Editorial Board

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Introduction to the Volume

STR Editor

The current volume of *STR* is a collection of essays centering upon the general theme of "Theological Interpretation of Scripture" (hereafter "TIS"). Gordon McConville has dubbed the discipline of biblical theology as a "somewhat slippery creature, which at times basks in the sun and at other times retreats quietly, or even ignominiously, into the shade."[1] His point is well-taken, as in the field "biblical theology" remains a contested concept, much less a discipline, and one that scholarship categorizes and refigures in the light of emerging trends. But what of TIS? Is it "slippery" and inchoate, a golem-like creature, an "unshaped form" (cf. Ps. 139:16)?

Critics of TIS would have us believe so. Some of the main critiques of the practice of theological interpretation include, but are not restricted to, the issues listed below:

1. It is not new…the church has been doing theological interpretation since its inception. Why is there a need for a new TIS "movement?" In actuality, theological interpretation has been a churchly practice since the beginning and continues to be so in the present. Therefore, there may not be a need for a new-fangled academic enterprise that is somehow supposed to be related to the Church in some ill-defined way.

2. It is not clear…there is no method associated with TIS and thereby it is difficult to assess. TIS ranges methodologically, offering little handles to begin to evaluate its aims, processes, and outcomes. One can press the question further to query whether or not *method* is the best way to understand the goal of TIS.

3. It is not biblical (enough)…TIS revives patristic and medieval modes of biblical interpretation that are, frankly, not rooted in the historical-grammatical sense of Scripture, which can lead away from the originating biblical meaning and down roads of interpretation that may in fact be dead ends. Biblical scholars sometimes aver that TIS needs firmer rootage in the "plain sense" of the text.

4. It is not theological (enough)…This critique can cut at least two ways. First, TIS invests itself in modes of theological enquiry that its practitioners (often) have not been thought through and so are only superficially applied. Second, the theological commitments that undergird

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[1] J. Gordon McConville, "Biblical Theology: Canon and Plain Sense (Finlayson Memorial Lecture 2001)," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 19/2(2001): 134–57 (134).

the historical-grammatical sense of Scripture are not reflected upon *theologically* so that biblical scholars can be working with a philosophy or theology of history that remains profoundly *un*-Christian and *anti*-theological. Theologians posit that theological interpretation of Scripture needs deeper rootage in theology proper to inform biblical studies.

We, for one, believe that the critiques of TIS are real and need to be addressed. However, it is in place to note that the critiques levied at TIS may eventuate from the unapologetic nature of its practitioners to engage in *biblical* interpretation, that is *theological*, which informs *the whole of life*, as *the Church* listens *for God's voice in Scripture*. At any rate, this burgeoning field of enquiry, far from being monochromatic or monolithic, attempts in various ways to hear and "hearken unto" God's voice in Holy Scripture.

The present volume offers one theoretical essay that addresses some of the issues identified above. The *STR* Fellow, Grant Taylor, provides some background and foundation to the enterprise known as TIS. This is Mr. Taylor's final endeavor as the *STR* Fellow. He has ably served as the liaison between publishers, authors, and *STR*. He also is the guest editor for this volume. We thank Mr. Taylor for his work and for the fine job on this volume.

Following upon the first essay are four essays of "theological interpretation" in practice. Three of them derive from the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research, Old Testament Group, that met 1–3 July, 2013 at Tyndale House, Cambridge. The theme of the summer meeting was "Theological Interpretation." We would like to thank the Chair, Dr. David Firth and Secretary Dr. James Robson for their work in the meeting and the willingness to offer publication for some of the papers read. We would also like to thank the Old Testament group for the stimulation and discussion that no doubt made the papers richer and more penetrating. The essays by Robin Routledge, Caroline Batchelder, and Geoffrey Harper offer theological interpretation on the relationship of Israel to the Church, the meaning of Isaiah 6, and the theological significance and meaning of the dietary laws. While not part of the Tyndale meeting over the summer, we are delighted to have an essay by respected theologian and aesthetician Calvin Seerveld on the Song of Songs to round out volume. Our hope is that the work here will stimulate more discussion, thought, and practice of theological interpretation of Scripture.

The Continuation of 'A New Exchange': Theological Interpretation of Scripture in Retrospect and Prospect

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Since this edition of *Southeastern Theological Review* discusses and gives examples of theological interpretation of Scripture (hereafter TIS), readers may desire a definition of TIS. Several forums, introductory books, and a dictionary[1] have covered this ground, so that this essay will not seek to do likewise. Instead, this brief essay will endeavor to show that as it is generally practiced today TIS represents what Karl Barth (1886–1968) believed was one of the primary goals of his *Church Dogmatics*: "… the initiation of *a new exchange* of views about the question of proper theology, the established knowledge of God, and the obedient service of God among men."[2] Of course, by "new exchange" Barth did not exclude all the theological interpretations of scripture that preceded his work. Rather, he hoped his *Dogmatics* would facilitate new discussions. In particular he hoped to break out of old historical-critical discussions (though in general he accepted the critical conclusions of the OT and NT scholars of his day) to break into what he called "the strange new world of the Bible." Since Barth has greatly influenced many current practitioners of TIS, the past and present of TIS owes much to this "new exchange" Barth initiated.

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[1] See e.g. Greg Allison, "Theological Interpretation of Scripture: An Introduction and Preliminary Evaluation," *SBJT* 14/2 (2010), 28–37; J. Todd Billings, *The Word of God for the People of God: An Entryway to the Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); Joel B. Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation: Engaging Biblical Texts for Faith and Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011); idem, "The (Re)Turn to Theology," *JTI* 1 (2007), 1–3; R. W. L. Moberly, "What is Theological Interpretation of Scripture?" *JTI* 3 (2009), 161–78; Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering an Ancient Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008); idem, "Biblical Theology and/or Theological Interpretation of Scripture" *SJT* 61 (2008), 16–31; idem, "What is Theological Interpretation? An Ecclesiological Reduction," *IJST* 12 (2010), 144–61; Kevin Vanhoozer, ed., *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), hereafter *DTIB*; John Webster, "Editorial: Five Thoughts on Theological Interpretation of Scripture," *IJST* 12 (2010), 116–17; Stephen Wellum, "The SBJT Forum: Theological Interpretation of Scripture," *SBJT* 14/2 (2010), 78–84; the *Journal of Theological Interpretation*; and *Ex Auditu*, which publishes papers given at the annual Symposium on Theological Interpretation of Scripture of North Park Theological Seminary.

[2] Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (trans. Grover Foley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), xi–xii. Emphasis added.

The goal of this essay, then, is to research selected roots of TIS to illumine its characteristics as presently practiced. This survey will provide background material for the next section, which will sketch some implications for the prospects of TIS. The final section proposes epistemological and ethical reasons for making the sufficiency of Scripture primary in doing theology. To look forward, then, we begin by looking back to see from whence TIS came.

Theological Interpretation of Scripture in Retrospect

Proponents of TIS position themselves in a particular way, both positively and negatively, toward the history of biblical interpretation.[3] Theological interpretation of Scripture stands over against the kind of interpretation represented in the famous 1787 address of J. P. Gabler and *for* the kind championed by Karl Barth in the 20th century. Gabler and Barth serve in this essay as two exemplars, but not necessarily the verifiable originators, of contrasting approaches.[4] Given the expanse of the period and scope of the material on the subject, this section includes a necessarily brief version of this history. Therefore I will examine Gabler's methods and significance, then note briefly the history of interpretation between his time and Barth's, and finally trace Barth's views as a stark contrast to Gabler's approach. This section will, it is hoped, illustrate the motives and concerns of TIS.

Against Gabler

Gabler's 1787 address at the University of Altdorf, "An Oration on the Proper Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology and the Specific Objectives of Each,"[5] provides an example of the then-nascent historical-critical method that stemmed from Spinoza in the 17th century, and especially the rationalist presuppositions of the 18th century, that governed this kind of biblical interpretation. In his oration Gabler distinguished biblical theology from dogmatic theology. Gabler held that

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[3] This is especially the case with respect to the question of the historical-critical method in theology. See the discussion in Joel B. Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation*, 43–70; cf. John Barton, *The Nature of Biblical Criticism* (Louisville: WJK, 2007).

[4] A good bit of work has been done in regard to the origins of historical-critical approaches and of theological interpretation. See, for example, H.G. Reventlow, *A History of Biblical Intepretation*, Volume 4: From the Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century (trans. Leo G. Perdue; RBS 63; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010); Michael C. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[5] See John Sandys-Wunsch and Laurence Eldredge, "J. P. Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary, and Discussion of His Originality" *SJT* 33 (1980), 133–58; reprinted in Ben C. Ollenburger, ed. *Old Testament Theology: Flowering and Future* (2d ed.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 497–506. Citations of Gabler in this essay give the page numbers from Wunsch and Eldredge.

… there is truly a biblical theology, of historical origin, conveying what the holy writers felt about divine matters; on the other hand there is a dogmatic theology of didactic origin, teaching what each theologian philosophises (*sic*) rationally about divine things, according to the measure of his ability or of the times, age, place sect, school, and other similar factors.[6]

Because Gabler believed the Bible should inform the church's theology, his method was to examine the OT and NT for the timeless, universal ideas found in the Bible and the Apocrypha and then to separate these from the time-bound ideas of the ancients. By comparing the universal ideas, which comported with rationalist notions of reality, across the OT and the NT one could come up with material for dogmatic theology. Gabler sought a pure biblical theology founded upon the work of historical criticism that abstracted the parts of the Bible from the whole.[7]

Gabler's proposal was more significant for its title and rationalist presuppositions than its content. Already J. S. Semler had called for the "free investigation of the canon" (1771–75) on the basis of a separation between religion and theology.[8] Gabler followed in this line: "Religion … is everyday, transparently clear knowledge; but theology is subtle, learned knowledge."[9] Gabler saw these distinctions as essential for the proper establishment of both theology and religion:

"… that we distinguish carefully the divine from the human, that we establish some distinction between biblical and dogmatic theology, and after we have separated those things which in the sacred books refer most immediately in their own times and to the men of those times from those pure notions which divine providence wished to be characteristic of all times and places, let us then construct the foundation of our philosophy upon religion and let us designate with some care the objectives of divine and human wisdom. Exactly thus will our theology be made more certain and more firm …."[10]

As a result of Gabler's method applied, the integrity of what had been held together in the history of the Church is precluded from the outset — indeed, held distinct from one another: the unity of the OT and NT, the Law and the Gospel, the church and the theologian, and history and theology.

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[6] Gabler, "Proper Distinction," 137.

[7] See Mark Elliot, "Gabler, Johann Philipp" in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (ed. Donald K. McKim; Downers Grove: IVP, 2007), 452–56.

[8] *Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Kanon* (4 vols.; Halle: Carl Hermann Hemmerde, 1771–75); cf. H. Rollmann, "Semler, Johann Salomo" in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, 910–14.

[9] Gabler, "Proper Distinction," 136.

[10] Ibid., 138.

Though Gabler may not have intended it, nonetheless the effect remains that distinctions reign according to his proposal.[11]

Gabler's address was influential because he identified three key distinctions that characterized academic biblical interpretation for the next 130 years: between biblical and dogmatic theology, between religion and theology, and between the church and the academy. As Peter Stuhlmacher notes, by the end of the 18th century "… for a very long time contact between the church's dogmatic tradition and scientific-critical theology was broken off."[12] After Gabler, the Bible became, in European universities at least, a literary resource for historical study of the Christian religion instead of historical revelation for theological reflection and Christian living. And Hans Frei suggests that due to the influence of Spinoza and even Cocceius in the 17th century and English Deism and German rationalism in the 18th century (e.g., Semler, Gabler), classic orthodox doctrines such as revelation no longer governed (or at times even influenced) biblical interpretation. It is not hard to see that a rupture occurred. Whereas the Reformers thought the literal sense and historical referents of Scripture were unified, after the 18th century biblical scholars generally kept them separate.[13] Thus the Bible, especially the Pentateuch and Gospels, came to be read "critically," which means: "read Scripture like any other book," that is, apart from any prior theological or traditional commitments about the Bible.[14]

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[11] Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale, 1974), 166, summarizes Gabler's approach: "Grammatical-historical and historical-critical analysis together rendered the full explicative meaning of texts for Gabler." Elliot, "Gabler," 452–53, argues that Gabler wanted to keep the Bible (both Testaments) together as a document. Yet it is difficult to follow Gabler's abstraction principle without, at some point, critically separating the Old from the New.

[12] Peter Stuhlmacher, *Historical Criticism and Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Toward a Hermeneutics of Consent* (trans. Roy A. Harrisville; Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 1977), 40–41.

[13] Frei, *Eclipse*, especially pp. 17–182. According to Frei (ibid., 55), the move toward more academic study of the Bible in Germany stems from an independence born in rationalism: "Not much of Protestant orthodoxy passed over into rationalist religious thought, but this one thing surely did: the antitraditionalism in scriptural interpretation of the one bolstered the antiauthoritarian stance in matters of religious meaning and truth of the other." Hence the essence of Frei's thesis is the breakdown in this period of reading the Bible as "realistic narrative" (ibid., 324). To overcome this eclipse, Frei proposes an increased emphasis on reading the Bible as narrative, treating its literal sense as a world of history-like narrative. The "realistic sense" of the Bible, then, for Frei refers to this narrative unity of the words themselves. For a critique see Timothy Ward, *Word and Supplement: Speech Acts, Biblical Texts, and the Sufficiency of Scripture* (Oxford: Oxford, 2002), 150–61.

[14] See the classic later essay by the English scholar Benjamin Jowett, "On the Interpretation of Scripture," in *Essays and Reviews* (London: Longman, Green, Longman

Barth provided a stark challenge to this viewpoint even though he was not the only, or even the first, scholar to do so. Adolf Schlatter (1852–1938), one of Barth's teachers, argues for a theological reading of Scripture as proper to the character of Scripture itself: "As soon as the historian sets aside or brackets the question of faith, he is making his concern with the New Testament and his presentation of it into a radical and total polemic against it."[15] Schlatter saw theological reading, i.e. faith, as intrinsic to the historical-exegetical task. Although Barth, then, was not the first to argue for a confessional reading of Scripture he does receive much more attention than Schlatter as the main exemplar of theological interpretation for the 21st century.

For Barth

Richard Burnett claims, "Karl Barth's break with liberalism in the summer of 1915 is the most important event that has occurred in theology in over two hundred years."[16] Whether or not this is true requires a debate beyond the scope of this essay. It perhaps suffices to note that some major practitioners of TIS believe that it is so. From Barth's *Epistle to the Romans* (1919) to his *Church Dogmatics* (1932–1966), Barth asked questions and gave answers that continue to spur TIS. Two emphases stand out. First, Barth seeks to integrate his own brand of exegesis and dogmatics for the church. Second, he emphasizes Christology within a Trinitarian account of revelation. For these two reasons, but not only these, Barth serves as the "motivation and model" for TIS.[17]

Whereas Gabler argued for the clear separation between biblical and dogmatic theology, Barth sought to put them back together. His first and last major publications illustrate the point. The series of prefaces to *Romans* represent an impassioned back and forth between Barth and his numerous contemporary critics. In the preface to the second edition (1922) Barth declares his difference from the common scholarly approach: "The matter contained in the text cannot be released save by a creative straining of the sinews, by a relentless, elastic application of the 'dialectical method.' The critical historian

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and Roberts, 1861), 330–433. The phrase "read Scripture like any other book" comes directly from Jowett's essay, p. 338.

[15] Adolf Schlatter, "The Theology of the New Testament and Dogmatics" in *The Nature of New Testament Theology* (trans. and ed. Robert Morgan; SBT 25; London: SCM, 1973), 122. For a helpful investigation of Schlatter's epistemology and exegesis see Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Salvation Historical Fallacy? Reassessing the History of New Testament Theology* (Leiden: Deo, 2004), 81–114.

[16] Richard E. Burnett, *Karl Barth's Theological Exegesis: The Hermeneutical Principles of the* Römerbrief *Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 1.

[17] Following the assessment of Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing*, 17; cf. Hans Madume, "Theological Interpretation After Barth" *JTI* 3:1 (2009), 143–56. Madume reviews three recent works on the theological exegesis of Karl Barth, and argues that we now need fewer works *about* Barth's exegesis and more work that integrates theology and exegesis in the way Barth modeled.

needs to be more critical."[18] By "critical" Barth means that most biblical commentators at that time needed to explicate theology from the text itself apart from historical concerns, and not settle for "… a disjointed series of notes on words and phrases."[19] For Barth the subject matter of the Bible, God, governed the exegetical task and this required more than he felt Liberals in biblical scholarship had given him to that point.

In *Evangelical Theology* (1963) Barth describes the science of theology as the science of the Incarnation. Above all, theology is "… concerned with Immanuel, God with us!"[20] Following a discussion of the devotional life of the theologian, he describes the relation of the theological disciplines. For Barth exegesis, biblical theology, and the church all cohere under the theology of the Immanuel:

> The science of biblical theology does not work in empty space but in the service of the community of Jesus Christ, which is founded by prophetic and apostolic testimony. It is for this reason that it approaches these tests with a *specific expectation*… . Biblical theology expects that testimony to the God who calls for faith will confront it in these texts. Nevertheless, it remains unreservedly open to such questions as: Will this expectation be fulfilled? … Is such exegesis 'dogmatic' exegesis? An affirmative answer has to be given only to the extent that the science of theological exegesis rejects, at the outset, every dogma which might forbid it the expectation just mentioned and might declare, from the beginning, its vindication to be impossible.[21]

At least for a confessing Christian theologian, no neat separation exists between religion and theology, between the church and the academy, or therefore between biblical and dogmatic theology. We must engage in *Church* dogmatics.[22] This motivation in Barth stimulates much of the emphasis on "ecclesial location" in TIS.

A second major impetus for TIS can be found in Barth's emphasis on Christology within his Trinitarian account of revelation. For Barth, "To say

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[18] Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (6th ed.; trans. E. C. Hoskyns; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 8. Hans Frei, "Scripture as Realistic Narrative: Karl Barth as Critic of Historical Criticism" in *Thy Word is Truth: Karl Barth on Scripture* (ed., George Hunsinger; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 49–68, describes Barth's tenuous and changing relationship with historical criticism. Cf. Burnett, *Karl Barth's Theological Exegesis.*

[19] Barth, *Romans*, 8.

[20] Barth, *Evangelical Theology*, 12.

[21] Ibid., 177–78. Cited in Stuhlmacher, *Historical Criticism*, 50–51, to whom I owe the reference.

[22] Cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics I.1: The Doctrine of the Word of God* (trans., G. W. Bromiley et al; eds. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance; London: T &T Clark, 2010) §4, 119. Theology is the study of *The Word of God for the People of God*, as the title of Billings's recent book encapsulates.

revelation is to say 'The Word became flesh.'" However, the Bible and the church's proclamation can only attest to and proclaim this fact, they cannot reproduce it as given.[23] Barth held to the fallibility of all human words and thus the indirect nature of the Word of God in the words of Scripture.[24] For Barth this principle stems from a more fundamental one (at least for Barth): the freedom of God to reveal himself. As such we may only know God insofar as he freely reveals himself in Jesus Christ. Timothy Ward notes,

> The only permanent, true 'Word of God' in itself is therefore Jesus Christ … the second person of the Trinity in human form, God come in the flesh. To identify anything else directly and permanently, in itself, with revelation or with the Word of God, as the Protestant orthodox did with Scripture, is for Barth, to threaten the supremacy of Jesus Christ.[25]

Barth therefore made the event of the Word of God into the hermeneutical key for understanding the both the contents and the nature of Scripture.[26] To do so one has to separate the biblical text and the historical event.

In order to understand Scripture's relation to the event of revelation, then, we need the doctrine of the Trinity.[27] Barth argues forcefully, "The basis or root of the doctrine of the Trinity … lies in revelation."[28] Furthermore the event of the incarnation is the revelatory event that grounds the doctrine of the Trinity: "According to the Bible God's being with us is the event of revelation. The statement, understood thus, that God reveals Himself as the Lord, or what this statement is meant to describe, and therefore revelation itself as attested by Scripture, we call the root of the doctrine of the Trinity."[29] This implies two key points for interpretation.

First, the doctrine of the Trinity is not equal to the biblical text but it "… translates and exegetes the text."[30] Second, true statements about the Trinity align with the statements about revelation insofar as "… revelation is correctly interpreted by the [doctrine of the Trinity]."[31] From Barth, then, a Trinitar-

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[23] Barth, *CD I.1*, §4, 119–20. Barth (ibid., §4, 120) states, "It is Jesus Christ Himself who here speaks for Himself and needs no witness apart from His Holy Spirit and the faith that rejoices in His promise received and grasped."

[24] See, for example, his discussion of Paul in the "Preface to the Third Edition" of *Romans*, 19; idem, *CD I.1*, §4, 99–111; §5, 165–86; cf., Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 110–16; W. S. Johnson, "Barth, Karl," in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, 64–65.

[25] Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 111; cf., Johnson, "Barth, Karl," 161; Barth, *CD I.1*, §4, 111–21.

[26] See Barth, *CD I.1*, §8, 315–16; cf. idem, *Evangelical Theology*, 12.

[27] Johnson, "Barth, Karl," 162.

[28] Barth, *CD I.1*, §8, 311. Barth (ibid.) claims to follow Calvin that ". . . the revelation attested in the Bible, is the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity, or that the doctrine of the Trinity is the appropriate interpretation of this revelation as such."

[29] Barth, *CD I.1*, §8, 307.

[30] Barth, *CD I.1*, §8, 308.

[31] Barth, *CD I.1*, §8, 309–10.

ian hermeneutic for reading the Bible emerges.[32] As W. S. Johnson states, "Triunity forms the implicit grammar that should guide all our ways of speaking of God."[33] As we will see below, Barth indeed initiated a "new exchange" in theology and hermeneutics that sparked and still influences TIS.

Two Responses to Barth's New Exchange: Stuhlmacher and Childs

Barth however was not the only 20th c. scholar to argue for TIS. In 1975, NT scholar Peter Stuhlmacher highlighted "… serious hermeneutical problems in Protestant biblical criticism …"[34] in order to propose a more critically theological approach. He finds, like Barth, that historical-critical exegesis in itself as practiced by most academic NT scholars does not attempt to provide a theological interpretation of Scripture. Stuhlmacher argues, however, that historical-critical exegesis can provide this if it will 1) follow a hermeneutics of consent for the biblical texts and 2) operate with a recognition of the "… enduring hermeneutical relevance of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed."[35]

A hermeneutics of consent incorporates one's openness to transcendence, methodological verifiability, and an awareness of the history of effects and interpretation between the biblical texts and us.[36] The first and third principles sound similar to Barth's emphases on hearing the word of revelation and his great dependence, for instance, on Calvin. Stuhlmacher likewise points us backward in order to go forward: "By the hermeneutics of consent, done in our own contemporary and scientifically studied fashion, we reestablish connection with the Reformation's hermeneutical model of Bible exposition."[37] Even though, like Barth, Stuhlmacher argues for an increased connection between exegesis and dogmatics, he claims one may make such a connection by hewing closer to the Reformation understanding of Scripture, which Barth did not do with respect to revelation and illumination.[38] He also provides a much more in-depth exegetical method than Barth, as could be expected given their different academic specialties. Thus Stuhlmacher questions basic points in Barth's "new exchange" while at the same time calling for some form of TIS. Stuhlmacher is much more a son of Schlatter, then, than of Barth.

Brevard Childs however followed in the footsteps of Barth.[39] His influence extends through his writings and those of his students (and their stu-

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[32] By "emerges" I do not mean for the first time, but in the context of Barth's 20th c. "confessional" theology, and in the light of his significance for TIS.

[33] Johnson, "Barth, Karl," 162.

[34] Stuhlmacher, *Historical Criticism*, 61. See ibid., 61–75, for full description of the problems.

[35] Ibid., 90.

[36] Ibid., 83–87.

[37] Ibid., 88.

[38] See Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 106–30, esp. 130.

[39] See the similar trajectory traced in Treier, *Introducing*, 18.

dents),[40] and spurs TIS primarily in one major area: the canonical approach for biblical theology. Though Childs' approach to biblical theology began with the *Crisis in Biblical Theology* (1970), his *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (1992) provides his most comprehensive thoughts.[41] The latter title (and subtitle) summarizes well his approach and its contribution to TIS. For Childs, "canonical" means the final form of the Bible, in its boundaries and shape and the processes leading to that shape, which is theologically binding on the community that reads it as Christian Scripture.[42] One can read the whole Bible as Christian Scripture because the OT and NT both function as discrete witnesses to Jesus Christ. Both render Christ to us. Indeed for Childs the subject of the literal sense *is Jesus Christ.*[43]

Childs in his biblical theology applies the words of Barth that the "critical historian needs to be more critical."[44] He often assumes or describes only briefly the results of source or redaction criticism before moving beyond them in order to comment on the theological meaning of the final form of a text in the canon.[45] The "canon," therefore, provides both interpretive

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[40] Many contribute to TIS, Christopher Seitz is notable among them. For an appreciative essay, see Seitz, "'*We Are Not Prophets or Apostles: The Biblical Theology* of B. S. Childs" in his *World Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 102–9. See also Mark S. Gignilliat, a former student of Seitz, *Karl Barth and the Fifth Gospel: Barth's Theological Exegesis of Isaiah* (Barth Studies; Burlington, Ver.: Ashgate, 2009); Richard Schultz, "Brevard Childs' Contribution to Old Testament Interpretation: An Evangelical Appreciation and Assessment," *Princeton Theological Review* 14 (2008), 69–94.

[41] See especially Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970); idem, "The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the Old Testament," *VTSup* 29 (1977), 66–80; idem, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); idem, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1992).

[42] See Richard Schultz, "What is 'Canonical' About a Canonical Biblical Theology" in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect* (ed. Scott J. Hafemann; Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), 85.

[43] See Brevard S. Childs, "The Sensus Literalis of Scripture: An Ancient and Modern Problem" in *Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie* (eds. Herbert Donner et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: 1977), 80–93; cf., Daniel R. Driver, *Brevard Childs: Biblical Theologian for the Church's One Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 92, who discusses a 1969 Yale University colloquium with Childs and Frei that illustrates Childs' early inclinations toward this approach.

[44] Barth, *Romans*, 8; cf., Philip Sumpter, "Brevard Childs as Critical and Faithful Exegete," *PTR* 14 (2008), 95–116.

[45] E.g., Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 419: "It is therefore quite impossible to speak theologically of Old Testament covenant without reckoning with the perspective of the final editors of the collection who shaped the literature as a whole." Cf. Schultz, "What is Canonical," 87.

boundaries and guidelines. Childs states the function of canon, for example, for interpretation of Isaiah:

> The canonical shape provides the larger framework of scripture — a rule of faith — within which the interpretive function of exegesis is guided…. In sum, the canonical shaping of the prophetic corpus functions as a rule of faith, both negatively to exclude certain critical options, and positively to establish an authoritative context for the whole ….[46]

Moreover, because of the "Christological Content of the Christian Bible," the canon has "a semantic 'given' designated by its role as sacred scripture."[47] Thus Childs allows for multiple levels of meaning in Scripture insofar as these levels accord with the canon, the rule of faith, which renders Christ.[48] Barth's stress on Christology in explaining revelation takes center stage in Childs' biblical theology. Childs followed Barth's initiation of a new exchange, applied it to biblical theology in his canonical approach, and so provides further impetus for TIS.[49]

Theological Interpretation of Scripture: "A New Exchange" Continued

Childs died in 2007, the same year the *Journal of Theological Interpretation* launched, two years after the publication of the *Dictionary of Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. By the first-decade of the 21st century, then, TIS was an enterprise in its own right and an exercise in academic discourse. This section thus sketches the characteristics upon which most scholars of TIS agree. As we shall see, there are large areas of continuing debate in TIS. Therefore in light of the sketch below we will discuss a few implications for the prospect of TIS.

Barth and Childs, and to an extent Stuhlmacher, show that TIS is above all about the proper starting point for reading Scripture in academic, not only ecclesial, settings. Restated, TIS purports to bring faith-formed, or confessional, readings of Scripture back into the halls of the academy. The rationalist distinctions and critical starting point(s) of Gabler must be overturned. As J. Todd Billings claims, "We start with faith in the triune God, a trust in Jesus Christ and the Spirit's transforming power through Scripture. In reading

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[46] Brevard S. Childs, *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 317.

[47] Ibid., 316.

[48] Driver, *Brevard Childs*, 246–54, describes how this emphasis evolved in Childs' work.

[49] Moberly, "What is Theological Interpretation of Scripture?" 165; Schultz, "Brevard Childs' Contribution to Old Testament Interpretation," 90–92; Dennis T. Olson, "Seeking 'the Inexpressible Texture of Thy Word': A Practical Guide to Brevard Childs' Canonical Approach to Theological Exegesis," *PTR* 14 (2008), 53–68.

Scripture, we seek to know and have fellowship with God in a deeper way."[50] Billings' first phrase illumines the primary characteristic of TIS.

The primary characteristic is a Trinitarian hermeneutic that stems from an epistemology of faith. The adjective "theological" in TIS functions as a (call for) description of the ontological implications of three interrelated realities: the Triune nature of God, his act(s) of revelation, and the faith of the reader(s). Kevin Vanhoozer argues, "*I believe that our grammatical analysis of biblical discourse is theologically incomplete until we have spelled out its ontological implications*."[51] "Theological" in TIS, then, refers to a confessional, "Trinitarian" interpretation of Scripture. John Webster and Christopher Seitz, for example, apply this principle to dogmatics and biblical studies, respectively.[52]

Other characteristics build upon this Trinitarian principle. First, just as Barth leaned heavily on Calvin in his theological reflections, TIS emphasizes "pre-critical exegesis." In the light of Frei's historiography, practitioners of TIS seek to reclaim what was eclipsed as a result of the explosion of historical-critical method in biblical studies. As Seitz asks, "While we value historical approaches, might we do well to let a past before the rise of the historical-critical method also teach us a lesson about how to read?"[53] Following Barth and Childs, those who claim TIS seek to reflect theologically on this history and incorporate, in varying ways, some of the instincts and methods gleaned from the pre-critical period.[54]

Second, TIS exhorts the practice of reading Scripture according to the Rule of Faith, summarized in the early Creeds of the Church.[55] The Rule "… is a summary of the church's confession about the basic story of the Christian

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[50] Billings, *The Word of God*, 11. See also Richard B. Hays, "Reading the Bible with Eyes of Faith: The Practice of Theological Exegesis," *JTI* 1.1 (2007), 5–27.

[51] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Vanhoozer responds to the four horsemen of an apocalyptic panel discussion on *Remythologizing Theology*," *STR* 4/1 (2013), 73, emphasis original. Cf., idem, *Is There a Meaning in this Text? The Bible, The Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 455–68.

[52] See especially John Webster, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (Current Issues in Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge, 2003); Christopher Seitz, *The Character of Christian Scripture: The Significance of a Two-Testament Bible* (Studies in Theological Interpretation; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011).

[53] Christopher Seitz, *Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction of the Prophets* (Studies in Theological Interpretation; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 199.

[54] See Childs, *Struggle*, 299; Treier, *Introducing*, 39–56; Christopher A. Hall, *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1998); David C. Steinmetz, "The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis" in *The Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (ed., Stephen E. Fowl; Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 26–38; Frances Young, "The 'Mind' of Scripture: Theological Readings of the Bible in the Fathers," *IJST* 7 (2005), 126–41.

[55] Especially the Nicene Creed. See Christopher R. Seitz, ed., *Nicene Christianity: The Future for a New Ecumenism* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001); David S. Yaego, "The New Testament and the Nicene Dogma: A Contribution to the Recovery of Theological Exegesis" in *The Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (ed., Stephen E. Fowl; Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 87–100; Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation*, 71–98.

faith, as informed in the Bible."[56] The Rule may serve in TIS as an example of the sort of "methodological verifiability" for exegesis of which Stuhlmacher wrote. That is, if one undertakes exegesis of the biblical texts in theological terms, the Rule helps norm or verify those terms. Childs especially influences this point.[57]

Third, TIS represents a sustained discussion about the meaning of biblical texts and how Evangelical and Catholic interpreters alike describe meaning.[58] Hence questions of multiple meanings, polyvalence, and multivalence receive fresh attention within discussion about the nature of general and "theological hermeneutics."[59] Jorge Garcia summarizes the thrust of what is agreed upon in this discussion: "A theory of scriptural meaning … must begin in theology."[60] Whereas Gabler and others sought meaning in a historical-critical interpretation of the Bible and theology, proponents of TIS seek meaning in a theological (Trinitarian) interpretation of the Bible and history.[61]

It is in place to offer an example on the third point identified above. Beneath the search for theological meaning in Scripture may lay a fresh perspective on an older, and traditional, sacramental view of history. Following Augustine, Barth, and Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac, Evangelical scholar Hans Boersma argues that "… periods of the Christian tradition and our present time are connected via a common sacramental participation in the eternal Word of God."[62] For Boersma this participatory reality *in God's history* should challenge Evangelicals to reject "… the modern perspective on history," in which our time is neatly separated from earlier times and events, as many modern historians see it.[63] This "sacramental view" of history shows an

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[56] Billings, *The Word of God*, 17. Seitz, *Character*, 171 claims: "… it focuses on the ontological realities of God in Christ through the various economies of the OT;" cf. ibid., 191–203.

[57] For example: Childs, *Biblical Theology*, 30–32; idem, *Struggle*, 315–17.

[58] See Treier, *Introducing*, 21–33; Hans Boersma and Matthew Levering, eds. *Heaven on Earth: Theological Interpretation in Ecumenical Dialogue* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013); and the Center for Catholic-Evangelical Dialogue: http://www.ccedprograms.org/.

[59] See Treier, *Introducing*, 127–56; cf., thesis number four of the "Nine Theses on the Interpretation of Scripture" in Ellen Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds. *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

[60] Jorge J. E. Garcia, "Meaning," in *DTIB*, 499.

[61] See Seitz, *Character*, 154–55; cf. Childs, *Struggle*, 317–20.

[62] Hans Boersma, "Anchored in Christ," *ChrCent* 128:3 (2011), 29. See ibid., 28: "For Barth, revelation means sacrament: thus God's revelation in Christ is 'the basic reality and substance of the sacramental reality of His revelation.'" Boersma cites Book XI of Augustine's *Confessions*. He notes in the article cited his indebtedness to the *nouvelle théologie* of Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac. See also Boersma, *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

[63] Ibid. "Because we tend to regard the time period of the biblical author and our own small moment under the sun as two distinct or separate moments, (univocally) identical in kind, we believe that it is our job simply to find out what exactly the bib-

increasing confluence of Evangelical and Catholic viewpoints in TIS.[64] Furthermore the specific point may illumine the integration in TIS of Trinitarian presuppositions, pre-critical interpretation, and Christological exegesis for the meaning of the literal sense. The lines of biblical hermeneutics[65] are being redrawn, especially for Evangelicals, in the continuation of "a new exchange."

Theological Interpretation of Scripture in Prospect

Theological interpretation of Scripture, therefore, is not a specific method for exegesis but rather a discussion and encouragement of a Christian practice of interpreting Scripture that can be characterized as ancient *and* modern.[66] Such practice includes vibrant and diverse discussion on a range of hermeneutical, theological, and ecclesial issues. The vibrant discussion however has not been received with universal acceptance.[67] Even those involved in the recent proliferation of TIS debate issues fundamental to its future. Treier surveys three areas: biblical theology, general hermeneutics, and the significance of a global church.[68]

The persistence of these questions indicates a future for TIS within the academy. Yet how TIS impacts the preaching and teaching, worship, and mission of the church remains to be seen.[69] For one thing, if adherents of

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lical author meant in any given biblical text in order to proclaim it as authoritative. Thus we simply move back from our contemporary time Y to the biblical time X in order to establish the theological or doctrinal teaching of the church today. And where we find discrepancies between our own cultural context and that of biblical times, we try to negotiate the degree to which we should adapt or accommodate to our current situation."

[64] See Boersma and Levering "Introduction: Spiritual Interpretation and Realigned Temporality" in *Heaven on Earth*; cf. Matthew Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

[65] By "biblical hermeneutics," I have in mind not only special hermeneutics but the relationship between general and special (or theological) hermeneutics. See the discussion in Treier, *Introducing*, 127–56.

[66] As Treier, for instance, claims with his title and subtitle: *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice*.

[67] See for example, D. A. Carson "Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Yes, But …" in *Theological Commentary: Evangelical Perspectives* (ed. R. Michael Allen; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 187–207; Stephen Wellum, "Editorial: Reflecting upon the Theological Interpretation of Scripture," *SBJT* 14:2 (2010), 2–3; John C. Poirier, "Theological Interpretation and Its Contradistinctions," *TynBul* 60:2 (2009), 105–18.

[68] Treier, *Introducing*, 103–86.

[69] Billings, *The Word of God*, xii, notes an irony within TIS: "In recent years, numerous books have sought to reclaim a theological approach to Scripture for the church; somewhat ironically, most are written exclusively for a scholarly audience." Hence Billings targets the (ironically) forgotten audience of the church with his book. For a potential model, see the Center for Pastor Theologians: www.pastortheologians.com.

TIS major in discussing the categories for theological reflection at the cost of actually doing biblical exegesis, one has to wonder what authority such theological statements will have in the long run. As Seitz observes, "Debates from a prior period most frequently emerge over a specific exegetical problem… . The exegesis urges and gives rise to the discussion of method."[70] Theological categories, methods, and statements for the church must emerge from the church's humble grappling with the written words of Scripture.

Also, despite the integrative approach of TIS its success in bridging the work of the academy (especially the seminary) and the church depends to some extent on how it impacts the shape and goals of theological education.[71] Theological interpretation will not be likely to impact how theological students learn, or how they practice what they learn, if lectures on theological exegesis or the like occur within disjointed, distanced, and de-personalized forms of theological education. If genre consists of form and content and theological education is a particular genre of education, then we need more theological reflection on the form in which theological education occurs and not only the content to be delivered. Therefore more theological reflection is needed, for example, on the rationale for and effects of online education models for those training to do ministry. For ministry is an inherently communal not individualistic work. Thus we might ask, given Barth's emphasis on incarnation: how does the incarnation impact how we do theological education;[72] and, how does our anthropology govern the way we educate people created in the image of God?[73] Will we eschew not only the rationalist modes of biblical interpretation but also the atomized theological curriculums and rationalist view of humanity we inherited from the 18th and 19th centuries?

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[70] Seitz, *Prophecy and Hermeneutics*, 200. Seitz gives Prov 8:22–23 in the writings of Athanasius as an example. The exegetical priority envisioned by Seitz may call for our fresh attention to the exegetical work of Schlatter and Stuhlmacher, for instance.

[71] See Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 107–35; Robert C. Hill, *Breaking the Bread of the Word: Principles of Teaching Scripture* (Studia Biblica 15; Rome: Editrice Pontifico Istituto Biblico, 1991); David S. Dockery, *Renewing Minds: Serving Church and Society through Christian Higher Education* (rev. ed.; Nashville: B&H, 2008).

[72] See Paul R. House, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Narrow Way of Personal Theological Education* (forthcoming). House has been especially influential on my own thinking in this area.

[73] James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Cultural Liturgies, vol. 1; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009). Theological interpretation has made some impact on theological curricula. The University of St. Andrews, for instance, offers the "MLitt Scripture and Theology," previously named the MLitt Theological Interpretation of Scripture. See http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/rt/ instituteforbibletheologyhermeneutics/mlitt/.

The Sufficiency of Scripture in Theological Interpretation of Scripture

Finally, the prospect of TIS will continue to be shaped by constructive answers given to the twofold question: what is the nature of Scripture and its role in theology? The consensus of TIS seems to be our need to configure hermeneutics in a Trinitarian way. Yet there seems to be less of a consensus on the nature of the Book from which our hermeneutic emerges and to which it is applied. Indeed, a diverse range of views on the nature of Scripture and its sufficiency for theology exists in TIS.[74]

As with the retrospect above, we can only illustrate this point from the work of three contributors to TIS. Kevin Vanhoozer appropriates speech-act theory to present a doctrine of the Triune God's mighty speech acts,[75] which accounts for Scripture's being (ontology) by way of its doing (speech-action). As such Vanhoozer salutes Barth's emphasis on the activity of God in revelation, while maintaining a tight connection between God's Word and the words of the biblical text. Moreover, Vanhoozer defends the place of the authors in determining meaning and creatively argues for a classic Reformation perspective on the question: "Scripture governs theology."[76] Theology flows from Scripture, the inspired written down speech acts of God.[77]

John Webster argues from a more Barthian perspective for the ontology of Holy Scripture. Since it comes as revelation from the utterly free, Triune God the doctrine of God is "… the proper location for a Christian theological account of the nature of Holy Scripture."[78] From this position the nature––revelation, sanctification, and inspiration—of Scripture, and our reading of it may be rightly understood. Because God's freedom grounds the nature of Scripture, two key points emerge. First, and in broad agreement with Vanhoozer, Holy Scripture governs the church not the other way around.[79] Second, a tension remains between God's Word and Spirit and the words of

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[74] This is not an original observation. See Wellum, "Editorial," 2.

[75] See his *First Theology: God, Scripture & Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IVP: 2002), 127–203; idem, *Is There a Meaning in this Text*, 201–366; idem, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: WJK, 2005), 37–114. On speech-act theory see J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (2d ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975); John Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

[76] Vanhoozer, *Drama of Doctrine*, 348.

[77] Vanhoozer agrees in this with exegetical-biblical theologians such as D. A. Carson. See e.g. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Exegesis and Hermeneutics" in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity & Diversity of Scripture* (eds. D. A. Carson et al; Downers Grove: IVP, 2000), 52–64; D. A. Carson, "Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology" in ibid., 89–104.

[78] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 39. Note for example this comment in ibid., 32: "… faith is 'founded' on Scripture, not because of its formal property as inspired but because Scripture is the instrument of divine teaching which proceeds from God."

[79] Ibid., 42–67.

the biblical text.[80] God norms theology and his word, Holy Scripture, indirectly bears witness to him because the Word was made flesh.

Stephen Fowl provides yet another option. Fowl responds to recent works in biblical theology[81] with the argument that, "our discussions, debates, and arguments about texts will be better served by eliminating claims about textual meaning in favor of more precise accounts of our interpretive aims, interests, and practices."[82] Fowl thus asserts the importance of the history of (especially pre-critical) interpretation for refining and expressing our interpretive practices.[83] He argues for "underdetermined interpretation" which recognizes the contingency of any interpretation and therefore accords epistemological priority to no single method.[84] Fowl argues this way because he believes that "… the authority of scripture is not a property of biblical texts" but rather a derivative of the ecclesial communities who by the guidance of the Holy Spirit interpret and practice Scripture.[85] For Fowl, Scripture finds its authority in its use in the community of the church and the loving interpretive practices of that community.

These are not the only perspectives on Scripture and its sufficiency for theology within TIS. As noted, TIS enables fruitful conversations between Catholics and Protestants on questions of hermeneutics and, by extension, the relationship(s) between Scripture and tradition.[86] The prospect of TIS for impact on Protestant (especially Evangelical) and Catholic churches and schools alike, then, hinges on how a given scholar answers the question: what is Scripture and its role in theology? It remains necessary to ask this question for the prospect of TIS both because of the diversity of viewpoints advanced in response and TIS's inherent claim to be interpreting *Scripture*—not *theology*––from the descriptor, "theological interpretation of Scripture." The vibrancy of a diverse conversation requires careful attention to fundamental issues.

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[80] See Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 40–41. Cf. John Webster, "Hermeneutics in Modern Theology: Some Doctrinal Reflections, *SJT* 51 (1998), 330–32, cited in Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 137, n. 1.

[81] Especially Childs, *Biblical Theology*, and Francis Watson, *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). See the analysis of Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis*, 118–31, to which this paragraph is indebted.

[82] Fowl, *Engaging Scripture*, 56.

[83] Ibid., 9–10: "… a theologically oriented history of Christian scriptural interpretation is 'the theologically most crucial of all historical fields, including biblical studies, for those who think … that the church's future depends on its postcritical reappropriation of precritical hermeneutical strategies.'" Fowl cites George Lindbeck, review of *Biblical Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective: Studies in Honor of Kalfried Froelich* (ed. Mark Burrows and Paul Rorem; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) in *ModTheol* 10 (1994), 101–6.

[84] Fowl, *Engaging Scripture*, 10.

[85] Ibid., 203.

[86] See, for example, the recent work of Edith M. Humphrey, *Scripture and Tradition: What the Bible Really Says* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013).

This final section, then, contains a proposal for a way forward in our answer to this question: what is Scripture and its role in theology? The proposal commends the view that Scripture is no less than God's word written —his covenant speech to his covenant people in Christ—and that it is therefore *fully* sufficient for salvation, life, and theology. As Ward has recently argued (in concert with Reformation confessions), this denotes the *material* and *formal* sufficiency of Scripture. That is, Scripture contains everything necessary to be known for salvation (material) *and* remains sufficient for its own interpretation (formal).[87] The formal sufficiency of Scripture refers in this proposal to the sufficiency of the grammar, structure, and logic of Scripture for doing theology. Within TIS large agreement exists on the material sufficiency of Scripture but not necessarily on its formal sufficiency. An emphasis on pre-critical interpretative practices and the ecclesial use of Scripture may privilege interpretation (past or present) over Scripture.[88] As Matthew Levering asks, "How are we to know when an ecclesial authority is interpreting Scripture in a scripturally well-formed way … ?"[89] What norms or controls any given interpretation, whether it purports to be theological or not? To propose the full sufficiency of Scripture thus invites us to ask and answer the following: what epistemologically grounds our theology and what ethically norms our theology?

The full sufficiency of Scripture epistemologically grounds our theology. That is, we may seek to know God by way of "scripturally well-formed" interpretations of *the* epistemological base that God has provided: Holy Scripture. As Francis Watson rightly argues, the word of God is "textually mediated,"[90] and it is reliably and authoritatively done so in the texts of Holy Scripture. These texts, then, are sufficient for our knowing God and knowing how to know him. The authorization for our interpretations then come by the illumination of the Holy Spirit as we lovingly read Scripture (i.e. in faith).

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[87] Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 16. The employment of Ward here should not be taken as a full agreement with the appropriateness of speech-act theory for the ontology of Scripture. See, e.g., Bowald, "The Character of Theological Interpretation," 171, n. 26 for a legitimate concern.

[88] This may or may not occur. The point is to stress the theoretical and practical significance of the sufficiency of Scripture, not to implicate any one scholar in denying the authority of Scripture. Though its authority certainly *seems* contingent to our interpretation in the work of Fowl, *Engaging Scripture*.

[89] Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis*, 125. One should note that Levering critiques Fowl from the Catholic perspective and therefore argues for more clarity from Fowl on the relationship between ecclesial authority, which he commends, and Scripture. Levering notes the latent difficulty in Fowl's view for norming biblical meaning. See ibid., 130–31.

[90] Watson, *Text and Truth*, 1: "The Word made flesh is never encountered without textual mediation, for Jesus is only recognized as such on the basis of a prior textually. Jesus is initially acknowledged as Christ and Lord because that which takes place in him is 'according to the Scriptures'."

Ward argues this serves in return to authoritatively control, or ground, our theology because of what Scripture is and does. He states,

> It is not that God's presence is 'guaranteed' by this 'way'; that would be a tendentious way to characterize it. Rather, Christ is faithfully conveyed to us by the polyphonic literary and generic diversity of Scripture. The Holy Spirit acts first to enable understanding and discernment of Christ so conveyed to us in Scripture, and supremely to stir up in us faithful and active response to him.[91]

The doctrine does not, however, ensure a particular effect; it does not guarantee "faithful Christian practice."[92] God does this.

The illumination accorded by the Holy Spirit does not make certain our particular interpretations of Scripture but rather our saving knowledge of God, who in turn guides believers as they read the Bible. As Calvin claims, "Scripture will ultimately suffice for saving knowledge of God only when *its certainty* is founded upon the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit."[93] For this reason Calvin, after claiming confidence in his presentation of the "Christian philosophy" of Scripture, points readers of his *Institutes* back to Scripture to test his own interpretations of Scripture in the same *Institutes*.[94] Thus the argument for the sufficiency of Scripture in theological interpretation is not an argument for the (perceived) certainty of our interpretations of Scripture.[95] Rather it is an argument for the sole epistemological base that the Triune God has given for reflection and action based upon his character, his creation, his will and his Son. Holy Scripture, the breathed out words of God written and therefore authoritative in the text, is that epistemological base.[96]

The full sufficiency of Scripture also serves to ethically norm our theology. We can learn much from the history of interpretation and the tradition(s) of the Church. For example, the Early Church Creeds provide good, necessary summaries of the right doctrine that springs from Scripture in the crucial contexts of delineating truth from heresy. They summarize the boundaries of Christian faith in accordance with the Scriptures and thus form helpful reminders of those boundaries. The Creeds do not, however, tell us what

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[91] Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 301, critiquing David H. Kelsey, *Proving Doctrine: The Uses of Scripture in Modern Theology* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press Intl., 1999).

[92] Ibid., 302.

[93] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (ed. John T. McNeill; trans. Ford Lewis Battles; LCC; Louisville: WJK, 2006), I. VII. 13.

[94] John Calvin, "Subject Matter of the Present Work" in ibid., 8: "Above all, I must urge him to have recourse to Scripture in order to weigh the testimonies that I have adduced from it." By "Christian philosophy" Calvin meant something like "biblical worldview." See ibid., 7, n. 8.

[95] Cf. Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 53.

[96] See Anthony Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 184–5, cited in Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 47.

Christians are commanded to *do*, together, in light of that faith. The Creeds do not show us how we are to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. Only Scripture functions, as Vanhoozer states, "… as a criterion for understanding what is appropriate to say and do today on the basis of God's earlier speech and action."[97] Only Scripture narrates and provides the ethical norms that teach us how to live out the truth with one another. And only Scripture textually mediates this truth of God to us. The creeds and confessions that we recite together and sign before one another point us back to Scripture.

The argument for the sufficiency of Scripture therefore helps us delineate the choices we have made regarding the relationship of the Church, the creeds, the history of interpretation, and ourselves to Scripture. Ward helps us again on this point:

> What the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture does recommend is the absolute necessity of careful, faithful, and subtle biblical exegesis as Christians try to listen for the divine voice on these issues; the doctrine is however insufficient to determine the exegetical results in advance. Thus, to assert the sufficiency of Scripture is not to imply that all questions of the functioning of Scripture in church and theology have been solved. However, it *is* to choose Scripture as one's supreme authority in Christian life and theology, and to decline other theological options.[98]

Our clarity on this doctrine allows us to be more, not less, specific as to the effect of one's own ecclesial location on interpretation.[99] Significant differences remain between Catholic and Evangelical scholars, for example, on the Scripture-Church-tradition relationship.[100] Specificity on our differences allows us to be more, not less, loving toward others in the ongoing discourse about theological interpretation. Our clarity on this choice provides more, not less, room for ongoing faithful Christian interpretation of Scripture because like (but much less than) God's mercies, cultural changes are new every morning. These changes invite and indeed require new interpretations that reaffirm the verities of Scripture, because only Scripture reveals the promises of God in Christ for our transformation by the Spirit in Christ. Inasmuch as we need a theological interpretation of Scripture, then, we need a scriptural interpretation of theology.[101] Evangelicals should be able to proceed with confidence that a proper understanding of biblical priority aids accurate historical-exegetical work that flows naturally and helpfully into theological reflection and healthy Christian practice.

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[97] Vanhoozer, *Drama of Doctrine*, 237.

[98] Ward, *Word and Supplement*, 299. Emphasis original.

[99] For a stimulating Catholic perspective on this topic with application to theological vocation, see Bruce D. Marshall, "The Theologian's Ecclesial Vocation" *First Things* (October 2013), 41–5.

[100] This order indicates my own evangelical, Southern Baptist ecclesial context.

[101] I owe this point to Paul R. House, from personal communication.

To stress the material and formal sufficiency of Scripture for theology is not to deny the need for other resources—ecclesial, philosophical, doctrinal, or historical—in constructing theology, especially in light of our ever-changing cultures. Explicating the effect of Scripture's sufficiency in these cultures certainly requires integrative work. Rather it is to stress our love of the only Creator and Redeemer *by* humble submission to his written words, in *both* their content and form. We stress this for both right knowing (epistemology) and obedient doing (ethics), in all of life.

Conclusion

Theological interpretation of Scripture continues the new exchange prompted by Barth and in so doing continues to work against some dominant trends and methods of academic biblical interpretation set in the 18th c. The impact of TIS is already being felt within academia.

Through the work of others, especially Childs, TIS has pushed forward into this century to look for new ways to discern biblical meaning. Theological interpreters of Scripture take their hermeneutical and historical cues from interpreters from the Church's past. The impact of TIS on the church, however, remains to be seen. This essay proposes that a clear choice for the material and formal sufficiency of Scripture in theology provides us the best epistemological ground and ethical norms for equipping the church for the glory of God in Christ. Schlatter once wrote, "We become fruitful for God when his word frees us from our own ideas, and his grace subjects our will to him."[102] To make the theological choice for the sufficiency of Scripture in theology points us in this fruitful direction for theological interpretation of Scripture.[103]

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[102] Adolf Schlatter, *Do We Know Jesus?: Daily Insights for the Mind and Soul* (trans. Robert Yarbrough and Andreas Köstenberger; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), 36.

Replacement or Fulfillment?
Re-applying Old Testament Designations of Israel to the Church

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Introduction

The acceptance of the OT as part of the canon of Christian scripture acknowledges that the OT is not merely an historical document relating to the faith of an ancient people but that it has relevance and authority for the Church. How that is worked out in practice is not always clear, and this article will not seek to answer that general question. However I do want to look at one aspect of it, namely: *theological issues relating to the re-application to the Church of OT texts that were addressed, originally, to the people of God in the OT.*

One question here is whether such a thing is legitimate at all. And there is serious theological opinion that it is not. OT texts that relate to Israel continue to relate to Israel, and where those texts refer to things to come, they will be fulfilled, literally, in the future national life of Israel. This is, for example, the view of classical or normative dispensationalism.[1] Others take an opposite

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[1] Classical dispensationalism sees a distinction between the Church and Israel, and argues that OT prophecies relating to Israel will be fulfilled, literally, within the future life of the nation. Ryrie has offered what appears to be a restatement of the key tenets of dispensationalism (which he terms "normative" dispensationalism)—see Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (rev. and enl. ed.; Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1995)—though maintains that any differences are not substantial or determinative (180–1, 190–1). In the light of its generally wide acceptance (see, e.g., John F. Walvoord, "Reflections on Dispensationalism," *BibSac* 158 [2001]: 131–7 esp. 135), it is reasonable to take Ryrie's views as broadly representative of the current form of classical or normative dispensationalism. Progressive dispensationalism—see, e.g., Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, eds., *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: a Search for Definition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992); Craig A. Blaising and Darrell Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993). Robert L. Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993)—allows that some OT texts that relate to Israel may have a partial application to the Church, but in their final consummation will include the literal fulfillment of Israel's political expectations; see, e.g., Darrell L. Bock, "The Reign of the Lord Christ," in Blaising and Bock, *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, 37–67 esp. 56–57, 66; "Current Messianic Activity and OT Davidic Promise: Dispensationalism, Hermeneutics and NT Fulfillment," *TrinJ* 15.1 (1994): 55–87; Bruce A. Ware, "The New Covenant and the Peo-

position: the Church is the spiritual heir to the blessings of God promised in the OT, and these things are no longer applicable to Israel as a nation.

Discussion of these issues is important and relevant, if sometimes rather heated. In this article I will argue that while the issue is a complex one, there is some justification for the view that OT texts may be re-applied to the Church, which is viewed as continuous with the OT people of God. This raises two further issues that cannot be dealt with here: the need for an appropriate hermeneutic to ensure that such re-application is legitimate, and the issue, that Paul appears to address in Romans 9–11, of whether national Israel continues to have a role in the future purposes of God.

Replacement Theology?

There are a number of NT passages where OT texts that appear, in their original context, to relate exclusively to Israel are redirected, and related directly to the church. One key passage is 1 Peter 2:9–10

> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.[2]

This text uses covenantal language that is central to the identity of Israel in the OT. Verse 9 echoes Exodus 19:6, where God declares to those he has just brought out of captivity in Egypt, and whom he is establishing as his own special possession by making a covenant with them: "you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation". The following verse alludes to the words of God in Hosea 2:23—"I will say to those called 'Not my people,' 'You are my people;' and they will say, 'You are my God.'" Following the sin of the northern kingdom, Hosea announces divine judgment on the nation (fulfilled in defeat and exile by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E.). But judgment is tempered by grace, and God also gives the assurance that he will restore his people; he will bring them back to the desert, where their relationship began (Hos 2:14), and, through a new covenant, will betroth himself to the nation forever (Hos 2:18–20). The reference to God's people being chosen to declare his praises also suggests a link with Isaiah 43:21,[3] which is also related to God's deliverance of his people, this time in a second exodus, from Babylon. These promises, which embody God's ongoing loving commitment to the

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ple(s) of God," in Blaising and Bock, *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, 68–97 esp. 93–96.

   [2] Unless otherwise stated all biblical references are from the NIV.

   [3] See, e.g., Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press), 163–4. This link is strengthened by the reference to "chosen people" (1 Pet 2:9) which is present in Isa 43:20, but not in Exod 19:5.

people he has chosen, are taken up by Peter who applies them very specifically to Christian believers.

We see a similar pattern repeated through the NT. In the letter to the Galatians, Christian believers are addressed as "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:29). The writer to the Hebrews identifies the new relationship that believers have through Christ with the "new covenant" promised by Jeremiah (Heb 8:7–13; cf. Jer 31:31–34; see also Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3:6). In the OT, the promise of a New Covenant is linked with the restoration and spiritual renewal of Israel, following the sin and failure that led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile.[4] And again, it is central to the self-understanding of the nation of Israel. In the NT, though, it appears to be given a much wider significance, and applied to all who have faith in Christ. Some suggest that in its opening reference to its addressees as "the twelve tribes scattered among the nations" (Jas 1:1), the Letter of James also identifies Christian believers with the OT people of Israel.[5] In the light of these and other NT passages, Wayne Grudem comments: "What further statement could be needed in order for us to say with assurance that the church has now become the true Israel of God and will receive all the blessings promised to Israel in the OT?"[6]

This view that the church has taken the place of national Israel in the purposes of God is the basis of what is referred to as "replacement theology" or "supersessionism". It needs to be noted, though, that this terminology and its definition often come from its opponents, and many who are labeled "supersessionist" do not recognize or accept the appellation. One such opponent,

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[4] Jer 31:31–34 contains the only specific reference to the "new covenant" in the Old Testament. Other texts, though, convey a similar idea (e.g. Isa 55:3; 61:8; Jer 50:5; Ezek 16:60; 37:26; Hos 2:18–20). For further discussion of the New Covenant in the Old Testament see Robin Routledge, *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2008 / Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009), 269–72 (and bibliography).

[5] See, e.g., Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 63; Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James* (Pillar New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 49–50; *James* (TNTC; Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 33. Others, however, see this as a reference to (possibly Messianic) Jews; e.g. James B. Adamson, *The Epistle of James* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 49–51; Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 65–68; Ralph Martin, *James*, (WBC 48; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 8–11. Opinion is also divided over the expression "Israel of God" (Gal 6:16). James Dunn suggests that this includes Gentile believers; see James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Blacks NT Commentary; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1993), 344–6; see also Richard H. Bell, *The Irrevocable Call of God* (WUNT 184; Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 178–9; R. Alan Cole, *Galatians* (TNTC; Leicester: IVP; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 235–7. However, cf. Martinus C. de Boer, *Galatians* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 405–8.

[6] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester: IVP; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 863.

Michael Vlach, has produced a comprehensive study of supersessionism.[7] He suggests that while there may be variations on the theme, supersessionism may be defined as "the view that *the NT church is the new and/or true Israel that has forever superseded Israel as the people of God*;"[8] and that any physical and political restoration of Israel as a nation is ruled out. Moderate versions of supersessionism do allow for the future salvation of Israel (or a significant part of it), as suggested, for example, in Romans 9–11, but this requires, according to Vlach, Israel's "incorporation into the Christian Church."[9] Vlach also refers to Richard Soulen, who suggests that supersessionism takes different forms. These include *punitive supersessionism*, which maintains that God's rejection of Israel is retribution for Israel's rejection of Jesus, and *economic supersessionism*, which suggests that the nation's special role ended, as it was always intended to do, with the coming of Christ and the birth of the church: the *carnal* being replaced by the *spiritual*.[10] Economic supersessionism is sometimes presented as taking a less negative view of Israel, and it certainly avoids some of the invective and hostility against Israel for that nation's part in the crucifixion of Jesus. However, it has far-reaching implications for our understanding of the OT and its relationship with the NT. Soulen addresses this in his third category: *structural supersessionism*, which, in his view, concerns not only the doctrinal issues relating to the relationship between the church and Israel, but also the way the canon of Scripture is perceived as a unity. The story of God's essential dealings with humankind incorporate creation and fall, in Genesis 1–3, but then jump to redemption through Christ in the NT. As a result, what lies between, made up, primarily, of God's direct dealings with the nation of Israel, are sidelined as having of little or no value when it comes to theological reflection. The large part of the OT has significance only in that it anticipates and pre-figures redemption in Christ.[11] This, though, is something

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[7] Michael J. Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel: A Theological Evaluation* (Nashville: B & H, 2010); other significant discussions of supersessionism include: Ronald Diprose, *Israel and the Church: The Origin and Effects of Replacement Theology* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2000); Richard Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996). See also, Craig A. Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," *JETS* 44.3 (2001): 435–50 esp. 435–7; Donald E. Bloesch, "'All Israel will be Saved': Supersessionism and the Christian Witness," *Int* 43 (1989): 130–42; Calvin Smith, ed., *The Jews, Modern Israel and the New Supersessionism: Resources for Christians* (Lampeter: Kings Divinity Press, 2009); Michael J. Vlach, "Various Forms of Replacement Theology," *TMSJ* 20.1 (2009): 57–69; Matt Waymeyer, "The Dual State of Israel in Romans 11:28," *TMSJ* 16.1 (2005): 57–71.

[8] Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel*, 12.

[9] Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel*, 23.

[10] Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel*, 14; see also Soulen, *God of Israel*, 29–33; Blaising, "The Future of Israel," 436. Gabriel Fackre, in an earlier discussion suggests as many as seven variants; see Gabriel Fackre, *Ecumenical Faith in Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

[11] Soulen, *God of Israel*, 31–32.

of a caricature, and is not reflected in the commitment, by many whom Soulen would describe as supersessionists, to the whole of the OT.

The language that critics use to describe so-called supersessionists can at times, though, appear rhetorical, emotive and misleading.[12] The term "supersessionist" is, itself, pejorative. It suggests a negative view of Israel, thus raising the specter of anti-Semitism.[13] And this negative view is further emphasized by the supposed reference to Israel as "carnal" rather than spiritual. Language that sets "Israel" against the "*Gentile* church" and suggests that Israel only has a future by being "incorporated into the church" is also misleading.[14] It is true that by the second century C.E. the church had become predominantly non-Jewish, and there was an evident distinction between the Church and the nation of Israel. The *Epistle of Barnabas*, which appears to have been accorded near-canonical status, sees a clear separation between Israel in the OT, who misinterpreted God's instructions and failed to recognize his purposes, and Christians, who, alone, can properly understand the OT.[15] Following Constantine, and the close connection between the church and the political power, the distinction between Jews and what became an overwhelmingly non-Jewish church grew.[16] However, though this separation

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[12] So, for example, Blaising suggests that the view implies that the physical descendants of Jacob "do not have a future except to linger on earth like refugees until the end of time as a witness to divine judgment. Why? Because God has disinherited them as a punishment for their rejection of Jesus, and he has replaced them with a new Israel, the Gentile Church" ("The Future of Israel," 435). By emphasizing the negative view of Israel and setting it against the *Gentile* church, Blaising presents a rhetorical caricature.

[13] In popular condemnation (for example on internet sites), the tendency towards anti-Semitism is frequently cited as a key reason for rejecting supersessionism or replacement theology (so-called).

[14] The term "church" might also be used pejoratively in this discussion. Certainly as an organized religious institution, possibly with links to political authority, the church has a poor record in its treatment of other religious groups—including Jews. In general, though, I am using the term more simply to refer to (and as shorthand for) the community of those who have faith in Jesus Christ, drawn from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

[15] So, e.g., the *Epistle of Barnabas* takes Jer 7:22 to imply that God never required animal sacrifices (*Barn.* 2); circumcision was always intended to be of the heart (*Barn.* 9) and passages that refer to forbidden foodstuffs were intended to be understood allegorically; "In these dietary laws … Moses was taking three moral maxims and expounding them spiritually; though the Jews, with their carnal instincts, took him to be referring, literally, to foodstuffs" (*Barn.* 10).

[16] Though with the accession of the Roman Emperor Julian (331–363 C.E.) who was labeled "the Apostate" because of his opposition to Christianity, this was reversed. Whilst probably having no great sympathy with the Jews, Julian saw them as allies against a common enemy. This was an aberration from the normal trend, though it may have contributed to anti-Jewish feelings in subsequent years. Those very negative feelings are reflected in Martin Luther's vicious invective against the

became a historical reality, it should not be seen, as it is by some, as inevitable. When NT writers re-apply OT texts and descriptors to Christian believers, they emphasize continuity between the OT people of God and the new community of those who have faith in Christ. And it is unlikely that it could have been any other way, since those who made up that early Christian community were themselves Jews. And, today, to argue that the future hope of Jews (as well as non-Jews) lies in Christ is not necessarily to imply that they must renounce their Jewish identity, as the (somewhat emotive) language of "incorporation into the church" suggests.

Fulfillment Theology

In my view it is not helpful to talk about the church "replacing" or "displacing" Israel. That kind of language creates an unnecessary dichotomy between the two. It seems better to see an essential continuity between the people of God in the Old and New Testaments, and to view the coming of Christ, and the community of God's people that comes into being through him, as fulfilling, rather than negating, the hope of Israel expressed in the OT. In this context, God's dealings with Israel in the OT are not irrelevant, as Soulen suggests, but play an important part in understanding God's dealings with his people more generally. This includes noting typological correspondences, and also identifying theological principles that underlie God's relationship with Israel and, where appropriate, re-applying those principles within a church setting.

Vlach is critical of those, whom he describes as supersessionist, using this kind of fulfillment language.[17] He argues that, whatever the terminology, the church now claims exclusive title to promises first made to national Israel, and that is a theology of replacement, whatever other name it may be given! However, Vlach overlooks what seems to me to be a vital consideration: were these promises in fact "first made to *national* Israel" and are thus based primarily on national identity, or were they, even in the OT, based instead primarily on a faithful and obedient response to God?

The OT People of God: the Community of the Faithful

Within the OT there appears to be a developing sense that faith, rather than national identity, is the determining factor in the composition of the people of God. From the very beginning, Israel's identity was determined by its relationship with God. The covenant with Abraham, by which God promised that the patriarch would become the father of a great nation, emphasizes

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Jews—calling for synagogues and religious writings to be burned, houses destroyed and Jews themselves removed from the protection of the law (Martin Luther, *On the Jews and Their Lies*, XI). For further discussion see, e.g., Michael Frassetto, ed., *Christian Attitudes towards the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook* (New York; London: Routledge, 2007).

[17] Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel*, 9–11.

this ongoing relationship with Abraham's descendants: "I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you" (Gen 17:7). From the first, though, this covenant relationship did not include all of Abraham's offspring, but was limited to his descendants through Isaac and Jacob, and even within that line, descent from Abraham was not the final qualifier: circumcision was also required (Gen 17:9–14). This was the *sign of the covenant* (Gen 17:11): the mark of belonging to the covenant people of God.[18] And anyone who was not circumcised was *cut off from his people* (Gen 17:14);[19] he had broken the covenant, and so could not be regarded as part of the covenant community, whatever his parentage.

We see this continuing emphasis on relationship in God's words to Moses, in what became a covenant formula: "I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God" (Exod 6:7).[20] The Sinaitic covenant, which may be seen as the establishment of Israel as a nation, also emphasizes the importance of obedience, and again, willful disobedience results in transgressors being *cut off from the people*.[21] The book of Deuteronomy further emphasizes the need for each generation both to respond to the demands of the covenant and to teach subsequent generations, so that the relationship with God and the obedience that necessarily accompanies it is maintained. Those assembled on the plains of Moab had not been at Sinai (Horeb), or had been too young, then, to respond to God's requirements; nevertheless, they were urged to remember what had happened there, and in so doing to see themselves as part of the same covenant people.[22] They must then make their own response; as must the generations that follow.[23] Entry into the covenant relationship between God and his people remains, ever, a contemporary issue. The people have a choice:[24] with blessings following obedience (Deut 28:1–14), and curs-

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[18] See further, e.g., Routledge, *OT Theology*, 167–9 (and bibliography).

[19] For further discussion of this expression, see Robin Routledge, "Prayer, Sacrifice and Forgiveness," *EuroJTh* 18.1 (2009): 17–28 esp. 19; *OT Theology*, 196–7; see also Eryl W. Davies, *Numbers* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Marshall Pickering, 1995), 83–84; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16* (AB 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 457–60; Gordon J. Wenham, *Leviticus* (NICOT London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1979), 241–3.

[20] This expression, or variants of it, occur in, e.g., Lev 26:12; Jer 11:4; 24:7; 31:1.33; Ezek 11:20; 34:30; 37:23. For further discussion see Rolf Rendtorff, *The Covenant Formula: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation* (OTS; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998).

[21] See, e.g., Exod 30:33, 38; 31:14; Lev 7:20–21, 25–27; 17:4; 22:3; 23:9; Num 9:13; 15:30–31.

[22] Deut 4:10–14.

[23] Deut 29 refers to the people about to enter into their own covenant relationship with God (vv. 12–13), though the scope is widened to include future generations who also accept its demands (vv. 15, 29).

[24] Deut 30:15–20 sets out the "two ways" that God puts before the people. It has been argued that the historical books Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings interpret

es, including eventual exile from the land, as the result of disobedience (Deut 28:15–68).

Already, then, we see that God's promises to Israel in the OT are not just based upon national identity, but are also conditional upon a right response to him. However, God's unwillingness to reject the people as a whole meant that hope in the OT remained linked with the destiny of the nation. The divine call and promise of blessing related to the nation as a whole, and those who did not respond appropriately were excluded from that blessing by being cut off from the nation. That appears to change, though, in the notion of the Remnant,[25] which finds particular expression in the book of Isaiah. Here, a distinction does seem to be made between the nation as a whole and the faithful minority from within the nation through whom God's purposes will be fulfilled.

The most common Hebrew root used in connection with the idea of "remnant" is *š'r*. Words from this root often refer to those who survive, or remain after, a particular crisis (e.g. 1 Kgs 19:18; 2 Kgs 19:4; Jer 40:11; Ezek 9:8). The most significant crisis in the OT was the Babylonian exile, which was seen as God's judgment on the faithlessness of the nation, and resulted in the people being removed from the land.[26] Against this background, *the* Remnant may be seen as the relatively small number of people who, following the exile, will turn back to God and enjoy the blessings of the age to come. The prophets viewed the exile as a theological necessity: a refining that would purify the nation and from which a renewed, faithful people would emerge. It seems probable that, at first, the prophets saw those who returned to the land after the exile as this faithful Remnant. However, as that community fell back into the same sins as before, it became clear that the trauma of exile had not brought about the necessary renewal;[27] and so the idea of the

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historical events in the light of these two ways set out in Deuteronomy—highlighting the view that blessing, including victory in the land, follows obedience, and defeat and the eventual destruction of the northern kingdom by the Assyrians and the exile of the southern kingdom in Babylon are the result of disobedience. See further, Routledge, *OT Theology*, 261–3.

[25] For further discussion of the Remnant, see, e.g., Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (3d ed.; Berrien Springs: Andrews University, 1980); Routledge, *OT Theology*, 266–7 (and bibliography).

[26] This happened twice: the northern kingdom (Israel) was defeated and taken into exile by Assyria in 722/21 B.C.E.; the southern kingdom (Judah) survived that crisis, but was defeated and exiled in Babylon in 587 B.C.E. When referring to "the exile" it is usually the Babylonian exile that is meant. There are references to a remnant linked with the Assyrian exile (e.g. Isa 17:4–6; cf. Amos 3:11), though future hope for the northern kingdom is tied to the restoration of the whole nation, which seems to be closely associated with the fortunes of the south.

[27] Ezra and Nehemiah seek to address some of the moral and spiritual issues facing the returning exiles; similar issues are addressed in Isa 56–66 and by the prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Remnant, together with the promise of restoration, seems to have been pushed into the eschatological future. The Remnant in the OT can be seen to embody the future hope of the nation and its presence points to the fact that God has not abandoned his people. However, this Israel of the future will be defined by its faithfulness to God, not by ethnicity alone.[28]

In this notion of the Remnant we see, then, that those who will finally inherit God's promises make up only a very small proportion of the physical nation of Israel, and thus that ethnicity is not a sufficient condition to be part of this new "Israel." I want to suggest that it is not, either a necessary condition.

The book of Isaiah introduces an additional, significant, element into the idea of the Remnant. The name of the prophet's son, *Shearjashub* ("a remnant will return," Isa 7:3) could be interpreted as a warning, *only* a remnant will return, or as a promise that the coming judgment will not result in total annihilation, and there will be some, albeit only a few, survivors. That same two-fold interpretation is given in Isaiah 10:20–23, which points to the near destruction of the nation, though again promises that some will survive. For Isaiah, this distinction is linked to *faith in God* (Isa 10:20 cf. 7:9). It is not the nation as a whole that will enjoy the blessings of salvation, but only those who turn to God and put their trust in him. And Isaiah appears to take this a step further. If the most significant factor in inheriting God's promises is faith, rather than national heritage, might not that open the way for the inclusion of non-Israelites, also on the basis of faith?

There is, and continues to be, debate about whether the book of Isaiah is truly universalistic, and envisions the nations sharing equally with Israel in the blessings of salvation.[29] In my view, though, a good case for that can be made. One significant example might be Isaiah 19:25, which portrays Israel along-

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[28] Rom 9–11 seems to use this same kind of argument. The presence of a "remnant," in this case those Jews who, like Paul, have become followers of Christ, demonstrates that God has not rejected Israel (Rom 11:1–5), and points to the future hope of ethnic Israelites. However, just as the remnant in Paul's argument are those who have come to faith in Christ, so this remnant embodies the hope that the people as a whole may also come to faith in Christ. The soteriological language does not necessarily imply national restoration, as claimed, for example, by Bloesch ("All Israel will be Saved," 134) and Blaising ("The Future of Israel," 438).

[29] For discussion surrounding this debate see, e.g., Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Second Isaiah—Prophet of Universalism," *JSOT* 41 (1988): 83–103; Michael A. Grisanti, "Israel's Mission to the Nations in Isaiah 40–55: An Update," *MSJ* 9.1 (1991): 39–61; Routledge, *OT Theology*, 330–3; Richard L. Schultz, "Nationalism and Universalism in Isaiah," in *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches* (ed. David G. Firth and H. G. M. Williamson; Nottingham: Apollos; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009), 122–44; Rikk E. Watts, "Echoes from the Past: Israel's Ancient Traditions and the Destiny of the Nations in Isaiah 40–55," *JSOT* 28.4 (2004): 481–508; D. W. van Winkle, "The Relationship of the Nations to Yahweh and to Israel in Isaiah XL–LV," *VT* 25.5 (1985): 446–58. "Proselytes in Isaiah XL–LV? A Study of Isaiah XLIV 1–5," *VT* 47.3 (1997): 341–59.

side Egypt and Assyria as equal beneficiaries of God's blessing, and applies designations formerly reserved for Israel—"my people," which appears as a key part of the covenant formula, and "the work of my hands," which, elsewhere in the book of Isaiah refers exclusively to Israel (29:23; 60:21; cf. 45:11)—to those two non-Israelite nations. I take Egypt and Assyria here as representatives, both of warring nations who will be united in a common worship of God, and of nations hostile to Israel who will, finally, stand alongside Israel as equal objects of God's grace. This leads to the view that, in the coming era of salvation, the people of God will be made up of Israelites and non-Israelites who stand before God, not by virtue of national heritage but solely on the basis of their faith. Ethnicity is thus no longer a necessary condition; rather, a faithful commitment to God becomes both the necessary and the sufficient condition for inclusion among God's people. John Bright summarizes the significance of the Remnant for the relationship between Israel and the church:

> In the notion of the Remnant … a distinction begins to be drawn between physical Israel and the true Israel, the actual Israel and the ideal Israel. The notion begins to take root in Hebrew theology that actual Israel will not inherit the Kingdom of God—that vision will ever be beyond her. Yet, along with this, there remains the confidence that one day there will emerge a true Israel, disciplined to be obedient to God's will, fit to be the instrument of his purpose. It is an Israel, not of birth, but of individual choice for the calling of God … It is precisely as this new Israel … that the Church understood itself.[30]

Within the book of Isaiah the Remnant is closely associated with two other important elements in Israel's future hope: the Messiah and the restoration of Jerusalem (Zion). Put simply, the Messiah will preside over the future era of salvation, he will reign from a renewed and restored Zion and the Remnant are those who will make up the redeemed community in that coming kingdom. The centrality of Zion here would appear to indicate Israel's prominence in the coming age, however, Zion appears, here, to have a wider significance, as the place where God has established his dwelling place, and therefore the place where he can be found. Isaiah 28:16 refers to God laying in Zion "a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation" and this security is appropriated by faith: "the one who trusts will never be dismayed." This passage is often taken as Messianic, and in the NT both Paul (Rom 9:33) and Peter (1 Pet 2:6) identify the stone with Christ.[31] However, in its original setting, it is more likely that the verse contrasts the security that comes from trusting in God with the false hope advocated by the leaders of Judah referred to in the previous verses (Isa 28:14–15). Those who find ref-

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[30] John Bright, *The Kingdom of God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 94

[31] The LXX reading, *ho pisteuōn epi autō* ("the one who trusts in *him*") indicates that the verse was given a messianic interpretation within early Jewish tradition.

uge in Zion are those who put their trust in God, and thus Zion becomes a symbol of the security that is to be found in God himself (cf. Ps 46:1).

And Zion's significance is not for the faithful of Israel alone. When he built and dedicated the temple in Jerusalem, Solomon recognized its significance for non-Israelites,[32] who, by looking to the temple and having their prayers answered would also come to know and fear God (1 Kgs 8:41–43). Isaiah 2:2–4 describes the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion. There is no sense here of Israel's political prominence. The nations come, not primarily to acknowledge or to pay homage to a nation, but to receive God's law and to submit to his rule over their affairs. By abandoning their weapons (Isa 2:4), the nations demonstrate willingness to put their trust in God and his judgment, and no longer in their own efforts and resources, and here again we see the relationship between salvation and faith. The reference to God's *law* (*tôrâ*, Isa 2:3) links Zion with Sinai. Just as Israel travelled to Sinai to receive the *tôrâ*, so the nations will come to Zion to receive God's instruction. Similarly, as the elders, who represented Israel, came into God's presence and shared a covenant meal on Sinai (Exod 24:9–11), so God will reveal his glory on Mount Zion (Isa 24:23; cf. 4:5–6), and, there, the nations are invited to share a banquet (Isa 25:6–8). Gordon McConville notes that in this, "Jerusalem succeeds Sinai as the symbol of Israel's status as the special people of God."[33] What is also significant in this is that when transferred to Zion, traditions that had been exclusively related to Israel (such as law and covenant) are now related, too, to the non-Israelite nations.

Another important factor in this discussion is the Servant of the Lord,[34] who appears, particularly, in four passages in Isaiah 40–55 (42:1–9; 49:1–9; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12) often referred to as "Servant Songs."[35] In the rest of Isaiah 40–55 the term "servant" is generally applied to Israel (e.g. Isa 41:8; 42:19; 43:10; 45:4) and some make the same identification in the Servant Songs. However, whilst other passages suggest that Israel has failed in its servant task (e.g. Isa 42:19–20; 43:8–10), the Servant Songs present one who is the ideal Servant, and so distinct from Israel. There is, though, a relationship between the two. In Isaiah 49:3, this ideal Servant is identified as Israel.

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[32] The term used to describe "foreigners" here is *nokrî*—and in this context points to those who are "from distant lands" (cf. Deut 29:22) and so not directly associated with Israel. See also note 42, below.

[33] Gordon McConville, "Jerusalem in the Old Testament," in *Jerusalem Past and Present in the Purposes of God* (ed. W. L. Walker; Cambridge: Tyndale House, 1992), 21–51 esp. 25; see also, Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (New Voices in Biblical Studies; Minneapolis: Winston, 1985).

[34] For general discussion of the Servant of the Lord, see Routledge, *OT Theology*, 291–6 (and bibliography).

[35] Duhm, who first drew specific attention to these passages, listed them as Isa 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12, and there is debate about whether some or all of the additional verses should be included. There may be further references to the Servant in Isa 48:16b; 51:16; 61:1–4.

This, though, does not resolve the matter of identity, because in verses 5–6 the Servant also has a mission *to* Israel. If both references to "Israel" are part of the original text, they must have different (though not unrelated) meanings, and the best explanation is that verse 3 points to the Servant as the embodiment of what Israel was meant to be.[36] God called the people of Israel to be his servant, to bear witness to what he has done among them (e.g. Isa 42:18–19; 43:8), but the nation has failed in that task. Nevertheless, God's purposes are maintained through another Servant, who is all that Israel should be, and through whom Israel will be restored and renewed.[37] Various suggestions have been made as to the Servant's identity. The Servant seems to have a prophetic role (e.g. Isa 49:1–2) and the second and third Servant songs are written in the first person, leading to the conclusion that the Servant may be the prophet himself, though the far-reaching nature of the Servant's ministry makes that unlikely. The Servant is, of course, also linked with Jesus. I have ventured my own suggestion, that the Servant might be a composite figure, including all who help Israel to carry out its own servant calling, including Isaiah; though finding eventual fulfillment in Christ.[38] A vital aspect of Israel's calling in the OT was, as God's witnesses, to reveal his glory to the whole world;[39] and it is not surprising, therefore, that the non-Israelite nations are included within the scope of the renewal brought by the Servant, who will be a *light for the Gentiles* (e.g. Isa 42:6; 49:6).[40] Thus the community that will come

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[36] See, e.g., Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 383–5; John Goldingay, *Isaiah* (NIBC; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), 281–2; John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 40–66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 291; Routledge, *OT Theology*, 292.

[37] See further, Robin Routledge, "Is There a Narrative Substructure Underlying the Book of Isaiah," *TynBul 55.2* (2004): 183–204; *OT Theology*, 291–296 (and bibliography).

[38] Routledge, "Narrative Substructure," 204.

[39] See, e.g., Robin Routledge, "Mission and Covenant in the Old Testament" in *Bible and Mission: A Conversation Between Biblical Studies and Missiology* (ed. Rollin G. Grams, I. H. Marshall, Peter F. Penner and Robin Routledge; Schwarzenfeld: Neufeld Verlag, 2008), 8–41; *OT Theology*, 319–33; Richard Bauckham, *The Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2004); Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2006). Some see mission as secondary in the OT, and achieved, primarily, through incorporation into Israel. I have argued, instead, that whilst Israel has a prominent place in God's purposes for the world, God's commitment to the world, as evident in creation and in the covenant with Noah (Gen 9:9–17) precedes his commitment to Israel, and that Israel was called primarily to demonstrate in their life together as the people of God, the relationship that God had always intended for all nations; see Routledge, "Mission and Covenant."

[40] The significance of this and the (possibly) parallel expression, "covenant to the people," has been debated. Whilst a nationalistic interpretation is not impossible, it is more natural, and more in keeping with its Isaianic usage, to see "light" in terms of enlightenment and salvation (cf. 9:2; 42:16; 45:7)—which is here extended to the

into being through the ministry of the Servant is one that is made up of all peoples.

In Isaiah 56–66 the nations again have prominence. Some have suggested that these chapters have a chiastic or concentric structure, which begins and ends with references to foreign nations (56:1–8; 66:18–23).[41] Foreigners, whose involvement in the religious life of the nation had previously been limited,[42] will be included on the basis of their faithful obedience, represented by keeping the Sabbath and holding fast to the covenant (56:6). And towards the end of the book we see God's glory being proclaimed among the nations (66:19): probably by the survivors of Israel.[43] This suggests full inclusion of the nations in the worship of Yahweh,[44] maybe even to the extent of serving as priests (56:6; 66:19).[45]

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non-Israelite nations. See, e.g., Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 44, 112; John Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 164–5; 377; *Isaiah*, 241–2, 283; Hanson, *Isaiah 40–66*, 46–47; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 117–9, 293–4; Schultz, "Nationalism and Universalism," 136.

[41] See, e.g., Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 461–465; cf. Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 373; Paul D. Hanson, *Isaiah 40–66* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox, 1995), 196. Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 301.

[42] The Hebrew noun used in Isa 56:3 for "foreigner" is *nēkār* (the related adjective is *nokrî*). This group is specifically excluded from celebrating the Passover in Exod 12:43. However, Ruth, who is also described as *nokrî*, does appear to be incorporated into the national life of Israel. And in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, Solomon envisages *nokrî* calling to Israel's God (1 Kgs 8:41–43). This suggests that the *nēkār* who binds himself the Yahweh may have a status that is similar to that of a *gēr*—a resident alien (see the discussion below). The reference to holding fast to the covenant points to an existing (if precarious) relationship. See, e.g., A. H. Konkel, "*nēkār*," *NIDOTTE* 1:108–9; D. Lang, "*nkr*," *TDOT* 9:423–31.

[43] The Hebrew noun here is *pělêṭâ*, which refers to those who escape. It is not the usual term for "remnant" (*šě'ār*), though the terms appear to be closely related, and occur together, in parallel, in, e.g., Isa 10:20; 37:31–32; cf. Gen 45:7; Ezra 9:14. If these are the Gentile survivors of a wider judgment on the nations (see, e.g., Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66* [OTL; London: SCM, 1969], 425) it is difficult to see to whom they would be sent. The idea, though, that this refers to the survivors of Israel being sent to make God's glory known to the nations is consistent with the narrative substructure of Isaiah; see Routledge, "Narrative Substructure." See also, Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66* (WBC; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 258; Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 373; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 688–689; Schultz, "Nationalism and Universalism in Isaiah," 130.

[44] Commenting on Isa 56:6–8, Brueggemann suggests that "foreigners are inducted into the full life of the worshiping community, participating in both prayer and sacrifice" (*Isaiah 40–66*, 172); Watts makes a similar observation: "this suggests that there will no longer be a distinction between the natural born and the proselyte" (*New Exodus*, 321); see, also, e.g., Childs, *Isaiah*, 458–9; Hanson, *Isaiah 40–66*, 194–5 Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–55*, 459–61; Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 314. Goldingay maintains that "the community continues to be ethnically based. A confessing community has not replaced it" (*Isaiah*, 317); though the unqualified acceptance of foreigners based

Inclusion of non-Israelites within the worshipping community is not new. Although not accorded full rights alongside native-born Israelites, a foreign resident, *gēr*,[46] who committed himself to the religious life of the nation, including circumcision, was able to take part in, for example, the celebration of the Passover, and was treated in the same way as a native-born Israelite (Exod 12:19, 48–49; Num 9:14)—even being described as part of the "community of Israel" (Exod 12:19). And those who sinned, willfully, were, again like native-born Israelites, "cut off from the people" (Num 15:30; cf. Lev 17:10; 20:1–3; Num 19:10b–13). If, as I have argued elsewhere, to be "cut off from the people" refers to being put outside the protection of the covenant this suggests that the *gēr* in Israel might be included in the covenant relationship between God and his people. In these earlier cases, this would generally be by incorporation into the physical nation of Israel;[47] and that idea may still be present within the complex universalism of the Book of Isaiah, though there is also the sense in which this gives way to the nations being brought into relationship with God as entities in their own right. That distinction is important in the discussion of the relationship between God and the non-Israelite nations. For the purpose of this argument, however, it does not need to be pressed. The Remnant, which constitutes the people of God in the era of salvation, is made up of the faithful of Israel (which may include the *gēr* and other foreigners who have bound themselves to the nation), as well as those from other nations who have, similarly, put their trust in Israel's God. And it is with this ethnically inclusive community of faith that the church identifies itself.

The Church: Continuity with the OT People of God

As we have seen, NT writers use designations originally related to Israel to describe the Church. I have argued that this is not an arbitrary reapplication; rather it is consistent with the development of the nature of God's people through the OT and its continuity with the community of those who put their faith in Christ.

We have noted something of that in relation to the Remnant: the ethnically inclusive community of those who are faithful to God, who will accept and benefit from the reign of the Messiah in the era of salvation. NT writers identify Jesus as the Messiah, and the Church as the faithful community over

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on their faithfulness together with rejection of natural born Israelites as a result of their unfaithfulness seems to be moving inexorably in that direction.

[45] See, e.g., Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 259; Childs, *Isaiah*, 542; Hanson, *Isaiah 40–66*, 195; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 459–60, 690; Watts, *New Exodus*, 319; Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 426.

[46] See, e.g., D. Kellermann, "*gūr*," *TDOT* 2:439`–449; A. H. Konkel, "*gwr*," *NIDOTTE* 1:836–839;

[47] See, e.g., Charles H. H. Scobie, "Israel and the Nations: An Essay in Biblical Theology," *TynBul* 43.2 (1992): 283–305 esp. 286–7.

which he presides. Jesus is also identified as God's Servant.[48] As we have seen, the Servant both embodies God's people, and is the one through whom God's purposes for his people, made up of Israelites and non-Israelites, are fulfilled. As God's Servant, Jesus, too, embodies all that Israel was meant to be, and is the one through whom the new community of God's people, comprising both Jews and non-Jews who put their trust in him, comes into being.

This is highlighted in the recent emphasis on NT writers' development of the Isaianic second exodus motif. Isaiah 40–55 portrays the return from exile in Babylon as a second and better exodus, which would herald the restoration and renewal of the nation, and the coming of God's kingdom. Although the return did take place, it was not as glorious as anticipated, and Isaiah 56–66 appears to address that disappointment and disillusionment. N. T. Wright and others suggest that this sense of disappointment continued into the first century C.E.[49] Geographically the people were back in their own land, but the great promises of restoration had not yet been fulfilled. Thus there was a sense in which the exile was still continuing. The NT writers set the coming of Jesus, against that background. In his life and ministry he re-enacts the narrative of Israel, in order to bring the history of Israel to a climax, and to end to its long bondage.[50] This he offers through a second exodus, brought about through his death and resurrection.[51] In this, there is a typological correspondence between Jesus and Moses;[52] a correspondence highlighted by Jesus' reference to his own "exodus" in Luke 9:31. This could simply be referring to his coming death. However other allusions to the exodus in Luke's gospel, and particularly the occurrence of this statement in the context of a conversation with Moses, suggests, too, a link with Israel's deliverance from bondage.[53]

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[48] E.g. Matt 12:18; Luke 2:32; Acts 8:35

[49] N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 268–72, 299–301; see also Richard J. Clifford, "The Exodus in the Christian Bible: The Case For 'Figural' Reading," *Theological Studies* 63 (2002): 345–61 esp. 352–354; David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Biblical Studies Library; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 143–6.

[50] Wright, *People of God*, 401–3.

[51] Wright, *People of God*, 388–9.

[52] As well as direct comparisons (e.g. John 1:17; 3:14; Heb 3:1–6) there are allusions and intertextual links; see, e.g., Peter E. Enns, "Creation and Re-creation: the Interpretation of Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3:1–4:13," *WJT* 55 (1993): 255–80 esp. 270–272; Fred L. Fisher, "The New and Greater Exodus: The Exodus Pattern in the New Testament," *SWJT* 20.1 (1977): 69–79 esp. 75–77; Richard D. Patterson and Michael Travers, "Contours of the Exodus Motif In Jesus' Earthly Ministry," *WTJ* 66 (2004): 25–47 esp. 39–42; Kurt Queller, "'Stretch Out Your Hand!' Echo and Metalepsis in Mark's Sabbath Healing Controversy," *JBL* 129.4 (2010): 737–58.

[53] See Susan R. Garrett, "Exodus from Bondage: Luke 9:31 and Acts 12:1–24," *CBQ* 52 (1990): 656–80; David Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel* (JSNTSup 119; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 128–9; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 381–2.

The significance of the new exodus for NT writers is explored in several recent discussions.[54] Rikki Watts explores the significance of the new/second exodus for Mark's gospel. He argues that Mark's introductory sentence (1:1–3 cf. Isa 40:3) sets out the conceptual framework of the book.[55] He, too, notes the sense of disappointment that followed the return from exile,[56] and the hope of a new exodus, whose fulfillment is inaugurated through Christ's ministry.[57] David Pao looks at the new exodus, particularly in relation to Acts. Like Watts he notes the significance of the quotation from Isaiah 40:3–5 (Luke 3:4–6), describing it as the "hermeneutical lens"[58] for Luke's writings. His discussion has implications for identity of the Church: God's continuing purposes for his people, being worked out through the book of Acts, include Jews and Gentiles, and thus the Christian community as a whole may be properly construed as "the true people of God."[59]

This new exodus, enacted through Christ, is also related to the work of the Spirit. In Isaiah 63:7–14 God's leading of his people through the desert is closely associated with presence and activity the Spirit (cf. Neh 9:20).[60] Keesmaat sees an intertextual link between this and the reference to being "led by the Spirit" in Romans 8:14.[61] And argues that there are further echoes

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[54] E.g. Andrew C. Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John: An Intertextual Study of the New Exodus Pattern in the Theology of John* (WUNT 2/158; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Garrett, "Exodus;" Sylvia C. Keesmat, *Paul and His Story: (Re)interpreting the Exodus Tradition* (JSNTSup 181; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Dave Mathewson, "New Exodus as a Background for 'the Sea was no More' in Revelation 21:1c," *TrinJ* 24NS (2003): 243–58; Rodrigo J. Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians* (WUNT 2/282; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Pao, *Acts*; Patterson and Travers, "Contours;" Watts, *New Exodus*; William J. Webb, *Returning Home: New Covenant and Second Exodus as the Context for 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1* (JSNTSup 85; Sheffield: JSOT, 1993); William N. Wilder, *Echoes of the Exodus Narrative in the Context and Background of Galatians 5:18* (SBL; New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

[55] Watts, *New Exodus*, 370.

[56] Watts, *New Exodus*, 67, 73, 104.

[57] Watts, *New Exodus*, 383.

[58] Pao, *Acts*, 37, 45.

[59] Pao, *Acts*, 5, 65, 83, 249.

[60] According to Sklba, Isa 63:11–14 and Neh 9:20 are post-exilic retellings of the exodus story, giving prominence to the Spirit, who will also take an active role in Israel's restoration; see Richard J. Sklba, "'Until the Spirit from on High Is Poured out on Us' (Isa 32:15): Reflections on the Role of the Spirit in the Exile," *CBQ* 46 (1984): 1–17 esp. 13. Paul appears to do something similar in 2 Cor 3:16–18, where he links the "Lord" in the exodus narrative (v. 16 cf. Exod 34:4) with the activity of the "Spirit;" see, e.g., Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1997), 199–202; C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Blacks NT Commentary, 2d ed.; London: A. & C. Black, 1973), 122–3.

[61] Sylvia C. Keesmat, "Exodus and the Intertextual Transformation of Tradition in Romans 8.14–30," *JSNT* 54 (1994): 29–56 esp. 40. The Greek verb, *agō*, occurs in

of exodus language in the designation "sons of God;"[62] and in the reference to God's "firstborn"[63] which, in Romans 8:29 refers to Jesus. Keesmaat also notes allusions to the exodus in the contrast between "sonship" and slavery, in Galatians 4–5.[64] Morales, too, notes the contrast between slavery, as a result of being under the curse of the law, and sonship, through the Spirit. The possible link with Isaiah 63:14 suggests that Paul saw this restoration in terms of a new exodus.[65] Like Keesmaat, he notes, further, the link between being "led by the Spirit" (this time in Gal 5:18) and Isaiah 63:14, and, following Wilder, points, too, to Psalm 143:10, which may also include exodus typology.[66]

The exodus is a paradigm for redemption is evident in both testaments. Through the exodus God demonstrated his commitment to his people and his power to act on their behalf. Following the Babylonian exile, God promised a new exodus: a new act of redemption that would also bring about a new creation of Israel and of the whole created order. According to the NT writers, that promise has been fulfilled in Christ, the new Moses, who leads his people, now made up of Jews and Gentiles, out of slavery and death and into new life as the children of God, and into the blessings of a new age.

This discussion thus points to continuity between the Old and New Testament people of God—with the latter viewed as *fulfilling* rather than *replacing* the former. The community of faith to which the OT points, is not *replaced by* the Church, it *is* the Church, where the Church is rightly understood, not institutionally, but as the ethnically inclusive people of God.

Conclusion

This remains a sensitive area of discussion and commentators are understandably, and probably rightly, cautious about using language that might in any way suggest replacement when talking about the relationship between the church and Israel. Equally, though, they should not tie themselves in semantic knots trying to avoid terms that others might choose to construe pejoratively. There is nothing intrinsically anti-Semitic in the insistence that the hope of salvation for all human beings, including Jews, lies only through faith in Jesus Christ. And, notwithstanding the tragic record of the church over the

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Isa 63:14 (LXX) and Rom 8:14 (and Gal 5:18). The link is even closer in the LXX which refers to the Spirit giving "guidance" (MT: "rest"). For textual discussion see, e.g., Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 609.

[62] Keesmaat, "Exodus," 38–39.

[63] Ibid. 40–41.

[64] Sylvia C. Keesmaat, "Paul and His Story: Exodus and Tradition in Galatians," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals* (ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 300–33.

[65] Morales, *Spirit*, 127–9, 149.

[66] Ibid. 146–151; see also Wilder, *Echoes*.

years, nor is there anything intrinsically anti-Semitic in the view that the Christian community, which was, in the first instance, predominantly Jewish, and which should continue to be ethnically inclusive, fulfills the hope of the people of God in the OT.

This fulfillment view is, in my view, consistent both with the developing understanding in the OT of the people of God as a community of faith, and with the NT portrayal of the Church as continuous with that community of faith. Certainly, there are implications for the way we interpret the OT in general, and in particular passages that point to the physical restoration and exaltation of Israel, and this needs further consideration. However it does provide a legitimate basis on which OT passages that relate to Israel's calling, relationship with God, purpose, and future hope, may be re-applied directly to Christian believers who, through Christ, are the embodiment of the OT people of God.

Undoing 'this people', becoming 'my servant': Purpose and Commission in *Isaiah* 6

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"This is the end—for me the beginning of life"[1]

Introduction

The significance of chapter 6 within the book of *Isaiah* has been fiercely debated.[2] If it is a 'call narrative', why is it not located in *Isaiah*'s opening chapters, as are the call narratives of *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*? And how can a 'sending' which so overturns the usual concept of Yahweh's soteriological purpose—that the word of Yahweh is sent to bring people to repentance—rightly belong to a prophetic call? The resolution of these two questions seems, to me, to be the mark of a viable canonical reading, not only of chapter 6, but of the whole of *Isaiah*. This essay will explore a resolution to these questions based on the form of the text of chapter 6 within *Isaiah*. I hope to demonstrate that the text itself acts as a guide into a particular way of reading. This way of reading, in turn, will ground my thesis that the book of *Isaiah* presents the figure of the Servant (developed in chapters 40–55) as the human who fulfils the relation to Yahweh for which humanity was created.

Isaiah 6 is the account of a remarkable enlargement of perspective for the one who is 'I' in the text,[3] and secondarily, but very importantly, for the reader, who (as I will show) becomes 'I' through the text. The vision of chapter 6 is recounted as a shift in perception made by one who is 'undone' by confrontation with an overwhelming reality (6:4), and tracks for the reader the process of change *from* ordinary human perspective *to* the perspective that marks the whole prophecy of *Isaiah*.[4]

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[1] These were the last words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer to fellow prisoners, as he was taken away to be hanged at Flossenbürg on April 9th, 1945. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, ed. E.Bethge (London: SCM Press, 1953). 181.

[2] All biblical references will be to *Isaiah*, unless otherwise noted. I use 'Isaiah' to refer to the prophet, and '*Isaiah*' to refer to the book.

[3] That this is the prophet Isaiah is rarely questioned, though see J.D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33* ed. B.M.Metzger, et al., Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, Texas: Word, 1985). 71., and P. D. Miscall, *Isaiah*, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993). 34.

[4] 1:2–4 to 2:2–4.

Chapter 6 comes at the end of a litany of disregarded prophetic appeals to Judah to 'turn'.[5] It is a last-ditch effort, not for repentance, because that is now too late, but to plant a seed for a future beyond the end; the seed of a new kind of person in relation to Yahweh.[6] It acts to confront its readers with the same vision which confronts the see-er, inviting them also to shift perspective, to become 'see-ers' and 'hearers' of Yahweh, and so be sent. So, *Isaiah* 6 has two simultaneous engagements: one in relation to the see-er and through him to Judah, as reported by the text, and the other in relation to the reader, by means of the text.

The shift in perspective recounted in *Isaiah* 6 is a shift from focus on a particular geographic location (the Hebrew temple) *to* the whole earth, and from a particular historical event (the death of the Hebrew king) *to* an ever-lasting kingship. It moves from the particular to the universal, from the historical to the eschatological, displacing the ethno-centric, hiero-centric world of Judah in the 8th century BC. Then, significantly, it refocuses on the particular—on Judah and their relation to Yahweh—in the light of all that has been seen.[7] The scene's initial outward movement prefigures the radical displacement and enforcedly expanded perspective of Judah, who are to be thrust out amongst the nations in the coming exile.[8] What is seen and heard in *Isaiah* 6, and pictured there as a revelation that 'shakes the foundations' of temple and earth, is critical to the movement of the whole book of *Isaiah*.

The Mission of Hardening

I propose that the prophet's 'commission to harden' (6:8–10) is a vital 'symptom' for the interpretation of the passage (and indeed for understanding the nature of the prophetic task in *Isaiah*), and that it is intended to provoke an unsettling re-evaluation of prophetic purpose.[9] This symptom effec-

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[5] שׁוּב, usually translated 'repent' (see the participle in 1:27). Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, "The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament," ed. Walter Baumgartner and Johann Jakob Stamm (Leiden: Brill, 1994), Vol 4, p1427. See also the appeals in 1:5, 1:16–20, and 2:5.

[6] See Seitz' suggestion that chapter 5 is 'a period of warning and exhortation.' Christopher Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39.*, ed. J.L.Mays, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville: John Knox, 1993). 12, also 47–49. With Judah's failure to 'turn', this period has now ended.

[7] 6:9–13.

[8] Because the book of *Isaiah* is framed as a word to heaven and earth (see 1:2), the use of pronominal suffixes to refer to particular locations on the earth (1:7; 2:7, 8) and the preceding contrasting image of the threat of chaos to the earth (5:26, 30), I read *kol-hā'res* in 6:3 as indicating 'all the earth' rather than the 'land' of Judah.

[9] Avoiding such a re-thinking, the Septuagint writers in an early interpretive move (probably during the 1st to the 3rd century BCE) 'translated' the imperatives of the Hebrew in 6:10 as indicatives. Richard S. Briggs, *The Virtuous Reader: Old Testament Narrative and Interpretive Virtue*, ed. C.G.Bartholomew, et al., Studies in Theological Interpretation (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2010). 175–176.

tively diagnoses the meaning of the passage: that Judah's framework for understanding the relation of Yahweh and earth is 'sick unto death' and has no future in Yahweh's earth.[10]

Nevertheless, *Isaiah* 6, as I will show, acts to bring the reader into the perspective of the book of *Isaiah*, in order to work the future envisioned by *Isaiah* in the reader, and through the reader in the earth; indeed to fulfil the destiny of the earth which it proclaims. This essay will explore this perspective, and show how Yahweh's future for the earth is directly connected with the mission of hardening.

Earth and Yahweh

As Webb notes, the 'headings' of chapters one and two[11] alert the reader to 'the twin poles of the days of Uzziah and *the last days*',[12] that is, to concurrent 'present' and eschatological perspectives. These poles represent a relation of the everyday to eschatological realities, which is innate to the design of *Isaiah*. They are the poles of 'human, earthly perspective' and 'Yahweh's eschatological perspective', which I will refer to as the poles of 'earth and Yahweh'.[13] The dislocation of these poles through Israel and Judah's rejection of Yahweh is given in the opening chapters as the cause of the tensions within *Isaiah*.[14] The book of *Isaiah* 'relocates' and resolves these tensions through the person of the Servant, envisaged in chapter 6 and developed in chapters 40–55.

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[10] The phrase 'sick unto death' [חָלָה … לָמוּת] comes from the story of Hezekiah, portrayed in *Isaiah* as a kind of representative of his people (e.g. 38:6). Given the death sentence by the prophet in 38:1, Hezekiah is reprieved and lives 15 more years, testimony to Yahweh's faithfulness (38:18, 19). Despite this, his 'final' word reported in 39:8 (placed to set the scene for chapters 40–55) gives a chillingly self-centered view of the world and its relation to Yahweh, one that clearly does *not* partake in the shift in perspective recounted in *Isaiah* 6, and which seems completely at odds with the self-giving intercession that Yahweh will work through Yahweh's Servant for the earth in *Isaiah* 40–55. I argue that this is by editorial design [Christopher Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36–39* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991). 204.], and that Hezekiah and his kingdom are represented in *Isaiah* 39 as 'sick unto death'. For an alternative reading of Hezekiah's final words, Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny*: 156–160.

[11] 1:1 and 2:1 (*sic*); also 2:2.

[12] Barry Webb, *The Message of Isaiah: On Eagles' Wings*, ed. A.Motyer, The Bible Speaks Today (Nottingham: InterVarsity Press, 1996). 45. Author's emphasis.

[13] Strictly speaking, these are the poles of 'the heavens and the earth' and 'Yahweh'. See the discussion of *Isaiah*'s cosmology in B. N. Peterson, "Cosmology," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, ed. Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2012), 91–94.

[14] 1:4b.

The opening words of Isaiah, son of Amoz, display these poles as he invokes heaven and earth as witnesses to the word of Yahweh.

> Hear, heavens and use the ear, earth,
> for Yahweh speaks …[15]

The act of prophecy itself, i.e. the conviction that these words are concurrently the words of Yahweh *and* the words of the prophet, fittingly embodies the same duality. The prophet, himself part of earth in its dislocation from Yahweh, brings Yahweh's word of 're-location' to the earth. Thus he holds the dislocated poles of earth and Yahweh together in his words. When Judah fails to respond to these words,[16] the prophet alone is left as the one who sees, hears, and so can be sent. By his obedient response to Yahweh, he will hold the dislocated poles of earth and Yahweh together in his person.[17]

I propose that this is the true nature of the prophetic task according to *Isaiah* 6, and that the people of Israel in their remaking as a prophetic people after exile, must be fashioned accordingly.[18] They must model 'in their person' the just alignment of earth with Yahweh, amongst the nations and for the nations.[19] This 'just alignment' will emerge as the basis of what is called '*mišpāṭ* ' in *Isaiah*. The entire book of *Isaiah* can be understood to unfold between the two poles of earth and Yahweh; the heavens and earth misaligned from Yahweh in chapter 1, and realigned with Yahweh in chapters 65–66. The fate of the exceptions to this realignment (chillingly described in the coda at 66:24), 'prove' the final alignment of the poles by the book of *Isaiah*. The fullness of all the earth *will be* Yahweh's glory. Harsh as the mission of hardening appears, I will show that—given the extent and persistence of Judah's sin and their consequent dislocation from Yahweh—it is necessary in order to plant the seed of hope for the future.[20]

In *Isaiah* 6, the see-er's vision is expanded to include what lies behind the world of the everyday. He sees Yahweh in Yahweh's true relation to earth; the destined alignment of earth and Yahweh towards which all history leads, and for which end Judah has been covenantally set apart. Simultaneously he

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[15] 1:2.

[16] See chapters 1–5, 6:9–13.

[17] 6:8.

[18] Childs notes that *Isaiah* 8:18 refers to Isaiah himself as 'paradigmatic', a 'sign and portent'. Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, ed. J.L.Mays, et al., The Old Testament Library (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2001). 53.

[19] Although not stated explicitly, the concept of the alignment of Yahweh and earth lies behind Fretheim's ideas in T.E. Fretheim, *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005). xvi. See his comments on the 'divine-world relationship' on page 18, also 22, 23 and 26. The logic of the chapters on Yahweh's partners also reflect this idea, in W. Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament; Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997)., esp. 554–6.

[20] 6:13.

realises the utter failure of his people in this calling, and their inevitable demise.

The king is dead. Long live the King!

> 6:1, In the year-of-the-death of the king, Uzziah,
> and I saw the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,
> and his skirts filling the temple.

Earth and Yahweh are immediately contrasted in the first verse of chapter 6. The 'year-of-the-death' is hyphenated in Hebrew, and almost certainly identifies much more than the date of Uzziah's death, again bringing the earthly into comparison and contrast with the eschatological.[21] Uzziah, the earthly 'lord', has died at the end of a remarkably prosperous and optimistic reign, and it is in his 'death-year', the end of an era, that the unnamed see-er sees a much greater Lord who continues, seated, to reign above the whole earth. For the see-er there is a 'fusion of horizons',[22] where a significant historical event has awoken him to the eschatological horizon beyond it.[23]

There is some discussion as to whether this 'seeing' took place within the temple, but the phrase 'and his skirts filling the temple' portrays the enthroned Lord above and far greater than the temple.[24] The ordinary horizon of Judahite perspective is thrown wide, relativising the temple as centre and dwelling-place of God. This great temple, 'navel' of the earth, and not only the earth's centre but its microcosm,[25] is filled with the mere 'outskirts' of Yahweh, God of all the earth, whose glory is the whole earth's fullness (6:3). Matthews describes 'the transference to the temple of the symbols of YHWH's presence' during settlement of Israel's land and the institution of

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[21] *Pace* R. W. L. Moberly, "'Holy, Holy, Holy': Isaiah's Vision of God," in *Holiness: Past and Present*, ed. S.C. Barton (London: T & T Clark, 2003), 124–125.

[22] H.G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. J. Weinsheimer and D.Marshall (London: Continuum, 1975). 305.

[23] Interestingly, there was a concurrent kingship in Uzziah's day, briefly described in 2 *Kings* 15:5 (more extensively in 2 *Chronicles* 26). Yahweh struck Uzziah with leprosy because his heart became 'lifted up', and he lived apart while his son Jotham 'reigned' in his stead, though Uzziah 'seems to have remained the real ruler.' John Bright, *A History of Israel*, fourth edition ed. (London: Westminster John Knox 2000). 258. It seems likely that this image of a dual kingship—a true reigning king, represented by a regent—lies behind the imagery of dual kingship in this passage. Behind Jotham was Uzziah, true king of Israel; behind Uzziah is Yahweh, true king over all the earth.

[24] See 40:22, where Yahweh 'sits above the circle of the earth'.

[25] Jon D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *Journal of Religion* 64, no. 3 (1984): 284.

the monarchy.[26] The vision of *Isaiah* 6 radically reverses that transference. Zion will be lost, and the se-er sees the symbols of Yahweh's presence moved outward again, into (and indeed filling) 'all the earth'.

Clearly there is a series of contrasts in this passage: the dead, earthly lord of national Israel contrasts with the normally unseen, divine lord, whom the see-er sees to be true king over all the earth. This contrast is demonstrated by the see-er's exclamation of woe in 6:5, a series of almost disjunct locutions which, significantly, reflect the *order* of how he sees: 'For the king—Yahweh of Hosts—they have seen—my eyes!' Firstly he sees 'the king!', then that this king is neither Uzziah nor his successor, but 'Yahweh of hosts!', and only then—with horror—he realises his own culpability as a result of what he has seen. The glory of thrice-holy Yahweh 'seated' or 'dwelling' [*yōšēb*] on the throne is contrasted with the despair of the man of unclean lips 'seated' or 'dwelling' [*yōšēb*] amongst the people of unclean lips. Underlying these multiple contrasts, as I will show, is the single determinative contrast between the earth and Yahweh.

Boundaries Thrown Back

Notably, the language used to present the *Isaiah* 6 vision is not distinctive visionary language, as is used elsewhere in *Isaiah*.[27] This underlines the nature of the events as within the possibilities of seeing and hearing that are open to all readers. While it is clearly a prophetic event peculiar to the see-er, the lack of specialist language keeps it within the range of the reader's potential experience, and plays upon the broad concepts of seeing and hearing. The opening 'I saw…' (6:1) and the following 'I heard' (6:8) seem to be used in deliberate opposition to the *end* of seeing and hearing for Judah that the passage records,[28] prefiguring the contrasts that become so significant later in *Isaiah*.[29]

I claim that the text consciously develops the see-er as a model of faithfulness in contrast to Judah—i.e. a model of one who sees, hears and consequently goes—that the Servant of Yahweh will later be shown to take up. This can be understood as the genesis of the much-debated contrast in *Isaiah* 40–55 between the faithful 'Servant' of the Servant Songs, and faithless servant Israel described outside the Songs.[30] In *Isaiah* 6, the 'see-er' sees and hears

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[26] Victor H. Matthews, "Theophanies Cultic and Cosmic: Prepare to meet thy God," in *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration*, ed. R.K.Harrison; A. Gileadi (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1998), 312.

[27] While the whole book of *Isaiah* is described in 1:1 as a 'vision' [חָזוֹן], chapter six is not. The writer simply uses the phrase 'and I saw…' [וָאֶרְאֶה] (6:1).

[28] W. A. M. Beuken, "The manifestation of Yahweh and the Commission of Isaiah: Isaiah 6 read against the background of Isaiah 1," *Calvin Theological Journal* 39, no. 1 (2004): 74 and 78.

[29] E.g. 42:6, 7, 18–20; 49:6, 7; 50:4, 5; 52:13; 53:11.

[30] This is one of the most commented-upon features in discussions about the identity and function of the Servant in *Isaiah* 40–55.The verbs for seeing and hearing

Yahweh and is 'sent'.[31] Judah refuses to see and hear Yahweh and will be 'sent far away' (into exile).[32]

From 6:2 the account is rendered by a series of exclamations, as if reporting live on an unfolding event.[33] Suddenly the see-er (and his readers with him) are 'over-seeing' and 'overhearing' a reality more true, more real than the everyday, and—critically—one that is concurrent with the everyday. As Buber writes, 'It is not in the future that the *kabhod* is to fill the earth…'[34] The usual boundaries of what is seen are thrown back, and the see-er is shown Yahweh in Yahweh's relation to earth as he has never seen them before.

> 6:2. Seraphim! Standing from above him! Six wings! Six wings to each! With two he covers his face, and with two he covers his feet, and with two he flies! 3. And he calls—this one to this one—and he says,
>
> 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Yahweh of hosts!
> The fullness of all the earth [is] his glory!'[35]
>
> 4. And the foundations of the thresholds shook from the voice of the one calling, and the house was filled with smoke. 5. And I said 'Woe to me! For I am undone! For a man unclean of lips I [am], and amidst a people unclean of lips I dwell. For the king—Yahweh of Hosts—they have seen—my eyes!

'Undone'

Why does this vision cause the see-er such woe? Because as he sees he *knows* that he is lost. Unclean of lips, he belongs to a people unclean of lips.[36] Until now he has proclaimed the truth about Yahweh,[37] but in the vision of chapter 6 he sees with excruciating clarity the relation between Yahweh and earth that undergirds all history, and himself in relation to it, and he knows

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that are negated in chapter 6 are recapitulated, and their function restored, in the Servant Songs.

[31] שָׁלַח, 6:8.

[32] רָחַק , 6:12.

[33] This 'immediate' quality seems to be one of the carefully composed literary features of the text. I have translated 6:2 in the present tense to express the immediacy of the participles, which are followed by imperfect verbs. I have translated the *waw* consecutive perfect verbs in 6:3 similarly; potentially they are governed by the imperfects in 6:2.

[34] Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1949). 128.

[35] 'Fullness' [מְלֹא] in 6:3 is a noun, rather than the verb of the usual English translation, 'all the earth *is filled* with his glory'. For a discussion of this translation see Levenson, "Temple and World," 289–290.

[36] As I will show, 'lips' represent not only the speaker, but what the speaker's lips are able to declare about Yahweh and earth.

[37] *Isaiah* 1–5.

that he does not—and because of his uncleanness that he cannot—belong to that true, real world in which 'the king is Yahweh' over all the earth. All that he thought he was is 'undone';[38] all that his people are is undone. He looks now into eschatological reality, where the poles of 'earth and Yahweh' are held together, and where the earth fulfils its creation purpose as the location for the display of Yahweh's glory, and he knows that he and his people—the 'elect' of Yahweh—have missed the reality of earth's relation to Yahweh, and consequently are outside the fullness and the glory. Those who were called to hold together these two realities of earth and Yahweh in their national life belong rather to the world of uncleanness.[39] They are doomed to destruction as the false must give way to the real. The see-er expects an end, and indeed, his life as he knows it will end.

The see-er's exclamation of woe echoes the '6-fold woe refrain' of chapter 5.[40] Israel's offences against Yahweh increase in seriousness in this series (5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21 and 22), culminating in the reversal of good and evil.[41] There is a dramatic shift in standpoint in chapter 6, after the see-er 'sees the Lord', where his past indictment against others—'Woe to those who…'—is turned upon himself: 'Woe to me for I…' Dismayed by his own uncleanness in the presence of Yahweh of hosts, the seer knows himself to be included in his own pronouncement of woe. He 'tastes' the utter lostness of his people for the first time.

The basis of the see-er's woe, I propose, is earth dislocated from Yahweh, and himself, together with Judah, wholly failed in their calling of 're-location', i.e. in their calling to live out before the nations the just location of humanity in relation to Yahweh, and to become a centre of re-location for the na-

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[38] 6:5, or 'destroyed', נִדְמֵיתִי .

[39] Uzziah the king, whose death is noted in 6:1, was unclean and forced to live apart, a leper as a result of his attempt to offer sacrifice in the temple (2 *Chronicles* 26:16–21).This incident stood as a warning to the people and priests of Yahweh about Yahweh's unqualified holiness, and seems likely to be the background to the use of 'uncleanness' in *Isaiah 6*. King Uzziah had taken upon himself divine authority which he did not possess, and became unclean as a result. I suggest that the see-er, in a moment of clarity and horror, sees that he and his people have been masquerading a divine authority which *they do not possess*, and are thus guilty of the same sin as Uzziah. Notably, the subject of falsely offered sacrifice is prominent in *Isaiah* 1–5 (especially 1:10–15). Thus it might be the prospect of leprosy that causes the see-er such dismay in 6:5. (This is not the same as the theory that the Servant of *Isaiah* 53 *was* Uzziah, and thus had leprosy, [discussed in C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah: An Historical and Critical Study*, second ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1956). 41.], or as the theory that the Servant was struck with leprosy and died. [See Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia*, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoed & Ruprecht, 1922). 396–397.]).

[40] Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39.*: 27.

[41] This is demonstrated specifically by the practice of injustice (5:23), the mark of Judah's estrangement from Yahweh, which I have called the 'dislocation' of the present and eschatological poles. See 1:17, 21–23.

tions.[42] *Isaiah* 6 records the see-er's acutely personal encounter with the message of 1:1–7; one that also has far-reaching consequences for the earth. Yahweh's sons are estranged from Yahweh, and as a result are mortally sick and their own 'earth' lies desolate.[43] While 'earth' in 1:7 refers most immediately to the land of 'Judah and Jerusalem', the dislocation of Judah in relation to Yahweh is clearly critical for the whole earth if the future is to be the one envisioned in 2:1–4 where the word of Yahweh goes out from Mt Zion and 'all the nations shall flow to it.' Judah has failed in their calling in relation to Yahweh, and Judah as Judah was must end. The see-er has seen Yahweh and earth, and their relation of glory. Here is life, and Judah is found to be outside that life.

The Bitter End and the Seed of Holiness

This death-knell demonstrates the reason for the see-er's lack of explicit identification in chapter 6. While almost universally taken to be the prophet Isaiah, the unnamed 'I' has another function critical to this scene: to broaden the scope of the see-er's identity to include the reader as 'I'. The first person pronoun works to involve the reader in the text,[44] and has the effect of opening up eschatological reality to readers through the see-er's eyes, allowing them to see their own uncleanness and culpability in its light, significantly whilst retaining their status as spectators of the scene. In this way, the scriptural report of the vision *works against* the see-er's commission to blind and deafen. By allowing the audience to 'stand outside' and see Judah's entrenched blindness, deafness and ultimate demise (the result of their dislocation from the intended relation of Yahweh and earth), while simultaneously being drawn into the drama as the 'I' who sees, the text acts to open eyes, ears and understanding at the very time that the prophet is commissioned to close them. It allows the reader-as-spectator to stand at the brink of the chasm over which unseeing Judah must plunge; to see their inevitable end but to avoid, if not the plunge itself, the end beyond it. The text here can be understood to be working towards its own fulfilment.[45] I suggest that the 'seed

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[42] 2:2–4.

[43] אַרְצְכֶם , 'your earth' (1:7).

[44] I.e. it is 'self-involving'. On the narrowing of the distance between author and reader because of 'I-narration' see A.L.H.M. Van Wieringen, *The Implied Reader in Isaiah 6–12*, ed. R.A. Culpepper and R. Rendtorff, Biblical Interpretation Series (Leiden: Brill, 1998). 32, 41. See Wenham's comment that '[s]elf-involvement is particularly evident in first-person utterances'. Gordon J. Wenham, *Psalms as Torah: Reading Biblical Song Ethically*, ed. J.B.Green and C.R.Seitz C.G.Bartholomew, Studies in Theological Interpretation (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012). 70.

[45] The 'ironic' interpretation of *Isaiah 6* 'serves to encourage the readers / hearers of Isaiah to listen, hear and believe so that what is presented ironically in Isaiah's call does not happen to them.' Torsten Uhlig, "Too Hard to Understand? The Motif of Hardening in Isaiah," in *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches*, ed. D. Firth and H.G.M. Williamson (Nottingham: Apollos 2009), 81. While this has similarities to my

of holiness' (6:13)—the only hope for the future—is planted by this text. The seed is the reader who has seen 'through the see-er's eyes', and for whom the 'foundations' are shaken by the knowledge of how Yahweh truly relates to earth.[46]

So the prophetic word stands as an unambiguous word of hardening, sealing the fate of the elect kingdom of Judah that has severed its life-giving connection to their true King. But *at the same time,* in its form as a report to an audience beyond 'this people', and in its position within the text of *Isaiah*, the prophetic word looks and works towards a hope that lies beyond that bitter end, and which is related to the present 'people' as a seed relates to its parent tree, dead, burned, and burned again.[47] This, I suggest, is the background to understanding the hardening passage in 6:10.[48] Judah as Judah is must be 'undone'. The prophet as the prophet is must be undone. The reader as reader must be undone. But Judah's death will plant a seed of holiness which will spring up with new vigour, as I will demonstrate, in the life of the Servant of Yahweh.

The movement that the see-er demonstrates—from the external knowledge of Yahweh's judgement of injustice to acute personal awareness of guilt, and of the inclusion of himself *in* Yahweh's judgement—is the movement that must be made by the reader who will take the path of renewal 'beyond the end' that is offered by the text.[49] This personal inward movement is part of the movement into 'all the earth' previously described, and part of the enlargement of perspective charted by the chapter. The prophet, as representative of Yahweh to earth, has spoken the word to the people; the prophet, as representative of earth to Yahweh, must also receive the word as a model for the people, prefiguring the role of the Servant in chapters 40–55.

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reading, it does not develop the idea that the 'seed of holiness' *is thus planted*. See also Briggs, *Virtuous Reader*: 180., and Moberly, "Isaiah's Vision," 133. I read chapter 6 without irony (beyond the inevitable 'irony' occasioned by the incongruity between the action and its result), as the trajectory of a 'former thing' coming to its inevitable end at the same time as the seed of a 'new thing' is planted.

[46] Contrary to H.G.M. Willamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). 35–36., among others, for whom the final words of 6:13 are 'a late gloss' and thus discounted, or who conclude that 6:12–13 has been 'added secondarily', I work with the canonical form of the chapter. Other writers take the chapter's structure as evidence of the integrity of the final verse. See Childs, *Isaiah*: 58.

[47] See Edgar W. Conrad, *Reading Isaiah*, ed. W.Brueggemann, et al., Overtures in Biblical Theology (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991). 110–113., 'it appears that the book is designed to present Isaiah as a paradigm for the … survivors [of the exile].'

[48] This claim is in relation to *Isaiah* 6, and not for other passages that use similar language; *Jeremiah* 5:21 and 7:16, *Ezekiel* 3:7 and 12:2, and *Zechariah* 7:11.

[49] The words reported in 5:19, 'Let [it] hasten … let the plan of the Holy One of Israel come in, and we will know' clearly demonstrate that the speakers had no idea of their own culpability.

The Word that Shakes the World

6:1–5 seems to have been composed as a kind of loose chiasm, indicating meaning, and highlighting the centrality of the seraphim's words in 6:3b.

6:1a, death, the king, Uzziah, I saw

    6:1b, 'my Lord', *yōšēb*

        6:2, *śĕrāpîm*, 'and he calls … holy'

            6:3b, 'The fullness of all the earth [is Yahweh's] glory'

        6:5a, 'and I said … woe', šĕpātayim

    6:5b, 'I', *yōšēb*

6:5, 'I am destroyed', the king, Yahweh of hosts, my eyes saw.

The chiasm shows that the contrast between the earthly and divine kings that is drawn in the first verse is also built into the structure of the section, and that the verb 'to see' encloses the whole.[50]

6:1–5, by its position in *Isaiah* as well as by its form, is presented as 'true seeing'. It is a reversal of those who do not (or will not) see Yahweh's work in 5:12b, and of those who have a completely false (and self-centred) idea of what it means to see Yahweh's work in 5:19.[51] The chiasm instructs the reader how to see, showing that at the heart of seeing is the earth in its relation of fullness and glory to Yahweh (6:3b). True seeing **is** seeing Yahweh's glory in relation to earth, and everything else in its location and order within that relation of glory. Seeing this central reality will enable *hā'ādām* (from and upon *hā'ădāmâ*) to live justly in relation to Yahweh.[52]

Now, the noticeable but slightly odd repetition of *yōšēb* makes sense, again drawing Yahweh and earth into chiastic parallel. The phonic parallel of *śĕrāpîm* with *šĕpātayim* marks the chiasm and supplies part of the reason for

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[50] The most common analysis of *Isaiah* 6 parallels 'and I saw …' (6:1) with 'and I heard …' (6:5), which is apparent in most English translations; e.g. Beuken, "Manifestation and Commission," 74. But see Cole's comment that the vision of *'ădōnay*'s glory is 'nicely envelope[d]' by 'the twofold use of רָאָה ', Robert L. Cole, "Isaiah 6 in its Context," *Southeastern Theological Review* 2, no. 2 (2011): 178., and Williamson's mention of the *inclusio* marked by 6:1 and 5. H.G.M. Willamson, "Temple and Worship in Isaiah 6," in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. John Day (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 127. I have tried to give the reason for the 'envelope' and *inclusio*.

[51] Notably, both these references to seeing Yahweh's work are paired with 'knowing' in the following verse (5:12 and 13, 5:19 and 20). I claim that this self-centred, 'upside down' understanding represents Judah's delusion about the relation of Yahweh and earth; their false concept of *mišpāṭ*, which the Servant will reverse. This is epitomised in Hezekiah's final words before the long silence of exile, 'Good is the word of Yahweh which you have spoken … for there will be peace and truth in *my day*' (39:8).

[52] 6:11–12.

the see-er's much-debated reference to unclean 'lips'.[53] It draws the divine speech of the 'burning ones'[54] into parallel with the inability of unclean, earthly, as-yet-unburned lips to speak similarly.

The chiastic parallel 'and he calls …' / 'and I said …'[55] parallels the declaration 'holy' with the declaration 'woe'. Outside of Yahweh's holiness, which is proclaimed over 'the fullness of all the earth', there is only woe. The contrast that is usually recognised here, between 'holy' and 'unclean' (6:3 and 6: 5), has generated much discussion. For example, Briggs writes that this contrast (rather than a contrast with something like 'unholy' or 'profane' which the reader might expect) represents 'a transcending of the prophet's own perspective … a conversion of status and perspective'.[56] However, the contrast between 'holy' and 'woe', which the chiasm marks, goes a step beyond this argument, and represents the distinctive ontology of *Isaiah* that I have tried to demonstrate: the 'two poles' of earth and Yahweh, here shown in absolute dislocation. 'Holy' and 'unclean' mark the extremities of ordered human existence within which movement and change is possible. The 'woe' of the seeer and his people is beyond these extremities, an expression of their utter remove from the holiness of Yahweh's realm, and their lostness outside of any possible relation to Yahweh; a lostness that would be final and irredeemable were it not for the present awareness of it breaking in in the vision. 'Holy' is declared by the *śĕrāpîm* over the reality and future of 'all the earth' in relation to Yahweh, and 'woe' declares that there will finally be no corresponding opposite to 'holy' that can be cleansed or atoned for.[57]

After this seventh declaration of 'woe' there will be no turning back. The 'woe' of 10:1 makes it clear that on 'the day of calamity and devastation' there will be no one for the people to go to for help, and—significantly—nowhere

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[53] E.g. Moberly, "Isaiah's Vision," 128–129., who asks 'Why this reference to the lips?' and outlines the possible answers. This is not to say that those reasons are incorrect, but to assert that *Isaiah*'s recounting of the vision is also shaped in significant ways by other concerns, including structure, sound and wordplay, and that these are a guide to the meaning of the passage.

[54] The literal translation of *śĕrāpîm*.

[55] This is obvious in Hebrew, but normally obscured in an English translation. See 6:3, 5. The contrast of the subject (he / I) emphasises the separation between divine and human realms, and what their representatives are able to declare.

[56] Briggs, *Virtuous Reader*. 173–174. See Phillip Jenson, "Holiness in the Priestly Writings of the Old Testament," in *Holiness Past and Present*, ed. Stephen C. Barton (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 105–107., and the chart in Briggs, *Virtuous Reader*. 174. Within this scheme, the see-er of *Isaiah* 6 knows himself to be unclean, at the furthest remove from Yahweh's holiness. I argue that the proclamation of 'woe' in 6:5 refers to a final remove beyond the 'scheme' that situates holy, profane, clean and unclean. The proclamation of 'woe' is at an absolute remove from the proclamation of holy.

[57] See 66:24 for a final picture of woe, now irrevocably outside Yahweh's realm. Wendell Berry, "How to be a Poet (to remind myself)," *Poetry* (January 2001)., writes, 'there are no unsacred places;/ there are only sacred places/ and desecrated places.'

to leave their *kābôd*.[58] There is no place for *kābôd* other than Yahweh's in an earth whose fullness *is* Yahweh's *kābôd*. 'Holy' is the single word which will finally describe the whole earth and all it contains in its relation to the lord Yahweh. 'Woe' is the single word that will finally describe everything of which 'holy' cannot be said. Again, the 'I' in 6:5 ('and I said …') is self-involving by identification with the see-er, opening the readers' eyes to their complicity in the dislocation of earth in relation to Yahweh, indeed to their complicity in 'woe'.

This reading bears out the implications of 6:3b, which holds together the poles of Yahweh and earth, and which I identify as the 'theological crux' of the passage: 'The fullness of all the earth is [Yahweh's] glory.'[59] I will argue that the rest of the chapter (and indeed the book of *Isaiah*), can be best understood in the light of this declaration.

In another detail of the chiastic pattern, the 'eschatological' community (in which 'he' calls 'holy') is described before verse 3, and after verse 3 the 'earthly' community (where the representative 'I' says 'woe') is described.[60] The central cry of the *śĕrāpîm* (6:3b) fuses the two communities in their destined interrelation to each other. These two poles that currently repel are declared by the seraphim to be held together for the fullness of Yahweh's glory. But before the joining between earth and Yahweh can be brought about,[61] the dislocated relation of Yahweh and Judah must be undone. In 6:9–10 the communities become 'disjunct',[62] as sensory perception between earth and Yahweh is cut off. There can be no overlap of Judah (for the earth) and Yahweh, until the relation between them is re-made. I will show that it is re-made in the Servant.

In this complex and evocative passage there are concurrent and overlapping patterns, including a triple repetition pattern.[63] The prominent repetition of 'holy' is echoed by three kinds of 'fullness': Yahweh's skirts 'filling' the temple, the fullness of all the earth that is Yahweh's glory, and 'the house … filled with smoke'. The central 'fullness' (of all the earth) is marked by this chiastic arrangement, and the repetition of fullness contrasts with the triple

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[58] 10:3.

[59] Briggs, *Virtuous Reader*. 175. puts the crux at 6:9–10, and Uhlig, "Too Hard?," 64. claims that the hardening of the people is 'the goal of the whole passage'.

[60] Francis Landy, "Strategies of Concentration and Diffusion in Isaiah 6," *Biblical Interpretation* 7, no. 1 (1999): 67, 68.

[61]This joining has been intended to be particularised and modelled in the joining between Judah and Yahweh.

[62] Landy, "Strategies," 68.

[63] While many comment on this, see especially Jonathan Magonet, "The structure of Isaiah 6," in *Proc, 9th World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, Aug 1985* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1986), 92–94.

emphasis on emptiness in the final verses of the chapter.[64] The reasons for the declaration of 'woe' (discussed above) are given by three 'for …' clauses.[65]

Briggs observes that three 'fundamental units of … thought' are introduced by '*waw* consecutive verbs of perception' (1, 8, 11), each marked by the triple use of '*ădōnāy*, which contrasts with the triple use of *Yhwh* (3, 5, 12).[66] The triple-repetition pattern may also account for the use of *sipîm* ('thresholds') in 6:4, because of paronomasia with *śĕrāpîm* and *śĕpātayîm*. The burning seraphs, the burned mouth, and the burning of the stump, which occur in each of the three sections of the chapter (1–5, 6–8, 9–13), are another expression of the pattern, tying together the see-ing, the sending, and the 'undoing' of Judah.

I have argued that the crux of this scene's first 'act' (6:1–5) comes with the seraphim's call in 6:3b, which is not only indicated by the text's structure but is given by the text as a 'world-shaking' word. Levenson has made a convincing case for the temple as a microcosm of earth in Hebrew thought, using *Isaiah* 6 as an example.[67] Just as Isaiah sees smoke filling the temple, he writes, 'so the seraphim proclaim that the *kābôd* fills the world.' In an extension of Levenson's logic, just as the 'foundations of the thresholds' of the temple (6:4) shake at the voice of the one speaking, so the foundations of the earth must shake at the same word.

The significance of the seraphim's call is highlighted by its form as 'an inset of formal verse … a common convention in biblical narrative for direct speech that has some significantly summarizing or ceremonial function.'[68]

Holy! holy! holy! Yahweh of hosts!

The fullness of all the earth is his glory.

This formal couplet holds together the poles of Yahweh and earth (dislocated since 1:2) in the resolution into which the book of *Isaiah* will finally bring them.[69] In this it foreshadows the whole action of *Isaiah*, showing those who read what lies behind (and ahead of) history, so that this seeing and hearing (in marked contrast to the people's inability to see and hear) becomes the seed of regeneration of a people who will be formed in the relation to Yahweh over whose glory the seraphim exclaim; a people who hold the poles of history and eschatology together 'in their person'. Even as Judah is being hardened *beyond* hope, hope in the form of one who sees, hears and goes is being brought to birth in the see-er. The old era is ending, even as the seed of a new era forms in the see-er, and in those who will 'see' through his eyes.

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[64] 'lack … desolation … abandonment … ', 6:11–13. Landy, "Strategies," 82.

[65] [… כִּי], Rolf P. Knierim, "Vocation of Isaiah," *Vetus testamentum* 18, no. 1 (1968): 56.

[66] Briggs, *Virtuous Reader*. 173. See also Willamson, "Temple and Worship," 127.

[67] Levenson, "Temple and World," 282–291.

[68] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, revised ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011). 31–32.

[69] E.g. 65:19–25; 66:1, 22–3.

What kind of Call?

As noted, there is much debate over this passage's status as a 'call narrative'. I think that it is a call, but of a particular kind. It is focussed by the central cry of the seraphim that sees the whole earth in its just relation to Yahweh, and it seems that anyone who 'sees' and 'hears'—that is, whose senses are alive to Yahweh—can respond to Yahweh's question (6:8). The call to 'go and be sent' and the future of Judah (if it exists at all) partake in the chapter's movement from the particular to the universal, and are set within *Isaiah*'s vision of earth and its glorious destiny of alignment with Yahweh. The one who answers will be the one who holds these two poles together for the fullness of the earth. *Isaiah* 6 is not only a call to those who might see and hear within the setting of the chapter, but—by its canonical presentation in the book of *Isaiah*—draws those who read it to become see-ers and hearers, who are then able to offer themselves in answer to Yahweh's question, to become executors of *mišpāṭ*, the just alignment of earth and Yahweh.

In *Isaiah* 6 the see-er takes a step beyond his existing calling, into both full identification with the earthly community of his people (6:5), *and* into his commissioning as part of the holy community (6:8, 'for us'), thus drawing together the poles of earth and Yahweh. It is this dual calling—the synthesis of the 'twin poles'—that lays the foundation for the figure of the Servant in *Isaiah* 40–55 to be envisaged and explored.

Separation and Presence

The seraphim call to one another that Yahweh is triply holy. Judah knows well the separation required by this absolute holiness, as their long and meticulous traditions of purification and atonement attest.[70] Holiness involves Yahweh's separation from the earth and its peoples.[71] At the same time, the parallel poetic line declares that the 'fullness of all the earth'— its purpose, its future, when it is most completely 'itself' as it was created to be—*is* Yahweh's glory, Yahweh's presence *in* the earth.[72] Earth is thus both separated from Yahweh because of Yahweh's holiness, *and* earth's 'fullness' is Yahweh's own

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[70] See Brueggemann, *Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*: 288.

[71] Brueggemann writes, 'It is probable that holiness, understood phenomenologically, remains completely a category of separation'. Brueggemann, *Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*: 288. For a discussion of Brueggemann's ideas see Jenson, "Holiness in Priestly Writings," 98, 113–115.

[72] This proclamation should be heard against the background of *Isaiah*'s use of 'fullness' and its cognates in chapters 1–5. In 1:15, Yahweh will not listen to prayers because the hands spread out to him are 'full of blood'. In 1:21, murderers live in the harlot-city which was once faithful and 'full of justice'. 2:6 –8 details increasingly negative kinds of 'fullness', culminating in people bowing down to the work of their own hands. The seraphim's cry asserts that the earth, in contrast, is made to be filled with Yahweh's glory.

glory.[73] That this is the meaning of the words is shown by the see-er's anguished response that he and his people are 'undone'. They are outside the fullness and glory of the earth.

Related to this concept of 'fullness' in *Isaiah* are the *Genesis* commands to 'fill the earth', given firstly to humankind, and then to Noah and his sons.[74] Both these commands are connected closely with assertions that humanity is made in God's image and likeness.[75] If humankind, created in God's likeness, is repeatedly commanded to 'fill the earth', what then *is* 'the fullness of all the earth' that is envisioned by God? It makes sense that it is the filling of earth with and by those who relate to God in such a way that can be described as 'likeness'.[76] Holiness and glory are held together with earth *in* (and by) those who are 'like' Yahweh. But the see-er has seen himself and his people to be utterly 'unlike'; unclean, and separated from Yahweh.

The Hebrew of the couplet at 6:3 is marked by a repeated long *ô* sound (also *ō* and *o*) that is present in every word apart from *hā 'āreṣ,* thus highlighting it, and indicating that, although this couplet magnifies Yahweh and Yahweh's glory, it is significantly also about the earth.[77] Even the phonics of the poetry both contrasts and holds together Yahweh's holiness and glory with the earth.

The two poles of Yahweh's otherness and Yahweh's presence, Yahweh's transcendence and Yahweh's immanence, eschatology and history *held together* are the word that shakes the foundations of the temple and the world.[78] Not surprisingly, these are the same poles whose dislocation generates the literary tension from the beginning of *Isaiah*. The earth's very existence and future are bound up with Yahweh's glory. In rejecting Yahweh and Yahweh's glory,[79] Judah has rejected their own identity as Yahweh's people, to be 'like' Yahweh amongst the nations of the earth. They have chosen their own undoing.

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[73] See the similar comments in Magonet, "Structure," 92.

[74] *Genesis* 1:28 and 9:1.

[75] *Genesis* 1:27 and 9:6.

[76] This would include not only populating, but creative endeavours and 'ordering'.

It is clear from the treatment of 'fullness' and its cognates in early *Isaiah* that, in a kind of parallel with Noah's time, Judah is guilty of 'filling the earth' in a distorted parody of God's charge. See footnote 72 above, and *Genesis* 6:11 and 13. See also Paul's claims in *Romans* 8:18–23.

[77]

קָד֣וֹשׁ ׀ קָד֣וֹשׁ קָד֗וֹשׁ יְהוָ֣ה צְבָא֑וֹת
מְלֹ֥א כָל־הָאָ֖רֶץ כְּבוֹדֽוֹ׃

[78] See the observations about 'bipolarity' in John N. Oswalt, "The Book of Isaiah: A Short Course in Biblical Theology," *Calvin Theological Journal* 39(2004): 59–66, 70.

[79] See 3:8.

Death and Likeness

It seems possible that the unusual word for 'undone / destroyed' is a wordplay on the more common meaning 'to be like'.[80] Thus the see-er's cry—a result of having seen earth's true calling in relation to Yahweh—would signify 'woe to me, for I am like ('to Yahweh', the one just seen), *yet* I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips …' He sees with stark clarity the dissonance between earth and Yahweh displayed by himself and his people in relation to Yahweh. Called to be 'like' Yahweh, they are instead 'unclean'. If they were 'like' Yahweh, their 'fullness' would be the display of Yahweh's glory (as part of 'all the earth', 6:3), but it is not. This wordplay underlines the basis of the see-er's horror: the utter failure of himself and his people who are called to be 'like' Yahweh in the earth. If this is so, the final line of the chiasm in 6:1–5 (parallel with the death in the first line of the king who was to be 'like' Yahweh for the people),[81] while it forms a conclusion of destruction through the failure of Judah to display Yahweh's likeness in the earth, is compatible with the thrust of the whole passage, that the only possible remaining future for Judah involves a relation of 'likeness' to Yahweh. Though destruction is inevitable, 'likeness' still seems possible. How will the reader read? What possibilities for the future will they see and hear in the prophecy?

In support of this wordplay, the chiasm in 6:1–5 mimics the 'likeness' between Yahweh and earth in its poetic structure. On either side of the central declaration of Yahweh's relation to earth are parallels between holiness and woe, the lord dwelling and the see-er dwelling, and the human and divine kings. The poetry holds together the 'unlike' on either side of the reciprocal 'indwelling' relation of identification ('likeness') into which Yahweh and earth will finally be brought. This is both a demonstration of their contrasts and tensions *and* a declaration of the coming fusion of the poles of Yahweh and earth.

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[80] [דמה], (6:5), Koehler and Baumgartner, "HALOT," Vol 1, 225, I. Wildberger and others have used an alternative definition, 'to be silent', meaning that the see-er is unable to participate in the seraphim's cry. Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary*, Continental Commentary (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991). 249. I have found only Williamson to mention the possibility of the meaning 'to be like' (he notes its occurrence in the *nip'al* [as here] 2nd masculine singular in *Ezekiel* 32:2, 'you are like'), but he does not consider it a serious possibility here. Willamson, "Temple and Worship," 138, footnote 129. It is interesting that this possibility has not been explored in the literature. My analysis of the relation of Israel / Judah to Yahweh, and the development of the figure of the Servant in chapters 40–55 as the one who is 'like' Yahweh suggests it clearly. It may be a wordplay that emerges only retrospectively, upon re-reading of this significant chapter.

[81] On earthly and divine kingship, see Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, ed. John D. W. Watts, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1983). 68.

Holy One of Israel / Yahweh of hosts

I propose that Yahweh's title in the formal verse of the seraphim's call, 'Yahweh of Hosts' (6:3), works polemically *against* the distinctive Isaian title 'Holy One of Israel', particularly considering the placement of chapter 6 within *Isaiah*. References to the 'Holy One of Israel' in chapters 1–5 evoke the title's covenantal significance, and address the failure of Israel and Judah to honour Yahweh.[82] They work *with* the Holy One's chosen identity, 'of Israel' to call errant Israel back to faithfulness to Yahweh's covenant, and to holiness, as Yahweh is holy. I propose that this is because Israel / Judah in these opening chapters is not yet past the point-of-no-return and can still be called back into their covenantal identity-in-relation to Yahweh.[83] Conversely, the references to 'the Holy One of Israel' immediately following chapter 6,[84] look forward to 'that day' in which Yahweh's covenantal longings will be fulfilled in Israel, when the Holy One's identity will again truly be 'of Israel'. I suggest that this is because Israel / Judah, as the see-er has seen in chapter 6, is 'destroyed'—dislocated, disbanded, disabled as an entity, cut loose from Yahweh, a dead 'oak' or 'terebinth', of which only the 'holy seed' will remain (6:13). Significantly, the holy seed is separated—'made holy'—by this very occasion, and its telling in *Isaiah* 6.

The 'seeing' in chapter 6 wrenches the see-er's eyes from the temple to Yahweh enthroned over all the earth; from unclean, mortal, earthly kingship to Yahweh, holy, 'high and lifted up', the King beyond all kings. In 6:3, Yahweh's identity is *not* given as 'the Holy One of Israel' (as might be expected in the context of the triple exclamation of Yahweh's holiness)[85] but as 'Yahweh of the hosts' ('of the masses', 'of the armies'), of all the earth.[86] As I have noted, the temple is relativised. Israel is marginalised. The Holy One's self-limiting genitive 'of Israel' is exploded outwards, and Yahweh's holiness and glory is shown to be 'of all the earth'.

I claim that the meaning of the relativisation of temple and people goes beyond enlargement to become a profound reversal of perspective. Rather than the glory of Yahweh being 'at home' in the temple,[87] the temple is shown as a place of Yahweh's glory *only* in its relation to all the earth as the

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[82] 1:4, 5:19, 5:24.

[83] Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39.*: 12, 25, 52–55.

[84] 10:20, 12:6, 17:7.

[85] A number of writers concur that the title 'Holy One of Israel' effectively sums up this vision, but is notably *not* used here, so the vision is thought to predate or even to be the origin of its use. E.g. John Goldingay, "The Theology of Isaiah," in *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches*, ed. D.G. Firth and H.G.M.Williamson (Nottingham: Apollos, 2009), 171. My argument is another explanation of the same observation.

[86] *Isaiah* demonstrates that Yahweh will use the armies of all the earth as Yahweh sees fit (see 5:26).

[87] This the implication of יָשַׁב in 6:1 and 5.

place of Yahweh's glory. This radically re-contextualises the calling of Judah in relation to Yahweh and the earth. Israel / Judah and temple as microcosms are shown to have failed the Holy One in their creation purpose of displaying Yahweh's glory, and as a prototype of the relation of earth to Yahweh.[88] Israel's reversal of Yahweh's just order (Yahweh's *mišpāt*), which emerges as their particular failing in chapters 40–55, is deeply connected with Israel / Judah's 'reversal' of Yahweh's glory in chapters 1–5. The task of the prototype, I argue, will become the task of the Servant in *Isaiah* 40–55.

Act Two

6. And he flew to him—one from the seraphim,
and in his hand a live coal!
With tongs he took [it] from upon the altar,
7. and he touched upon my mouth and he said,
'Look! This has touched upon your lips,
and your iniquity is turned aside,
and your sin has been atoned for.'
8. And I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
'Whom will I send, and who will go for us?'
And I said, 'I am ready![89] Send me!'

The two parts of Yahweh's question in the oft-preached verse 8 hold together the same underlying tension between Yahweh and earth that I have observed throughout this essay. Here the Lord sends; the human agent goes. Divine sovereignty and human will are held together by the poetry of the lord's question, each intact, without comment.

Whom will I send, and who will go…?'

Its form as a general question is again self-involving, inviting the reader to 'overhear' in the same way as the see-er, and to similarly align themselves with Yahweh's purpose. Earth is to be aligned with Yahweh *in* the see-er / hearer, both within the text and by means of the text. Atoned for, the see-er can now be sent as an agent of the true world, where the King is Yahweh of hosts, and where the fullness of Yahweh's creation *is* Yahweh's glory. When Yahweh sends, and the human goes, when the verbs of earth and Yahweh, of history and eschatology coincide, this, I propose, is the 'fullness' of the destiny of earth, and the way in which earth will become, as Yahweh intends, the place of Yahweh's glory. Again, we can see in the text that one world is ending—the world where disobedient Judah is severed from Yahweh—while the seed of the new world is already being planted. This is why Israel is re-

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[88] See 5:7: 'For the vineyard of Yahweh of Hosts is the house of Israel…'

[89] See this translation of *hinĕnî* in Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (London: Yale University Press, 1993). 126.

envisioned as 'servant' after the national destruction of exile. The person of the Servant of Yahweh is the human point at which divine and human verbs—and thus energies—coincide; the joint, covenantally-formed life which begins in seeming insignificance, in simple acts of alignment with Yahweh (perhaps better known as 'obedience') of one faithful human person or nation. This is the germ or 'holy seed' (6:13) that will become, when developed, the prototype of realigned humanity, firstly for Israel, then for the nations, and finally for 'all the earth', of which Yahweh's glory is purposed to be the fullness. Chapter 6 is framed by this movement from the 'lord' to the one who is sent, the seed of the servant.

The Effective Word

9. And he said 'Go! And you will say to this people,
"Really hear! … but you will not understand.
And really see! … but you will not know"
10. Make fat the heart of this people!
And their ears make heavy and their eyes make blind,
lest they see with their eyes and with their ears they hear,
and their heart understands and they turn and they are healed.'
11. And I said, 'How long, Lord?'
And he said, 'Until the cities lie waste from lack of an inhabitant [yôšēb],
and the houses from lack of a human (ʾādām),
and the ground (hāʾădāmâ) is laid waste to desolation,
12. and Yahweh sends the human (hāʾādām) far away,
and great the abandonment in the midst of the earth.
13. And yet a tenth in it,
and it will turn and it will be for burning,
like a mighty tree and like an oak,
which in felling [become] a pillar to them,
a seed of holiness, its pillar.

I understand the 'mission of hardening' as a two-stage process.[90] Firstly, the see-er must command 'this people' to really hear, but they will not understand; to really see, but they will not know (6:9). [91] At this stage the people are

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[90] See the scheme in K.T. Aitken, "Hearing and Seeing: Metamorphoses of a Motif in Isaiah 1–39," in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. P.R. Davies and D.J.A. Clines, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 144* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 12, 18–19.

[91] The imperative followed by an infinitive absolute has the function of strengthening the main verbal idea; the 'exact nuance … must be determined from context'. Allen P. Ross, *Introducing Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2001). 167–168.

able to hear and see as commanded, but as a continuation of the trajectory of their wilful refusal to 'turn' in *Isaiah* 1–5 they 'will not' understand and know. This can be read in the sense of refusal, rather than a future tense. The prophet is to declare to them what they are already doing,[92] and even now the prophet's word might alert them to the precipice.

Secondly (and it is important to see the two stages), the see-er is commanded to *prevent* the people from seeing and hearing, lest they understand, turn and are healed (6:10).[93] I argue that the very command to 'really see' and 'really hear' (6:9) when met with the people's wilful and persistent refusal to make sense of what they see and hear in the relation to Yahweh into which they are called, results in the fat heart, heavy ears and blinded eyes of 6:10. The organs of seeing, hearing and understanding, when not used for their intended purpose, will cease to function. The word refused thus effects the hardening. Similarly, the privileges which the people enjoy—of land, temple, king and cult—are the by-product of a particular relation to Yahweh, of a call to serve that they have refused, and even now are refusing, and are the means for a purpose from which they are now drawing back. Those who 'will not' understand and know as a result of their seeing and hearing, will finally attain the endpoint of their trajectory of refusal: the inability to understand and know. All this is brought about by one on an opposite trajectory, who has seen, heard and understood, and answers *hinĕnî* to the call to go, and who himself, as noted, is the seed of a different kind of future, and a living testimony that the future might have been otherwise for Israel and Judah.[94] The trajectory of life intersects with the trajectory of death *in* the mission of hardening.

Francis Landy has noted the clarity and order of the passage,[95] as it proclaims its message of coming disorder, using the language of uncreation. The meticulous design of the poetic structures reflects the sovereignty of the Lord 'high and lifted up', including the Lord's meticulous design in the coming 'disordered' future. What is seen in verses 1–5 is critical for understanding 9–13 as an outworking of Yahweh's sovereignty in the earth, and the outworking of the seraphim's declaration of the true nature of earth in its relation to Yahweh. The uncreation of Judah's 'known world' (11–13) is *in order that* 'the

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[92] Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*: 271. This might be the reason for the 'mild' negative אַל (rather than the absolute negative לֹא). אַל with the jussive expresses 'a negative wish or dissuasion', Page H. Kelley, *1992*, Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans). 173. See also Brown, Driver, and Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon (Unabridged), (1996). 39.

[93] See Uhlig's differentiation between 'literal imperatives' (what Isaiah is actually to do) in v9, and 'figurative imperatives' (which will result from his words) in v. 10a. Uhlig, "Too Hard?," 68.

[94] I suggest that this is also what Hezekiah's healing was supposed to be (see *Isaiah* 38), and its failure as a prototype of Judah's future is a demonstration of the failure of human kingship.

[95] Landy, "Strategies," 70.

fullness of the earth [will be] (finally) Yahweh's glory'. Only when the see-er has seen the Lord 'high and lifted up', in the Lord's true relation to earth, is he able to see the coming destruction as an aspect of that sovereignty. Indeed his question in 6:11, 'How long, Lord?' frames the coming destruction within the purpose of God.[96] It is a question only able to be voiced by someone whose identity is formed by the knowledge of Yahweh's covenantal commitment to Yahweh's people.[97]

The sense of the passage is a kind of 'if … then …' construction. *If* really hearing, the people will not understand, and if really seeing, they will not know, *then* (and this is the second stage) the effect of the prophetic word is to 'make fat … make heavy … make blind'. This construction picks up the conditionality of judgement that is mentioned repeatedly in chapters 1–5[98] and makes it final by Judah's own choice. These people have not only severed their life-giving connection to their true King, but have parodied it,[99] effectively inoculating themselves against understanding, and the prophet now proclaims their inevitable fate. Such ongoing wilful resistance to Yahweh is the antithesis of the 'I' who really sees and hears, and who—rather than refusing the difficult wisdom arising out of his hearing and seeing—says 'send me'. Such a one can best be described as 'servant' of Yahweh. Thus a servant reverses the 'mission of hardening'.

Indeed, the mission of hardening may be best understood through the theme of reversal. As has emerged during 6:1–5, Israel and Judah's conception of the 'good order' of the earth in relation to Yahweh—the temple at the centre with the glory going out from it—has been reversed. In light of the seraphim's declaration, any glory of the temple is due solely to the glory of Yahweh that is the fullness of all the earth. If the people (and the prophet in his identification with them) are guilty of falsely offered sacrifice,[100] of the reversal of good and evil,[101] of the persistent practice of injustice,[102] and of seeing the world from the perspective of their covenant privilege with Yahweh,[103] rather than seeing the honour of their covenant call to demonstrate that Yahweh's glory is the earth's fullness, then they have reversed the word of Yahweh. They have manufactured and lived in a world of the reversed word, a world 'spoken' by unclean lips. In this way, the very word of Yahweh which was to have brought turning and healing will now bring inability to turn, and destruction.

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[96] Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39.*: 57–59.

[97] As Childs comments this is the 'language of the Psalter', Childs, *Isaiah*: 57.

[98] E.g.1:5, 16–20; 2:5 and chapter 5.

[99] 1:11–15.

[100] See footnote 39.

[101] 5:20.

[102] 1:16–31.

[103] 5:19.

Conclusion

Miscall has astutely described chapter 6 as a *mise-en-abîme* of *Isaiah*.[104] It is a vision within a vision, a prophetic encounter within a prophecy, which as I have shown, distils and reveals the central concerns of the book of *Isaiah,* and which instructs the reader in how to read. The crux of its 'first act' (6:3b within 6:1–5) shows the twin poles of Yahweh and earth held together as designed. Israel and Judah, as Yahweh's elect, have not only failed but refused to hold these poles together in their national life, thus locating themselves inevitably outside the glory of Yahweh.

I have argued that just as the 'I' of chapter 6 is complicit in the 'realm' of Judah (for the earth), and thus in Judah's sin and lostness, so by his obedience he becomes complicit in the divine realm, relocating in his person, through costly obedience, the dislocated poles of Yahweh and earth. The narrative of the rebellion, hardening and demise of Judah, unfolding from *Isaiah* 1, peaks with the mission of hardening in chapter 6, where the text works simultaneously in the opposite direction on the canonical level, to bring about in its readers the distant future that it sees: the survival of the holy seed. The position of *Isaiah* 6 after chapters 1–5 is critical to its purpose of alerting the reader to Judah's trajectory of destruction, and to the coming point-of-no-return, after which their intransigence will be fixed in an act of anticipatory judgement. The poetry works to draw readers into the identity of the 'I', so that out of uncleanness, 'woe' and death, will be sown the seed of a new humanity, a renewed 'likeness', who sees and understands, who hears and who answers 'send me!' Thus the solution to the final failure of Israel and Judah is pictured (though not yet named) as a 'servant'.[105] I propose that this is the pattern for the Servant of Yahweh, the exemplar of a new kind of humanity, one who holds the poles of earth and Yahweh together in his person, which is taken up and explored in the servant poetry of *Isaiah* 40–55, and which will become the basis of Israel's return, firstly to Yahweh, lord of all the earth, then to the land.

Chapter 6 not only reveals the proper relation of Yahweh and earth,[106] marking it as the centre of true seeing, but clarifies and separates readers in their response to it. It induces them to embrace either one future or the other: to remain part of the 'sinning nation' of chapters 1–5 whose end is woe,[107] or to identify with the 'I' of chapter 6; to become one who is 'like' by obedient relation to Yahweh, and so part of the holy fullness of the earth which is

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[104] Miscall, *Isaiah*: 34. A *mise-en-abîme* (a term used in heraldry) is 'an image within an image'; 'the containment of an entity within another identical entity' "Mise-en-abyme," in *Merriam Webster Dictionary* (2013).

[105] The threefold use of '*ădōnāy* in 6:1, 8 and 11, the 'lord' of the servant, supports this claim.

[106] As noted, the good order between Yahweh and earth is what is meant by *mišpāṭ* in chapters 40–55.

[107] Note the rhyme that links 'woe' to the nation in 1:4, *hôy | gôy*.

Yahweh's glory. Thus, through and beyond undoing and death, Yahweh is still creating Yahweh's people in Yahweh's likeness. Yahweh is still Yahweh *of hosts*, the Holy One *of Israel*, the God whose word is sent to bring its hearers to repentance and to bring about the future of which it speaks, through the one called to be 'servant'.

Time for a New Diet?
Allusions to Genesis 1–3 as Rhetorical Device in Leviticus 11*

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Introduction

Leviticus 11 with its seemingly archaic dietary prohibitions has both bored casual readers and vexed trained exegetes. The diachronic and historical issues presented by this text are complex; the result has been a history of kaleidoscopic interpretation.[1] Yet many recent approaches to the text have been indelibly shaped by a number of questionable assumptions.

The first is simply that chapter 11, along with the rest of the book's purity regulations, is at best undeniably dull and at worst puerile, even irrelevant.[2] While this sentiment may be regularly encountered in the pew, it also appears with surprising frequency within the academy. P, the putative source behind Leviticus 11, has been labelled "stiff,"[3] "arid,"[4] and "prosaic,"[5] labels which have influenced subsequent scholarship.[6] The chapter's genre designation as

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[1] For a comprehensive history of interpretation, see Jiří Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale: An Intertextual Study* (Berrien Springs: Adventist Theological Society Publications, 2000), 15–111.

[2] Cf. Samuel H. Kellogg, *The Book of Leviticus* (3rd ed.; Armstrong & Son, 1899; repr., Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978), 277.

[3] Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Edinburgh: A&C Black, 1885; repr., Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 6.

[4] Cf. R. Norman Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 58.

[5] Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (trans. Mark E. Biddle; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997), lxxxi.

[6] The outworking of assumptions about the nature of P can be seen, for example, in Sean McEvenue, *The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971), 22. For further explication of the anti-law bias inherent to Old Testament studies, see Walter Brueggemann and Davis Hankins, "The Invention and Persistence of Wellhausen's World," *CBQ* 75/1 (2013).

'instruction manual'[7] is also unfortunate, because as Kalinda Stevenson notes, "assumptions about genre determine interpretation."[8] An 'arid,' 'prosaic,' instruction manual hardly invites exploration of theological message and persuasive rhetoric.[9]

Furthermore, source-, form- and tradition-critical examinations of Leviticus 11 have inevitably emphasised diachronic issues. As a result the text has been mined for clues regarding its compositional history, its underlying oral traditions, and the reconstruction of early Israelite history. Determining the rationale for the dietary prohibitions has dominated discussion of the chapter: How and when did these laws originate? Why these particular animals?[10] Jiří Moskala identifies fourteen distinct answers given.[11] Most solutions, however, appeal to *extra*-textual factors to elucidate the text.[12] Yet with interpretative keys being sought outside the text, consideration of how Leviticus 11 *works as literature* is lacking. As a result, the chapter's theological and persuasive intent has been muted.

Purpose and Approach

The contention of this paper is that an important dimension of Leviticus 11 has not been fully appreciated: namely its intertextual connection to the creation-fall narratives of Genesis 1–3. A connection to Genesis 1 is not controversial, as both texts are assigned to P. Hence Jacob Milgrom finds the same creation theology, word use, and ideology in the two texts,[13] even stating that, "Lev 11 is rooted in Gen 1."[14] A connection to Genesis 2–3, however, is more contentious as Genesis 2–3 is usually assigned to J. Nevertheless,

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[7] E.g., William H. Bellinger, *Leviticus and Numbers* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), 17; Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 47, 112. Cf. John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 157; Martin Noth, *Leviticus: A Commentary* (Rev. ed.; London: SCM, 1977), 15.

[8] Kalinda R. Stevenson, *The Vision of Transformation: The Territorial Rhetoric of Ezekiel 40–48* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 11.

[9] So, e.g., Samuel R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (8th, revised ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1909), 129: "[P] nowhere touches on the deeper problems of theology."

[10] Kellogg, for example, invests twenty-four out of twenty-eight pages on Leviticus 11 discussing rationale related matters (Kellogg, *Leviticus*, 277–304).

[11] Jiří Moskala, "Categorization and Evaluation of Different Kinds of Interpretation of the Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11," *BR* 46 (2001): 7–40.

[12] For critique of the major views consult Moskala, "Categorization"; Edwin B. Firmage, "The Biblical Dietary Laws and the Concept of Holiness," in *Studies in the Pentateuch* (ed. J. A. Emerton; Leiden: Brill, 1990); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New York: The Anchor Bible, 1991), 718–736.

[13] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 656, 658, 689.

[14] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 47.

connections have been posited. Robert Alter, for example, commenting on Leviticus 11:42 says, "[t]his phrase, of course, is another allusion to the Creation story, or rather, to the end of that story in the Garden of Eden."[15] However, Alter does not define what he means by 'allusion.' Nor does he comment further about the intentionality implied, the purpose such an allusion might have, or the hermeneutical implications of inter-source referencing.[16]

My purpose, therefore, is to expand on suggestive comments like Alter's by demonstrating that Leviticus 11 intentionally alludes to Genesis 1–3 and that it does so for rhetorical and theological reasons. Before we commence, however, a comment is necessary concerning the approach this paper will take. We all have our presuppositions as we come to interpretation; at the least we should make them explicit. My starting point is encapsulated by John Barton's comment: "the Pentateuch does now exist and must presumably have been assembled by *someone*: it is not a natural phenomenon. And the person who assembled it … no doubt intended to produce a comprehensible work."[17] Irrespective of compositional history the Pentateuch has been authored or redacted as a final text. It is the intertextuality present within this *final form* that I will explore as a means to elucidate theological and rhetorical intent. Therefore, while not dismissing diachronic concerns, this study is explicitly synchronic. My focus will be on the product rather than the process.

Establishing a Methodology

Ellen van Wolde notes that intertextuality has become 'trendy.'[18] The recent interest in appropriating this field for Old Testament studies has been widely noted.[19] Nevertheless, the necessity of a clearly articulated and theoretically sound methodology is illustrated by several factors.

The first is a scholarly penchant towards what Samuel Sandmel calls 'parallelomania.'[20] By parallelomania Sandmel is referring to the tendency displayed by some scholars to 'find' non-existent parallels. Secondly, however, is

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[15] Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation With Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004), 588.

[16] Cf. the similar lack of elaboration in Richard E. Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Works* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1981), 121.

[17] John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), 43 [emphasis his].

[18] Ellen J. van Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality?" in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (ed. Sipke Draisma; Kampen: Kok, 1989).

[19] E.g., Michael R. Stead, *The Intertextuality of Zechariah 1–8* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 18; Wolde, "Trendy Intertextuality?" 43; Tryggue N. D. Mettinger, "Intertextuality: Allusion and Vertical Context Systems in Some Job Passages," in *Of Prophets' Visions and the Wisdom of the Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on his Seventieth Birthday* (ed. Heather A. McKay and David J. A. Clines; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 257.

[20] Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81/1 (1962).

an alternate proclivity of finding genuine, yet insignificant, connections. Jiří Moskala, for example, in his intertextual study of the food laws makes much of the shared use of words like ארץ and כל in Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1, but he does not take into account their ubiquitous use throughout the Old Testament.[21] In the light of these tendencies Timothy Beal is wise to ask: "How does the reader impose limits on the innumerable intertextual possibilities of a particular biblical text?"[22] This is an important question, especially considering the infrequent use of citation formulae by Old Testament authors[23] as well as the tendency of Hebrew literature to be implicit rather than explicit.[24] Thus, in order to ensure that allusions are not simply in the eye of the beholder, defined methodology becomes essential.

To that end, a number of different systems have been proposed for establishing connections between texts. One of the clearest is the set of eight diagnostic criteria outlined by Jeffery Leonard in his 2008 article in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.[25] His eight criteria for establishing the validity of intertextual connections are as follows:

1. *The use of shared language*.[26] This is the primary condition for establishing a connection between texts. Risto Nurmela concurs, suggesting that uncovering lexical parallels remains the most objective criterion for determining the presence of an intertext.[27] An implied, but important, consideration is whether the *quoted* text was available to the *quoting* author.[28] However, as this study focuses on connections within the *final form* of the Pentateuch, the diachronic problems are minimised: Genesis 1–3 in its canonical setting anticipates Leviticus 11.

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[21] Moskala, *Laws*, 200–202.

[22] Timothy K. Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling the Means of Production," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Danna Nolan Fewell; Louisville: Westminster, 1992), 28.

[23] Cf. Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 219. For discussion of the methodological issues surrounding the New Testament use of the Old, see Gregory K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 29–40.

[24] Cf. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (Rev ed.; New York: Basic Books, 2011), 143–162.

[25] Jeffery M. Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case," *JBL* 127/2 (2008).

[26] Leonard, "Allusions," 246.

[27] Risto Nurmela, "The Growth of the Book of Isaiah Illustrated by Allusions in Zechariah," in *Bringing Out the Treasure: Inner-Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14* (ed. Mark J. Boda and Michael H. Floyd; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 246. See also the qualifications suggested by Stead, *Intertextuality*, 29–30.

[28] Gregory K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2008), 24.

2. *Shared language is more important than non-shared language.*[29] Accordingly Leonard states, "that a text contains additional language that is idiosyncratic or not shared *in no way* undermines the possibility of a connection."[30]

3. *The distinctiveness of shared language.*[31] Rare terminology indicates a higher likelihood of intentional allusion between texts than the sharing of commonplace terms.

4. *The use of shared phrases.*[32] Shared phrases and syntactical constructions indicate a stronger likelihood of allusion than shared individual words.

5. *Accumulation of shared language.*[33] This criterion is identical to Richard Hays' category of "volume,"[34] and holds that *multiple points of contact* between two texts present stronger evidence of a genuine connection than single occurrences of terms or phrases.[35]

6. *Shared context.*[36] Here Leonard suggests that shared language used in contextually similar ways evidences a stronger connection than shared language alone. Richard Schultz also highlights the importance of context: "a quotation is not intended to be self-contained or self-explanatory; rather a knowledge of the quoted context also is assumed by the … author … [I]f a quotation's source is not recognized, there is an unfortunate semantic loss."[37]

7. *Shared language need not be accompanied by shared ideology.*[38] The fact that later writers may advance differing ideologies than those of an alluded-to text has no bearing on the validity of a prospective connection.[39]

8. *Shared language need not be accompanied by shared form.*[40] Leonard notes: "Common form could actually point away from an allusion by raising the possibility that commonalities between texts are the result of parallel rather than dependent development."[41] Michael Fishbane agrees, arguing that re-interpretation presents stronger evidence of dependence than verbatim repetition.[42]

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[29] Leonard, "Allusions," 249.

[30] Leonard, "Allusions," 249 [emphasis his].

[31] Leonard, "Allusions," 251.

[32] Leonard, "Allusions," 252.

[33] Leonard, "Allusions," 253.

[34] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 30.

[35] Cf. Gregory K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984), 307.

[36] Leonard, "Allusions," 255.

[37] Schultz, *Search*, 224–225.

[38] Leonard, "Allusions," 255.

[39] Leonard, "Allusions," 256.

[40] Leonard, "Allusions," 256.

[41] Leonard, "Allusions," 256.

[42] Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 285. Cf. Schultz, *Search*, 219–21.

As is evident from the preceding criteria, evaluation of potential allusion presents a spectrum of likelihood, moving from unlikely to extremely probable. Gregory Beale is correct: "All such proposed connections have degrees of possibility and probability."[43] However, as Hays comments, "[t]he more [criteria] that fall clearly into place, the more confident we can be in rendering an interpretation of the echo effect in a given passage."[44] Thus the cumulative effect of multiple criteria becomes persuasive.

Parallels between Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1–3

So what do we find when we apply these eight criteria to Leviticus 11 with respect to Genesis 1–3? The results are intriguing, with connections evident at lexical, syntactical and conceptual levels.

Firstly, at a lexical level Leviticus 11 displays considerable overlap with Genesis 1–3.[45] However, as already suggested and contra Moskala, lexical overlap alone is insufficient to demonstrate significance.[46] Thus, the examples I offer relate to terminology that is both *shared* and *distinctive*. A number of terms fit the criteria. גחון appears only twice in the Old Testament: in Genesis 3:14 and Leviticus 11:42. מין, appearing 30 times in the Pentateuch,[47] is used only in connection with creation, flood and food law texts.[48] Twenty-five out of twenty-seven uses of the שרץ root are found in the same three contexts.[49] Similarly clustered is the cognate root רמש.[50] חיה in noun form appears thirty-one times in the Pentateuch.[51] Two thirds of occurrences cluster in Genesis 1–3,[52] the flood narrative,[53] and Leviticus 11.[54] The עוף root occurs in the

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[43] Beale, *Worship*, 24.

[44] Hays, *Echoes*, 32.

[45] See the lists presented in Moskala, *Laws*, 200–201, 228, 231–232.

[46] For example, Moskala's argument based on the respective frequencies of כל is unpersuasive (Moskala, *Laws*, 202). Moreover, כל appears forty times in Leviticus 11 despite his count of thirty-six. This forty-fold (i.e., 4x10) use of כל is perhaps intended to symbolise that the *entire* animal world is under consideration. Cf. Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance* (3rd ed.; London: Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd., 1913), 123, 243.

[47] Its only occurrence outside the Pentateuch is in Ezekiel 47:10.

[48] Gen 1:11, 12(x2), 21(x2), 24(x2), 25(x3); 6:20(x2); 7:14(x4); Lev 11:14, 15, 16, 19, 22(x4), 29; Deut 14:13, 14, 15, 18.

[49] Gen 1:20(x2), 21; Gen 7:21(x2); 8:17; 9:7; Lev 5:2; 11:10, 20, 21, 23, 29(x2), 31, 41(x2), 42(x2), 43(x2), 44, 46; 22:5; Deut 14:19. Remaining Pentateuch uses are in relation to people (Exod 1:7) or animals (Exod 7:28 [8:3]).

[50] Gen 1:21, 24, 25, 26(x2), 28, 30; 6:7, 20; 7:8, 14(x2), 21, 23; 8:17(x2), 19(x2); 9:2, 3; Lev 11:44, 46; 20:25. There is only one other Pentateuch occurrence (Deut 4:18).

[51] Interestingly, חיה appears four times each in both Genesis 1 and Leviticus 11.

[52] Gen 1:24, 25, 28, 30; 2:19, 20; 3:1, 3:14.

[53] Gen 7:14, 21; 8:1, 17, 19; 9:2, 5, 10(x2).

[54] Lev 11:2, 27, 47(x2).

Pentateuch thirty-seven times with Genesis 1–2,[55] the flood narrative,[56] Leviticus 11,[57] and parallels[58] accounting for thirty uses. Also of note is the אכל root. It is used 4 times in Genesis 2 to relay positive and negative commands regarding food (2:16–17). A further seventeen uses in Genesis 3 play a key role in the narration of the fall.[59] Notably, אכל also appears seventeen times in Leviticus 11 where its use similarly concerns both positive and negative dietary commands.[60] Thus, at the lexical level, there are some interesting correspondences between our respective texts, satisfying the first three of Leonard's criteria.

Lexical overlap alone, however, does not signify incontrovertible allusion. Leonard's fourth criterion concerns parallel syntactical constructions. The presence of shared phrases and word combinations raises the probability of definite connection between Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1–3. Again, some examples will illustrate.

Firstly, the שרץ and רמש roots are used in conjunction only in Genesis 1:21, Leviticus 11:44–46 (twice), and in the flood narrative.[61] Secondly, there is a parallel formed by the use of אכל with נגע in Genesis 3 and Leviticus 11.[62] More specifically, the second masc. plural *qal* imperfect forms of these two verbs only appear in conjunction three times: in Genesis 3:3, Leviticus 11:8, and its parallel in Deuteronomy 14:8. Thirdly, the assignment of 'all of' (מכל) a food source in combination with a prohibition (לא + אכל) of a particular aspect occurs only three times in the Old Testament (Gen 2:16–17; 9:3–4; Lev 11:2–4).[63] Fourthly, the syntactical combination of the noun גחון,[64] the preposition על and the verb הלד occurs only twice in the Old Testament: in Leviticus 11:42 and Genesis 3:14. In both cases the reference is to movement (lit. 'walking') upon the belly. In Genesis 3 the subject is the cursed serpent; in Leviticus 11 the reference is to the detestable creatures which similarly crawl on their bellies. Interestingly, both verses also attest a form of אכל which, as noted earlier, is a *Leitwort* in both contexts.[65] I will return to consid-

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[55] Gen 1:20(x2), 21, 22, 26, 28, 30; 2:19, 20.

[56] Gen 6:7, 20; 7:3, 8, 14, 21, 23; 8:17, 19, 20; 9:2, 10.

[57] Lev 11:13, 20, 21, 23, 46.

[58] Lev 20:25(x2); Deut 14:19, 20.

[59] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Waco: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 75; Robert H. O'Connell, "אכל," in *NIDOTTE* (ed. Willem VanGemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 1: 395.

[60] Cf. Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2011), 117, fn. 153.

[61] Gen 7:21; 8:17.

[62] Postell, *Adam*, 109, fn. 131; John D. Currid, *Leviticus* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2004), 146; Firmage, "Dietary," 206.

[63] Noted by Leigh M. Trevaskis, *Holiness, Ethics and Ritual in Leviticus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011), 97.

[64] Itself a rare term, as already noted.

[65] Noted by Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 98.

er the rhetorical force of this particular parallel, but for now an intertextual connection seems apparent. Moreover, the use of the same unique combination of terms but with slightly different forms fulfils Leonard's eighth criterion.

So not only are there lexemes that are both shared and distinctive, but there are also unique syntactical combinations that link Leviticus 11 to Genesis 1–3. However, as Paul Noble notes, verbal parallels independent of similar context are not sufficient to establish deliberate allusion.[66] Necessary, he suggests, are "meaningful variations on essentially the same underlying plot."[67] Similarly, according to Leonard's sixth criterion, shared terms and phrases used in *contextually similar ways* evidence a stronger connection than shared language alone. Therefore a number of conceptual similarities between Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1–3 become important.

Firstly, Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1–3 share the same spatial conception and taxonomy. In both, three spheres of existence are understood: land, water, and air. Additionally, contra Mary Douglas,[68] the *four-fold* classification of the creatures that inhabit these spheres in Genesis is also apparent in Leviticus 11: land animals, flying creatures, aquatic life and 'swarmers.' This four-fold taxonomy is emphasised by the structure of Leviticus 11 which groups all its named examples in multiples of four: four prohibited quadrupeds (11:4–7), twenty prohibited birds (11:13–19), four acceptable insects (11:22), and eight detestable land swarmers (11:29–30).[69]

Secondly, there is a shared conception of Eden. Theologically, Eden, or at least the garden in proximity to it, functions as the place where humanity and Yahweh may co-inhabit.[70] In Leviticus 26, Canaan is conceptualised as a new Eden with blessing promised in specifically edenic language.[71] So, while accepting Gordon McConville's proviso of restricted and provisional access,[72]

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[66] Paul R. Noble, "Esau, Tamar, and Joseph: Criteria for Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," *VT* 52/2 (2002): 228. [change to *VT* 52/2 as per your formatting]

[67] Noble, "Criteria," 233.

[68] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 2002), 69–70, argues for a three-fold classification of animals, one for each sphere.

[69] Cf. Hartley, *Leviticus*, 153. The noun חיה also appears four times in Leviticus 11.

[70] Cf. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New York: The Anchor Bible, 2000), 2302; T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: Exploring God's Plan for Life on Earth* (Nottingham: IVP, 2008), 20–31.

[71] The people will be fruitful (פרה) and will increase (רבה) (Lev 26:9; cf. Gen 1:28), they will enjoy abundant food supply (Lev 26:10; cf. Gen 2:9, 16; 3:17–19), Yahweh will no longer expel them (Lev 26:11, cf. Gen 3:24), but will dwell and walk (הלך, *hitpa'el*) among them (Lev 26:12; cf. Gen 3:8).

[72] J. Gordon McConville, "'Fellow Citizens': Israel and Humanity in Leviticus," in *Reading the Law: Studies in Honour of Gordon J. Wenham* (ed. J. G. McConville and Karl Möller; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 21.

Leviticus nevertheless portrays its implied readers as being on the way to re-enter 'Eden.'

Thirdly, within this general evocation of Eden the command(s) in both texts mirror one another: a positive command regarding eating (Gen 2:16; Lev 11:3) is accompanied by dietary restriction (Gen 2:17; Lev 11:4). Likewise, the consequences for transgression display similarity. In Genesis 2:17 disobedience is forecast to result in death, and in 3:24 the man (האדם) is driven out from Yahweh's presence. Thus, against Barr,[73] death in Genesis 3 is understood as punitive exclusion from the presence of Yahweh.[74] As John Walton rightly notes, "the overwhelming loss was not paradise; it was God."[75] Against this background, Leviticus opens (Lev 1:2) with the possibility of 'a man' (אדם) once again entering the presence of Yahweh, a presence now situated in the tabernacle (Lev 1:1; cf. Exod 40:35). But transgressing the dietary prohibitions of chapter 11 made a person unclean until evening (Lev 11:24), and hence effectively banished them from Yahweh's tabernacle presence.[76] Thus the food laws of Leviticus 11 display remarkable conceptual parallels to the events of Eden. Israel, pictured as a new Adam, faced the same choice of obedience in relation to food with parallel consequences. Fidelity to the word of Yahweh is concretised in terms of diet, just as it had been in Eden.

In sum, applying Leonard's intertextual criteria to our texts demonstrates that parallels between Leviticus 11 and Genesis 1–3 exist at lexical, syntactical and conceptual levels.[77] While individual connections may not be decisive in and of themselves, the cumulative evidence is persuasive. Taken together, the *accumulation* of shared language, across *multiple* points of contact, strongly suggests a genuine intertextual connection, a conclusion supported by the fact that shared language is being used in contextually analogous ways. Thus it is highly probable that Leviticus 11 alludes to both creation *and* fall. Interestingly, the probability of allusion to Genesis 2–3 is higher than it is for Genesis 1, which raises questions regarding the seeming reticence among scholars to discuss the connection. To speak of allusion, however, is to infer intention. But can intent be demonstrated? That becomes a critical question if we want to consider theological and rhetorical function.

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[73] James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality* (London: SCM, 1992), 11: "there is no breakdown of relationship between God and [Adam and Eve]."

[74] Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 99; R. W. L. Moberly, "Did the Serpent Get it Right?," *JTS* 39/1 (1988): 18. This is not to say that physical death is not in view. Barrosse's concept of 'total death' helpfully holds together the physico-spiritual nuances (Thomas Barrosse, "Death and Sin in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans," *CBQ* 15/4 (1953): 449–450). [Change to CBQ 15/4 in line with formatting]

[75] John H. Walton, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 231.

[76] Roland K. Harrison, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: IVP, 1980), 156.

[77] Discussing the notable lexical overlap with the flood narrative is beyond the scope of this present paper.

Demonstrating Intentional Allusion

How does one demonstrate that parallels are intentional and not merely coincidental? Three criteria become important indicators. First, *multiple*, *specific* parallels *to the same text* indicates deliberate allusion.[78] Lyons formulates the key quantitative question thus: "Do the shared locutions occur in a significantly higher proportion in the source and target texts than in other texts?"[79] If they do, then, "the presence of multiple common words, the combination of which is rare … suggest[s] dependence."[80] Regarding this, we found an accumulation of shared language across multiple points of contact, with lexical and syntactical features throughout Leviticus 11 connecting to Genesis 1–3. Of further significance is the specificity of the parallels noted. A number of terms and word combinations are used in the Pentateuch only in relation to Genesis 1–3, the flood narrative, and Leviticus 11 and its parallels. Such repeated linking to the same text, at lexical, syntactical and conceptual levels, serves to draw attention to the connection, lessens the chance of 'semantic loss' for the reader, and in doing so, demonstrates intention. As Bonnie Kittel notes, "allusion is used to recall a *specific* passage to … mind."[81]

An important caveat regarding the availability of options needs to be made at this point. Parallels between two texts may simply indicate syntactic or lexical constraints. However, as Lyons makes clear, "if a locution shared by two texts could have been selected from a number of semantically equivalent locutions, it is more likely to be the result of a purposeful and conscious choice."[82] Thus the availability to the Legislator of suitable synonyms—for example, זן for מין, בטן or כרש for גחון—suggests deliberate word choice in order to link our two texts.

A second criterion for determining intentional allusion is the presence of *re-interpretation for a new context*.[83] Verbatim parallels may simply illustrate that both texts are making independent use of another tradition.[84] Thus interpretative reuse is stronger evidence of deliberate connection. Michael Lyons notes that such "creative interaction" can take numerous forms: "an author can interpret an earlier text, use it as a basis for an argument, disagree with it, or reuse its words to create a new argument."[85]

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[78] See Hays, *Echoes*, 30; Michael A. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 68–70; Schultz, *Search*, 224–225.

[79] Lyons, *Law*, 68.

[80] Lyons, *Law*, 69.

[81] Bonnie P. Kittel, *The Hymns of Qumran: Translation and Commentary* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1981), 50 [emphasis hers].

[82] Lyons, *Law*, 72.

[83] See Fishbane, *Interpretation*, 285; Leonard, "Allusions," 256; Schultz, *Search*, 219–221.

[84] Cf. Peter R. Ackroyd, "Criteria for the Maccabean Dating of OT Literature," *VT* 3/2 (1953): 114–118.

[85] Lyons, *Law*, 73.

Such reinterpretation is exactly what we find in Leviticus 11; for instance, with the unique syntactical connection formed by the combination of עַל גָּחוֹן, and הָלַךְ. The respective forms in both texts are as follows:

עַל־גְּחֹנְךָ תֵלֵךְ 'on your belly you will move' (Gen 3:14)

כֹּל הוֹלֵךְ עַל־גָּחוֹן 'everything which moves upon [its] belly' (Lev 11:42)

The direct address *of the serpent* in Genesis 3:14 is reflected in the second person forms of both verb and pronominal suffix. Leviticus, in contrast, reworks the same verb, preposition and noun combination in order to delineate *a category of creature* which recalls the edenic serpent's cursed mode of locomotion. The allusion functions to connect the commands in Leviticus 11 with the primordial infidelity and its catastrophic consequences, viz. Leviticus 11:42 reworks Genesis 3:14 for a new theological purpose. The implied journey of the Israelites towards 'paradise regained'[86] provides a rationale for such allusion, thereby further indicating that the intertextual connection is intentional.

A third indicator of intentional allusion is the *merging of intertextual connections with the other rhetorical features of a text.* That is what we find in Leviticus 11 in relation to what Yairah Amit terms 'rhetorical progression.' She defines rhetorical progression as,

> a rhetorical technique, or contrivance, that organizes the data for the author in a multi-phased, hierarchical structure, wherein the elements are arranged in an ascending or descending order: from the general to the particular, or vice versa; from minor to major, or the reverse; from the expected to the unexpected; the impersonal to the personal, and so on. Often the final step in the progression is the climactic one, while each of the preceding steps plays its part in expanding or narrowing the sequence, and thereby shedding more light on the subject.[87]

The organisation of a text in this fashion reveals intent. Hence, if it can be demonstrated that any rhetorical progression in Leviticus 11 incorporates intertextual connections to Genesis 1–3, then further support for intentional allusion will be garnered.

However, the unity of Leviticus 11 has frequently been challenged.[88] Verses 24–40 are usually understood to be an interpolation as they interrupt the flow of the chapter.[89] Milgrom concludes that 11:24–40 "sticks out like a

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[86] Cf. Magnus Ottosson, "Eden and the Land of Promise," in *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986* (ed. J. A. Emerton; Leiden: Brill, 1988), 177.

[87] Yairah Amit, "Progression as a Rhetorical Device in Biblical Literature," *JSOT* 28/1 (2003): 9.

[88] See Noth, *Leviticus*, 91–92.

[89] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 692. So also, Samuel E. Balentine, *Leviticus* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2002), 98; Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Leviticus* (trans. Douglas W. Stott; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 132; David P. Wright, "The

sore thumb."[90] However, the noted disjuncture may in fact indicate rhetorical device rather than interpolation,[91] for Leviticus 11 *as a whole*[92] evidences Amit's rhetorical progression.[93]

First, stress is placed on the land swarmers. As we noted beforehand, Leviticus 11 divides all animal life into land, water and flying creatures as well as the שרץ which occupy each sphere. However, the land swarmers appear out of sequence as a separate category and not as subsets like the water and flying שרץ (cf. 11:10, 20–23). Furthermore, they receive the most detailed discussion (11:29–38), they alone have the potential to make objects and food unclean (11:32–38),[94] and they are uniquely contrasted with the imperative to be holy like Yahweh (11:44). Second, there is an interrelated movement towards increasing uncleanness. Use of טמא in 11:1–8 for quadrupeds is replaced by the stronger שקץ in 11:10–23 for the prohibited fish and birds.[95] But *both* terms are used to describe the land swarmers (11:29, 41). Furthermore, while touching the carcasses of clean and unclean animals makes one unclean (11:24–28, 39–40), the carcasses of land swarmers defile not only people (11:31), but also objects and food (11:32ff.). Even *part* of their carcass (מנבלהם) is enough to impute uncleanness (11:35). In 11:43 the land swarmers even have the ability *to make people detestable* (שקץ).[96]

Spectrum of Priestly Impurity," in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel* (ed. Gary A. Anderson and Saul M. Olyan; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 168.

[90] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 693.

[91] See also the devastating critique of Milgrom's position on stylistic grounds by Wilfried Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 49–56.

[92] The chapter may be outlined as follows:
11:1–2a Superscription
11:2b–23 Categories of clean and unclean animals
11:2b–8 Land creatures
11:9–12 Water creatures
11:10 Water swarmers
11:13–23 Flying creatures
11:20–23 Flying swarmers
11:24–40 Defilement potential of death & land swarmers
11:24–28 Defilement caused by unclean animal carcasses
11:29–38 Defilement caused by land swarmers
11:39–40 Defilement caused by clean animal carcasses
11:41–45 Defilement versus holiness
11:46–47 Postscript

[93] See also Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 81–107; Wenham, *Leviticus*, 176.

[94] The exception is clothes that are made unclean due to contact with carcasses (11:25, 28).

[95] For understanding שקץ as a more intense category, contra Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 684, see Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *Leviticus* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 196; Bellinger, *Leviticus*, 74; Michael A. Grisanti, "שקץ," in *NIDOTTE* (ed. Willem VanGemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 4: 243–4.

[96] Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 103.

These two emphases merge in the climactic section of the text (11:41–45), a merger reinforced by the wordplay formed between שרץ and שקץ.[97] The supremely defiling land שרץ are the only animals mentioned;[98] they function to picture the epitome of anti-Yahweh existence (11:44). Critically, the rhetorical progression in Leviticus 11 climaxes at the very point where the land swarmer's intertextual connection to the cursed serpent of Genesis becomes most evident, for these שרץ are creatures which 'walk on the belly' (11:42).[99] This interweaving of intertextuality and rhetorical progression again indicates that allusion to Genesis 1–3 by Leviticus 11 is intentional.

In the light of these considerations, allusion to creation and fall appears to be an intentional strategy employed by Leviticus 11. But what rhetorical and theological functions do such allusions perform for the text's readers?

The Function of Allusions to Genesis 1–3 in Leviticus 11

Recognition of Leviticus 11's intertextual connection to Genesis 1–3 becomes critical for understanding how its rhetoric works. By deliberately recalling the creation-fall narrative, Leviticus 11 sets its stipulations against a cosmic background in which Israel is envisioned as a new Adam. The lexical, syntactical and conceptual connections to Genesis 1–3 combine to indicate that Israel now faces the same choice (obedience to Yahweh's commands), relating to the same sphere of life (eating), with potential temptation and defilement coming from the same source (animals). As we have seen, it was precisely those animals which recalled the Genesis serpent that Israel was to be most careful to guard against. Israel must not repeat Adam's failure. The persuasive nature of Leviticus 11 regarding this point is seen most clearly in its explication of the consequences of disobedience.

Contravention of Leviticus 11's regulations resulted in a person (or object) becoming unclean until evening (e.g., 11:24). This uncleanness (טמא), perhaps the central concern of chapter 11,[100] is generally understood only as ritual impurity in relation to the cult.[101] An ethical dimension is usually only supposed in H (Lev 17–26).[102] However, this reading of טמא is based on the

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[97] This may explain the preference shown in Leviticus 11 for using שרץ rather than רמש.

[98] 11:42 delineates three types of land swarmers. See Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 683.

[99] The unexpected non-mention of 'serpent' as one of the eight listed examples (11:29–30) serves to further heighten the connection by conspicuous omission. See Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *A Study of Hata' and Hatta't' in Leviticus 4–5* (Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 2003), 105.

[100] Leviticus 11's thirty-four uses of the טמא root, the most occurrences in any chapter of the Old Testament, signal the focus. טמא appears only three times antecedent to Leviticus (Gen 34:5, 13, 27).

[101] David J. A. Clines, ed., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (8 vols.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 3: 366; *HALOT*, 2: 375; *BDB*, 379.

[102] Cf. Richard E. Averbeck, "טמא," in *NIDOTTE* (ed. Willem VanGemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 2: 365–6.

questionable assumption that Leviticus 1–16 is only an 'instruction manual' for ritual practice. But is making assertions about ritual procedures all that the text is doing?

Important for elucidating the issue is the work of Mary Douglas. In her seminal *Purity and Danger* she noted that 'to be unclean' works symbolically to reflect the values of a particular society.[103] So what, therefore, did uncleanness symbolise for the Israelites? If all creatures are part of God's good creation (Genesis 1), then why should certain ones be detested?[104] While appeal is sometimes made to innate impurity,[105] the text does not seem to make that connection.[106] If such animals were intrinsically unclean then contact with live animals should also defile.[107] Thus many scholars suggest a symbolic connection with death and disorder,[108] but they do not develop how or why the symbolism works. In this regard, the connections we have established to Genesis 1–3 are illuminating.

Inappropriate eating or touching (the verbal forms used in conjunction connect to Genesis 2–3) of animals made persons unclean (יטמא) until evening (עד־הערב), and hence prohibited them from entering God's presence at the tabernacle (11:24; cf. 7:21).[109] Likewise, death in 11:39 makes previously clean animals, suitable for food and sacrifice, unclean, and disqualifies them from table and sanctuary. Thus, a conceptual connection is established between טמא and מות in their ability to exclude from Yahweh's presence.[110] Furthermore, Leigh Trevaskis draws attention to the highly unusual use of the

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[103] Douglas, *Purity*, 45, 158.

[104] Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 86; Paul Copan, *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 81. Cf. Ephraim Radner, *Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008), 115.

[105] E.g., Wenham, *Leviticus*, 176. Milgrom's conclusion that such animals are "impure genetically" seems to be derived more from rabbinical speculation than biblical exegesis (Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress 2004), 115).

[106] Rather, the prohibited animals are simply 'unclean *for you*' (טמא הוא לכם; 11:4 *et passim*).

[107] Also, how could intrinsically unclean animals like the eagle become paragons of virtue, e.g., in Exodus 19:4?

[108] For instance, Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (trans. J. Martin; 25 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 2: 372; Andrew A. Bonar, *A Commentary on Leviticus* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1966), 225; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 686; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 145.

[109] Although purification procedures are outlined for clothes (11:28) and defiled objects (11:32), the omission of purification rites for people, "serves to make the person's exclusion from the holy sanctuary until after evening emphatic," (Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 88).

[110] Cf. Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 92.

noun מָוֶת in Leviticus 11 to signify animal death.[111] Its peculiar use here may intentionally provoke remembrance of the first occurrence of the root in the Eden narrative. Either way, the parallels with Genesis 2–3 suggest that an unclean status in Leviticus 11 symbolised the consequence of Adam's rebellion, viz. the death of his punitive exclusion from the presence of Yahweh (cf. Gen 3:23–24).[112]

Intertextuality thus proves to be a core feature of Leviticus 11. The Legislator, faced with the predilection of the Israelites to sin, required weighty persuasion; allusion to the creation-fall narratives provided the means. This "clever embedding" of allusion becomes a central facet of the text's persuasive ability.[113] Thus we can see that Leviticus 11 is concerned about far more than ritualistic instruction. The text's structure emphasises the land שרץ, creatures that allude to the Genesis serpent (11:42); its preoccupation with uncleanness symbolically connects to the death experienced by Adam; its motivational clause is to be holy as Yahweh is holy (11:44–45).[114] Thus Knierim is correct in his assessment of Leviticus: while "[t]he surface level of a text communicates to the reader explicit information … it also points to aspects beneath itself … which generate and control its form and content."[115] Consequently, the common assumption that Leviticus 11 is *primarily* about dietary laws is at best questionable.[116] Baruch Schwartz is correct, legal texts aim to do far more than merely legislate.[117]

Thus, even as the text of Leviticus 11 makes assertions regarding unclean animals, its matrix of Genesis allusions performs a number of additional illocutions. Firstly, the allusions *remind* the reader of Eden. Secondly, the quantity and specificity of connections serve to *illustrate* the multiple parallels between Israel and Adam; Israel is deliberately being placed into Adam's shoes.[118] Thus, thirdly, the text *warns*. On her way to re-enter 'Eden,' Israel

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[111] The only other possibility is Ecclesiastes 10:1, although the text is ambiguous. See Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 91, fn. 185; Choon-Leong Seow, *Ecclesiastes: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 311–312.

[112] Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 89.

[113] Cf. Ziva Ben-Porat, "Forms of Intertextuality and the Reading of Poetry: Uri Zvi Greenberg's Basha'ar," *Prooftexts* 10/2 (1990): 273–4.

[114] The command of 11:43–45 is generally understood as reflecting the ethical view of H (e.g., Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 695). However, Trevaskis argues that H may simply be making explicit what was already implicit in the text (Trevaskis, *Holiness*, 106). In light of our investigation, Trevaskis seems correct.

[115] Rolf P. Knierim, *Text and Concept in Leviticus 1:1–9: A Case of Exegetical Method* (Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1992), 1.

[116] Cf. Kiuchi, *Leviticus*, 203–204.

[117] Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Prohibitions Concerning the 'Eating' of Blood in Leviticus 17," in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel* (ed. Gary A. Anderson and Saul M. Olyan; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 66.

[118] For further discussion of the similarities between Adam and Israel, see Postell, *Adam*, 114–119.

faced the same choice of life or death: life if she remained in Yahweh's presence, death if she followed Adam's example of disobedience; the immediate, albeit temporary, 'death' of banishment from tabernacle, but also the more permanent death of exile and extinction (Lev 26:14ff.). Hence, fourthly, Leviticus 11 marshals all its resources—including allusion—to *persuade* the Israelites to choose Yahweh and life, and so "escape the domain of death,"[119] with all its multifaceted implications at spiritual, physical and eternal levels.[120] Thus, the primary illocution of the text, encapsulated by the chapter's motivational clause, is a *call* to be holy as Yahweh himself is holy. *Imitatio Dei* was to be the goal and means of Israel's life with Yahweh.

Implications for Pentateuch Scholarship

Our investigation of Leviticus 11 vis-à-vis Genesis 1–3 has been revealing: Leviticus 11 not only shares affinities with Genesis 1 but also intentionally alludes to Genesis 2–3 for rhetorical and theological reasons. However, while such connectivity within the final-form Pentateuch has been hinted at by others, for example, Alter's comment above, the *implications* are generally left unexplored. For that reason it is worthwhile to conclude with some brief thoughts regarding the potential impact of our findings for Pentateuch scholarship more broadly.

Firstly, at least in relation to Leviticus 11, consideration of the intertextuality present within the final-form Pentateuch opens fruitful exegetical avenues. Thus, while not by itself commenting on the validity of source-critical approaches, this study suggests that we need to move beyond merely diachronic appraisals.[121]

Secondly, the evident allusions to Genesis 2–3 made by Leviticus 11 raise further questions for consensus approaches to the text. The interdependence of a P text with one normally assigned to J lends support to Norman Whybray's suggestion that it may be better to speak of an *author* of the Pentateuch rather than *redactors*: viz. a "single historian" acting as a "controlling genius."[122] The reason for this is made clear by Noble. He states,

> [I]t is difficult to conceive how a theory [i.e., the Documentary Hypothesis] which rests so much upon the supposed independence of origin and development of a book's various parts can account for the multitudinous allusions of one part to another that we find in its final

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[119] Alexander, *Eden*, 145.
[120] Cf. Barrosse, "Death," 449–450.
[121] Klawans' point is apt: "we may do well to put history of religion on the backburner and focus for a while on the meanings of our texts," (Jonathan Klawans, "Methodology and Ideology in the Study of Priestly Material," in *Perspectives on Purity and Purification in the Bible* (ed. Baruch J. Schwartz, et al.; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 95).
[122] Whybray, *Making*, 233, 235.

form. Allusion entails authorship; and wide-ranging allusion entails wide-ranging authorship.[123]

As any compositional theory must account for *all* the main features of the text, including its intertextual connections, Noble likewise concludes that it is better to speak in terms of 'author.'[124]

Thirdly, our study highlights the literary artistry and persuasive rhetoric of this particular legal text. Although these terms are often reserved for the Bible's narrative and poetic sections, it is perhaps time to begin to more seriously consider the rhetoric of its legislative texts.[125] As Dale Patrick suggests, "explicit rules—laws—are only the tip of the iceberg of the phenomenon of Law."[126] Appreciation of the persuasive rhetoric of Leviticus 11 opens a window into the text's theological intent. This is no arid, prosaic, instruction manual, conveying a redundant message for a post-Resurrection age. Instead, Leviticus 11 has rich theological depths that have not yet been fully plumbed.

Finally, this paper has something to contribute towards the neglected question of how the Pentateuch's legal and narrative sections relate. It would seem that the complex merger of genre- and content-divergent material in the Pentateuch creates a final-form *Gestalt* that is greater than the sum of its parts. As we have seen, the embedding of legal material in an underlying narrative greatly increases the rhetorical power of the legislation. Thus attention to *narrative sequence* becomes a hermeneutical necessity for hearing the persuasive voice of, not only Leviticus 11, but the Pentateuch as a whole.

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[123] Noble, "Criteria," 247.

[124] Noble, "Criteria," 247–248.

[125] The neglect is readily apparent. No Old Testament texts are examined in Stanley E. Porter and Dennis L. Stamps, eds., *Rhetorical Interpretation of Scripture: Essays From the 1996 Malibu Conference* (*JSOTsupp*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999). Of the nineteen chapters in Thomas H. Olbricht and Anders Eriksson, eds., *Rhetoric, Ethic, and Moral Persuasion in Biblical Discourse: Essays From the 2002 Heidelberg Conference* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), only one examines an Old Testament text (Chronicles). Two texts each are examined in Anders Eriksson, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Walter Ubelacker, eds., *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts: Essays From the Lund 2000 Conference* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002)—Kings and Chronicles—and in Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht, eds., *The Rhetorical Analysis of Scripture: Essays From the 1995 London Conference* (JSOTSup; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997)—Judges and Job. In David J. A. Clines, David M. Gunn, and Alan J. Hauser, eds., *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), five out of twelve chapters focus on Pentateuch texts, but all are on narrative sections.

[126] Dale Patrick, *Old Testament Law* (London: SCM, 1986), 4.

Overlooked Herder, and the Performative Nature of שיר השרים as Biblical Wisdom Literature

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Introduction

Exposition of שיר השרים (*The Song of Songs*) remains as fascinating and as contested today as ever before. The recent commentary by Daniel J. Estes (2010) supplements Marvin H. Pope's (1977) exhaustive bibliography of 55 pages on *The Song of Songs* with 25 more pages of especially professional articles by the current generation of theologians and critics who, from every perspective under the sun, lay claim to an insightful interpretation.

Hector Patmore, in critique of Michael Fox's popular treatment (1985),[1] states the old ideal: "We must strip away our deeply embedded assumptions about Canticles—its connection to the Egyptian songs, its obvious secular-sexual character—and re-engage with the text that lies before us."[2] But Patmore, like Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, recognizes—particularly since Wittgenstein and Derrida problematized any fixed end to "the play of signification"—*what* the text is that one takes to be the object before us depends upon where you stand to contextualize the piece.[3] And then, rather than give up and take the position, as Kathryn Harding seems to do ("The point, I think, lies in the indeterminacy of the verses, and the possibility of multiple, conflicting readings..."[4]), it seems more hopeful to follow Ellen E. Davis' call for "interpretive humility [which] might begin with each of us identifying, as best we can, what factors in our personal histories conduce to a certain interpretative style."[5] Put-down arguments from a presumed neutral (and hence au-

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[1] *M. V. Fox, The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

[2] Hector Patmore, "'The Plain and Literal Sense': On contemporary assumptions about the Song of Songs*," VT* 56/2 (2006): 249.

[3] "In distinction to formalist literary criticism, a critical theory of rhetoric insists that context is as important as text. What we see depends on where we stand. One's social location or rhetorical context is decisive of how one sees the world, constructs reality, or interprets biblical texts." E.S. Fiorenza, "The Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: Decentering Biblical Scholarship," *JBL,* 107/1 (1988): 5.

[4] Kathryn Harding, "'I sought him but did not find him': The elusive Lover in the Song of Songs," *Biblical Interpretation*, 16 (2008): 58.

[5] Ellen Davis, "Reading the Song Iconographically." *The Scrolls of Love. Ruth and the Song of Songs*, eds. Peter S. Hawkins and Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 176.

thoritarian) position could be replaced with sharing of knowledge from self-critical, subjective viewpoints aiming at a communal encyclopedic reading.[6]

This article proposes to enter the fresh (neglected) voice of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) into the cacophony of voices interpreting שיר השרים,[7] and it show that Herder's unorthodox, believing approach may help firm up a chorus among several of the more promising readings past and present which recognize the provenance of *The Song* to be "biblical wisdom literature,"[8] or, as Scott B. Noegel and Gary A. Rendsburg put it, "a sophisticated poem, with a polemical purpose."[9]

First I shall give the gist of Herder's hermeneutic approach to the Bible formulated in his *Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffend* (1780–81), and show how it undergirds his unpublished 1776 version of *Die Lieder der Liebe* found

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[6] John Barton's "conclusion" in *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984) settles on this point too, 204–7.

[7] Except for the fine book by John D. Baildam, *Paradisal Love: Johann Gottfried Herder and the Song of Songs* (JSOTSup; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), and Thomas Willi, *Herders Beitrag zum Verstehen des Alten Testament* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1971), there have been only a few articles dealing with Herder's treatment of שיר השרים: R.T. Clark, Jr., "Herder, Percy, and the Song of Songs," *PMLA*, 61 (1946), 1087–1100; Ulrich Gaier, "Lieder der Liebe: Herders Hohelied Interpretation," in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs*, ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn (BZAW 346; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 317–37; John W. Rogerson, "Herder's *Lieder der Liebe* im Licht der modernen Bibelwissenschaft," in *Vernunft, Freiheit, Humanität. Über Johann Gottfried Herder und einige seiner Zeitgenossen.* Festgabe für Günter Arnold zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. Claudia Taszus (Eutin: Lumpeter & Lassel, 2008), 250–60. Herder is overlooked by past and the recent standard, major commentaries on *The Song of Songs*: Daniel J. Estes, *The Song of Songs*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary, volume 16 (Nottingham: Apollos, 2010), 265–444; J. Cheryl Exum*, Song of Songs* (Louisville: Westminster Knox Press, 2005); Richard S. Hess, *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Christopher W. Mitchell, *The Song of Songs* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003); Tremper Longman III, *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2001); Duane A. Garrett, *Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary, volume 14 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993), 347–432

[8] M. Sadgrove, "The Song of Songs as Wisdom Literature," *Studia Biblica 1978*, ed. E.A. Livingstone (JSOTSup 11; Sheffield, 1979), 245–48; Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress press, 1979), 573–9; George M. Schwaab, *The Song of Songs' Cautionary Message Concerning Human Love*, Studies in Biblical Literature, ed. Hernchand Gossai, volume 41 (New York: Peter Lang, 2002); Katharine J. Dell, "What is King Solomon doing in the Song of Songs?" *BZAW* 346 (2005): 8–26; André La Cocque, "I am black and beautiful," in *Scrolls of Love. Ruth and the Song of Songs*, eds. Peter S. Hawkins and Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 162–71; Kenton L. Sparks, "The Song of Songs: Wisdom for Young Jewish Women," *CBQ* 70 (2008): 217–97*;* Daniel Estes (2010), 293–98.

[9] Scott B. Noegel and Gary A. Rendsburg, *Solomon's Vineyard: Literary and Linguistic Studies in the Song of Songs* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 1.

in his posthumous *Sämtliche Werke*.[10] Then as a philosophical aesthetician by trade, taking off from Herder's contribution, I posit a few suggestions on how, if we recognize the literary, performative character of the biblical text of *The Greatest Song*, theologians with all their critical expository knowledge of texts, could perhaps keep alive a "childlike" wisdom to help people in our post-literate age better hear God speak from this intriguing book of the Bible.

Herder's Hermeneutic of Empathetic Childlike Trust (1780–81)

In 1776 Goethe (1749–1832) paved the way for Herder to come to Weimar to be Chief Pastor and Court Preacher for the liberal Duke Carl August (1757–1828). The 1780–81 writing of Herder, *Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffend* (*Letters about the study of Theology*), was his attempt to give direction for the model school he was setting up in Weimar to train Protestant pastors.[11]

Herder's doctrinal positioning at this time was a fluid, eclectic mash of undigested *theologoumena*, mixing up Spinoza, Savonarola, Rousseauan themes and Freemasonry, with biblical motifs. Still, he was ready to be scorned for attacking the ruling Enlightenment fashion on what theology should be and

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[10] References in the text to Herder sources will be as follows: Johann Gottfried Herder, *Lieder der Liebe, ein Biblisches Buch. Nebst zwo Zugaben (1776)* in *Sämmtliche Werke*, Band 8 (ed. Bernhard Suphan; Berlin: Weibmannsche Buchhandlung, 1892), 589–658 [in this essay as (8:page)]; *idem.* "Lieder der Liebe. Die ältesten und schönsten aus Morgenlande. Nebst vier und vierzig alter Minneliedern (1778) as "Salomons Hoheslied" in *Herders Werke in fünf Bänden*, Band 1 (ed. Regine Otto; Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1978), 53–94, 396–99 [in this essay as (1:page)]; *idem.* "Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffend," 2 A., in *Theologische Schriften, Herder Werken in zehn Bänden*, Band 9 (eds. Christoph Bultmann and Thomas Zippert; Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Klassiker Verlag, 1994), 141–607 [in this essay as (9:page)].

[11] In Rudolf Haym's first volume of *Herder nach seinem Leben und seinen Werken*, volume 1 (Berlin: Verlag von Rudolph Gaertner, 1880) and in the early section of volume 2:1–166 [*Herder nach seinem Leben und seinen Werken* (Volume 2; Berlin: Verlag von Rudolph Gaertner, 1885), Haym's careful, detailed analysis shows that Herder's "Bückeburger Exil" (1771–1776) was quite different in perspective from Herder's "Riga period" (1764–1769) and his "Wanderjahre" (1769–1771), sporting among the intellectuals of the *Aufklärung* ("Enlightenment"); and Herder changed back to an alignment with the Enlightenment temper when he came more under the influence of Lessing and Goethe in Weimar (1776 onward). So a decade of writings (1771–1781) have an anti-Rationalist character—supported by his scorn for "academics" in his Berlin Preisschrift, *Vom dem Einfluss der Regierung auf die Wissenschaften und der Wissenschaften auf die Regierung* (1780)—that is not characteristic of very early and later Herder. *Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffen*d was conceived in the Bückeburg spirit, although published in 1780–1781. Haym states: "genug, er spinnt nur ab, was er längst auf dem Rocken hatte" (Haym, 2: 67). Robert T. Clark, Jr. seconds this assessment in *Herder, his Life and Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), 214.

do, because Herder held that the Bible was essentially "Ur-poetry";[12] working out of Hamann's cryptic conception that "Poetry is the Mother tongue of the human race," polymath Herder believed that the original Hebrew (poetic) language from "in the beginning" was the simple well-spring of truth for us today.

Herder produced a theory whose extreme unorthodoxy made Michaelis's rationalizations appear pale and reactionary, but whose emphasis upon the work as Oriental love poetry broke through the bounds of theology and rationalism and contributed towards a most fruitful conception of the function and significance of poetry in society. In an age of reason Herder sought to make the Bible live again.[13]

The best theological study—so runs Herder's introductory thesis in *Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffend*—is *Bible study*. And the right way to read this divine book is humanly (1. Brief, 9: 145). One does not worship the book itself as if its printed letters are supernatural, produced by angels. Also, one should, according to Herder, take learned "biblical criticism" with a grain of salt, since such scholars may be expert philologists, but at the same time, be unable to understand the author and the message. Always keep your childlike naiveté and deep respect for the Bible as you thoroughly learn the original languages, even when you see the Bible desecrated by its critics (1. Brief, 9: 148).

The key thing in reading the earlier Older Testament, wrote Herder in this 1780 blueprint for the Protestant Weimar seminary, is for us Germans to catch the genius of this most ancient oriental Hebrew language. We need to live into its simple, pre-abstractional orality, and not anachronistically treat Moses and David's writings as if they follow the rational rules of Batteaux or fit into Greek and Roman genres of literature. Biblical writings are not "artifice-like" fairy tales and fables but are natural living expressions, proclaiming what actually took place. That Adam and Eve are historical creatures—their creation, communal temptation and first experiences—could not be narrated for childlike ears of those earliest times in a more simple, more true, more understandable, historically truthful way than the *Genesis* account tells it (2. Brief, 9: 154). This earliest human history is presented in such a step-by-step children's-story-telling way, that it cries out, "This is the truth! This is the truth! (2. Brief, 9: 158). The same is so for the story of Balaam with the talking ass, which saw the angel (Numbers 22–24). If a reader treats that tale as only a moralizing fable, then one has veritably betrayed the spirit of the origi-

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[12] Cf. Haym, 1:534–5, 585, 631–9, 673–8; 2: 36–7, 130–5, 150. Christoph Bultmann and Martin Kessler give a comprehensive overview of "Herder's Biblical Studies" and "Herder's Theology" as a whole, in *A Companion to the Works of Johann Gottfried Herder*, eds. Hans Adler and Wulf Koepke (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 233–75, but do not emphasize the special character of Herder's 1771–1781 stance, and his radical changes in outlook amid his multiple interests in theology, literature, artworks, and especially his pioneering fascination with folk tales of the world.

[13] J.D. Baildam, 303.

nal telling. One has misread the faith of the folk embodied in the account, who believed that even a foreign, unwilling shaman was subservient to the God of Israel (2. Brief, 9: 159–63).

Herder suggests that because Genesis 1–11 has been edited together from still earlier sources (*Urkunde*) shows Moses did not make it up. The story is not just a song and is not a scientific cosmogony, but is simply, like the fatherly voice of the Ancient of Days, a natural presentation of a primal look at the universe (3. Brief, 9: 168). A Bible reader should note the incredible range of tone to the diverse narratives: the confiding domestic style dealing with patriarchal vicissitudes; the more festive and strong, almost epical recounting of deeds of certain prophets; the sublime, majestic poetic speech of God, and God's intimate silences. But the truth and historical veracity of all these varied Bible stories reside in their utterly powerful simplicity (*Einfalt*). The telling is not overloaded and encrusted with poetastic devices. To read the Bible aright one needs a stillness, a kind of gentle morning quiet in which you just let the forthright story come over you in its childlike, youthful innocence. Read the books of the Bible preferably without learned commentaries; consult them only to comprehend difficulties and places which seem unintelligible (3.Brief, 9: 172).

The critical hermeneutic principle is to read every book in the spirit in which it is written, and that includes the Book of books, the Bible. So I adopt Voltaire's taunt, says Herder: "I am a Jew when I read the venerable, holy Hebrew Bible." Since it is clearly the Spirit of God breathing in the Bible from its beginning to its end, in its very tone and content, nothing could be more contradictory than to read the writings of God in a Satanic spirit, that is, subvert the most ancient wisdom with the most modern consciousness, cheapening heavenly simpleness with a fashionable witty banter (12. Brief, 9:257).

To come to the Bible with sophistic questions, cautions Herder, is to get lost in a black hole or be caught in a spider web of philosophical nit-picking, instead of just receiving and enjoying the lively godly effectuating voice (*Wirkung*) of the Scriptures. If you do not hear the soft lovely sound of the Bible's step, like the approach of a friend or a loved one, but slavishly want to fumble around to measure out the tread, you will never get to hear God speak (12.Brief, 9:259). On the other hand, Bible readers can be saved from the abyss of fanaticism (*Schwärmerei*) when they take to heart that *the basic thrust of the biblical writings is attesting to the ordinary historical deeds of God.* God's speech is the speech of deed: God speaks, it happens; the supernatural, divine speaking shows up in the most ordinary "natural" happenings. That is why the biblical account relates events, as it were, offhandedly.

Then Herder spells out the crux of his hermeneutic for reading these special, holy, biblical writings, building out from his fundamental credo that poetry underlies prose—"poetry" means Ur-revelational testimony—and working out of Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742) which suggest that (ver-

nacular) speech is a transparent underlying medium of true thoughtful communication.

The Scriptures are inscripted poetry, history-telling, or letters, all of which are adulterated and subverted by turning them into paraphrases. A genuine letter (*Brief*) is one-to-one conversation, direct address, uttering out of your heart, unmediated reporting or telling. Such original poetic expression is ruined, contends Herder, by emasculating it into a paraphrase. Then the apostle Paul or Peter is no longer speaking to you face-to-face from the text in an immediate, living impression-making way, which provides an inexpressible pleasure; but the intuitive heart-to-heart knowledge presented by the communing countenance (*Geistes-Miene*) is displaced and distanced by inserting a go-between digest. So the active speech fades into the shard of a message, and becomes more like a tintinabulating partial echo of what was once possibly said (22. Brief, 9: 352–3).

To understand the biblical text, you must *learn to see it with your very own eyes yourself*, and not first get its message handed to you secondhand by someone wearing a different set of glasses (22, Brief, 9: 354–5). A good paraphrase can (maybe) have a limited use to help uneducated persons not lose their way, but for those learning to exegete Scripture you need to learn to walk on your own feet and not settle for *Gängelwagen* (walkers/crutches). Herder recommends to those who are training to be pastors and theologians: instead of consulting many distracting commentaries about the books of the Bible, be busy in your own little practice of Scripture translation. *Every good theologian has to work at translating his or her Bible for themselves.* One will learn much more theology, which is good for your study and your professional office of ministry, by doing Bible translation than by reading quantities of commentaries (22. Brief, 9: 357).

Two matters remain critical for good reading and translation of the Bible, according to Herder: (1) The spirit of the apostles' writings is not a worldly spirit, not the *Aufklärung* spirit of our age, but "the Spirit of God, a spirit of childlikeness, trustfulness and simplicity" (23. Brief, 9: 360). Trust the written text to be true to fact and needful for us now! (*uns jetzt*), and not just some antiquarian residue of an ancient past. So, one should not get stuck in details, but get the whole architectonic connection of the Bible story and the interrelationships of its ongoing structure. The sum-up of the Older and Newer Testaments is: Christ's coming with his invisible, everlasting Reign. What else has human nature to hope for, and been able to strive for, but this Kingdom which the prophets prophesied, that Christ himself brought to the world, and which whatever is good and true at all times has tried to bring about? (39. Brief, 9: 501–3).

(2) The Scriptures are couched in symbolic language, which has been misinterpreted and exaggerated horrendously. Luther correctly rejected, writes Herder, allegorical, tropological, and analogical antics as monkeyshine (*Affenspiel*), and came to read and translate Scripture with concrete idiomatic simplicity, packed with teaching, power, vitality and deft art (39. Brief, Beilage,

9:505). What we need is a correct, wise, sound implementation of the symbolical character of Scriptural writings, to bring back and highlight its fully natural, lasting, lovable and heartfelt telling language—the metaphorical language of the Hebrews (39. Brief, 9:502).

Herder's homiletic has the cash value of his hermeneutic: preaching is essentially proclaiming the will of God, laying out for human heart and conscience the Word and Counsel of God for our shalom. Preaching is not served by the rhetoric of Demosthenes and Cicero, but is called to be plain exposition of the Bible (*Auslegung der Bibel*), an unsophisticated, "homey" explanation, like Jesus' parables. *The listener must hear <u>the Bible</u> speak, the veritably live Bible (für sich belebte Bibel).* The good result, then, is that afterwards, when one remembers what was preached, the listener will have only the text in consciousness as he or she strolls back along the running stream or pleasant pathway taken by the sermon (40. Brief, 9: 509). Biblical passages will spark different expositions at different times over the years because we humans are always swimming in the stream of changing times and our changing temperaments. Biblical texts rejuvenate themselves for our attention, and we ourselves grow younger with them (40. Brief, 9: 510).

Herder's Unpublished Original Rendition of *das Hohelied* (1776)

In this 1780 prolegomenal prospectus for the Weimar seminary, Herder was "preaching" so to speak, what he had himself been "practicing" in 1776: the direct presentation of the biblical שיר השירים in dithyrambic German verse, following up what Herder considered to be the fine, vividly clear and strong, sensitive translation Luther had made of *das Hohelied*.[14] Herder tried, as best he could, in the spirit of Solomon's day and attuned to his other writings, simply, without any *a priori* hypotheses, to get at the meaning of what is objectively there in the biblical text: pure singing about love (8: 646). The biblical text is not giving hope to escape from hell; it is not teaching history of the Christian church; it is also not pandering to the prim sensuality befitting our current Crébillonic taste. This biblical book is purely celebrating the intense Eastern (*Morgenland*) human experience of loving and being loved. The book is not a constructed drama, but is *a cycle of single songs*, each with its own particular fragrance and individual color, each practically untranslatable in its vital sensing singularity, like a specific sigh or a kiss (8: 591–4).

In this unpublished treatment of שיר השרים, Herder detects 22 songs which he, rather than carefully translate, mirrors in highly exclamatory, poetic free verse. Each of the 22 German "songs" is given a title, and is followed by a brief prose comment on its tone, striking images, hinted import, and/or placement in the whole collection. For example, Song 2:7 is called a lullaby (*Schlummerlied*), which is repeated at Song 3:5 and Song 8:4, and always, says

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[14] Baildam has printed in his book, as Appendix A, both the unpublished 1776 and the published 1778 translation Herder made of The Song of Songs, in a handy parallel comparative form, pages 306–321.

Herder, ends a lengthy cohering "scene" (*jedesmal zu Ende einer ganzen grossen Scene*, 8: 602). Within a short song (*Brautsgeschenke*, Song 1:9–14) Herder can distinguish different gendered voices: the royal kingly voice offering golden jewelry (Song 1:9–11), and the compliant woman voice bearing henna blossoms from the gardens of En Gedi (Song 1:12–14).

After the first lullaby song is sung, sealing the dreamy sleep of the beloved, notice, says Herder, how carefully the editor of this Bible book tied together, wherever he could, the intentional threading together of the sequence of songs: she is awakened by the voice of her lover singing, "Arise, beloved, my beautiful one, come wander away with me" (Song 2:8–14).[15] And then, after a *Scheuchlied* (shepherd working song) about chasing foxes away from the ripening gardens (Song 2:15), and a song about her shepherd lover working in the pastures far away during the day (Song 2:16–17), the beloved sings a song about finding and meeting him at night in her mother's house (Song 3:1–4). So the lullaby song comes once again (Song 3:5) to mark a decisive "scene" (*eine entscheidene Scene*): every earlier song of budding love checked by a chaste modesty in the longing expressed, finally now—the editor places it here!— the beloved and lover come together at the mother's bedroom (8: 607).[16]

As Herder reads it, after the fragment of Song 3:6 ("What is that coming up out of the distant grasslands?" which signals a new section),[17] Song 3:7–11 introduces Solomon's royal marriage bed, and all the descriptions of betrothed love-making which follow. The "newlywed" song [Song 4:1–5:1] describing naked body parts [Song 4:1–5] is interrupted at Song 4:6, as being somewhat improper (*da er sie körperlich nicht schildern sollte*, 8: 609), and is interrupted again at Song 4:16b, since the continuing (more respectful) speech (*Schwester-Braut*) is still too boldly excessive (*zu kühn*, 8: 611). But Herder excuses the passionate hyperbole in the love-talk as the forthright Oriental way of calling a breast "a breast," and belly a "belly," feeling out what a woman feels like as God's creature better than we Westerners can, with our false modesty and "gutter-talk" (*Säuereien*) (8: 611).

Herder's rendition of the disturbing nightmare in which the beloved loses her lover who would not force entrance to her, so she goes looking for him and is abused by the city watchmen (Song 5:2–7), yet then, in response to the question of what does your lover look like, describes him exuberantly as a glorious sculptured body (Song 5:10–16): Herder's rendition of this single song scene Song 5:2–6:3 mimics every change—jagged, restless lines punctu-

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[15] "Der Anfang des Stückes macht offenbar, wie sorgfältig der Sammler band, wo er im Faden seines Buchs und Zwecks binden konnte" (8: 604).

[16] "Stehet das Stück, so wenig es von aussen zu den vorhergehenden passt, so einzeln es ist, nicht trefflich im Licht? an *seiner* Stelle, an *diesem* Orte?—Alles Vorhergehende des Buchs ist Zubereitung zu diesem Funde, diesem Lohne" (8: 607).

[17] In the 1778 published "*Salomons Hoheslied*" version Herder makes this remark regarding Song 6:10, which he applies to Song 3:6 and Song 8:5: "Es wird ausdrücklich eine neue Szene angekündigt, mit dem bekannten Anfange: 'Wer ist die, die aufsteigt'?" (1: 84).

ating by dashes for Song 5:2–7, measured, eulogistic Pinadaresque verse for Song 5:10–16, ending with the quieted-down woman's short trimeter testimony [Song 6:2–3],

Mein Lieber, er ist mein,

Mein Lieber, ich bin sein,

Er weidet unter Blumen (8: 613).

About here in the book, with songs #15, #16, and #17 (Song 6:4–9, 6:10–13; 7:1–9), Herder seems to lose the thread of what he has been tracing, of how awakened love moving through desire reaches for passionate consummated bodily union. "I leave it to others," writes Herder, "to figure out why a Solomonic song [Song 6:4–9] talking 'fierce army' [Song 6:10], follows the tender pastoral ending of the previous song [Song 6:2–3]. This section [Song 6:10–13] is the murkiest in the whole book because we do not know what prompts the tangent juxtaposition of Deborah-like militant roughness and idyllic sweetness" (8: 618–19). Oh, well, continues Herder, more such strange oppositions occur, "always with larger-than-life, more audacious images."[18]

Song 18 entitled "Innocent love" [Song 7:10–8:3] is the climax of the book, says Herder, highlighting the fertility and fruit-bearing naturality built into bodily committed human loving, with all the charm of country simplicity, graced with unsophisticated innocence, surrounded by brotherly love, the mutuality of a kiss, and the welcoming breast of one's mother (8: 623). Overcome by the truth of it all, Herder can't help but let his deepest heartfelt allegiance show and apostrophize Nature: "O Nature, Nature! You holy and desecrated temple of God! You are most profaned there where You should be for us the most wholly holy!" (8: 621). "Woe to anyone who does not feel the truth of the rapture of such delicate chaste love" (8: 623).

I almost wish the more gentle, peaceful song #20 [Song 8:5–7], says Herder, had concluded the book (8: 625). The true love extolled as "Fiery flames of the LORD," which holds past temptations and beyond death, has a mature, almost motherly caring, harvested richness to it, while recalling the pristine awakening of the first love (8: 624). In the denouement [Song 8:8–12] the sister tells her older brothers who had been anxious about her chastity, a little story (*Geschichtchen*), which is maybe about King Solomon's treasury of wives and vineyards (8: 626–7). And then the final #22 song duet [Song 8:13–14] rejoices with lover and beloved running off freely together like gazelle and a young deer to the sweet-smelling mountains.

"I am satisfied now," says Herder, "if simply unaffected, clear meaning has been shown, if the singular particularity of each song has been noticed

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[18] "Ich überlasse es andern, auszuspähen, warum das Stück jetzt folge? hier stehe? Gnug es folgen mehrere seiner Art: immer mit grössern, kühneren Bildern" (8: 617). Herder goes on to say, "Diese Gegend ist die dunkelste im Buch; nur aber dunkel, weil und sofern wir die nähere Veranlassung nicht kennen." (8: 618).

with its very own lineaments and bouquet, and *especially if the subtle thread on which the editor has strung these precious pearls has been detected* [my emphasis]. ...the editor seems at the same time to have had an eye for the most subtle nuances in these exceptional phenomena, to make perceptible *even the very sequence* [Herder's emphasis] of the pieces, and to deal with the many-sided, extremely rich playfulness of all the different situations, charms and timings of the cornucopia of love.[...] Whoever wants to find in these songs artful allegories, secrets and drama, or even amorous intrigues and confounding tales of envious love-affairs from the harem, go ahead; but not me—I don't find them!"[19]

Herder claims to be presenting only what these exquisite songs say, without adding any hidden meanings to what is stated. But all 22 pericopes Herder delineates and calls "songs" are too poetically complicated to be considered "folk songs" (as Song 2:15 indeed is): Herder finds different voices respond to one another in the same "pearl" of a song [Song 1:9–14, 1:15–2:6; 8:8–9, 8:13–14], and notes interruptions in the tilt of a simple song [Song 4:6, 4:16c], and finds questions with answers in a given "song" [Song 5:9; 6:1, 10; 8:5a]. "Song" for Herder is an honorific term certifying the impassioned (Ossianic) ancient historical originality, and therefore rhapsodical truth, of the biblical writing by the young king Solomon. So, although Herder ostensibly rejects the Catholic tradition of a fourfold (literal, moral, allegorical and anagogic) reading of Scripture, he does read into the "literal" (="natural") givens a God-speaking instructional message, because Herder at this time believes that the Bible will always remain "the North star for our daily life, the Bible's everlasting history of images and zodiac (!) is that in which the sun of our destiny, nature, and morality basks."[20]

In his remarks appended to this 1776 unpublished exposition of *das Lied der Liedern* , Herder says that God does not beat around the bush but God champions in this pristine *Hohelied* the pure, sensuous passionate, royal marrying love-pleasure on earth which Adam and Eve enjoyed in Paradise. This utterly good, innocent, *original* ravishing delight of loving given for our human nature—a love approved by mothers—is celebrated as God's order for our living wisely, to which the cramped, cosmeticized, hypocritical secondhand rubbish (*Trödelkram*) of chastity-sermons and monkeyshine moralisms (*Affenmoralisiren)* are the cold-hearted antithesis (8: 632–5). The editor has

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[19] "Ist überall nur der *natürliche klare Sinn* gezeigt, die *Einzelheit* jedes Stückes in seinem eignen Licht und Dufte bemerkt, sodenn der *feine Faden* verfolgt den der Sammler bei *Reihung* dieser kostbaren Werken hatte; so bin ich zufrieden. ...der Sammler scheint zugleich im Auge gehabt zu haben, die feinsten *Nuancen* in diesem sonderbaren Phänomen, *selbst der Folge nach*, sichtbar zu machen und das *vielseitige reichste* Spiel von allen Seiten zu behandeln. ...Künstliche *Allegorien, Geheimnisse und Dramas* oder gar *Liebesränke* und verflochtne *Neid- und Bulergeschichten* aus dem Harem finde darinn, wer wolle; ich finde sie nicht!" (8: 628).

[20] "...so wird auch die Bibel *Polarstern* unsres Laufs, ihre *Geschichte* ewig der *Bilder- und Thierkreis* bleiben, in dem sich die Sonne unsrer Bestimmung, Natur und Sittlichkeit wälzet" (8: 629).

overseen and ordered the whole book, says Herder, from the first sighing to
the last echo, as it were, around two purple threads—holy (bashful) desire
and (fully loving) truth (8: 634)—which, "if Christendom would once upon a
time open its eyes to see what she has in the Bible *on this very matter*, you
would see how much, really how very much would change! and not for the
worse" (8:637). One should not miss the first clear literal sense (*den ersten klar-
en Wortsinn*) of the text, and so misuse this Bible book, reading it as an allego-
ry. "It is the very spirit of the Bible to make human for us everything godly: it
is the spirit of mysticism, on the contrary, to suppress all (human) forms and
configurations, and to deify and spiritualize (*hinaufzuhimmeln*) everything hu-
man."[21]

An important contribution Herder has made toward understanding שיר השירים *is his
reading of the whole book as an edited sequence of "scenes" of responding voices, which
somehow play off of one another.*[22] Not only does he credit the gendered voices
(discernible by grammatical verb endings in the Hebrew language) of Beloved
(*Liebe, Geliebter*) and Lover (*Lieber, Liebster*), but Herder has a poetic sensibility
to catch hints of intuited connections and yet has the literary critical acumen
not to exaggerate minor details (as many commentators have done with Song
2:15). Herder even has the daring imagination to suggest that the woman cuts
off the haranguing "I'm gonna climb the palm tree" peroration [Song 7:1–9a]
because it is made by a "love-drunken bridegroom"! (dem Liebetrunknen
Bräutigam) and out of touch with her soft loving response [Song 7:9b–12] (8:
621). Even if Herder confesses he cannot sense the relation of successive
settings, he affirms that the editor does still make the connection, although it
might be unclear to us, who are later readers. Herder takes this tack explicitly
a couple of times in the later published 1778 version.[23] It is noticeable that
especially at the passages in the series of songs where Herder in 1776 had
trouble finding the threaded strings of the pearl necklace [Song 6:4–9, 6:10–
13], in the subsequent 1778 published version Herder emphasizes there what
he is unsure about: "I will show first of all the connection and the progress of

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[21] "Geist der Bibel ists, alles Göttliche für uns zu *humanisiren*, und Geist der Mys-
tik, alle Formen und Gestalten zu verdrängen, alles Menschliche zu *vergötten* und
hinaufzuhimmeln" (8: 638).

[22] Cf. notes above, 16, 17, 19.

[23] Commenting now on how poorly he thinks the *Schlummerlied* (about Jerusalem
daughters) at Song 3:5 goes with what immediately precedes in Song 3:4 (the moth-
er's bedroom) Herder says, "Ohne Zweifel setzte es der Sammler her, weil es Nacht
ist und weil er ihr nächtliches Suchen und Streben jetzt mit süsser Ruhe krönen
wollte" (1:66). Herder admits the bold eulogy of Song 5:10–16 sticks out against the
tremulous nightime dream of Song 5:2–7, but bows to the judgment of the editor:
"Nur wiederhole ich, dass diese Gestalt mir zu der Landszene des Nachtgesanges
abstechend dünkt; beides scheint nur vom Sammler gebunden" (1: 79).

the whole song; the most stimulating attraction lies in the threaded-together succession."[24]

It is this insistence by Herder upon *an (authoring) edited, imaginatively structured unity to the* שיר השירים which is, I believe, the key to a sound reception of the Bible book's revelation. If Herder's interpretation of the *Song of Songs* is known to later scholars, it is usually summarized by saying that Herder sees the book of songs "as a string of pearls."[25] That phrase comes from Herder's later 1778 published version, where he struggles to explain how the refrain adjuring the daughters of Jerusalem not to force love before it is ready [at Song 3:5] follows the account of a disturbing night dream [Song 3:1–4] and then continues. "Since night is on the docket, the editor lets other such individual night pieces follow [Song 3:6–11, see esp. v.8], which hang together no more than a row of beautiful pearls fastened on a string."[26] Such faint praise for connection at this troublesome spot for Herder has been wrongly generalized as his judgment on the unity of the whole book. Herder's 1778 published version shows much less struggle than the 1776 unpublished version to find the edited links between vignettes. Yet it is the subtle threading together of the "pearls" which was Herder's special fascination.

In contrast to the 1776 more interjectional, emotionally poetic, loose rendition of the given Hebrew text in an almost continual pitch of workshopping excitement and discovery with 22 song segments, the 1778 version reaching publication was more subdued, the German rendering was closer to a verse translation honoring the Hebrew parallelism of lines, and interconnected sequences were assumed rather than belaboured. In 1778, the 22 fragmentary songs are present but not accented.[27] Herder now uses the key recurrent paragraph addressing "the daughters of Jerusalem" as a refrain marker of the four major sections of the book: Song 1:2–3:5; 2:8–3:5; 3:6–8:4; 8:5–14. In 1778 Herder is also on the look-out, as any aesthetically trained reader would be, for recurring metaphoric leitmotifs which tie things imaginatively together. Early mention of "apple tree" and "apples" by the Shulammite girl [Song 2:3, 5] sets us readers up, says Herder, for the concluding importance of the apple tree, where the lovers first met in the mother-friendly countryside [Song 8:5bc] (1: 61).

In line with his over-all conviction that the narrative of the book moves from reciting love's first attraction through obstacles and uncertainties until the enjoyment of a chaste love union is reached, Herder, in both 1776 and

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[24] "Ich will zuerst die Verbindung und den Gang des ganzen Gesanges zeigen; in ihm liegen die meisten Reize" (1: 84).

[25] For example, Carl Gebhardt, "Das Lied der Lieder*," Der Morgen* (Berlin: Philo Verlag, 1930), 6: 447–8.

[26] "Und da es einmal Nacht ist, lässt er noch mehr solche einzelne Nachtstücke folgen, die nicht mehr zusammenhangen als eine Reihe schöner Perlen, auf eine Schnur gefasset" (1: 66).

[27] Songs #16, #17, and #18 of 1776 are coalesced into one longer pericope in 1778 [Song 6:10–8:3]; cf. 1: 82–4.

1778 versions, seriously exposits the closing lines of the book as a conclusive ending (8: 625). The Shulammite sister tells off her over-protective, controlling but negligent older brothers [Song 8:8–9; 1:6bc; 6:11–12], writes Herder, reporting that her virginity has been kept intact because her beauty, loving and honour were originally virtuous and able to persevere with their own God-given integrity [8:10] (1:94). Herder, who believed the שיר השירים was written by young Solomon before Solomon aged into the extensive harem and idolatry of 1 Kings 9–11 (8: 631), does gingerly just mention the sharp critique of Solomon which is inscripted at the conclusion of the whole round of songs and voices in Song 8:11–12, as if it were possibly a slight rabbinic cautionary note uttered *by the youth* (8: 626–7; 1: 94)...for the older "enlightened" folk to hear and take to heart.

Import of Herder's Hermeneutic for Understanding the Literary, Performative Nature of Holy Scripture, and *The Greatest Song*

So Herder gave rigorous aesthetic, literary critical attention to this Bible book, especially in his first 1776 unpublished attempt to grapple directly and rhapsodically with the given Hebraic text. Herder's reading of the שיר השירים also took its cue from his heartfelt response to Matthew 5–7 as the core of the Christian religion,[28] and was saturated by his highly Romantic Idealist posture of the Bückeburg years (1771–1776) and his most happy marriage with Caroline Flachsland (1773), as he stood up against the dominant Rationalistic parsing Enlightenment spirit of the day.[29] Despite his heterodox orientation—most probably without a sound biblical conception of sin—during this 1771–1781 decade of rejecting Reason as the North star for living and looking to the Bible *and* "Nature" (12. Brief, 9:260) for direction and wisdom, Herder has given theologians and Bible readers several crucial matters to reflect on, especially for understanding the heavily over-interpreted שיר השרים.

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[28] In his pastoral letter of November 1771 to Prince Holstein-Gottorp, Herder confesses that Christ's *Bergpredigt* was central to all his preaching. "Hier ist mehr als Platon und alle Weisen" (2: 96–7).

[29] Thomas Willi notes that Pascal's *Pensées* were always on Herder's writing desk in the Bückeburg years (115). And Hans-Joachim Kraus' judgment is important: "Es ist das unverwelkliche Verdienst Herders, dass er die Eigenständigkeit der hebräisch-alttestamentlichen Welt erkannt hat—gegenüber einer orthodoxen Dogmatizierung und gegenüber einer rationalistischen Auflösung. ...Nach dem Tasten und Schwanken des Johann David Michaelis, nach den hemmungslosen Ausbrüchen des krassen Rationalismus und nach dem problematischen, vermittelnden Neuansatz Johann Salomo Semlers steht ein begnadeter Dichter und Theologe auf und *bringt gegen alle kritische Zersetzung die Botschaft von einer neuen Begegnung mit der Bibel, die dem klassischen, romantischen, pantheistischen und humanistischen Geist der Zeit entgegenkommt, ja: ganz auf ihn eingeht*. Die Bedeutung dieses Ereignisses wird man kaum überschätzen können." "Hebräischer Humanismus im Zeitalter der Romantik," in *Geschichte der Historisch-kritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments von der Reformation bis zur Gegenwart* (Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Verlag des Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1956), 110.

(1) Herder takes the biblical text to be poetic literature. Therefore, one must treat the Scripture, read its text, present it to others in its *literary* character. Otherwise you manhandle God's written Word.

Herder's ejaculating, seemingly almost improvisatory 1776 poetic recapitulation of the *Song*, as well as his 1778 more exacting translation of the book, both try to *give German voice in kind to the artistically minted Hebrew script*. And Herder's adjoining, interconnecting, running commentary paragraphs [30] try not to be a school-masterly addition to what was spoken so much as imaginatively highlighting features which draw out the subtle meaning of the pericope.[31] Herder practiced his hermeneutic principle of bringing out the full allusive meaning of the literary Scripture, the tone and color, the vibrato of God's voice comforting and warning us people. Theologians who read the Bible often do it as (believing or unbelieving) theologicians who mistake the inherently metaphorical concision of the biblical narrative for logical imprecision, and are concerned to harmonize logically what is given more elliptically, as if one needs a dogmatic propositional residue to relate and validate the God-speaking message given literarily.

Various contemporary women scholars emphasize this poetic quality of שיר השרים too. "The Song's poetic qualities are routinely praised but generally ignored in favor of the exegetical quest for explanation. […] a question that invites paraphrase, as if poetic images could be reduced to what they signify."[32] But the defining quality of the biblical text is "symbolical" (Herder, 39. Brief, 9: 502); its language is polyvalent and plurisignificant (Exum), and the connotations which inhere the meaning are as important as the denotations. Analysis does not make poetry come alive unless the patient analytic probing folds back into an imaginative repristination of the original literary text—this is what Herder did with the שיר השירים—thanks to an aesthetic act close to what Ricoeur is searching for with his depiction of "the second naïveté."

Theological scholarship is often tempted to rationalistic pedantry where the commentator gets lost in details that digress from the servant task of making the artistic text speak more eloquently, the kind of exhaustive scholarship the poet William Butler Yeats mentions in his poem which ends with "What would Catullus say!" about his "classical" expositors who apparently do not have an erotic muscle in their bodies. Chana Bloch notes that translation of the original שיר השרים can fail if one does not find "the proper register in English":[33] if you give medical precision to sexually nuanced matters ex-

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[30] Ulrich Gaier calls it "commentarius perpetuus" (327).

[31] Thomas Willi characterizes Herder's method as "schöpferische Nachbildung statt gehorsamer Auslegung" (51).

[32] J. Chryl Exum, "How does the Song of Songs Mean? On Reading the Poetry of Desire," *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok*, 64 (1999): 47.

[33] Chana Bloch, "Translating Eros," in *Scrolls of Love: Ruth and the Song of Songs*, eds. Peter S. Hawkins and Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 154.

pressed allusively, then you forfeit aesthetic fidelity for a scientific conceptual clarity that distorts the text that is there.

The fact that the biblical writings (especially כתובים) are literary in nature can tempt hermeneutic theorists to reject any determinative meaning for a passage, and so allow expositors to use texts as pretexts to validate their hobby horse. But a literary text, in my judgment, has imaginatively determined meaning: the epiphoric parameters and diaphoric limits to metaphoricity[34] fashion references that are not anything or everything, but which present a softly focussed known with its attendant field of a hovering penumbra of precise, suggestive associations.

A key to correct reading of (biblical) literature is to discern the over-all cohering thrust or story line of the piece, if there be one. A person's decision on this crucial matter depends on one's point of view. It is fairly well accepted today that nobody comes to the biblical text like a clear window pane or a blank disk on which the biblical text transparently imprints itself for dissemination. Everybody has their subjective *apriori* viewpoint—including Herder. As Gadamer has argued, everybody is prejudiced. Just try to get a good "prejudice" and learn to dialogue with all the others, world without end.[35]

But are there any steps to take which would help readers approximate like a parabola to Herder's goal of *hearing what is first given there in Scripture*, to hinder exegesis from becoming eisegesis, to recognize and weed out intentional or an unwitting reading of Bible passages to support partisan causes? Certainly, like a Gadamarian bumblebee one can gather pollen from different flowers and weeds. For example, when Bernard of Clairvaux seems to erase any "literal" meaning of the text in his 86 sermons on the first two chapters of *The Greatest Song* in favor of its allegorical message, one can still catch the necessity of reading a piece of Scripture woven into the whole biblical tapestry of God's not condemning but loving the world so much that God sent God's Son here to save the world and all its creatures (John 3:17), but demur at Bernard's "spiritualizing" of bodily love.[36] Or, one can respect Herman Gunkel's search for the historical *Sitz im Leben* of a given psalm to preclude a reader's thinking Asaph's psalms just dropped out of heaven one sunny afternoon, but lament that Gunkel's followers seem to divert psalm study into

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[34] Philip Wheelwright, "Two ways of metaphor" in *Metaphor and Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), 70–91.

[35] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 3 A (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck, 1962), 250–83. "Die Ausschöpfung des wahren Sinnes aber, der in einem Text oder in einer künstlerischen Schöpfung gelegen ist, kommt nicht irgendwo zum Abschluss, sondern ist in Wahrheit ein unendlicher Prozess" (282).

[36] In *Bernard of Clairvaux on the Song of Songs: A Contemporary Encounter with Contemplative Aspirations* (Toronto: Institute for Christian Studies, M.A. thesis, 2007), Michael Mols admits that Bernard has a "propensity for claiming metaphysical significance of physical reality" (80), but argues that "Bernard delves deeply into rich, bodily descriptions in order to reach beyond the surface of the physical, for spiritual truths are to be found at the heart of corporeal existence" (79).

pigeonholing psalms into hardened genres, as if typing a psalm is the clue to hearing its wrestled prayer.

A careful review of intelligent works by respectable scholars seems to prove you get the fruit from whatever seeds you plant. Marvin H. Pope's unsurpassed, exhaustive 743 page Anchor Bible (1977) introduction, translation and commentary notes for the funereal mythic meaning of the Song of Songs, as he reads it, with examples of the long history of its widely diverging expositions, "disappears" the biblical givens into being a prompt for anything you ever wanted to know about the sexual ins and outs of Eastern fertility cults. The magisterial Concordia Commentary (2003) by Christopher W. Mitchell, of 1343 pages which, after 26 years, led the author to understand Christian marriage as an enfleshment of the great mystery Paul cites on the union of Christ and the church (Eph. 5:23), self-consciously reads the Song of Songs in a bold Christological way as being somehow about "divine love," and a worthy testimony to the truth of Lutheran sacramental theology.[37]

Herder's literary approach of a loose cycle of songs but edited into a sequence of scenes as a divinely revealed paean for holy human love seems much closer to what is *given* in שיר השרים than what Pope and Mitchell "find." But Herder's disarming directness with the original poetic text can be affirmed, deepened, and given both historical and kerygmatic power by supplementing Herder's reading with Roland Murphy's (1949) approach that "The *Canticle* is essentially a parable," and Daniel Estes' (2010) judgment "that the Song of Songs is intended to be read as an extended proverb (משל) of ideal intimacy,"[38] and Noegel and Rendsburg's judgment that שיר השרים is a unified whole which "inveighs against Solomon," dated approximately 918–876 BC.[39] (cf. final section below)

(2) Herder believes the Bible has a revelatory Einfalt (simplicity) and needs to be read in the holy spirit in which the Ur-poetic text is inscripted. That means for Herder that interpreters of the Bible must make its truth and *Wirkung* ("effectuating transformation") transparent, directly heard and imbibed by the laity, not kept as a preserve for academics.

This tenet of Herder will be harder today for both orthodox theologians and professional critics to work with, since Herder does not affirm a special inspiration for the Bible but claims it is naturally divinely revelatory of truth. Baildam notes astutely that "Herder was not secularizing religion, but rather sanctifying poetry."[40] From my own tradition of the catholic faith transmuted by the historical Reformation carried on by Martin Luther and Jean Calvin, I take Herder's cue to be an off-beat recognition of the kerygmatic nature of the Scriptures. The kerygmatic nature of the Bible asks for its performative

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[37] Cf. Christopher Mitchell, *Song of Songs*, 4–7, 20–6.

[38] Roland E. Murphy, "The Structure of the Canticle of Canticles," *CBQ*, 11 (1949): 382; and Daniel Estes, 275.

[39] Noegel and Rendsburg, 171–4.

[40] Baildam, 94.

presentation, because the literary biblical script is effectual and geared to galvanize a response. Because it is a performative text, the Bible needs to be heard; the Holy Scriptures need simply, intimates Herder, to become oral. This is a crux of the hermeneutic task and points to what Paul Ricoeur is after with his "second naïveté."

In line with folk song specialist Herder's tack, one does well to approach the Ur-original biblical writings as a revelatory musical score or dramatic script[41] which the interpreters play as best they can. And it is wise counsel to realize that the biblical script presents God speaking, God proclaiming the good news of Christ's kingdom a-coming. So Bible interpreters best fulfill their task by becoming dummies for the ventriloquist Holy Spirit to open the ears of would-be Bible hearers. Serious biblical theologians need to learn the original languages well and make their own faulty but dedicated translations of the holy Scriptures for themselves, as Herder suggested for prospective pastors (9: 357), because then you are as close to the source of revelation as you together with other saints, living and dead, can get. *Translation is the primal interpretation.*

And then one must read aloud the translation with correct intonation, pauses, accent, and sober imaginative, empathetic flair that is due literature—*reading aloud is the interpretive follow-up to translation.* One reads 1–2 Kings with a different inflection than Psalm 42–43 or 88, and the gospel according to Mark has a lilt quite unlike the Letter to the Hebrews. Translation and reading aloud are the basic, most elemental hermeneutic activities, long before one starts to put the message into other explanatory words. An oversimplified "translation" or a deadpan, lacklustre, or hurried reading of Scripture is hermeneutic murder.

Reading aloud Bible passages, like wrestling for their translation from the original languages: to be done rightly, both must have a *Hineinleben*s*haltung* (*adsorbing* participating-in) quality, reading *with* the grain of the text, not against the grain. These primal and secondary interpretations should have the character of a blind person touching, feeling, intimately probing the features of someone else's whole face to decipher the deepest secrets its contours betray, but one does it more like a lover than a medical doctor, and processes the knowledge gained intuitively rather than demonstratively. The project of making a vernacular translation of Holy Scripture is called to recapitulate the original, say it again with love that brings out imaginatively nuances of what one finds, but refrains from importing amplifications into the text or excising meanings by making the translation more exact and explicit than the original.

Standard commentaries—a tertiary interpretive activity, because a person inserts his or her own explanatory thoughts *about* the message that has been

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[41] Cf. David Scott, "Speaking to Form: Trinitarian-Performative Scripture reading," *Anglican Theological Review*, 77/2 (1995): 143; and Stephen C. Barton, "New Testamnent Interpretation as Performance," *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, 52/2 (1999): 171.

inscripted, alongside its translated presentation—can be more useful than crutches; Herder recognized this too (9: 355). A careful studious commentary can invite you into the communion of saints throughout the ages who have tried to unlock the speech of the biblical book by assembling their learned contributions in digest form. But a commentary is pernicious if instead of listening and serving as a trustworthy prolegomenon, it tries to talk the biblical text into submission and, like a bad book review, acts like a pre-emptive strike, a substitute, so you do not have to go meet the original text firsthand yourself. Many scholarly commentaries on the Bible also seem to lose the sense of their extraordinary privilege to be reflecting on being spoken to by God in the script. Ricoeur's "virtuous circle" is pertinent: "You must understand in order to believe, but you must believe in order to understand."[42] If the worded comment about the biblical text has not been convicted by the κηρῦγμα—if the piercing Word has not gone through the commentator's heart, soul, mind and strength, and the tertiary interpreter has not come to *own* the living Word, the resultant commenting dissertation on the text easily becomes a weighty pillar of salt losing its savor.

To become a trustworthy theological interpreting servant of God's Older and Newer Testament scripted Word, one does well, with all the getting of philological and cultural historical knowledge *focussed toward literary critical mastery of the text* which has been selected and is being read to be understood: one does well to get the wisdom to corral the painstaking scholarship toward making the script speak to other persons face-to-face.[43] A sound tertiary Bible commentary must not be devoid of exhortational overtones, lest it deny the kerygmatic quality of the text at hand. This matter is close to the practice of a sermon: a good sermon—Herder would chime in—is not a lecture, even though it may provide historical setting about the inception of the passage, quote the local poets as the apostle Paul did in Athens (Acts 17:16–34), subtly use oratorical figures of speech as Paul did in writing the Corinthians.[44] A

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[42] "No interpreter in fact will ever come close to what his text says if he does not live in the aura of the meaning that is sought. ...the second naïveté that we are after, is accessible only in hermeneutics […] hermeneutics proceeds from the preunderstanding of the very matter which through interpretation it is trying to understand. […T]his second naïveté is the postcritical equivalent of the precritical hierophany." Paul Ricoeur, *The Hermeneutics of Symbols: I,* 298.

[43] This principle is in line with both Herder's and! Fiorenza's brief to "enable students...to overcome the institutionalized dichotomy between graduate training in the university and ministerial education in schools of theology" (15–16). To do justice to the ancient biblical texts demands one exposit their meaning for just public life today.

[44] Paul's disclaiming that his speaking was καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου (1 Cor. 2:1) strikes me as a litotes the Corinthians would appreciate. Anybody so skillful in style as to write the letter to the Romans was not a crude speaker. The Jew Paul meant he did not trust (Stoic or Epicurean) Greek rhetorical devices to upstage the convicting power of God's Spirit (1 Cor. 2:4).

good sermon is only echoing and extending a good reading aloud of the Scripture passage put in Luther-gutty current language that surprises listeners with the cross-referenced resonances of the whole Bible speaking to pressing needs. A good sermon is like Jesus *explaining* one of his deceptively simple parables.

Theological hermeneutical scholarship is most faithful when its centrifugal encouraging outreach has the centripetal force of performative oral interaction with another person with an I-to-Thou affecting presence. Theologians need to take seriously the apostle Paul's statement: *faith comes from <u>hearing</u>, and the hearing by the spoken word* (ῥήματος) *of Christ* (Rom. 10:17)...preached! (κηρύσσουτος) (Rom. 10:14). Therefore, for those who understand a metaphor: one should read, study, and interpret the Bible on your knees.[45]

Considering שיר השרים to be a Book of Wisdom Literature in Critique of Late Solomon, Witnessing to the Joy and Jealousy of Bonded Erotic Love

A way to update Herder's fresh contribution, resolve some of his difficulties with the שיר השרים, and to unite a swath of contemporary studies of the *Song*, would be to tap into the long-standing tri-alogue conception of the fabric of *The Greatest Song*[46] and a growing consensus that the *Song* is best understood in the form of biblical wisdom literature.

J. Cheryl Exum has finally dared to say that "only by reading the Song as a whole can we do justice to its poetic genius."[47] Kenton Sparks hedges his judgment by declaring the book to be somewhere between an anthology and a "coherent composition," thanks to an editor who is "very nearly an author."[48] Iain Provan comments that there are clear indications of "three main characters (the woman, her lover, and the king) rather than merely two….

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[45] Ellen Davis states it so: "...the Song is essentially a mystical text, a text that emanates from religious vision and invites—even requires—prayerful reading" (178).

[46] Marvin Pope recites the history of the "dramatic" approach taken by Origen (200's AD), Ibn Ezra (1100's AD), John Milton (1642), Heinrich Ewald, (1867), Franz Delitsch (1885), S.R. Driver (1897), H.H. Rowley (1937), and many others, including myself (1967), Pope (1977), 34–7. Driver's extensive treatment, comparing the two-persons and the three-persons conception, is most worth scrutiny, in his *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 436–53.

[47] J. Cheryl Exum, "The Poetic Genius of the Song of Songs," in *Perspectives on the Song of Songs / Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung,* ed. Anselm Hagedorn; Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 346 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 80, note 8.

[48] Kenton Sparks, "The Song of Songs: Wisdom for Young Jewish Women,*" CBQ,* 70 (2008): 293.

When one understands this, it is a relatively easy matter to go on to articulate a coherent reading of the whole Song."[49]

Scholars like Marc Brettler still question the "unity" of the *Song*, even though its edited title, שיר השרים, calls it one single song; "interpreters that speak of `the Song' and treat it as a whole are problematic."[50] Other commentators, like those critics who could not fathom how a psalm which began *de profundis* but ended in exaltation might be a unified poetic piece, contend that the שיר is "clearly" a collection of brief, atomic "poetic units,"[51] never supposing the juxtaposition of the deft sentiments might bear a dialogical "connection." And the most egregious rejection of any "narrative unity" to the book is by those who pan "the dramatic reading" because, as Estes formulates the thesis, quoting D.M. Carr, "there is no clear plot or logical sequence" to what is said, and a "dramatic unity" is foreign to the Semitic peoples and among the Hebrews in particular, and is certainly not found in the biblical Older Testament.[52]

However, how does one account for the fact that the lovers often address one another in the שיר as if immediate and present, and there seems to be "a kind of women's chorus" addressed by a refrain; and there are grammatical imperatives, jussives, cohortatives, and participles indicating on-going interaction?[53] As Chana Bloch says, "Though the Song is not a drama...it is dramatic in effect."[54]

The missing key to interpret the opposition and confrontational tone of the lyrical rhapsodies of love in the book is to take seriously the evidence for the *critique* of Solomon throughout the piece, and to realize that *a paratactic back-and-forth recitation of voices,* characteristic of wisdom literature, is utterly at home in biblical teaching revelation. Once one realizes *The Greatest Song* is not an anthology of loose songs about love, but is a hanging-together structured whole in the "Yes, but" format of standard Older Testament wisdom literature,[55] one has a more sound approach to reading *The Greatest Song* as a cho-

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[49] Iain Provan, "The terrors of the Night: Love, Sex, and Power in Song of Songs," in *The Way of Wisdom: Essays in honor of Bruce K. Waltke*, ed. J.I. Packer and Sven K. Soderlund (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 158.

[50] Marc Bettler, "Unresolved and Unresolvable: Problems in Interpreting the Song," in *Scrolls of Love: Ruth and the Song of Songs*, ed. Peter S. Hawkins and Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 187.

[51] Franz Landsberger, "Poetic units within the Song of Songs," *JBL* 73/4 (1954): 207–8.

[52] Daniel Estes, 281–282, 290.

[53] J. Cheryl Exum, "How does the Song of Songs Mean? On Reading the Poetry of Desire*," Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 64 (1999): 48–50.

[54] Ariel Bloch and Chana Bloch*, The Song of Songs: A New Translation with an Introduction and Commentary,* afterword by Robert Alter (New York: Random House, 1995), 16.

[55] Cf. Calvin Seerveld, "Proverbs 10:1–22: From poetic paragraphs to preaching," in *Reading and Hearing the Word, from text to sermon: Essays in Honor of John H. Stek,*

rus of voices, and will not find the opposition of a Solomon voice and a shepherd voice so strange.

Proverbs 1–9, for example, pits the Woman Wisdom voice (Prov. 1:20–33) against the conniving wicked swindlers (Prov. 1:10–14), and tells a graphic parable of exemplary temptation (7:6–23) leading to a formulated warning (Prov. 7:24–27); and chapter 9 has Woman Wisdom and Woman Foolishness each voice their similar invitations to youth to come in for a delicious meal (Prov. 9:1–6, 13–18). Later on in the Older Testament there are the extensive speeches of false counsel by Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, plus Elihu, contesting the integrity of Job: such a jumble of aphoristic, epigrammatic poetic set pieces and chorus of contesting voices is the paradigmatic rabbinic way to provide תורה to the next generation. To dismiss such "dramatic tension" of the script because it lacks a Sophoclean plot line and "logical" (!) cohesion outlined by Aristotle, is narrow-minded, bad aesthetics. There is much more presentation power in voicing such "wisdom" text than is dreamt of in many a theology.⁵⁶

Herder was on the cusp of affirming this integrative interpretation in 1776 in his attempt to offer a live-wire biblical text freed from rationalizing theologoumena when he acknowledged that the different "scenes" were "edited together," even though Herder identified only two main figures, believed the piece had been written during the heyday of Israel's flourishing peace under Solomon, and missed the significance of the refrain.⁵⁷ That is why Herder, for example, had trouble fitting together the switching back and forth in the pericopes of the book between Solomonic pomp and circumstance next to pastoral shepherdess and motherly homey simplicity. Herder's rather lame explanation in 1778 is that the conjunction of a rough Mahanaim (army) dancing pleasure and gentle apple blossom contentment [6:8–13] is normal for the Eastern (*Morgenland*) take on love matters, albeit rather foreign to the morals and mores of us nice, non-Oriental people (1:87–90).

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ed. Arie C. Leder (Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary and Christian Reformed Church Publication, 1998), 181–200.

⁵⁶ G. Lloyd Carr's repeated, off-colour judgment that my oratorio translation and version of The Greatest Song "is unactable*"* because of his "considerable experience in theatrical production and direction*"* ("Is the Song of Songs a 'Sacred Marriage' Drama?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 22:2 [1979]: 113; *The Song of Songs, An Introduction and Commentary* [Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984], 34) seems simply foolish to me, since my translation of שיר השרים has been powerfully performed many, many times from 1967 to 2012, in Canada, the Netherlands, Greece, Australia, Spain, and the United States. Cf. Calvin Seerveld, *The Greatest Song in critique of Solomon,* freshly and literally translated from the Hebrew and arranged for oratorio performance (Gregorian style song by Ina Lohr) [Chicago: Trinity Pennyasheet Press, 1963, 1967 / revised second edition, Toronto: Tuppence Press, 1988], www.seerveld.tuppence/html.

⁵⁷ Gaier, 334; Rogerson, 256.

Although Herder had the poetic antennae to sense a change in voices at 7:9b, cutting off the 7:1–9a rant of a "love-drunken bridegroom" which needed to be interrupted (8:621; cf. supra also ms.18), Herder seemed to miss the deep difference in spirit between the "lusty" calculating character of the body-parts speech in 7:1–9a (half repeating the stilted 4:1–5 address) and the delicate, tasteful homage to a betrothed woman in 4:8–15 (echoing the lovely poem in 2:10b–14). It is surprising that many more theologians than Herder have not taken offense at the rehearsed, frontal, body-part cataloging text of 7:1–9a as a lascivious affront to a woman, compared to the respectful yearning male voice celebrating the beloved's sweetness, clothes and aroma as a lovely sheltered garden.[58] The שיר presents two quite vividly contrasting approaches to the woman, and it makes literary *and* site-specific historical sense to assign the domineering making-love voice to a Solomonic figure, and the deferential sister-bride-to-be male voice to a shepherd lover.[59]

The careful (archaicizing) reference in the edited title—אשר לשלמה—is a clue that the שיר is not authored by Solomon, but is the *Song* "which concerns" Solomon, is "about" Solomon. [60] What has blocked theologicians from hearing the *Song* "*in critique of*" Solomon is this:

> An additional difficulty is that the three-person approach necessarily makes Solomon a villain who tries to seduce Shulammith, which would conflict with his status as the exemplar of wisdom in biblical thought and later Jewish and Christian theology.[61]

But the actual biblical assessment of Solomon is different than the theological tradition Estes cites: Solomon went bad in later life, as reported in 1 Kings 9–11. One should not miss either the disapproving point of the chronicler's laconic note that Solomon spent twice as many years building his own house (13 years) as it took to build God's house (7 years) (1 Ki. 6:37–7:1). And most readers miss the chill in Christ's remark that "Solomon in all his glory was not dressed up" as well as a simple wild flower in the field (Matt. 6:28–29; Lu. 12:27)?[62]

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[58] Noegel and Rendsburg read the exaggerated praise in the שיר *against* the backdrop of Arab *tašbib* and *hija* poetry which they cite to support their contention that such utterings in the text, for example, Song 1:9, are ironic praise, a kind of invective (133–40).

[59] Exum (2005) thinks Song 5:10–16 in the Song has a woman adopting "the gaze" too (89); but Harding correctly notes that unlike the direct second-person confronting address of the male voice (Song 7:1–9a), the Shulammite's *wasf* is cast as a third-person description of her lover's appearance *in absentia* (55).

[60] Cf. Noegel and Rendsburg, 140–1.

[61] Daniel Estes, 282.

[62] The only other reference to Solomon in the Newer Testament is also not complimentary but criticizes the blinding esteem in which Solomon was held by the misled masses; Matt. 12:42, Lu. 11:31.

Once one is prepared to think critically of late Solomon, then you detect how the שיר השרים אשר לשלמה deftly criticizes the historical Solomon for boasting about his Egyptian horses [Song 1:9]—a violation of God's command for Israel's kings[63]—and for traveling around with exaggerated royal pomp [Song 3:6–11]. When the Song of Songs openly rejects Solomon's having an extensive *harem* [Song 8:11–12], that wisdom needs to be taken seriously even though it is literarily formulated. That ringing statement does not "problematize the book as a whole" (which Elizabeth Huwiler ranges among "Loose Ends"),[64] but follows up the climactic systematic point of Song 8:6–7 with the Song of Song's historical *Sitz im Leben*.[65] Rather than try to explain "Tirzah" [Song 6:4] as a mistake,[66] one can better take "Tirzah" as evidence of the time and place God had *The Greatest Song* inscripted...by the elderly rejected counselors (wise men) of Rehoboam, those who had known the debauched orgy days of old King Solomon, and knew that abduction of pretty girls for old King David (like Abishag the Shunammite) whom Solomon inherited and for whom Solomon had Adonijah murdered, to keep his inheritance of David's throne legally intact (1 Kings 1 and 1 Ki. 2:13–25),[67] did happen historically in Israel at that time, and God was not pleased.[68] So God's Spirit had "the wise" literate persons of the day—and it could have included wise women[69]—when Tirzah served as Omri's capital of the North-

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[63] King Solomon violated the explicit instruction for Israel's kings not to trade in Egyptian horses, noted in Deut. 17:14–17. Cf. 1 Ki. 4:26 and 10:26–11:8.

[64] Elizabeth Huewiler*, Song of Songs*, in *New International Biblical Commentary on Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999), 288.

[65] "We conclude with our summary position: the Song of Songs was written circa 900 B.C.E., in the northern dialect of ancient Hebrew, by an author of unsurpassed literary ability, adept at the techniques of alliteration and polyprosopon, able to create the most sensual and erotic poetry of his day, and all the while incorporating into his work a subtext critical of the Judahite monarchy in general and Solomon in particular," Noegel and Rendsburg, 184. Noegel and Rendsburg, however, do not take the final step of recognizing two contrasting male voices (172).

[66] Marvin Pope, *Song of Songs*, 558–60.

[67] Absalom's violation of fleeing David's rump *harem* left behind, upon the counsel of the wise Ahitophel, also was a way to validate his usurping acquisition of the royal throne (cf. 2 Sam. 16:20–23).

[68] Cf. Seerveld*, The Greatest Song, in critique of Solomon*, 67–94.

[69] Professional wise woman were integral and a respected group in Israelite society from the time of General Joab and King David who "consulted" them at critical moments (cf. 2 Sam. 14:1–24; 20:14–22) until the time of Jeremiah (called החכמות, Jer. 9:16–20). So thoughts of womanly writers among those "wise counselors" whom God had compose *The Greatest Song* is apropos (and does not need the edge of "resistant" reading). Cf. articles by S.D. Goiten (1957), Athalya Brenner (1985), Jonneke Bekkenkamp and Fokkelien van Dijk (1987) collected in Part II of Athalya Brenner, ed., *A Feminist Companion to the Songs of Songs* (Sheffield Academic press, 1993), 58–97; and Jannie H. Hunter, "The Song of Protest: Reassessing the Song of Songs," *JSOT* 90 (2000): 114. Many years ago (ca. 1950's) the Dutch philosopher

ern kingdom (920–875 BC) and would be compared to Jerusalem, book this exquisite poetic literature. Literature is not unreliable "fiction" because poetic "figures of speech" ruin its factual information. Literature is intrinsically metaphorical prose which is able to recount historical deeds, disclose unpleasant truths, and provide sound directives *within* its sheath of imaginative exuberance, allusivity, and ironic quality.

Then the strange opposition Herder feels bewildering in the whole piece makes good narrative sense, and other "songs" also fall into place (for those willing to use their imagination): that the Shulammite country maiden was abducted by palace officials [Song 6:11–12], taken into Solomon's *harem* precincts, the Daughters of Jerusalem [Song 1:4b–7], forced to endure Solomon's affected seductive advances while she communes in her musing and dreams with her absent, betrothed shepherd lover...until in the whole story the lover confronts the royal captor and captive [Song 6:8–9], and after Solomon's final appeal revealing lust [Song 7:1–9a] is repulsed, the country lovers pledge their vows of jealous true love [Song 8:6–7], a critique of (old) Solomon is voiced [Song 8:11–12], and the agile lovers are blessed to be free...together.

So the שיר השירים ingeniously testifies and discloses again, in fallen historical circumstances, God's original, marvelous creational gift and call (Gen. 2:18–25) for a woman and a man to enter freely into mutually pledged erotic joy that knows the jealous union of flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone. The nuptial vows enunciated in 8:6, which Solomonic magnates of every age have defaulted on, present in capsule the poignant wisdom thrust of this whole Bible book,[70] summing up the back-and-forth struggle for genuine love (=*mutually giving away your very bodied self* to an other for whom you are saved) versus its simulacrum of *getting physical self-satisfaction.*

> Hold me as a seal (חותם) to your heart;
>
> keep me as a signet ring upon your finger.
>
> For love is as permanent as death,
>
> and the passionate drive of love as all-consuming as the most terrible power!
>
> Its flames are flashes of fire—
>
> a pure fire of the LORD God!

Just as the poetic paragraph of Prov. 5:15–23 serves like *halakah* on the Genesis 2 passage affirming bonded erotic pleasure (before there were parents and before sin spit on God's good handiwork), so the שיר השירים acts

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theologian, K.J. Popma, who specialized in Older Testament wisdom literature, told me he thought it likely that שיר השרים was inscripted by women.

[70] Exum (1999) credits Song 8:6–7 as the "one didactic statement" in the piece. Sadgrove says these verses "which are "possibly a *mashal*" serves as the climax of the *Song* (246).

like *haggadah* extrapolation on God's Genesis-revealed approval of and bless-
ing upon human passion sealed by a vow.[71] The exultant joy experienced by
two persons—a man and a woman, like Adam and Eve—sexually to become *one
flesh*, celebrated and praised by this *Greatest Song* reveals deeply the exuberant
merciful wisdom of the LORD God who created for us humans the possibil-
ity of such shalom.

Then one can hear the refrain (Song 2:7; 3:5; [5:8]; 8:4)—introduced by
השבעתי ("I plead/I charge you to swear to me that") as pledging an oath.[72]
And the mention of חתום (an "authoritative seal," or "signet ring") acknowl-
edges the covenanting permanence which is normative for such committed
love action. That reality sets up the obedient, later prophet Hosea's deed of
marrying a prostitute in order to try vividly to teach God's people how the
covenantal LORD felt about their idolatries.[73] And underneath these prophet-
ic developments lies the basic revelation of שלהבת יה ("a flame of YAH!")
which heightens both Genesis 2 and Proverbs 5 to show what is at stake for
us humans in our lifetimes: if human erotic, passionate love is not enflamed
by the very LORD God! what does it profit you? Paul Ricoeur seconds Beau-
champs's judgment that if יה is not taken to mean "Yahweh," but is reduced
to an adjective like "vehement" (RSV) or "raging" (NRSV), one has missed
the capstone significance of this concluding passage and its tie-in to Wis-
dom.[74]

Conclusion

My brief has been: "We can learn from overlooked Herder's hermeneutics
and treatment of שיר השרים that if you go to Scripture initially as a dogmatic
theologician, you will misconceive what God asks of you as biblical theologi-
an." The logical distillation of Scripture's tenets comes afterwards. First, one
must know how to approach the Bible as literature and read the biblical liter-
ary text with a faith couched within the biblical canonic framework, and be
aware of the biblical text as a performative (God-speaking) script. Otherwise
one may forfeit taking in the Bible the way the Scripture is truly given, and
thus garble its direction and wisdom for our daily human lives.[75]

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[71] Herder hints at this connection (cf. supra ms. 10), and this insight was explicat-
ed early on by Phyllis Trible in her formative book, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*
(Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), where the *Song* is read as a corrective midrash
on Genesis 2–3; cf. chapter 5, "Love's Lyrics Redeemed."

[72] Sadgrove, 24.

[73] Conversely(!), the apostle Paul uses the intimacy of Christ with the church to
help teach converted pagan men how to respect women in marriage. Cf. Eph. 5:21–
24 leads into Eph. 5:25–33.

[74] Cf. Paul Ricoeur, "La métaphore nuptiale," in André Lacocque et Paul Ricoeur*,
Penser la Bible* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1998), 452, note 37.

Book Reviews

Peter Enns. *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins.* Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012. Xx + 172 pp. Paperback, ISBN 978-1-58743-315-3. $17.99 Paperback.

The historicity of Adam is the latest faith-science battleground. New studies in genetics have asserted that the human genome's complexity cannot allow for a single male ancestor, which contradicts theological assertions that original sin only can be understood correctly by the historicity of a literal first father.

Enns wishes to avoid what he views as false dichotomies. As he notes, "People have left their faith behind when confronted with such a false choice. If the faith of such readers is to be sustained, they must not cling to the mistaken approaches of the past but find the courage to adjust their expectations to what Genesis is prepared to deliver" (56). Enns therefore employs an orthodoxy defined not by the biblical text but by its interpretations in the historical creeds (x-xi).

For Enns, this means re-evaluating not the text of Genesis so much as its ancient Near Eastern literary context. He affirms Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis, placing the composition of the Torah as late and editorial. By reading Genesis's opening as the product of a newly nationalistic Israel, the creation story becomes merely one more competing story.

This view encounters substantial theological problems, particularly those rooted in Paul's linkage between Adam and Christ in Rom. 5. Enns notes the paucity of Old Testament references to Adam and at least implies that Paul's views of original sin are alien to the remainder of Scripture because of his faulty handling of prior texts. While Enns affirms sin's universality (xi), he is ill-at-ease with Pauline original sin (and its theological heirs).

Evangelicals likely will view Enns' arguments as rigged from their outset. First, he constantly asserts the logical fallacy of the appeal to authority (*argumentum ad verecundiam*). Statements such as "biblical scholars commonly accept" (38) and "there is really little question among scholars of Scripture" (47) tend to be overblown when applied to contentious issues such as the dating of Genesis and authorial intent.

Second, he deflates inspiration to what he terms "a faulty theological assumption …: The Bible is inspired by God and therefore simply can't reflect the sort of nonsense we see in the ancient world. God is the God of truth and wouldn't perpetuate lies, but correct them" (42). This places the opening of Genesis into the category of pure myth, though it somehow retains its moral force as "God's Word" (56). Indeed, Enns personally embraces this foundational moral status of Scripture in his opening pages: "I also try to follow the teachings of Scripture as a whole and Jesus in particular in my life as

a follower of Christ" (xi). Likewise, he asserts his belief in "the work of the Savior" (xi).

This "work of the Savior" is, of course, grounded in the resurrection, which is the ultimate faith-science question. If we jettison a literal interpretation of Scripture because of scientific assertions that lie "beyond any reasonable scientific doubt" (ix), then what are we to do with the literal resurrection of Christ, which likewise lies beyond empirical belief? Is it just a self-identity story generated by the disciples to assert the superiority of their god-man in the context of the Greco-Roman world's competing caesars-cum-sons of God? As Enns seems to shrug off his own observation that "the resurrection of Christ is every bit as mythical as Adam… . [But this] is actually beside the modest point I am making" (125), he also adds "accepting the resurrection of Christ is truly a matter of faith" (126) and "the resurrection of the Son of God is a game changer" (130). The reader must ask, then, what is so compelling about the resurrection in the face of scientific doubt? And if the resurrection is merely a moral story, are we not confronted again by Paul's pesky assertion (1 Cor. 15:19) that without a literal resurrection, we are to be pitied? While Enns connects 1 Cor. 15 with Rom. 5, he shortchanges the importance of the relationship between the resurrection and a historical Adam.

Finally, Enns's hermeneutical framework demands interpretation of Scripture through a scientific lens: "Unless one simply rejects scientific evidence …, adjustments to the biblical story are always necessary" (xv). This fails on a major, but under-examined, factor in the faith-science conversation: "scientific evidence" is basically scientific text: it must be interpreted. There is a significant difference between accepting scientific *evidence* and accepting scientists' *interpretations* of that evidence within the presuppositions of their own interpretive community.

Enns wrestles with important questions but, alas, he provides few new answers to sustain a refreshed dialogue. Perhaps this is to be expected, however, when he insists on employing his own native, skeptical tongue, discounting the language of his co-conversants as barbaric.

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Sang-Il Lee. *Jesus and Gospel Traditions in Bilingual Context: A Study in the Interdirectionality of Language.* Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 186. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012. xviii + 522 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-3-11-026617-7. $168.00 Hardback.

In *Jesus and Gospel Traditions in Bilingual Context*, Sang-Il Lee offers scholars the first systematic study of the effect of bilingualism on the transmission of the Jesus tradition. In the first part of the book, he includes a lengthy history of research, demonstrating that bilingualism, which functions as the jargon term for multilingualism as well (81), has largely been overlooked. He also offers detailed descriptions of bilingualism in first-century Palestine, the Di-

aspora, and the Jerusalem church. In the second part of the book, Lee presents arguments for the effects of bilingualism at the levels of syntax, phonology, and semantics. His conclusion chapter then applies many of these insights to various issues in Gospels studies, such as the Synoptic Problem or historical Jesus research.

In general terms, Lee's efforts to demonstrate the significance of bilingualism for scholarly conceptions of the Jesus tradition are overwhelmingly successful. He introduces important concepts such as matrix language (predominant language), embedded language (acquired language), codeswitching (intentional usage of multiple languages in the same language event), and many others. His emphasis on the role of multiple languages and their utilizations in Jesus' context leads to fresh insights. For example, contra Hengel, Lee proposes that the usage of *Hellenistai* at Acts 6.1 refers to predominantly Greek-speaking bilinguals with no reference to their ethnicity (whether Jewish or Gentile). As another example, his successful arguments for the interpenetration of Aramaic and Greek present substantial problems for scholars who attempt to reconstruct the Aramaic behind the Greek tradition based on a simplistic Aramaic-to-Greek translation hypothesis.

The main weakness of the study, however, is the way in which the argument for the significance of bilingualism drives the discussion over, and sometimes against, the evidence that Lee marshals. At times, this leads Lee to treat the same piece of evidence differently in different contexts. For example, when Lee wishes to argue against Hengel that the Greek names of the seven deacons indicates their identity as Greek-speaking Hellenists, he claims, "A Greek name itself should not be considered indicative of someone's language" (198). However, only one page later, when Lee wants to forward the theory that Caesarea Maritima was a bilingual city, he says, "Synagogue inscriptions from Caesarea … imply that all donors of the inscriptions could be Greek-speaking Jews, *as their Greek names show*" (199 n.68, emphasis added).

More problematic, however, are the occasions when Lee claims more than the evidence can support by drawing firm conclusions from demonstrations of possibility. One example is his argument that the seven deacons were bilingual and thus "the Bilingual Seven" (197–208). That some of the seven came from bilingual contexts demonstrates the possibility that they were bilingual. No matter how high this possibility is, however, it remains only a possibility. The text of Acts simply does not provide us enough information about their individual identities and linguistic abilities to conclude that all seven were certainly bilingual, much less that they were chosen for service on the basis of their bilingualism (205). As another example, Lee argues consistently on the basis of cognitive linguistics that alleged Semitisms and Septuagintalisms in the New Testament are not necessarily due to ("contact-induced") Hebrew/Aramaic infiltration of Koine Greek, but rather due to the ("internal-induced") syntactic change within Greek itself. As one linguistic instance, he cites the hypotactic participial usages of *legō*, wherein the *legō* participle loses its lexical sense in modification of the main verb. Lee argues that these

are not Semitisms, as is commonly assumed, and cites as evidence occurrences of this phenomenon in Greek authors. Lee initially introduces his counterclaim with appropriate caution in the subjunctive mood: "However, it *seems* that the usage of λέγων *can be* considered to be grammatical polysemy of λέγω in the development of Hellenistic Greek" (253; emphases added). He proceeds, however, from the positive demonstration that this phenomenon occurs in Greek literature to the firm negative conclusion that "this means that the syntactic change should not be regarded as a peculiar characteristic of New Testament Greek, nor as a Semitism or a Septuagintalism" (254). Lee has, however, demonstrated only the possibility of this phenomenon being an internal Greek development, not the impossibility of its being a Semitism or Septuagintalism.

Such overreaching claims (which are not infrequent) should not, however, distract scholars from the significance of Lee's study. Like many other seminal works, its main contribution is in opening scholars' eyes to a field of discourse with long-range implications. In this sense, it is less significant for the individual answers it offers than for the questions it not only raises, but enables. On this basis, I highly recommend this original and insightful study to Gospels scholars, especially those interested in the linguistic and scribal cultures of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity.

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B. Dwain Waldrep and Scott Billingsley. (eds) *Recovering The Margins of American Religious History: The Legacy of David Edwin Harrell Jr.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012. xvii + 152 pp. Paperback. ISBN-13: 978-0-8173-5708-5. $22.95 Paperback.

Historians who study the American South can all agree that religion played a central role in the creation of the region's distinctiveness. All Christian denominations have given greatly to the history of the place and the thought and behavior of Southerners. The evangelical Protestant movements have been especially influential in the 19th and 20th centuries. A lion in the field of Southern evangelical religious studies since the late 20th Century has been David Edwin Harrell Jr. His scholarship and reach are vast. His first major contribution, a book on the Disciples of Christ, *Quest for A Christian America* (1966) is still considered a classic in the field. He continued with a biography of one of its leaders in *The Churches of Christ in the Twentieth Century: Homer Hailey's Personal Journey of Faith* (2000). He wrote a U.S. history textbook, *Unto a Good Land: A History of the American People (2006),* his *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (2008) broke new ground on that topic and he completed biographies of both Oral Roberts*, Oral Roberts: An American Life* (1985) and Pat Robertson, *Pat Robertson: A Life and Legacy* (2010). Anyone wanting more information about these two lions of Southern evangelicalism and their Churches, media empires, and educational

institutions must take up what Harrell wrote. Who else has had this kind of range and ability to write in such different genres and do so with such skill and finesse? And this short list of Harrell's written accomplishments only scratches the surface. He taught and trained thousands of students, many of whom followed in the master's footsteps, and remained active in Church life.

In this compact volume a legion of leading Southern historians, some of them Harrell's own students, attempt to come to terms with what is arguably a legacy that will endure perhaps twice as long or more than the fifty years Harrell has studied the Southern religious past. Festschrift this is not. In nine essays neatly bookended with a beautiful foreword by Wayne Flynt and trenchant conclusion by Beth Barton Schweiger, scholars lay down original work of their own and explain both Harrell the man and Harrell the scholar. Anyone interested in Southern religion will have to examine the essays to learn more about the beliefs, controversies, and issues that continue to inter-est and haunt scholars of Southern Protestant Evangelicalism. To understand Ed Harrell, as his friends called him, this volume is also indispensable. Ed had one foot planted firmly in his Christian faith as a "Biblical literalist" as Schweiger labels him, and the other in the "liberal academy" albeit at large Southern universities, throughout his long and expansive career.

Samuel Hill, James R. Goff Jr., Richard T, Hughes, and Charles Reagan Wilson provide essays both biographical and analytical to situate Harrell and his work in the broader context of Southern history. Sprinkled throughout their work are cherished personal stories of encounters or impressions of an affable man, great golfer, and genuine friend who left a mark on all he met. Scott Billingsley, John Hardin, and B. Dwain Waldrep present essays that are more analytical, covering the so-called prosperity gospel, development of the Churches of Christ, and millenarian fundamentalism in the South. Each essay gives a nod directly or indirectly to Harrell and his work on faith in the rural and growing urban communities across the region. The volume has notes, an index, and a section about the contributors. It is a welcome and gratifying effort that honors a good and faithful servant of the Lord.

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Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles. *The Lion and the Lamb: New Testament Essentials from The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012. xviii + 460 pp. Hardback, 9781433677083. $39.99 Hardback.

Introductions to the New Testament are legion and tend to crop up with regularity. The majority of those that are particularly well done are typically targeted at the same audience: seminary students and those working at a graduate level. It is rare to find a New Testament introduction that is con-densed enough and yet foundational enough to be appropriate for a New

Testament survey at the college level. *The Lion and the Lamb*, however, fits that bill nicely, and what it does, it does very well.

As the subtitle suggests, *The Lion and the Lamb* is an abridgment of the earlier work, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown* (B&H Academic, 2009) by the same authors. For the student (or professor) of the New Testament who is wondering which of these volumes best fit his needs, it would be helpful to know what *The Lion and the Lamb* offers and how it differs from its parent volume, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown.* This review will consider both.

The Lion and the Lamb essentially offers its readers four things. First, it offers a prolegomena to the study of the New Testament, including a discussion of the nature and scope of Scripture (Ch. 1), introductory background issues related to the study of the New Testament (Ch. 2), and introductory material related to Jesus (Ch. 3) and Pauline studies (Ch. 9). Second, it offers, as expected, an introduction to the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. This makes up the rest of the chapters in the work. With each New Testament book the authors include a regular collection of sections and subsections: a brief presentation of "core facts" about each book, a discussion of the unique contribution of that book to the canon, a brief discussion on authorship, date (and internal and external evidence for such), provenance and destination, purpose, and literary plan. The survey of each book also contains an outline, a short discussion of the theological contribution of the book to the Christian faith, a short statement of application from the book, study questions, and a brief but appropriately scholarly bibliography. Third, *The Lion and the Lamb* offers a "unit-by-unit" survey of the content of each of the New Testament books. And fourth, the work concludes with fifteen pages of color maps that will be useful to beginning students of the New Testament. Within these four offerings, *The Lion and the Lamb* is appropriately introductory as befits its audience, sufficiently academic to be used by beginning college students and perhaps even seminary students, thoroughly conservative and evangelical in its approach, and current in its scholarship.

How then does *The Lion and the Lamb* differ from *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*? *The Lion and the Lamb* is almost half the number of pages of its parent volume. This page-count reduction was achieved by abridging the prolegomena and abridging the introductory material to each New Testament book. In all cases but one the heart of each discussion remains fully intact. Though readers of *The Lion and the Lamb* will not get as complete a discussion as readers of *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, they will still read treatments on canon, book order, collection, transmission, inspiration, the use of the Old Testament in the New, second temple Judaism, references to Jesus outside of the Gospels, and even the synoptic problem. In each section introducing the books of the New Testament, readers will receive balanced and academically respectable conclusions about authorship, historical setting, and composition, though detailed supporting arguments such as inticate challenges to authorship, portioning theories, etc. have been omitted.

The only significant complete omission from the prolegomena is the removal of the section on modern approaches to reading Paul (New Perspectives, N. T. Wright, etc.). Given the importance of that discussion to current issues in the study of the New Testament, that omission is unfortunate. The entry on "New Perspectives" in *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown* was quite good. But given the difficulty of that discussion for novices to the field and the intended audience for this book, that omission is probably forgivable.

The Lion and the Lamb is an excellent text for those looking for a more condensed version of a larger New Testament introduction. It is user-friendly, of a manageable size, and yet comprehensive enough to serve as an excellent classroom text for beginning students without the need to require a second, supplementary text.

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J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays. *Living God's Word: Discovering Our Place in the Great Story of Scripture.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. 322 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780310292104. $34.99 Hardback.

Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays believe that to rightly understand the Bible one must "learn the [biblical] Story" and "how to read the Story well" (9), and it is for this reason that they have written *Living God's Word.* Their purpose is not only to summarize the biblical story but also to demonstrate how a person can become part of that grand narrative, both through initial faith in Christ and the ongoing life of a believer. Their implied audience is undergraduate Bible overview students.

The book follows the typical contemporary outline of the biblical story, beginning with Creation and Fall, moving to the beginnings of Redemption with Israel, and then seeing Redemption culminated with Christ's first coming and consummated with his return. Duvall and Hays cleverly alliterate their chapters using the letter "C", and they outline that broad narrative more specifically as Creation and Crisis, Covenant, Calling Out, Commandments, Conquest and Canaanization, Creation of the Kingdom, Communion and Common Sense, Crumbling of the Kingdom, Captivity and Coming Home, Christ, Church, and Consummation. Some of those sections have multiple chapters (e.g. Christ, and Church) while others are stand-alone chapters themselves (e.g. Commandments).

Duvall and Hays believe that the Bible is one story, connected in each part. The primary way they connect the different parts together is by reminding the reader what was lost in the Garden and by showing how the Abrahamic covenant is the promise of redemption for that loss. They connect the Old and New Testaments through the Abrahamic promises of land, descendants, a blessed global family, and blessings and cursings, first in the Old Testament narratives and prophecies of their fulfillment and then through Christ's fulfillment of them in the New Testament. The authors remind the reader that

what God is ultimately about is saving man from what happened in the Fall, and that he is doing so through Christ, who defeats evil, rescues his people from sin, and restores his creation (19). The final goal is for God to be able to dwell with his people once again on his creation.

There is much to commend about *Living God's Word*. The message of the book, that as good biblical readers we must both understand the biblical story and apply it, is spot on. The authors' summary of the story is accurate and theologically astute. The organization of the chapters includes a synopsis of what has happened to that point, ways to apply the message of the current chapter, and assignments to help the reader fully understand the chapter's content. These are all useful tools for either new readers of the Scriptures or those who are teaching a Bible overview course. Hard questions, such as the relationship between evolutionary theory and Genesis 1, the date of the Exodus, and evidence for the resurrection, are handled succinctly but also with aplomb. Historical data relevant to parts of the biblical story are inserted with ease. Most importantly, the authors are theologically informed, Christologically centered, and focused on God's work of restoration for his image bearers and for all of creation.

Even with these commendations, there are a few weaknesses, but here I will only mention one. The most obvious to this reviewer is the organization of the book. Particular books of the Bible are split into different parts of the story; for instance, 1 Kings 1–11 is discussed in the Creation of the Kingdom section, while 1 Kings 12–2 Kings 25 gets treatment under the Crumbling of the Kingdom. Further these two sections are split up by the Communion and Common Sense section, which handles Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Songs. This is confusing for someone trying to read through the Bible for the first time or trying to learn about the story, and makes the canonical placement of books seems disjointed in contrast to the more fluid story of Duvall and Hays. It seems wiser, at least to this reviewer, to follow the canonical order of the books and adjust the section titles rather than the other way around. Further, one wonders why Duvall and Hays follow the English order of the canon, when the Hebrew order of Law, Prophets, and Writings may have alleviated some of these difficulties.

In spite of what I consider an organizational snafu, Duvall and Hays have produced an excellent introduction to the story of the Bible that will benefit any beginning student of the Word. *Living God's Word* could also be used in a church setting, perhaps as a teaching tool on a Wednesday night study on an overview of the Bible. In short, I would recommend this book to anyone attempting to more fully grasp the overall message and story of the Bible and its application to believers today.

<div style="text-align: right">

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Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott. *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Xi + 757 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780199791606. $65.00 Hardback.

In the past half-century, numerous studies of Jonathan Edwards's thought have been published. Until very recently, scholars had to use reprints of nineteenth-century editions of Edwards's writings and, if they were serious, spend considerable time working with the manuscripts available in the Beineke Library at Yale University. That changed in 2008 when Yale University Press completed publication of the twenty-six volume *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*. Since then, the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University has made the entire series and an additional forty-seven volumes of Edwards's works available online at the Center's website. Researchers now have access to critical editions of Edwards's entire written corpus.

The Theology of Jonathan Edwards, co-authored by Michael McClymond and Gerald McDermott, is the first serious study of Edwards's thought since the completion of the "Yale Edition" of Edwards's works. The authors are well-qualified to take up their task. McClymond, who teaches at Saint Louis University, is a leading scholar of revival and is the author of *Encounters with God: An Approach to the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (OUP, 1998). McDermott, who teaches at Roanoke College, is the author of two monographs about Edwards's thought and is the editor of *Understanding Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction to America's Theologian* (OUP, 2008). Their combined effort in *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* is by far the most comprehensive study of Edwards's theology that has yet been published.

McClymond and McDermott divide their book into three major parts. Part One introduces Edwards's historical, cultural, and social contexts. The authors push back against attempts to find one central theme in Edwards's thought. Instead, they compare his theology to a symphony with multiple, presumably complementary parts. This eclectic approach allows them to hold together various alleged tensions in Edwards's theology and interpret him as a figure who transcends traditional movements and boundaries. He was part Reformed Orthodox theologian, part Enlightenment philosopher, part Puritan pastor, and part evangelical revivalist. His deep spirituality was informed by all of these contexts and was affective, mystical, and activist. He was not a static defender of a closed theological system, but was a creative theologian whose system was constantly evolving as he learned new insights and underwent new experiences.

Part Two, by far the largest section, provides an exposition of Edwards's theology spread out over thirty chapters. It is in these chapters especially that the authors make their case for a symphonic reading of Edwards's thought. In terms of his method, Edwards focused extensively upon beauty and theological aesthetics, found types of Christ in all of Scripture and even the created order (!), valued the role of tradition more than many Protestants, embraced both literal and spiritual exegesis, and believed that God was working among all peoples throughout all of history to bring about his redemptive

purposes. He was a creative and theocentric philosopher who included an apologetic angle in many of his writings, especially against Deism.

Edwards's theology was thoroughly Trinitarian, prefiguring modern social models of the Trinity, and focused upon God's sovereignty, self-glorification, and self-communication. He closely connected eschatology and history, famously seeing Christians' final destiny as a heaven that is filled with intra-Trinitarian love and human relationships that reflect that love. His Christology was a creative extension of classically Reformed themes. Edwards's pneumatology, though also broadly Reformed, was also arguably Catholic in some ways, though filtered through the lens of revival. He wrote extensively on angelology, closely connecting the person and work of angelic beings with the person and work of Christ.

Edwards's understandings of affections, which included thoughts, emotions, and will, stood at the center of his anthropology and shaped his understanding of revival and authentic spiritual experience. He modified covenant theology by collapsing the biblical covenants into one covenant of redemption, though he accepted the Puritan emphases on church and national covenants. His influential views on free will and original sin were philosophical attacks on "Arminianism," which Edwards considered to be any commitment to a self-determined will in salvation and ethics. His soteriology was fundamentally Reformed, though allegedly refined by a Catholic emphasis on infused grace, which informed an understanding of justification and sanctification that in some respects resembles the New Perspective. Conversion was a monergistic, transformative "sense of the heart" given by the Holy Spirit that may or may not accompany the traditional Puritan means of grace. Unlike most Protestants, Edwards incorporated an Orthodox-like understanding of *theosis* into his soteriology, emphasizing our participation by grace in the divine life of God.

Edwards's ecclesiology underwent subtle shifts during his ministry, especially regarding the sacraments. He came to emphasize a pure church membership and a more restricted communion than he inherited from his grandfather and predecessor, Solomon Stoddard. This change played a key part in his dismissal from his Northampton pastorate in 1750. Despite caricatures to the contrary, Edwards was a skilled preacher who embraced the traditional Reformed emphasis on proclamation. He was also very active in public affairs, though loyalty to the heavenly kingdom always outweighed loyalty to the earthly kingdom. Edwards's ethic famously emphasized "disinterested benevolence," which is love of God for his own sake, and beauty. He combined a millenarian eschatology, prayer, and revival advances in his emphasis on global evangelization. He also served as a missionary to Native Americans after his forced termination. Edwards maintained a lifelong interest in other religions, speculating (though never advocating) that some non-Christians might be saved short of conversion based upon their disposition toward receiving Christ if they had access to the gospel.

Part Three examines how Edwards's thought was appropriated by his successors and how it has been interpreted by various scholars. The so-called New Divinity was comprised of second-generation Edwardseans who advocated revival, missions, and benevolent activism. There was both continuity and discontinuity between Edwards and the Edwardseans, especially in matters of sin and soteriology. Scholars continue to debate how true some of the Edwardseans were to Edwards himself. Andover Seminary became a center for New Divinity thought, while Princeton Seminary offered a more traditionally Calvinist rebuttal to the New Divinity. The Princetonians, especially Charles Hodge, also offered general criticism of Edwards's thought.

A diverse cadre of secular and religious historians and philosophers, Neo-Orthodox and evangelical theologians and ethicists, fundamentalist revivalists, and Reformed pastors participated in a mid-twentieth-century Edwards Renaissance after decades of misunderstanding, neglect, or outright rejection. Each of these groups offered different, often competing views of Edwards; even some Catholics attempted to appropriate Edwards. This multiplicity of interpretations, which fits nicely with a symphonic reading of Edwards, leads McClymond and McDermott to suggest that Edwards serves as a theological bridge between various movements and traditions that do not always complement one another (Protestant and Catholic, liberal and conservative, etc.).

The Theology of Jonathan Edwards represents a landmark achievement in Edwards Studies. Overall, McClymond and McDermott do an excellent job of summarizing Edwards's theology and the reception of his thought during the past two and a half centuries. The authors' symphonic approach is a helpful way to interpret Edwards, and their suggestion that he was an open system thinker is surely correct, at least within the boundaries of the Reformed tradition. The emphasis on Edwards's spirituality is refreshing, as is the authors' general hesitancy to artificially pit Edwards the pastor against Edwards the theologian, or Edwards the philosopher against Edwards the revivalist. Scholars and graduate students who are interested in Edwards's reception and legacy will find much food for thought (and perhaps a dissertation topic or two) in Part Three.

As is always the case in a book of this scope, many scholars will disagree with some of the authors' interpretations. I will raise two such concerns. First, McClymond and McDermott are reliant on Anri Morimoto's "Catholic" interpretation of Edwards's theology. They cast Edwards as a "soft" Protestant in terms of his views on justification, sanctification, and the nature of grace. The resulting portrait, an ecumenical Edwards who provides a possible bridge to overcome the Protestant-Catholic divide, seems very far removed from Edwards's historical context as a Reformed pastor who believed, unequivocally, that Rome was Antichrist. Scholars such as Michael McClenahan, Kyle Strobel, Josh Moody, and Doug Sweeney have demonstrated that Edwards's views on these doctrines were not semi-Catholic, but creative restatements of Reformed Orthodoxy.

Second, it seems that McClymond and McDermott at times overemphasize Edwards's unpublished "Miscellanies." One clear example is in their understanding of Edwards's theology of world religions. McDermott in particular has argued for Edwards's openness to other religions for many years, especially in his book *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths* (Oxford University Press, 2000). The authors do not claim Edwards was an inclusivist, but they suggest Edwards was at least moving in that direction, making their case primarily from his unpublished writings that were constantly being revised and refined. Edwards may have indeed been a proto-inclusivist; my principle concern is not with Edwards's views of the unevangelized. My discomfort is with the methodological problem of relying on unpublished, ever-changing, half-formed private musings such as the "Miscellanies" to illumine what Edwards *really* thought. It seems like the better route is to allow unpublished works to contextualize, but never control the interpretation of Edwards's published works, especially when they seem to contradict one another.

Despite my personal demurrals on some points, I am deeply impressed with *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. It will certainly become the starting point for those interested in Edwards's thought, much as George Marsden's *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (Yale University Press, 2003) has established itself as the first stop for those interested in Edwards's life. McClymond and McDermott demonstrate comprehensively that Edwards's theology offers a rich feast for us to embrace, adapt, and perhaps, at times, even debate. I have no doubt their important new book will encourage many readers, especially pastors and students, to dive into the writings of Jonathan Edwards for themselves. Highly recommended.

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Kelly M. Kapic and Bruce L. McCormack, eds. *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012. x + 421 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801035357. $34.99 Paperback.

The purpose of the volume edited by Kapic and McCormack is to summarize the development of classical doctrines over the last couple of centuries. After an introduction, which discusses the concept of modernity and lays out the task for the writers, there are fourteen essays written by highly qualified theologians moving through each of the major theological categories normally discussed in a systematics curriculum. Thus, the most valuable contribution of this volume lies in its structuring its summaries around the doctrine instead of the individuals. As such, the book exposes the student to the broader scope of the modern path through which the doctrine grew, while at the same providing categories by which Schleiermacher and Barth, among others, can be understood.

The nature of the task given to the contributors has at least three limitations. First, while providing a great service to students and teachers of theology, the scope of a doctrine's development within modernity deserves much more elucidation than a 20-page summary can provide. By necessity, then, the authors truncate aspects of the development of the doctrine. For example, in his article, "The Person of Christ," McCormack—fittingly a Barthian scholar—ends abruptly with Barth's theology, telescoping all approaches that follow Barth as either extension or permutation on paradigms culminating in him. As such, McCormack places the burden of evaluating recent developments upon the shoulders of the contemporary student with the expectation that his summary provides the necessary framework for such a task. Though his summary of the doctrine proves valuable and perhaps fits well with the pedagogical purpose of the book, a summary of the reception of Barth and others by more recent theologians would be most welcome.

A second limitation appears when the authors attempt to do too much. In some sense, the reader will feel such a tension throughout the book as the authors attempt to summarize (albeit many times in helpful categories) intricate developments of doctrinal positions and movements. For example, the articles by Kärkkäinen and Horton on "Ecclesiology" and "Eschatology," respectively, suffer acutely from this drawback, even though they have provided a valuable resource for starting to study these doctrines in modernity.

Third, the strength of the book—namely, its structure around a doctrine and not the players in the discussion—also contributes to an inability to come to a complete grasp of certain trains of thought within the development of the doctrines. More specifically, although great time and effort is given in many of the articles to Schleiermacher's (or Barth's) contributions, the impression exists that much more could be said. This is due to the fact that one's theology does not simply develop within a clear set of categories delineated by classical discussions. In other words, despite a noble effort by the contributors, the professor and student will need to demonstrate the overlap in the theologians' thinking regarding these categories.

Kapic and McCormack have provided the theology professor with a valuable resource to bring a student up-to-speed regarding the path of theological studies in modern times. This is so even if the professor views it primarily as a launching point to discuss differences of opinion on modernity and a doctrine's development within modern times. With the priority that the authors give to the contributions of Schleiermacher and Barth, however, a work elaborating specifically on their contributions would be invaluable to such instruction. For many students, the names and approaches will need further elaboration and perhaps more in-depth study to arrive at a full understanding of the ramifications and adaptations for one's theology. At the same time, the book provides the student with a fitting introduction to a lifetime of studying theology. As such, it is here that the book may be poised to make a contribution to the church, namely in influencing how present and future ministers will think about classical doctrine categories within the context of modern

culture. The book will thus fulfill its purpose of instructing students in how the church has thoughts about its doctrine, even when such thinking parts ways with the traditions of which the student may have been a part.

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Miles V. Van Pelt. *Biblical Hebrew: A Compact Guide*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. xii + 210 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780310326076. $19.99 Paperback.

Alongside the Zondervan Biblical Hebrew lineup of grammars, workbooks, vocabulary lists, flashcards, and sundry charts and study aides, Van Pelt has added *Biblical Hebrew: A Compact Guide* [*BHCG*]. This self-described "little book" (the size of a half package of 4x6 inch note cards) appears to be a consolidation of his introduction, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew* (2nd Edition, Zondervan, 2007) written with Gary Pratico, and is presented without the accoutrements of a beginning text—vocabulary, exercises, etc.

The content is a compendium of Biblical Hebrew grammar written from a synchronic perspective. It includes sections on phonology, orthography, and syllabification as well as nouns, pronouns, pronominal suffixes, numerals, prepositions and other particles. Nearly eighty pages are dedicated to charts and prose detailing all of the major Hebrew stems plus the strong and weak verbal conjugations with interspersed biblical examples and morphosyntactic notes. The text is appended by a verbal paradigm and a Hebrew-English lexicon numbering approximately one thousand lexemes.

For most English-language speakers, the grammatical vocabulary will be familiar and not overly linguistic with limited Hebrew terms confined mostly to *niqqud* ("Qamets", "Daghesh", etc.). The grammatical descriptions are written in clear prose and exemplified sufficiently. Biblical examples are numerous and aptly chosen, but references are regrettably absent. The Hebrew text is presented in square script and Tiberian vowels without description of or marking of cantillation. The font size is sufficient; the layout is well conceived; and the printing legible. Typographical errors are relatively few—negligible peccadilloes are conspicuous with the rendering of doubled *mem* (at point four, 9), replacing *patah* for *qames* in הַזְּקֵן (18), and omitted linking vowels with 2fs and 1cp "Type-1" pronominal suffixes (46). Variation in font color—black, red, and gray—is used cogently but suffers from inconsistency within several paradigms (e.g. with the II-Guttural 3mp form [86]) and in other places (cf. the pronunciation charts of the consonants [2] and the vowels [3–4]).

BHCG proves beneficial regarding raw data and portability, but much of the information, particularly pertaining to verbal inflection and lexis, is more readily and comprehensively accessible in other reference materials. Whereas basic phenomena are attended to, the limited grammatical descriptions may lead to frustration as the pedagogic space between a beginning and intermediate grammar appears small even for a compact guide. These issues accom-

panied by the specific concerns noted below impart uncertainty as to the precise value of *BHCG* for the majority of Hebrew students.

The resourcefulness of future editions would be improved with the addition of a parsing guide and sections addressing nominal vocalic patterns and clause-level syntax. The present material describing the high-frequency function words (prepositions, conjunctions, and particles) could be expanded without losing its compact nature. The twenty percent of the pages dedicated to the non-exhaustive "Hebrew-English Lexicon" might be better utilized by an appendix detailing a glossary of linguistic vocabulary and indices providing cross-references to grammatical terms and biblical quotations.

Several aspects of the grammatical description require further comment:

- A transliteration system is absent, and the Hebrew terminology is rendered inconsistently. For example, the voiceless bilabial fricative is rendered by *f* in "Alef", "Kaf", "Qof", "Hatuf" but *ph* in "Hateph"; the voiceless dental stop is *t* in "Bet", "Dalet", "Het", "Tet" but *th* in "Pathach"; the voiceless pharyngeal fricative is transcribed as *h* in "Het", "Hatef", and "Holem" but *ch* in "Pathach".

- The widely accepted seven-vowel timbre system of Tiberian Hebrew is exchanged for an inconsistent scheme of quality and quantity, grouped into "five vowel classes (a, e, i, o, u)" of long, short, and reduced vowels.

- Describing Hebrew grammar synchronically is laudable but, at times, leads to incongruent explanations. On the other hand, imprecise diachronic descriptions are sporadically proffered. Third-*he* verbal roots are said to be original third-*yod* roots, but periodically they fall together paradigmatically with third-*waw* verbs (e.g. שָׁלַוְתִּי) or remain third-*he* (e.g. גָּבְהְתָּ). The "Diphthongs" section describes Proto-Hebrew diphthongs; yet these realize in Tiberian Hebrew as triphthongs (i.e. *bayt and *mawt as בַּיִת and מָוֶת).

- Other minor criticisms: a discussion of accent marking is missing but could be explicated with Dagesh Lene/Forte under "Other Vowel Symbols"; doubly-closed syllables (CVCC-type) are not mentioned with syllabification or Shewa rules; under "Hebrew Vowel Rules" open pretonic syllables are said to require "long" vowels which is true with nominals only; the dual ending is presented as part of the productive morphological system, but it is only lexicalized with certain words; the "Irregular Seghol" of the definite article reflects a regular sound change, that is, original *a becomes *segol* preceding originally doubled ח, ע, and ה followed by *qames*; the indeclinable relative particle אֲשֶׁר is termed a "pronoun"; the numerals three through ten are listed as masculine and feminine based on their morphological form and not according to their syntactic function (e.g. שָׁלֹשׁ is labeled as "Masculine

Absolute"; שְׁלֹשָׁה is "Feminine Absolute"); the "Directional Particle" is better described as an adverbial suffix and not merely as having a lative function; the discussion of imperative sequences should be extended to all volitives; and a description of the long and short prefix conjugations (i.e. imperfective and jussive) is lacking.

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Mark Dever. *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*. Nashville Tennessee, B&H Publishing Group, 2012. vii + 177 pp. Paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4336-7776-2. $12.99 Paperback.

Perhaps no doctrine is subject to more misunderstanding than that of the church. Assuming we can genuinely recover a church life more faithful to the New Testament, Dever's plain-speaking yet insightful book packs significance far exceeding its size. This is not a work of hair-splitting minutia but a cut-to-the-core theological treatise.

The author lays heavy emphasis on both the significance of the church and the sufficiency of scripture in guiding our comprehension of its mission, organization and practice: "In this book I hope to introduce the reader to what the Bible says about the nature and purpose of the church—what it is, what it is for, and what it does." (xiv)

He succeeds admirably. In too many works, the Bible becomes little more than a proof text to justify views reached by other means. Whether or not one agrees with all Dever's conclusions, this is an ecclesiology which can only be justified in terms of biblical revelation. It safely navigates through choppy waters, leaving us in no doubt as to where the truth lies.

Approaching this study *biblically*, *historically* and *practically*, Dever begins by exploring the continuity and discontinuity between Israel and the church. This is a vital endeavor done handily by tracing, etymologically, the usage of "assembly"; surveying the NT role for "ecclesia"; and examining both names and images for the church. As arguments stack up, we have ample ground to distinguish the church from Israel while recognizing their remarkable parallels. The church stands alone, however, as the Body of Christ— the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for taking the good news of Jesus to every tongue, tribe and nation.

Next Dever contrasts the church with the Kingdom of God. The two must be distinguished but never separated. The Kingdom is a matter of recognizing and living under God's authority. Accordingly, the church is a fellowship of those "who have accepted and entered into the reign of God." The Kingdom of God "creates" the church (13) as true Christians live yielded lives separated from the world. Then, through the gospel of the Kingdom, the church possesses its keys and is entrusted with its power. This is not a

distinction without a difference, though in actuality the two keep close company.

Further consideration of the church *biblically* finds Dever addressing its salient features in terms of the "one, holy, universal and apostolic" confessional standard, all amply supported with scriptural undergirding. From these certainties, he nicely segues into the distinguishing marks of the church, under the twin headings of *Right Preaching* and *Right Administration of the Ordinances*. Moving through these sections it is clear that the author takes no lukewarm part. The focus is *not* on churches failing but on failing to *be* the church.

So, this work is a positive force encouraging responsible church membership (chap. 4), solid church polity (chap. 5), biblically qualified leaders (chap. 5) and the faithful practice of congregational discipline (chap. 6). Dever's treatment of the purpose of the church (chap. 7) draws these features into a cohesive whole with God-centered worship, congregational edification and world-wide evangelism all carefully aimed at the glory of God. Little wonder the church's hope (chap. 8) points us continually to Christ's coming and all that His return implies.

As Dever takes up the church *historically*, he provides helpful insights on long-debated questions. Controversies over the church are duly considered, along with discussions of church unity and the rise of denominationalism. While there will be differences of opinion as to whether belief in believer's baptism derived from Elizabethan England (97), Dever is squarely on point in identifying church purity as the fundamental rationale for denominational development.

Chapters 10 and 11 speak to the church's ordinances and organization, investigating past ecclesiastical debates and developments. Dever examines history to achieve the best application of his exegesis of the Word. This brings helpful context and depth of understanding. The church must practice its creed; congregations will always be restless until they rest on the Word of God.

In the final division, Dever buttresses his case *practically,* identifying the hallmarks of a "biblically faithful" church. The author demonstrates how the Bible's vital truths graciously assemble into a church that is *Protestant, gathered, congregational and baptistic.* Of special note is his discussion of the "gathered church" relative to the growing trend of multi-service, multi-site congregations who, in Dever's words, "never congregate." This may ruffle a fair bit of ego, but Dever's questioning of such practices is both forceful and cogent. Those who see in their Bibles a call for vigorous church planting have long known it only too well.

Rounding off this section, Dever asks "Should we have Baptist Churches Today?" With a hardy assent, he probes the connection between baptism and church membership, at the same time making baptism a prerequisite for the Lord's Supper. On this point not everyone will agree. Still, his case is well taken, and just because it's hard to draw a line doesn't mean we shouldn't.

Concluding with the importance of a *"right ecclesiology"* Dever demonstrates how everything vital to the church is encompassed by this doctrine, especially our witness before a skeptical world. The church is not immune from deadly, earthward influences. We must guard, therefore, what it looks like when we live gospel-driven, spiritually transformed and obedient lives.

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Mark A. Noll. *Turning Points*, 3rd Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012. vii + 356 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8010-3996-6. $22.99 Paperback.

Now in its third edition, Mark Noll's *Turning Points* takes the reader on a two thousand year journey through the history of the Christian faith. Structurally built on the premise that Christianity has been directly shaped by certain events over the course of time, Noll seeks to examine those crucial watershed moments he believes left an indelible mark on the faith and set the church on an entirely new trajectory. Each of these hinge moments are explored so that the reader is granted a clear window into the event in question and shown its unique impact on the face of the faith. This allows Noll seamlessly to explore both the emerging and developmental nature of Christianity within a clear and specific historical context.

Chapters 1–3 chart the course of Christianity from its infancy through the patristic period. The destruction of the Temple is cited as the catalyst that separated the church from its Jewish roots. In fact, Noll argues this is precisely what "liberated the church for its destiny as a universal religion offered to the whole world" (16). The ecumenical councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon expanded on this re-orientation by highlighting Christianity's embrace of a territorial form of the faith. Alongside the wedding of church and state, the Trinitarian and Christological language employed in these councils demonstrates a tangible assimilation of Greek ideas and language within the context of Christian theology. Consequently, both politics and culture made lasting impressions on the affairs of the church.

Chapters 4–6 traverse the medieval period with each "turning point" developing in response to an external, historical issue. Here, Noll cites St. Benedict's *Rule* as a critical standard that established much needed ecclesiastical bounds in an attempt to counteract two problems: 1) a dangerous and growing ascetic ideology and 2) a diminished spirituality ushered in by the political and monetary success of the church via the *corpus Christianum*. Similarly, Noll addresses Charlemagne's coronation in chapter 5 by highlighting the mutually beneficial nature of the ceremony for two parties. The alliance was expedient in preserving the papacy's rise in power, while also re-aligning a Christian empire with northern aspirations in light of the expansion of Islam in the Mediterranean region. Four centuries later Noll stresses that these two reali-

ties, alongside exacerbated theological and cultural divisions, led to the definitive East/West divide in the Great Schism.

Noll highlights three events during the early modern period and verbally concedes his own confessional Protestant identity with an emphasis on Luther at Worms (148). Luther's bold stand on Scripture in the face of Charles V provided the impetus for a fracture in the Western church that would remain until today. Moreover, his captivity to the authority of Scripture also lent credence to the rebutting papal claim that such convictions would serve as a seed of fragmentation within the church. The principle of *Sola Scriptura*, which initially served to unite the reformers, would also serve as the very thing that would divide them in light of differing hermeneutical constructs. Chapter 8 further develops this idea of fragmentation, but uses the 1534 Act of Supremacy in England to move beyond mere theological discord towards an emphasis on "self-consciously local, particular, and national forms of Christianity" (170). Accordingly, Noll concedes the polyvalent nature of Christianity moving forward. Chapter 9 explores the influence of the Jesuits, not only in their impact on directing the Catholic reformation (altogether different from the reactionary counter-reformation), but more importantly on expanding the newly articulated dogma of Rome via eastern missionary expansion.

Chapters 10–13 really explore the realignment of the faith in light of the aforementioned fragmentation. The ministries of the Wesley brothers are portrayed as a catalyst of spiritual renewal in an otherwise stagnant, lifeless English church and are cited as the impetus for modern evangelicalism. Chapter 11 casts the French Revolution as "the end—or at least the beginning of the end—of European Christendom" (244). This is seen as the shedding of a Christian ethos in favor of a man/reason centered one. The early twentieth century saw a renewal of global missionary efforts highlighted by the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, which facilitated a spirit of ecumenicalism for a greater Kingdom mentality. Interestingly, this ecumenical spirit is subject to a historical asterisk, for it was entirely devoid of Catholic participation and was largely dominated by an American/English contingent. These two groups become the focus of Chapter 13, which is the largest addition from previous editions. Here, Vatican II is recognized for its role in reassessing Catholic dogma against the backdrop of modernity and its contemporary challenges. The Lausanne Congress, on the other hand, is seen as a Protestant parallel to Vatican II (297); its truly global perspective was baldly lacking at Edinburgh.

Turning Points is a well-written and thought provoking perspective on the developmental nature of Christianity. Obviously, Noll's book is open to the criticism of reductionism. The nature of such a complex entity as Christianity is difficult to understand properly through such a limited sampling. Moreover, one might have qualms about the author's selection of certain specific "turning points." For instance, the Leipzig Debate (1519) might be seen as more determinative to the reformation divide and Worms as simply the final reali-

zation of it. Yet, for a book that seeks to track the trajectory of the Christian faith, these are pragmatic concessions that are a reality for any historical endeavor.

The third edition's inclusion of Vatican II and Lausanne is intriguing. Few qualms can be made for Vatican II's impact, but Lausanne's portrayal as a "turning point" is the most ambitious aspect of this book. This could be perceived as an attempt to find a Protestant equivalent, rather than a meritorious event in its own right. Admittedly, the impact of these two events on the faith is not yet fully discernible, a concession made in the Introduction (ix). Time will tell whether Noll's inclusion of the latter was actually warranted.

Regardless of whether one stands outside the Christian faith or is a follower of Jesus simply seeking to understand one's confessional heritage better, Noll's work provides a historically rooted picture of Christianity. It carefully explores each historical event with enough detail to help corroborate its inclusion in the work, yet frequently leaves the reader seeking further study. Taken as a whole, the real value of Noll's *Turning Points* is its view of the developmental nature of Christianity as men and women alike sought to flesh out their allegiance to Christ across the ages.

Stephen Brett Eccher
Wake Forest, North Carolina

Hugh J. McCann. *Creation and the Sovereignty of God.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012. ix + 280 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780253357144. $39.95 Hardback.

This book defends the thesis that God creates the world and exercises complete sovereignty over everything in it. Overall, this work is written in admirably clear prose. One of its unique strengths is the range of issues it covers. These topics include a defense of God's existence, divine sustenance, divine eternity, the problem of evil, God's sovereignty and human freedom, an account of how God creates moral and conceptual truths, and the doctrine of divine simplicity.

The work has eleven chapters. Chapters one through three explore the existence and nature of God. For example, in chapter one, McCann defends a version of the cosmological argument for God's existence. This is the position that there must have been a first cause of the universe, and this cause is God. Atheists have challenged this view by arguing that the universe is infinitely old without any first cause behind it. However, McCann contends it is hard to maintain this position in light of the modern Big Bang theory. This theory states that the universe is not infinitely old but rather began to exist in a large explosion around thirteen billion years ago. In chapter three, McCann explores God's relation to time. Traditionally, God has been viewed as a timelessly eternal entity that exists completely outside of time. However, recently, some have argued it is better to think of God as everlasting. On the everlasting model, God, like creatures, is located in time, but, unlike any crea-

ture, He has always existed at every moment of time. McCann rejects the everlasting position in favor of the view that God is timelessly eternal. One reason is preserving a robust view of God as creator. In the everlasting position, insofar God always finds Himself locked inside the realm of time, there is a feature of the world that God did not create, namely time itself.

Chapters four through seven treat the problem of evil. McCann touches on a variety of issues in this section. These include divine sovereignty and human freedom, friendship with God, and suggestions as to why there is suffering in the world. For example, in chapter six, McCann argues that one reason why God allows His creatures to rebel against Him is to make friendship with Him possible. Becoming another person's friend requires making a free and informed decision to befriend that person. However, for a person to make such a decision to become God's friend, McCann contends that a person must understand the opposite of befriending Him, namely, being at enmity with Him. In chapter seven, McCann continues to explore reasons that God might have for allowing evil in the world. He argues that one reason is the admirable nature of lives that defeat hardship to achieve success. For example, part of the reason why we admire Beethoven as a great composer is the fact that he composed excellent music despite facing obstacles such as deafness. McCann also suggests that God might allow suffering to help people develop their character. He points out that it is through undergoing suffering that people are able to develop virtues such as patience, humility, perseverance, and trust in God.

Chapters eight through eleven explore the nature and extent of God's creative activity. In chapter eight, McCann follows Leibniz in defending the claim that our current world is the best possible "world" that God could have made. In recent times, many philosophers have rejected this position on the grounds that it seems to be too grandiose a view, since our world is riddled with many instances of suffering. However, McCann contends this position is not as implausible as it may seem. For instance, suppose that what makes a world perfect is containing an infinite amount of some commodity such as happiness. Then it is not obvious that our world is not the best possible. For, according to traditional Christian theology, in our world the saints in fact experience an infinite amount of happiness in the afterlife in heaven. In addition, chapter nine explores how God can be the creator of moral facts (e.g. the fact that murder is wrong). Here McCann develops and defends a version of divine-command theory, the view that God determines what is right and wrong by His commands. Thus, on this view, God is the one who creates the fact that murder is wrong by commanding against it.

McCann has done an excellent job of bringing together and advancing the conversation on many of the major issues discussed within contemporary, analytic philosophy of religion. Scholars and serious students will want to use this book as the starting point for thinking further about the issues it addresses.

Allen Gehring
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Marion Ann Taylor, editor. Agnes Choi, associate editor. *Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2012. xvii + 585 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780801033568. $44.99 Hardback.

"Where are all the women?!" A frustrated friend voiced her concern over the lack of female authors in her biblical interpretation masters program, just the type of concern this volume seeks to address. Believing that "women deserve inclusion in the histories of the interpretation of the Bible" (2), the editors provide a rich resource for biblical educators to integrate the voices of women into their instruction.

The 180 entries (each one ranging from two to six pages) arranged alphabetically (one wonders if a chronological arrangement might have created better contextual reading) highlight women who were "influential, … unique in terms of ideas or interpretive genre, or representative of the kind of interpretive writings done by a number of women at a certain period of time" (5). Even those criteria demand a winnowing, and so the editors limited their scope to the writings of women who wrote after the completion of the Bible up to the twentieth century. The more recent authors gained a place in the volume only if the woman was deceased and her writings predated the "globalization of the profession of biblical studies" (6).

Reading through the lives of these women creates a deep sense of the church universal. The questions and arguments with which the current church wrestles over the place of women in the home and in the church are nothing new. For centuries women have wondered about the same conundrums and advanced the same exegetical supports, an insight that affirms the complexity and vivacity of Scripture for all generations. At the same time their stories create a sense of sadness for what they had to struggle against and gratefulness for the doors they opened. Thus women of current generations, who certainly have struggles, also have many more options and many more pioneers to look toward as examples.

The sense of connectedness arises from the great diversity of stories told in the book. Mystics and missionaries, poets and preachers, apologists and skeptics are each situated in their own time, culture, and life situations in order to help the reader understand some of the reasons behind their stances or decisions. Then, the contributors provide examples of the woman's biblical interpretation, including her methodology along with specific examples of treatments of texts or biblical themes, which often provide lovely quotes for use in preaching or teaching. Finally, each entry provides several bibliographic resources because the shortness of the entries inevitably whets the appetite of the reader to know more.

A few examples give an indication of the insights provided by the volume. Emilie Grace Briggs owned the vocation of biblical studies almost as a birth-

right, as the daughter of theologian Charles Augustus Briggs. She blazed the trail of theological education for women in America as the first female to receive a diploma from Union Theological Seminary, graduating summa cum laude. As a member of The Society of Biblical Literature and the American Oriental Society she assisted her father in his production of the Hebrew and English Lexicon and wrote her own articles and eventually her own dissertation, where she argued for the woman's diaconate as an ordained order, but was never able to find a publisher and thus, without meeting this requirement, was unable to earn her Ph.D. She proved that whatever advantage she received by birth, she made her own, and proved herself to be a skilled interpreter in an age when most women were not allowed such a role.

Zilpha Elaw represents a very different experience of life, in which her emotive and visionary experiences motivated her biblical work of preaching and writing. Born free in Philadelphia in 1790 to a mother who eventually had twenty-three children, Elaw embodied many of the dichotomies of women of her time with an interest in the Bible. She believed that Paul admonished women to be silent and to submit, but also believed that God made exceptions, of which she was an example. She believed that women should submit to their husbands, but when her husband wanted her to stop preaching she submitted instead to the command of God to preach. She believed, as did many of the time, that women should be in the home and care for their children, but eventually had to leave her daughter in the care of another family to continue her ministry. She had to make these choices because women of her time often had only one option open to them. To do something different resulted in mental dissonance and great sacrifice.

Realizing that one volume cannot do all things, I do think it a great loss that the text under-represents non-Western and nonwhite voices, especially in the current era when the majority world will provide the majority voice in the church. That lacuna calls out to be filled by another volume, but until then, *The Handbook of Biblical Women Interpreters* gives voice to many who had been forgotten or ignored, the female half of those who have wrestled with Scripture and walked away forever changed.

Amy Peeler
Wheaton, Illinois

Andy Chambers. *Exemplary Life: A Theology of Church Life in Acts.* Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2012. xvi + 224 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780805449617. $29.99 Hardback.

In *Exemplary Life,* Andy Chambers asks what Luke's "summarizations" in Acts 2:42–47, 4:32–35, and 5:12–16 tell believers about the church's being, character, and mission. Chambers' thesis is that "Luke intended his descriptions of life in the Jerusalem church in the summary narratives [to serve] as exemplary portraits for readers" (28).

After a brief introduction, Chambers recounts in chapter 1 how a modernist approach to Acts, that relies on source, form, and redaction criticism, has truncated interpreters' abilities to adequately comprehend these "summarizations" and their message about church life. Chambers argues at the end of this first chapter for a method that relies on a narrative, rhetorical approach to understanding these passages and their placement in the book of Acts, an approach he fleshes out in detail in chapter two. The heart of the book, chapters three through six, is Chambers' analysis of Acts 2:42–47, 4:32–35, 5:12–16, and briefer summarizations about the Gentile church utilizing these narrative and rhetorical tools. The author concludes in chapter 7 that Luke intends through these summarizations to teach his readers about the church's origin (from God), characteristics (fellowship, sharing, praying, and teaching, among others), and mission (to go into all the earth with the gospel). A short eighth chapter that offers practical application for the present day church concludes the book.

Chambers' monograph is a helpful one in that it digs deeper into the church's propensity to use these texts as launching points for a practical ecclesiology. Through his intricate understanding and use of narrative and rhetorical criticism, Chambers convincingly argues that these texts are not just generic summaries of the story thus far, but crucial building blocks in Luke's construction of a theology of church life in Acts. Chambers also adroitly critiques the modern Enlightenment approaches to Acts, while at the same time appreciating the positive insights of their proponents. Additionally, Chambers adeptly weaves a narrative style with a storied, exegetical, and socio-culturally aware reading of the book of Acts. His conclusions are warranted and well supported from within the confines of his own method.

Even so, there are at least two major lacunae in Chambers' work, both of which involve the relationship of Acts and the Old Testament. To preemptively summarize, Chambers does not give adequate attention to either Acts' or the specific passages' relationship to the Old Testament. Admittedly, Chambers does mention occasionally an OT quotation, and he is able to relate the practices in Acts to parallel practices in Second Temple Judaism. But there is no connection, first of all, to the broader biblical storyline (i.e. to the story of Israel), or secondly, to specific OT background for each passage. This seems odd in a book that purports to be so heavily influenced by narrative and rhetorical approaches, as it is apparent that Luke is connecting the story of the early church to the story of Israel throughout Acts. Additionally, a key point made in Chambers' book is that the Gentile church is summarized as exemplary by Luke just like the Jewish church is in the first half of Acts. Interestingly, though, there is no mention of the storyline of the Bible and how the grafting in of the Gentiles fits into it.

While the above is not a minor criticism, at least in this reviewer's opinion, Chambers' work should still be commended for its close exegetical attention to the "summarization" passages in Acts. The monograph advances the conversation of how Acts can be both descriptive of early church life and also

prescriptive for the contemporary people of God. For this reason it should be engaged by anyone seeking to understand the issue on a more technical level.

Matthew Y. Emerson
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Stewart E. Kelly. *Truth Considered & Applied*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011. vii+376 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780805449587. $29.99 Paperback.

Most discussions on postmodernism in evangelical circles tend to be polarizing. For instance, some treat it with great disdain and never acknowledge some of the important lessons that can be learned from it. Others, by contrast, naively celebrate postmodernism's emergence and try to reformulate Christianity around its teachings, never seeing how it weakens, if not destroys, the possibility of proclaiming Christianity as Truth. Thankfully, however, some are more cautious and precise in their treatment of postmodernism as they reject the bad without ignoring the legitimate concerns that it raises. Such is the case with Stewart Kelly's *Truth Considered & Applied*. To be very clear, Kelly is not a postmodern. In fact, his work is focused on arguing that there is "such a thing as truth, that objectivity, suitably modified, is still viable, that a modest rationality is defensible, and that knowledge should still be construed *veritistically*" (3). Nevertheless, he is not modern either. To put it simply, Kelly notes that there are positives and negatives with both perspectives and strives for a middle ground between them.

The book has three major sections. In Part 1 Kelly offers a careful survey of the major tenets of both modernism and postmodernism. This is one of the book's major strengths. Too often, postmodernism is presented apart from its proper historical and ideological context—the Enlightenment and modernism. Fortunately for the reader, Kelly's work does not do this. Unless one understands the particular ideas and motifs of modernism, it will be very difficult to appreciate the significance of postmodernism. On the whole, Kelly's juxtaposition of modernism and postmodernism clearly illuminates the two perspectives and allows the reader to see why postmodern thinkers reject metanarratives, human objectivity, and a correspondence theory of truth. Yet, for every supposed advantage that postmodernism has over modernism, Kelly notes that postmodernism has problems of its own.

Part 2 is largely historical in nature. Kelly walks through the last 140 years of American historiography to highlight the questions, concerns, values, and biases of historians and how these shaped our confidence, or lack thereof, in historical knowledge. This section reads a bit like an interlude from the larger philosophical discussion of the first and last part of the book. But overall, this is a very helpful section on the historiographical developments of the late 19th and 20th centuries that called the possibility of historical knowledge into question. Of most benefit, however, is the way Kelly humbly dismantles the standard objections to the possibility of historical knowledge.

In Part 3, Kelly addresses the various theories of truth and argues for a modest version of the correspondence theory of truth. As he shows, the pragmatic and coherence theories have some benefit when used as tests for truth, but ultimately fail to capture the nature of truth itself. And though the traditional correspondence theory has some challenges to it, Kelly successfully demonstrates that a more modest version "is still the best thing out there and the only game in town" (320).

There are a few places where the discussion on key ideas is not as helpful as it could be. For example, while making his point that "Reason is Not Omnicompetent" (29–31), he spends most of his time discussing why Classical Foundationalism fails. While these two issues are obviously related, he seems to conflate them and thus forfeits clarity. Also, despite the obvious value of the extensive research presented in the work, there are times when the heavy use of quotations hinders more than it helps.

Nevertheless, Kelly's *Truth Considered & Applied* is an excellent work for anyone interested in the subject matters of Truth, Modernism, Postmodernism, or general Epistemology. His treatment of the major positions and issues is balanced and constructive. Unlike many others that offer one-sided assessments of modernism and postmodernism, Kelly's approach avoids the dangers of both, while also acknowledging the valuable lessons that should be learned from each perspective. Though he admits total objectivity is not actually possible for human beings, he does not go too far by throwing objectivity out altogether. And, given the nature of reality and certain facts about the world, he is a strong proponent of the possibility of gaining knowledge and making truth claims. This is definitely a valuable work. I commend it to anyone who wants to understand the issues.

James K. Dew, Jr.
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Craig G. Bartholomew and Ryan P. O'Dowd. *Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011. 336 pp. Hardback. ISBN - 9780830838967. $30.00 Hardback.

In this volume, Craig G. Bartholomew, H. Evan Runner Professor of Philosophy and professor of religion and theology at Redeemer University College (Ancaster, ON) and Ryan P. O'Dowd, former professor of Old Testament at Redeemer University College and current pastor at Bread of Life Anglican Church (Ithaca, NY), have "opened a dialogue about what it means to embrace and embody a theology of Old Testament Wisdom literature today" (16). After introductory chapters exploring the nature of biblical wisdom, setting the context of ancient wisdom, and defining the character of biblical poetry, they offer an overview and theological interpretation of Old Testament wisdom, focusing on Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes. In addition, a close exegetical and theological reading of one important poem from each book is provided.

Though wisdom was often interpreted allegorically in its reception history, Bartholomew & O'Dowd stress the "totalizing" nature of biblical wisdom, "Hebrew wisdom is not just about activities like sewing, farming, building, or reasoning on their own. It is about how all such activities find their meaning in the whole of God's created order" (24). Following van Leeuwen, biblical wisdom is characterized by four traits: Wisdom (1) begins with the fear of Yahweh, (2) is concerned with discerning the order God has built into creation, (3) provides discernment for particular order and circumstances in our lives, and (4) is grounded in tradition, particularly the theology of creation.

Next, the authors examine wisdom literature in the ancient world, focusing particularly on Egypt and Mesopotamia. While remarkable similarities between ancient Near Eastern collections of wisdom show that these nations influenced one another (e.g., Prov. 22:17–24:22 & *Instruction of Amenemope*), Bartholomew & O'Dowd highlight the uniqueness of Israel's wisdom, resulting from its basis in a monotheistic worship of Yahweh. Each culture viewed wisdom as a key to unlocking the "god-king-creation nexus," but Israel's theological distinctive altered its conception of order in the world.

Moving to the Old Testament wisdom books, these authors seek to retrieve "the immense power of Proverbs," stressing that this book presents "the ABCs of biblical wisdom when life is generally going right" (74). Using "the fear of Yahweh" as their governing theme, the book is divided into three main sections: Proverbs 1–9 (ideal wisdom), 10–29 (wisdom in random events of daily life), and 30–31 (two "extreme" conditions). The fitting nature of the book's final poem (Prov. 31:10–31) is aptly noted, combining its governing theme with daily works of wisdom in the life of an anonymous woman. However, while "the fear of Yahweh" certainly provides unity to the book (14 occurrences), the claim that "its placement illumines main divisions in the proverbial material" (80), later specified as Proverbs 1:7, 9:10, and 22:4 (81–82), does not explain the authors' major division between chapters 29 and 30 nor the inclusion of Proverbs 22:4 as a main seam in the book. Also, the presence of this theme in the "Sayings of the Wise" (23:17; cf. 22:19) was overlooked, which highlights a main difference with Egypt's *Amenemope*.

Considering Job and Ecclesiastes, Bartholomew & O'Dowd stress that "the wisdom of Proverbs is not a simple path but must be combined with faith and endurance" (138). Again, wisdom's foundation takes center stage, as Job's story opens with contrasting claims—God affirms Job's fear of Him while "the satan" questions it (1:8–9). But amidst his suffering, Job's dilemma is that he believes that God knows the way of wisdom and grants it to those who fear Him (28:23–28), but he does not have the wisdom to understand why the righteous suffer in God's good and ordered world (142). The authors aptly note that the divine speeches (Job 38–41), rather than *simply* a rebuke for Job's arrogance, highlights God's power and wisdom in creating and ruling His world, to restore Job's humility and reassure his faith in the midst of mystery and suffering (148). One omission though is any discussion of Job's

hope and redeemer (13:15; 19:25–26). The chapter concludes with theological implications for pastoral counseling, epistemology and theodicy.

In contrast to Proverbs, Qoheleth's wisdom, with which he searches for life's meaning, is not based in the fear of Yahweh but in his own reason, observation, and experience alone (199). Yet, amidst the description of this futile, man-centered quest, there are numerous passages which encourage one to fear God and enjoy the pleasures of life as His good gifts (2:24–26; 3:10–15, 16–22; 5:1–7; 7:23–29; 8:10–15; 9:7–10; 11:7–12:7). The authors explain this tension as a battle between the teachings of Qoheleth's youth as a believing Israelite and his life experiences that seem to contradict conventional wisdom (202). Bartholomew & O'Dowd suggest that ultimately the two speakers (narrator and Qoheleth) come to the same conclusion: wisdom must begin with the fear of Yahweh (12:1, 13).

The concluding chapters explore wisdom in the New Testament and a Christian theology of wisdom for today. A handful of editorial mistakes notwithstanding (e.g. reduplicated terms and formatting errors in the Kierkegaard quote, 167), Bartholomew & O'Dowd have produced an invaluable theological introduction to Old Testament wisdom, commendable reading for both scholar and educated layperson. This volume will be a close companion as I study and teach courses on this subject.

<div align="right">
Brian P. Gault
Columbia, South Carolina
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John Painter and David A. deSilva. *James and Jude*. Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament. Edited by Mikeal C. Parsons and Charles H. Talbert. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012. xiv +256 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801036347. $27.99 Paperback.

In the last five years, scholars and students of the New Testament have seen a handful of commentaries published on James and Jude (e.g., Vlachos [EGGNT, 2013], Giese [Concordia, 2012], Keating [CCSS, 2011], McKnight [NICNT, 2011], Osborne [CBC, 2011], Varner [2011], Donelson [NTL, 2010], González [Belief, 2010], Hartin [Sacra Pagina, 2009], and McCartney [BECNT, 2009]), each approaching the text of these letters from varying perspectives and with different areas of concentration. In this commentary, John Painter (Professor of Theology, Charles Sturt University School of Theology) covers James, and David A. deSilva (Trustees' Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Greek, Ashland Theological Seminary) deals with Jude. Neither author is new to the epistle concerned, which enriches their discussion found here in the Paideia series.

One of the highlights of this commentary (and the series as a whole) is that the authors present their own positions and supporting arguments instead of simply presenting differing positions. The authors do interact with differing positions, but not to the point that the reader cannot identify what the authors' positions are and why (e.g. deSilva's discussion on rhetoric and

the ending of Jude; see 218–219). Painter's discussion may raise some flags in certain evangelical circles, mostly because of his view on the Patriarchate and James' authority (27–30) as well as the late date that he ascribes to the text (25). Fortunately, neither of these two positions have very much influence on his discourse-unit analyses that follow the main introduction.

Before each analysis, the authors also provide a general introduction with relevant information for the section at hand. Painter's introductions concentrate more on lexical discussions (e.g., *hapax*, uses in the LXX, etc.) given James' unique vocabulary throughout the letter. DeSilva's introductions cover major textual variants, similarities to extra-biblical literature from the first century, and other relevant topics. When readers move to the main analysis of the text, they will not find the authors looking under every grammatical rock or exploring every exegetical possibility. Instead, Painter and deSilva alike provide sound syntheses of each major discourse unit with focused attention on important lexical and grammatical issues. Finally, each discourse-unit analysis concludes with a discussion of the text's theological implications for the 21st century. Throughout the entire commentary, call-out boxes are provided to supplement discussions on various themes or issues (e.g., the uses of imperatives and rhetorical questions in James, lexical analyses, etc.).

No commentary exists in which a reviewer wholeheartedly agrees with everything. For example, Painter says ἀδελφός is in "the position of emphasis" in Jas. 1:9 (69). ἀδελφός precedes ταπεινός in word order simply because this is how one constructs the restrictive attributive position. A better observation might have been why James chose to use the restrictive attributive position instead of the ascriptive one (ταπεινός ἀδελφός), the former being more emphatic than the latter. Issues like these are minor quibbles though. Readers should exercise greater caution, for example, when it comes to Painter's position that James did not write the letter attributed to his name. And in the case of Jude, deSilva, like many others, argues that Peter made use of it when he wrote his letter (e.g., 2 Pet. 3:3 and Jude 17–18). From Peter's perspective, however, the mockers were yet to come (ἐλεύσονται); by the time Jude writes, these intruders have already crept in (παρεισέδυσαν). Nothing in the text warrants Petrine dependence on Jude.

According to the editors, upper-level undergraduate and graduate students of biblical studies programs are the target audiences of the Paideia series (ix). While the analyses of James and Jude are far from exhaustive, the discussions on the Greek, rhetoric, and social milieu of the first century are valuable to those beyond the target audience. The exegetical discussions, especially concerning the Greek language (i.e., lexical analyses and grammatical constructs), are not loaded with linguistic jargon and complicated terms that may have frightened many pastors and other Christian servant-leaders in the past. The analyses are linguistically informed and tactfully presented, written as if Painter and deSilva had this broader audience in mind.
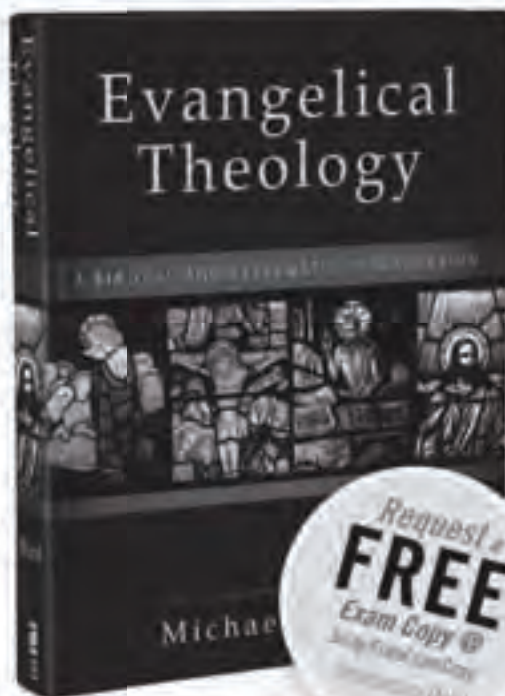
Thomas W. Hudgins
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centerforfaithandculture.com

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The Bush Center for Faith & Culture seeks to engage culture as salt and light, presenting and
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english major
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