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BOOK REVIEWS

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Introduction

Benjamin L. Merkle
STR Editor

This Spring issue of *STR* is un-themed, containing one Old Testament essay, two New Testament essays, one essay that is cross-disciplinary (New Testament and Theology/Ethics), and one unique essay regarding the papers of John Sailhamer which are now housed at Southeastern Seminary.

The first essay in this issue is by Ched Spellman, Assistant Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies at Cedarville University. His essay, "Nehemiah's New Shadow: Reading and Rereading the Ezra-Nehemiah Narrative," argues that the conclusion to the book of Nehemiah suggests that, although the people have returned from exile, rebuilt the temple, restored the walls, and repopulated Jerusalem, the people have failed to adhere to the requirements of the Mosaic covenant. Thus, when the sober tone of Nehemiah 13 is carefully considered, Ezra-Nehemiah should not be interpreted as a positive portrayal of post-exilic Israel. Rather, the recurrence of pre-exilic themes demonstrates that the situation is less than ideal.

In the second essay, Andrew Naselli, Assistant Professor of New Testament and Theology at Bethlehem College and Seminary, asks the question, "Was it always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat 'meat sacrificed to idols' in an idol's temple?" His answer, though perhaps no longer the majority view, is that it was not *necessarily* always wrong to do so. He argues that (1) some meals at an idol's temple were merely social events that did not involve idol worship; (2) the Greek term εἰδωλόθυτος means meat sacrificed to idols regardless as to whether one eats it in an idol's temple or at home; and (3) the passage in 1 Cor 8 is significantly different from 10:14–22 so as to introduce a different scenario (and thus different principles that might apply).

In the third essay, Peter Dubbelman, Senior Adults Pastor at Apex Baptist Church and Ph.D. Candidate at Southeastern, maintains that when Paul writes concerning "the Law's decree" being "fulfilled in us" (Rom 8:4), that Paul is referring to both imputed righteousness *and* that which a Christian is to become based on their union with Christ. That is, justification includes a transformative aspect as a person is conformed to the image of the Son.

The fourth is essay co-authored by David Jones (Professor of Christian Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary) and Andrew Spencer (Ph.D. in Ethics). In their essay, "The Fate of Creation in the *Eschaton*," Jones and Spencer address how one's view of the future of creation (i.e., whether it will be annihilated and then recreated or whether it will be renewed and restored) is often linked with one's view of creation care. They argue for the restoration view based on 2 Pet 3:10 and then offer several implications of how Christians should view creation care based on their view of the fate of creation.

The final essay, "Gleanings from the John H. Sailhamer Papers at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary" is by Kevin Chen, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Union University. After carefully examining the personal papers (especially class notes and unpublished book-drafts) of the late professor John Sailhamer, Chen provides valuable insights into Sailhamer's thoughts.

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Nehemiah's New Shadow: Reading and Rereading the Ezra-Nehemiah Narrative

Ched Spellman
Cedarville University

Ezra-Nehemiah is sometimes interpreted as a positive portrayal of the return of Israel from exile. Ezra 1 begins with a prophetic expectation of return and restoration. However, the conclusion of the book in Nehemiah 13 emphasizes that although the people have rebuilt the temple, restored the walls, and repopulated Jerusalem, they have still failed to keep the demands of the Mosaic covenant. The sober tone of this final chapter prompts a rereading of the narrative as a whole. Rereading the book in light of the conclusion highlights a distinct pattern of tensions throughout the story. A central textual strategy of the author subtly demonstrates the recurrence of pre-exilic conditions in the post-exilic community. Rather than a subsidiary appendix or epilogue, then, Nehemiah 13 represents perhaps the culminating capstone of the composition.

Key Words: Ezra-Nehemiah, mosaic covenant, Nehemiah 13, textual strategy.

"Where do we begin / the rubble or our sin?"[1]

At the end of the *The Silmarillion*, J. R. R. Tolkien tells the story of the last days of the Third Age of the fictional world he calls Middle Earth. Whereas this epic history in *The Lord of The Rings* recounts in sprawling detail the exploits of that age, the same account in the *Silmarillion* spans only a few pages. After the overthrow of Sauron, there is a time of rest for the people of Middle Earth. "Sauron failed, and he was utterly vanquished and passed away like a shadow of malice. . . . Thus peace came again, and a new Spring opened on earth." The King of Gondor was crowned and the darkness of Sauron's shadow was dispelled. One of the final images of the *Silmarillion* centers on the growth of a new tree: "in the courts of Minas Anor the White Tree flowered again, for a seedling was found by Mithrandir in the snows of Mindolluin that rose tall and white above the City of Gondor." After the darkness of the Third Age, the White Tree represents the memory of the lessons learned from the War for the Ring of Power. The account ends though, with a cryptic foreshadowing comment: "And *while it still grew there* the Elder Days were not

[1] Bastille, "Pompeii" on *Bad Blood*, Virgin Records, 2013.

wholly forgotten in the hearts of the Kings."[2]

At various points after completing *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien experimented with a sequel to his Middle Earth epic set one hundred years after the death of Aragorn the king. Tolkien tried to complete it a few times but always abandoned it, in part because of the dark turns it kept taking. He called it *The New Shadow*, and in this fragment of a tale there are rumbles of conspiracy and the people have forgotten the darkness of the great battles of the past. As Tolkien reflected, the story "proved both sinister and depressing" as it involved the common story of mankind's "most regrettable feature," namely, "their quick satiety with good."[3] The people of Gondor grew "discontented and restless." Tolkien found that "even so early there was an outcrop of revolutionary plots" and "Gondorian boys were playing at being Orcs and going round doing damage."[4] In this tale, there were only "a few still living who could remember the War of the Ring as a shadow upon their early childhood."[5] As one of the characters reflects, "Deep indeed run the roots of Evil." Even in the light of the "great peace" of that time, a "new shadow" began to grow across the hearts of the people of Middle Earth.

In some ways, the narrative account of Ezra-Nehemiah is a tale of triumph. Judah returns from exile and the temple, the city, and the walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt. As it records the final events of Israel's history found in the Hebrew Scriptures, this concluding chronological account portrays a momentous occasion. The darkness of exile had finally given way to the light of Cyrus's decree and the fulfillment of prophetic promises about the return to the land and the restoration of the people. A possible interpretation of these events might fly a "Mission Accomplished" banner over this sequence of events. In my estimation, however, the author of Ezra-Nehemiah intends to argue almost the exact opposite. For Ezra-Nehemiah, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Running through Ezra-Nehemiah is a *new shadow* that colors the entire account of exile and return.

[2] J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2001), 304.

[3] See J. R. R. Tolkien, "The New Shadow," in *The Peoples of Middle-Earth*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: HarperCollins, 1996), 410.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., 411.

The Shape of the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah

Many studies of Ezra-Nehemiah are rooted in the book's beginning.[6] Cyrus's edict sets the return from exile into motion and contains several of the central themes of the book. With prophetic fervor, Ezra 1 trumpets the return of the people of God to build the house of God by the order of the Persian king.[7] In Ezra 6:14, the narrator gives a summation of the

[6] Though beyond the scope of the present study, an initial interpretive issue involves the legitimacy of reading Ezra and Nehemiah as Ezra-Nehemiah. Though separating the books has ancient precedent in the reception history of these texts, the manuscript evidence indicates a compositional unity from the earliest stages of their transmission. From my perspective, the presence of compositional strategies that span both sections of Ezra and Nehemiah (e.g., the repetition of the list of names from Ezra 2 in Neh 7) supports the notion that Ezra-Nehemiah is a compositional unity. Consequently, any study of the function of Ezra-Nehemiah within the context of the Writings needs to grapple with the message of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah as a two part compositional whole. Cf. J. C. VanderKam, "Ezra-Nehemiah or Ezra and Nehemiah," in *Priests, Prophets and Scribes*, ed. E. Ulrich et al. (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992), 55–75. For a brief summary of the arguments for the unity of Ezra-Nehemiah, see Tamara Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah* (Atlanta: SBL, 1998), 11–14. As she notes, "The unity of Ezra-Nehemiah is attested in all the ancient manuscripts available and in the early rabbinic and patristic traditions" (11). Because of the literary coherence of Ezra 1–10 and Neh 1–13, many continue to argue for the distinct though related nature of these two narrative blocks. In this vein, Mark Boda remarks, "There appears to be an inner rhetorical logic to the book of Nehemiah as an independent narrative entity" ("Prayer as Rhetoric in the Book of Nehemiah," in *New Perspectives on Ezra-Nehemiah: History and Historiography, Text, Literature*, ed. Isaac Kalimi [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012], 276).

[7] Eskenazi argues that Cyrus's edict captures the main literary and theological emphasis of the book: "The edict of Cyrus (Ezra 1:1–4) introduces, and, to an important extent, encapsulates the basic themes of the book by focusing on the people of God, building the house of God, and fulfilling the written edict of God and Cyrus. These three issues—the people, house of God, and written documents—are fundamental to the structure and message of Ezra-Nehemiah" (*Age of Prose*, 40). This insight is often followed in summaries of the book's message. For instance, in a recent theological introduction to the book, Mark Futato writes, "The decree of Cyrus not only sets the agenda for the book of Ezra-Nehemiah but also contains the three major themes of the book: (1) rebuilding the 'house' of God, (2) the importance of the people of God, and (3) the primacy of the written Word of God" ("Ezra-Nehemiah," in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament* [Wheaton: Crossway, 2016], 520). My concern in this study is not necessarily to argue against this helpful summation of the book's message.

events of the book that connects with the opening edict: "And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia."[8] Understandably, this opening and the themes it forefronts have received a small library of scholarly analysis from a variety of perspectives.

However, this emphasis on the epic beginning of Ezra sometimes relegates the ending of Nehemiah to the shadows. Often dismissed as an afterthought, understood as an appendix, or deemed a dislocation of material in need of re-sequencing, Neh 13 often receives an interpretive framework *other than* the one the book gives it.[9] In fact, an interpretive dilemma arises when one focuses on this ending. The reasons why Neh 13 is sometimes neglected seem to fall under two main headings. The ending is perceived to be an (1) *anticlimactic afterthought* that is actually (2) *out of order*.

Indeed, this final chapter of Nehemiah seems to bear all the marks of an out-of-place textual unit and thus cries out for alternative explanation. The temporal sequence of the final chapters of the book has long puzzled interpreters and historical-critics seeking to make sense of the original historical setting and situation.[10] Many interpreters take Neh 13:4ff to be a literary "flashback" to a time before the celebration of Neh 12 or even prior to the covenant agreement of Neh 10. This proposed chronology intensifies the sense of the dislocation of this unit, as Nehemiah's activities seem vacuous, petty, self-congratulatory, or simply an implementation

Rather, I think the failure of the Mosaic covenant should at least be included in a list of Ezra-Nehemiah's central themes.

[8] The narrator continues, "This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius" (6:15).

[9] On the importance of Nehemiah 13 for an understanding of Ezra-Nehemiah, see Gary E. Schnittjer, "The Bad Ending of Ezra-Nehemiah," *BSac* 173 (January-March 2016): 32–56. As Schnittjer notes, "endings and beginnings provide nonnegotiable frames of reference for narratives. Any adequate interpretation of a story will make sense in light of its beginning and its ending" (32). He concludes that "the bad ending of Ezra-Nehemiah sheds light on the function of the entire narrative" (33). See also Joshua E. Williams, "Promise and Failure: Second Exodus in Ezra-Nehemiah," in *Reverberations of the Exodus in Scripture*, ed. R. Michael Fox (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014), 74–93. For Williams, too, "Nehemiah 13 holds a critical role in determining the book's portrayal of the post-exilic community and its relation to restoration promises of the prophets, especially Jeremiah" (90).

[10] Because of its prominent and explicitly acknowledged use of literary sources, Ezra-Nehemiah is a lightning rod for critical reconstruction.

of what the community has already decided.[11] Consequently, the role of Neh 13 as a fitting chronological and literary conclusion to the work is not typically addressed. Even those seeking to account for the narrative shape of the book often conceptually re-order the material prior to their literary analysis.[12]

Rather than a subsidiary appendix or epilogue, however, Neh 13 represents perhaps the culminating capstone of the composition.[13] As outlined below, part of the author's textual strategy is to demonstrate the recurrence of pre-exilic conditions in the post-exilic community. In relation to this developed strategy, the final sequence of the book is the author's theological exclamation point. Accordingly, there are several literary features that highlight the role of Neh 13 within the shape of Ezra-Nehemiah. These include the author's use of narrated time, his strategic

[11] See Eskenazi's characterization of Nehemiah in *Age of Prose*, 145–52. Eskenazi views Nehemiah as a foil to the more pious Ezra (ibid., 136–44). Two reasons for Eskenazi's perspective seem to be her emphasis on the people over the individuals and her temporal relocation of chapter 13 to before the people's covenant agreements of chapter 10. On this reading, Nehemiah seems to be taking individual credit for the people's corporate accomplishment and is "merely enforcing the community's pledge and prior practices" (151). These considerations would then make Nehemiah's words in chapter 13 a "hollow boast" (ibid.).

[12] For example, Williamson seeks to temper claims of a "chronistic history," to respect the stand-alone character of Ezra-Nehemiah, and to do justice to the narrative effect of the book's arrangement. As he writes, "greater attempts have been made to do justice to the medium of narrative through which the books address us" (*Ezra-Nehemiah*, xlviii). Williamson is attracted to this approach because "it takes more seriously than any other the character of the books themselves" (ibid., xlviii). He concludes that "given the circumstances of the way these books developed, the safest starting point seems, therefore, to be to attend to their overall shape, since it is in the arrangement of their sources that the editors have had most effect and where their intention is thus most clearly discernible" (ibid.). Williamson, though, argues that Nehemiah's conclusion is chronologically out of place. As mentioned above, while adopting a literary approach to the book, Eskenazi also re-locates the timing of Neh 13 to a position prior to Neh 8–10 (see *Age of Prose*, 122–26).

[13] The narrative and verbal connections noted in this study between Nehemiah 13 and the rest of Ezra-Nehemiah seem to confirm Boda's observation: "Nehemiah 13 should be seen not as a coda to the work, but rather as the closing moments of the second phase of Nehemiah's activity, which began in chap. 7. Thus, if Ezra-Nehemiah is a unified complex, the final section of this corpus should be considered narratologically as part of the narrative level controlled and presented by the autobiographical narrator of Nehemiah 1–13" ("Prayer as Rhetoric in the Book of Nehemiah," 277).

incorporation of literary sources, and several direct structural links to preceding sections.

Textual Analysis of Nehemiah 13 and Its Role in Ezra-Nehemiah

After the enthusiastic re-affirmation of the Mosaic covenant in chapter 10 and the exuberant wall dedication in chapter 12, there follows a series of sobering scenes. The final sequence begins at the end of chapter 12 with a reminder of the nature of Israel's worship in the "ancient days" of David and Asaph (Neh 12:46). This reminder is followed by a foreshadowing and possibly ominous comment: "So all Israel *in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah* gave the portions due the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and set apart the consecrated portion for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated portion for the sons of Aaron" (Neh 12:47).[14] These two figures also span the far ends of the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative, with the first prominent figure, Zerubbabel, coupled here with the last prominent figure Nehemiah.

If Nehemiah's narrative had ended here, the overall tone of the book would be significantly impacted. Here is a picture of Israel worshiping and obeying in the house of God as the people of God as they did in the days of David. As the author records, "On that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, even the women and children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar" (12:43). It was the best of times! The story, though, continues. And the shadows lengthen into the final narrative sequence of the book.

What follows in Neh 13 brims with dramatic tension and theatric actions. The account begins in 13:4 with a temporal indicator: "Now prior to this." Many commentators identify the antecedent of this phrase to the dedication of chapter 12.[15] This renders 13:4–31 as either a kind of narrative flashback (on a literary approach) or simply a dislocated scene (on a critical approach). However, an alternative option is to connect this time indicator here ("now prior to this") with the time indicator that follows in 13:6, "But during all this time I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king." In

[14] Scripture quotations are from the NASB unless otherwise noted. Emphasis is added to highlight that the author is qualifying his statement by locating Israel's obedience within a limited timeframe.

[15] For example, Eskenazi argues that "this coda in Ezra-Nehemiah trails like an afterthought, looping back to a time before the climax of the celebration. . . . The section functions as an appendix to the book, summarizing earlier material, but narrated this time from the perspective of Nehemiah" (*Age of Prose*, 123).

this scenario, the account of 13:4–31 is set 12 years after Nehemiah's initial one-year ministry in Jerusalem.[16] As Nehemiah recounts, "After some time, however, I asked leave from the king" (13:6).

Nehemiah's return, then, occurs over a decade after his initial visit. Accordingly, this narrated moment bears the weight of signifying the success or failure of Ezra and Nehemiah's theological and cultural reforms. Throughout the book, the author uses sophisticated ways of presenting the progression of time. In particular, the relationship between chronology and narrated time is an important textual feature. There are several significant temporal shifts in the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative. This time gap at the end is simply the final instance of a narrative technique already employed throughout the book.[17] To the point, the account of Nehemiah's return cannot be accidental or mere happenstance (either chronologically or compositionally). The author seems to give Nehemiah's final narrative a full measure of hermeneutical significance. Beginning this section in this unique way also allows the account of Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem to seem sudden and shocking. In this quick sequence, as soon as Nehemiah comes to the city he learns "about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, by preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God" (13:7).

The sequence of events in chapter 13 mirrors the very aspects of the Mosaic covenant that the people hastily agreed to in Neh 10. After the corporate prayer of repentance in chapter 9, the people decide to take on "themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant and to keep and to observe all the commandments of God our Lord, and his ordinances and His statutes" (10:29). Specifically, they commit to avoid mixed marriages with people of the land (10:30), to cease from buying and selling on the sabbath (10:31), to contribute to the temple service and maintain the offerings (10:32–33), and to supply and sustain the priesthood through financial

[16] Nehemiah's term parallels Ezra's one year of ministry.

[17] On this textual feature, see Greg Goswell, "The Handling of Time in the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah," *TrinJ* 31 (2010): 187–203. Goswell contends that "the attempt by some scholars to posit the chronological displacement of Neh 13:4–31 should be resisted. This coda is best understood as chronologically subsequent to Nehemiah 10 and the ordering of the final form of the text has a compelling logic of its own" (203). Williams argues for this position as well in "Promise and Failure": "Although the chronological picture from Neh 12:44–13:31 is difficult to determine because the chronological notices are generally vague, it appears that verses 4–31 have a common temporal point of departure: Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem" (90).

contributions (10:34–39). As they say, "Thus we will not neglect the house of our God" (10:39).

Twelve years later (13:6–7), however, the people systematically fail at each recently restored practice. Nehemiah's actions observe and confront this very sequence of covenant breaches. The purity of temple worship is compromised (13:4–9), the support of the priesthood through tithes has ceased (13:10–14), the people buy and sell on the sabbath (13:15–22), and mixed marriages are a social norm (13:23–30). These elements are the inverse of the covenant commitments that the community agreed to uphold in chapter 10.[18] This chiastic structure supports the notion that this final sequence is directly related to the rest of the narrative.

Temple: Nehemiah Cleans House. The drama begins immediately after Nehemiah returns. One of the last and most detailed stipulations articulated in chapter 10 by the people had related to the care of God's house. They even specify directly that "the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse" (10:38). Within these chambers, the contributions, the new wine and oil, and the utensils of the sanctuary were to be kept (10:39). What Nehemiah finds, however, is that Eliashib has not prepared the storehouse for the service of the temple. Rather, he has prepared it as a residence for his own relative Tobiah.[19] Nehemiah finds his former political adversary setting up shop within the chambers of the temple.[20] Nehemiah seethes, "It was very displeasing to me, so I threw all of Tobiah's household goods out of the room" (13:8). Nehemiah then ceremonially cleanses the room and restores it to its proper function (13:9).

Tithes. In the immediately following account, Nehemiah discovers that "the portions of the Levites had not been given them so that the Levites and the singers who performed the service had gone away" (13:10). Whereas Tobiah's *presence* on the temple grounds represented one side of this covenant breach, the *absence* of the Levites there represents the other.

[18] For the striking literary and rhetorical arrangement of Neh 13:4–31, see Goswell, "Time in Ezra-Nehemiah," 201–2; Schnittjer, "Bad Ending of Ezra-Nehemiah," 40–42; and Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric," 281–84.

[19] The author draws this connection explicitly: "Eliashib . . . had prepared a large room for [Tobiah], where formerly they put the grain offerings, the frankincense, the utensils and the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests" (Neh 13:4–5).

[20] Tobiah, of course, had worked against Nehemiah's reforms (see Neh 2:10–19; 4:3–7; and 6:1–19). Nehemiah had already prayed against Tobiah in Neh 6:14.

There was no one on hand to guard and keep the temple. Nehemiah reprimands the officials and says to them, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" (13:11).[21] Nehemiah restores the priests, the people replenish the storehouses, and Nehemiah appoints "reliable" men to oversee the distributions.

Sabbath. The next scene matches the first in dramatic tension.[22] "In those days," Nehemiah notes, some in Judah were "treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading them on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and all kinds of loads and they brought them into Jerusalem on the sabbath day" (13:15). Nehemiah promptly admonishes them. However, he also observes that merchants from Tyre who were also living in the city were selling to the sons of Judah "on the sabbath, even in Jerusalem" (13:16). Nehemiah then reprimands the nobles of Judah and exclaims, "What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day?" (13:17). He then connects their post-exilic transgression to their pre-exilic condition: "Did not your fathers do the same, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this trouble? Yet you are adding to the wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath" (13:18).[23] Here, Nehemiah explicitly articulates a theme that subtly runs throughout the book: Will the people ever be able to worship and obey in the land over an extended period of time?

This scene continues into the night in urgent fashion. "It came about that just as it grew dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath," Nehemiah "commanded that the doors should be shut and that they should not open them until after the sabbath" (13:19). He stations servants at the gates to enforce his sabbath regulation. As he notes, "Once or

[21] Nehemiah's statement directly echoes the statement of the people in 10:39: "Thus we will not neglect the house of our God."

[22] Note the length and complexity of this scene. The offenses of this chapter gradually expand to include more and more of the people and become more and more difficult to address.

[23] Interestingly, Nehemiah's words here echo Jeremiah's message to the people in Jer 17:19–27. There, the Lord declares, "You shall not bring a load out of your houses on the sabbath day nor do any work, but keep the sabbath day holy, as I commanded your forefathers" (v. 22). In spite of this clear directive, the pre-exilic community is not able to comply: "Yet they did not listen or incline their ears, but stiffened their necks in order not to listen or take correction" (v. 23). The consequences of neglecting the Lord's command are dire and direct: "If you do not listen to Me to keep the sabbath day holy by not carrying a load and coming in through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem and not be quenched" (v. 27).

twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem" (13:20). Nehemiah then taunts them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you" (13:21). Understandably, "from that time on they did not come on the sabbath" (13:22). Nehemiah commands the Levites to purify themselves, guard the gates, and sanctify the sabbath.[24]

Mixed Marriages. The final account is a culmination of the theological confusion of this era in Israel's life. In several ways, Nehemiah's memoir builds to this narrative moment. "In those days," Nehemiah recounts, "I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and Moab" (13:23).[25] These instances of cohabitation created both a linguistic diversity and deficiency. The children of these relationships, "half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people" (13:24). Nehemiah comes unhinged and now plays the role of adversary himself.[26] He contends, curses, and assaults some of them.[27] He pulls out their hair and forces them to swear that they will not allow their children to intermarry.[28] During the sabbath confrontation, Nehemiah drew attention back to the time of exile. He now reaches even further back to the time of Solomon. He queries, "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless, the foreign women caused even him to sin" (13:26). This historical example

[24] These types of commands become increasingly daunting. The Levites are now gatekeepers. They have to purify themselves, guard the temple, but also guard the city! Schnittjer observes here that Nehemiah uses the "renovated city walls and gates, not for protection from physical harm, but to stop sabbath breaking" ("Bad Ending of Ezra-Nehemiah," 42).

[25] These particular countries are mentioned here for the first time in Ezra-Nehemiah. However, they are significant in the prophetic history as nations that constantly threatened Israel's security and religious faithfulness. In particular, these are the countries from which some of Solomon's many wives came (1 Kgs 11:1–8). See the theological and textual connections to Deut 23:2–6.

[26] Cf. Schnittjer: "Williamson rightly identifies the practices Nehemiah forcefully corrects as more than failures; they represent declension and corruption in all of the areas that God had granted success through the book (temple, purity, city)" ("Bad Ending of Ezra-Nehemiah," 42). Schnittjer also notes the parallel in this section to Num 32:8–14 and Jer 17:21–27.

[27] See Neh 13:25: "So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair."

[28] Nehemiah here forces the people to make the same vow they made in Neh 10 (that obviously did not work!).

presses the urgency of Nehemiah's warning. In prophetic despair, Nehemiah asks, "Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?" (13:27). Chapter 12 is full of great joy; chapter 13 is full of great evil.

The word "evil" (רעה) is a key word in chapter 13. With each usage, the gravity of this evil seems to intensify. In 13:7, Nehemiah discovers the evil (רעה) that Tobiah had done. In 13:18, Nehemiah decries "all this evil" (רעה) that the people had wrought by breaking the sabbath. Finally, in 13:27, Nehemiah laments "all this great evil" (רעה) that the unfaithfulness of the people had provoked by intermarriage. Significantly, this term is also a key word at the beginning of the narrative (Neh 1:3; 2:17). The first report Nehemiah hears in the book regards the dismal state of the people in Jerusalem: "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress (רעה) and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire" (1:3). In 2:17, Nehemiah's call to rebuild echoes this first report: "You see the bad situation (רעה) we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach." These verbal links between the beginning and end of the narrative suggest that the rebuilt walls and repopulated city did not expunge "evil" from the land.

The historical moments Nehemiah recounts here are highlighted particularly in the prophetic history found in Joshua through Kings and are theologically linked. The shadow that begins with Solomon's downfall reaches all the way to the moment Zedekiah trudges to Babylon shrouded in darkness.[29] Thus, in a compressed narrative account in chapter 13, Nehemiah's lengthiest speeches make a similar point: the people are repeating the very actions that brought upon them the judgment of exile.

This note about the corporate practice of intermarriage is followed by an individual example. Nehemiah recounts, "Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I drove him away from me" (13:28). The mention of Eliashib provides an *inclusio* with the opening of the chapter.[30] Two of Eliashib's relatives represent embodied examples of the post-exilic issues confronting the community. Here, the physical and theological enemies

[29] See the account in 2 Kgs 25:1–7, where Zedekiah was forced to witness the execution of his Davidic lineage just before his eyes are gouged out.

[30] In Neh 13:28, there is a structural similarity to the beginning of the chapter, where the individual account of Eliashib and Tobiah transitions to the corporate issue of the people's lack of care for the temple. Here, the reverse movement is indicated.

of Israel are in-laws. Thus, at the close of Israel's recorded history in the Hebrew Bible, Nehemiah recounts that the people have blended into the nations around them, the priesthood is defiled, and the covenant agreements have all been breached (13:29–30). It was the worst of times!

Nehemiah's final act is to restore ceremonial order one last time before his final lament: "Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his task, and I arranged for the supply of wood at appointed times and for the first fruits" (13:30–31). Of course, because these are essentially the exact conditions that were seemingly firmly in place at the end of chapter 12 and before Nehemiah went back to Persia, the reader is not encouraged to see Nehemiah's final reforms as anything approaching effective.[31]

A major focus of Ezra-Nehemiah is the corporate role of the "people" but Neh 13 ends with a clear literary focus on the individual Nehemiah.[32] After the completion of the wall (Neh 6), the exuberant oath of the community to follow the Mosaic covenant (Neh 10–11), and the wall-to-wall dedication and celebration (Neh 12), Nehemiah's memoir here feels a bit like a melodramatic *memento mori*. At the least, this jolting juxtaposition depicts Nehemiah's descent down from these heights of chapter 12 back into the rubble of rebellious hearts in chapter 13. In particular, Nehemiah's editorial remarks articulate the ambiguity of the nation's status at this point in their history.

Running through this final chapter is a growing sense of desperation, as Nehemiah punctuates his account with a repeated refrain:

- After the temple confrontation: "Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out my loyal deeds which I have performed for the house of my God and its services" (13:14).

[31] Cf. Goswell's interpretive summary: "Having noted the connections between chs. 5, 10, and 13, I would argue that the ordering of the final form of the text has a compelling logic of its own: due to previously exposed abuses (e.g., Neh 5), the community agreed to observe this series of stipulations (Neh 10), but precisely these points of law were later abused (Neh 13), showing that God's people could not be trusted to keep their promises" ("Time in Ezra-Nehemiah," 203). Schnittjer too makes this point: "The Ezra-Nehemiah narrative has trained readers to see continuities between former times and later times. . . . Nothing in the narrative causes readers to believe that Nehemiah has cleaned up Jerusalem once and for all" ("Bad Ending of Ezra-Nehemiah," 46). Schnittjer notes that the message of Malachi confirms this reading (in particular, Mal 2:10–16).

[32] Eskenazi and Goswell highlight the "people" aspect of the book. In fact, this emphasis on the people is part of the reason Eskenazi re-assigns this account to the time of Neh 10.

- After the sabbath confrontation: "For this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness" (13:22).
- After the intermarriage confrontation: "Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites" (13:29).
- After the entire narrative: "Remember me, O my God, for good" (13:31).

This final note is the most laconic and functions as a summative conclusion to Nehemiah's memoirs and Ezra-Nehemiah as a whole. Nehemiah's invocations characterize his emotional state during this period of his ministry and reveal the theological emphasis of this final narrative sequence. As Boda notes, "these prayers play a significant role in the narrative, for in them the autobiographical narrator breaks into the narrative directly seeking to shape the reader's response. The reader is left with these four staccato bursts of declarative narrative as the story comes to a close."[33]

Though Nehemiah's refrain here might appear self-congratulatory, it could also be taken to represent his growing sense of desperation. Throughout the narrative, Nehemiah beseeches the Lord to "remember" (זכר).[34] While this verb appears in Nehemiah's prayers across the book, there is a distinct cluster of occurrences in the final chapter.[35] At the beginning of his account, Nehemiah undertakes a strategic plan to rebuild the walls and complete the restoration project. He prays, "Remember the

[33] See Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric in the Book of Nehemiah," 281–82. Boda uncovers the rhetorical effect of Nehemiah's prayers throughout the narrative. In this vein, Barbara Leung Lai also highlights the emotive function of Nehemiah's first person pleas within the book in "'I'-Voice, Emotion, and Selfhood in Nehemiah," *OTE* 28.1 (2015): 154–67. Though focused on the characterization of Nehemiah, Leung Lai demonstrates the hermeneutical interplay between the "memoir" sections and the surrounding Ezra-Nehemiah narrative.

[34] The verb זכר can have the sense of "to name" or "mention" but most often has the sense of "to remember" or "to call to mind." In the OT, the term frequently appears in legal or covenantal contexts (see HALOT, s.v. "זכר"). In the LXX, זכר is translated by μιμνήσκομαι, which has a similar semantic range (BDAG, s.v. "μιμνήσκομαι").

[35] The term occurs 5 times across Neh 1–12 (1:8; 4:8; 5:19; 6:14; 9:17) and 4 times in Neh 13 (13:14, 22, 29, 31).

word which You commanded Your servant Moses" (Neh 1:8).[36] Significantly, Moses's words are invoked at the beginning of the narrative to point to optimism about the return from exile, while at the end, the breached stipulations of the "book of Moses" (Neh 13:1) provide cause for prophetic pessimism about the restoration of the people.[37] In this final account, Nehemiah throws up his weary hands, recognizing that this work will surely be forgotten unless the Lord remembers, precisely *because* it is now clear to him that these social and theological reforms more than likely will not last. The corporate joy of chapter 12 has transmogrified into the individual lament of chapter 13.

A Series of Mixed Messages in Ezra-Nehemiah

The sober tone of this final chapter prompts a re-reading of the narrative as a whole. Re-reading the book in light of the conclusion highlights a distinct pattern of tensions throughout the story. A central textual strategy of Ezra-Nehemiah seems to include small narrative details that shift the perception of a scene.[38] What might appear straightforwardly positive, for example, is reconfigured to include elements of ambiguity or mitigating factors.[39] The figures in a particular account might perceive an event as positive, but by framing the scene in a certain way, the narrator hints

[36] The content of Nehemiah's prayer is drawn from the Pentateuch (see Lev 26:33; Deut 12:5; 30:1–5): "If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples; but if you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell."

[37] The cluster of "remember" (זכר) language in Neh 13 also provides a distinct echo of the opening prayer of Neh 1. This linguistic resonance is another indicator that the final chapter of Nehemiah forms an integral part of the book's message.

[38] See Goswell's discussion of this technique in "Time in Ezra-Nehemiah," 199–200. Goswell notes this feature at work in the relationship between Neh 6:17–19 and 13:4–31.

[39] We might add to this list the pattern of local and distant opposition that hampers the restoration projects throughout the book. The narrative time gaps also point to a "return" from exile that is not straightforward but rather included many starts and stops. Royal foreign intervention is needed throughout the narrative to thwart local opposition. This scenario perhaps contributes to the feeling throughout the account that the "sons of captivity" are still under foreign rule. We might also note that the glory of the Lord does not fill the second temple as it had the first.

at an alternate interpretation. Indeed, the author of Ezra-Nehemiah seems to signal a series of mixed messages.

1. *The Post-Exilic Exiles*. An initial example of this subtle subversion is the way the people are consistently characterized throughout the book. Long after the sons of Israel have crossed the physical borders of the land, they are characterized as the "sons of captivity."[40] The Israelites are often simply referred to as "the exiles" (גּוֹלָה).[41] This characterization is amplified by the corporate prayer of repentance in Neh 9 where the people exclaim without ambiguity, "Behold, we are slaves today, And as to the land which You gave to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty, Behold, we are slaves in it" (Neh 9:36).[42] Drawing out the implications of this exilic condition further, they explain, "Its abundant produce is for the kings whom You have set over us because of our sins; They also rule over our bodies and over our cattle as they please, So we are in great distress" (Neh 9:37). This self-understanding makes the immediate re-application of the Mosaic covenant in Neh 10–11 all the more remarkable.

2. *Mixed Emotions*. One of the clearest instances of this technique is found in the account of the laying of the temple foundations in Ezra 3:10–13. In a scene that anticipates features of the wall dedication in Neh 12–13, the priests and the Levites assemble with their appropriate instruments "to praise the LORD according to the directions of King David of Israel" (Ezra 3:10). After words of thanksgiving, "all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid" (3:11). In this scene of momentous jubilation, the narrator zooms in on a sobering detail of the account: "Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy,

[40] The phrase "sons of the captivity" or "people of the exile" (בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה) occurs in Ezra 4:1; 6:19–20; 8:35; 10:7, 16. The narrator writes, "Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people of the exile were building a temple."

[41] The people are referred to as "the exiles" (גּוֹלָה) in Ezra 1:11; 2:1; 4:1; 6:19, 20; 8:35; 9:4; 10:6, 7, 8, 16; and Neh 7:6. This term is also used in Jeremiah (28:6; 29:1, 4, 20, 31), Ezekiel (1:1; 3:11, 15; 11:24, 25), and Zechariah (6:10). Significantly, then, Ezra-Nehemiah uses an exilic term from the Prophets to describe the post-exilic community.

[42] These statements about contemporary servitude connect to Ezra-Nehemiah's ambiguous evaluation of Persian rule in this period. On this perception and the way the central prayers contribute to this theme, see Greg Goswell, "The Attitude to the Persians in Ezra-Nehemiah," *TrinJ* 32 (2011): 191–203.

so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away" (3:12–13).[43] In this lengthy additional note, the narrator reveals the emotional complexity of this scene. The author intentionally distinguishes what was indistinguishable to those listening in on this event. The perspective of the author prompts the reader to reflect further on the meaning of this event and those recounted in the rest of the book. This coordination of shouts of joy and cries of sorrow are structurally echoed by the unmitigated joy at the end of Neh 12 and the unmistakable sorrow at the end of Neh 13.

3. Mixed Marriages. When Ezra enters the narrative, he brings the law of the LORD along with him (Ezra 7:1–10). After he arrives in Jerusalem, Ezra is immediately informed of the problem of intermarriage (or cohabitation). The people, the priests, and the Levites "have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands" (9:1). As the princes report, "they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the land; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness" (9:2). Ezra is appalled and in his prayer of confession, he articulates again that this is one of the very reasons exile came in the first place. Ezra declares, "We are slaves" (9:9).[44] The Lord has rescued a remnant and allowed them to return to the land. However, repeating the pre-exilic error of intermarriage puts the return and restoration in danger of disaster. Ezra even raises the specter of another exile: "Shall we again break your commandments and intermarry with the peoples. . . . Would you not be angry with us to the point of destruction, until there is

[43] On the complexity of translating this passage, see Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 52–54. Fishbane brings Ezra 3:10–12 into dialogue with Hag 2:3: "Who of you remains who saw this Temple in its first glory? And how do you see it now? Is it not like nothing in your eyes?" (52). As Fishbane notes, the perspective of Hag 2 and Ezra 3 that stresses "despair and nostalgia" is not a "mere rhetorical flourish devoid of all historical substance" (52).

[44] This language is another connection between Ezra's prayer in Ezra 9 and the people's prayer in Neh 9. Williams observes, "The prayers of Ezra 9 and Neh 9 present a disobedient community still in bondage, in exile. The measures of Ezra 10 and Neh 10 were intended to head off the community's disobedience by following the Law of Moses (Neh 10:29). Despite the attempts to shape the returnees into an obedient community through oaths to keep God's law through Moses, Neh 13 demonstrates that such attempts ultimately failed" ("Promise and Failure," 92).

no remnant nor any who escape?" (9:13–14).

4. Mixed Motives. There are sometimes mixed motives connected to the repentant response of the people.[45] In order to address the issue of intermarriage, the people gather together before the temple in Jerusalem. Ezra has been "mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles" (Ezra 10:6). When the people gather, the narrator notes that "all the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter *and the heavy rain*" (10:9, emphasis added). The reader is left unsure about whether the people are trembling because of the gravity of their sin or because of the force of the torrential downpour. Ezra then declares that the people must repent and put away their foreign wives (10:11). The people respond in haste, but they also bring up the rain again: "Then all the assembly replied with a loud voice, 'That's right! As you have said, so it is our duty to do. But there are many people; it is the rainy season and we are not able to stand in the open. Nor can the task be done in one or two days, for we have transgressed greatly in this matter'" (10:12–13). The matter of the rain is given as one of the controlling considerations for the timing and schedule of their response to this covenant breach.

5. Mixed Results. The end result of Ezra and the people's reform agreement seems to end well, although there are notable objectors.[46] The investigation is completed and the list of those who intermarried is provided (10:18–43). However, there is never a clear account of the solution actually being carried out. The Ezra narrative ends with an ambiguous note that is notoriously difficult to translate: "All these had married foreign wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had children" (10:44). The reader, then, is left with lingering questions about the nature of this process. Though built up with such urgency, the account of this resolution is sudden and curiously ambiguous. Of course, this pattern is structurally significant, as both Ezra and Nehemiah end abruptly with the problem of intermarriage manifestly unresolved and in real danger of repetition. The final form of the Ezra-Nehemiah narrative, then, is doubly anticlimactic.

[45] Perhaps a similar "mixed motive" relates to Nehemiah's critique of the people's lending practices. He upbraids the practice but mentions in passing that he was part of the problem! See Neh 5:9–10, "Again I said, 'The thing which you are doing is not good; should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies? And likewise I, my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Please, let us leave off this usury.'"

[46] See Ezra 10:15. Though, there is some ambiguity here too. The objectors either took issue with the solution or of the timing of the solution (i.e., they wanted to deal with the problem without a "rain delay").

6. Mixed Language. Finally, the result of these mixed marriages is illustrated in the mixed languages heard at the end of the book. Nehemiah recounts that the children of these intermarriages spoke the languages of the surrounding nations, and "none of them was able to speak the language of Judah" (Neh 13:24). Here a mixed race speaks a mix of languages, and the children are in danger of losing an aspect of their Jewish heritage.[47] This linguistic babel of languages perhaps illustrates the increasing complexity of the consequences of covenant unfaithfulness. Though more speculative, this account of mixed languages at the end of the book might connect in some way to a certain paratextual feature of Ezra-Nehemiah, namely, that some portions are written in Hebrew and some portions in Aramaic.[48]

Conclusion

These narrative details together with the final scene of Nehemiah seem designed to make a cumulative case for a forceful assertion: The exile might not have ended.[49] Ezra-Nehemiah in general and Neh 13 in particular represent the final narrated sequence of Israel's history within the Hebrew Bible.[50] The last word of this grand storyline is Nehemiah's grueling final gasp, "Remember me, Oh my God for good!" Nothing about

[47] Cf. Allen, *Nehemiah*, 164: "Language is an emotive indicator of cultural identity. Hebrew had religious importance because it was the language of Torah and prayer."

[48] Ezra 4:8–6:18 is written in Aramaic. See Ezra 4:7, "and the text of the letter was written in Aramaic and translated from Aramaic." However, the letter that is said to be in Aramaic ends in 4:16, and the king's letter ends 4:22. The Aramaic continues as the narrative continues beginning in 4:23–24. This prompts an interpretive question: Why do the Aramaic portions blend into the narrative portions beyond the letters that are said to be written in Aramaic? Is it possible that the theme of mixed-messages (and the presence of mixed languages at the conclusion of the book) has been textualized by the author? Though of course speculative, this solution provides a possible explanation tied to the author's subtle compositional (and/or paratextual) strategy.

[49] The notion of "exile" can entail physical, spatial, but also theological aspects. Cf. Schnittjer, "Bad Ending of Ezra-Nehemiah," 46–47. See also the context of covenant repentance in 1 Kgs 8.

[50] A fruitful avenue for further research would be to consider the canonical function of Ezra-Nehemiah within the Hebrew Bible in general and the Writings section in particular. For example, one might ask how this reading of Ezra-Nehemiah's narrative would function in relation to the book of Daniel or the book of Chronicles. For recent examples of this type of study, see John Sailhamer,

Nehemiah's account in chapter 13 indicates to the reader that these reforms will last. As a last lurch of leadership, Nehemiah seeks to heal the deep wounds of the nation but only succeeds in placing a bandage on their brokenness.

This reading and rereading of Ezra-Nehemiah helps locate the book within the flow of biblical history. The book of Deuteronomy represents Moses's final words to the second generation of Israel after the exodus. These sons of Israel have waited their entire adult lives for this moment. The final chapters of Deuteronomy contain Moses's final words to the people before his death. A curious feature of Moses's speech is its tone of prophetic pessimism. He envisions Israel's entry into the land of promise and blessings for obedience, but he forefronts direct warnings about the curses for disobedience. What's more, he envisions the conquest, but also the exile. As the LORD tells Moses, "For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn me and break My covenant" (Deut 31:20). Moses relays this sentiment to the people, saying, "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands" (Deut 31:29).

After the conquest, Joshua echoes Moses's final words. He also proclaims a prophetic pessimism that warns the people of the curse of exile that looms for every generation. Joshua declares, "It shall come about that just as all the good words which the Lord your God spoke to you have come upon you, so the Lord will bring upon you all the threats, until He has destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God has given you" (Josh 23:15). The author of Joshua includes the ominous note that "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the Lord

"Biblical Theology and the Composition of the Hebrew Bible," in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Scott J. Hafemann (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002), 25–37; Michael B. Shepherd, *Daniel in the Context of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 111–13; Julius Steinberg and Timothy J. Stone, "The Historical Formation of the Writings in Antiquity," in *The Shape of the Writings*, ed. Julius Steinberg and Timothy J. Stone (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 1–58; and Ray Lubeck, "Ezra, Nehemiah, and Ezra-Nehemiah: When Characters and Characterization Collide," in *Text and Canon: Essays in Honor of John H. Sailhamer*, ed. Robert L. Cole and Paul J. Kissling (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2017), 167–88.

which he had done for Israel" (Josh 24:31).[51] In explaining the exile of the Northern Kingdom, the author of Kings demonstrates that Moses and Joshua's pessimism was in fact prophetic, as exile becomes a reality.[52]

The author of Ezra-Nehemiah echoes this perspective of the prophetic history and gives a contemporary variation on this prophetic theme. Ezra-Nehemiah answers the enthusiastic "Amen! We will do it!" of the people with a reminder that the effect of exile is not only external. The people have returned from captivity, but they brought their hearts prone to wander back with them. In an age of empires, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia are not Israel's greatest threat. The towering walls have been rebuilt; but the most lethal enemy of the people resides within them. Ezra-Nehemiah's final warning to its readers is clear: *Remember who the real enemy is*. As one of Tolkien's characters in *The New Shadow* notes, "a man may have a garden with strong walls . . . and yet find no peace or content there. There are some enemies that such walls will not keep out."[53]

[51] The note is "ominous" because it only includes two generations (Joshua and the following generation) within the time period when Israel serves the Lord. This comment, of course, also anticipates the opening of the book of Judges, where the author recounts this transmogrification: "All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which he had done for Israel" (Judg 2:10).

[52] See 2 Kgs 17:6–41.

[53] Tolkien, "New Shadow," 414.

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Was It Always Idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to Eat εἰδωλόθυτα in an Idol's Temple? (1 Cor 8–10)[1]

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Does Paul teach in 1 Cor 8–10 that it was always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat εἰδωλόθυτα *in an idol's temple? Gordon Fee and other exegetes present three interrelated arguments that the answer is yes: (1) eating* εἰδωλόθυτα *in an idol's temple was an inherently religious event; (2)* εἰδωλόθυτος *means meat sacrificed to idols that one eats in an idol's temple; and (3) 1 Cor 8 parallels 10:14–22. But the more plausible answer is no: (1) eating* εἰδωλόθυτα *in an idol's temple could be a non-idolatrous social event—like eating in a restaurant; (2)* εἰδωλόθυτος *means meat sacrificed to idols—whether one eats it in an idol's temple or at home; and (3) 1 Cor 8 differs significantly from 10:14–22.*

Key Words: 1 Corinthians 8–10, εἰδωλόθυτος*, idolatry*

In 1 Cor 8, Paul appears to have a category for a Corinthian Christian eating εἰδωλόθυτα (meat sacrificed to idols) in an idol's temple without sinning. Verses 9–10 in particular seem to support that it was not always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple:

> But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? (8:9–10)[2]

But that seems difficult to harmonize with 10:14–22 because there Paul appears to say that eating such food in the temple participates in worshiping demons. Verses 19–21 in particular seem to contradict 8:9–10:

> What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. (10:19–21)

Many exegetes have tried to harmonize 1 Cor 8 with 10:14–22 by arguing that the "food offered to idols" in chapter 8 parallels exclusively the meat sold in the marketplace in 10:23–11:1—meat that people ate in their homes. But that does not work because the "food offered to idols" in chapter 8 must at least include what 8:10 explicitly says: "eating in an idol's temple" (ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενον).

That sets up the question this article seeks to answer: *Does Paul teach in 1 Cor 8–10 that it was always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat* εἰδωλόθυτα *(meat sacrificed to idols) in an idol's temple?* Exegetes generally answer that question in one of two ways:

1. *Yes*. Starting with Gordon Fee's articles in 1977 and 1980 and especially his 1987 commentary (which is now in its second edition), it has become increasingly common for exegetes to argue that the answer is yes.[3]

2. *No*. Some exegetes argue that it was not *always* idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple because it depends on the nature of the meal.[4]

Choosing between those two views is difficult,[5] but I think the more

[1] Thanks to friends who examined a draft of this essay and shared helpful feedback, especially Phil Brown, J. D. Crowley, Craig Keener, and Matt Klem.

[2] Scripture quotations are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

[3] Gordon D. Fee, "2 Corinthians VI.14–VII.1 and Food Offered to Idols," *NTS* 23 (1977): 140–61; idem, "Εἰδωλόθυτα Once Again: An Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 8–10," *Biblica* 61 (1980): 172–97; idem, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2nd ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 394–541. In the second edition of his commentary, Fee notes that after his two articles and the first edition of his commentary, the relatively novel view he argues for has "not only emerged as the 'standard' view (with much 'tweaking,' of course), but has done so with very little acknowledgement that another view ever existed" (396n10). The primary position Fee argues against is the traditional view that the "food offered to idols" in chapter 8 parallels the meat sold in the marketplace in 10:23–11:1. See also Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 186–230; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 350–51; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 347–504; Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, 3rd ed., Historisch Theologische Auslegung (Wuppertal: Brunnen, 2014), 426–587.

[4] E.g., see Bruce N. Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8–10 (A Response to Gordon Fee)," *TJ* 10 (1989): 49–70; David G. Horrell, "Theological Principle or Christological Praxis? Pauline Ethics in 1 Corinthians 8.1–11.1," *JSNT* 67 (1997): 83–114; Seyoon Kim, "Imitatio Christi (1 Corinthians 11:1): How Paul Imitates Jesus Christ in Dealing with Idol Food (1 Corinthians 8–10)," *BBR* 13 (2003): 210–17.

[5] That is why some exegetes avoid it—cf. Andreas Lindemann, *Der Erste*

plausible answer is no. In this article, part 1 presents three interrelated arguments that it was always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple. Then, part 2 refutes those three arguments.[6]

1. Three Interrelated Arguments That It Was Always Idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to Eat Meat Sacrificed to Idols in an Idol's Temple

The three main arguments regard the historical-cultural context, a word study, and the literary context.

1.1. Argument from the Historical-Cultural Context: Eating εἰδωλόθυτα in an Idol's Temple Was an Inherently Religious Event

Fee argues that 1 Cor 8–10 speaks "to first-century issues that for the most part are without any twenty-first-century counterparts"—at least in Western cultures.[7] "That going to the temples is the real issue" in 1 Cor 8–10, argues Fee, "is supported by the fact that the eating of cultic meals was a regular part of worship in antiquity."[8] Dennis Smith similarly argues

Korintherbrief, HNT 9/1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 196–97.

[6] This article builds on two previous ones: Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols"; E. Coye Still III, "The Meaning and Uses of ΕΙΔΩΛΟΘΥΤΟΝ in First Century Non-Pauline Literature and 1 Cor 8:1–11:1: Toward Resolution of the Debate," *TJ* 23 (2002): 225–34. Coming nearly thirty years after Fisk's 1989 article and over fifteen years after Still's 2002 article, my article does not radically break new ground but attempts to argue more clearly and comprehensively while interacting with recent literature on 1 Corinthians.

[7] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 81.

[8] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 397. For further support, Fee cites Wendell Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10*, SBLDS 68 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 8–64. Cf. Schnabel, *Erster Korintherbrief*, 464: "*alle* Mahlzeiten innerhalb eines Tempelareals kultischen Charakter hatten und generell „in den Opferrahmen eingebettet" waren" (emphasis original; Schnabel quotes Hans-Josef Klauck). See also Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8–10 in Its Context*, Studies in Christianity and Judaism 5 (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1993), 31–38, 57–59, 79–87, 152–55; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 348–50. Cheung follows Gooch regarding the historical-cultural context, but he goes a step further than Fee et al., concluding that it was sinful to eat meat sacrificed to idols not only in an idol's temple but *anywhere* if you knew the meat's origin: "Paul regarded the eating of idol food, *with the awareness of their idolatrous origins*, as a sinful act rather than a matter indifferent" (Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy*, JSNTSup 176 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999], 7 [emphasis original]). Cheung argues, "There is no evidence, and no reason to believe, that Paul himself perceived the eating of meals in idol temples as anything but idolatry" (95). Cf. William Mitchell Ramsay, *Historical Commentary on the Epistles to the Corinthians* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1901), 431: "The feast must necessarily have had the form of a ceremony connected with the worship of the deity to whom the locality was consecrated. On this there can be no question. A feast in such a locality could not be a purely secular and non-religious function."

that participating in a Greco-Roman sacrificial banquet typically blended the sacred and the secular, so "in most cases" eating in the temple had "a religious component."[9]

Thus, the historical-cultural context, concludes Fee, supports what he contends about 1 Cor 8–10: the main problem Paul addresses is eating meat sacrificed to idols at the cultic meals in the pagan temples. And if eating meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple was always an inherently religious event, then for a Christian to participate in that event would be to participate in demonic activity and thus be guilty of idolatry (10:14–22).

1.2. Argument from a Word Study: εἰδωλόθυτος Means Meat Sacrificed to Idols That One Eats in an Idol's Temple

Paul signals a new section in his letter with the words Περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων (1 Cor 8:1a), which the ESV translates, "Now concerning food offered to idols." The NIV translates, "Now about food sacrificed to idols." The CEB translates, "Now concerning meat that has been sacrificed to a false god." Every major modern English translation says something similar.

The topic of "idol food," argues Fee, "is probably related to the earlier warning (5:10–11) against associating with 'idolaters.' If so, then eating 'food sacrificed to idols' refers to a specific form of idolatry against which Paul apparently had already spoken in his previous letter."[10] That "specific form of idolatry," argues Fee, is eating meat sacrificed to idols *in an idol's temple*: "*eidōlothyta* does not refer primarily to marketplace food, but to their (some of them at least) participating in the cultic meals in the precincts of the pagan temples, and thereby eating food that had been sacrificed to

[9] Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 74.

[10] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 394.

idols."[11] What decisively proves that, for Fee, is that Paul uses the word εἰδωλόθυτον in 1 Cor 10:19: "The tie in this verse between 'idol food' and 'idol' at the meal in the pagan temples, which at the same time returns to the argument of 8:4, is sure evidence that εἰδωλόθυτα throughout chap. 8 refers to the temple meals, not to marketplace food."[12]

Witherington likewise concludes that εἰδωλόθυτος "meant meat sacrificed to and eaten in the presence of an idol, or in the temple precincts."[13] In other words, the issue is not only *what* you eat but *where* you eat it.[14]

1.3. Argument from the Literary Context: 1 Cor 8 Parallels 10:14–22

Fee is convinced that 1 Cor 8 and 10:14–22 address the same basic issue:

> Some have asserted that if there were no "weak" brother or sister to see the action of those "with knowledge," then the latter might participate in the cultic meals as they wished. But Paul's ensuing argument (10:1–22) quite disallows such an interpretation. Thus the two sections (8:7–13; 10:1–22) indicate that going to the temples is wrong in two ways: it is not acting in love (8:7–13), and it involves fellowship with demons (10:19–22).[15]

That view raises at least two questions:

[11] Ibid., 396. See also Fee, "Εἰδωλόθυτα Once Again," 181–87; Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet: The Dilemma of Sacrificial Food at Corinth*, JSNTSup 169 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 267.

[12] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 520n585.

[13] Ben Witherington III, "Not So Idle Thoughts about *Eidolothuton*," *TynBul* 44 (1993): 237–54. Cf. Panayotis Coutsoumpos, "Paul's Teaching of the Lord's Supper: A Socio-Historical Study of the Pauline Account of the Last Supper and Its Graeco-Roman Background" (Ph.D. diss., University of Sheffield, 1996), 161–62; Randy Leedy, "To Eat or Not to Eat: The Issue Concluded (1 Corinthians 10)," *Biblical Viewpoint* 32.1 (1998): 38–40.

[14] Ben Witherington III, "Why Not Idol Meat? Is It What You Eat or Where You Eat It?," *BRev* 10.3 (1994): 38–43, 54–55.

[15] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 417–18. See also Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 81. Cf. Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority: A Study of 1 Corinthians 8.1–11.1 in the Light of the Jewish Diaspora*, LNTS 299 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 127; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 388; Rohintan Keki Mody, *Empty and Evil: The Worship of Other Faiths in I Corinthians 8–10 and Today*, Latimer Studies 71 (London: Latimer Trust, 2010), 55; Michael Li-Tak Shen, *Canaan to Corinth: Paul's Doctrine of God and the Issue of Food Offered to Idols in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1*, StBibLit 83 (New York: Lang, 2010), 146–47, 160–62; Andrew Wilson, *The Warning-Assurance Relationship in 1 Corinthians*, WUNT 2/452 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 76–82.

1. What about what Paul says in 8:9–10? "But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?" It seems like what Paul writes here is *not* parallel to 10:14–22. Fee acknowledges,

> The chief objection to this reconstruction lies in the tension some see between this passage [8:1–13], where Paul appeals to love, and 10:14–22, where he forbids such behavior outright. How can he begin in this way if in fact he intends finally to forbid it altogether? It should be noted, however, that because of 8:10 this is a problem for all interpreters. The answer lies with Paul's understanding of the relationship between the indicative and the imperative (see on 5:6–8). Paul seldom begins with an imperative. As in 6:12–20, 1:10–4:21; 12:1–14:40, he begins by correcting serious theological misunderstandings and then gives the imperative.[16]

Fee thinks "this right" of eating in an idol's temple refers to a *so-called* right based on faulty "knowledge."[17] By writing ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη ("this right *of yours*," emphasis added), Paul is "strongly suggesting that ἐξουσία was another Corinthian catchword."[18] The "right" is parallel to Corinthians arguing in 6:12–20 that they had the "right" to commit πορνεία.[19] In 8:10, Paul argues "from the perspective of the weak, who were being abused by this falsely 'constructive' action."[20] Before prohibiting eating in an idol's temple in chapter 10, in chapter 8 Paul first addresses the Corinthian Christians' hearts:

[16] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 399n24.

[17] Ibid., 425–27. Cf. John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Social-Rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1*, WUNT 2/151 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 218: "Paul employs the word ἐξουσία ironically in order to show the negative consequences of its use by the Strong." See also Paul Douglas Gardner, *The Gifts of God and the Authentication of a Christian: An Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 8–11:1* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994), 55–56; Joop F. M. Smit, "The Rhetorical Disposition of First Corinthians 8:7–9:27," *CBQ* 59 (1997): 482–83; Schnabel, *Erster Korintherbrief*, 464–65.

[18] Timothy A. Brookins and Bruce W. Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 1–9: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 200.

[19] Fee, "Εἰδωλόθυτα Once Again," 186–87.

[20] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 486. Cf. Charles Hodge, *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Carter, 1860), 148.

> Although Paul will eventually, and in very strong terms, forbid the Corinthian believers' going to the temples, his first concern is with the thoroughly misguided ethical basis of their argument. The problem is primarily attitudinal. They think Christian conduct is predicated on *gnōsis* ("knowledge") and that knowledge gives them *exousia* ("rights/freedom") to act as they wish in this matter.[21]

Paul waits to explicitly prohibit eating in an idol's temple until chapter 10, argues Fee, because he is responding to a letter the Corinthians wrote him, and "he works his way through their argument point by point."[22]

2. How does chapter 9 fit into what Paul argues? The traditional view is that Paul explains how he exercises his rights to illustrate what it looks like to give up one's genuine rights (not one's so-called rights) for the sake of the gospel. Fee rejects that view and argues that in chapter 9 Paul is responding to a Corinthian letter that questioned whether he had the authority as an apostle to forbid them from eating in an idol's temple.[23]

2. Three Interrelated Arguments That It Was Not Always Idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to Eat Meat Sacrificed to Idols in an Idol's Temple

This section responds to and refutes the three main arguments in part 1.

[21] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 401.

[22] Ibid., 431; cf. 511. Newton similarly argues that Paul does not explicitly forbid eating in the temple in 1 Cor 8 because Paul begins by subtly building an argument and does not strike hard until 10:14–22 (Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 24). Cf. Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians*, ed. William P. Dickson, trans. D. Douglas Bannerman, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1879), 1:246; Archibald T. Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 2nd ed., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914), 171; Peter J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles*, CRINT 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 196; Gregory W. Dawes, "The Danger of Idolatry: First Corinthians 8:7–13," *CBQ* 58 (1996): 91–98; Sean M. McDonough, *Christ as Creator: Origins of a New Testament Doctrine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 154–57; Randy Leedy, *Love Not the World: Winning the War against Worldliness*, Biblical Discernment for Difficult Issues (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2012), 97.

[23] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 434–35.

2.1. Argument from the Historical-Cultural Context: Eating εἰδωλόθυτα in an Idol's Temple Could Be a Non-Idolatrous Social Event—Like Eating in a Restaurant

People today who are most culturally familiar with Western cities like New York or Los Angeles or Toronto might have a hard time imagining how different the Corinth of Paul's day was. Religion and politics were virtually inseparable in Greco-Roman cities in the first century, and the hub of religious rituals was the temple. "Visitors to Corinth's central market area in Paul's day would find themselves surrounded by temples: to Hermes, Poseidon, Heracles, Apollo, the Pantheon, Tyche, the imperial cult, and others."[24] People did not gather regularly at temples for worship services like many Christians today regularly gather at church buildings. The temple itself housed the image of its god, and when people sacrificed animals, they typically did it outside in front of the temple.[25]

After sacrificing animals to their idols, pagans would save some of the meat either (1) to eat on the temple grounds or (2) to sell to vendors who would then sell it in the meat market. The issue we are most concerned with in this article is the nature of the meals when people would eat the sacrificial meat *in the temple*.

2.1.1. Eating in Greco-Roman Temples

People in the ancient Greco-Roman world ate in an idol's temple for a variety of reasons.[26] On one end of the spectrum was participating in explicitly religious pagan ceremonies that Paul calls demonic (1 Cor 10:14–22). But on the other end of the spectrum was simply eating meat like one might eat in a restaurant today (8:10). Meat was a treat that was not a staple part of most people's diets,[27] and people often ate meat in the temple for nonreligious business meetings or on special occasions for

[24] Moyer V. Hubbard, "Greek Religion," in *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*, ed. Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 111.

[25] Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, trans. Brian McNeil (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 23–24; Hubbard, "Greek Religion," 111.

[26] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 62–63. Cf. Joel R. White, "Meals in Pagan Temples and Apostolic Finances: How Effective Is Paul's Argument in 1 Corinthians 9:1–23 in the Context of 1 Corinthians 8–10?," *BBR* 23 (2013): 538–39; Dieter Zeller, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, KEK 5 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 282.

[27] Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 189–90.

nonreligious social gatherings such as celebrating a person's birthday:

> How meals at temples were understood by the ancients is especially indicated by references found in the collection of invitations to the *klinē* of Sarapis. These invitations are part of a larger corpus of papyrus fragments from Egypt, all of which date from the first to the fourth centuries C.E.
>
> *Some of the meals indicated in these invitations are secular in nature yet take place in a sanctuary*. For example, a marriage feast takes place "in the temple of Sabazios" and a birthday feast takes place "in the Sarapeion [sanctuary of Sarapis]." . . .
>
> [T]he religious nature of the meal is not defined by its location, for a sacrificial meal can take place in either a temple or a private home, and a secular celebration can take place in a temple.[28]

"In the ancient world," explains N. T. Wright, "the temples normally *were* the restaurants."[29] Archeologists have discovered that attached to some Corinthian temples were rooms for dining, which private dinner parties could use for banquets.[30] Wendell Willis presents three views on what meals in the temple generally signified: (1) *Sacramental view:* "The worshippers consumed their deity who was contained (really or symbolically) in the sacrificial meat." (2) *Communal view:* Those eating a meal consciously worshipped the deity by sharing the meal with that deity. (3) *Social view:* Those eating a meal ate "before the deity," but the focus was not on worshipping the deity but instead "on the social relationship among the worshippers."[31] Willis concludes that the social view is correct:

> There is a good deal of evidence from the late Hellenistic and Imperial periods for the social interpretation of cult meals in the Greco-Roman world. This evidence indicates that the general importance of table fellowship in civic, fraternal, occupational and religious associations was *the social conviviality and good cheer*. . . . Sacrifices and common meals were normative features of Hellenistic

[28] Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist*, 76–77 (emphasis added).

[29] N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: 1 Corinthians*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 2004), 98 (emphasis original). Cf. N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 126n14.

[30] Wendell Willis, "1 Corinthians 8–10: A Retrospective after Twenty-Five Years," *ResQ* 49 (2007): 107: "Corinth is one of the best excavated cities in Greece," and archeologists have excavated "a number of dining rooms adjacent or attached to temples." According to Willis in 2007 (107n26), the source "with the most extensive recent archaeological survey" is Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols*.

[31] Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth*, 18–20 (emphasis added).

> cults and associations. Since these meals were characteristic expressions of Greek public life, it is altogether understandable that the Corinthian Christians would desire to be involved in them, at least to the degree they considered permissible. [Note 234: Ex-pagan Christians in Corinth would have had many social obligations from family or business (marriages, funerals, puberty rites) which would have involved sacrificial meals, normally in or near the temple grounds. Participation would be an expected part of family and social duty.] Since *they probably did not see such meals as religiously significant*, their enlightened Christian monotheism would have been sufficient to overcome any qualms about eating-except among some members "weak in conscience." The social character of cult meals would also have emboldened the Corinthians to ask defensively of their founder-apostle reasons why they must abstain from such normal functions of life.[32]

Willis later qualified that these social meals generally had a "religious" component, but that "religious" component was not explicit idol-worship but "social enjoyment."[33] Such meals did not necessarily always begin with

[32] Ibid., 47, 63. Cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible 32 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 332, 346–47; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Keys to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 118–19. Newton, whose conclusions generally line up with Fee, concedes, "The association of the 'god's portion' with the priest or other sacrificial officials certainly opens up the very real possibility that the majority of the food—that eaten by the worshippers/others present—may not have been considered sacrificial in nature. This would support the hypothesis that 1 Corinthians 8 dealt with the issue of temple *eating*, whereas 1 Cor. 10.1–22 tackled the problem of actual sacrificial acts accompanied by eating. . . . Those who reclined in *eidoleia* thus represented a very wide spectrum, both in their reasons for being there and in their conception of the significance of their eating. . . . Meals were multi-functional and as such, each person could major on a specific ingredient, justifying their participation on that basis. The nature of the sacrifice will be considered particularly in the context of 1 Cor. 10.14–22, but ambiguity clearly was likely regarding whether, or to what extent, the consumed food actually was sacrificial in nature. Add to that the ambiguity regarding the nature of the recipient of the offering (human or divine?) and the consequent activity of participants (worship or merely honouring?), and we will see once again, that the nature and significance of the act of 'reclining at table' in 8.10 was by no means a clear-cut issue; its significance very much lay in the eye of each beholder and participant of the meal" (Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 198–99, 299, 304 [emphasis original]).

[33] In a 2007 essay that Willis wrote twenty-five years after he finished his

a formal demonic ceremony of sacrifice and prayer. (The actual animal sacrifice took place outside at the altar in front of the temple.) Meals in the temple could be merely social. Thus, Conzelmann says that Paul "does not forbid the visiting of temple restaurants, which could be visits of a purely social kind."[34] One could eat εἰδωλόθυτα in an idolatrous way in the temple or in a person's home, and one could eat εἰδωλόθυτα in a non-idolatrous way in the temple or in a person's home. Eating εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple for a social meal was not always idolatrous. It is kind of like how American currency says, "IN GOD WE TRUST," yet using such currency is not always an inherently religious event but usually a secular one. Another example is getting married in a church's building—though many do that for religious reasons, others it for merely traditional or aesthetic reasons and not for religious ones.

Both Fee and Witherington concede that eating in a temple could be like eating in a restaurant:

> The meals [in pagan temples] were also *intensely social occasions* for the participants. For the most part, the Gentiles who had become believers in Corinth had probably attended such meals all their lives; indeed *such meals served as the basic "restaurants" in antiquity*, and *every kind of occasion was celebrated in this fashion.*[35]

Ph.D. dissertation on 1 Cor 8–10, he reflects on how scholars have interpreted 1 Cor 8–10 in the last quarter-century, and he defends and qualifies himself on this point because, he explains, "The place where my work has been most often, and most loudly, criticized is in regard to my interpretation of the meaning of sacrificial meals in pagan religions. It is obvious that I did not express myself carefully. Using a heuristic approach, I presented schematically three understandings of pagan religious meals: sacramental, fellowship, and social. I criticized the first two strongly and opted for the last one. In doing so, I seem to have left the impression that I did not think these meals were 'religious' but 'merely' social. I could not at all support such a view; clearly the meals were 'religious.' There is strong evidence that these cults (and their worshippers) would not have accepted—even understood—a contrast between 'religious' and 'social.' *But the question really should be, what does 'religious' mean in the first-century pagan world?* Their gods gave, as one of their great gifts, *occasions for conviviality and enjoyment* as an essential aspect of sacrifice. *This social enjoyment was a positive part of religious sacrifice*" (Willis, "1 Corinthians 8–10," 108–9 [emphasis added]). Willis kindly read a draft of this article and confirmed that I am not misrepresenting him.

[34] Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, ed. George W. MacRae, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 148.

[35] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 397 (emphasis added). Fee thinks Willis's *Idol Meat in Corinth* "has probably pushed the evidence too far in one direction,

> Several temples in Corinth had dining rooms where feasts were held on many occasions, including birthdays. *Temples were the restaurants of antiquity*. There is archaeological evidence at the Asklepion in Corinth of a dining room with couches along the four walls and a table and brazier in the center.[36]

Fotopoulos, who suggests that the Temple of Asklepios may be what Paul has in mind in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1,[37] explains, "It may have been possible to rent such temple dining rooms for private use *not directly related to the cult*. The beautiful accommodations of the temple and its lavish dining facilities, its location at the outskirts of the city, and abundant greenery would have made it an attractive place to dine."[38] Murphy-O'Connor explains,

> It is entirely probable that the wealthier members of Paul's flock had been wont to repair to the Asclepion *for recreation. It was probably the closest the city had to a country club with facilities for dining and swimming.* It would have been natural to continue going there after conversion, because even though the converts no longer believed in the healing god, they still would have seen the value of the site.[39]

Corinthian Christians were young in the Christian faith and were largely Gentile converts with pagan backgrounds. "Could they meet over lunch with business associates or fellow members of their trade guild, or

nullifying the religious aspect altogether" (397n19).

[36] Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 188 (emphasis added).

[37] As does Schnabel, *Erster Korintherbrief*, 463.

[38] Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols*, 176 (emphasis added). See also Wolfgang Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 4 vols., EKKNT 7 (Zürich: Benziger, 1991–2001), 2:263n300.

[39] Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*, 3rd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002), 190 (emphasis added). Cf. Robert L. Plummer, "Eating Idol Meat in Corinth: Enduring Principles from Paul's Instructions," *SBJT* 6.3 (2002): 58–59: "The temple complexes were roughly analogous (in their dual functionality) to a modern Masonic Lodge—i.e., as a building that serves as a meeting place for its owners or adherents, but is often used by the broader community for social activities as well. Social gatherings that met in ancient temple complexes were likely to partake of meat consecrated to a pagan deity, but the gatherings themselves would not usually have been construed as actual religious services." Plummer, however, goes on to argue that in 1 Cor 10 Paul circles back to the issue of eating in an idol's temple in 8:10; thus, "Not only for the sake of the non-believer, but also because it is flirting with demonic idolatry, Christians should stay out of the temple precincts—even for non-religious functions" (63).

attend a reception in a temple for a relative's wedding?"[40] Could they eat in a temple on special civic occasions?[41]

It seems that it was possible for Corinthian Christians to eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple without participating in a demonic religious ceremony because some meals in the temple did not include a demonic religious ceremony. "Paul's intent was not to declare all temple meal attendance off limits; the *nature* of the meal, not its *location,* was the issue."[42]

That does not mean, however, that Corinthian Christians should regularly eat εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple (8:10). Paul argues in chapter 8 that they should be willing to give up that right for the sake of fellow Christians (see §2.3).

2.1.2. Four Analogies

It seems impossible to find exact parallels between the situation in 1 Cor 8–10 and my own context in America, but I can think of at least four analogies that illustrate the main idea (though, of course, the analogies break down). The key in each analogy is that the activity is not always idolatrous.

1. *Eating in an Asian restaurant that sets food before idols*. Asian restaurants

[40] Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 476.

[41] In Corinth an annual festival occurred in the forecourt of the imperial cult temple. See Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 269–86. Winter argues that this annual festival that celebrated the Isthmian Games began *after* Paul left Corinth. It was the most prestigious event of the year, and the social elite were expected to attend. Winter postulates, "The dining rights to which Paul refers were connected with entertainment at the Isthmian Games" (281). In an earlier book, Winter similarly argues that the "right" in 1 Cor 8:9 "was a civic privilege which entitled Corinthian citizens to dine on 'civic' occasions in a temple." Bruce W. Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens*, First-Century Christians in the Graeco-Roman World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 166. See also Bruce W. Winter, "The Enigma of Imperial Cultic Activities and Paul in Corinth," in *Greco-Roman Culture and the New Testament: Studies Commemorating the Centennial of the Pontifical Biblical Institute*, ed. David E. Aune and Frederick E. Brenk, NovTSup 143 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 71.

[42] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 69. Cf. Bruce N. Fisk, *First Corinthians*, Interpretation Bible Studies (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 50; Richard E. Oster Jr., "Use, Misuse and Neglect of Archaeological Evidence in Some Modern Works on 1Corinthians (1Cor 7,1–5; 8,10; 11,2–16; 12,14–26)," *ZNW* 83 (1992): 65–67.

all over the world commonly set a plate of food before an idol (like a Buddha statue) that those eating in the restaurant can see. Many restaurant workers do that as a matter of a superstitious tradition, hoping that it will help prosper their business. Does that mean it is always idolatrous for a Christian to eat in such a restaurant? No. It may be unwise, and a Christian should not do it if it would harm a fellow Christian. (By harm a fellow Christian, I mean cause them to sin against their conscience and possibly apostatize.)[43] But there is a way to eat in such a restaurant without participating in idolatry.

2. *Shopping at a store that displays an idol*. In shops all over the world, shop workers display idols for the same reason that restaurant workers set food before an idol (see the previous analogy). Does that mean it is always idolatrous for a Christian to shop in such a store? No. It may be unwise, and a Christian should not do it if it would harm a fellow Christian. But there is a way to shop at such a store without participating in idolatry.

3. *Eating in a casino's restaurant*. If gambling in a casino is a sinful activity Christians should not participate in,[44] then is it always inherently sinful for a Christian to eat in a casino's restaurant? No. There is a significant difference between those two activities. Eating food in a casino's restaurant could be merely a social activity that Christians can enjoy (e.g., if it involves delicious food that is unusually affordable). It may be unwise to eat in a casino's restaurant, and a Christian should not eat in a casino's restaurant if it would harm a fellow Christian. But eating in a casino's restaurant is not always inherently sinful.

4. *Watching an appropriate movie in a movie theater that also shows movies that feature pornography or the occult*. Some people go to movie theaters explicitly to indulge in pornography or dabble in the occult. Is it always inherently sinful for a Christian to go to those same theaters to watch a relatively

[43] Andrew David Naselli and J. D. Crowley, *Conscience: What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 109: "The concern here [in Rom 14:13–15] is not merely that your freedom may irritate, annoy, or offend your weaker brother or sister. If a brother or sister simply doesn't like your freedoms, that is their problem. But if your practice of freedom leads your brother or sister to sin against their conscience, then it becomes your problem. Christ gave up his life for that brother or sister; are you unwilling to give up your freedom if that would help your fellow believer avoid sinning against conscience? That's what this passage is talking about when it refers to putting 'a stumbling block or hindrance' (Rom. 14:13) in another's way. We shouldn't bring spiritual harm to others (see also vv. 20–21)."

[44] Cf. Vern S. Poythress, *Chance and the Sovereignty of God: A God-Centered Approach to Probability and Random Events* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 263–81.

innocent film like *Bambi*? No. It may be unwise, and a Christian should not do it if it would harm a fellow Christian. But there is a significant difference between watching a movie that features pornography and watching *Bambi*.

Again, those four analogies are not perfect. But they parallel to some degree that it was not always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple.[45]

2.2. Argument from a Word Study: εἰδωλόθυτος Means Meat Sacrificed to Idols—Whether One Eats It in an Idol's Temple or at Home

After examining the 357 occurrences of εἰδωλόθυτος in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*,[46] I agree with how Fisk and Still critique Fee for arguing

[45] Another possible analogy is listening to rock music, which Randy Leedy argues is inherently idolatrous. Cf. Leedy, "To Eat or Not to Eat," 48: "Behind rock music, for example, as well as behind sensual or violent movies and videos, lies a demonic power that is clearly manifest both in these things themselves and in the fruit of these things in people's lives. The passage before us [i.e., 1 Cor 8–10] cannot be used to justify such music and entertainment under the claim of Christian liberty; on the contrary, the passage clearly prohibits Christian participation in demonic activities, and it does so in the strongest possible terms. The force of Witherington's word study, and the exegesis proceeding from it comes home here with great force. The passage from 8:1 to 10:22 does not call for tolerance with respect to meats offered to idols; it calls for absolute abstinence from participation in demonic worship. And if Paul was so forceful in prohibiting participation in demonic activities outside the church (i.e., at the temples), there is no doubt about what he would say regarding such influence being brought into the church, as is being done so prominently today in the form of Contemporary Christian Music." See also Leedy, *Love Not the World*, 122–24. Leedy's argument is a syllogism: (a) *Major premise:* Christians should not be part of demonic activities. (b) *Minor premise:* Rock music is connected with demonic activity. (c) *Conclusion:* Christians should not listen to rock music. That conclusion is valid only if the minor premise is true. But is rock music *always* connected with demonic activity? I think rock music does not inherently communicate sinful sensuality and rebellion in all times and all cultures. (See Naselli and Crowley, *Conscience*, 75–76. Cf. Plummer, "Eating Idol Meat," 64–66.) It may be unwise in some contexts to listen to rock music, and a Christian should not do it if it would harm a fellow Christian. But it is not always inherently sinful for a Christian to listen to rock music.

[46] *TLG* is a massive digital library of Greek literature (see http:// stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/). I searched it for all references to εἰδωλόθυτος in September 2016. The word first appears in the first century AD with nine occurrences in the NT and two outside it: Sib. Or. 2:96 and 4 Macc. 5:2.

that εἰδωλόθυτος means meat sacrificed to idols that one eats in an idol's temple:[47]

1. The lexical data both in the NT (9 times—Acts 15:29; 21:25; 1 Cor 8:1, 4, 7, 10; 10:19; Rev 2:14, 20) and outside the NT confirm that BDAG correctly defines εἰδωλόθυτος as "someth. offered to a cultic image/idol. . . . It refers to sacrificial meat, part of which was burned on the altar as the deities' portion . . ., part was eaten at a solemn meal in the temple, and part was sold in the market . . . for home use."[48] The word εἰδωλόθυτος does not mean meat sacrificed to idols that one eats in an idol's temple. It simply means meat sacrificed to idols—whether one eats it in an idol's temple or at home. *Where* you eat it is not essential for defining the word.[49] That is why Thiselton translates εἰδωλόθυτος as "meat associated with offerings to pagan deities."[50]

2. Fee commits an exegetical fallacy by conflating what the word *refers to* in a particular context (i.e., in 1 Cor 10:19) with what the word *means* in other contexts (i.e., in 1 Cor 8:1, 4, 7, 10).

3. In 1 Cor 8–10, "Paul condemns not idol meat but idolatry."[51] In chapter 8, eating εἰδωλόθυτος is morally neutral, but in 10:19 it is idolatrous *because eating it in that context is participating in idolatry*. Two words in chapter 10 explicitly refer to idolatry: εἰδωλολάτρης in 10:7 ("image-worshiper/idolater") and εἰδωλολατρία in 10:14 ("image-worship, idolatry").[52]

Consequently, I agree with Still and Fisk:

> Paul's use of the term ἐξουσία (1 Cor 8:9) appears to be an affirmation of an authentic right possessed by the knowers. If this is so, then whatever is happening in the temple in 1 Cor 8:10 is not inherently sinful (as is the cult meal participation of 1 Cor 10:14–

[47] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 55–59, 63–64; Still, "The Meaning and Uses of ΕΙΔΩΛΟΘΥΤΟΝ," 225–34.

[48] BDAG 280.

[49] On Acts 15:29; 21:25; Rev 2:14, 20, see Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 56–57; Still, "The Meaning and Uses of ΕΙΔΩΛΟΘΥΤΟΝ," 227–31. The letter in Acts 15 and 21 sets forth guidelines that allow both Jewish and Gentile Christians to fellowship together when they eat, and Rev 2 condemns participating in idolatry.

[50] Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 617–20. Cf. Murphy-O'Connor, *Keys to First Corinthians*, 115–16; Shen, *Canaan to Corinth*, 110–11.

[51] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 63. Cf. Horrell, "Theological Principle," 100–101.

[52] BDAG 280.

> 22), but becomes sinful when it results in the destruction of a brother. Hence, Paul's argument assumes two tiers of temple meals: 1) those not inherently idolatrous and objectively defiling (1 Cor 8:10); and, 2) those inherently idolatrous and objectively defiling (1 Cor 10:20–21).[53]
>
> Many temple activities were indeed theologically and morally "neutral," but others were blatantly idolatrous. Apparently, some in the Corinthian church were inclined to go, or had already gone, beyond attendance at harmless social events to share in temple meals which included actual worship of pagan deities. . . . Paul's urgent warning is that, by participating in a meal alongside pagans who are engaged in idol worship, Christians become guilty of idolatry by association; in fact, they become sharers in demon worship (10:20).[54]

2.3. Argument from the Literary Context: 1 Cor 8 Differs Significantly from 10:14–22[55]

Fee's view does not work if 1 Cor 8 differs significantly from 10:14–22. There are at least four issues to address here:

1. Fee argues that 1 Cor 8 and 10:14–22 are parallel. He thinks Paul waits to forbid the Corinthians from eating in an idol's temple until chapter 10 because he is responding point by point to their letter and because he typically addresses the indicative before the imperative. But, Fisk asks, "Was Paul really more concerned with the selfishness of chap. 8 than with the idolatry of chap. 10? The problem will not go away."[56] Fee acknowledges that problem as "the chief objection" to his view.[57]

2. Fee claims that the "right" in 8:9 is a *so-called* right—that is, some Corinthians *claimed* they had that right but in 10:14–22 Paul explains why

[53] Still, "The Meaning and Uses of ΕΙΔΩΛΟΘΥΤΟΝ," 233.

[54] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 63–64.

[55] To survey how eleven NT scholars propose we should read 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, see E. Coye Still III, "The Rationale behind the Pauline Instructions on Food Offered to Idols: A Study of the Relationship between 1 Corinthians 4:6–21 and 8:1–11:1" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000), 55–94. What Still himself proposes is similar to Fisk's view and against Fee's view, but he argues that Paul attempts to persuade the Corinthians to completely give up ever exercising their genuine right to eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple (94–126; also E. Coye Still III, "Paul's Aim regarding ΕΙΔΩΛΟΘΥΤΑ: A New Proposal for Interpreting 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1," *NovT* 44 [2002]: 333–43).

[56] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 54.

[57] Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 399n24.

they do not actually have that right. But Paul could have written "so-called right"—just as he says "so-called gods" (λεγόμενοι θεοί) in 8:5. And all six times that Paul uses ἐξουσία in what immediately follows it refers to a genuine right—not a so-called right (9:4, 5, 6, 12 [2x], 18).

Further, some exegetes argue that ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν **αὕτη** ("this right *of yours*," [emphasis added]) in 8:9 means that it was a *so-called* right—not a right Paul acknowledged as genuine. But that reads too much into the grammar. Paul parallels that construction (minus the demonstrative pronoun) in 9:18, and there no one questions that Paul thinks it is a genuine right: εἰς τὸ μὴ καταχρήσασθαι **τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ μου** ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ("so as not to make full use of *my right* in the gospel," [emphasis added]).

3. Fee claims that the "right" in 8:9 is parallel to the Corinthians arguing in 6:12–20 that they had the "right" to commit πορνεία. But in that passage Paul does not say they have the ἐξουσία to commit πορνεία. Instead he immediately and directly refutes them.[58]

4. In chapter 8 the issue is not idolatry (as it is in 10:14–22) because eating idol meat in chapter 8 is objectively neutral:

> In stark contrast to the warnings in 10:1–22 about lapsing into idolatry (10:7, 14, 20–22), chap. 8 implies that some Christians can eat idol meat with no transgression. . . . Paul does not deny outright that they possess a degree of freedom. Would Paul employ the term ἐξουσία without qualification in the context of blatant idolatry? . . . We have here [in 8:10] a practice that is familiar enough to Paul and his audience that he can refer to it in passing, without explanatory comment. . . . To see objective idolatry in chap. 8 is to miss Paul's point. In fact, it is precisely because eating εἰδωλόθυτος is morally neutral that many enlightened Corinthian Christians will eat without fear of sinning. Paul's concern is that when they eat in the presence of the weak, harmless actions readily *become* harmful.[59]

[58] See Andrew David Naselli, "Is Every Sin outside the Body except Immoral Sex? Weighing Whether 1 Cor 6:18b Is Paul's Statement or a Corinthian Slogan," *JBL* 136.4 (2017): 969–87.

[59] Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols," 59–61. D. A. Carson, *For the Love of God: A Daily Companion for Discovering the Riches of God's Word*, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Wheaton: Crossway, 1998), entry for September 3: "The issue [in 1 Cor 8] concerns something that is not *intrinsically* wrong. One could not imagine the apostle suggesting that some Christians think adultery is all right, while others have qualms about it, and the former should perhaps forgo their freedom so as not to offend the latter. In such a case, there is *never* any excuse for the action; the action is prohibited. So Paul's principles here apply only to actions that are *in themselves*

If chapter 8 is about idolatry, then it is about *subjective* idolatry, while chapter 10 is about *objective* idolatry:

> In chapters 8–10 Paul seems to wrestle with two kinds of idolatry: *subjective* and *objective*. By "subjective idolatry" we mean an occasion when a person consciously participates in an activity that they consider idolatrous. Whether or not others judge it to be so may be beside the point. By "objective idolatry" we have in mind people who do not consider themselves idolaters (they do not believe in idols or other gods) who participate in an activity that they consider innocent but which in fact is idolatrous.[60]

In chapter 8 Paul addresses the issue with reference to disputable matters, but in 10:14–22 he addresses the issue with reference to worshipping idols. Christians may disagree on disputable matters but not about worshipping idols.[61] The key difference is the nature of the meals: If Corinthian Christians partook of εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple *in the same way* that they partook of the Lord's Supper (10:16–17), then that would always be idolatrous (10:18–22).

In 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, Paul argues that there is much more at stake than enjoying your rights, which include eating meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple (8:1–13).[62] He illustrates how he has given up his rights for

morally indifferent" (emphasis original). Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 160 (following Fisk): "Given his explicit reference to eating in the temple in 8:10, in the context of that which is in principle acceptable for believers, it seems clear that he also has in mind those social gatherings in the temple precincts that were not overtly religious in nature." Cf. Samuel E. Horn, "A Biblical Theology of Christian Liberty: An Analysis of the Major Pauline Passages in Galatians, Colossians, 1 Corinthians, and Romans" (Ph.D. diss., Bob Jones University, 1995), 109–11; Kim, "Imitatio Christi," 211; Stephen Richard Turley, "Revealing Rituals: Washings and Meals in Galatians and 1 Corinthians" (Ph.D. diss., Durham University, 2013), 187–91.

[60] Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 369.

[61] See D. A. Carson, "On Disputable Matters," *Them* 40 (2015): 383–88; Naselli and Crowley, *Conscience* (especially the chapter on Rom 14 [84–117] and "Appendix A: Similarities between Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8–10" [143]).

[62] Horrell, "Theological Principle," 99: "The implication in ch. 8 seems clearly to be that eating εἰδωλόθυτος is *not* idolatrous or sinful *per se*, but only if it causes problems for the weak who eat it as of an idol. In 8.10 there is no hint that their presence in a temple is of itself unacceptable, or idolatrous. . . . It is surely difficult to see why Paul should apparently leave unquestioned the ἐξουσία of the strong to eat εἰδωλόθυτος, even in a temple, in ch. 8, if he intended to prohibit that very

the sake of the gospel (9:1–23),[63] and he exhorts the Corinthians to flee from idolatry and not presume that they are unable to fall (9:24–10:22). The way to approach the issue of eating meat sacrificed to idols is to strategically do all to God's glory by seeking your neighbor's good (10:23–11:1). So Paul prohibits the Corinthian Christians from eating meat sacrificed to idols in three contexts, and he allows it in two:

(1) *Yes*. You have the right to eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple when it is not part of the pagan religious ritual (ch. 8).

(2) *No*. Give up your right to eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple if that would harm a fellow Christian (ch. 8).[64]

(3) *No*. Do not eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple as part of the pagan religious ritual because to do so would be to participate in demonic worship (10:14–22).

(4) *Yes*. You have the right to eat meat sacrificed to idols that you can buy in the meat market and eat in your home or the homes of your neighbors (10:25–27).

(5) *No*. Give up your right to eat meat sacrificed to idols in another person's home if a person informs you that the meat was sacrificed to idols and thus implies that they think you as a Christian would object to eating the meat because that would be participating in idol-worship (10:28–30).

activity in ch. 10." Cf. J. J. Lias, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, CGTSC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 98; C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, BNTC 7 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1968), 196; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 148–49; W. Harold Mare, "1 Corinthians," in *Romans–Galatians*, EBC 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 240; William F. Orr and James Arthur Walther, *I Corinthians: A New Translation, Introduction, with a Study of the Life of Paul, Notes, and Commentary*, AB (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 235; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 332, 346–47.

[63] Horrell, "Theological Principle," 94–95: "The argument of chs. 8 and 9 may therefore be summarized: Paul cites and accepts the theological principles which the strong use to justify their ἐξουσία to eat εἰδωλόθυτος. Paul nowhere questions this ἐξουσία or the principles upon which it is based, but what he does do is to maintain that Christian conduct involves a Christ-like self-giving for others, a self-enslavement, a setting aside of one's own rights for the sake of the gospel." Cf. D. A. Carson, "The Cross and the World Christian (1 Corinthians 9:19–27)," in *The Cross and Christian Ministry: Leadership Lessons from 1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 115–37.

[64] Paul J. Achtemeier, "Gods Made with Hands: The New Testament and the Problem of Idolatry," *ExAud* 15 (1999): 55: "What may start out as an innocent attendance at some event held in the public rooms attached to some pagan temple can in the end prove injurious to Christians whose grasp on their faith is yet tender enough to be damaged by reminders of their former religious devotion."

The logic of chapters 8–10 presupposes that what 8:10 refers to is a genuine right that the Corinthian Christians possessed. Paul exhorts them to give up that right if it would harm a fellow Christian. What Paul teaches about the conscience in this passage does not make sense if eating εἰδωλόθυτα *in an idol's temple* (8:10) is not actually an activity the Corinthian Christians could ever do without sinning.

3. Conclusion

So does Paul teach in 1 Cor 8–10 that it was always idolatrous for Corinthian Christians to eat εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple?

Fee and other exegetes present three interrelated arguments that the answer is yes: (1) eating εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple was an inherently religious event; (2) εἰδωλόθυτος means meat sacrificed to idols that one eats in an idol's temple; and (3) 1 Cor 8 parallels 10:14–22.

But the more plausible answer is no: (1) eating εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple could be a non-idolatrous social event—like eating in a restaurant; (2) εἰδωλόθυτος means meat sacrificed to idols—whether one eats it in an idol's temple or at home; and (3) 1 Cor 8 differs significantly from 10:14–22.

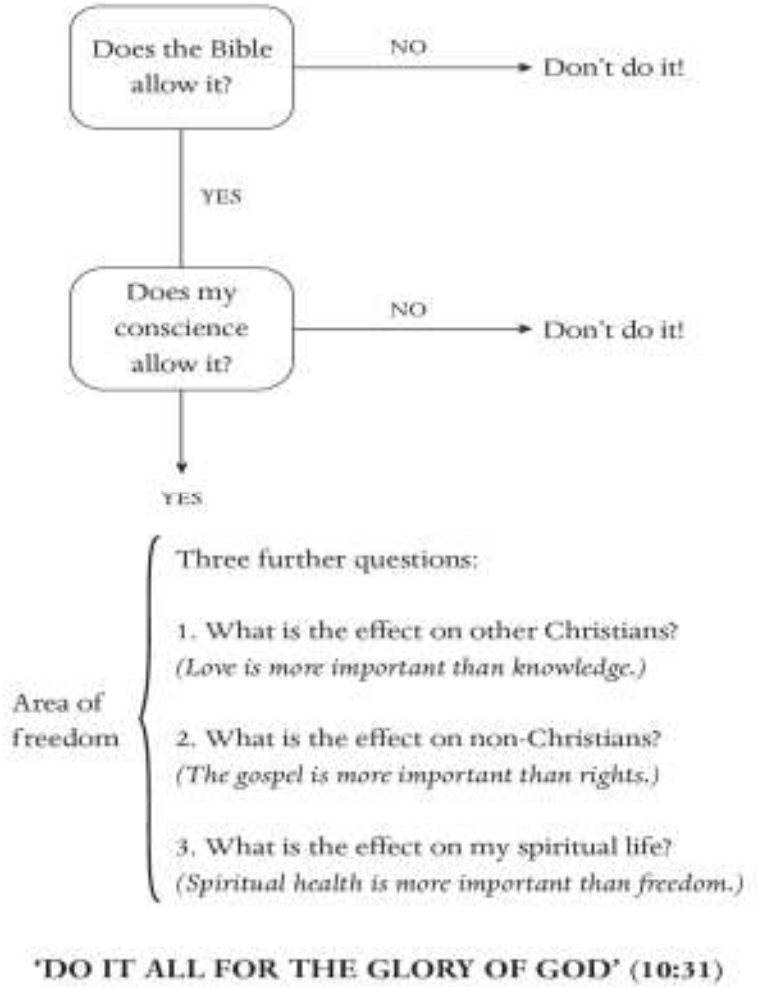
Three qualifications:

1. I am not a hundred percent certain I am correct—more like 80 percent sure. This is a complicated issue that depends largely on the historical-cultural context. What would falsify my thesis is evidence that all meals in the temple began with a formal demonic ceremony. I am not aware of such evidence.

2. My thesis does not imply that Corinthian Christians *should* eat meat sacrificed to idols in an idol's temple. Just because Christians are free to do something does not mean that they *should* do it. There are other factors to consider. Christians must not insist on exercising their rights at all times. Vaughan Roberts comments, "Paul may agree with the libertarians' theology [in 1 Cor 8], but he certainly disagrees with their selfish application of it. . . . Our theological understanding may rightly tell us that we are free to take a particular course of action, but that does not necessarily mean we should follow it."[65] Roberts helpfully summarizes Christian decision-making in 1 Cor 8–10 in a flowchart (see Fig. 1):

[65] Vaughan Roberts, *Authentic Church: True Spirituality in a Culture of Counterfeits* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 111–12.

Figure 1. Vaughan Roberts's Flowchart on Christian Decision-Making in 1 Cor 8–10[66]



3. What motivated me to study this issue in the first place was not primarily the historical-cultural context but the literary context. I cannot harmonize 1 Cor 8:9–10 with 10:14–22 unless what Paul describes in 8:9–10 is actually a disputable matter and not always idolatry. It is important to calibrate your conscience correctly regarding disputable matters so that

[66] Ibid., 133. Used with permission.

you are free to flex (i.e., give up your rights) for the sake of the gospel. You cannot flex on an issue (such as eating εἰδωλόθυτα in an idol's temple) if your conscience condemns you about it. Although it may be simpler to prohibit an activity as inherently sinful and therefore off limits, it is not a virtue to say that genuine rights are not really genuine rights.[67]

[67] On calibrating your conscience and flexing for the sake of the gospel, see chapters 4 and 6 in Naselli and Crowley, *Conscience*, 55–83, 118–40.

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God's New Creation in Romans 8:4

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In Rom 8:4, when Paul mentions how "the Law's decree might be fulfilled in us," he means not only an imputed righteousness but also the fullness of righteousness that a Christian is to become. For Paul understands that the proclamation of the gospel provides a continuum of the Creator's Word (2 Cor 4:5–6), which both redounds toward the fullness of new creation life and creates a relationship between a Christian's being and doing. This perspective of justification includes an ontological transformation of the inner person toward the fullness of spiritual health and well-being, namely the image of the Son (Rom 8:29).

Key Words: justification, new creation, righteousness, Romans 8:1–4, spiritual formation, the Love Command, the Law's fulfillment

In Rom 8:4, when Paul mentions how "the Law's decree might be fulfilled in us," he means not only an imputed righteousness but also the fullness of righteousness that a Christian is to become.[1] This thesis is controversial and its field of play broad, encompassing various Pauline perspectives on justification held within Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism. It does, however, fit within an interpretation, made by a diverse and growing group of Pauline scholars (e.g., Thomas Schreiner; E. P. Sanders), that the decree of the Law mentioned in 8:4 pertains to a Christian's obedience.[2] It contends with the Magisterial Reformers' interpretation of 8:4 that relied only on an "as if" righteousness—a perspective exemplified by John Calvin's comment below:

> You see that our righteousness is not in us but in Christ . . . sin has been condemned in Christ's flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us (Rom. 8:3–4). The only fulfillment he alludes to is that which we obtain through imputation. . . . To declare that by him alone we are accounted righteous, what else is this but to lodge our righteousness in Christ's obedience, the obedience of Christ is reckoned to us *as if* it were our own?[3]

The thoughts in this essay do not challenge a foundational concept for 8:4—"to be declared righteous by faith" (δικαιοῦσθαι πίστει; 3:28)—nor the Reformer's emphasis on faith. Instead, the argument here, as will be defended later, is that Paul understands that the proclamation of the gospel (2 Cor 4:5-6) provides a continuum of the Creator's Word that both redounds—metaphysically and ontologically—toward the fullness of new creation life and creates a relationship between a Christian's being and doing.

A few definitions are in order. First, Rom 8:4 mentions the fulfillment of the Law; this condition is associated in this paper with J. Christiaan Beker's changed "human condition" of new creation life that is made possible by God's triumph in life and thought.[4] Second, within this essay, this changed "human condition" is caused by a great disturbance of God's creational power that is "according to the Spirit" (κατὰ πνεῦμα) and "toward righteousness" (εἰς δικαιοσύνην).[5] That is, God's declaration of righteousness has an original starting point that is by faith through grace. It is also creative and teleological in nature, a process that contains an ontological transformation of the "inner being." As such, the phrase "toward righteousness" relates to an initial and sustaining effort of "the righteousness of God" (ὁ δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ) until

[1] Karl Barth believed that Paul referenced in 8:4 the "new existential man" (Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn Hoskyns, 6th ed. [New York: Oxford University Press, 1968], 282). My thesis, however, identifies with Brunner's natural theology over Barth's. An expanded defense of this thesis interacts with Luther's "at the same time righteous and a sinner" (*simul justus et peccator*) and Barth and Luther's critique of Augustine's justification. I welcome communication sent to PDubbelman@gmail.com.

[2] So Kevin W. McFadden, "The Fulfillment of the Law's *Dikaiōma*: Another Look at Romans 8:1–4," *JETS* 52.3 (2009): 483nn1–2.

[3] John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, LCC 20–21 (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1960), 753 (emphasis added).

[4] Johan Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 85. Augustine noted a "change of affections" (*Christian Instructions*, 17.16) and a "cure" of nature (*Nature and Grace*, xi.12), but he idealistically understood as the fulfillment of the Law mentioned in 8:4 (Aurelius Augustine and Paula Fredriksen Landes, *Augustine on Romans: Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans, Unfinished Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Texts and Translations, Early Christian Literature Series 23.6 [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982], 21); see also Augustine's *On the Spirit and the Letter*; *A Treatise Concerning Man's Perfection in Righteousness*.

[5] "Toward righteousness" is found in 4:3, 5, 9, 22; 6:16; 10:4, 10; cf. Gal 3:6; Jas 2:23. Δικαιόω is in Rom 2:13; 3:4, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7; 8:30, 33; cf. Gal 2:16–17; 3:8, 11, 24; 5:4.

the *eschaton*, namely, the "last Day" of redemption in God's plan. Third, Jesus mentions "a first and greatest commandment" and "a second like it," namely, "Love your God" and "Love your neighbor as yourself." Upon them "hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matt 22:34–40; cf. John 14:15–21). These two commandments were given in the context of an encounter with Jesus—once for all times but also ongoing. This same encounter is now possible through the proclamation of the gospel. These two commandments are known in this paper as the Love Command. For Paul, this second commandment brings together all the commandments (Rom 13:9) and love is the "fulfillment/completion of the law" (πλήρωμα νόμου; 13:10; cf. Gal 5:14).

Weightier studies than this one have contemplated how the Law's decree might be fulfilled in us. I modestly hope to contribute to this conversation, primarily by a dialog with Douglas Moo, who argues in his Romans commentary that the only fulfillment Paul alludes to in Rom 8:4 is Christ's perfect obedience to the Law that is transferred to the believer.

Three sections provide a skeleton base for the aforementioned thesis. Section one initially places this thesis within Romans. Section two extends this placement to include the Pauline corpus and Hebrew Bible. Section three concludes my thesis defense, by a discussion about "the righteousness of God."

Romans 8:4 within Romans

Romans 8:4 does not explicitly mention either a changed "human condition" or that the Law is fulfilled only by imputation. Neither does Paul directly answer an implied question brought up by 8:1–3, namely, "What was the Law powerless to do?" He also does not fully describe what "no condemnation" means. Context is key and epistemological foundations matter; every interpreter presses them upon 8:1–4 to yield their perspective of this pericope.

Romans

Romans provides a declaration of the theology and praxis of Paul's gospel (2:16). This gospel begins and completes the Christian's pilgrimage.[6] This proclamation to "the harassed and helpless" and "weary and

[6] See, e.g., Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement*, trans. A. G. Herbert (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003; repr. 1931); Ernst Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971); idem, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey William Bromiley (Grand

burdened" (Matt 11:28; 9:37) brings about an "obedience of faith" (ὑπακοὴν πίστεως; Rom 1:5b; 16:26; cf. 15:18) that Paul typifies elsewhere as "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6; cf. Rom 5:5). It emphasizes first God's magnificence, power, and patient love to a people "bound to disobedience," who do what they please and suffer horribly for it (1:19–24, 26, 28; 2:4; 6:23; 11:32). Along with Ernst Käsemann and Moo, but contra Martin Luther (see below) and Calvin, this perspective of the gospel takes "for" (γάρ) in 1:18 as explanatory.[7]

This "obedience of faith," found at the beginning and end of Romans, acts as "a literary device that frames" Paul's gospel (i.e., a rhetorical *inclusio* [inclusion, bracket]). Calvin interpreted this phrase epexegetically, namely, as "an obedience which is faith";[8] however, a plenary genitive (source and epexegetic) is also possible, a view that supports the thoughts in this essay.[9] Richard N. Longenecker elaborates: it is a "genitive of source . . . as 'obedience that comes [or springs] from faith'—though, possibly, as a genitive of apposition or definition . . . understood as 'faith that consists of [or 'manifests itself in'] obedience.' . . . a genitive of source seems most probable here."[10] Similarly, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and John Ziesler understood there to be an inextricable, inexplicable relationship between belief and obedience.[11] Moo also understands "obedience of faith" "to be mutually interpreting: obedience always involves faith, and faith always involves

Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994); F. F. Bruce, *Paul, Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977); Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans*, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985).

[7] Käsemann, *Romans*, 36; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 99; John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, trans. John Owen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 67n1. Martin Luther, *Luther's Works: American Edition*, ed. C. Oswald Hilton, vol. 25, *Lectures on Romans* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1972), 18, basically ignores this linkage.

[8] Calvin, *Romans*, 48. So also all the Reformers and recently by Theodor Zahn, Anders Nygren, and C. E. B. Cranfield (Moo, *Romans*, 52n70.).

[9] So also James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, WBC 38A (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 17; Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 237.

[10] Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 80.

[11] Romans 1:5; 6:17; 10:9–11; 10:16–17; 16:26; 2 Thess 1:8; 3:14. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, trans. R. H. Fuller and Irmgard Booth (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 68; Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Romans: The Law, Its Functions and Limits, Exposition of Chapter 7:1–8:4* (London: Banner of Truth,

obedience. They should not be equated, compartmentalized, or made into separate stages of Christian experience."[12] However, with the Reformers, Moo's thoughts conflict with the aforementioned connection in my thesis between a Christian's being and doing. With respect to the Christian's "state of being" (οἱ ὄντες) noted in 8:5–8, Moo interprets it "to connote the idea of 'realm,' with flesh and Spirit denoting those 'powers' that dominate the two realms of salvation history."[13]

Moo notes that 5:1 sums up the dominant teaching of chapters 1–4.[14] Equally accepted is that Paul's gospel—concisely mentioned in 1:1:1–7, 16–19; 3:21–26; and 8:1–4—reaches its climax in Romans 8, which emphasizes the Spirit.[15] For Moo, 5:1 provides "the first implication of our justification"; viz., not an internal dynamic "but the outward situation of being in a relationship of peace *with* God."[16] This "peace *with God*" reverberates throughout 5:1–8:39, which, according to Moo, is an amplification of "the assurance provided by the gospel: the hope of salvation."[17] For Moo, there is an emphasis on "justification as a past act . . . a new and permanent status . . . a once-for-all act."[18]

Moo's perspective on justification has a long and respected history. Luther's view of imputation also provided peace with God and remedied his sixteenth-century quandary—namely, a God he could not please, a system of *poenitentia* ("remorse, penance") he could not master. It also birthed his catechetical, agonizing-euphoric, Law-gospel dialectic of "the justice of God" (*iustitia Dei*) that represents first wrath then forgiveness, a Christian who is "at the same time righteous and a sinner" (*simul justus et peccator*), and an interpretation of 8:4 that relies, with Moo, only on imputation.[19] For Luther, the Christian is ontologically a

1973), 337–38, 340–41; J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry*, SNTSMS 20 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 168–71.

[12] Moo, *Romans*, 52.

[13] Ibid., 486.

[14] Ibid., 298–300.

[15] David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson, eds., *Pauline Theology III, Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 55; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 516; Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 516; Moo, *Romans*, 467–70.

[16] Moo, *Romans*, 299 (emphasis original).

[17] Ibid., 290.

[18] Ibid., 298.

[19] Ibid., 483–84.

sinful being, though righteous by imputation. In his Galatians commentary (1535), Luther comments on Gal 3:6, a verse that parallels Rom 4:5:

> Righteousness is not in us in a formal sense, as Aristotle maintains, but is outside us, solely in the grace of God and in His imputation. In us there is nothing of the form or of the righteousness except that weak faith or the first fruits of faith. . . . To take hold of the Son and to believe in Him with the heart as the gift of God causes God to reckon that faith, however imperfect it may be, as perfect righteousness . . . we are reckoned as righteous, even though sins, and great ones at that, still remain in us.[20]

Luther states that the believer is "reckoned as righteous." The significance of Paul's continued use of this phrase is noted later. For now, it is important to accept that the promised new aeon is here (16:25–27), which includes the shift, for the believer, from "according to the flesh" to "according to the Spirit." This interpretation is not in dispute within Pauline theology. The promised Spirit is the presence of the future and the start of a promise-fulfillment continuum.[21] That is, the deposit of the Spirit in a Christian's life associates closely with the fullness of what is to come; it also guarantees this future state.

What exactly does Paul mean by "according to the Spirit"? Could it be more than what Moo allows, namely, a realm with flesh and Spirit that denotes two dominions of salvation history? Perhaps. This raises a question. What does Paul mean in 8:4 that "the righteous decree/requirement of the law" (τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου) is fulfilled "in us" (ἐν ἡμῖν)?

"In Us"

According to 8:3, Christ effectively rectified "what the law was powerless to do." In 8:4, Paul states that the Law's decree is fulfilled "in us." The use of "in/by Christ" (ἐν Χριστός) instead of "in us" would unquestionably secure a reformational interpretation of 8:4. But Paul used the phrase "in us." Moo interprets this prepositional phrase as a descriptive dative, where "Christian behavior is the necessary mark of those in whom this fulfillment takes place," and the Law's fulfillment

[20] Luther, *LW*, 26:234.

[21] Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 4. See also George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future; the Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

is understood only by the doctrine of imputation.[22] Gordon Fee alternatively takes "in us" as a locative dative:

> The Spirit himself fulfills Torah by replacing it, and he does so by enabling God's people to "fulfill" the "whole of Torah"—which in other contexts is expressed in the love command, the initial fruit of the Spirit. In bringing the time of Torah to an end, God did not thereby eliminate its purpose, but through the Spirit has brought that purpose to fruition. After all, Paul does not say that Torah is now "obeyed" or "kept" or "done"—the ordinary language for Torah observance—but that what Torah requires is now "fulfilled in us."[23]

A careful exegetical comparison of Moo's and Fee's interpretations of "in us" is not possible here. Moo, because of his reformational understanding of "to be declared righteous by faith," presents his reasons toward that end; he roots the interpretation of 8:4 only in 8:3.[24] Fee presents a longer argument and grounds his understanding of 8:4 by what has come before and after it, namely, 7:7–25 and 8:5–11.[25] I suggest that Fee's interpretation provides the greatest cohesion within Paul's gospel, Romans, and the OT's promised New Covenant.

According to Luther, the Law's one requirement is that the heart worships God, turning its affections from the material to the eternal God.[26] The meaning of "righteous decree/requirement" (δικαίωμα; 8:4) is debated by scholars; Joseph Fitzmyer maintains it "most likely means 'regulation, requirement, commandment' of the law, i.e., what the law ideally required (as in 1:32; 2:26)."[27] Paul may hold a near consistent definition of "righteous decree" throughout Romans. If these statements are true, a connection of 8:4, by the repetitive use of "righteous decree," to 1:32; 2:26; 5:16, 18, is noteworthy, especially given these verses' ethical contexts. Why? If this phrase has a meaning everywhere else in Romans that associates a Christian's behavior with the Love Command, it would be unusual that it did not have this same

[22] Moo, *Romans*, 483–84.

[23] Fee, *God's Presence*, 536.

[24] Moo, *Romans*, 481–85.

[25] Fee, *God's Presence*, 534–38.

[26] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. E. Theodore Bachmann, vol. 35, *Word and Sacrament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1960), 376; cf. Gal 5:13–16, with its behavioral aspect of "by the Spirit" (πνεύματι) that bears the fruit of love.

[27] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 487; cf. BAGD 198; K. Kertelge, *EDNT*, 1.335. With both Fitzmyer's above definition, for δικαίωμα, and my thesis in mind, δικαίωμα is henceforth abbreviated to "righteous decree."

meaning in 8:4. The Love Command correlates to Luther's one requirement of the Law. But a heart turned toward the Lord is an impossibility: because it does not live "according to the Spirit," it is turned either in upon itself (Luther) or turned to things (Aurelius Augustine). Additionally, because of the Law's operational setting of "according to the flesh," the Law is unable to break sin's power and turn a person's heart toward the Lord. "But now" (3:21; 6:22; 7:6, 17), because of the changed "human condition," what the Law required, namely, the Love Command, begins to be possible, "because God has poured out [ἐκκέχυται] his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (5:5).[28] The significance of this perfective verb, "poured out," should not be missed: God's realized love, for the one who is "declared righteous by faith," has a continual, present dynamic to it. Further, God's love in "our hearts," by the indwelling Spirit, brings about a changed "state of being," an ongoing ontological transformation. The Christian is now able to turn from selfishness and imitate Christ's humility that is demonstrated by their love for God and others (2:8; Phil 2:3–11).

Similar thoughts are found within Bonhoeffer's incarnational approach to ethics, where the phrase "to be declared righteous by faith" involves a dynamic where Christ "stands in my place . . . because I cannot . . . he stands at the boundary of my existence. This is an expression of the fact that I am separated, by a boundary that I cannot cross, from the self that I ought to be. This boundary lies between my old self and my new self . . . between law and fulfilment."[29]

Bonhoeffer's "Lectures on Christology" (1933) introduced a new question to theology.[30] The familiar question was "How does God relate to finite humanity?" Bonhoeffer asked, additionally, "Who is this person that addresses us as both God and human?"[31] For Bonhoeffer, in part, Christ is "for-me" (*pro-me*).

The being of Christ's person is essentially related to me. His being-

[28] "Righteous decree" as a reference to the tenth commandment mentioned in 7:7, versus the Love Command, is not problematic. Luther understood all nine commandments as organically connected to the first: they show nine ways to live out the first and nine assaults on God when violated. If true, a similar, albeit reverse, approach can be taken for the tenth, which makes the tenth a reverse way to state this Love Command.

[29] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, ed. Larry L. Rasmussen, trans. Isabel Best and D. W. S. Higgins, vol. 12, *Berlin: 1932–1933* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2009), 324.

[30] Ibid., 12:299–360.

[31] Ibid., 12:305.

> Christ is his being-for-me. This *pro-me* is not to be understood as an effect that issues from Christ . . . but is to be understood as the being of his very person. . . . This is not a historical, factual, or ontic statement, but rather an ontological one: that is, I can never think of Jesus Christ in his being-in-himself, but only in his relatedness to me. . . . Christ stands for his new humanity before God, . . . If this is so, then he *is* the new humanity. . . . That means he *is* the church-community. He is no longer acting *for* it, on its behalf, but rather *as* it.[32]

Even Luther confessed, "It is one thing if God is present, and another if he is present in you."[33] Bonhoeffer's ontological understanding of the salvific event should not be ignored. Bonhoeffer continues,

> Christ is the church-community by virtue of his being *pro-me*. He takes action as the new humanity. The church-community, between his ascension and his second coming, is the form he takes. Word [as Word of God that is God's revelation] . . . exists in time and space . . . the mighty Word of the Creator. By speaking, it creates the form of the church-community.[34]

Christ, as "for-me," was Bonhoeffer's "regained center," from start to finish.[35] He is also "the center of human existence, history, and *nature*—these are never abstract matters and are never to be separated from each other. . . . Christ as the center means that Christ as mediator for the creation in its servitude, is the fulfillment of this law, the liberation from this servitude for the whole human being."[36]

Both Bonhoeffer's thoughts and my proposed fulfillment of Rom 8:4 identify with Augustine's "change of affections."[37] Augustine declares, "[We] are justified freely by His grace—not that it is wrought without our will; but our will is by the law shown to be weak, that grace may heal its infirmity; and that our healed will may fulfill the law."[38] Augustine mentions, here, a sanative element of justification, namely, spiritual health and well-being of the inner person.

[32] Ibid., 12:314–15 (emphasis original).

[33] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. Robert H. Fischer, vol. 37, *Word and Sacrament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1961), 68.

[34] Bonhoeffer, *DBW*, 12:323 (emphasis original).

[35] Ibid., 12:324.

[36] Ibid., 12:324, 327 (emphasis added).

[37] Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* I.17.16; NPNF, Series 1; Vol 2.

[38] Aurelius Augustine, *Saint Augustin's Anti-Pelagian Works*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Peter Holmes, Robert Ernest Wallis, and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, vol. 5, NPNF1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 89 (ix.15).

This above ontological change in the "human condition" is typically not found in a traditional Reformed doctrine of justification.[39] The church and its members are the body of Christ (12:5; 1 Cor 12:27). If Rom 8:4 does not associate with the start of an ontological continuum of new creation life toward its "end" (*telos*), then when does it begin? If 8:4 does associate with the start of a new creation, an exchange still happens, but imputation and a change of realms/status may not fully encompass what Paul means in 8:4. My proposed interpretation of 8:4 may find further support and definition by Paul's Abrahamic faith (4:17), which is explored next.

Romans 4

Abraham is Paul's fundamental example of what it means "to be declared righteous by faith"— Paul's ideal figure for his monotheistic, gospel that unifies all of humanity (Eph 2:11–22).[40] He was both the father of the Jews and the one who turned from astral-worship to worship the Creator.[41] And, for many scholars, Abraham's life also represents both a prototype of the belief that declares a person righteous (Rom 3:21–8:33; Gal 3–4) and an antitype of the disbelief that leads to disobedience (Rom 1:18–3:20).[42] Both examples involve a response to God's revelation as omnipotent Creator (1:20; 4:17b, 20).[43] According to Edward Adams, "The implication of the contrast pattern . . . is that Abraham's faith and God's reckoning of it . . . reverses the Gentile folly, and God's judgment upon it."[44] For Halvor Moxnes, Abraham's faith is exemplary—a faith that encases in a person the "reversal of the structures of the world."[45]

Paul knows salvation for the believer as a past, present, and future event, namely, a salvation that has a defined point of origin, dynamism, and future aspect (10:9–13; 1 Cor 1:18; Eph 2:5, 8), where faith represents both assent and surrender. The Law wanted "to impart life"

[39] E.g., Michael S. Horton "Traditional Reformed View," in *Justification: Five Views*, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy (Downers Grove, IL; InterVarsity Press, 2011), 83–111.

[40] Moo, *Romans*, 79; Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 196.

[41] Edward Adams, "Abraham's Faith and Gentile Disobedience: Textual Links between Romans 1 and 4," *JSNTSup* 65 (1997): 55.

[42] For this list, see Adams, "Abraham's Faith," 47n1.

[43] Achtemeier, *Romans*, 15–22.

[44] Adams, "Abraham's Faith," 63.

[45] Halvor Moxnes, *Theology in Conflict: Studies in Paul's Understanding of God in Romans*, NovT 53 (Boston: Brill, 1997), 273, 278.

(ζῳοποιῆσαι; Gal 3:21) but could not. For before Christ the truth was suppressed and exchanged for a lie, by those who rejected their Creator and relied on their own efforts (Rom 1:18–3:20). But now, Abraham's faith involves the impartation of life. How? Abraham believed in God, "who gives life to [οὗ τοῦ ζῳοποιοῦντος] the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (4:17).

Romans 4 represents a present-future, promise-fulfillment continuum that concludes with 4:23–25:[46] the cross and resurrection as one event that is "for our acquittal" (διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν; 4:25). Dunn writes, "The justifying grace of God is all of a piece with his creative, life-giving power. . . . to provide the eschatological breakthrough which his resurrection demonstrated."[47] Paul clarifies this thought in 5:16–18: the one act "brings a life-giving acquittal" (εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς; 5:18). The connection of 5:16–19 to 8:4, by Paul's use of "righteous decree" in these passages, should not be overlooked: Christ's declaration that "it is finished" reverses the impossible human condition of a heart change, with an emphasis on resurrection power.[48] This life-giving continuum is only further established by Moxnes's point that the contrast of Law and promise in Romans 4 morphs into new terms in 5:1–8:39: death and life, "according to the flesh" and "according to the Spirit"—a movement accomplished by God, "who raised Christ from the dead" (8:11).[49]

Against all hope, Abraham actually "became the father of many nations" (4:18). Likewise, Christians, with "the firstfruits of the Spirit," hope for their full redemption (8:22–25), a hope that is based on an actuality. The Reformers, however, considered their righteousness hypothetical, an "as if" condition. But Abraham's status as a father was not "as if" he was a dad, he actually became a dad on the way to becoming "the father of many nations."

N. A. Dahl affirms a similar view, by means of Paul's Adam-Christ typology (5:12–19; 1 Cor 15:22).[50] For him, "the *superiority* of the new

[46] Gordon D. Fee emphasizes the Spirit as the key element of conversion and Christian living (*Galatians*, Pentecostal Commentary Series [Dorset, UK: Deo, 2007], 200–2). This Spirit, per Fee, is "dynamically experienced as the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham" (ibid., 201).

[47] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 241; cf. Käsemann, *Romans*, 129; Käsemann, *Perspectives*, 94–95.

[48] Käsemann, *Perspectives*, 95.

[49] Moxnes, *Theology*, 276.

[50] N. A. Dahl, "Christ, Creation and the Church," in *The Background of the*

creation" is validated because God's new creation "brings about not only a restitution but also a *transformation* of the first one."[51] Dahl continues by noting that this eschatological change "is thought to be 'in process of realization'; the last things which correspond to the first are no longer merely future, they are also present, actual realities."[52]

The above view of Romans 4 is contra Moo and not without difficulty. For Moo, the particle ὡς (*hōs*) of Rom 4:17c creates a possible grammatical escape from this position. To Moo's objection we now turn.

God's Creative Power

Moo interprets οὗ . . . καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα (4:17) as "the one who calls things as though they were." He believes that had Paul meant to say, "the one who calls into existence the things that do not exist," he would have written, "οὗ . . . καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα εἰς τὸ εἶναι";[53] i.e., primarily because ὡς can denote a comparison, Moo "hesitantly and reluctantly" concludes that "the clause cannot refer to God's creative power as such, whether general or spiritual. It is, then, the nature of God as . . . 'summoning' that which does not yet exist as if it does that Paul must mean."[54] This position is not without merit, and it fits nicely within an "as if" view of the Christian's righteousness. Besides what was noted in "Romans 4," there are more factors against Moo's interpretation of 4:17c.

First, for Moo's above interpretation, ὡς must be defined as a particle of comparison. However, ὡς does not consistently denote comparison, and it is often used to introduce "a quality" of being (1:21; 3:7).[55] Further, it can, even if not typically, denote result or purpose, as is the case of its first appearance in Romans (1:9).[56] Only the use of ὡσεί (*hōsei*; cf. 6:13) instead of ὡς necessitates a condition of comparison for 4:17c.

Second, Mark A. Seifrid notes that 4:17 links to "the Isaianic message of the God who brings into existence and effects his purposes by

New Testament and Its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and David Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 422–43.

[51] Ibid., 426 (emphasis original).

[52] Ibid., 430.

[53] E.g., Moo, *Romans*, 282. So also Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, BECNT 6 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 237.

[54] Moo, *Romans*, 282.

[55] BAGD 1104(3).

[56] Ibid., 1105(4).

his creative word alone. . . . Paul stands especially close to Isaiah in that he understands 'calling' (*verbum efficax* ["the effective word"]) as the creative act of God."[57] If Seifrid is correct, it is not irrational to believe, contra Moo, that Paul's use of "call" in 4:17c does refer to God's creative power.

Third, J. R. Daniel Kirk extensively argues that Second Temple Judaism confessed "God as creator-resurrector."[58] Fourth, Jesus's resurrection is both central to Paul's conversion and at the heart of Romans.[59] Fifth, an association between 4:17 and Gen 1:1–3 is accepted widely by Romans scholars and is effectively defended by Moxnes[60]—a position adopted by most English Bibles.[61] These last three points equally encourage the interpreter to resist Moo's view of Rom 4:17, namely, that it "cannot refer to God's creative power . . . whether general or spiritual."

Since Bultmann, it is not uncommon to insist that, for Paul, "world" (κόσμος) is strictly a historical term.[62] This perspective has been corrected by Adams, who argues persuasively that Paul's use of "world" (κόσμος) and "creation" (κτίσις) are of a "certain ad hoc nature."[63] Indeed, Paul can use them affirmatively within his soteriology and eschatology (e.g., 4:13; 8:8–25; 11:12, 15; 2 Cor 5:19). If Rom 4:17 does associate with Gen 1:1–3, then in Romans Paul does not put physical creation and salvation in antithesis.[64] Additionally, creation and new

[57] Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 626; 607–85.

[58] J. R. Daniel Kirk, *Unlocking Romans: Resurrection and the Justification of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 70; 67–72.

[59] Richard B. Hays, "Reading Scripture in Light of the Resurrection," in *The Art of Reading Scripture*, ed. Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 216–38; Kirk, *Romans*.

[60] Moxnes, *Theology*, 241–53. For this list of scholars and their rationale, see Moo, *Romans*, 281n64; Käsemann, *Romans*, 121–24; C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975), 1:244–45; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, HNTC (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 96–97; J. A. Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, TPINTC (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1989), 131–32; Longenecker, *Romans*, 516–19.

[61] E.g., CEB, ESV, CSB, NASB, NIV11, NJB, NLT, NRSV.

[62] Rudolf Bultmann and Robert Morgan, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (London: SCM Press, 1952), 254.

[63] Edward Adams, *Constructing the World: A Study in Paul's Cosmological Language* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 242–44, 246. Moo, *Romans* predates Adams's work.

[64] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 218.

creation may even share a continuum, by means of a miraculous exchange (cf. 1 Cor 15), that is different than the Reformer's "as if" great exchange. With both this section and the one before it in mind, I posit that some of Paul's intent in Romans 4 is missed, and therefore also 8:4, if the Abrahamic faith that Paul exemplifies does not tangibly reverse the impossible and begin an ontological transformation typified metaphorically by Abraham, who first became Isaac's dad before he became heir of the world (4:13).

The Pauline Corpus and Hebrew Bible

Paul's Creation-Gospel Proclamation

Second Corinthians 4:5–6 correlates Paul's gospel with Gen 1:1–3: "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus. . . . For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts." Paul parallels the creation account with the proclamation of the gospel. This analogy should not surprise anyone, as the ensuing four reasons suggest.

First, Gen 1:1–3 presents a formation by God that is primordial, consistently demonstrated in the Bible (e.g., 1:26–27; Mark 1:17; John 11:38–44), and conceivably even a thesis statement for all that follows it. God "speaks" material change into existence! Vern Poythress emphasizes this point when he states, "Divine action always includes divine speaking."[65]

Second, God as the source (ἐκ), sustainer (διά), and goal (εἰς) of all things was accepted by both Stoic philosophers and Jews as part of their creation theology.[66] This "exit and return" (*exitus et reditus*) structure emphasizes that everything comes from God and returns to him; it sums up the essence of the Christian life. In Romans, Paul uses these Greek prepositions in Rom 1:5a, 11:36, and 16:25. Like the phrase "the obedience of faith," they too act as "a literary device that frames" the essence of life in Christ: God's "exit and return" arrangement manifests by Word (1:18–11:36) and resultant deed (12:1–16:27).

Third, Paul's gospel and apostolic call, which are nearly synonymous, are by God's "command." Note the connectivity between Paul's gospel and call, by the word "command" (ἐπιταγή; 16:26; 1 Tim 1:1;

[65] Vern S. Poythress, *God-Centered Biblical Interpretation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1999), 146.

[66] With Rom 11:36 in mind, Moo comments, "Paul borrows this formula" from Hellenistic Jews who applied it to Yahweh (*Romans*, 743).

Titus 1:3). Further, Paul's use of call (καλέω; e.g., Gal 2:6, 11–12) customarily refers to God's effectual call that includes a promise-fulfillment dynamic initiated by God's spoken word.[67]

Fourth, this gospel creates a new creature[68]—a view that finds support from Augustine. His conversion experience informed his spiritual-formation theology, both of which are significantly dependent on his emphasis of God as Creator.[69] He confessed,

> *Sharp arrows of the mighty one* . . . They pierce hearts! But when human hearts are transfixed by the arrows of God's word, the effect is not death but the arousal of love. . . . He shoots to turn you into his lover. . . . converted to the Lord they pass from death to life.[70]
>
> You pierced my heart with the arrows of your love, and we carried your words transfixing my innermost being. The examples given by your servants whom you had transformed from black to shining white and from death to life, crowded in upon my thoughts. They burnt away and destroyed my heavy sluggishness preventing me from being dragged down to low things. They set me on fire with such force that every breath of opposition from any "deceitful tongue" had the power not to dampen my zeal but to inflame it the more.[71]

[67] Schreiner, *Romans*, 237.

[68] Käsemann, *Romans*, 219.

[69] E.g., in Aurelius Augustine, *Confessions I Books 1–8*, trans. Carolyn J.-B. Hammond, LCL 26 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 411–13 (VIII.12.30); Aurelius Augustine, *Confessions II Books 9–13*, trans. Carolyn J.-B. Hammond, LCL 27 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 5–7 (IX.2.3), 21–23 (IX.4.10), 135–39 (X.27.38–29.40), 193–95 (XI.2.3), 197–99 (XI.3.5), 273–75 (XII.10.10), 333–425 (XIII.1.1–38.53), which is encapsulated by 351–53 (XIII.9.10).

[70] *Ex. Ps.* 119.5 as quoted in Aurelius Augustine, *Essential Expositions of the Psalms*, ed. Michael Cameron, trans. Maria Boulding (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2015), 66–67; both the italics and "God's word" are original.

[71] Aurelius Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 156 (IX.2.3). See also Augustine, *Confessions II*, 351, 353; XIII.9.10; Aurelius Augustine, *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans*, Penguin Classics (New York: Penguin, 2003), 262–63 (XI.28); 593–94 (XIV.28); James Wetzel, "Augustine on the Origin of Evil: Myth and Metaphysics," in *Augustine's City of God: A Critical Guide*, ed. James Wetzel, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 167–85.

Augustine's "you pierced . . . transfixing my innermost being," according to Carolyn Hammond, "combines the idea of impaling (i.e., piercing) with securing (i.e., transfixing): God's words (Scripture) are both making and unmaking Augustine. His symbol in art combines these two images into a flaming heart pierced by an arrow."[72] The "making and unmaking" of Augustine's inner being may align with Paul's "inner person" (ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος) that prior to Christ lived in condemnation (Rom 7:22) but subsequently renews to the image of its Creator by means of a transformation of "our inner being" (ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν; 2 Cor 4:16; Eph 3:16; cf. Col 3:10). According to Paul Kolbet, Augustine's emphasis on God's speech made him jettison Plato's "beautiful words."[73] Kolbet concludes that Augustine "contended that the eloquence of this humble word [the incarnation of the Word of Jesus Christ] spoken by God in Jesus Christ . . . created a community that took its character [of love] from the very speech that constituted it."[74] This Augustinian tradition accentuates God's gracious, efficacious call into his divine life that is representative of the Word that became flesh.

This creation-gospel view—with God's perfective, creative love in mind (Rom 5:5)—makes the Word the seamless thread of the Christian's life, from its foundation (1 Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20) to its "end" (Rom 8:39; cf. 1 John 2:5; 4:12, 17–18). This perspective finds both added definition and reinforcement from the promised New Covenant and Paul's related OT/NT *locus classicus*.

Paul's *Locus Classicus*

Second Corinthians 2:12–4:18 is Paul's most authoritative pericope, namely, his *locus classicus* that distinguishes the Old and New Covenants and their "preaching" (*kerygma*).[75] Four things are noteworthy in this passage. First, it contains a gospel declaration addressed above in "Paul's Creation-Gospel Proclamation" (4:5–6). Second, Paul states in 3:3–6 that a Christian's competency only comes "by the Spirit of the living God . . . that gives life [ζῳοποιεῖ]." This latter assessment is an

[72] Augustine, *Confessions II*, 4n6.

[73] Paul R. Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls: Revising a Classical Ideal*, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 17 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 207.

[74] Ibid., 203.

[75] C. H. Dodd, "Natural Law in the New Testament," in *NTS* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), 141.

essential element in Paul's gospel (Rom 8:18–39; 2 Cor 4:16–18; 12:9).[76] Further, one easily notes a connection between 3:3–6 and Rom 4:17 by their shared use of "gives life." Third, Paul records a receptivity of the gospel that encompasses both a state of "freedom" (ἐλευθερία; 2 Cor 3:17) and a transformation of "our inner being" "from one point of glory to still a higher point" (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν; 3:18; cf. Col 3:10; Rom 8:17, 29–30).[77] Fourth, Paul refers to the New Covenant promise, when he mentions Christians, who have the Law "written" on their hearts "by the Spirit of the Living God" (2 Cor 3:3).[78] Paul's use of a perfect tense verb to describe this act of writing (ἐγγεγραμμένη) signals to the reader that this is a completed past action whose effects are felt in the present. Three OT prophecies—from Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—inform the immediately preceding three points.

In Deuteronomy, the imperative to "circumcise your hearts" (Deut 10:16) is met by God's prophetic promise, "The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts . . . so that you may love him" (30:6). Jeremiah's command to "circumcise your hearts" (Jer 4:4) is similarly met by God's promise, "I will make a new covenant . . . I will write their law in their minds and write it on their hearts . . . I will forgive their wickedness" (31:33–34). Ezekiel analogously declares, "A new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" (Ezek 36:26–27; cf. 11:19; Isa 44:3–5; 59:21). These prophecies announce that the promised indwelling Spirit marks the dawn of the eschatological age that resolves Israel's plight of Law disobedience and allows them to fulfill the Love Command. For the indwelling Spirit creates a "new heart" upon which the Law is written.

The Promised New Covenant in Romans

By the use of two particles found in Rom 8:1a, namely, "therefore now," Paul proposes that 8:1–4 should be read in light of Romans 7, which describes a state of condemnation brought about by living "according to the flesh." Similarly, by an explanatory "for" (γάρ) in 8:5 an expansion of 8:4 continues until 8:11, which presents a contrasting "state of being" between those who live "according to the flesh" and those who live "according to the Spirit." These connections are not in

[76] Käsemann, *Perspectives*, 39–40.

[77] Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, WBC 40 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 71–72.

[78] So ibid., 52; Dodd, "Natural Law in the NT," 141.

dispute.

For Moo, this "state of being," which Paul mentions in 8:5, 8, represents "two realms of salvation history. . . . a 'positional' rather than a 'behavioral' concept."[79] Similarly, Moo notes with respect to 8:4, "flesh and Spirit stand against each other not as parts of a person (an anthropological dualism), nor even as impulses or powers within a person, but as the powers or dominating features, of the two 'realms' of salvation history."[80] With respect to 5:9–11, he writes, "To be indwelt by God's Spirit means to be 'in the Spirit' and *not* 'in the flesh.' Paul's language is 'positional': he is depicting the believer's status in Christ, secured for him or her at conversion."[81] The following three, possibly four, reasons suggest that other discussions in Romans may conflict with Moo's strict division between a Christian's position and their behavior.

First, the Hebrew plight-solution pattern, noted in the previous section, "Paul's *Locus Classicus*," arguably continues within Second Temple literature, Galatians, and Romans.[82] For example, in 7:7–25, Paul rejects a Jewish view that found strength from the Law;[83] he declares that the "law of sin" (7:23) both dominates the unbeliever's "state of being" and creates the "according to the flesh" ethical, condemning dilemma—an ethical cul-de-sac of failure from which there is no escape without Christ. But now the "law of the Spirit" has "freed" (ἠλευθέρωσέν; 8:2) the believer from this "law of sin." This Spirit induced "freedom" can identify with Paul's OT/NT *locus classicus*, which also mentions a "freedom" that is by the Spirit—a freedom that resolves Israel's plight of Law disobedience. How does this new "state of being," which includes a behavioral and ontological aspect, come about for Paul? The Law is "written on human hearts" (2 Cor 3:3).

Second, Paul mentions Gentiles, who demonstrate that "the Law is written upon their hearts" (Rom 2:14–15). He also references "a man," who keeps the "righteous decrees of the Law" (δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου) and is inwardly circumcised (2:25–29). For Moo, these Gentiles are "very unlikely" Christians, and the "man" in 2:27 is an "allusion."[84] For others, they are genuine Gentile Christians, depicted by Jer 31:33 and mentioned in Rom 11:3 and 15:9. Paul's mention of them critiques

[79] Moo, *Romans*, 486.

[80] Ibid., 485.

[81] Ibid., 489–90.

[82] Frank Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 1989).

[83] Käsemann, *Romans*, 216.

[84] Moo, *Romans*, 150, 174.

Israel's behavioral failure and expounds upon God's solution that rescues the whole created order.[85] If this latter position is true, it is not unreasonable to thematically correlate parts of 2:12–29 with Paul's OT/NT *locus classicus* and the promised New Covenant. This association would allow the plural "righteous decrees" (2:26), with its behavioral aspect, to correlate with the singular "righteous decree" (8:4), with its suggested Love Command emphasis. Prior to Christ, the Jews had, by the Law, a "form of knowledge" (2:20). This Law, summarized by the Love Command, is now poured into the heart of the believer (5:5), and Christ is both the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:24) for holy living.

Third, Rom 6:16–17 describes a Christian who "having been set free" (ἐλευθερωθέντες) from sin's power obeys God "from the heart" (ἐκ καρδίας; cf. 1:9; 8:10, 16). This "obedience from the heart" displays a "freedom" (ἐλευθερία) that definitely identifies with the Christian who "has been set free" (ἠλευθέρωσέν; 8:2) and feasibly so with Paul's OT/NT *classicus* distinction, where the new state of the Christian is "freedom" (ἐλευθερία; 2 Cor 3:17) for the "inner being" (4:16) that includes transformation toward the likeness of Christ (3:18). If true, this "obedience from the heart" may both contrast with a person's inability to submit to God's Law (Rom 8:8), who lives "according to the flesh," and identify with the New Covenant's promise of obedience from a "new heart." The psalmist confessed, "I will run in the way of your commandments, when you set my heart free" (Ps 119:32). Moo does not engage with this "obedience from the heart" in Rom 6:17;[86] his three other discussions that involve 6:17 consistently refer to a believer's new status and transfer from an old to a new realm.[87]

As noted previously, God promised the indwelling Spirit; this Spirit would create a "new heart" because the Law would be written upon it. This new "state of being" also involved "freedom" and transformation. These same characteristics are noted within the immediately preceding

[85] So Augustine, *On the Spirit*, xxvi.43–xxvii.47; H. Köster, φύσις, *TDNT* 9:273; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:156; Stephen Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 158; N. T. Wright, "The Law in Romans 2," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, ed. James D. G. Dunn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 134; 131–50; N. T. Wright, "Romans 2:17–3:9: A Hidden Clue to the Meaning of Romans?," *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 2.1 (2012): 1–25; for more, see Fitzmyer, *Romans* and Köster, *TDNT* 9:273n218.

[86] Moo, *Romans*, 400–2; cf. 174.

[87] E.g., ibid., 201; 359, 755; cf. 51, 359, 397, 403, 405, 407, 930.

three points. Minus this indwelling Spirit, Paul insists, there is neither a Christian (8:9) nor a transformation of the "inner being" (2 Cor 3:18; 4:16). For Herman Ridderbos, Paul's gospel "signifies a radicalizing of the concept of Jew, and thereby of the definition of the essence of the people of God."[88] For Käsemann, Paul's gospel, which reveals "the righteousness of God," presents "the God who brings back the fallen world into the sphere of his legitimate claim."[89] Righteousness is granted to faith as a gift that is forensic, apocalyptic, and efficaciously powerful. Both forgiveness and new creation, for Käsemann, bring about "a change in existence," which represents a constant earthly change (Phil 3:7–12).[90] If the thoughts of this section are true, they provide one more reason that "fulfilled in us" (πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν; Rom 8:4) could also describe a new essence for Paul's "inner being." Romans 1:16–17 may add to this rationale.

For Moo, the "faith" mentioned in Hab 2:4 "probably *modifies* 'the one who is righteous,' [but] Paul appears to give the words a different meaning. . . . In both the meaning of the terms and their connections, then, Paul's quotation differs from the meaning of the original. But the differences should not magnified."[91] Additionally, for Moo, "from faith to faith" (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν; Rom 1:17) presents a rhetorical combination, "intended to emphasize that faith and 'nothing but faith' can put us into right relationship with God."[92] My suggestion that 8:4 refers to a changed "human condition" adds to the possibility that the meaning of Hab 2:4 is echoed in Rom 1:17 and not significantly modified. This perspective of 8:4 also joins the majority view that "from faith to faith" depicts some type of progression.[93]

The Righteousness of God

As noted, a reformational interpretation of 8:4 only relies upon an "as if" righteousness that is outside of a Christian that comes only by imputation. Further, the declaration of God's righteousness that brings justification for the believer represents a past act, a new and permanent status; it is a "once-for-all" act. Last, it does not refer to God's creative power, whether general or spiritual. A rereading of 8:4 continues to be offered here.

[88] Ridderbos, *Paul*, 334.

[89] Käsemann, *Romans*, 29.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Moo, *Romans*, 75, 77, 78 (emphasis added).

[92] Ibid., 76.

[93] Ibid., 76nn56–61.

First, in Paul's letters, the phrase "the righteousness of God," or its equivalent, is found nine times: Rom 1:17; 3:5, 21–26 (4x); 10:3 (cf. 9:14); 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9. Placed within a pericope whose emphasis is the great commission, 2 Cor 5:21 states, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ)." Arguably, Wright defends a behavioral, ontological component for "the righteousness of God" in 5:11–6:2.[94] Moreover, the ethical implications of "the righteousness of God" are undeniable outside the Pauline corpus (e.g., Matt 6:33, Jas 1:20; 2 Pet 1:1). Last, its parallel with God's faithfulness and Israel's unbelieving, unfaithful lifestyle in Rom 3:1–8 is also sure.

Second, in continuation with and building upon the preceding point, the phrase "toward righteousness" is used with respect to an obedient life lived under Christ's lordship that is contra sin and instead "leads to righteousness" (6:16). This expression also references a believer's behavioral shamelessness and Christ's faithfulness, resurrection, and lordship (10:4, 9–11). For Paul, Jews boast in their possession and performance of the Law as well as their relationship with God (2:17, 23; 4:2; 5:3). Their lives, however, fail to establish genuine righteousness (10:3). Instead, they live lives of shame and reflect a people not in covenant with the LORD (2:24–25; 6:21; 9:33). On the other hand, a Christian boasts in the Lord and the righteous lifestyle he creates (5:2–3, 11; 10:10–11; cf. 1 Cor 1:29–31). Within this latter claim, the heart of a person "believes toward righteousness" (καρδίᾳ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην; Rom 10:10), namely, they trust in and surrender to their Creator, who by grace through faith "gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that did not exist" (4:17).

Third, as noted, Paul's gospel, which reveals "the righteousness of God" and climaxes in Romans 8, impacts one's understanding of 8:4. Longenecker's "three principal foci of the Christian gospel" are "righteousness of God" as "an attribute of God and a gift from God," the "faithfulness of Jesus," and the believer's faith.[95] This outlook unites Perspectives on Paul, Old and New. By now, the reader has noted an emphasis in this essay on a gospel that "is the power of God" (1:16) and Käsemann's perspective of "the righteousness of God": Paul's term that describes God's powerful activity (1:16) that brings back a

[94] For Wright's view of justification, see N. T. Wright, "Justification: Yesterday, Today, and Forever," *JETS* 54.1 (2011): 49–63.

[95] Longenecker, *Romans*, 457–60.

collapsed world into the realm of his legitimate rulership.[96] H. Schlier clarifies this rescue operation: "The righteousness of God" both acquits and empowers, for "neither in its commencement nor its continuation is the justifying action of God quietistic; it is always teleological."[97] If these men are correct, justification is not just a past act.

Fourth, Paul's theological passive, "it has been determined" (ἐλογίσθη; 4:3, 9–11, 22–23) and his ethical imperative, "determine" (λογίζεσθε; 6:11) can display a continuum of God's creational decree toward the fullness of new creation life—a "righteous decree" empowered "according to the Spirit," the same Spirit that creates the "new heart." This continuum, after all, even may find support in 4:5 and Paul's pneumatology. The present tense verb and participles of 4:5 can represent continual action. Likewise, the "deposit" (ἀρραβών) of the Spirit guarantees what is to come. The definition of "deposit" includes an obligation toward additional payments.[98]

Fifth, Paul personifies both sin and righteousness as determinative powers that influence toward dissimilar ends (6:15–23):[99] sin, which strengthens its obedient servant's identification with depravity, finalizes in death (6:12, 16, 21, 23); the transformative power of righteousness creates a new inner being, whose "end" is eternal life (6:5, 8, 22–23; 8:11). Paul has received "grace and apostleship to call people . . . to the obedience of faith" (1:5). He believes that the declaration of "the righteousness of God" should be accompanied by an Abrahamic faith that allows the Law to be obeyed "from the heart." This gospel "is the power of God" (1:16), a creational power that is "toward righteousness" for the Christian. Romans 4:24 supports this perspective. Paul arguably presents in 4:24 a teleological framework, which has a future aspect to it, by his use of the phrase "to whom it will be determined" (οἷς μέλλει λογίζεσθαι).[100] As such, his argument in 4:23–25 can relate to an initial and sustaining effort of "the righteousness of God" until

[96] Käsemann, *Romans*, 21–32; John Henry Paul Reumann, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Jerome D. Quinn, *Righteousness in the New Testament: Justification in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 83; H. Schlier, δικαιοσύνη, *TDNT* 2:209–10.

[97] Ibid., 209.

[98] 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13–14; cf. Rom 8:23; BAGD 134.

[99] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 354.

[100] G. Mussies, *The Morphology of Koine Greek as Used in the Apocalypse of St. John: A Study in Bilingualism* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 307; contra Moo, *Romans*, 287, whose reason is theological not grammatical.

that "last Day."[101] Moo's reason against this rendition of 4:24 is theological not grammatical;[102] however, BAGD defines μέλλει as an action that is "inevitable" and "subsequent to another event."[103] Elsewhere in Romans, Paul consistently uses μέλλει to refer to a future event (5:14; 8:13, 18, 38) and even, per Moo, to a "final state."[104] This teleological aspect for God's declaration of righteousness is also supported by Paul's use of δικαίωσις (4:25), which BAGD describes to be an "acquittal as a process as well as its result διὰ τὴν δικαίωσις [because of this acquittal]."[105]

Sixth, the above teleological aspect of "the righteousness of God" gives consistency to all of Paul's usages of both "toward righteousness" and "determine." A reformational perspective furnishes different meanings to these phrases that are dependent upon their context; e.g., Moo associates "toward righteousness" in 4:5 with an imputed righteousness and in 6:16 it correlates with a "'moral' righteousness, conduct pleasing to God."[106]

The above argument, in its totality, does not discount a forensic righteousness but argues that 3:30 ("God is One, who will call righteous [δικαιώσει] the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith") involves a gospel proclamation by and toward the image of Christ that creates and sustains new life in the believer. Within this view, Christians are not, per Barth's criticism of Augustine, their "own creator and atoner" but grow "toward righteousness" (6:16; cf. 10:4, 10), by God's decree of love (8:35–39)[107]—something the Law was after all the time. By grace a person reigns "in life through the one man, Jesus Christ" (5:16–18; 8:28–34) toward God's "end." Here, "to be declared righteous by faith" includes "a life-giving righteous acquittal" (εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς; 5:18) that provides an ontological transformation of the "inner being." The "power of God," which is the Word of the gospel (1:16), provides the initial and sustaining effort of this change until that "last Day." This new creation life inextricably and inexplicably links a Christian's being and doing, belief and obedience. Truth progresses toward reality "through the righteousness of God provided by faith" (διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως; 4:13),[108] as God powerfully fulfills his promise toward the imitation of Christ (8:29).

[101] Dunn, *Romans*, *1–8*, 223.

[102] Moo, *Romans*, 287.

[103] BAGD 627.

[104] Ibid., 511; cf. 334, 494, 545.

[105] BAGD 198.

[106] Moo, *Romans*, 262, 400.

[107] Karl Barth, *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life: The Theological Basis of Ethics*, trans. R. Birch Hoyle, Library of Theological Ethics (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 60; see also 3–6, 20–23.

The Spirit's very ontology (love, wind) reinforces this movement that births the singular but multifaceted fruit of love (8:9; 2 Cor 3:17; Gal 5:22). God's unconditional love and freedom creates the changed "human condition" that loves God and neighbor, which is to declare by word and deed that "Jesus is Lord!" Paul's first statement in Romans about the gospel, which declares "the righteousness of God," highlights this declaration of lordship (Rom 1:1–7). He emphatically insists upon Christ's lordship by repeating this truth in 5:1, 11, 21; 6:23; 7:25; 8:39. As noted earlier, Abraham is a prototype of faith that determines a person "toward righteous" and an antitype of disbelief that leads to disobedience. Moreover, Paul's proclamation of the gospel, from start to finish, presents an Abrahamic faith through which the gospel is both "making and unmaking" the believer. As such, the declaration of "the righteousness of God," which proclaims Christ's lordship, either enflames toward life (3:21–8:39) or dampens to death (1:18–3:20).

Mortificatio and *Vivificatio*

By Calvin's time, the rubric of the Christian life sprang from systematic categories of "killing" (*mortificatio*) and "quickening" (*vivificatio*), of which Barth's criticism seems fair, "What we have called the divine call to advance is in Calvin so overshadowed by the divine summons to halt that it can hardly be heard at all."[109] Of course, the gospel involves repentance and forgiveness (*mortificatio*); however, an ongoing gospel minus a coequal, united "quickening" is contra Paul's meaning in 6:5.[110]

[108] Faith in this phrase is translated as a genitive of source. A similar congruence between a Christian's belief and lifestyle is displayed by a phrase in Acts 26:18, namely, "those who are being sanctified by faith" in Christ (τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει). In 26:18, "faith" is understood as an instrumental dative.

[109] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* , ed. G. W Bromiley and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. G. W. Bromiley, vol. IV.2, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation Part 2* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 575 (§ 66.4).

[110] Constantine R. Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 228–29. Campbell's thoughts on Paul's related σύν compounds (cf. 228–36) are summarized on page 425: "Paul reiterates that participation in his death results in participation with him in life."

In 6:5, Paul explains how the believer walks in newness of life: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." Paul not only strongly contrasts death with resurrection, but he unites these two concepts;[111] there cannot be one without the other. He presents not a probability but a certainty: The unification of the believer with Christ in his death guarantees the certainty of their resurrection.[112]

The epistemological foundation of 6:5, namely vv. 6–7, includes a phrase that may also affirm this "killing" and "quickening" structure and its identification with God's declaration of righteousness. Romans 6:7 states that the one who has died has been δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας. Most English Bibles translate this phrase as "freed from sin" (e.g., CEB, ESV, CSB, NASB, NIV, NKJ, NLT, NRSV) rather than "justified from sin" (RSV). I suggest that the declaration of "the righteousness of God" contains the stark reality that "no one will be declared righteous" (οὐ δικαιωθήσεται; 3:20) by works, and the jubilant truth that the believer has been "freed" into a new "state of being" that is "toward righteousness." In support of this perspective, when Paul explains the meaning of 6:1–7, he states that the believer is no longer a slave to sin but "has been freed [ἐλευθερωθέντες] . . . toward holiness [εἰς ἁγιασμόν], whose end [τέλος] is eternal life" (6:22).[113] As noted, this state of freedom can equate with an "obedience from the heart," a new "state of being." As such, the declaration of the "righteousness of God" begins and completes the great disturbance. This process involves a continuum of new creation life, where a person's transforming "state of being" is portrayed by "killing" and "quickening"—an activity that starts, continues, and ends by means of God's promise and fulfillment "toward righteousness."

Dahl states, "The purpose of the Creator is realized in the new creation, that is in Christ, who is . . . the mediator of creation . . . the beginning and archetype of the new creation."[114] Though the Reformers valued an "order of salvation" (*ordo salutis*), this term was not used until the eighteenth century. I cannot here discuss in detail an order of salvation. Hopefully, it is sufficient to note that it involves a continuum that is both ontological, transformational, and teleological; its "end" is

[111] BAGD 38(3).

[112] BDF 448(6); cf. Rom 5:19.

[113] Like the concept understood by "toward righteousness," this process that is "toward holiness" is equally affected by God's righteousness (6:19, 22)—a concept that cannot be expounded here.

[114] Dahl, "Creation," 441; Rom 6:1–14; 8:18–39; Eph 4:13–16.

"conformity [σύμμορφος] to the image of his Son" (8:29). A. T. Robertson's thoughts on "conformity" affirm this view. He notes that "conformity" starts with "an inward and not merely superficial conformity . . . here we have *morphe* ['form'] and *eikon* ['image'] to express the gradual change in us till we acquire the likeness of Christ the Son of God."[115] According to Walter Grundmann, this "includes a transformation of the being of man."[116] Within this purview, from the first declaration of "the righteousness of God" to its last, the gospel can be understood as the Word of new creation. Similar to the first "Let light shine out of darkness," the gospel transforms the fallen "image of God" (*imago Dei*) to its restored eschatological perfection by "killing" and "quickening" in union with Christ. By this great disturbance, a heart now says with Christ, "Sacrifices you do not desire; here I am, I have come to do your will; your law is within my heart" (Ps 40:6–8; 51:16–17; Heb 10:5–10). God's love that is poured "in our hearts" allows for a life that is both filled with hope and void of shame (Rom 5:5). There is continual hope and no shame because of God's unwavering love that forgives, changes, and assures the Christian of the fullness of what is to come (8:9, 23), namely, conformity to the image of the Son.

Wrapping up "the Righteousness of God"

Sin was able to reign because of an "according to the flesh" human condition. "But now . . . grace abounds even more" (3:21) and creates the new creation "human condition," where obedience is "from the heart," the "perfectively written" law upon the heart. "The righteousness of God" dethrones sin. God's grace "reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (5:20–21). When this happens, the purpose of God's decree begins for the Christian community: living within a "killing" and "quickening" dynamic, "they think the things of the Spirit" (8:5) and participate in the good work that God's Word brings to completion on that "last Day" (Phil 1:6). "Christ's love compels . . . he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves" (2 Cor 5:14–15).

John's gospel declares, "In the beginning was the Word, . . . This Word became flesh" (John 1:1–14). Further, the Christian grows up "toward him" [εἰς αὐτὸν], namely, Christ who is the head of the body,

[115] A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1930), 4:377.

[116] Walter Grundmann, "Compounds in Σύν- Which Develop the Σύν Χριστῷ," *TDNT* 7:786–94.

in every way (Eph 4:15). As such, the believer is not externally conformed by an exterior law but inextricably transformed by the indwelling, empowering Spirit—that incorruptible seed of Christ implanted as new creation life by the spoken Word. Here, a Christian—with an inward desire to bear another's burden— "fulfills the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2) and demonstrates the "completed law, the one that gives freedom [τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας]" (Jas 1:25).[117] For God's "righteous decree," which was once by a written code, is now by the Spirit that "imparts life" (ζῳοποιεῖ; 2 Cor 3:5–6; cf. Gal 3:21). As such, the declaration of "the righteousness of God" triumphantly progresses toward its complete fulfillment by means of a new creation miracle until that "last Day." This triumphant love, with its perfective aspect, is poured into the human heart (Rom 5:5), by an Abrahamic faith (4:17) that produces the great disturbance. This disturbance "gives life" (ζῳοποιεῖ), according to 4:17 and 8:11, from the moment of new creation life within the believer until its *telos*. Resultantly, until that "last Day," a life once short of God's glory (3:23) bears fruit toward the character of Christ and God's glory (5:1–4; 8:18; 2 Cor 3:18; 4:16–18; 2 Thess 2:13–14).

Within this view of "the righteousness of God," being is not separated from doing, and the Christian's faith constitutes more than a change of status and realm. Here, Paul contrasts a perspective of disbelief and disobedience (Rom 1:18–3:20) with "The one who believes in the one who declares the ungodly righteous" (τῷ πιστεύοντι ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ; 4:5). "But now" the Law's goal, which was to turn a person's heart to the Lord, is fulfilled "in us." This creation of new life happens by the proclamation of the gospel, with its Abrahamic faith. This "enthused" (ἔνθεος; cf. 2 Thess 1:1; Rom 2:17; literally, "in God") person, this new creation human in continuity with God's decree, ontologically is transformed (12:2; 2 Cor 3:18) by the Word until that "last Day." Here, in view of God's merciful great disturbance, similar living sacrifices as Christ's (Rom 12:1–3) efficaciously reflect "genuine rather than hypocritical love" (12:9–21). To some degree, they imitate Christ (15:2–3) because they fulfill the Law's requirement of a heart lovingly directed to God and neighbor.

Paul states, "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1 Cor 15:10; cf. Eph 2:1–10; Phil 2:12–13). This confession is found within his explanation of the gospel. God's grace had a behavioral effect on Paul that was rooted in his new "I," namely, his changed "state of being." That is,

[117] In this translation, "freedom" is taken as an attributive genitive.

both Paul's "I" and his efforts were effected by grace, saving grace, from start to finish.

My thesis brings congruence to all of Paul's mentions of Law-fulfillment (Rom 8:4; 13:8; 2:26; 3:31). Within this perspective of 8:4, obedience does not bring about justification for works do not play a meritorious role, and vindication is not on the basis of them. Instead, human faithfulness is a divine act, first and foremost, and an "obedience from the heart" is part of an ontological transformation that is by grace through faith. This "obedience of faith" is evidence of, but not instrumental toward, the Creator's pronouncement of righteousness that produces new creation life. As such, my thesis may also unify all of Paul's thoughts on justification, including his first statement of it in 2:13.

Romans 2:13 has long plagued Protestant, Pauline scholars. Since the Reformation, it is typically not noted as a reference to Christians, for it asserts that "the doers of the law will be declared righteous (δικαιωθήσονται)."[118] However, when the proclamation of "the righteousness of God" provides a continuum of the Creator's Word toward the fullness of new creation life, this verb's future tense and theologically passive voice can reference God's final verdict on that "last Day." On that Day, the good work started by the Creator's Word, which manifests by deed in a believer's life, will have reached its "end" (Phil 1:6).

Conclusion

The Spirit of God creates new life in a person. From the first declaration of "the righteousness of God" to its last, the gospel, which is the power of God, commissions and ethically empowers a person to turn his or her heart both affectionately to love God and neighbor. This proclamation, when united with an Abrahamic faith, symbiotically transitions the Christian toward the image of Christ, "from one point of glory to still a higher point." Peter understood this decree as a call to participate in the divine nature, namely, God's glory and "goodness" (2 Pet 1:3, 5; ἀρετή).[119] He too rooted this viewpoint in an atonement that

[118] Nonetheless, Augustine's *On the Spirit and the Letter* notes that 2:13 refers to Christians (Augustine, *Anti-Pelagian*, 5:402; XVI.45).

[119] Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 49, 237 references the "aretegenic power of the cross," a dynamic that involves "participatory action" and is "virtue producing." Aretegenic derives from a transliteration of ἀρετή, namely, *aretē*. For this aretegenic progression, see also Andreas

brought health, which enabled the Christian to live "for what is right" (1 Pet 2:24; τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ).

There is no condemnation for those in Christ (Rom 8:1), for God graciously brings about forgiveness and freedom. This path of freedom is lived in union with Christ and represented by a process of "killing" and "quickening," promise and fulfillment. Possibly we can hear Paul say, "I no longer live. Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by the proclamation of the righteousness of God and its accompanying Abrahamic faith. 'Christ died and returned to life, so that he might be the Lord' of even the Christian's ethical struggles" (14:9; cf. 7:7–24; 8:37–39; Gal 2:20). Christ's victory over sin provides forgiveness and begins an ontological change of the Christian's "inner being" toward the image of the Son. This change is sustained by an "exit and return" structure of "God, the one who declares righteous" (θεὸς ὁ δικαιῶν; Rom 8:33). This Abrahamic, worshipful life is accompanied by hope, joy, and "groaning as in the pains of childbirth" (8:22)—a prayerful life offered "from the heart" of the believer, by the Spirit, and in union with Christ Jesus (8:23, 26–27, 34).

Paul's prayer and a psalmist's confession are most appropriate within this outlook of 8:4.

> I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead . . . Because of his great love for us, God . . . made us alive with [συνεζωοποίησεν] Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved [σεσῳσμένοι]. . . . For this reason . . . I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of power. . . . I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being [εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον], so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And . . . being rooted and established in love . . . that you may know this love of Christ that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or think or imagine, according to his power, that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church . . . . (Eph 1:18–20; 2:4–5; 3:1, 7, 16–19, 20–21; NIV 1986)

> Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. . . . the glory due his name. . . . The voice of the LORD . . . is powerful . . . majestic. . . . It breaks . . . makes . . . shakes . . . and gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with *shalom* ("peace"). (Ps 29:1–11).

J. Köstenberger, *Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholarly Virtue* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 43–46, 50–51.

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The Fate of Creation in the *Eschaton*

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Apart from the nature and timing of the millennium, God's actions toward his creation at the end of this age mark one of the most debated ideas among conservative Christians. Several views are commonly held, the most common of which are the annihilation view and the restoration view. This essay argues the restoration view is the most consistent with the text of 2 Pet 3:10, that the restoration of all creation is consistent with a canonical view of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that it is the appropriate view to instill a proper motivation for creation care among Christians.

Key Words: annihilation, creation, eschaton, judgment

If the creation is going to be completely destroyed and entirely recreated when Christ comes again, why bother with environmental ethics? That question, according to its common reception, is the supposed point behind James Watt's infamous comment in a Congressional hearing, "I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns."[1] Watt, a Pentecostal Christian, disputes the popular interpretation of his comment as a rejection of concern for the environment.[2] However Watt intended his comments, the reception of his words accurately reflects a common understanding among evangelicals of the fate of creation in eschatological terms. More important than theories of the nature and timing of the millennium, the transition to the New Heavens and New Earth is, possibly, the most significant eschatological concept for environmental ethics.

[1] For example, this is quoted in Steven Bouma-Pediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 71. When viewed in its context, however, the comment has clearly been misrepresented. See Ron Arnold, *At the Eye of the Storm: James Watt and the Environmentalists* (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1982), 75.

[2] James Watt, "The Religious Left's Lies," http:// www.washingtonpost.com /wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/20/AR2005052001333.html.

Among evangelicals there are two main views of the fate of creation in the *eschaton*.[3] The first, the annihilation perspective, is the idea that the heavens and the earth will be completely destroyed and re-created *ex nihilo* on the Day of the Lord.[4] The second basic perspective is the restoration view, which holds that at the final judgment creation will be purified and then renewed to a state of glorified goodness.[5]

The annihilation view is a common perspective in some strains of contemporary evangelicalism.[6] It is particularly popular among classical dispensationalists.[7] This perspective holds that the present world will be utterly destroyed and that a new creative act, which is parallel to the Genesis

[3] A third view, the escapist view, which anticipates total destruction of the earth and eternal existence of human souls in a disembodied state, is also popular in some versions of folk Christian eschatology, but it is difficult to document. Representations in popular culture include cartoon depictions of the dead playing harps on clouds and similar ideas that humans exist eternally in a disembodied state. The view is sufficiently common that Norman Wirzba writes, "Many theologians believe bodies to be something that must finally be overcome and left behind" (*From Nature to Creation: A Christian Vision for Understanding and Loving Our World* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015], 22). Unfortunately, Wirzba cites no theologians who argue for eternal disembodied existence, in part, because few, if any, examples of published theologians arguing for that position exist. Jaroslav Pelikan shows that the escapist view has roots in early Gnostic heresy (*The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition [100–600]* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971], 81–97.

[4] One danger in using the term "annihilation" here is the potential confusion of those arguing for the complete destruction and *ex nihilo* re-creation of the cosmos with individuals who argue that the unregenerate will escape eternal judgment due to annihilation. The authors prefer the term "destructionist view" but have chosen to refer to the perspective as annihilationist in following previous discussions of the main textual issue. See Gale Z. Heide, "What Is New About the New Heaven and New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 and 2 Peter 3," *JETS* 40.1 (1997): 37–56 and Matthew Y. Emerson, "Does God Own a Death Star? The Destruction of the Cosmos in 2 Peter 3:1–13," *SWJT* 57.2 (2015): 281–93.

[5] Michael D. Williams, *Far as the Curse is Found* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005), 272–73. See also Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 1158–61.

[6] Amy Johnson Frykholm, *Rapture Culture: Left Behind in Evangelical America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 13–37. A prime example of this is John MacArthur, *2 Peter and Jude* (Chicago: Moody, 2005), 109–25.

[7] Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Findlay, OH: Dunham Publishing, 1958), 552–53; and *Prophecy for Today: An Exposition of the Major Themes in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), 181. It may be noted that Pentecost uses the word

1 creation *ex nihilo*, will occur to establish the new heavens and the new earth. Adherents of this view cite biblical references to a new heaven and a new earth such as Isa 65:17 and Rev 21:1, as well as the ostensible destruction of the earth indicated in some translations of 2 Pet 3:10.[8]

The second common perspective is the restoration view. Proponents of this view hold that the overarching narrative of Scripture indicates that creation will be purified by fire, but then it will be renewed, rather than destroyed, and distinctly re-created. This can also be supported by a textual variant in 2 Pet 3:10, accompanied by an alternate translation with the understanding that the word translated "new" in 2 Pet 3:10 refers to a *renewed* heaven and earth, not a unique, different, or completely new heaven and earth from the present ones.

This article examines the support for the restoration view of eschatology by studying 2 Pet 3, the fulfillment of the gospel through the renewal of creation as shown by a broad canonical perspective, and argues that the restoration view contributes to a robust and biblical environmental ethics.

2 Peter 3:10 Re-Examined

The restoration of creation is consistent with a careful reading of 2 Pet 3.[9] The discussion of this passage is complicated by the presence of a

"dissolution" instead of "annihilation" or "destruction," but it is clear that he predicts a complete destruction with a completely new creative action to establish the new heavens and new earth, which parallels God's original creation of the present heaven and earth (*Things to Come*, 561). In his commentary on Revelation, Grant Osborne advocates total destruction followed by re-creation (*Revelation* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002], 729–31), particularly 730n4. See also *Bible Truths for Christian Schools*, 2nd ed. (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1988), 97. Cf. J. Vernon McGee, *Second Peter* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 84–87. Craig Blaising and Darrell Bock, progressive dispensationalists, use language which implies the restoration view of eschatology but do not go into great detail in their *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 264–70. The annihilation view is not unanimous even among classic dispensationalists, as Clarence Larkin argues for the "renovation" of earth after purification by fire in his classic book (*Rightly Dividing the Word* [New York: Cosimo, 2005], 27–28).

[8] The best academic defense of the annihilation view is R. Larry Overstreet, "A Study of 2 Peter 3:10–13," *BSac* 137 (1980): 354–71 (esp. 365).

[9] This essay can hope to do little that others have not previously done well with regard to exegesis and interpretation of the questionable passages. The contribution of this essay is in demonstrating the significance of a proper reading of 2 Pet 3:10 for environmental ethics. See Emerson, "The Destruction of the Cosmos in 2 Peter 3:1–13," 281–93; Al Wolters, "Worldview and Textual Criticism

textual issue which has served to obscure the meaning of Peter's comments on the new earth. The KJV renders 2 Pet 3:10 as saying that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." In contrast, the ESV translates the same phrases as, "the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed." A major difference exists between the rendering of the same Greek word, στοικεῖα, as both "elements" and "heavenly bodies." Another clear difference exists between the two translations which invites the question how being "burned up" can be confused with being "exposed" since the Greek words for the two are significantly different.

Στοικεῖα may be translated in several different ways. At times it was used to refer to the four basic elements, heavenly bodies, or angelic powers.[10] Another possible translation would coincide with the use of the

in 2 Peter 3:10," *WTJ* 49 (1987): 405–13; Heide, "What Is New About the New Heaven and New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 and 2 Peter 3," 37–56.

[10] Peter Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 284; Kittel, ed., *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [*TNDT*] (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), s.v., "στοικιον." For support of heavenly bodies, see Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1901), 297. Gene L. Green provides support for the position of στοικεῖα meaning all material things (*Jude and 2 Peter* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008], 330). Commentaries on the use of this word in other places in Scripture are similarly divided as to the meaning of the word. On Gal 4:3, 9, see Ronald Y. K. Fung, *Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 181, 190–91. Fung supports the reading of elementary teaching. Cf. Ernest de Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1921), 510–18. Burton supports the idea of "rudimentary religious teachings." Contra Timothy George, *Galatians* (Nashville: B&H, 1994), 294–99. George supports the translation "spiritual powers." On Col 2:8, 20, see Douglas Moo, *Letter to the Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 187–93. Moo comments that "the rarity of the expression makes it overwhelmingly likely that the phrase had the same meaning in Galatians as in the Colossians texts" (ibid., 188). By extension this argument can be used to support the same meaning in all books of Scripture. Moo holds that the reading of elementary principles is well attested (ibid., 189) and comes to support the view in Galatians (ibid., 192). See also, Richard R. Melick Jr., *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon* (Nashville: B&H, 1991), 259n179. Melick holds the meaning as "elementary" and comments that it is the most likely meaning in 2 Pet 3:10. Cf. T. K. Abbott, *Ephesians and Colossians* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1953), 247–48.

same word outside of 2 Peter; five of the uses of the term in Scripture refer to false or immature moral principles (cf. Gal 4:3, 9; Col 2:8, 20; Heb 5:12). There are merits of each of the translations of στοικεῖα, but it appears to make more sense for the faulty philosophies to be destroyed rather than the other options when the next textual issue is considered.

The difference between being "burned up" and "revealed" is a more vexing problem because it has its root in a textual variant. The *Textus Receptus*, upon which the KJV relies, uses the word κατακαήσεται, meaning "will be burned up." The Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus both contain the word εὑρεθήσεται, which can be rendered "will be found."[11] According to Wolters, every major critical edition of the New Testament text since the late nineteenth century has used the latter word because it exists in the earliest manuscripts.[12] On the other hand, Metzger contends that although many of the oldest manuscripts have εὑρεθήσεται, there is a high degree of doubt about its veracity—this despite the fact that the UBS committee chose the εὑρεθήσεται reading. According to Metzger, the large number of textual variants and relative lack of consistency leave the wording questionable, and the majority of the variants tend to imply dissolution of the earth.[13] Metzger states that generally, "the more difficult

Abbott supports elementary teaching, or things with which the world is concerned. Wilson supports the idea of "elementary principles" in Col 2:8 but argues for the word meaning "physical elements" in 2 Pet 3:10 (R. McL. Wilson, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Colossians and Philemon* [New York: T&T Clark, 2005], 196–97).

[11] David Wenham, "Being 'Found' on the Last Day: New Light on 2 Peter 3:10 and 2 Cor 5:3," *NTS* 33 (1984): 477–79; Richard Baukham, *Jude and 2 Peter*, WBC (Waco: Word, 1983), 303; Frederick W. Danker, "II Peter 3:10 and Psalm of Solomon 17:10," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 53.1–2 (1962): 82–86; Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003), 357–87. See also, Gordon H. Clark, *New Heavens, New Earth: A Commentary on First and Second Peter*, 2nd ed. (Jefferson, MD: Trinity Foundation, 1993), 232–33. Clark supports the reading of εὑρεθήσεται but argues that it is a euphemism for destruction. Gene Green supports the textual variant εὑρεθήσεται but retranslates the passage to say the "heavens and earth will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed by burning, even the works that are discovered in it" (330–31). This circumvents the problem. It should be noted that Green's discussion of re-creation v. renewal is somewhat confusing. Green's commentary could be taken as support for either the annihilation or restoration perspective (see *Jude and 2 Peter*, 324–35).

[12] Al Wolters, "Worldview and Textual Criticism in 2 Peter 3:10," *WTJ* 49 (1987): 405–13.

[13] Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed.

reading is to be preferred particularly when the sense appears on the surface to be erroneous but on more mature consideration proves itself to be correct."[14] In this specific case, however, he deems the earlier, more difficult reading to be less trustworthy than later variants. The many variants and the change over time seem to be indicative of redactive work based on a worldview that thought the original nonsensical and sought to right an assumed previous scribal error.[15]

Taking a step back from 2 Pet 3:10 to look at the context, it seems that there may be merit in the reliance upon the older, seemingly more difficult reading of "will be found." In 2 Pet 3:3–7, Peter discusses God's judgment of the earth through the flood, stating in verse 6 that "the world at that time *was destroyed* (ἀπώλετο), being flooded with water" (NASB, emphasis added). Then, in v. 7 Peter writes that "the present heaven and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and *destruction* (ἀπωλείας) of ungodly men" (NASB, emphasis added). The word used for destruction in v. 6 is a cognate of the word used for the destruction of the present ungodly men referred to in v. 7. In the first case the destruction did not result in a new creation, but rather a renewal of the creation; this points to a destruction which is not annihilation or complete dissolution, but restorative in nature.

Davids offers the idea that 2 Peter is referring to the "exposure and expunging of evil; thus, the 'elements' are 'melted' and 'destroyed' only insofar as is required for the exposure and destruction of evil."[16] Davids holds that this is consistent with language used in Old Testament prophecy. Concerning 2 Pet 3, Calvin writes that "heaven and earth will be cleansed by fire so that they may be fit for the kingdom of Christ."[17] Luther makes the connection between the flood and the final judgment, stating that "everything must be changed by fire, just as the water changed everything at the time of the Flood."[18] According to Wolters, "Just as the

(New York: United Bible Society, 1994), 636–37. The textual apparatus of the UBS 4th edition lists nine different variants, with the largest number of witnesses supporting the two main variants εὑρεθήσεται and κατακαήσεται.

[14] Ibid., 12–13.

[15] Wolters, "Worldview and Textual Criticism in 2 Peter 3:10," 405.

[16] Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 157.

[17] John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries: The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St. Peter*, trans. William B. Johnston (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 365.

[18] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works,* vol. 30, *The Catholic Epistles*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, trans. Martin H. Bertram (St. Louis: Concordia, 1967), 195. Note that in the same paragraph Luther also said that "everything in heaven and on earth will

second world is the first one washed clean by water, so the third world will be the second one even more radically purged by fire."[19]

This idea of the continuation of the same earth through the Day of the Lord seems to disagree with Peter's statement that the judgment will result in "new heavens and a new earth, in which the righteous dwell" (2 Pet 3:13). How can the heavens and earth be "new" if they are the same objects which were created by God in Genesis? The word "new" in this passage, as in other passages that refer to the new heavens and earth, is καινός. This word is typically used when something is new in nature, superior, or distinctive. Had Peter meant to say that the new heavens and earth were something that had just appeared, or were new in time, he would most likely have used the word νέος. Notably, John's Revelation uses the word καινός in chapter 21 when describing the new heavens and earth, and the LXX uses the word καινός in Isaiah's description of the new heavens and earth in chapters 65 and 66.[20] Peter holds that the fate of the earth on the Day of the Lord is to be purified with fire, and to be renewed, not re-created. In order to be accepted as a normative view, however, the view must be evaluated in comparison with its larger canonical context.

Broader Canonical Perspective

In evaluating the restoration view of eschatology, the nature of the creation event should be considered first. God spoke everything into existence, and after he completed each phase of creation he declared the creation "good" (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25), with the creation of man being declared "very good" (Gen 1:31). The creation was unambiguously good before the Fall. This tends to point to an understanding that God

be reduced to powder and ashes." This is not inconsistent with the coming of judgment significantly changing the shape of the earth with regard to shape and form prior to divine renewal and does not support the idea that the earth and heaven will be completely obliterated. Luther's commentary on this passage seems to be much more concerned with the need to live rightly before the Lord because of the inevitability of judgment than in the degree of continuity of creation in the eschaton; however, annihilation seems beyond his intended meaning since he makes much of the previous judgment of sin on the earth through the flood.

[19] Wolters, "Worldview and Textual Criticism in 2 Peter 3:10," 405–8.

[20] *TDNT*, s.v. "καινός." See also Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (London: Macmillan, 1911), 275. Swete comments that καινός "suggests fresh life rising from the decay and wreck of the old world."

could conceivably want to renew and restore the world, rather than annihilate and re-create the world.

However, the goodness of creation did not remain uncorrupted. Shortly after the creation was complete and humanity was installed in the Garden of Eden, they were tempted by the serpent and disobeyed God's direction (Gen 3:1–7), which led directly to their banishment from the Garden and subjection to the curse. Adam's curse was not simply that he would die and that women would have pain in childbirth; nor did the curse stop with the serpent crawling on its belly. Rather, the whole of creation was cursed for man's sake, and previously unknown difficulties came into being (Gen 3:17–19).[21] Man was to work for his living among the thorns which sprung from the ground because of his sin. The creation's suffering is a pointer for man, to remind him that things are not the way that God created them and to point toward a renewal of all things (cf. Rom 8:18–25).

The renewal of the creation comes through Christ, as is pointed to in the so-called *protoevangelion* (Gen 3:15).[22] However, it can also be clearly seen in John's Gospel, "God so loved the κόσμος that he gave his only begotten son" (John 3:16). Κόσμος was commonly used in the New Testament to indicate the sum of all creation.[23] It seems possible that the significance of John's choice of words goes beyond the extent of the atonement to the grand redemption narrative that can be found throughout Scripture.[24] In fact, if Christ's ministry is not seen as the redemption of all things, then the careful preservation of every kind of animal through Noah's Ark is somewhat of a mystery. If God's plan was merely to save humanity, then he could have accomplished that by preserving man and

[21] Some translations render Gen 3:17 to say that the ground was cursed "because of you" (NASB, NIV, NLT, ESV, CEV, HCSB), while others read "for thy/your sake" (KJV, NKJV, ASV, *Young's Literal Translation*, *Darby Translation*). The latter seems a more likely rendering because it matches closely with Rom 8. The former rendering catches one aspect of the text, that man's sin was the cause of the ground's cursing, but it fails to get the second sense of the text, that it was for man's benefit that the ground was cursed. Wolters captures the main point of the passage when stating, "All of creation participates in the drama of man's fall and ultimate liberation in Christ. . . . This principle is a clear scriptural teaching" (*Creation Regained,* 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 56–57).

[22] Williams, *Far as the Curse Is Found*, 70.

[23] *TNDT*, s.v. κόσμος; Williams, *Far as the Curse is Found*, 59; Wolters, *Creation Regained*, 63–68.

[24] Derek Carlsen, "Redemption versus the Fall," *Christianity and Society* 14.4 (2005): 48.

only those animals that would be useful for man.[25]

Romans 8 describes the creation as being cursed "in hope" of being "set free from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom 8:20–21 NASB). According to Paul, creation was cursed by God for man's sake and will be restored when man is redeemed. Creation longs for the coming restoration just as Christians long for redemption. Paul does not recognize a coming destruction of the created order but a judgment followed by redemption. While Paul is using the longing of creation for restoration as a metaphor of the longing of Christians for the return of Christ, it seems unlikely that he would use an untrue example to prove his point. In view of passages such as these, one must raise the question of the meaning of other prophetic passages concerning the Day of the Lord.

Prophecy and Redemption

One verse which has been used to support the annihilation view is Mic 1:4. Micah's message was directed to a particular time and audience, but he uses language similar to Peter in describing the coming judgment. Fire is pictured in the judgment that Micah predicts for both man and creation, but notably the earth is melted, the surface of the earth is re-formed, and the end result is the destruction of evil in the world (Mic 1:1–4:13). As Samaria is judged, the marks of its existence are removed and made into fertile vineyards, pointing toward restoration, not destruction (Mic 1:6). Micah's book passes through judgment, the prediction of the Messiah, and into restoration which images the narrative of redemption found through Scripture.

Isaiah 24 offers a vivid picture of the coming judgment of the earth but seems far from depicting a total annihilation. Instead, Isaiah writes that the earth will be "broken asunder," "split through," and "shaken violently" (v. 19). At the end, however, the "Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem" (v. 23). It is on the same mountain that the kingdom will come to fruition, according to John's apocalypse. While the earth is dealt with violently, the same mountain is there for Christ to reign on after the judgment is complete.

A classic picture of the coming restored state is found in Isaiah's description of the new heavens and earth. Here Isaiah describes a part of the coming restoration in which creation exists along the same pattern as it does under the curse, except the goodness is restored. Death is no longer feared (Isa 65:20), man's work is not spoiled (Isa 65:23), and even

[25] Tigers and bears, for example, are traditionally dangers to humanity. If the point was to preserve only man, then the Ark's preservation could have gone forward with the preservation of a few assorted farm animals.

nearly all the animals are restored to their pre-Fall state. It is of interest that although "the former things will not be remembered" (Isa 65:17 NASB), the serpent will still exist in its post-Fall, dust-eating state (Isa 65:25), perhaps as a reminder of the greatness of God's restorative miracle which blots out the memory of the unpleasant past.

Malachi uses images of a fiery judgment, much like Peter. In Malachi, the Lord announces that "the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff. . . . But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings" (Mal 4:1–2). Evil will be burnt up, and healing will come for the righteous. The parallel to 2 Pet 3 seems altogether too close to be incidental.[26]

John's Revelation discusses the coming destruction and renewal of all things. In chapter 7, John writes that there are particular angels assigned to affect the creation but that their work is subject to God's timing (vv. 2–3). Also during an interlude in the narrative of judgment, a brief picture of restoration is offered, where people redeemed from the tribulation on the earth are shepherded by the Lamb and have tears wiped from their eyes (v. 17). There is judgment, but something is preserved out of judgment.

The restorational emphasis of God's greater work is revealed in the last chapters of Revelation. Because of its content, the discussion in Rev 21 is significant eschatologically, in terms of what will happen at the end of days, and it is also important christologically. It appears to connect the two theological categories. Speaking of the fate of all things in the *eschaton*, God says that he is "making all things new" (21:5). The word, again, is καινός, meaning to restore. Providing context for that, Rev 21:3–4 gives a telling indication of what is to come and what came to earth in Jesus as it says:

> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and he will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." (NASB)

This seems to resonate with John's words in his Gospel that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (1:14). It also reflects the entire narrative of the four Gospels, where every action of Christ, particularly the miracles, is restorative in nature.[27]

[26] Cf. Wolters, "Worldview and Textual Criticism in 2 Peter 3:10," 409.

[27] The exception to the restorative nature of the miracles is the pericope of

The Gospel as Renewal, Restoration, and Reconciliation

A clear statement of the gospel is that Christ lived on earth as a human, died on the cross, rose again, and bodily ascended to heaven in order to redeem, restore, and reconcile all things to God on man's behalf and for his own glory (1 Cor 15; Col 1:17–20). To an audience that is accustomed to defining the gospel as entirely concerned with individual redemption, this may appear to be a diversion from the pure gospel at best, or a perversion of the gospel at worst. However, given the idea that the culmination of Christ's work in the world, through the cross, is cosmic restoration, it may be seen that this definition of the gospel reflects the greater implications of Christ's work.

Consider the nature of the miracles that Christ performed. It has already been stated that they were primarily restorative in nature. What was the point of the miracles? Jesus himself stated that the things he did and taught were in accord with God's will and designed to magnify God's glory (John 7:16–18). This could lead to the idea that Jesus performed the miracles in order to demonstrate his power. Matthew 11:20–24 would tend to support that argument, but Christ's miracles were not flamboyant demonstrations of power. It is clear that Jesus did not do miracles mainly to get people to believe and to accept his power (Matt 13:58).[28] Instead, Jesus did miracles to affirm the faith of believers and to point them toward his greater purpose, as can be seen by considering the nature of Jesus's miracles.

A representative sampling of Jesus's miracles can include the following events: a paralytic was healed (Matt 9:1–8; Luke 5:18–26), the hemorrhaging woman was healed (Matt 9:20–22; Mark 5:25–34; Luke 8:43–48), the official's daughter was healed (Matt 9:18–19, 23–26; Mark 5:21–24, 35–43; Luke 8:40–42, 49–56), the blind were made to see (Matt 9:27–30;

the fig tree which was performed primarily to demonstrate the need for continual preparedness. A fair example of two different exegetical approaches to the parable of the fig tree may be seen in Allan J. McNicol, "The Lesson of the Fig Tree in Mark 13:28–32: A Comparison Between Two Exegetical Methodologies," *ResQ* 27.4 (1984): 193–207. As well, the pseudopigraphical interpretation of the parable provides some insight as to the early church's reading of the parable (Richard Bauckham, "The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter," *JBL* 104.2 (1985): 269–87.

[28] One might suppose that if Jesus's objective was to merely demonstrate that he was powerful, he might have done something like fly or shoot lightning bolts from his hands. In fact, he did none of those things and resisted the temptation of Satan to defy the natural order by leaping off the temple to be caught by angels (Matt 4:5–7).

12:22; 15:30; Mark 8:22–26; Luke 7:21; John 9:1–3), and evil spirits were cast out (Mark 5:1–15; Luke 8:26–38). The miracles were restorative in nature; they took a fallen state and worked to make it right for the glory of God. Jesus says in John 9:3 that the healing of that particular blind man was done to show the works of God. John 20:30–31 explicitly reveals that Jesus's miracles were performed and recorded so that people would believe—in other words, so that the restoration of individual souls would occur. Matthew 15:31 records that the results of the miracles was that people glorified the God of Israel. The miracles pointed toward who God is and caused people to give him glory; they are demonstrations of the fulfillment of the eschatological promise of the gospel.[29] All things will be made new, and that process began with Christ during his life on earth.[30]

The gospel as a restoration of all things can be seen in Paul's writings as well. Paul discusses salvation as a transfer from one kingdom to another in Col 1:3. In the very next verses, he goes on to discuss the fact that creation was for Christ, is held together by Christ, and that all things on heaven and earth are reconciled to God through Christ (Col 1:14–20). The redemption of the body and all of creation from Rom 8:18–22 was discussed above already. First Corinthians 15, which deals with the continuity of the present bodies of humans with the resurrected, eschatological bodies, also provides an excellent example of the restoration which is to come through Christ's redemptive work. These are just some of the examples that point toward the gospel as the redemption of all things.

The main point is not that the gospel is about cosmic restoration rather than individual salvation in the eschaton. Instead, the main point is that there will be both individual salvation and cosmic restoration on the Day of the Lord. The restoration view of eschatology helps to make sense of the entirety of the Scriptures: both the gospel for individuals and the gospel for all of creation. Looking forward to a restoration of the whole of creation has significant implications for environmental ethics.

Implications for Environmental Ethics

The preceding sections demonstrate why a restoration view of the fate of creation in the *eschaton* is a valid and preferable reading of 2 Pet 3:10; this section briefly explains why that eschatological view is significant for Christian environmental ethics. Geographer Janel Curry-Roper argues, "I

[29] Stephen S. Kim, "The Christological and Eschatological Significance of Jesus' Miracle in John 5," *BSac* 165 (2008): 420–23.

[30] Williams, *Far as the Curse Is Found*, 284–85; see also Hans Schwarz, "Eschatological Dimension of Ecology," *Zygon* 9.4 (1974): 333–35.

believe that eschatology is the most ecologically decisive component of a theological system. It influences adherent's actions and determines their views of mankind, their bodies, souls, and worldviews."[31] Curry-Roper joins a chorus of environmental activists in her idea that the annihilation view of the fate of creation has negative implications for environmental ethics.[32]

Such pessimism about the potential for environmental ethics among those who affirm annihilation of the creation is warranted but often overstated. The clear majority of conservative evangelicals who publicly argue in favor of creation care affirm a restoration view of eschatology.[33] The opposite statement is not necessarily true, however. That is, to affirm an annihilationist eschatological perspective does not encourage active abuse or even neglect of the environment.[34] At the same time, critics are right to note that an expectation of complete destruction and re-creation *ex nihilo* does tend to consign creation care to a second-order issue, often well behind personal evangelism and even other social issues like abortion and religious liberty. Thus, the recovery of a restoration view of eschatology is important both as a generic pursuit of truth and because that perspective has potential for encouraging appropriate participation in environmental activism.

The restoration view has at least three significant benefits for the pursuit of environmental ethics. First, it encourages a proper valuation of creation. An annihilation view encourages the view of creation as a temporary reality given by God primarily for human use. It is clear that Scripture affirms that creation has *instrumental* value for human usage, but it

[31] Janel M. Curry-Roper, "Contemporary Christian Eschatologies and Their Relation to Environmental Stewardship," *Professional Geographer* 42.2 (1990): 159.

[32] E.g., Stephan Skrimshire, "Eschatology," in *Systematic Theology and Climate Change: Ecumenical Perspectives*, ed. Michael S. Northcott and Peter M. Scott (New York: Routledge, 2014), 162; Bernard Daley Zaleha and Andrew Szasz, "Why Conservative Christians Don't Believe in Climate Change," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 71.5 (2015): 19–30; Barbara R. Rossing, "'Hastening the Day' When the Earth Will Burn? Global Warming, Revelation and 2 Peter 3," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 35.5 (2008): 363–73.

[33] Katherine Wilkinson, *Between God and Green: How Evangelicals Are Cultivating a Middle Ground on Climate Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 58.

[34] Contra Rossing, "'Hastening the Day' When the Earth Will Burn?": 368–69; Michael Northcott, "The Dominion Lie: How Millennial Theology Erodes Creation Care," in *Diversity and Dominion: Dialogues in Ecology, Ethics, and Theology*, ed. Kyle S. Van Houtan and Michael S. Northcott (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2010), 94–96.

also has *inherent* value as it points humans toward enjoyment of God.[35] As Wolters states in colloquial terms, "God does not make junk, and he does not junk what he has made."[36] Just as people are more likely to treat heirloom china with more care than disposable flatware, so Christians are more likely to pursue the holistic well-being of the environment if they see that it has permanent value pointing toward God's greatness.

Second, the restoration view of eschatology encourages a moderation of extreme environmentalism because it anticipates God's action in the restoration of all things. A common failure of some forms of environmental ethics is the expectation of a re-pristination of the created order; that is, some environmentalists see the goal of environmental action as totally eliminating the impact of humans on the environment through human action.[37] Often this extreme expectation results in misanthropy, sometimes including support for abortion as a means to reduce human impact on nature.[38] In contrast, a restoration eschatology that anticipates the continuity of both human and non-human creation provides an impetus to pursue what Francis Schaeffer calls "substantial healing," which "conveys the idea of a healing that is not *perfect*, but nevertheless is real and evident."[39] As Rom 8:18–24 affirms, all of creation is anticipating a future completion of the redemptive process through the supernatural work of God. A restoration view of eschatology encourages human effort toward "treating nature now in the direction of the way nature will be then," but it recognizes the impossibility of complete attainment of that redemption apart from God's unique restorative act in the *eschaton*.[40]

Third, a restoration view of eschatology tends to encourage a more hopeful eschatology that engenders pursuit of social goods including and beyond creation care. An annihilation view of eschatology allows (though it certainly does not require) a preference toward personal redemption over efforts toward social goods that, in small form, exemplify the nature

[35] Andrew J. Spencer, "The Inherent Value of the Created Order: Toward A Recovery of Augustine for Environmental Ethics," *Theoecology Journal* 3 (2014): 1–17.

[36] Wolters, *Creation Regained*, 49.

[37] For example, see James Hefferman, "Why Wilderness?: John Muir's 'Deep Ecology'," in *John Muir, Life and Work*, ed. Sally M. Miller (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 102–16.

[38] E.g., Commission of Population Growth, *Population and the American Future* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), 78.

[39] Francis Schaeffer, "Pollution and the Death of Man," in *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1985), 5:39.

[40] Ibid.

of the coming cosmic restoration. By affirming the permanent goodness of creation, the restoration view more forcefully encourages participation in both personal evangelism and work for the common good, including creation care. A restoration view of eschatology elevates Christ's restorative works to the status of examples Christians are called to emulate within the limits of human capacity in the near term, rather than leaving Christ's miracles as merely signs of his perfect dominion of nature. This perspective applies Peter's encouragement to live "lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming day of God" to both our personal and social ethics as "we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Pet 3:11–13 ESV).

Assuming a creation-positive Christian environmental ethics is warranted, the restoration view of eschatology provides the best foundation for it. The expectation of God's imminent work in renovating the created order encourages Christians to ascribe appropriate value to the created order, to engage in restorative work in both human and non-human portions of nature, and limits the expectation of the immediate impact of human efforts, which in turn tends to mitigate the sometimes-misanthropic tendencies of popular environmental ethics.

Conclusion

The textual support for the restoration reading of 2 Pet 3 should ensure that perspective on the fate of creation in the *eschaton* continues to be included in discussions in the future. Given the canonical support for the restoration view, there is additional reason to favor that interpretation of such a key eschatological passage of Scripture. In light of the textual and contextual arguments favoring a restoration view on the fate of creation in the *eschaton*, this essay has argued that the restoration view is important as it leads to a proper valuation of creation and encourages participation in creation care within a broader Christian social ethic.

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Gleanings from the John H. Sailhamer Papers at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

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The personal papers of Dr. John H. Sailhamer are housed in the archives at the Library at Southeastern Seminary and are available for study and research. This voluminous collection is comprised of over 2,200 items that span his 36-year teaching career (1974–2010). Particularly valuable are his class notes and unpublished drafts. Viewed against the backdrop of his published work, these materials provide additional insight into Sailhamer's thought and scholarship because they sometimes deal with topics that were not treated (or treated in as much detail) in his published work. They also show the development of his thought on some issues. Further research would undoubtedly reveal even more about the ideas of this eminent evangelical OT scholar.

Key Words: development of thought, gleanings, John Sailhamer, research, Southeastern Seminary, unpublished papers

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is fourfold: (1) to raise awareness of the John H. Sailhamer papers and their value for research purposes, (2) to provide a brief orientation to these papers as an aid to their use, (3) to share gleanings from my research in these materials, and (4) to suggest areas of further research.[1]

[1] I would like to thank Tracy McKenzie, Seth Postell, and Chris Chen for providing feedback on earlier versions of this article. The writing of this article would not have been possible without the support of Union University (for granting sabbatical leave for fall semester 2017), Southeastern Seminary (for accepting me as a Visiting Scholar for part of that time), and Patty Sailhamer (for providing invaluable input, giving her husband's personal library to Southeastern, and giving me access to additional files at their home in Fullerton, CA). Ray Lubeck and Chris Chen also graciously shared their own copies of Sailhamer-related notes with me.

The John H. Sailhamer Papers and Their Value

Dr. John H. Sailhamer (1946–2017) was a leading evangelical Old Testament and Hebrew scholar who taught at Southeastern from 1999–2006. It was his second-to-last institution during his illustrious 36-year career. His passing on January 9, 2017 brought about a renewed reflection on his life and scholarship. In a written statement read at his memorial service, Walter Kaiser remarked, "John Sailhamer was always one of my closest friends and a real source of theological stimulation."[2] This service also included written statements by Chuck Swindoll, Wayne Grudem, and John Piper, who called Sailhamer's life "a great life" and credited him with assisting him in sermon preparation, encouraging him during the Open Theism controversy, and supporting his "wild idea" to start a seminary.[3] In a video recording that was part of a separate remembrance service at Sailhamer's last institution, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (now Gateway Seminary), four-time colleague David Howard, Jr. called him "a great influence on me" and "one of the brightest people I've ever met."[4] Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Seminary, called him "the quintessential Christian scholar" whose classroom teaching was "truly legendary."[5]

Sailhamer's impact on Southeastern Seminary continues to this day through his colleagues and former students who are now faculty or staff there. This impact also includes his personal library, which was generously donated to the seminary library by his wife Patty. Whereas his books are kept in the Sailhamer Room, his personal papers are kept in the archives, where they are available for research purposes. The content includes class notes, unpublished drafts, journal articles, correspondence, and even a few fascinating artifacts. They amount to 15 record cartons (1 cubic foot each) and contain over 2,200 items.

These papers provide a unique view into Sailhamer's life and scholarship. Although his scholarship should be understood first and foremost through his publications and classroom teaching, his papers sometimes

[2] This statement was printed and displayed at the service. Photo in author's possession.

[3] These statements were also printed and displayed at the service. Photos in author's possession.

[4] https://vimeo.com/201295458/3be7538ad3 (accessed 9/21/17). See the 1:23 mark.

[5] https://www.sebts.edu/news-and-events/headlines/2017/01/SP16_Sailhamer.aspx (accessed 9/21/17).

provide a fascinating additional perspective. Sailhamer was known for revising his material for a long time (sometimes for years) before publishing it. His papers, for example, contain drafts of *Genesis Unbound*,[6] which were likely worked and re-worked. Furthermore, Sailhamer's knowledge, which obviously included his published material, far exceeded it. Nowhere is this more evident than in the various sets of class notes that he used for teaching and sometimes distributed to his students at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School,[7] Western Seminary, Southeastern, and Golden Gate. From the time he started teaching while a Ph.D. student at UCLA in the mid-1970s, his class notes were composed in complete sentences and organized according to a clear outline. As a result, the ideas expressed in such notes, which he continued to compose throughout his entire career, are comprehensible to researchers. His thoroughness and clarity are posterity's gain. Often themselves reflecting re-working and updated versions, his class notes were used for courses such as Hebrew Syntax, Habakkuk, the Psalms, Hermeneutics, Isaiah, and other subjects that were never given the full-length treatment in his publications that they received in a classroom setting. Much of the material from his notes, especially on the Pentateuch and Old Testament theology (with a healthy dose of hermeneutics folded in), eventually did, of course, find extended published expression. On the other hand, it is also true that much of his material did not.

Even though the latter material should be assumed to be unfinished and interpreted in the context of his published work, it is these class notes along with his other unpublished drafts that are the most valuable for biblical studies as a record of Sailhamer's views on certain matters. Moreover, because of the different versions of these notes and the ability to date some of them (see "Orientation" below), they also at times suggest the development of his thought on particular issues (see "Gleanings" below), especially during the period before his first well-known work was published in 1992, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (his commentary on Chronicles was published in 1983 and a few articles were also published during this period). Sometimes specific influences on his thought can likewise be detected through his citation of secondary literature in these notes or suggested through the mere presence of a journal article that he kept together with a particular set of class notes.

[6] Box 4, Folder 19 and Box 13, Folders 4–5, 11, John H. Sailhamer papers, Archives and Special Collections, Library at Southeastern, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC. All citations of box and folder in this article are with respect to these papers.

[7] Based on the experiences of two of his former students at Trinity, Joe Wong and Ray Lubeck.

A Brief Orientation to the John H. Sailhamer Papers

As mentioned above, the John H. Sailhamer papers are voluminous, amounting to over 2,200 items and comprising thousands upon thousands of pages. With so much material, it may be helpful to provide a brief orientation to those who might want to use them for their own study, teaching, and/or research. The starting point is the helpful online "Finding Aid" created by the archives staff at Southeastern Seminary.[8] This searchable spreadsheet lists every item by box number and folder number, along with its date (if known), type (e.g., class notes, manuscript, etc.), and title/subject. The items listed vary in length, some being just a single page, others a thick stack of class notes or book manuscript, and many in between. The majority of the most valuable material for researchers is contained in Boxes 1–4 and 12–14. The other boxes contain mainly unannotated secondary literature (Boxes 5–11), although they do contain some annotated secondary literature (e.g., Box 7, Folders, 1–4, 36–37; Box 9, Folders 3, 7, 12, 16; Box 11, Folders 1, 2, and 5) and some of Sailhamer's own notes (e.g., Box 7, Folder 18; Box 8, Folder 27; Box 11, Folder 5).

Although most of Sailhamer's papers are undated, the physical appearance of the particular paper used for various notes gives a general indication of its age.[9] The naked eye can easily tell that some paper is newer, and some is quite old. Furthermore, Sailhamer often used certain types of scratch paper that his family has identified as belonging to certain periods of his life. For example, the "banana paper" and "California Car[t]age Co." paper, whose physical appearance already appears to be older, has been linked to the period of his pre-dissertation doctoral studies at UCLA (1974–1978) prior to taking a full-time teaching position at Bethel College in Minnesota. Being from the pre-personal computer age, the blank side of this kind of paper was often used for handwritten class notes. Another type of scratch paper that Sailhamer often used was Bethel Theological Seminary letterhead, which always for some reason bore the name "Robert A. Guelich," a former professor of New Testament Language and Literature who later taught at Fuller Seminary and died in 1991.[10] The blank

[8] http://library.sebts.edu/archives/sailhamer (accessed 12/15/17). I would like to thank Steve Jones, archivist at Southeastern, for his support of this project, including giving input on this section of the article and facilitating the reproduction of selected materials for my research.

[9] These visual cues are currently being used by archives staff at Southeastern to add approximate dates to undated materials as they update the finding aid and prepare portions of the collection for digitization.

[10] http://articles.latimes.com/1991-07-13/news/mn-1669_1_professor-at-

side of this type of scratch paper was used for handwritten notes (e.g., Box 1, Folder 24; Box 13, Folder 16) or typewritten notes (e.g., Box 3, Folder 8). In some cases, in addition to suggesting an approximate date for the original production of certain class notes, it should be observed that sometimes class notes handwritten on these identifiable types of scratch paper were apparently re-used in courses taught during a later period of his career.[11]

Incidentally, Sailhamer's production of his class notes (and in some cases, books) in this way from earlier "source" material generally parallels his view of the "composition" of biblical books and of the Tanak.[12] Two more suggestive parallels between Sailhamer's scholarly practice and his views on Scripture are: (1) his belief in "punctuated equilibrium" related to the formation of the Tanak[13] and possible "punctuated equilibrium" in his own thinking, especially as it relates to creative breakthroughs, and (2) his belief that the Masoretic text has "postbiblical layers"[14] and his own heavily annotated Hebrew Bible (these annotations being another "postbiblical layer" in themselves) that he used throughout his career.[15]

The development of printing technology is also reflected in the various types of printer paper used for printed class notes. Older style ("continuous feed") printer paper is serially attached on its short (horizontal) edges, and its long (vertical) edges have detachable paper strips with holes used to guide the paper through the printer. After a document is printed, these strips are manually removed and each sheet of paper manually detached from the sheets of paper preceding and following. The detachment along

fuller-seminary (accessed 9/22/17).

[11] E.g., Box 14, Folder 10 includes two sheets of "Bethel paper" in notes for a course taught at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; Box 14, Folder 16 includes handwritten notes on "banana paper" in notes for a course taught at Philadelphia College of the Bible in 1995.

[12] E.g., Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009), 22–23, 28, 54–56. This parallel has also been pointed out by James M. Hamilton, "John Sailhamer's *The Meaning of the Pentateuch:* A Review Essay," *SBJT* 14.2 (2010): 64, "Sailhamer's emphasis on compositional strategy and his focus on intertextuality actually prompted me to wonder whether he was imitating the Bible itself in the composition of his own book."

[13] See handwritten outline and diagram in Box 13, Folder 41 (left hand margin); handwritten illustration of "New Testament Background" in Box 14, Folder 46; "Biblical Theology and Composition of the Hebrew Bible," in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Scott Hafemann (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 30–31.

[14] Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 217.

[15] This Bible remains at the Sailhamer's home in Fullerton, CA.

all four edges of this older printer paper is observable to the naked eye in some of Sailhamer's notes. There even appears to be at least two subtypes of this general kind of older printer paper, judging from the different appearances of the edges and the different kind of printing on the paper (see Box 1, Folder 21; Box 2, Folders 2–4, 6, 9). The older and lower print quality of the two appears to be the product of a dot matrix printer. Although "continuous feed" printer paper is still in use today, it has long since become uncommon in homes and offices. This allows for an approximate dating of the original printing of these kinds of materials in Sailhamer's papers. They are frequently found during his Trinity Evangelical Divinity School era (1983–1994). Relatedly, there is also the rare appearance of yellow scratch paper indicated as being from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (e.g., Box 1, Folder 27). What we consider today to be modern printer paper and modern print (laser) quality is typical for class notes sometimes distributed for courses at Western, Southeastern, and Golden Gate. While the irony of attempting to date Sailhamer's papers is not lost on us (he recognized the inherent difficulty of dating some of the material in the Bible and sometimes hesitated to affix a precise date to them), the approximate dating of some of Sailhamer's undated papers remains possible and helpful for research purposes.

Relatedly, it would be helpful for the researcher to know the general timeline of Sailhamer's teaching career. It began on a part-time basis while he was in Southern California during the pre-dissertation phase of his Ph.D. studies at UCLA (1974–1978). He then took a full-time teaching post at Bethel College and then Bethel Seminary (1978–1983). His longest teaching position was at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (1983–1994). From 1994–1999, Sailhamer commuted to teach for one year at Philadelphia College of the Bible (1994–1995) and then lived in Minnesota four years (1995–1999). During the latter period, he was a scholar-in-residence at Northwestern College in St. Paul, MN (1995–1998) and traveled at various times to teach at Western Seminary (which continued on a visiting basis even during his years at Southeastern and Golden Gate). His last two full-time teaching positions were at Southeastern (1999–2006) and Golden Gate (2007–2010).[16] His retirement period (2010–2017), induced by challenges to his health, coincided with the end of his scholarly endeavors.

[16] For a longer biographical essay by his wife Patty, see "Biography of John H. Sailhamer," in *Text and Canon: Essays in Honor of John H. Sailhamer*, eds. Robert L. Cole and Paul J. Kissling (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2017), xi–xvi.

Gleanings from the John H. Sailhamer Papers

In the process of going through a large portion of the most valuable boxes for researchers (Boxes 1–4 and 12–14), I discovered several fascinating things in the John H. Sailhamer papers. One, though comprising only a small percentage of these papers, is scholarly correspondence and/or files that concern or were produced by especially valued colleagues. For example, Walter Kaiser, who was Sailhamer's dean at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, wrote a memo concerning a tentative reading list for Ph.D. candidates in Old Testament, which is found in Box 14, Folder 40. In one unpublished manuscript, Sailhamer asks, "Is Walt Kaiser an Evangelical Frei?" though he does not explore the question further (Box 13, Folder 14). In another, Sailhamer provides a nine-page biography of Kaiser (Box 14, Folder 29), an earlier version of the one published in *Bible Interpreters of the Twentieth Century: A Selection of Evangelical Voices*.[17] These elements confirm and illustrate Kaiser's comments on their close friendship cited above. Likewise, Bruce Waltke, whom Sailhamer calls "my friend and mentor" on the dedication page of his *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, is similarly represented.[18] In an envelope postmarked September 21, 2007, when Sailhamer was at Golden Gate, Waltke, then at Regent College in Vancouver, had evidently sent a dissertation on Exodus 1–24 to Sailhamer's attention (Box 14, Folder 33). About twenty months prior (January 24, 2006), a portion of Waltke's manuscript from his magnum opus, *An Old Testament Theology*,[19] had been sent to Sailhamer from Zondervan for his endorsement (Box 2, Folder 14). Sailhamer had been a student of Waltke's at Dallas Theological Seminary and even kept class notes that he had handwritten in 1971 on binder paper while a student in Waltke's Old Testament Introduction class (Box 13, Folder 57). Sailhamer also adapted some of Waltke's material when he started teaching Hebrew (Box 1, Folder 16). Sailhamer would contribute articles to

[17] Sailhamer, "Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.," in *Bible Interpreters of the Twentieth Century: A Selection of Evangelical Voices*, ed. Walter Elwell and J. D. Weaver (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 376–87. The article begins on p. 375 with an introductory section on Kaiser's "Life and Times" that is not included in the version in Box 14, Folder 29. The published version also shows evidence of additional editing.

[18] See the preface to *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 5–6, which specifically highlights Waltke and Kaiser. Of Waltke, he said, "To have studied with this scholar is a rare privilege." Of Kaiser, he said, "Both in his writings and in personal conversation, Dr. Kaiser has taught me much about the theology of the OT."

[19] Bruce Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).

Festschriften for both Waltke and Kaiser.[20] He also contributed to one for Gleason Archer.[21]

Besides those that concern Kaiser and Waltke, Sailhamer's papers also contain several articles and sermon manuscripts by John Piper (see especially Box 5, Folder 3–6; also Box 11, Folder 31; Box 13, Folder 46), four articles and a presentation outline by Wayne Grudem (Box 12, Folder 3; Box 14, Folder 17), and what appear to be three transcripts of sermons by John MacArthur, Jr. (Box 14, Folder 30).[22] Sailhamer's papers do not contain multiple works from many evangelical contemporaries, so his filing away of these works is suggestive of his respect for these colleagues. His collegiality is also evident through correspondence concerning a dinner and discussion that was hosted in his home during his time at Trinity for Chicago-area Old Testament scholars on January 22, 1990 (Box 13, Folder 38). Attendees included Kaiser, Archer, Terence Fretheim, Jack Lundbom, Edward "Ted" Campbell (McCormick Seminary), Eugene Roop (Bethany Seminary), Wesley Fuerst (Lutheran School of Theology), and Leslie Hoppe (Catholic Theological Union). Ralph Klein was invited but wrote a letter explaining why he could not attend.

Sailhamer's papers also reveal influences on his thought. In conjunction with his collection of books, the secondary literature that he kept on file, which make up most of Boxes 5–11, were probably pieces that he felt

[20] See "A Wisdom Composition of the Pentateuch?," in *The Way of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Bruce K. Waltke*, ed. J. I. Packer and Sven K. Soderlund (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 15–35; "Preaching from the Prophets," in *Preaching the Old Testament*, ed. Scott M. Gibson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 115–36. Sailhamer kept copies of both articles in his own files as well (see Box 2, Folder 11, 31; Box 4, Folder 8).

[21] See "Exegesis of the Old Testament as a Text," in *A Tribute to Gleason Archer*, ed. Walter Kaiser and Ronald Youngblood (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 279–96. Copies of this essay are also found in Box 2, Folder 11; Box 3, Folders 1, 11.

[22] The one entitled, "Preaching the Word in and out of Season" almost exactly matches the sermon transcript of "Preaching the Word in and [sic] Out-of-Season Culture" posted here: https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/ 80-226/preaching-the-word-in-and-outofseason-culture (accessed 12/18/17). Likewise, "Insight into a Pastor's Heart—Part 1" almost exactly matches the sermon transcript posted here: https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/GTY71/insight-into-a-pastors-heart-part-1 (accessed 12/18/17). Similarly, "Insight into a Pastor's Heart—Part 2" almost exactly matches the sermon transcript posted here: https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/GTY72/ insight-into-a-pastors-heart-part-2 (accessed 12/18/17). During his UCLA days, Sailhamer taught for John MacArthur's LOGOS Bible Study Center at Grace Community Church.

were worth keeping and having readily accessible. Occasionally, an article has been instead placed together with class notes, which suggests its special importance for that subject. One example of this is F. F. Bruce's article, "The Earliest Interpretation of the Old Testament,"[23] which is found in Box 2, Folder 1 in a section of Sailhamer's papers that focuses on biblical interpretation. Bruce's interest is in "that [interpretation] which is found within the Hebrew Scriptures themselves,"[24] including "the reinterpretation of earlier prophecy by later prophets."[25] The first example Bruce considers is Gog, concerning whom Ezek 38:17 "plainly announced that Gog's invasion of the Holy Land has been foretold by earlier prophets, although not under the same name."[26] In Sailhamer's published work, he agrees with Bruce's main observation about Ezek 38:17 while differing with his qualification, "although not under the same name." Sailhamer finds Gog by name in Num 24:7 LXX and other ancient versions.[27] Bruce thinks that Gog has been "introduced . . . in spite of his absence from the Hebrew text."[28] The "eschatological interpretation" that Bruce thinks is not original and has been "placed upon the words" in the LXX[29] Sailhamer instead sees as fitting the literary context.[30] In Dan 11, Bruce also notes the connection between Gog and the "king of the north" who is suddenly destroyed in the land of Israel (vv. 40–45) and the interpretation of the "ships from Kittim" in Num 24:23 with reference to Roman ships in Dan 11:30.[31] Sailhamer also discusses Num 24:23–24 in relation to Dan 11:30.[32] Although Sailhamer did not cite Bruce's article, perhaps because his own position was sufficiently distinct, the preceding considerations suggest that this article played a role in the development

[23] F. F. Bruce, "The Earliest Interpretation of the Old Testament," in *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 17 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 37–52.

[24] Ibid., 37.

[25] Ibid., 38.

[26] Ibid. Bruce cites Isaiah's prophecies concerning the Assyrians (Isa 10:32; 31:8; 37:29) and Jer 4:6–29, which may concern the Scythians, who "come from the same general area as Gog and his allies."

[27] Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 244–45.

[28] Bruce, "The Earliest Old Testament Interpretation," 40.

[29] Ibid., 41.

[30] Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 409, "this last oracle of Balaam [Num 24:23–24] appears to place the scope of his oracles too far in the future to be a reference to the reign of David." Also see *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 245.

[31] Bruce, "The Earliest Old Testament Interpretation," 42.

[32] Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 409; idem, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 49, 201, 222.

of Sailhamer's thinking and work. Daniel 11 and Ezek 38 are especially highlighted in his 2000 article for the *Bulletin for Biblical Research*,[33] and his attention to Num 24 goes as far back as his days as a Ph.D. student at UCLA.[34]

Another example is Sailhamer's citation of "Greenberg" (no work cited) regarding the interpretation of the divine name in Exod 3:14 as meaning, "I am who is (with you)," in his handwritten class notes (Box 13, Folder 53). This interpretation is similarly found in *The Pentateuch as Narrative*,

> The Lord's reply, "I am who I am," may be paraphrased as, "It is I who am with you." . . . the name of God, "Yahweh," is meant to convey the sense of "he who is present" or "he who has promised to be present with his people." In giving his name to Moses, then, God not only promised to be present with him and his people but also recalled the promise itself: "he who is with us."[35]

Though Sailhamer cites Cassuto instead, Moshe Greenberg's *Understanding Exodus* may also have been a source for Sailhamer's view on the divine name. Greenberg comments, "Perhaps the simplest way to take it is as expressing the essence of the phrase *'ehye 'immak* (verse 12): "[My name is] *'ehye* (for the ellipsis cf. Gen. 23:28b), for/in that I will be/am (present). . . . The significance of the name is, accordingly, 'the present one, he who is there.'"[36]

One of the most interesting things that can be gleaned from the John H. Sailhamer papers is evidence of the development of his thought. The observations I make in the following are only a sampling of what his papers could reveal about this broad topic (see "Areas for Further Research"

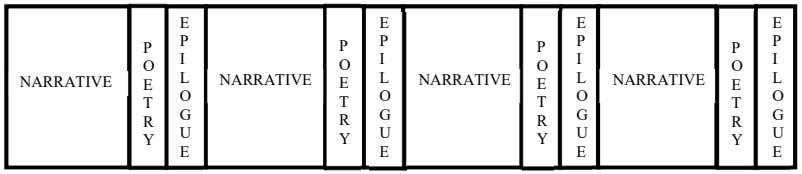
[33] Sailhamer, "Creation, Genesis 1–11, and the Canon," *BBR* 10 (2000): 91.

[34] Secondary literature on Num 24 is found grouped with notes from his days as a Ph.D. student at UCLA. This material is currently on file at Sailhamer's home in Fullerton, CA and includes commentary by H. Holzinger, *Numeri* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1903); Julius Wellhausen, *Die Komposition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments*, 4th ed. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1963); Dillman on Num 24:7–19, source unspecified (perhaps *Die Bücher Numeri, Deuteronomium und Josue* [Leipzig: Hirzel, 1886], in the series, *Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament*). Sailhamer's notecard box that he used to file notes for his dissertation on the translation of verbs in Ps 3–41 LXX also has sections for Num 23–24 and other major poems in the OT, including Gen 49, Deut 32–33, Judg 5, and 1 Sam 2:1–10.

[35] Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 246.

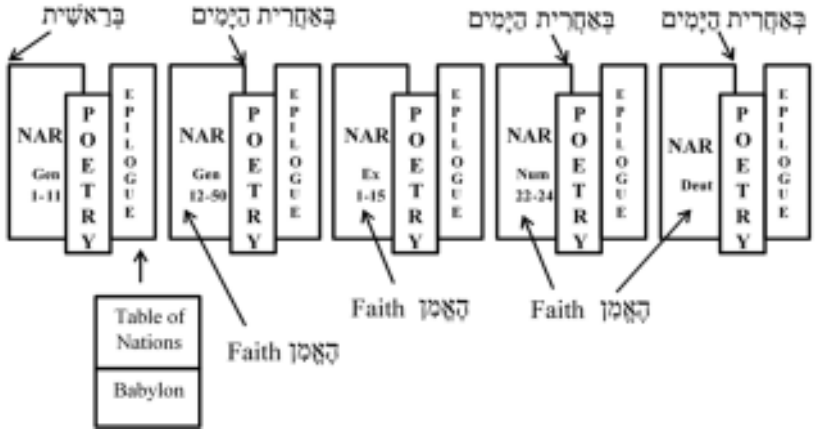
[36] Moshe Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus*, The Heritage of Biblical Israel (New York: Behrman House, 1969), 81–82.

below). I limit myself to several examples that can be dealt with relatively briefly. Particularly notable are Sailhamer's earlier, unpublished proposals for the structure of the Pentateuch. One of the hallmarks of his published work on the Pentateuch is an argument for its overall structure as a sequence of narrative, poetry, and epilogue that repeats four times.[37]



The first narrative-poetry-epilogue sequence corresponds to Gen 1–50, the second to Exod 1:1–15:21, the third to Exod 15:22–Num 24:25, and the fourth to Num 25–Deut 34. With the exception of the second section of poetry (Exod 15:1–18), he argues that the other three poetic sections (Gen 49; Num 23–24; Deut 32–33) contain Messianic prophecy in connection with the phrase "in the last days" (Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Deut 31:29). This a key piece of his argument that the message of the Pentateuch centers on the Messiah.

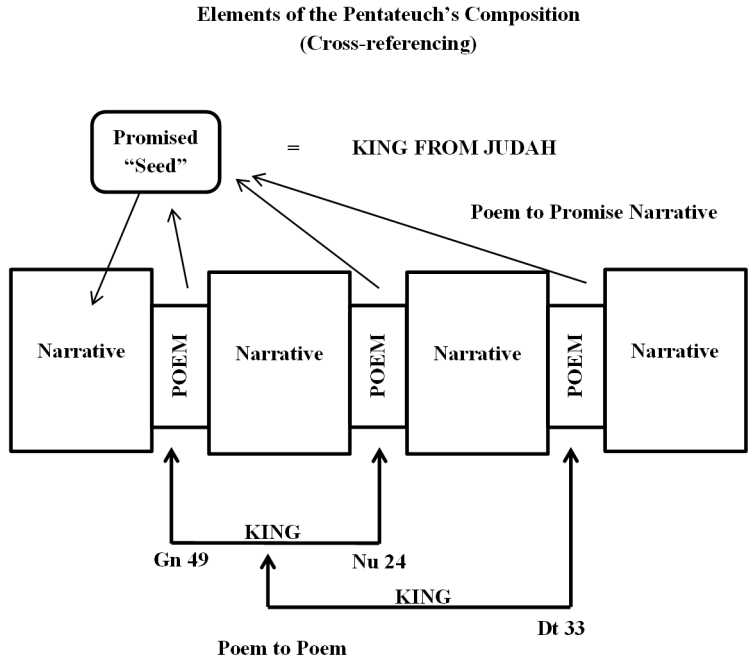
However, in Box 13, Folder 3, there is a diagram he produced that describes the Pentateuch in terms of *five* repetitions of the narrative-poetry-epilogue sequence.



[37] *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 35–37; *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 210–12; *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 36. The diagram below is not found in these works. I produced it to reflect his published work and as a point of comparison to the two other diagrams below.

What was the first sequence in his published work (Gen 1–50) used to be broken into two (Gen 1–11, Gen 12–50).[38]

Though perhaps not intended to give as much detail as some of his other diagrams of the structure of the Pentateuch, a different diagram in Box 14, Folder 6 illustrates this structure in terms of four narrative blocks (consistent with his published work) but only three major poems (and no epilogues). Exodus 15:1–18, which appears neither with the phrase "in the last days" or a Messianic prophecy, is absent.



Evidently, Sailhamer gave extensive thought to the structure of the Pentateuch even to the point of revising earlier proposals that he had probably shared in class.[39]

Another striking example arises from his discussion of Hittite treaties

[38] Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 323, would later describe the compositional strategy of Gen 1–11 as "extend[ing] through the whole of the Pentateuch." See also pp. 34–36. For earlier published syntheses, see *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 35; *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 210; "Creation, Genesis 1–11, and the Canon," 89–106.

[39] The two diagrams in this paragraph were re-created by Alysha Clark based on photos of the originals.

in relation to biblical covenants in some earlier class notes probably from his UCLA days (e.g., Box 13, Folders 2, 6, 46). In the summary paragraph of a five-page document on "Covenant Forms in Israel," Sailhamer writes, "Israel enjoyed a special relationship with God in which God was the Great King and Israel was His obedient vassal" (Box 13, Folder 2). This document also points out similarities between suzerain-vassal treaties and the Mosaic covenant (Exod 19–24), the book of Deuteronomy as a whole, and the covenant renewal at Shechem in Josh 23–24. Though this has been commonly done by evangelical OT scholars, this is surprising for Sailhamer because of the emphasis in his published work on the biblical text as the "inspired locus of divine revelation."[40] Obviously, his use of such extra-biblical background information in this way in his earliest class notes is inconsistent with this emphasis in his published work, which came later.

Before concluding that Sailhamer contradicted himself on this issue, the timing of the publication of Hans Frei's *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* in 1974 and its influence on Sailhamer must be taken into account.[41] Twenty years after its publication in an article for *Criswell Theological Review*, he recollected,

> As I now look back on it, the point where my biblical "cosmic map" was "almost lost" was at the point where the idea entered my head that the study of ancient near East history would help me understand the Bible. Thus it was to understand the Bible that I went off to study the ancient Near East. For me personally it was a very fortunate thing indeed that the same year I entered graduate school, Yale University Press saw fit to publish a book written by Hans Frei entitled *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative*. It was that book which rescued my biblical "cosmic map."[42]

In light of his early class notes, which not only cited Mendenhall's work on Hittite treaties but at other points also used extra-biblical historical background for exegesis,[43] it seems that the implications of Frei's

[40] E.g., Sailhamer, "Johann August Ernesti: The Role of History in Biblical Interpretation," *JETS* 44 (2001): 193–206.

[41] Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1974).

[42] Sailhamer, "Cosmic Maps, Prophecy Charts, and the Hollywood Movie, A Biblical Realist Looks at the Eclipse of Old Testament Narrative," *CTR* 7.2 (1994): 73.

[43] See the discussion of barrenness in the ancient world related to Sarah and Hagar in Gen 16 in Box 13, Folder 2. See also Box 13, Folders 12–13. Box 13, Folder 59 contains a syllabus for an Old Testament Introduction class printed on Bethel Seminary scratch paper and which has the 1981 edition of John Bright's, *A History of Israel*, as a required textbook.

work, which Sailhamer's comments above suggest that he had read not long after its publication, gradually but steadily impacted his thinking. Indeed, his later notes as well as his published work move away from the use of Hittite treaties to explain biblical covenants.[44] Significantly, Box 13, Folder 8 largely contains materials related to Hans Frei's *Eclipse*. Included is a manuscript of a paper on Frei by Marvin Anderson in January 1982 for a Bethel Seminary faculty seminar. Also included in this folder are Sailhamer's handwritten notes on binder paper on Frei's *Eclipse*, which seem to have been the basis for his unpublished typewritten response to Frei's book also contained in this folder. Given that it was typed on Bethel Seminary scratch paper and cites Roland Barthes in a 1980 issue of *Critical Inquiry*, this response likely came from the same general period as the faculty seminar on the same topic. Though I cannot be sure without further evidence, perhaps it was around this time that Frei's ideas further solidified in Sailhamer's thinking.

A gradual impact of Frei's *Eclipse* on Sailhamer's thinking can also be detected in his earlier notes on "Basic Hermeneutical Principles" (Box 13, Folder 13). The fifth of these principles is that Scripture "should be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context." The sixth principle is that it "should be interpreted in the light of the unified advancing of the divine revelation." He also allows for "rare" instances of *sensus plenior*. In early handwritten notes for a Christology course in Fall 1974 (Box 14, Folder 15), Sailhamer even has eight pages of notes on typology.[45]

[44] See *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 281–96, which in its extended discussion of Exod 19–24 only passingly refers to a possible parallel between the stone tablets in Exod 24:12 and the fact that "some treaty documents in the ancient world required two copies." There are no other references to ancient treaties in this section of his book, though see also his reference to the suzerain-vassal relationship on p. 27 and his use of ANE law codes on p. 64. Relatedly, Sailhamer notes that the plastering of stones prior to writing on them in Deut 27:2 "was a common method for public monuments in ancient Canaan" and provides the appropriate citation (p. 470). George Mendenhall's "Ancient Oriental and Biblical Law," *Biblical Archaeologist* 17.2 (1954): 26–46, is cited on p. 63 but with reference to the distinction between "legal action" (or "technique") and "legal policy," not with reference to Hittite treaties (see Mendenhall's "Covenant Forms in Israelite Traditions," *Biblical Archaeologist* 17.3 [1954]: 50–76). Discovered two years after the publication of these articles by Mendenhall, the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon have also played a role in this discussion (see Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11*, AB [New York: Doubleday, 1991], 6–9).

[45] Four pages are written on "banana paper" and cite R. T. France, and the other four are on binder paper and cite S. L. Johnson (i.e., S. Lewis Johnson).

Although the standard practice of the grammatical-historical method, the use of the category of progressive revelation for interpretation, *sensus plenior*, and traditional typology have been common among evangelical scholars for some time, Sailhamer's published work is notable for its departure from all of these. While still holding to the grammatical-historical method, he believed that "grammatical" and "historical" were not two different aspects of this hermeneutical method as has become the consensus ("grammatical and historical") but are one and the same ("grammatical, namely/or historical").[46] Neither does his published work invoke progressive revelation as a unifying framework for biblical theology, nor *sensus plenior* or traditional typology with respect to the Messiah in the Old Testament. The likely reason for this is that the thrust of so much of his scholarly work is to show exegetically and compositionally that Messiah is indeed central to the Pentateuch and the Tanak. Although his early class notes from when he first started teaching as a graduate student in 1974 say, "OT = God centered; NT = Christ centered" (Box 13, Folder 6), in an interview with *Christianity Today* in January 2010 about his last work and magnum opus, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch*, Sailhamer at the end of his career said,

> The Old Testament is about ancient history. But that is not its meaning. Its meaning is Christ. Saying that also calls for a great deal of caution. In my book, I take the view that the whole of the Pentateuch is about Christ, but that doesn't mean that Christ is in the whole Pentateuch. Finding Christ in the Pentateuch means learning to see him when he is there rather than trying to see when he is not there.[47]

Even with his word of "caution," it is obvious that Sailhamer's view of Messiah in the Pentateuch and the OT developed significantly since the time he started teaching.[48]

[46] Sailhamer, "Johann August Ernesti: The Role of History in Biblical Interpretation," 193–206. In *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 105, he likewise affirms, "In Ernesti's view, 'historical' meant simply the 'grammatical' meaning of the words of Scripture. The 'historical' meaning was the 'grammatical' sense."

[47] http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2010/januaryweb-only/12-11.0.html (accessed 9/27/17).

[48] While on the faculty of Golden Gate, Sailhamer taught a summer course in 2008 for Western Seminary entitled "Messiah in the Old Testament" (electronic copy of syllabus in author's possession). The course description begins, "The Old Testament, the first three quarters of the Bible, is the gospel of the Messiah. The most important feature of the Old Testament is the way it depicts the nature of our relationship with God and His promised Messiah." A year earlier in 2007, he had taught another summer course for Western Seminary, entitled "Jesus and His Bible: A Christian Theology of the OT" (photocopy in author's possession). Its course description includes, "To understand the Old Testament is to understand the Bible and the Gospel. *To misunderstand the Old Testament is to misunderstand the Bible and the Gospel"* (emphasis original).

Another area in which development of Sailhamer's thought can be observed is in the search for the best terminology to describe his hermeneutical methodology. In notes for an Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis course at Trinity in Spring 1985, he referred to the "Grammatical/Syntactical Study of the Old Testament," and the "Literary/Historical Study of the Old Testament." In one place, he crossed out "Historical" in the latter and replaced it with "Grammatical," so that the phrase then reads "Literary/Grammatical Study of the Old Testament." Sixteen years later in 2001, he characterized his own approach as aligned with the grammatical-historical method as Ernesti understood it.[49] Relatedly, Sailhamer's 1987 article for the *Journal of the Evangelical Society* describes his "canonical approach" to the OT that employs the "tools of compositional analysis."[50] His later published[51] and unpublished material (see Box 2, Folder 11–13, 15, 16), however, preferred the term "compositional."[52] As one more example, his early notes favorably employ "typology" (Box 14, Folder 15; see above), and his same 1987 *JETS* article refers to a "typological hermeneutic found within the Torah [that] is picked up and carried along not only by later Biblical writers but also by those who were responsible for the final shape of the OT canon."[53] Significantly, he also argued that "such a hermeneutic was not foreign or out of step with the final composition of the Pentateuch. On the contrary, in substance it is at one with that of the author of the Pentateuch." Several years later in his *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (1992), he instead uses the terminology, "narrative typology."[54]

[49] Sailhamer, "Johann August Ernesti: The Role of History in Biblical Interpretation," 193–206.

[50] Sailhamer, "The Canonical Approach to the Old Testament," *JETS* 30 (1987): 307–8.

[51] E.g., "Biblical Theology and the Composition of the Hebrew Bible," in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, 25–37.

[52] Although his *Introduction to Old Testament Theology* (1995) is subtitled, "A Canonical Approach," he remarked to me in personal conversation that he wanted the term "compositional" but was rebuffed by the publisher.

[53] Sailhamer, "The Canonical Approach to the Old Testament," 307–8.

[54] Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 37–44 (see also his positive use of "typological" on pp. 31, 126). Also, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 295. On p. 155, he refers to an "inner typology" in the Balaam oracles.

Likewise, although still distinguishing his views from traditional typology,[55] he refers in *The Meaning of the Pentateuch* to "a kind of typological pattern of thinking" that links Balaam's second and third oracles (Num 23:18–24; 24:3–9).[56]

The development of Sailhamer's thought in certain areas over the course of his career should be expected for a scholar of his stature. On the other hand, it should also be observed that other areas of his thinking remained consistent during these same years. For example, in Box 13, Folder 2, he comments in his early class notes concerning the phrase traditionally translated "formless and void" in Gen 1:2 (*tohu wabohu*), "It is very questionable, however, whether, the terms used here [*tohu wabohu*] do, in fact, describe a chaotic condition." This is consistent with what he says in *Genesis Unbound* and his other published work. Likewise, his mediating position on the identity of the seed of the woman in Gen 3:15 is consistent in both his early class notes and his published material.[57] Granting his early allowance for "rare" instances of *sensus plenior*, he also seems to have always held to "only one author intended meaning" (Box 13, Folder 13). Accordingly, he writes in *The Meaning of the Pentateuch*, "in the OT there is a divine intent. . . . That intent, as I understand it, is the same as the human author. In my approach to the OT, I always assume that what its human author intended to say is the same as what God intended. If we understand the human author's intent, we will know what God intended."[58]

[55] See Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 81, 228, 515, 521, 606. Through a text search of the eBook edition of this work, I did not find the phrase "narrative typology" or "inner typology."

[56] Ibid., 331.

[57] In handwritten notes on Gen 3:15 in Box 13, Folder 2, he calls the identity of the seed "not clear" until the coming of Christ. In later printed notes in Box 13, Folder 3, he cautions against finding "too much or too little" in Gen 3:15. He takes the seed as collective but with "a hint, a promise, that such a redeemer is yet to come." In *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 108, he remarks concerning a "puzzling yet important ambiguity: Who is the 'seed' of the woman? It seems obvious that the purpose of verse 15 has not been to answer that question, but rather to raise it. The remainder of the book is, in fact, the author's answer." On the previous page, he similarly stated, "The woman's 'seed' is certainly intended to be understood as a group (or individual) which lies the same temporal distance from the woman as the 'seed' of the snake does from the snake itself." Likewise in *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 321–23, he argues that the "he" in Gen 3:15 is ambiguous in the immediate context but specified as the Messianic king by other poems in the Pentateuch (see also pp. 587–90). Relatedly, on p. 9 of a set of class notes in our possession from July 2005 entitled "A Conversation with an Echo," Sailhamer writes, "The light that is cast from Genesis 3:15 and refracted throughout the rest of the OT, cast [sic] a picture of the pledge of a coming Redeemer who is fatally wounded when he crushes the head of the serpent." In *Meaning*, 239, he accordingly discusses Gen 3:15, Gen 49, Isa 63, and Dan 7 together. Similarly, in a 2009 lecture in Fullerton, CA entitled "Paul's Use of the Old Testament" (recording in author's possession), he remarked at the 30:31 mark, "John 3:16 is written in Genesis 3. Gen 3:1[5] is John 3:16."

Areas for Further Research

The preceding gleanings from the John H. Sailhamer papers are just that: gleanings. As such, they are a mere sampling of what these papers might reveal about Sailhamer's life and scholarship. It would be both impossible and egregiously reductionistic for the relatively brief discussion in this essay to attempt to encompass all the material in his papers. Indeed, I make no claim whatsoever of that sort and believe that much more can be said even about those portions of his papers that I looked at more closely. At the same time, in the process of my work, I became aware of areas of further research in the John H. Sailhamer papers. I desire to pass them along to my readers not as a restrictive program but rather as an aid and time-saver to future researchers who would like a few ideas on where to start. Those who would like to start from scratch or take a fresh look at these papers from their own perspective are of course welcome to do so.

One area for future research would be a more detailed consideration of the development of Sailhamer's hermeneutical methodology over the course of his career. As noted above, his papers contain class notes on hermeneutics from when he first started teaching (e.g., Box 13, Folder 13), his time at Trinity (e.g., Box 1, Folder 21), and towards the end of his career for a Fall 2006 course at Southeastern (Box 2, Folder 13). There are still more materials in his papers that deal with hermeneutics but are not part of class notes devoted specifically to this topic. Each of these treatments of hermeneutics in his papers, along with his published work, provide a "snapshot" of his hermeneutical method at various points in his career and could be analyzed for its development. Another area for future research would be Sailhamer's work on Hebrew syntax. Although he published on this topic,[59] his papers also include various versions of his own

[58] Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 69.

[59] Sailhamer, "A Database Approach to the Analysis of Hebrew Narrative," *MAARAV* 5–6 (Spring 1990): 319–35. See also, "2 Samuel 13:1–4 [sic; should be 12:1–4] and a Database Approach to the Analysis of Hebrew Narrative," in *Bible et Informatique: Interprétation, Herméneutique, Compétence Informatique* (Paris: Champion, 1992), 99–122.

unpublished notebook on Hebrew syntax that he distributed to his students. Also included in his papers are printouts of various passages whose clauses have been tagged according to the system he developed. Much of this kind material can be found in Boxes 1–2. These printouts are reflective of his own extensive databases that may yet be on one of his hard drives. Other areas for future research include his thought on books in the Bible that he did not publish extensively on but are represented in his papers, such as Habakkuk, Psalms, and Isaiah. Lastly, those who are interested in his latest work might also search his files for draft portions of *The Meaning of the Pentateuch* that were abbreviated or left out due to the manuscript being too long by about 300 pages.[60] In addition to the areas for further research that I am aware of, there is no telling what other fruitful topics are awaiting discovery.

Conclusion

We offer the above in hopes that it accomplishes its provisionary purpose of assisting and encouraging further research in the John H. Sailhamer papers at Southeastern Seminary. Perhaps the one and only rule of thumb for those who research the work of John H. Sailhamer is that in one sense there can be no true experts on John H. Sailhamer. The only expert, strictly speaking, was himself. A corollary, as his students can attest, is that no one can speak for Dr. Sailhamer except for Dr. Sailhamer. Ever wary of being misunderstood, he was at the same time constantly refining his ideas. When trying to understand such a creative, dynamic, and deep thinker who could also deploy his ideas with rhetorical flourish, we need to take the time to understand what he means, expect his ideas to develop over time, and allow for his use of memorable ways of communicating his material. This involves the common practice of giving a person the benefit of the doubt, but in Sailhamer's case it sometimes also involves the laborious effort of reading what he read, even if it is lengthy and/or in a foreign language. While these papers do not tell us what he would have said on topics that he never addressed, they do tell us more about what he did say at certain times through written formats besides his published work. Ultimately, I pray for their proper use unto a deeper understanding of the Scriptures that he so loved. His life verse, Joshua 1:8,

[60] Patty Sailhamer, "Biography of John H. Sailhamer," xv, refers to "editing to reduce his thousand-page manuscript to its final size of over 700 pages." See the third page of his class notes for a hermeneutics course at Southeastern (Box 2, Folder 13), which refers to "[t]he subtitle of this book, 'An Exegetical Discussion of the Torah as Scripture,'" a possible reference to a draft of what became *The Meaning of the Pentateuch*.

consists of an exhortation that we would do well to heed, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, and you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it, for then you will prosper your way and then you will succeed."

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Book Reviews

D. A. Carson, ed. *The Enduring Authority of the Scriptures*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. xvi + 1,256 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0802865762. $65.00.

The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures (TEACS) is the third volume in a sort of informal trilogy that began in 1983 with the publication of *Scripture and Truth*, and continued in 1986 with *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon* (both volumes edited by D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge and published by Zondervan). After thirty-one years, and a host of new issues concerning hermeneutics and the authority of Scripture, it was time for a fresh evangelical contribution to the discussion—hence, *TEACS*. Having authored or edited some fifty books, Carson (research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and president of The Gospel Coalition) is well-qualified to edit such an anthology that brings together thirty-five essays from thirty-seven of the brightest minds within evangelical scholarship.

The purpose of *TEACS* is to offer evangelicals a comprehensive, go-to resource that not only addresses the nature and authority of Scripture in a scholarly, yet approachable manner but goes after "the jugular" of the most popular attacks on the authority of Scripture (see e.g., Carson's helpful "Summarizing FAQs," in Chapter 36). Carson notes the importance of both the formal (authority of Scripture) and material (right understanding of the gospel) principles in evangelicalism. *TEACS* focuses on the formal principle (p. xv) yet reveals how inextricably linked both of these principles are—that the church should never be bifurcated from Scripture into a sort of cold, spiritless "Bible of the academy," which Carson traces back to the seventeenth-century writings of Johann Michaelis and the "social and political goals" of "progressive conservative Enlightenment interests" (p. 4).[1]

Structurally, *TEACS* is divided into seven sections (Introduction, Historical Topics, Biblical and Theological Topics, Philosophical and Epistemological Topics, Comparative Religions Topics, Thinking Holistically,

[1] See also the helpful essay by R. Yarbrough, "Bye-bye Bible? Progress Report on the Death of Scripture," *Them* 39.3 (2014): 415–27, which Carson uses as a lens to survey the landscape of the debate.

and Frequently Asked Questions) covering a wide spectrum of topics (history, biblical theology, canon, inerrancy, philosophy, comparative religions, etc.) and provides useful indices for ancient and modern names, subjects, and Scripture references. Given the book's title, the Biblical and Theological Topics section is highlighted in *TEACS*. This section consists of fourteen essays and occupies nearly a third of the book.

As with any anthology, some essays are stronger than others. *TEACS* is no different. While space prohibits an adequate list of all the strengths and weaknesses within *TEACS*, perhaps a few will suffice to summarize. In terms of strengths, Carson's literary review (Chapter 1) and FAQs (Chapter 36) are alone worth the price of *TEACS*. These chapters not only orient readers to the discussion but offer a quick reference guide to the fountainheads and subsequent streams of debate. Additionally, Chapter 36 anticipates many of the questions that concerned congregants may have regarding the trustworthiness of their Bibles, and *TEACS* equips pastors/teachers to answer these (and other) important questions. Perhaps the biggest weakness in this project is its format. The size of this book is daunting and could seem overwhelming and cost-prohibitive to busy pastors and seminary students—precluding its usefulness and justifiability for seminary classrooms. Instead of one, massive "catch-all" resource, which contains essays that may not be quite as useful to certain pastors/students as others (e.g., the Comparative Religions Topics section), perhaps a series of smaller, discipline-specific, and less costly volumes would have improved its focus, usability, and readership. Only time will tell.

In sum, Carson's anthology serves as an important step forward in the evangelical response to debates surrounding the authority of Scripture. This book engages many of the pervasive arguments attempting to undermine the authority of Scripture and enables pastors, students, and teachers alike to have a more fully orbed understanding of the debates and issues involved. While not perfect, as no book is, this anthology is a timely addition in the age Charles Taylor has so adroitly described as the "Age of Authenticity"[2]—an age in which "self-cultivation" is key and the experiential is elevated to a place of primary importance. In such an age, authority—especially the authority of Scripture—is not only devalued but is to be eschewed *a priori*. With the cacophony of competing voices in the church today—all attempting to have the final say on the issues of hermeneutics and the authority of Scripture—*TEACS* issues a clarion call

[2] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2007), 473–79, 508.

for evangelicals that could hardly be more recommended and needed.

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John Piper. *A Peculiar Glory*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016. 302 pp. Hardback. 978-1433552632. $24.99.

Most defenses of the authority of Scripture entail surveys of the historical understanding of the doctrine, which demonstrates the exceedingly high view the majority of Christians through history have had of the trustworthiness of Scripture. Those books often offer means to meet the apologetic attacks against Scripture, where accusations about alleged factual inaccuracies and supposed retrograde ideologies seem to threaten the value of the Bible for contemporary audiences. *A Peculiar Glory*, however, takes a different approach. Here John Piper spends little time on apologetic arguments but focuses on the internal, supernatural witness of Scripture—to its beauty, enduring value, and trustworthiness. The thesis of this book is quite simple. Piper argues, "The Bible is completely true" (p. 11). *A Peculiar Glory* is an account of how that can be understood by reading the text itself.

Piper divides his volume into five unequal parts, with a separate introduction and conclusion. In Part One, Piper tells his own story in a single (first) chapter, which walks through his own Fundamentalist upbringing, his call to ministry, his doctoral training under proponents of so-called Higher Criticism, and his continued dependence on the absolute trustworthiness of Scripture in his pastoral ministry. The second part outlines the shape of the Bible in three chapters. Chapter Two explains the content and formation of the Old Testament. The third chapter surveys the nature of the New Testament. Chapter Four offers an explanation of the basis for confidence in the truthfulness of the text of Scripture that the church has today.

Part Three shifts to a recounting of the claims of Scripture about itself. Chapter Five outlines how the Old Testament validates its own authority and consistency. The sixth chapter discusses Jesus's confidence in the Old Testament, as documented in the New Testament. Chapter Seven explores the concept of apostolic authority, which is the basis for the trustworthiness of the New Testament.

In the fourth part of the volume, Piper shifts to an explanation of the basis of Christian confidence in the truthfulness of Scripture, which is the crux of the book. He begins this task in Chapter Eight by explaining that his approach is drawn from pre-modern pastor-theologian, Jonathan Edwards. This is the approach that relies largely on the aesthetic and supernatural power of Scripture rather than purely rational argument for trust in the Bible. In the ninth chapter, Piper shows how the reader can see God's glory through Scripture, which is how he believes Christians can be confident in the truthfulness of Scripture. Chapter Ten takes up Pascal's Wager, which is a common apologetic used to encourage people to assume truths that can only be known by faith. Piper disputes that approach as useful, arguing faith can only come through experiencing God's glory. The eleventh chapter recounts and applies John Calvin's testimony of confidence in the Bible because of the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit.

In Part Five, Piper continues his argument for confidence in the Bible by demonstrating how Christian Scripture is uniquely confirmed. Chapter Twelve relates how Piper gains confidence in the authority of Scripture through the expansive scope of the story and its confirmation in natural revelation. The thirteenth chapter commends assurance in Scripture because of the surprising meekness of God incarnate, despite being regal sovereign of the universe. Chapter Fourteen summarizes the support for the trustworthiness of Scripture because of the historical fulfillment of prophecies. Similarly, the fifteenth chapter offers Christ's documented miracles as support for confidence in Scripture because of how God's glory shines through them. Chapter Sixteen argues that the transformed lives of those who trust God's word validate the truthfulness of his word. In the seventeenth chapter, Piper considers how historical reasoning fits into his scheme of spiritually apprehending the value of Scripture, arriving at the conclusion that both have value. Piper closes the book with a brief conclusion that ties the various threads together.

This book is more than an academic defense. It is an introduction to the most powerful text on the planet. It tells the story of Piper's own affection for Scripture and invites the reader to join him and a long stream of faithful Christians who have found the Bible to be unquestionably true and irreplaceably valuable for bringing its readers into a deeper relationship with the creator of the universe. It is, in one sense, a love story.

A Peculiar Glory will not overcome the defenses of a committed skeptic, but it will inspire Christians at various stages of sanctification to take the Bible seriously and to seek God in it. This is the sort of text thoughtful laity can devour, seminarians can delight in, and pastors can be encouraged by in their study. A volume like this would do more to protect the heart of a Christian facing faith challenges in the classroom or in the workplace than many books that provide a historical defense of Scripture.

There is a place for those, but Piper's approach is refreshing.

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John Piper. *Reading the Bible Supernaturally: Seeing and Savoring the Glory of God in Scripture*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2017. 430 pp. Hardback. 978-1433553493. $32.99.

The life of the pastor, seminary student, or biblical scholar can, over time, lead to a diminution in joy over the glory of the Bible. When the text of Scripture regularly becomes the focus of technical study and grammatical wrangling, it is easy for those engaged in regular, long-term biblical research to lose sight of the miracle that is the Bible. John Piper's book, *Reading the Bible Supernaturally: Seeing and Savoring the Glory of God in Scripture*, pushes back on the malaise of research with a reminder that a Christian's encounter with Scripture goes beyond the natural act of reading to the supernatural act of experiencing the goodness of God.

Piper pursues his explanation of reading the Bible supernaturally in three unequal parts. Part One contains ten chapters that unpack a six-part proposal that the ultimate goal of reading Scripture is that the worship of God would spread throughout the world. Anyone who has paid attention to Piper over the past three decades will find the six parts familiar. First, God's worth and beauty are of ultimate value. Second, pure worship of God is the aim of Scripture. Third, God can best be seen by reading his word. Fourth, savoring God's excellence should be the reader's main aim. Fifth, reading is incomplete apart from transformation into God's likeness. Sixth, missions and evangelism are a necessary outcome of the transformation from reading Scripture supernaturally. These ideas are not new, but they are refreshing for the weary scholar and invigorating for those seeking to begin a lifetime of study.

In Part Two, Piper explains the supernatural nature of Bible reading in three chapters. First, he notes that truly understanding the significance of Scripture depends on the Holy Spirit opening the mind to the content of his revealed word. Second, Piper shows how the Pharisees were well versed in the Bible but lacked understanding because their reading was purely natural. Third, he gives multiple examples from the New Testament of reading that transcends from the natural to the supernatural; this is a unique and ongoing part of the Christian experience.

Having explained the need for supernatural reading, Part Three explains particular natural steps in that process in fourteen chapters. Piper emphasizes the need for hard work in study of Scripture, for humility in seeking wisdom, and the need for prayer for real understanding. He deals

with the all-important question of the nature of meaning and the possibility of a contemporary reader discovering the author's meaning in an ancient text. Piper also deals with the need for persistent curiosity and careful observation in seeking to understand a text. He also treats the question of theological propositions and the difficulty of paradoxes. This last section takes the book from a primarily theoretical volume to an intensely practical text. After a brief conclusion, Piper attaches an appendix that explains his system of visually diagramming the text, which some students find helpful to better understand Scripture.

The benefit of this volume will largely depend on where the reader is in his or her relationship with Scripture. Piper's effervescent enthusiasm for Scripture and God's goodness as shown through his word are transparently obvious. This book is thus a delight to read, no matter what the facts or skills the reader may learn from it. For the weary and possibly cynical scholar, this book has the potential to reignite the fire that drove him to the pastorate, to seminary, or to earn a terminal degree. The seasoned layperson will find in this volume an inspiration to dig into Scripture and encounter the living God through his living word. The fledgling seminary student can glean practical skills to equip her to better study the Bible. This book is multifaceted and can be useful to a wide-range of readers throughout their Christian life.

Reading the Bible Supernaturally includes a great deal of practical instruction which is good but could be gleaned from other texts. However, this particular volume, when set in the context of the long ministry of John Piper, takes on new significance. Whether one agrees with Piper in all of his exposition, there is never any doubt that he has seen God and that he delights in the goodness of God through Scripture. This book gives readers a window into Piper's experience and, perhaps, a way to share in that joy along with him.

This volume has distinct devotional value since it exhorts readers to be renewed in their dedication to Bible reading. It would be a splendid gift for a travel-worn pastor who is struggling to find joy in difficult ministry. This book might serve well as a secondary resource in some seminary courses, like a pastoral ministry course or a hermeneutics course. It is a book that will benefit the church, but it seems targeted at those who engage in regular formal study of the Bible. Perhaps it is the sort of text that might ignite the imagination of a Sunday School teacher or mature layperson so that he transitions to an ardent relationship with Scripture. Most importantly, though, this book should be read and enjoyed as it helps the reader find immeasurable joy in God through the Bible.

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Stephen B. Chapman and Marvin A. Sweeney, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. xvii + 525 pp. Paperback. 978-0521709651. $39.99.

The Cambridge Companion to the Hebrew Bible (hereafter *CCHB*) is the cooperative effort of an eclectic group of HB/OT scholars to summarize the state of HB/OT studies. The handbook is divided into five major sections: Text and Canon, Historical Background, Methods and Approaches, Sub-collections and Genres, and Reception and Use. Each chapter provides an overview of the major fields of HB/OT research. The goals of the volume are two-fold: The first is to demonstrate "how the increasing diversity in biblical scholarship is no accident but results in part from the nature of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament itself" (p. 2). The second is to showcase how scholars from different traditions "can mutually participate in fruitful collaboration, even though some of their operational presuppositions about the field may not match" (p. 3). *CCHB* is a nuanced and up-to-date treatment of the major issues in HB/OT studies because of the guiding influence of these goals. I will interact with five chapters (one from each section) to represent the general orientation of this volume.

James VanderKam's chapter, "Texts, Titles, and Translations," sets the tone for the rest of the work in terms of nuance and specificity. VanderKam begins with an overview of the extant manuscript evidence for the text of the HB/OT in which he orients the reader to the complex textual evidence for the books (scrolls) of the HB/OT. He proceeds to summarize the ancient Jewish and Christian titles for the canonical texts which point to larger groupings of the individual scrolls. He concludes the chapter with a summary of modern translations and translation philosophy. VanderKam is cautious and fair at every point. However, his translation philosophy is questionable. He favors an eclectic translation philosophy instead of a diplomatic translation philosophy. Rather, both translation philosophies are necessary. Eclectic translations reflect a hypothetical original/initial text and diplomatic translations reflect an extant text in history (i.e., a MS).

In "The History of Israelite Religion," Brent Strawn discusses the history of Israelite religion in terms of three issues: the sources (HB/OT and ANE documents), loci (officials and the people), and content of Israelite religion (ancient Israelite belief and normative theology). Strawn argues that the history of Israelite religion should be an eclectic discipline which utilizes all the available materials to recast ancient Israelite belief and practice. His analysis is particularly balanced. The most fruitful element of Strawn's chapter is his underlying method. He seeks to integrate diverse

approaches to the study of Israelite religion. He thereby lays the groundwork for a unity-in-diversity approach to the study of ancient Israelite religion.

John Collins' chapter, "Historical-Critical Methods," is thorough, balanced, and up-to-date like the rest of the volume. However, Collins places too much confidence in historical-criticism's explanatory power. Historical-criticism is a necessary step in the interpretive process but without literary criticism and theological exegesis the interpreter "seriously diminishes our ability to understand" the biblical text, to borrow a phrase from Collins (p. 144).

William Brown presents the psalms as poetry, species, performance, corpora, corpus, "soul anatomy," and theology in "The Psalms and Hebrew Poetry." In each section, Brown summarizes the state of the field and argues for his own approach to these issues. For example, he prefers Berlin's approach to parallelism over Kugel's approach, and he suggests that the shape of the collections of the Psalter and the Psalter itself serve as an aid in interpretation. He concludes the chapter by arguing for a dual theological core for the Psalter centered on instruction and salvation. However, Brown's dual core is too simplistic (much as a single center approach to the Psalter). Instead, the Psalter's theology corresponds to the multi-faceted theology of the HB/OT and cannot be summarized in terms of a dual core.

Walid Saleh's chapter, "The Hebrew Bible in Islam," carefully demonstrates the complex relationship between the HB/OT and Islam in both historical and contemporary perspective. Saleh demonstrates that the Qur'an is thoroughly dependent upon Jewish and Christian traditions. However, later Muslims interpreted this relationship variously, which has led to different receptions of the HB/OT in Islamic religion. These receptions then reveal variant views of the status of the HB/OT: (1) as a falsified, non-divine text, (2) as a mostly corrupted text, (3) as a mostly pristine text with slight corruption, and (4) as a divine text subject to corrupt interpretations (p. 413). Saleh's chapter is an essential starting place for reception historical study of the HB/OT in Islam.

In summary, *CCHB* is an insightful review of contemporary research on the HB/OT. Its strengths far outweigh its weaknesses which are usually tied to individual chapters rather than the book as a whole. The seasoned scholar and the novice student can profitably use this volume in their teaching and research.

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Eva Mroczek. *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xi + 269 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0190279837. $105.00.

Seventy years after their discovery in the caves proximate to Khirbet Qumran and throughout the Judean Desert, the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) continue to captivate the imagination of popular and academic audiences and re-write our conceptions of ancient literature. The oldest of these ancient scrolls—dating as early as the second century BCE—include more than 200 documents that are commonly identified as "biblical" (see Martin Abegg, Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich's *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* [New York: HarperCollins, 1999], i–xvi).

Eva Mroczek's proposal in *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* is that "Bible" and "book" signify differently for a modern person as compared with ancient audiences and thus should be replaced by new metaphors that map onto these ancient documents more accurately. Rightly, Mroczek suggests that "new metaphors can help illuminate aspects of texts that old ones had obscured" (p. 41). She attempts to recast thinking concerning the ancient literary imagination away from the "modern categories of text, authorship, and publication" (p. 4) using various comparisons to describe the time before the canon was fixed and text-forms were "multiform, uncontained writings" and still in flux (p. 39). Unlike printed books, various digital formats including complex assemblages (e.g., Ben Sira) and open, unbounded series (Psalms/Jubilees) provide better similarities to the narrative involved in ancient writing.

This innovation is motivated by seeing the textual world in native eyes at the genesis of the writing of what became the books of the Bible. Because of the growth in understanding the diversity of literatures, especially as a result of the discoveries of a vast array of Second Temple documents, Mroczek claims that "the texts that are now biblical cannot be assumed to be the singular center of the literary imagination" (p. 11). While some may be critical of this conclusion, the data provide a canvas onto which the portrait of ancient Judaism is still being painted. The paucity of evidence, the unknown origins of texts, and the debated use of many of them, obscure the nature of the basic sectarian groups in Second Temple Judaism, the interpretations of the writings, and the connections between the two. As scholars continue to identify the problems the DSS create for established notions of the composition and compilation of the biblical canon, it would seem that we are at the forefront of a Kuhnian paradigm shift in our conception of ancient texts. And Mroczek offers a helpful caution for those who might rely upon outmoded, modern notions to

understand ancient realities.

In sum, Mroczek's argument is innovative, cogent, and commendable as a corrective to situate scholars' historical perspective. But several problems should be noted: The time period encapsulated in the title (*Jewish Antiquity*) is ill-defined and is seemingly used interchangeably with "Second Temple Period," "early Judaism," "Qumran Period," and "Second Temple Judaism." The socio-cultural designation, also, provides an unclear framework for whose writings are included or excluded and how these are appraised.

While several orders and inventories are evidenced, the claim that "the 'book of Psalms' as a unity is not attested at Qumran" (p. 32) is overstated. In fact, the Qumran data may be aggregated to suggest a proto-MT-like sequence. In particular, small sequences from the Psalter's disputed books four and five may be combined to indicate emergent assemblages within Book Four with 4QPs^{b} (91–4), 1QPs^{a} (94–6), 4QPs^{m} (93, 95, 97–98), 4QPs^{b} (99–103), 2QPs (103–4), Book Five with 4QPs^{b} (112–8), 4QPs^{o} (114–6^{l}), 11QPs^{d} (115–6), 1QPs^{b} (126–8), and even their macro-arrangement and connection to books one through three: 1QPs^{a} (86, 92) and 4QPs^{b} (99–112). Further, the manuscripts from Naḥal Ḥever and Masada as well as the Old Greek Psalms provide clear connections to the existence of a proto-MT text-type and sequence for the entire book.

Mroczek helpfully deconstructs the category "rewritten Bible." However, the Pesher texts provide insight into the status and use of certain documents contrasted with others. Why are prophetic compositions and Psalms alone "interpreted"? What is singular about these texts that are foundational for reading their own realities?

Finally, at times, it seems that Mroczek falls prey to her own attempt to avoid anachronism. The textual units that became biblical obtained, at some point, special status requiring collection. The question of inclusion and textual authority, however, is a socio-political-religious one and not a compositional one. What to call this eventuality is decidedly telic if we use the term "biblical." But if such a term is abandoned as anachronistic, one cannot discount the fact that certain "written revelations" were privileged over others. Whether this is a compositional characteristic and/or a later communal recognition is difficult to assess without telic implications driving our imaginings.

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Daniel Y. Wu. *Honor, Shame, and Guilt: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Book of Ezekiel*. Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplements 14. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016. xix + 219 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1575064376. $47.50.

Daniel Wu offers here a persuasive riposte to the opposition of shame and guilt, either as terms, concepts, or "cultures" in models of honor/shame discourse. He opens with an orientation to the dynamics of honor/shame discourse and its academic jargon. Then in successive chapters, Wu walks through the three terms of the title: honor, shame, and guilt. He focuses the discussion around the main roots associated with the Hebrew terms (√*kbd*, √*bwš*, and √*ʿwh*) offering some orientation of the concept in various models, then giving a semantic survey of the key root both in the Hebrew Bible as a whole and then within Ezekiel proper. Each chapter concludes with arguments for adapting present models of honor/shame to fit the semantic material in Ezekiel. In the jargon of the book Wu moves from the "emic" (constructed model imposed on the culture) to the "etic" (the semantic examination of the terms) and back again to the "emic."

Regarding all three key terms, Wu suggests a starkly theocentric understanding. Fundamental to the argument, he states that the concept of honor has to do with "worth" (uncontroversial enough), and that which has worth for Ezekiel is "YHWH himself and, derivatively the response to him that is appropriate for his creatures" (p. 99). It is hard to demur from this point in certain regards, but we should not confuse that summary for something proven in the semantic survey. It represents an attempt to make a coherent whole out of the material—and may be right in that regard. But the feeling remains that Ezekiel scholars might find such a solution a bit simplistic. Yhwh acts for the sake of his √*kbd* repeatedly in Ezekiel, as Wu points out, jealous for his own √*kbd* both among his people and the nations. Yet it seems a slippery equivalence to speak of a jealousy for his honor/glory (√*kbd*) to be recognized as a basic concern for an "appropriate response to him." The former might be included in the latter, but especially in a covenant context, one would think a more exact sense could be found. In any case, Wu demonstrates that for Ezekiel, Yhwh represents the entire "public court of recognition" that must be satisfied.

The discussion of shame comes in dialogue with the root √*bwš*, in which Wu follows Avrahami's study in the Psalms to mean "disappointment" or a failure to meet expectations. While I have some reservations over Avrahami's method, Wu maintains a bridge to the more common

translation "shame" by pointing out the overlap between social disappointment/failure and the status (and feeling) of shame. Again Wu presses for a theocentric definition: √*bwš* is defined by "the person, character, and values of YHWH himself" (p. 131). It is thus "disappointment" or "failure" for the people when they misrepresent or otherwise fall short of Yhwh's person (his √*kbd*).

The discussion of "guilt," through the semantic study of √*ʿwh*, provides the final piece in dismantling the divorce of shame and guilt. He takes √*ʿwh* in Ezekiel as "at its heart . . . that which is twisted, that is, what does not accord with the character of YHWH" (p. 166). And he finally concludes that "the meaning of (√*ʿwh*) cannot be equated with guilt, any more than (√*bwš*) can be equated with shame, or (√*kbd*) can be equated with honor" (p. 166). That is, the semantic terms are not equal to the conceptual constructs that would separate them in psychological or anthropological terms. The models need adjusting. In fact, both "guilt" and "shame" in Ezekiel are part of a "concept cluster" (or "overlapping polysemic entities") that support one another and cannot be set in opposition.

It may be that Wu oversteps the data in each of these categories. Sometimes a theological summary is put forward as a semantic conclusion, which detracts from the work's persuasiveness. But his conclusion, in its most general terms, is simply put:

> [H]onor is what YHWH deems of worth, is indicative of right relationship with him, and is defined in accordance with and in appropriate response to his [√*kbd*], which is in turn derived from his own character of [steadfast love and faithfulness]. Shame is what in YHWH's eyes fails/falls short of an appropriate response to his [√*kbd*] and thus constitutes a fundamental breach of relationship with him. Guilt is the concrete expression of that failure, the transgression or distortion of the covenant terms that express and enable right relationship with the God of [steadfast love and faithfulness]. (p. 174)

Finally, a number of weaknesses are apparent in the book, at least from the side of biblical studies. He assumes unity across both Ezekiel and the Hebrew Bible generally not only for dialogue but in using one text to determine the meaning in another—for which I have some sympathy—but it will make many in Hebrew Bible studies cringe (and his appeal to "canonical theology" cannot carry the weight he places on it). He generalizes ideas in theological terms, and the semantic work is not always as critical or focused as it ought to be. But that should not take away from what the work *is* and what it does right. Wu successfully challenges a model of honor/shame popular in the Context Group that pits guilt and shame against one another. And the book's main audience and goal lie within

that field of discussion. Understanding this helps make sense of the otherwise ill-fitting appendix on models of the atonement. What it has to do with Ezekiel is never told us and really is not the point. The point has been the construction of a model that is broad enough to make sense of the basic theological and rhetorical uses of honor/shame/guilt language in the Hebrew Bible, using Ezekiel generally to do so.

And in that regard Wu succeeds very well. He rightly dismantles the opposition of guilt and shame; he puts forward a compelling (if not watertight) way of construing the relationship of honor/shame/guilt that is theologically interesting and potentially justifiable in the biblical texts; and he does this while offering numerous insights on individual texts of Ezekiel along the way. This work adds usefully to the burgeoning interest in honor/shame discourse and deserves a wide reading.

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Todd Wilson and Gerald Hiestand, eds. *Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016. 217 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0830851713. $25.00.

This collection of essays had its origins in the first annual Center for Pastoral Theologians conference in November 2015 on the theme "The Pastor Theologian: Identities and Possibilities." From that conference this work emerged, divided into three parts. Part One includes the five plenary addresses and focuses on the identities of a pastor theologian. Part Two examines the role of a pastoral theologian through a series of historical analyses of the ministries of John Calvin, Thomas Boston, John Henry Newman, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The final section focuses on the pastoral theologian and Scripture.

The purpose of the Center, and the focus of these essays, is to bring theological relevance to the work of the pastor and pastoral relevance to the study of theology. So, Peter Leithart argues for a recovery of relevant biblical theology written for the church by pastoral practitioners within the church, not from the isolation of the academy. He charges preachers who fill their sermons with cute anecdotes, news reviews, or sports commentaries as "guilty of pastoral malpractice," robbing their people of the rich biblical and theological content that is needed (p. 19).

Subsequent essays by James K. A. Smith and Kevin J. Vanhoozer in this first section explore the role of pastor as political theologian and public theologian. Rather than an assumed stance chosen by activists, this role is the inherent responsibility of those called to bring the light of faith onto the world the church inhabits. Political and public theologians should

guide their congregations in their sojourn as aliens and strangers in this world.

The last two essays in Part One, contributed by co-editors Todd Wilson and Gerald Hiestand, address the pastor theologian as ecclesial theologian (Hiestand) and as cruciform theologian (Wilson). The designation ecclesial theologian is focused on the audience being addressed. The pastor theologian is in a better position to speak God's truth and its implications into the lives of the everyday people who comprise the church than academic theologians, and the church, not the academy of scholars, is the pastor's audience. It is then Wilson's contention that the kind of relevant theology that can minister to people in the midst of the world's suffering is developed in the pastor who fully embodies Paul's ministry stance "I am crucified with Christ."

The historical essays that comprise Part Two look at the pastoral theologian ministry of several historical figures. Scott M. Manetsch examines the Geneva of John Calvin and notes the function of religious institutions developed to ensure the relevance of pastoral ministry to the daily life of the people and to encourage the people's theological awareness. The Scottish minister Thomas Boston is the focus of Philip Ryken's essay. Boston's conviction of the practical usefulness of the Scriptures enabled him to communicate the theological truths he gleaned from them, refined in the crucible of his own life experiences, in a manner effective in crises both within the church and without. John Henry Newman, nineteenth-century English theologian and convert to Roman Catholicism, is the subject for Chris Castaldo. It was Newman's "personalist" views that led him to develop a practice of investment in the lives of others, instilling theological truths through his sermons, writings and personal involvement in those who comprise the body of Christ. The final essay in this section is Joel D. Lawrence's examination of the tragically brief life and ministry of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He argues it was Bonhoeffer's commitment to the people of God—the church—that shaped his theological work. Although he also ministered in an academic setting, he was first and foremost a pastor.

The six chapters comprising the final section of this book highlight the role of the Bible in the life and work of the pastor theologian. Edward W. Klink calls for a return to ecclesial "exegesis," by which he means a renewed recognition of Scripture as revelation from God, while recognizing its literary function and identity, and seeing it as God's own commentary on his divine activity. Jason A. Nicholls examines the Pastoral Epistles to recover the biblical portrayal of a pastor theologian. He notes Paul's mandates to guard the gospel, teach and pass on God's truth, pursue a

personal life of exemplary godliness, share in suffering, and exercise oversight in the church as essential to fulfilling the role of a pastor theologian.

Laurie L. Norris advocates for the inclusion of women in the vision of pastor theologian, even within church traditions that do not number women among pastors. She suggests that other terminology, such as ecclesial theologian, might permit this. The necessary role of apologist within the understanding of pastor theologian is the emphasis of Josh Chatraw. Then, building on the foundation of Proverbs, Eric C. Redmond argues for the application of godly wisdom in the teaching, ministry, and personal life of the pastor theologian. In the concluding chapter, Douglas Estes analyzes 2 John as a first century pastor theologian's creative theological writing (Estes prefers *écriture*) as an example of careful, creative theological analysis that is fresh and relevant to his congregation and "sticks to the soul of his readers" (p. 201).

There is much in this collection of essays which will resonate with all who desire the church to be relevant to those who comprise it, as well as to the culture and people among whom it ministers in this world. While we will not agree with every idea expressed, the overarching call is one we should heed, and these essays can serve us well in stimulating necessary thinking.

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H. Daniel Zacharias and Benjamin K. Forrest. *Surviving and Thriving in Seminary: An Academic and Spiritual Handbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017. 197 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1577997788. $17.99.

An excited anticipation of one's future ministry should carry over into preparing for that ministry. However, for some, excitement wears thin as one partakes in the daily grind of seminary training. Being confronted with new ideas; juggling the responsibilities of family, study, and church; and learning biblical languages can cause seminary students to question the need for all this training and maybe even their call to vocational ministry. H. Daniel Zacharias and Benjamin K. Forrest aim to provide guidance, encouragement, and skills for students preparing for or engaged in seminary training, not only to survive but also to thrive during their time in seminary (p. 1).

Surviving and Thriving in Seminary is divided into three parts, apart from an introduction, conclusion, and three appendices. Chapters one through three focus on preparation for the incoming student as well as his family. Chapter one discusses adjusting to seminary, particularly being introduced to unfamiliar technical jargon and ideas, as well as the biblical languages.

Chapter two addresses how to engage in spiritual disciplines for growth in godliness. Since Scripture is foundational for spiritual formation, the authors spend a great deal of time noting the challenges to spending time in God's word and make practical suggestions for doing so in seminary. The key for engaging in the disciplines daily while in seminary is to integrate them into one's studies (pp. 33–36). Chapter three focuses on the relationship of the student to his family. The core of this chapter shows a seminary student how to contribute positively to the spiritual growth of his spouse through *relational*, *intellectual*, and *practical* enhancers (pp. 52–56).

Chapters four through seven examine the responsibility of the student to take charge of his time and physical health. Chapter five discusses how to develop a schedule for completing assignments on time. Chapter six focuses on three practices essential to one's physical (and spiritual) well-being: eating well, regular exercise, and appropriate rest. Because human beings are integrated creatures, care for one's body assists in the productivity of the mind and the wholeness of the spirit (p. 90). Since many students will already be engaged in local church ministry, the authors use chapter seven to address how to balance the responsibilities of seminary and ministry. The authors provide several practical tips for striking this balance (pp. 113–16).

Chapters eight through ten survey the skills one must acquire and the tools that will aid one's academic work. Chapter eight gives a thumbnail sketch of using primary and secondary resources, how to build one's bibliography for a research paper, and the proper use of citations. Chapter nine efficiently covers some important tips to consider when reading for and writing an academic paper. With regard to reading, the authors address the necessary skill of "active" reading (p. 137), discerning how much time and attention an article or book requires for research, note-taking strategies, and dedicated time and focus on reading to gather information. With regard to writing skills, the authors emphasize the need to understand the assignment, the numerous benefits of beginning an assignment early, engaging critically with one's resources, and following proper writing style and paper formatting. Chapter ten highlights some current software applications, and especially digital applications, to help students save time and effort, and to excel at their studies.

Surviving and Thriving in Seminary includes three appendices aimed at choosing and paying for seminary and preparing one's spouse for seminary life. In the first appendix, the authors note three areas that are important in choosing a seminary: doctrinal compatibility, the ability of the seminary to prepare one for one's vocation, and financial cost. In the second appendix, the authors focus their discussion on debt reduction and money making principles while one is in seminary. However, most space

is taken up with debt reducing principles. The final appendix contains ten ways in which a spouse can support the person pursuing a seminary education.

The authors are to be commended for their clear and engaging writing style. They successfully utilize stories and personal anecdotes to illustrate key concepts. The book is thorough in its scope, covering one's devotional life, ministry, family, and academic life, although the greatest concentration is on one's academic life. Much of what is said about seminary is also applicable to students who are preparing for or currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in biblical studies or Christian ministry. However, one area was underrepresented in this book: the role of the local church in the life of the seminarian. Perhaps the authors expect seminary students to be active participants in a local church, and so it was taken for granted. Nevertheless, those considering seminary training or those in the first year of seminary would do well to heed many of the principles in this book.

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Gordon Smith. *Evangelical, Sacramental, and Pentecostal: Why the Church Should Be All Three.* Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017. 160 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0830851607. $17.00.

Gordon Smith is the president of Ambrose University and Seminary in Calgary, Alberta. His previous publications focus on the spiritual life of the church and include *Called to Be Saints* and the edited *The Lord's Supper: Five Views,* both published by IVP.

Smith begins this book with a childhood recollection in which his pastor distinguished his ecclesiological position from others by saying he was not sacramental and not Pentecostal but firmly evangelical. The question Smith poses is: why not all three? Aiming his argument mainly at the evangelical who might think like his former pastor, Smith concludes that there is no good reason not to be evangelical, sacramental, and Pentecostal.

First, Smith argues that the New Testament presents a harmony between the three perspectives. Smith begins with John's Gospel in which Jesus tells his disciples to "abide" in him (John 15:4). What are we to make of *abiding* in Jesus? The answer, Smith contends, depends on one's commitment to one of the three perspectives. Evangelicals suggest that to abide in Jesus is to remain in his word. Sacramentalists point to the sacraments as the means by which Christians abide in Christ. Pentecostals, on the other hand, think that to abide in Jesus is to be united with Christ by the Spirit. Smith suggests that since John includes all three perspectives, so should we. Smith finds further support in the Luke-Acts narratives.

Since Luke integrates all three elements—the work of the Holy Spirit, the proclamation of the word, and the practice of the sacraments—it is a mistake to emphasize one at the expense of another.

Second, Smith suggests that the contemporary divisions are not strictly Protestant in nature, nor should the contemporary church divide along these lines. According to Smith, both John Calvin and John Wesley emphasized the immediate work of the Spirit and the elevated status of the sacraments. Then, in the central section of the book, Smith explores the assumptions of evangelical, sacramental, and Pentecostal Christians and concludes that their principles are in harmony with one another. Moreover, all three are means of receiving God's grace.

In conclusion, Smith offers some practical ways whereby the church might balance its emphasis. He suggests that by following a liturgical year, churches would be able to focus their communal life according to the "great festivals," focusing on the sacramental life of the church during the Christmas season, the evangelical emphasis on the Bible during Easter, and the Pentecostal emphasis on Ascension Day and Pentecost Sunday. He also suggests that churches should arrange their sanctuary to give equal importance to symbols of all three perspectives.

To many a growing Christian, the problem of denominational separation is difficult. Why should Christians, who otherwise espouse unity, be so divisive when we have so much in common? The book's title and introduction offers hope. Smith's pastoral intentions are clearly good. He desires unity and is attempting to answer the question primarily by appealing to Scripture.

So, what might Smith's childhood evangelical (and non-sacramental, non-Pentecostal) pastor say in response? For much of the book, the author makes it very difficult for evangelicals to disagree. Most evangelicals concur that we should experience the Holy Spirit, be baptized, and partake of communion. Yet, many churches de-emphasize teaching on the work of the Spirit or don't take the Lord's Supper seriously. This is a problem. Smith gently suggests that defining one's church by what it is not undermines recognition of the work of the Spirit and the gravity of the sacraments. In this respect, the book is a healthy correction.

Nevertheless, Smith's title leads the potential reader to believe that he will argue that the evangelical Church should adopt the views of other traditions, ones that evangelicals have largely rejected. And in this regard Smith's definitions are vague. If by Pentecostal we mean those who have experienced the Holy Spirit in their lives then we can all surely agree. But that is not what evangelicals think delineates a Pentecostal from an evangelical. Pentecostals do not merely suggest that we ought to experience

the Spirit. Rather, they argue that the miracle and sign gifts—often including the gifts of apostle and prophet—remain in use today. If this is what is meant, then many conservative evangelicals will demur. Also, if what we mean by sacramental is the regular practice of the Lord's Supper and the baptism of believers, then evangelicals agree. But if one means the worldview entailed by a Thomistic division of nature and grace, then most evangelicals would object.

Smith does not ignore the issues over which evangelicals, Roman Catholics, and Pentecostals divide. However, when he makes a contentious point, he supplies little in the way of argument in its support. For example, in explaining why evangelicals might adopt the Pentecostal perspective Smith states, "The canon is closed. But [a prophetic word] will still be a new word—from God, through a prophetic utterance" (p. 120). But isn't this the issue over which we disagree? The non-charismatic evangelical believes that since the canon is closed, then there is *no new word*. Unfortunately, Smith does not seek to argue the point and concludes that the evangelical ought to accept the charismatic view without further ado.

All told, the weight of the book's argument is important: by rejecting the theological perspectives of others, evangelicals can overreact by diminishing the work of the Holy Spirit or the importance of the sacraments in the life of the church. So if this book corrects an imbalance, then it has served well.

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Chiara Bertoglio. *Reforming Music: Music and the Religious Reformations of the Sixteenth Century*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017. xxxv + 836 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-3110518054. $104.00.

Chiara Bertoglio, though young, is an accomplished Italian pianist, with a performing career stretching back over a decade. She is also a musicologist, writer, and professor fascinated with the intersection of theology with musical performance and interpretation.

Upon opening the impressive tome of her *Reforming Music: Music and the Religious Reformations of the Sixteenth Century*, one cannot help but be impressed at the sheer amount of information Bertoglio has compiled and worked through. Yet there is a rigorous organization permeating the entire volume. The table of contents, often an afterthought for most authors, spans eleven pages, each chapter having multiple, numbered subdivisions. Bertoglio has compiled an almost inestimable resource to assist in engaging the musical development of the sixteenth century for scholars and students.

From the first chapter it is very apparent that for Bertoglio, context is key. This, in one aspect, is a driving force behind the book. Christopher Boyd Brown's *Singing the Gospel* (2005), though an excellent book on hymnody of the sixteenth century and its contribution to religious practice in Joachimsthal, Germany, does not achieve the scope of context which Bertoglio engages. She has worked hard to consider the cultural, religious, and political climate surrounding many of the musical developments of the century.

This intentional awareness of the multiplicity of contexts undergirds her impetus for the first two chapters. In roughly 100 pages she sketches the overarching cultural, religious, and political circumstances. Then, in the third chapter, she explores the "problems" concerning music the church was facing. These three chapters establish the context and the issues religious leaders were seeking to solve. The fourth chapter explores how the different reformers of the time understood and approached music, and then the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters move into the musical contributions and developments by both Luther and Calvin, as well as the developments unique to the Church of England.

One of the greatest contributions of Bertoglio's work comes in chapters eight and nine, when she considers the Council of Trent and its impact upon music. She points out, "It can be said, therefore, that Trent did not aim at reforming Catholic music, but rather at comprehending it within the Church's own Reformation; its official pronouncements concerned general approaches and basic principles rather than stylistic, aesthetical or practical details" (p. 388). In drawing out Trent's lack of concreteness concerning music she argues quite effectively that this vagueness essentially left musical practice in the Roman Catholic Church up to local interpretation. Rather than argue that the Council of Trent had a huge impact upon musical practice, she establishes that the Council itself did not address the musical issues at hand very explicitly, therefore providing a context for varied response and interpretation. The impact of the Council upon the musical shape of the sixteenth century was significant specifically because of its vagueness in regards to music.

In chapters ten and eleven, Bertoglio explores the developing confessionalism of the sixteenth century and its impact upon musicians and musical developments. These chapters are insightful: Due to the broader view Bertoglio takes throughout the book, she is able to highlight some important aspects of confessionalism which other books neglect for their more narrow concentration. Specifically, chapter eleven considers how musicians and the music they created contributed to a cross-confessional unity in the church.

The twelfth and final chapter in her book is unique and significant in

its consideration of women's contribution to and impact upon musical development, building upon chapter eleven's theme of cross-confessional unity. Bertoglio notes, "I see the female contribution to religious music in the sixteenth century as one means of reconciliation, since women's voices were sometimes those of the most oppressed human beings, and thus those with which the Crucified Lord most readily identified Himself" (p. 626). Working through the limited musical opportunities available to women in the sixteenth century, she takes time to note the largely negative impact of Trent upon feminine musicality. Her excellent work with primary documents throughout the book is of special significance here because of the lack of work done in this area.

Overall, Bertoglio does a thorough job of presenting the overarching scope of musical development occurring in the sixteenth century. Some theologians may have squabbles over a few of her summaries of theological developments, but her broad strokes are accurate and the musical implications she discusses are often neglected by those who would debate the theological points. The book emphasizes the effects of the religious and cultural upheaval of the century upon music and strikes a healthy balance between depth and breadth. The cost of the book will probably discourage many from buying it, but for those who can acquire it, Bertoglio's *Reforming Music* is a massive resource for the musical developments associated with the religious reformations of the sixteenth century.

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Robert R. Reilly and Jens F. Laursen. *Surprised by Beauty: A Listener's Guide to the Recovery of Modern Music*. Rev. & exp. ed. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2016. 508 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1586179052. $34.95.

When he is not writing about U.S. foreign policy or current cultural issues, Robert Reilly contributes music reviews to publications such as *High Fidelity, Musical America,* and the *American Record Guide*. His book *Surprised by Beauty* is the fruit of over 35 years of Reilly's listening to and writing about classical music. His co-author, Jens F. Laursen, is a German-born music critic who contributes chapters on certain European composers. As Reilly's writing predominates in the book, my comments will focus on his contributions in this review.

Surprised by Beauty is an edited and expanded edition of Reilly's first edition, published in 2002. Part I of the book is a listener's guide to modern classical music with sixty-four chapters reviewing major compositions from the late-nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. The chapters are

arranged alphabetically by composer, as most chapters focus on only one composer. Two "bookend" essays on music and the sacred frame these review chapters. Part II includes six interviews between Reilly and various composers such as Gian Carlo Menotti (famous for the Christmas opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors*), as well as one with conductor Robert Craft.

Partly due to its format and function as a guide to modern classical music, *Surprised by Beauty* does not begin with its overarching thesis. Instead, Reilly establishes his point bit by bit. To summarize, Reilly asserts that, although Arnold Schoenberg's compositional techniques held Western art music captive in the twentieth century, "the tyranny [of atonal music] is now gone and tonality is back" (p. 430). It is now "safe to return to the concert hall" (p. 276). As indicated in the book's title, Reilly has been *Surprised by Beauty* in the music of many modern composers who continued to write tonal music during a musical period dominated by avant-garde composers such as Schoenberg, Pierre Boulez, and John Cage.

As a secondary, but not unrelated, emphasis, Reilly probes the connection between music and the sacred. His opening essay "Is Music Sacred?" is answered by a complementary essay introducing composers who are "Recovering the Sacred in Music" (specifically the "mystical minimalists," Henryk Górecki, Arvo Pärt, and John Tavener). He equates the recovery of tonality—defined in a footnote as "all non-atonal music" (p. 21)—with a "spiritual recovery" (p. 26). Following ancient Greek and early Christian writers, Reilly asserts that music "should attempt to make the transcendent perceptible" (p. 20).

Despite the book's title, the work suffers from an unclear definition of "beauty." Often, Reilly's identification of musical beauty comes across as subjective and experiential, as in his description of hearing Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* for the first time and being "overwhelmed . . . by the intensity of the beauty evident in a very heartfelt performance" (p. 56). Throughout the book, it is not clear whether musical beauty is based on eighteenth-century standards of Western tonality or nineteenth-century standards of musical expression (on which George Rochberg's comments are noteworthy, p. 491). Other remarks link musical beauty to transcendence, such as his assertion that Morton Lauridsen's music "touches upon eternity" (p. 198). But, whatever musical "beauty" is, it is clear that it has nothing to do with Arnold Schoenberg, who declared himself "cured of the delusion that the artist's aim is to create beauty" (quoted on p. 23).

Likewise, there is an unclear definition of "the sacred" in music, despite the essays mentioned above. The book reviews music in the Western classical tradition but does not focus on "Christian" music by Christian composers. Even decidedly agnostic composers such as Ralph Vaughn

Williams (see p. 398) and Gerald Finzi (a "believing agnostic") are said to "write sublime, religiously inspired music" (p. 106). One wonders if more careful use of historic aesthetic categories such as the beautiful and the sublime might provide finer distinctions.

Despite these conceptual difficulties, *Surprised by Beauty* is an excellent and encyclopedic resource for those seeking to explore modern composers. Through the written reviews and CD recommendations, Reilly and Laursen introduce the reader to many unfamiliar pieces of music, extending the invitation to "Open your ears" to new music (p. 62).

The work is also a commendable example of informed Christian cultural engagement with the arts, something that is rare in the literature on classical music. For example, Reilly's response to the aleatoric music of John Cage concludes with an apt quote from the apostle Paul: "If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played?" (1 Cor 14:7, p. 85).

I recommend the book to serious music lovers looking for a guidebook to modern classical music that is willing to ask questions that go beyond taste and sensibility. Indeed, Reilly and Laurson engage with music in a way that encourages listening for the transcendent.

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William T. Cavanaugh and James K. A. Smith, eds. *Evolution and the Fall*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. xxix + 231 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0802873798. $26.00.

Evolution and the Fall presents ten essays on issues stemming from the apparent conflict between Genesis 1–3 and the current evolutionary paradigm related to human origins. While there have been a number of recent monographs and edited works on this topic, what sets this book apart is the emphasis upon engaging the topic through a creative-yet-faithful appropriation of Christian tradition. As the editors write in the introduction, "[O]ur theological heritage provides an invaluable foundation for building new theological models that address our increased knowledge about the natural world" (p. xx). The model given for this approach is the Chalcedonian doctrine of the hypostatic union, a theological development in the early church that refused to succumb to the apparent tension between Jesus's humanity and deity, favoring instead a new formulation that involved faithfulness to core convictions and theological imagination. In engaging science and Scripture, the basic tensions are presented as the rejection of an original human pair in favor of a bottleneck population and the rejection of an original good creation distorted by a Fall. The goal

of this work is to engage these points of tension from the perspective of tradition-anchored Christianity.

Part I of the work, "Mapping the Questions," consists of three essays clarifying key issues on both sides of the debate. Darrel Falk begins with an essay on the current scientific understanding of human origins. For anyone familiar with Falk's work with Biologos, this essay on the scientific methods for understanding human origins (i.e., the fossil record and gene tracking) does not present new information but does offer a concise summary of the current paradigm. The following two essays, from Celia Deane-Drummond and James K. A. Smith, work from the theological side in assessing the doctrine of the Fall in light of this scientific paradigm. In particular, both of these essays are concerned with articulating a historical Fall that resonates with an evolutionary account of human origins.

Part II, "Biblical Studies and Theological Implications," examines passages of Scripture most often connected to the science-Scripture discussion. Richard Middleton presents areas where Genesis 2–3 is capable of thematic dialogue with science through mutual illumination between the two fields of knowledge. Joel Green examines original sin through several intertestamental and New Testament writings, arguing that the biblical witness opens up a spacious account of original sin capable of articulation apart from a primordial couple or historical Fall. Aaron Riches evaluates Adam in light of Jesus's paradoxical nature, favoring an approach that affirms Adam's historicity but accepts the mysterious nature of this claim.

Part III, "Beyond Origins: Cultural Implications," consists of essays by Brent Waters and Norman Wirzba pushing back on possible implications of the scientific paradigm. For Waters, against the scientific quest for immortality in the form of posthumanism, the doctrine of the incarnation affirms both the goodness and the finitude of the human body. For Wirzba, Christian tradition enables an interpretation of the world as God's creation (with an ensuing call for participatory creation) rather than simply as nature.

Finally, Part IV, "Reimagining the Conversation: Faithful Ways Forward," concludes with two essays clarifying the origins of the modern rejection of the Fall and examining the science vs. Scripture debate. In the first, William T. Cavanaugh argues that rejection of the Fall in modernism was not a result of the scientific method but rather the result of political theories influenced by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, each of whom affirmed the Fall but rejected key aspects of its effects upon human society. In the second, Peter Harrison argues for a "soft" irenicism in the Scripture-science debate that scrutinizes the elements of scientific theory and Christian doctrine in search of fruitful dialogue.

This book will be of particular value to anyone interested in a spectrum

of voices that take both science and Scripture seriously. While many (particularly conservative) Christians will be more critical than these essays of the current scientific paradigm, the writers can be commended for not allowing the science side of the debate to control the framing of the discussion. Rather, they offer dialogue between the sides, searching for points of resonance, points of possible rearticulation, and points of rejection. This is particularly evident in James K. A. Smith's essay, "What Stands on the Fall?," where the doctrine of the Fall is upheld and creatively engaged in light of evolutionary theory, and Norman Wirzba's essay, "On Learning to See a Fallen and Flourishing Creation," where he pushes back against a Darwinian conception of nature in light of a Christian doctrine of creation. Of course, there are also points of internal disagreement amongst the writers worth recognizing, most notably over the nature, historicity, and effects of the Fall. Finally, it would have been helpful for the book to include an essay solely devoted to the historical development of the doctrine of the Fall, since it plays a major role in the essays. Aside from this quibble, this is a worthy collection of essays without a single weak link or esoteric diversion from the major topic of study.

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Paul Copan, Tremper Longman III, Christopher L. Reese, and Michael G. Strauss, eds. *Dictionary of Christianity and Science: The Definitive Reference for the Intersection of Christian Faith and Contemporary Science*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 704 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0310496052. $59.99.

Perhaps the least satisfactory aspect of this book is its title: it should be the *Encyclopedia* of Christianity and Science. As a detailed reference for ideas and the people who originated them, it is valuable and unique. Consistent with the subtitle, it focuses tightly on the *intersection* of faith and science: readers would look in vain for entries on general scientific terms and concepts (e.g., galaxy, neutrino, entropy, chromosome, or continental drift) that have not played a significant role in the interaction of science and Christianity through history. By contrast, a rich variety of entries cover the myriad facets of the origins debate, from "Age of the Earth" and "Archaeopteryx," through "Life, Origin of" and "Neo-Darwinian Synthesis," to "Random Mutation" and "Uniformitarianism."

For the entries on controversial topics, the editors have done an excellent job finding good representatives of several conflicting viewpoints. Under the broad heading of Creationism, there are four entries: two for the Old-Earth position, "Critical View" and "Supportive View," and then

the same two entries for the Young-Earth position. Each of the four entries goes on for pages. This is only one of many examples of even-handed treatment for controversial subjects. In reading through several of them, I found myself experiencing the reality of Proverbs 18:17: "The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him" (ESV). In cases where I have a strong opinion, I found myself furious at the well-constructed arguments for the contrary positions—though not dissatisfied with the defense of my own viewpoint that was invariably included. I frequently recognized the names of the entries' authors as being among the foremost proponents of their respective views.

The book is much more than simply an encyclopedia of the origins controversy. Hundreds of fascinating entries about historical figures (and some still living) consume perhaps 50 percent of the pages. Two of these entries stood out to me because I had previously known nothing about them: Catholic neuroscientist Sir John C. Eccles and South African physicist and Templeton prize winner George F. R. Ellis. Eccles suggested that the human soul is real but scientifically undetectable because it interfaces with our brains through quantum effects in our synapses, while Ellis made the eminently sensible claim that philosophies denying the reality of consciousness and free will are promoting "a completely incoherent position." Numerous other entries cover ideas in philosophy, and I found it fascinating to realize how many (non-Christian) philosophies indicate science should be intrinsically impossible.

Some entries on topics familiar to me stood out as particularly excellent. One of these is "Cosmology, Contemporary," by Bruce L. Gordon. It is a rollicking ride through the mind-blowing yet profoundly God-haunted wonderland of modern cosmic theory. Among the most significant quotables is the statement, "In short, it seems to be resistance to the fact that the transcendent God hypothesis fits the observational data of contemporary cosmology that drives much current speculation." Based on my own experience as a professional astronomer, this hits the nail absolutely on the head. Gordon goes on to quote Stephen Hawking's famous question, "What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?" In his closing discussion of multiverse theories, Gordon briefly describes the cogent yet delightfully bizarre "Boltzmann Brain Paradox"—which, unfortunately, does not rate an entry of its own. Another excellent entry is "Miracles," by Craig Keener—who provides an extensive and evidence-based discussion of why it is reasonable to believe in them. Among the rich variety of other topics covered are the Turing Test (for artificial intelligence), the logical/philosophical Problem of Induction, and the life of the fifth-century Neoplatonic philosopher Hypatia.

It is difficult to point to any specific shortcomings in this book. Two entries I'd like to see in a future edition would cover the "evangelical atheists" Neil deGrasse Tyson (of the Cosmos remake) and Sean Carroll, a Caltech-based popularizer of speculative modern cosmology. But for all its excellence, the book is not for everyone. Seekers, unless they are intensely intellectual, may find the huge array of ideas that are discussed merely bewildering. I would recommend the book for pastors and teachers: it can be an invaluable resource for communicating effectively to scientists both believing and skeptical. The dictionary will likely be of greatest value to well-educated individuals who are confident in their faith and their basic understanding of science. They will be enriched, without being confused, by exposure to the wide range of concepts and characters.

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Nabeel Qureshi. *No God But One: Allah or Jesus? A Former Muslim Investigates the Evidence for Islam and Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016. 316 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0310522553. $17.99.

Nabeel Qureshi passed from life to life on September 16, 2017 at the age of thirty-four. He lost his battle with cancer but is now living in the presence of his Savior, Jesus. It is not a stretch to say that in his shortened life, Qureshi was a clear beacon for Christ in the fog of Christian-Muslim dialogue. His testimony and apology for the Christian faith is moving, clear, and continues to impact Muslims and Christians, devout and non-devout alike.

Qureshi's *No God But One* is the follow-up to his first book, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*. He characterizes his first volume as the heart of his journey from Islam to Christianity and the second as the mind of his journey (p. 13). While written on a popular level, this is an apologetic work in which Qureshi seeks to clarify the differences between Islam and Christianity with the aim of demonstrating the overwhelming evidence for Christianity. Far from a dry academic book about religion and apologetics, Qureshi approaches the subject matter from the perspective of three crucial questions that were substantive in his own faith journey and are of consequence for anyone genuinely wrestling with the truth claims of Christianity and Islam. The questions are (p. 21):

- What are the differences between Islam and Christianity?
- Can we be confident that Christianity or Islam is true?
- Is the truth worth dying for?

These questions provide the structure of the book. Qureshi addresses key doctrinal issues connected with each one throughout the work, answering them from a comparative perspective that relies on historical and doctrinal evidences.

In section one of the book, Qureshi answers the overarching question, "What are the differences between Islam and Christianity?" From the outset, I found myself wanting more. One helpful addition would be the inclusion of some definition and distinction of the major sects within Islam. While he certainly tackles key doctrinal differences between Islam and Christianity and provides some helpful information and interesting ideas, it seems that his treatment of the Islamic and Christian histories is, at times, uneven. There were multiple instances where I wondered why he included certain details while omitting others. One example is the discussion of the *Mihna*, the Islamic Inquisition (pp. 49–53). The *Mihna* is an interesting historical time within Islam, but its inclusion seems unfair and unduly slanted to cast a negative light upon the Islamic belief in *tawhid*. While Qureshi certainly addresses historical events within Christianity like the Crusades, he treats that phenomenon in a more positive manner than the *Mihna*. In sum, there are points that one might interpret as unfair, depending on one's perspective, and even question how some of the material helps move the discussion along.

Another critique of the first section is the lack of rigor or definitive answers Qureshi provides. For example, chapter eight is a scant four pages even though he is answering the key question, "Do Muslims and Christians Worship the Same God?" I believe Qureshi works from the false assumption that the answer follows from the material in the previous chapters. This is not the case. More clarity and depth in this chapter would help the reader make better connections and give a more satisfying answer to this seminal question. Overall, Qureshi's introduction of various topics is appealing, but his answers are less fulfilling. In short, part one of this book may leave some with little desire to continue reading, but that would be a mistake.

In the second section, Qureshi addresses the question, "Can we be confident that Christianity or Islam is true?" At this point in the book, one finds more clarity and begins to understand the project as a whole. In answering this question, Qureshi provides the compelling reasoning and argumentation lacking earlier.

The majority of the content of the second section is focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ. As Qureshi writes, "At no point is the schism between Christian and Islamic theologies broader than on the person of Jesus" (p. 213). I believe he is correct in this, asserting the competing views of Jesus as the central issue between Christianity and Islam.

Qureshi ably deals with the key subjects of the cross, the divinity of Jesus, the resurrection, the prophethood of Muhammad, and the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, but one finds the most lucid and compelling section of the book in the latter part of section two. For me, this made the book a worthwhile read.

Finally, Qureshi ends with the shortest answer to his final question, "Is the truth worth dying for?" While only a few pages, the anecdotal answer provided through the death and online poem of Fatima is sobering and appropriate (pp. 295–96). It is sobering due to the reality of suffering, persecution, and even death that awaits one who decides to follow Jesus out of Islam, like Qureshi's own story. It is appropriate since there are no definitive facts that help answer such a large, existential question.

Despite some shortcomings, *No God But One* is a commendable work to a number of audiences. It provides enough substance and historical detail to be interesting to the casual reader or one who is simply interested in Islam and Christianity. It addresses deep questions in a provocative way that would appeal to a seeker from a Muslim background. Academically, it is useful as introductory material in a college class or for the student wanting more information on key differences between the two major world religions concerned. Qureshi accomplished what he set out to do, and this book is another positive contribution from a life that burned brightly, yet too quickly, for Christ.

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James Nyman. *Stubborn Perseverance: How to Launch Multiplying Movements of Disciples and Churches among Muslims and Others (A Story Based on Real Events)*. 2nd ed. Edited by Robby Butler. Mount Vernon, WA: Mission Network, 2017. xi + 301 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0996965279. $14.95.

Church Planting Movements (CPMs) have been described, evaluated, and discussed extensively since David Garrison published *Church Planting Movements* in 2004. Various approaches, guides, and manuals have been written and disseminated. Multiple questions persistently arise even after reading strategy manuals: How can one facilitate a CPM? How does one know what a burgeoning CPM looks like at ground level? Finding an answer has often required a person to travel to a mission field, work alongside missionaries, and buy into the strategy prior to having the opportunity to carefully evaluate both the process and outcome.

In *Stubborn Perseverance,* James Nyman seeks to answer the "How?" of CPMs. He explains,

> This book uses the vehicle of story to demonstrate church-planting movement (CPM) principles in context, presenting various motivations that lead people to Christ, illustrating discipleship issues new believers face, showing how groups come to function as house churches, and describing a model for how local leaders are developed. (p. xi)

As background, Nyman has served among Muslim unreached people groups in Indonesia since the early 1990s and began utilizing CPM strategy in 1999. Nyman and his wife currently serve with Beyond.

Nyman uses a unified fictional account among a fictional people group to demonstrate how CPM strategy is generally implemented among Muslim people groups, with the further goal of urging his readers to pursue CPM strategy themselves. While the fictional nature may be initially offputting, this serves to highlight the transcultural assumptions of CPM. Rather than being a description of CPM at work among a specific people group, Nyman intends to offer a prescriptive method that can be implemented regardless of culture. Even so, limitations still exist in this approach since differences will certainly exist between people groups of various religious and social backgrounds.

Nyman walks the reader step-by-step from the seed of a CPM in a small group of local believers through church formation and leadership development. Each chapter focuses on only one aspect of the process, allowing the reader to examine that element. Each chapter also includes questions to facilitate group discussion which could assist a mission team or missions class in reflecting upon the CPM principle described. In addition to the narrative, the primary CPM sources referenced throughout the book are conveniently provided in approximately fifty pages of appendices.

One of the major benefits of this work is that it allows for evaluation and critique of methodology and results. Nyman depicts how a CPM will generally be facilitated within a Muslim context, allowing the reader to identify both strengths and weaknesses of the approach, even if the authors do not recognize or identify weaknesses.

Nyman also narrates the implementation of several controversial elements of CPM strategy such as the CAMEL Method, the "insider movement," and leadership development. The debate regarding these issues has been extensively documented in other articles and books, but their use in this book bears mentioning because the narrative structure does not provide critical evaluation of the practices. Instead, they are assumed as essential to CPM strategy. The CAMEL method is employed as the primary method of evangelism. The "insider movement" is not affirmed explicitly, but one character describes himself as "a Muslim follower of

Isa Al Masih" when confronted about being a Christian (p. 207). Nyman's narration of leadership development is narrowly focused on developing leaders of ongoing movements. The importance of pastoral leadership is discussed, but little space is dedicated to leadership in the church or deeper study of the Bible. Leadership is mainly seen as leading and facilitating the extension of the movement. The bias toward these methods is not unusual in CPM strategy even though significant theological and practical problems arise from their use. While a reader must be aware of this bias, Nyman is open about the use of these practices.

The strengths of this book lie in both its open presentation of the inner-workings of a CPM and its compilation of CPM sources in one location. This book could serve as an excellent text within an introductory missions course or as an aid to current or prospective missionaries who are considering implementing a CPM strategy. The narrative format allows students or missionaries to have realistic expectations and to ask informed questions of their professors or field supervisors. The resources in the appendices provide sufficient material to comprehend, evaluate, and implement a CPM strategy if one chooses. While a reader may find points to critique in the strategy, Nyman offers a candid peek at the inner workings of a CPM at ground level. For this reason, *Stubborn Perseverance* is a valuable resource for missions students, teachers, and practitioners.

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