

The Old Testament and Second-Century Christians

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In a famous statement written in 1921, Adolf Harnack questioned the relevance of the Hebrew Bible for Christians:

If one carefully thinks through with Paul and Marcion the contrast between “the righteousness that is by faith” and “the righteousness that is by works” and is persuaded also of the inadequacy of the means by which Paul thought that he could maintain the *canonical* recognition of the Old Testament, consistent thinking will not be able to tolerate the validity of the Old Testament as canonical documents in the Christian church.¹

Later in the same chapter, Harnack states the following thesis, for which he argues:

*[T]he rejection of the Old Testament in the second century was a mistake which the great church rightly avoided; to maintain it in the sixteenth century was a fate from which the Reformation was not yet able to escape; but still to preserve it in Protestantism as a canonical document since the nineteenth century is the consequence of a religious and ecclesiastical crippling.*²

Harnack recommended that the Protestant churches make it clear that the Hebrew Bible is useful for reading but is not canonical, that it is not to be put on the same level as the NT and has no compelling authority for Christians.

Harnack would have regarded the jettisoning of the OT in the second century as a mistake, but he is not clear as to why this is so. I do not wish to question the wisdom of second-century Christians in retaining these scriptures but rather to examine some of the issues that relate to their deliberations about them.³

Abundant reasons for discarding these writings can easily be cited. For most Christians in the early second century, observance of the first day of the week had taken the place of Sabbath day observance. Although the practice of fasting continued among some groups and in some places, most dietary restrictions and

1. Harnack, *Marcion*, 133, emphasis in original.

2. Harnack, 134, emphasis in original.

3. In general I use the terms “Hebrew Scriptures,” “scriptures,” and “Old Testament (OT)” interchangeably, although it is clear that the last term is exclusively a Christian one. Further, most Christians of the second century did not know the scriptures in the Hebrew language but in a Greek translation, the Septuagint (LXX), which included books that were not represented in the Hebrew.

purity regulations based on Torah had either ceased or been greatly modified. Male circumcision of gentile believers was not demanded. Christians accepted and even hailed the destruction of the Jerusalem temple and the demise of its priesthood. The people of the “old covenant” were regarded as the despised opponents of God’s saved people. The abandonment of so many practices and principles along with the retention of the sacred texts that command them is an issue that calls for explanation.

Explanations are not, however, readily apparent. Pragmatic considerations point in opposite directions. On the one hand we may ask if it was advantageous for the second-century church, now overwhelmingly gentile in its composition, to include Jewish writings among the sacred scriptures. To include Hebrew literature as part of Christian sacred scripture would seem to do little to support missionary work among so-called pagans. Why burden prospective converts with writings that are foreign to their culture? On the other hand, the fledgling Christian movement desperately needed to disprove its novelty in a world that prized the ancient. Aware of the need for deep roots, Christians could cite the Hebrew Scriptures as part of their own history and so gain a degree of respectability in the Roman world. Further, we must remember that the OT had long ago been translated into Greek (probably second-century BCE), and so was accessible to educated readers throughout the empire. The weight of these observations should not be discounted, and yet such pragmatic considerations do little to explain the church’s retention of the OT as sacred, authoritative literature.

For most first and early second-century Jesus believers, the authoritative status of the OT was a non-issue. The Hebrew Scriptures would inevitably constitute the Bible for those believers who considered themselves to be Jews and were so regarded by their fellows. But gentile Christian writers appear to share similar views about the authority of the OT, although in the LXX version. These writers display little interest in arguments that would support their assumptions about the OT, undoubtedly because few questions were raised about them. Some early writers reveal that there were underlying issues about the ancient texts, but it is not until the time of Marcion that the churches seriously wrestled with the place of the OT for Christians. A glance at a few of the representative texts will highlight their viewpoints.⁴

The writer of the letter known as *1 Clement* (traditionally dated c. 95 CE) is concerned about the apparent ouster of some church leaders in Corinth. Writing

4. In this section I focus attention generally on the texts collectively known as “the Apostolic Fathers” and so will not include here a mention of canonical texts, with the exception of the Letter to the Hebrews. It should, however, be noted that the NT texts generally share the assumptions about the OT that we find among the Apostolic Fathers. Paul accepts the authority of the LXX even while claiming that Torah observance is not necessary for gentile believers. The Gospel of Matthew stresses the conviction that Jesus is the fulfillment of ancient Hebrew prophecy. The Acts of the Apostles will be discussed below.

from Rome, he puts a high premium on proper order in the church, and he is able to cite numerous OT examples to support his position. The problems caused by jealousy, he writes, faced not only Peter and Paul but also Cain, Abel, Moses, and David.⁵ He urges his readers to turn from jealousy and obey the commandments of God, and he cites Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot, and Rahab as exemplars of obedience.⁶ To support his insistence on proper order in the church he refers to the practices of priests and Levites: "For special liturgical rites have been assigned to the high priest, and a special place has been designated for the regular priests, and special ministries are established for the Levites. The lay person is assigned to matters enjoined on the laity."⁷

For Ignatius of Antioch (usually dated c. 110–115 CE), likewise, the Hebrew Scriptures are authoritative, even if some qualifications are notable. Explicit references are sparse in the seven letters, but the bishop is certain that the prophets predicted the coming of Jesus the Christ.⁸ His insistence on the distinction between Judaism and Christianity seems to be directed more against the continuation of Jewish practices among Christians than against the scriptures per se. In the letter to the Magnesians Ignatius writes:

It is outlandish to proclaim Jesus Christ and practice Judaism [ἄτοπὸν ἐστίν, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν λαλεῖν καὶ ἰουδαίζειν]. For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity—in which every tongue that believes in God has been gathered together.⁹

Ignatius is aware that Jesus believers have abandoned the observance of the Sabbath and substituted the Lord's Day.¹⁰ In the letter to the Philadelphians there is a curious reference to uncircumcised advocates of Judaism and circumcised advocates of Christianity,¹¹ followed by an equally puzzling reference to the "archives" or "ancient records":

For I heard some saying: "If I do not find it in the ancient records [ἀρχαίους], I do not believe in the gospel." And when I said to them, "It is written," they replied to me, "That is just the question." But for me, Jesus Christ is the ancient records [ἀρχαία]; the sacred ancient records [τὰ ἁθικτὰ ἀρχαία] are his cross and death, and his resurrection, and the faith that comes through him—by which things I long to be made righteous by your prayer.¹²

William Schoedel and others have convincingly argued that "archives" in this passage must refer to the OT.¹³ Ignatius' objection, thus, seems to be directed

5. See 1 Clement 4.

6. See 1 Clement 9–12.

7. 1 Clement 40.5 (Ehrman, LCL).

8. See, e.g., Ignatius, *Magn.* 8.2.

9. Ignatius, *Magn.* 10.3 (Ehrman, LCL).

10. See Ignatius, *Magn.* 9.1.

11. See Ignatius, *Phld.* 6.1.

12. Ignatius, *Phld.* 8.2 (Ehrman, LCL).

13. See Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 207–9; Schoedel, "Ignatius and the Archives."

against believers who hold exclusively to these scriptures and do not see the harmony between them and the Ignatian gospel. They would most likely be believers from among the Jews or else gentile believers who are attracted to Jewish traditions. In any event, what is at stake between Ignatius and his opponents at this point is not the authority of the OT but its interpretation.

The Letter to the Hebrews¹⁴ also reveals that interpretative issues must have been under discussion. This author seems proud to cite the numerous examples of faith among the Hebrew worthies (Heb 11:4–40). But he is equally concerned to proclaim that the first covenant with the Jews has become obsolete and has been replaced by the new (Heb 8:13). He claims that practices associated with the Jewish people have been superseded by the sacrifice of the Christ. There is no longer a need for mortal priests to make sacrifices or for a temple or altar, since the perfect and eternal sacrifice of the heavenly priest has accomplished the forgiveness of sins for those with faith in Jesus. Ironically, however, the author requires the authority of the OT in order to prove its obsolescence. Only if one accepts the authority of Genesis does it make sense to cite the mysterious Melchizedek as priestly predecessor of Jesus (see Gen 14:18; Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1–28).

Some of the same themes that we see in Hebrews appear also in the *Epistle of Barnabas* (probably c. 130 CE), but with more vehement anti-Jewish expressions. As in Hebrews, we see the pitting of one part of the scriptures against another part. In *Barn.* 2.4 we have, “For through all the prophets he has shown us that he has no need of sacrifices, whole burnt offerings, or regular offerings.”¹⁵ He belittles Jewish observance by claiming that Jews were mistaken in taking the OT commandments literally. They were mistaken, for example, in interpreting the prohibition of pork as a prohibition against eating pork. The commandment really, Barnabas says, tells us not to associate with pig-like people.¹⁶ Moses spoke “in the spirit.” “But they received his words according to the desires of their own flesh, as if he were actually speaking about food.”¹⁷ Jews also thought that God commanded them to remember the Sabbath day, but the commandment rests on the creation narrative in which God rested on the seventh day (Gen 2:2–3) and on the affirmation that with God one thousand years is a day (Ps 90:4). Thus, *Barnabas* concludes that the commandment has nothing to do with the observance of the seventh day of the week but rather it signifies the consummation of all things in 6000 years.¹⁸ The *Epistle of Barnabas* reveals that, for Christians, the problem with the

14. Harold W. Attridge considers a number of possible dates for the writing of Hebrews but finally agrees that any narrowing of dates beyond 60 and 100 CE is tenuous. Attridge is convinced that Hebrews is later than *1 Clement*, which he dates 90–120 CE. See Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 6–9.

15. Ehrman, LCL. The author has in mind Isa 1:11–13; Jer 7:22; Zech 8:17; Ps 51:17.

16. See *Barn.* 10.3.

17. *Barn.* 10.9 (Ehrman, LCL).

18. See *Barn.* 15.3–4.

OT is its interpretation, not its authority. Literal interpretation is mistaken; one must always search for a meaning that we would call metaphorical. For these reasons, *Barnabas* can conclude that God's covenant was never meant for Jews and that it is wrong to think of it as intended for both them and us.

And so you should understand. And yet again, I am asking you this as one who is from among you and who loves each and every one of you more than my own soul: watch yourselves now and do not become like some people by piling up your sins, saying that the covenant [ἡ διαθήκη] is both theirs and ours. For it is ours. But they permanently lost it, in this way, when Moses had just received it.¹⁹

It is doubtful if any of our authors thought of the parts of the OT as having equal authority. It is not likely that they had a holistic concept of these scriptures. We are not yet at a time of clear canonical definition, either by a Jewish or a Christian body. Although some Christians had access to the LXX, they probably did not feel compelled to approach it as a unity. Luke comes close to defining the contents of the scriptures when he speaks of the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44; see also Acts 24:14).²⁰ Much stronger than any sense of unity, for most writers of our period, there is a clear preference for some parts over others. Justin, for example, sees no conflict between affirming the scriptures and rejecting the Mosaic Law. He states that Christians believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but not Moses, since Christ abrogated the Mosaic Law.²¹

Although the above summary is by no means exhaustive, it would not be misleading to regard it as representative of the various attitudes toward the OT among the early Christian communities. What we may learn from it is that the basic authority of the OT, in its LXX translation, was generally affirmed. We must, however, take note of two qualifications. First, not all parts of the OT are equally authoritative; second, problems of interpretation become paramount.

We probably will never know the full story of the church's use of the OT in the second century, but we may gain some insight into the situation by examining what is probably the most serious challenge to its retention: I mean, of course, that of Marcion. In the early to mid-second century Marcion and his followers maintained that the OT had no relevance for Christians.²² At best its inspiration came from the creator-God rather than from the God and father of

19. *Barn.* 4.6–7 (Ehrman, LCL).

20. Luke's language reflects the fact that the book of Psalms constituted a single entity (see Luke 20:42; Acts 1:20) and that there was a recognized order (see Acts 13:33, 35).

21. See Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 11.

22. The precise dates for Marcion's activity are quite uncertain, because the sources on which we must rely are inconsistent and confusing. Harnack thinks he must have been born about 85 CE and that he arrived in Rome c. 138 and was excommunicated from there in 144. See Harnack, *Marcion, 1*–27**. In my judgment, Marcion's views were probably known in the East as early as 115–120 CE, well before he arrived in Rome. See the discussion in my *Marcion and Luke-Acts*, 26–31.

Jesus Christ. The Law of Moses has nothing to do with the gospel proclaimed by Jesus and Paul. Although the Hebrew prophets predicted the coming of a messiah, Jesus did not fulfill these prophecies. His messiahship was of a very different kind from that predicted by these prophets.

Marcion's core convictions led him to conclude that the God who was revealed by Jesus was totally unknown before Jesus' appearance. What Jesus revealed and Paul taught was fundamentally new, unexpected, and unanticipated. Marcion, thus, concluded that there could be no connection between Jesus and the Hebrew prophets. Evidently, he stressed a non-allegorical, non-figurative interpretation of the prophets. Tertullian condemned him for this because it meant that he was in agreement with Jews, who likewise denied that the prophets predicted the coming of Jesus.²³ But Marcion accepted Isaiah and the other prophets as trustworthy predictors of the future. He concluded that the messiah foretold by these prophets was not Jesus and that such a one had not yet come. That coming is still to be anticipated as a future event, as Jews believe.²⁴

If, as Marcion contended, Jesus revealed a hitherto unknown God, it follows that the Creator-God is not to be the object of Christian worship, and his book is irrelevant. Marcion was sharp in his criticism of the God of the OT. For him, neither the creation stories of Genesis nor the Torah as a whole is to be challenged on the grounds of accuracy but rather in terms of the God portrayed in them. This God enacted the *lex talionis*, which allowed for physical retaliation that for Marcion was deeply objectionable.²⁵ This God is inconsistent: "he forbids labour on sabbath days, and yet at the storming of the city of Jericho he commands the ark to be carried round during eight days which include the sabbath."²⁶ This God is inconsistent on the matter of sacrifices.²⁷ This God is either capricious or lacking in foresight, initially approving and later disapproving certain persons,²⁸ or repenting a previous action, as in the cases of Saul (1 Sam 15:11) and Jonah (Jonah 3:10; 4:2).²⁹ This God seems not to be omniscient, unaware of the whereabouts of Adam in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:9, 11) or of Cain's murder of Abel (Gen 4:9–10).³⁰ Marcion's critique of the Hebrew Bible was, for the most part, directed to the morality and deficiency of the God who inspired it. He saw in these writings, especially in Torah, something that fell beneath the teachings of Jesus and Paul, and the contrasts were so extreme that he concluded that the God who inspired these scriptures was not the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

The struggle with Marcion and his followers involved a number of complex issues, not least among them the authority of the OT and its interpretation.

23. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.21.2; 3.5.4; 3.12.1.

24. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 3.6.3; 3.7.1–8; 3.8.1–2; 3.21.1.

25. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.18.1.

26. Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.21.1 (Evans).

27. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.22.1–4.

28. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.23.1.

29. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.24.1–2.

30. See Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.25.1, 3.

His literal interpretation of the OT all but foreclosed this option for his proto-orthodox opponents. As a result the victors in the struggle came more and more to stress various non-literal methods of reading the scriptures. These methods were not, of course, new. They had a long history extending from Paul's allegorical reading of Genesis 21 in Galatians 4 to the metaphorical interpretations of the Mosaic Law in the *Epistle of Barnabas*.

But did Marcion's Bible actually contain the OT? Most scholars have answered this question in the negative, but in a recent monograph Sebastian Moll suggests that Marcion's canon did in fact contain these scriptures. Consciously going against the mainstream of scholarship on Marcion, Moll claims that Marcion's NT would have been meaningless without the OT. He blames Harnack for instituting the view that Marcion excluded the OT from his canon, citing Harnack's well-known antipathy toward it. Moll writes:

Marcion did not understand the Old Testament in the light of the New, he interpreted the New Testament in the light of the Old . . . This is why it would be a misconception to believe that Marcion would have needed the New Testament in order to "discredit" the Old, for it is in fact the Old Testament which forms his starting point. The evil God created a miserable world with weak creatures, gave them a burdensome Law and judges them cruelly. Then Marcion's good God enters the scene as a pure anti-God, with no other function than to spite the Creator and to free mankind from its horrible lot.³¹

Thus, according to Moll, Marcion could not have excluded the OT from his church, since without it the message about the good God could not be proclaimed effectively.

Moll does not, however, fully clarify Marcion's intentions. Why would it have been necessary to include the OT in the canon in order to demonstrate the superiority of the good God to the creator-God? If the function of the OT in Marcionite circles is to illustrate the nature of the God who inspired it, why would it thereby have *canonical* authority alongside the scriptures of the "anti-God"? In Moll's terms, the OT is the product of an evil (rather than a just) God, whose subjects are to be released. It would seem, then, that the OT is not authoritative for Christians but serves at best as the prologue to the NT.

Jason BeDuhn is, in my judgment, on sounder ground than Moll at this point. He understands Marcion as embracing a form of Christian faith that preceded him, a form that cherished Paul's epistles and devalued Jewish influences.³² Conflict occurred when Marcion ran up against the Roman church, where, as John Knox described it, "the historical continuity with Judaism is prized as one of the most precious values, where ultimate authority is vested in the Jewish Scriptures, where the sharp Pauline antithesis between law and gospel, be-

31. Moll, *The Arch-Heretic Marcion*, 82–83, emphasis in original.

32. See BeDuhn, *The First New Testament*, 20–23.

tween letter and Spirit, is softened, if not effaced.”³³ Under these circumstances, Marcion’s refusal to accept the canonical authority of the OT would be central to his theology and would constitute a major stumbling block between him and his Roman counterparts.

BeDuhn calls Marcion’s canon the “first New Testament.” It may be more nearly correct to designate it as the “first Christian Bible.” It is, for Marcion and his followers, the complete Bible, the entire canon. And it is not so much that Marcion rejected the OT as it is that he failed to include it in his canon. If Marcion’s is the first Christian canon, it would not be right to say that he rejected a previous canon that included the OT. Marcion was certainly aware of the historic use of the OT in the early church, and his failure to include it in his canon is a conscious rejection of its authority. But this is not the same as imagining that he dismantled a canon that had previously been generally accepted.

However we conceive it, Marcion’s denial of authority to the OT created a strong negative reaction from the church at Rome and doubtless other churches as well. In my judgment, however, the author of Acts, writing about 120 CE, had already perceived the threat of Marcionite Christianity and attempted to address its contentions point by point.³⁴ This author concedes that the Jesus believers altered some practices that had previously been commanded in the OT, but he justifies the changes. Dietary regulations appear to be abolished when Peter is told to eat all kinds of animals (see Acts 10:9–17). Sunday worship is traced back to the time of Paul (see Acts 20:7–12). More significant are those aspects of the Acts narrative that appear to respond to specific Marcionite claims. Marcion stressed the distance between Jesus and the Hebrew Scriptures, but the author of Acts repeatedly showed that Paul and the other Christian leaders maintained that Jesus fulfilled the predictions of the Hebrew prophets (see, e.g., Acts 3:18; Luke 24:26–27). Marcion claimed that Paul was the only apostle, but the author of Acts portrayed him as at one with Peter and the others, even subservient to them on some occasions, and—despite his obvious admiration for Paul—defined apostleship in a way that actually excludes him (see Acts 1:21–22).³⁵ Marcion called Peter and the others “false apostles,” in contrast to Paul, but the author of Acts not only characterized them as in total agreement with Paul but even went so far as to attribute to Peter the first conversion of a gentile (see

33. Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament*, 13.

34. Although Luke and Acts have traditionally been dated c. 80 CE, recent studies have argued that there are good reasons for dating the composition of these texts to the first quarter of the second century. See Pervo, *Dating Acts*. Pervo mounts a compelling argument for dating the composition of Acts in about 115–25 CE. See also my *Marcion and Luke-Acts*, where I maintain, following John Knox, that Acts was written in the second century as, to a significant extent, an anti-Marcionite text. See Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament*. In my judgment, the author of Acts was acquainted with the teaching of Marcion at an early date.

35. Only in Acts 14:4, 14 does the author use the term “apostle” for Paul (and Barnabas). These references constitute exceptions to the rule laid down in Acts 1:21–22.

Acts 10:1–11:18) and to write for him a speech that made him sound a lot like Paul (see Acts 15:7–11). Marcion maintained that Paul proclaimed release from the dominion of the God of creation and Torah, but the author of Acts characterized Paul as a Torah-observant Jew and devout Pharisee (see, e.g., Acts 23:6; 26:5) and portrayed him as proclaiming to the Athenians that the creator-God is the only God (see Acts 17:24–31). Marcion taught that Jesus brought Torah to an end, but the author of Acts showed that the apostles and Paul, inspired by the spirit, agreed that some things from Torah were still to be required even of gentile believers (see Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25).

A major theme in Acts is that of promise and fulfillment, a theme that plays a role in Christian hermeneutics for centuries. Contrary to the Marcionite claims, the author of Acts makes it clear that the Hebrew prophets were not only proclaiming truth but that what they proclaimed pertained to Jesus and his followers. Peter announces that the suffering of the Messiah (Acts 3:18) and the coming age of universal restoration (Acts 3:21; cf. 3:24, 25) were predicted by all the prophets. At the home of Cornelius, Peter tells his audience that the prophets had proclaimed that belief in Jesus assures the forgiveness of sins, presumably for gentiles as well as Jews (Acts 10:43). James announces that inclusion of gentiles in the believing community was foretold by the prophets, and he confirms this with a quotation from Amos 9:11–12 (Acts 15:15–18). The Paul of Acts, likewise, claims that his preaching conforms to the prophetic writings (Acts 26:22; 28:23).

The author of Acts is not simply telling the story of the rise of Christianity; he is, to a significant extent, defining the Christian movement in opposition to Marcionite concepts. His narrative totally revises the Marcionite portrayal of the earliest Christians. For the author of Acts, belief in Jesus is in conformity with the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures; Torah is not totally dispensed with; Jewish traditions are not absolutely jettisoned. The forceful and engaging narrative of Acts and its use in anti-Marcionite controversies late in the second century assured that for proto-orthodox Christians the Hebrew prophets would thereafter be bound up tightly with Christian proclamation.³⁶

In terms of canonical development the author of Acts played a pivotal role. By insisting on the role of Jesus and the apostles in fulfilling prophetic promises, the author of Acts contributed significantly in paving the way for the Hebrew Scriptures (in the LXX version) to become part of the Christian Bible, as the Old Testament. Although the author of Acts did not explicitly discuss the issue of canonicity, he had his main character, Paul, proclaim that he believed “everything laid down according to the law or written in the prophets” (Acts 24:14; see also 26:22; 28:23). Although other early Christian authors and leaders

36. See Mount, *Pauline Christianity*; Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts*.

played important roles, it is plausible to suggest that without the contribution of the author of Acts, the canonical status of the OT would have been far more questionable than it in fact was.³⁷

The history of second-century attitudes toward the OT is admittedly complex and requires much more extensive treatment than can be undertaken in this brief contribution. My intent here has been only to scratch the surface of this history and to offer a suggestion that may shed some light on the situation. The proposal is that the Marcionite challenge called upon proto-orthodox Christians either to discontinue the historic use of the OT or to justify its position as authoritative and relevant for them and that the composition of Acts was a major response to the challenge. The proto-orthodox rejection of Marcion, beginning with the composition of Acts, led to the framing of a Christian canon that would begin with the OT.

If these considerations do not fully answer the question of why second-century Christians retained the OT, they at least help us to understand the issues that were at stake. Paramount among the issues is the authority of the OT, and proto-orthodox Christians, acknowledging the long history of its acceptance among believers and rejecting Marcion's rejection, affirmed it. Secondary issues involve the relative authority of parts of the OT and the right ways to interpret these scriptures. Justin probably speaks for most believers when he demotes the Mosaic Law to a position below that of the prophets. Issues of interpretation were resolved by virtually abandoning methods pre-emptively employed by Marcionites and exploring metaphorical, allegorical, and typological possibilities. Although some of the issues emerged prior to Marcion and continued afterward, it was the Marcionite challenge and the response to it that settled the basic status of the OT for second-century Christians, and the author of Acts was a major and early participant in shaping the anti-Marcionite response.

37. On the role of Luke-Acts in the history of NT canonization, see Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament*.

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