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Introduction to the Volume

STR Editor

Unlike many of the other "themed" editions of *Southeastern Theological Review,* the current volume is occasional. We are delighted to have received high-quality essays, which have gone through the normal double-blind peer review process. The product, we hope, speaks for itself. As our readers will expect by now, this edition of *STR* is international and ecumenical in scope, and the essays coalesce around the major research interests that our journal aims to explore: theology (systematic, historical, moral, and applied), biblical studies (Old and New Testaments and biblical theology), philosophy (philosophy of religion, philosophical theology, and apologetics and culture), and missiology (missions, evangelism, public square).

In our first essay, James Mulroney explores the Greek of Hab 2:2–5, its meaning, and how it has been received in New Testament texts. This is a close piece of exegetical reasoning which gives insight on the messianic nature of the reception of Hab. 2:4. Mulroney does not believe that the verse is inherently "messianic" in the Hebrew or Greek, but it is rightly received as such, fitting to New Testament to theology and Christian hermeneutics in the light of Jesus.

Our second essay is an interview with Michael Goheen on the publication of his new volume on missiology: *Introducing Christian Mission Today.* This is a rich work and the interview exposes the motivations, aims and distinctives of the volume (without giving too much away!). This is, by all counts, a landmark text in the field of missiology and worth the effort of sustained reflection from its readers.

An essay by Jonathan Pennington follows Goheen's interview. Pennington explores the connections between James K.A. Smith's research in the Cultural Liturgies series and his own research on the Gospels in the New Testament. His is a constructive critique of Smith's work and a fresh take on research into the Gospels. This

essay will, no doubt, serve as a window from which readers will see his future work on ethics and the Sermon on the Mount.

David Firth draws attention to the place of God's instruction in the Psalter. His work is detailed and helps to uncover the important, if underdeveloped, theme of God's instruction for both the Psalter and biblical scholarship on the Psalter. He provides solid evidence that the theme of God's instruction is not only present, but significant in the Psalter, and Firth goes further to outline particular *functions* that the theme serves in the theology of the Psalter. Firth shows that *Torah* in the Psalter is not a pharisaic legalism to the law. Rather, God's instruction in the Psalter is good, formative, and engenders delight for God.

Following Firth's essay is that of Jeremy Kimble, who turns his attention to a topic that is exegetically contentious and pastorally relevant. His question centers upon how one understands the function of "elders" or "pastors" in the New Testament. Kimble argues that the notion of "steward" needs to be brought to bear in the discussion, based on the New Testament evidence. He concludes:

> Since pastors are to give an account to their Master, they must be sure to work diligently in proclaiming God's Word concerning the good news of Jesus Christ and in leading the congregation in applying that proclaimed Word and walking in the ways of God. With this kind of faithful pastoral ministry God will be well pleased.

So Kimble's essay is at once deeply rooted in a close analysis of New Testament evidence, but it simultaneously addresses the place of pastors and pastoral ministry in the local church for today.

The essays are followed, in normal order, by an international team of reviewers. It is our hope that the essays and reviews will be of benefit and enrichment to our readers.

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Revisiting Hab. 2:4 and its Place in the New Testament Eschatological Vision

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I.

It is widely agreed that the Apostle Paul quoted Ambakoum[1] 2:4b in Rom 1:17b because it was a messianic text that supported the core thesis of his epistle: the righteous (one) shall live by faith, and not by works of the law. It has been argued that this central article—to live by faith—is then unpacked throughout the rest of the epistle as the author explains what this means in light of the coming of Christ. The apostle's citation is often handled as if it were a proof-text, being lifted out of Ambakoum to suit the purpose of the epistle. Support for the messianic background comes from studies by Dodd and Strobel, which have asserted that, in the former, Paul was working out of a messianic interpretative tradition of the passage,[2] and in the latter, the translator of Ambakoum introduced a messianic reference at Amb 2:3a.[3]

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[1] Ambakoum is here given as the title of the Old Greek (OG) translation of the Hebrew book entitled Habakkuk by tradition. In this study, the abbreviation LXX refers to the OG translation of Torah, the Pentateuch, something about which Jerome was emphatic. The abbreviation of OG (Old Greek) refers to any of the earliest translations of the books of the Septuagint that are in relative continuity with the LXX, e.g. OG Isa would refer to the OG translation that occurred after the LXX in the second century. Critically speaking, this often refers to the eclectic texts from the *Septuaginta-Unternehmen* of Göttingen.

[2] Cf. C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London: Nisbet & Co, Ltd., 1953).

[3] Strobel is quite clear that a comparison between Hab 2:3 and Amb 2:3 reveals a messianic reference, which he assumes on the basis of the later Qumranic tradition of interpretation, arising, he argues, from those expectations of the Maccabean struggle; he writes, "Sie scheint, soweit wir heute die Ursprünge der apokalyptischen Hoffnungen von Qumran festzulegen vermögen, veranlaßt und getragen von der Erwartung der Makkabaerkämpfe. In dieser Zeit verdichteten sich nationale Hoffnungen

In addition to the reference of a coming, unnamed individual in Amb 2:3a, modern studies also indicate the use of ὁ δίκαιος as an epithet for the messiah,[4] and the syntagmatic movement of the personal pronoun in Amb 2:4b (noting the difference in MT).[5] On

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und religiöses Erwarten zur Schärfe der uns hinlänglich bekannten Messianologie der urchristlichen und tannaitischen Zeit…Alles spricht dafür, daß sie selbst schon ein – zunächst im weitesten Sinne verstanden - messianiches Verständnis der Stelle Hab 2,3 kannte und angestrebt hat." Cf. A. Strobel, *Unterschungen, Verzögerungsproblem* (NovTSupp 2; ed. W. C. van Unnik; Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1961), p. 47.

[4] Studies abound on this within the faith of Christ debate. Cf. Douglas A. Campbell, "Romans 1:17 – A *Crux Interpretum* for the ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Debate," *JBL* 113/2 (1994): p. 282; Richard P. Carlson, "Whose Faith? Reexamining the Hab 2:4 Citation within the Communicative Act of Romans 1:1–17," in *Raising Up a Faithful Exegete* (eds. K. L. Noll and Brooks Schramm; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010), p. 315; A. T. Hanson, *Paul's Technique and Theology* (London: SPCK Publishing, 1974), pp. 13–51; Richard B. Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and the Pauline Christology. What Is at Stake?," (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1991), pp. 719–20; Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids, Mich. / Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), pp. 134–5; Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination* (Grand Rapids, Mich. / Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), pp. 119–42; Ian G. Wallis, *The Faith of Jesus Christ* (SNTSMS 84; ed. Margaret E. Thrall; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 81. Also Manson argues that the new subject of Amb 2:3 is marked titularly in Hebrews by addition of the article, ὁ ἐρχομένος, and theologically echoes Matt 11:3, cf. T. W. Manson, "The Argument from Prophecy," *JTS* 46/183,184 (1945): p. 134. Also Marguerite Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes* (BdA 23.4–9; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999), p. 275.

[5] There are two important linguistic details of note. First, of the major uncials ($G^{B.Q.S.V.W}$), the possessive pronoun μου is in syntagmatic relationship with πίστις, whereas in G^{A} it is brought forward to δίκαιος, hence, ὁ δίκαιός μου ζήσεται ἐκ πίστεως (also $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$). Second, MT has a third person pronoun in the phrase אמונתו, whereas in OG this is first person, hence πίστεώς μου. The NT omits the pronoun altogether. I disagree with the idea that Paul introduced ambiguity in Rom 1:17b and Gal 3:11 so that the omission creates a harmonious theological ambiguity. The idea is that faith is a gift, therefore it is the Lord's, and that the recipient exercises it, therefore it is the individual's—both are true. But this actually seems even more unclear. It is far more likely that Paul omitted the pronoun of his text (assuming it was present in his *Vorlage*) because he was making the point clearer, not less. As Siefrid notes, "[t]o 'live by *my* [i.e., the Lord's]

account of these things, and because this righteous person will live "by faith", it is argued that the OG text indicates the coming of a (the) messiah.[6] Amb 2:3–4 is thus listed as part of the Second Temple milieu of messianic expectation,[7] and is said to be confirmed by Paul's appropriation of the text in Romans and Galatians.[8]

In this study I will explore this messianic claim more closely.[9] First, I will discuss the method surrounding how one finds, or identifies, this theological feature (a messianic one) on the level of text-production in the Septuagint. Second, I will then make a literary and linguistic analysis of Amb 2:2–5. After that I will then show

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faithfulness' is to live by faith." Studies on this point can be found in those mentioned in n. 4, and also cf. Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *NT Use of the OT* (eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2007), pp. 608–11.

[6] Bird notes that this was introduced by the translation, and Hays indicates this may have happened unintentionally, cf. Michael F. Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009), p. 45; Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, p. 135.

[7] Cf. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, p. 51; Strobel, *Unterschungen, Verzögerungsproblem*, pp. 19–55; Wallis, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*; Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?* See also refs. in n. 4. But this is not true of some of the weightiest contributions to this discussion, who do not list Hab 2:4 as a messianic reference, making no mention of it at all, cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer S. J., *The One Who Is to Come* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007); John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010); William Horbury, *Jewish Messianism* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1998); Sigmund Mowinckel, *He That Cometh* (trans. G. W. Anderson; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005).

[8] Cf. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination*, pp. 136–42; Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, pp. 135–41.

[9] When I say messianic I am considering how most scholars use the term today to refer to the messiah himself, or to a specific messianic figure(s), not to the notionally implied aspects of messianism, which are embedded intrinsically in the concept of eschatology. Scholars use the term messianic (messianism) differently in this way. Sometimes it is clear that it refers to a specific figure, a coming one, warrior, helper, etc., but at other times it appears related to his work and its effects, such as, for example, the nature of justification for one who believes in the messiah. So, stating that the NT is messianic can mean one thing or another depending on context.

how the thematic and semantic content of the OG passage could have given rise to its use in the NT, so that it became messianic, not that it was so when it was crafted.

II.

So, first things first. In the field of Septuagint studies the difference between what is called text-production and text-reception is of paramount importance.[10] This is especially true for the study of Septuagintal theology. Text-production refers to the work of the translator within his *Sitz im Leben*. A discussion of text-production calls to mind the translator, his work and, quite importantly, what is known of his personal context(s), such as his linguistic ability, literary style, locale, political situation, etc. In the context of this study, what is true for the production of the Twelve is true for Ambakoum.[11] He most likely worked in a group setting with other translators in some sort of scribal/language community. We know almost nothing of the warp and woof of synagogue life for this

[10] Cf. my dissertation at the University of Edinburgh (2015), St. George's Square; also the essays by Al Pietersma in Cameron Boyd-Taylor, ed. *A Question of Methodology* (14; Leuven: Peeters, 2013). Do note, however, that Pietersma integrated the Interlinear Paradigm into the concept of text-production, which I disagree with in my earlier work.

[11] The Twelve is the title of the OG Minor Prophets (MP), and the abbr. LXX refers to the Pentateuch only. It is likely that the Twelve was translated by one hand in Alexandria, Egypt sometime in the early-mid second century. The translator was probably fluent in Greek (Classical and Koiné) and Aramaic, but for whom Hebrew was likely an academic language (Joosten/Brock). He would also have stood in a tradition of translational style that he received from the earlier work of the Pentateuch (LXX) (Aitken). See Jan Joosten, *Collected Studies on the Septuagint* (FAT 83; eds. Bernd Janowski, Mark S. Smith, and Hermann Spieckermann; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), p. 32; Jan Joosten, "A Syntactic Aramaism in the LXX: ἰδού in temporal expressions," *JSCS* 45 (2012): p. 44; Sebastian P. Brock, "The Phenomenon of Biblical Translation in Antiquity," in *Studies in the Septuagint* (ed. Harry M. Orlinsky; New York: Ktav Publishing, 1974), p. 549; James K. Aitken, "The Language of the Septuagint and Jewish Greek Identity," in *The Jewish-Greek Tradition in Antiquity* (eds. James K. Aitken and James Carleton Paget; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 120.

time,[12] so to imagine that OG was designed for public reading to a lay audience, like in a modern church or synagogue, is probably unhelpful. As many scholars now assume, we have to think of a community of scribes, junior and senior, who worked to preserve the copying of their Hebrew text(s). Thackeray called them *les collaborateurs*.[13] Then, for various reasons, late in the third-century, the Hebrew Torah was translated into this community's Greek vernacular according to certain translational principles. The initial production of the Septuagint would have been for a small audience of scribes that held to a certain reading of their Hebrew texts. This reading, or interpretation, was transformed into Greek in the translation process. The initial production of LXX was followed within about a generation by, among other works, the Twelve. More works emerged over the decades, and some parts of the Septuagint are suggested to have not been completed until the turn of the millennium, and in Palestine, not Alexandria.[14] This sets some works very far apart indeed, meaning that later works might have been affected by the emergence of ideas that arose from within the context of reception.[15] Hence to refer to "the Septuagint" can be misleading with respect to its linguistic or theological unity. This is why the text-production context is so important to distinguish from text-reception.

Text-reception refers to the life of a text within its recipient communities. While the very first recipients of OG would have been the aforementioned language community, what is to be borne in mind here is that in the subsequent communities—in different locations, i.e. Palestine—the interpretation of the text can, as often does, undergo change. This may also result in redactional alterations. In fact this is one reason why it is so important to distinguish

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[12] As Lester Grabbe has pointed out, "evidence for institutions generally accepted as synagogues is known for the Diaspora as early as Ptolemaic times. But when we look at Palestine itself, evidence for the existence of synagogues is lacking before the first century BCE and perhaps even until the first CE." Cf. Lester L. Grabbe, "Synagogues in Pre-70 Palestine: A Re-Assessment," *JTS* 39 (1988): p. 410.

[13] Henry St John Thackeray, "The Greek Translators of the Prophetical Books," *JTS* 4 (1903): p. 579.

[14] Cf. Gilles Dorival, Marguerite Harl, and Olivier Munnich, *La Bible grecque des Septante* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1988), pp. 107–11.

[15] The classic example is the καίγε recension, see Dominique Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila.* (10; Leiden: Brill, 1963).

between the text at the point of production and of reception(s). What the translator intended, or meant, by way of his translation may undergo change by the emergence of a new way of reading the text. The presence of Hebrew texts in circulation with Greek texts might also conflate the reasons and intentions behind later recensions and versions of OG.[16] Now these things relate very much to the field of Septuagint studies and room is not permitted here to draw out more details.

A few years ago Bird also sought to break down or flatten this kind of methodological distinction. He no longer wants scholars to be concerned over whether or not OG/OT texts initially contained messianic references if they are used in that way in the NT. He gives four reasons why "messianic readings of Old Testament texts can be considered legitimate even if a messianic sense is not explicit in the original context."[17] Of these four, his second reason is that "reinterpretation of sacred traditions is already taking place within the development of the Old Testament corpus",[18] of which he briefly cites Amb 2:3. But as is shown in this study, the text of Ambakoum does not introduce a messianism in v. 3.[19] The only

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[16] Cf. James K. Aitken, "The Origins of καί γε," in *Biblical Greek in Context* (eds. James K. Aitken and T. V. Evans; Leuven: Peeters, 2015).

[17] Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?*, p. 44.

[18] Ibid. Moreover, as the Septuagint project spanned centuries (and likely different locations), with some books not appearing within its corpus until the turn of the millennium, it is a very tendentious enterprise to make intertextual links between books that span as much time as was needed for earlier books to be received with an alternate reading(s). The myth that the Septuagint was created by 70 (72) scribes at one point in time must be finally dispelled forever. We are looking at a very large body of work that came into existence from the late third century that did not finish "growing" until the first century. Questions of canon of course take us beyond this study.

[19] Messianism in the Second Temple period could have quite different meanings, referring to a political warrior (e.g. 4QpIsa[a]), maybe a dying servant (e.g. 4Q285), priestly figure (e.g. 1QS 9:11), "future eschatological teacher" (Wolters) (e.g. CD 7:18; 4Q174) or in some cases duumvirates (Bird). Most often the role of this figure is associated with any combination of royal, priestly or prophetic functions. In each respect there is the expectation of a future figure who will come and perform some kind of extraordinary act(s). This human agent was to bring a kind of deliverance. Evans sees this future anointed person as "part of a larger eschatological

reason modern scholars seem to think that it does is because of how the text was later interpreted. A reinterpretation should not round off the edges that distinguish between the original intention(s) in translation and the multi-varied life of a text by later language communities. So, while I am happy to agree that the text of Ambakoum reflects the interpretative tradition of its community, I think we give up too much if we allow our hermeneutics to become either anachronistic or monolithic.[20] I sympathise greatly with Bird's point that certain texts were open or free to be used by later communities, such as the authors of the NT, but without differen-

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drama, whereby human activity on earth is appreciably altered." Of all the expectations, it seems that the prevailing one was restoration of the Davidic kingship. The coming of the messiah would inaugurate the end of days, an eschatological period. Hence messianism refers to a specific person, whereas eschatology refers to a period of "future hope" at the end of time (Mowinckel). Fitzmyer and Boda connect this idea with eschatological beliefs. The presence of the word מִשִׁיחַ (or related words, i.e. מָשַׁח, מִשְׁחָה, מָשְׁחָה) is not necessary (Bird/Boda/Collins). The idea can be articulated through the use of other words. The idea of a person(s) who will come in the future has its roots in the HB, which some call proto-messianic, e.g. Gen 49:10–11; Num 24:17; and Isa 11:1–6. But whether such ideas are clearly identifiable in the Septuagint is very debatable for the earliest translations (Knibb). The development of Christian ideas of messianism, in light of the appearance of Christ, are certainly not unwarranted, but must be held in suspense, especially when dealing with the idea generated by a translator. Cf. Craig Evans, "Messianism," in *DNTB* (eds. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), p. 698; Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, p. 17; Edward W. Glenny, *Finding Meaning in the Text* (VTSup 126; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009), n. 120; Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?*, pp. 31–62; Fitzmyer S. J., *The One Who Is to Come*, pp. 1–7; Mark Boda, "Figuring the Future: The Prophets and Messiah," in *The Messiah in the OT & NT* (MNTS Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 35–48, 73–74; Al Wolters, "The Messiah in the Qumran Documents," in *The Messiah in the OT & NT* (MNTS Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 76–79. Also cf. essays in Michael A. Knibb, ed. *Septuagint and Messianism* (BETL 195; Leiden: Brill, 2006).

[20] What I mean by the latter term is that the text in question was interpreted differently by different communities. To say Amb 2:3 was interpreted messianically means something different from group to group. It is not sufficient to simply say it was messianic as if it in some wobbly way ended up meaning it related to Jesus.

tiating between the two one can obfuscate an understanding of the original translator's work. There is a real risk of running roughshod over the original interpretation, which would have been located within that community's habit and tradition of reading the Hebrew Bible. It has its own voice. Interpretative developments should not be squashed. When one says "this" or "that" is in the Septuagint at the time of its composition and it was not, then we ought to be clear that we are, in fact, actually relying upon—rightly I hope—the NT interpretation of it. The text became messianic, which is fine. But it was not when it was translated. Moreover, much of NT scholarship relies upon the assumption that Amb 2:4b is a reference to a future messiah—Jesus—for the argument of a subjective reading of Rom 1:17b. Yet this is a case of reading a NT idea into an OG text.

Now, we know very little about the original translator of the Twelve. There are no notes, commentaries, marginalia, etc. What we can know of the translator's interpretation (or reading) of the Hebrew book of Habakkuk, we only get from an analysis of Ambakoum within its cultural (and therefore linguistic) setting.[21] I am sure that the passage of Amb 2:2–5 is eschatologically charged (and explain in detail below),[22] but the idea that this future individual refers to a messiah is highly tendentious. When Dodd claims that Paul "drew upon a tradition which already recognized the passage from Habakkuk as a *testimonium* of the coming of Christ", he, I take

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[21] From a text-critical standpoint we are on shaky grounds here too. Our earliest exemplars are from the 4th C., (provide list), and are all Christian, which is not inherently problematic, but even of these there is evidence of recensional activity in order to bring the OG reading into conformity with its use in the NT, i.e. Heb 10:37–38.

[22] Eschatology is possibly today what a word like messiah was for Jews of the Second Temple period. While Christians all affirm that Jesus is the Christ—the Messiah—definitions of eschatology are diverse and vigorously debated. In this study, eschatology is, as the word indicates, a study of the end times. The arrival of the messiah is intrinsically tied to it. It refers to an age, epoch or time in which God acts to save his people through executing his divine judgement against their enemies, abolishing sin and wickedness. I take the position that the NT presents an already/non-yet dimension of God's actions, so that the present age is entirely eschatological; Christ has already died and risen. God has already judged sin at the Cross, yet the future final judgement, when all sin is put away forever and creation restored, has yet to occur.

it, is not referring to the interpretation of Ambakoum, but to a Jewish tradition that preceded Paul that used this text that way. Dodd makes this suggestion based on NT exegesis, not a thorough-going exegesis of Ambakoum. Moreover, it is not entirely necessary for Paul to lean upon such a tradition (we don't know if it even existed). The text of Amb 2:2–5 has an eschatological dimension from which Paul could have easily drawn in order to make his theological case. The eschatological context and contrastive emphases of Ambakoum would have been a sufficient contextual and theological trigger for Paul's use in, for example, Rom 1:17. Let us see how.

III.

A literary and linguistic analysis of Amb 2:2–5—the literary context of Amb 2:4—points to an eschatological period in which God will render judgement. There is a vision that is to reach an eschatological goal (marked in the source text [ST] by קץ),[23] which means that it will occur at the end of the age. Within the framework of this vision an unnamed individual will arrive. Just as the vision will occur at the eschatological end of time, so also will this person appear. Then, the parallel sentence (paradigmatic) refers again to a person who will walk by faith. This individual will be tested, and if he succeeds the Lord will be pleased with him. Careful exegesis of this passage really does not have a "messianic tone",[24] at least not at the level of text-production.

Furthermore, this so-called messianic claim is set within a literary "frame".[25] Amb 2:2–5 exhibits a "paragraph cohesion", to borrow Cranmer's phrase, which needs to be considered when assessing the eschatological character of the text. It is this structure that indicates that the OG translator had a paragraph level grasp of his ST. My intention is to study this passage as discourse in order to see how a non-atomistic approach yields up more detail than considering, for example, the placement or omission of a pronoun.[26]

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[23] Cf. n. 58.

[24] Hanson, *Paul's Technique and Theology*, p. 42.

[25] David J. Cranmer, "Translating for Paragraph Cohesion," *BibT* 35/4 (1984): p. 432.

[26] In this context, by atomistic, I mean taking certain parts of a passage, e.g. a pronoun, certain nouns, and making reference to them only without consideration the linguistics (i.e. syntagmatic organisation, dis-

Each chapter of the book of Ambakoum is a coherent unit that builds upon the previous chapter,[27] just like the ST. In chapter one the prophet introduces his complaint about the wickedness and injustice in his midst. He asks the Lord why he has not answered his pleadings and cries (1:2–4). Yet the Lord answers by proclaiming that he is raising up the Chaldeans as a scourge for his people (1:5). This new enemy will be terrifying (1:7), and they will not only judge Judea but many nations (1:17). It is an international punishment against wickedness and idolatry (cf. 2:18–19). The second chapter addresses the situation after the invasion, but Ambakoum receives it in advance, having set himself up as a watchman of the Lord (2:1). He stands upon his parapet and looks for the Lord's deliverance. His purview yields a verbal response from the Lord.

	Amb 2:2	Hab 2:2
aA	καὶ ἀπεκρίθη πρός με κύριος	וַיַּעֲנֵנִי יְהוָה
aB	καὶ εἶπεν γράψον ὅρασιν	וַיֹּאמֶר כְּתֹוב חָזֹון
bA	καὶ σαφῶς ἐπὶ πυξίον	וּבָאֵר עַל־הַלֻּחֹות
bB	ὅπως διώκῃ ὁ ἀναγινώσκων αὐτά	לְמַעַן יָרוּץ קוֹרֵא בוֹ

In verse two the Lord commands Ambakoum to write down a vision, which is to be made clear or plain for the recipient. Although the adverb σαφῶς is very common, the verbal it translates, **באר**, is not, being used only twice elsewhere of Moses (expounding the Law [Deut 1:5] or writing down clearly the law of God [Deut 27:8]). Like Moses, Ambakoum writes down his vision onto tablets. But unlike Habakkuk, who etches his vision onto tablets (לוחות), his namesake Ambakoum writes this onto a single tablet of box-wood. Although the Greek substantive πυξίον is by no means rare, it is

course boundaries, etc.) of the passage. Moreover, I am convinced that a non-atomistic reading would be closer to that of not only the NT authors, but also the OG translator(s).

[27] The book of Habakkuk has been studied extensively in commentaries. The following is a brief synopsis for the purpose of this essay. I encourage the reader to consider the following works for a more extensive analysis on either MT or OG: Francis I. Andersen, *Habakkuk* (AB 25; New York; London: Anchor Bible/Doubleday, 2001); Robert D. Haak, *Habakkuk* (Leiden: Brill, 1992); Wilhelm Rudolph, *Haggai-Maleachi* (KAT 13,2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1976); Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*.

seldom used in the Septuagint. In fact, the Septuagintal translators choose different words for the common Hebrew nominal לוח (tablet), depending on the context with the most common being πλακάς. Among the prophets of Isaiah and Moses who write upon a πυξίον (Exod 24:12; Isa 30:8), Ambakoum is like them in writing down an important oracle that is to stand as a witness.

The purpose of the vision is so that he who reads *them* will run,[28] ὅπως coordinates the two verses. The neuter plural object of the final clause αὐτά does not have a near grammatical referent like in the Hebrew (the suffix pronoun on the phrase בו refers to חזון).[29] The only logical referent is the contents of the vision, which have been written down on the box-wood. The change is slight but apparent. If either δικαίωμα or κρίμα were implied (consider also μαρτύριον), all having grammatical concord, then there would be a lexical link to a Deuteronomic *leitmotif*.[30] The reader is being asked to comprehend the judgements or precepts of the Lord that are contained in the verbal expression of the vision.

This then naturally leads one to ask what the precise contents of the vision are. If these are judgements, then what kind are they and

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[28] The English optative mood, which is common in English translations, lessens the clear sense of "will run". At the reading of the tablets the individual will run, or flee. It is the only logical course of action; only a fool would stay to suffer the judgement of God. Cf. Haak, *Habakkuk*, p. 56.

[29] Whenever a verbal precedes a participial substantive that is then followed by the prepositional objective phrase, בו, it always has the spatial sense of "in it" (Neh 7:5; 13:1 Ps 127:1; Nah 1:7). Though the translators of the Psalter and Twelve, however, never read it this way, offering instead the accusative pronoun for the phrase. This use of *bêt* is probably best thought here as to "express participation in something", cf. Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (SB 27; Rev. English ed.; Roma: Pontificio istituto biblico, 2006), §133c., perhaps indicating that the tablets were to be setup somewhere where everyone could read them. Perhaps a public square (Andersen)? It might convey the idea that one would be without excuse. Cf. Andersen, *Habakkuk*, pp. 202-203.

[30] The word λόγος is masc., and the choice for ῥῆμα would be slightly unusual within the Twelve (stylistically uncharacteristic). Also, recourse to an idea of grammatical value derived from the SL phrase הלחות does not seem tenable, contra David Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Analysis of the Old Greek Version of Habakkuk," (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate University, 1998), pp. 166–67, p. 175.

how do they relate to the vision of Ambakoum? Andersen thinks that these are the five woe oracles that make up the bulk of chapter two (vv. 6–20).[31] In them the Lord denounces the Chaldean invader and those of Judah who colluded with them. The woes increase in intensity, culminating in a famous denunciation of the utter foolishness of idolatry. But Möller's suggestion is more compelling.[32] The content of the vision is 1:5–11 (and also vv. 13–17): the announcement and description of the Chaldean invasion. This is the unbelievable thing the Lord is doing. The reintroduction of this proclamation is also a marker for an eschatological context, also in part because the Chaldean invader has already just been described in this way (1:7, 9).[33] The coming Chaldean is awful and terrifying, and has the Lord's warrant to destroy (Amb 1:7).[34] The Chaldean is

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[31] Andersen is also working from the Hebrew text, cf. n. 27. Also, Watson thinks that the vision is "the book [of Habakkuk] in its entirety", cf. Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), pp. 142–43.

[32] Möller's general conclusion on this very subj. for MT, by analogy, corresponds to the question of the content of the vision in the Septuagint. The material from vv. 5–11, different from MT (to the scoffers and impious), also bears witness against the activities described in the coming woe oracles. The material from chapter three is a response to the situation(s) iterated in the previous chps., and therefore it is unlikely to be that hymn. However, it could include material from that chapter, especially that which corresponds to the victory of the invader, *pace* Cleaver-Bartholomew. Cf. Julie Clinefelter Möller, "The Vision in Habakkuk: Identifying Its Content in the Light of the Framework Set Forth in Hab. 1," (PhD diss., University of Gloucestershire, 2004); Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Analysis of the Old Greek Version of Habakkuk," pp. 175–76.

[33] See James A. E. Mulroney, "A Stone Shall Cry Out from A Wall. Studies on the Translation Style of Old Greek Habakkuk," (PhD diss., The University of Edinburgh, 2015), pp. 148–55.

[34] The subject throughout Amb 1:7 remains the Chaldean, and does not change to the LORD or his work. First, the immediate referent for the final pron. in v. 6, αὐτός, refers to τὸ ἔθνος. This is the Chaldean, the grammatical object raised up by the LORD in v. 5. Second, the change from pl. to sg. is normal in the prophecy of Amb, e.g. vv. 6–7, 8 and 10–11, within certain literary bounds. The logical antecedent in v. 7 is the subj. from the previous clause, irrespective of the semantic application of ἐπιφανής. The Chaldean is then the judgement of God, which is awesome and fearful, etc. There is nothing here to indicate confluence of referents,

the judgement of the Lord. It is this opening context in v. 2 that is seldom considered in studies that consider Amb 2:4 to contain a messianic reference. The eschatological context of this specific passage is *first* marked in v. 2.

While v. 3 opens with an expected coordinating conjunction, in this case διότι, conditionality is found in 3b *and* 4a, with additional contrast between vv. 4–5, also being coordinated by the repetition of δέ. The interjection (הנה) in Hab 4a is dropped and there emerges a kind of parallelism within OG that does not exist in MT:[35]

§	Amb 2:3-5bB	Hab 2:3-5bB	§
3aA	**διότι** ἔτι ὅρασις εἰς καιρὸν	כי עוד חזון למועד	3aA
3aB	καὶ ἀνατελεῖ εἰς πέρας	ויפח לקץ	3aB
3aC	καὶ οὐκ εἰς κενόν	ולא יכזב	3aC
3bA	**ἐὰν** ὑστερήσῃ	אם יתמהמה	3bA
3bAα	ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν	חכה לו	3bAα
3bB	**ὅτι** ἐρχόμενος ἥξει	כי בא יבא	3bB
3bC	καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίσῃ	לא יאחר	3bC
4aA	**ἐὰν** ὑποστείληται	הנה עפלה	4aA
4aB	οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῳ	לא ישרה נפשו בו	4aB
4bA	ὁ **δὲ** δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται	וצדיק באמונתו	4bA

contra Cleaver-Bartholomew. Moreover, the Chaldean will render his own kind (τὸ κρίμα αὐτοῦ) of judgement, which will be measured out with a divine proclamation proceeding from him. The use of λῆμμα in this context is unsettling as divine warrant is given to the gentile nation to sweep into the Land and render judgement. Then, after an extended metaphorical description in v. 8, verse nine introduces another eschatological reference through reference to the destruction of the impious by use of the keyword συντέλεια. Cf. Cleaver-Bartholomew, "An Analysis of the Old Greek Version of Habakkuk," pp. 131, 136.

[35] A similar observation is noted by Harl, et al, but is segmented and not comprehensive, disjointing the subjects between vv. 3–4 and 4–5, cf. Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*, pp. 275–76.

		יחיה	
5aA	ὁ **δὲ** κατοινωμένος καὶ καταφρονητὴς ἀνὴρ ἀλάζων	ואף כי היין בוגד	5aA
		גבר יהיר	5aAα
5aB	οὐδὲν μὴ περάνῃ	ולא ינוה	5aB
5bA	ὅς ἐπλάτυνεν καθὼς ὁ ᾅδης τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ	אשר הרחיב כשאול נפשו	5bA
5bB	καὶ οὗτος ὡς θάνατος οὐκ ἐμπιπλάμενος	והוא כמות ולא ישבע	5bB

First, like MT, the vision, ὅρασις, is the subject of the first three clauses of 3a. However, a number of scholars argue that the subject of the subsequent two clauses (3aB–C), and also of the first conditional sentence (3bA), is καιρός.[36] This is because the masculine pronoun in 3b, αὐτόν, cannot grammatically refer to the vision, and also what appears to be reticence to allow introduction of a new implied subject in the protasis of 3b. Therefore:

[καιρός] ἀνατελεῖ εἰς πέρας
καὶ [καιρός] οὐκ εἰς κενόν
ἐὰν [καιρός] ὑστερήσῃ
ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν
ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίσῃ...

This resolves the apparent incongruence. But I argue that the pronoun refers to the implied subject of the first protasis. This is disambiguated as the text is read, being grasped when the text is read as a whole. This can be understood in two ways. First, the subject must logically correspond to that which it is contrasted across the passage. Because 3b is logically connected to 4a–b through contrastive emphases, marked by δέ, the subject from 3b should have the same *kind* of qualities of that to which it is con-

[36] Strobel sees the key semantics here indicating an "eschatologischen Klang", and that "Das umsomehr als die Wendungen εἰς καιρόν und εἰς πέρας die 'eschatologische Stunde' bezeichnen." See Strobel, *Unterschungen, Verzögerungsproblem*, p. 48.

trasted in 4b, ὁ **δὲ** δίκαιος. Clearly *someone* is in view not *something*.[37] From v. 3b to 5a, a certain kind of person is juxtaposed to another.

Second, there is a question of linguistics (grammar). As observed in the above chart, conditionality in v. 4a does not exist in MT. Instead we have two paradigmatic sentences in OG. In each case the protasis has to be resolved.[38] The choices here must be understood as being made with a high degree of intentionality. The translator had to choose ἐάν over εἰ, and in so doing, had to be aware (even unconsciously) that he would then be introducing the subjunctive mood, which will then limit and affect his choices for the apodosis. His choice of ἐάν in v. 4a instead of a Greek interjection, e.g. ὦ or οὐαί, shows a recurrent degree of intentionality, and also some Aramaic interference.[39] And reaching forward to v. 5a where **אף כי** is translated by δέ, we are given the broad overarching alternate structure for OG. The entire passage is styled through the use of conditionality and contrastive emphases. It is like MT in that two kinds of people are juxtaposed, but it is more emphatic via mood and choice of literary particles. One might say that a teaching of the Hebrew is drawn out and composed into Greek.

On this level of analysis there is no hint of messianism, simply a future vision and a coming individual. The semantic content marks the eschatological content for the reader, which still does not give us a future hope of a messiah.

In MT the interjection of v. 4 is clearly felt: Behold! The sense of the passage is interruptive: look for someone in light of what has been said about this visionary person. In the first clause of Hab 2:4 the same subject is read for both verbals. The subject is the soul of an individual, **נפשו**, it is puffed up and not upright, which is contrasted to an individual that will live by his faith—faithfulness to the covenant. The normal sense of the preposition *bêt* is to be read here as the individual's soul in him.[40] In light of the previous verse, we are looking for an individual, though presently unnamed, who will live by his faith. The *wāw* of v. 4b is contrastive, based upon

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[37] Harl, et al., also thinks that the subjects of the initial verbals of vv. 3–4 "suggests a parallelism", see Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*, p. 275.

[38] See Dietrich-Alex Koch, "Der Text von Hab 2:4b in der Septuaginta und im Neuen Testament," *ZNW* 76/1 (1985): p. 73.

[39] See n. 43.

[40] Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §133c.

the reading of the passage. The righteous individual is being compared to one who is puffed up and proud.

But as explained, Amb 2:4 is a paradigmatic verse, another conditional sentence. So, having introduced the eschatological notion of divine judgement in v. 2, which is understood through the coming of an end-time vision (εἰς πέρας / לקץ),[41] OG indicates that this will also be marked by the arrival of an individual. Now the immediate mental link is to a person who lives by faith—everyone is thinking of Amb 2:4b—but the text does not make that point yet. The parallel sentence flags up the possibility that this person may incur the displeasure of the Lord. The first clause of v. 4 is sufficiently different from MT, it reads:

MT	הנה עפלה לא ישרה נפשו בו
OG	ἐὰν ὑποστείληται οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ
En	If he recoils [draws back], my soul is not be pleased with him.

Scholars have argued that the first clause of 4a was simply read errantly,[42] the rare verbal **עפל** was read perhaps √**אלף**,[43] but it seems hard to imagine that the translator also misunderstood the follow-

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[41] Cf. Joachim Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (WUNT 76; eds. Martin Hengel and Otfried Hofius; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1995), n. 266; Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*, p. 274.

[42] Cf. Koch, "Der Text von Hab 2:4b," p. 73; William H. Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," *JBL* 82/83 (1963): p. 323.

[43] See Anthony Gelston, ed. *BHQ* (BHQ 13; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010), p. 118; Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," p. 323. I take the position that the translator likely read **הנה** through his Aramaic lens and perhaps added in his mind the final **ה** to the front of the first verbal thus making a *hop'al* (הֻן הָעֻפְּלָה), which is a suggestion from Gelston (though he does not mention Aramaic). This is then another example of Aramaic interference in the translation that suited a certain interpretation of the text.

I also wonder if the use in Num 14:44 would have been a help to the translator. The use of βιάζομαι there may likewise be interpretative, so that the idea of forcefulness is adapted to what it means in this context of Amb 2:2–4. Instead of being forceful, the wrong virtue is to recoil or draw back from the words of the covenant (Deut).

ing finite verb ישר.[44] The usual claim that the translator (perhaps the same person who had copied the Hebrew scroll) misread a *wāw* for a *yôd* also persists. The subject of the second OG clause is changed to the LORD's soul (ἡ ψυχή μου). The following prepositional phrase in 4b is also altered in a similar way, the righteous will live *by the* LORD*'s faith* (ἐκ πίστεώς μου).[45] Emphasis is clearly placed on the LORD. This change cannot help but be understood as having theological denotations.[46]

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[44] It is found many times throughout the HB. Although ישר is used a small number of times in the MP (Hos 14:10; Mic 2:7; 3:9; 7:2, 4; Hab 2:4), it does, however, undergo some interpretative changes, i.e. Mic 7:2, 4. Moreover, Amb 2.4a is the only instance in the Twelve where it is translated by εὐδοκέω. Also, the interpretative choice for the latter was perhaps derived from LXX, where in Num 23:27 it is translated with the similar sense from ἀρέσκω. In both respects the interpretation is centred on how the upright please God by their life.

[45] Both pronominal suffixes are read in the third per. in 8ḤevXIIgr. But the first line is read as a nominal clause, with the initial verb (עפל) read as a metaphorical substantive (σκοτία), hence, ἰδ[οὺ] σκοτία οὐκ εὐθεῖα ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ [ἐν αὐτῳ]. Brownlee understands the sense for עפל II of "be covered, obscured, swoon", to be the thought behind the change in the Palestinian recension. This means that the original translator read it through עפל I, and the recensor the second. In each respect a lack of faith is attributed to the individual, hence failure to persevere, or darkness clouding one's inner person. This interpretative point likely lies at the root of the sentence wide changes. It may be, in conjunction, that the translator intentionally read the consonants in a way that *helped* him to structure the meaning of the verse. Cf. Beate Ego et al., eds., *BQ* (vol. 3B; Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 132; Emanuel Tov, Robert A. Kraft, and P. J. Parsons, *DJD 8* (8; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 52; William H. Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk* (JBL 11; Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1959), p. 43; DCH, "עפל".

[46] Tg. may also point to an interpretative understanding of the passage in general, which interprets the first two clauses as, הא רשיעיא בלביהון לית כל אלין (*Behold, the wicked think in their hearts that these things are not so*). In light of all this evidence, every version of this text has undergone some significant change with the first two clauses of v. 4. Furthermore, the translator has no trouble translating נפשו in the following sentence (v. 5), τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ – what would have been a catastrophic mistake in misreading the *wāw* with the LORD as speaker (ὅς ἐπλάτυνεν καθὼς ὁ ᾅδης). Cf. Kevin J. Cathcart and R. P. Gordon, eds., *The Targum of the Minor Prophets*

Ambakoum 2:4a resolves the protasis in the same line so that OG retains the contrast, δέ, as MT does between it and 4b. The initial line, however, indicates that the person who lives by faith demonstrates that he is not the person who withdraws, he obtains the delight of the Lord. With the use of this third class conditional structure the possibility of failure is slight.[47] It relates to the state of human affairs and does not mean that the individual will fail, but quite simply—as things are in life—one will have to see how it plays out.

This righteous individual is then contrasted to another kind of person, the kind that recoils and does not walk by faith. This is marked by the particle δέ, which translates the phrase **אף כי**.[48] This

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(eds. Kevin J. Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara; The Aramaic Bible 14; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), pp. 150–51.

[47] This is marked in the protasis by ἐάν plus a verb in the subjunctive mood (any tense), which is the main grammatical feature, and also lack of ἄν in the apodosis, with the verbal in any mood and tense. (Also some grammarians have argued that because the mood is the main grammatical marker one can also see this same semantic use with the syntax εἰ + subj., which was not uncommon in Homeric and Classical Greek, cf. Porter.) It is a fairly common Hellenistic literary device. Although this class can suggest a condition with a likelihood of occurrence, it does in fact "encompasses a broad range of potentialities in Koine Greek", which may include a "mere hypothetical situation or one that will probably not be fulfilled" (Wallace). Boyer (referenced in Porter) statistically determined that in the majority of instances such probability is unlikely to be fulfilled. Cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, pp. 696–97; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar* (4th rev. ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996), p. 689; Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the NT* (1; ed. D. A. Carson; New York; Bern: Peter Lang, 1989), pp. 307–11.

[48] The coordination of verse five by **ואף כי** can suggest the opening of new material, but both Andersen and Haak think not. As Andersen notes, "The initial 'and' shows that v5 continues something, but it need not be coordinated with the immediately preceding clause" (Andersen). The phrase is not entirely uncommon, sometimes with the *wāw*, sometimes without. It appears that the function of this use, along with **כי**, may double up as serving to both line "up the situation of its clause with that of the previous clause," (Waltke & O'Connor) and emphasise the situation, the latter restricted more to the additional presence of **כי**. It is "asseverative", (Andersen) connecting, "indeed", (Andersen; Haak) or "furthermore", (Smith) to the preceding material by noting more information. Cf. Andersen, *Habakkuk*, p. 217; Haak, *Habakkuk*, p. 59; Bruce K. Waltke and Mi-

contrast does not clearly exist in the ST.[49] In OG, the person who recoils is like one deceived by wine, who will never complete anything. He will come to no good end; he is like Sheol, never satisfied. The contrast is stark.[50]

The coming, unnamed individual of Amb 2:3 arrives as part of the vision of judgement of Amb 2:2, which was first announced in Amb 1:5. This is a reference to the Chaldean, God's instrument of judgement.[51] It has been marked as an eschatological event in Amb 1:7 and 9, having the strength and fear of the Lord—he raised them upor this purpose. The still-future interpretation of OG implies more than just the historical scenario that resulted in the Babylonian incursion and exile. Literarily speaking, *he who is coming* is, quite simply, the future eschatological Chaldean (often referred to in the singular, see n. 34)—not the historical one.[52] The association of judgement remains, but it is heightened or elevated to a yet future time when another kind (final) of judgement is made. The ref-

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chael Patrick O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), §39.3.4d; Ralph L. Smith, *Mic-Mal* (WBC eds. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker; vol. 32; Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), p. 105.

[49] See n. 48.

[50] Harl, et al., sees this final contrast as in relation to the Chaldean, reaching back to the previous chapter, although not making all the linguistic connections. Quite simply, the final subject of 2:4b is only contrasted to 2:5a. Cf. Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*, p. 276.

[51] Perhaps because Harl, et al., does not make a discourse analysis of the text, the appearance of the Chaldean is first mentioned as the character of 2:5. But as shown here, the whole pericope indicates a development starting earlier in the text, though the eschatological use of words is noted for 2:3: "une visée eschatologique". Cf. Ibid., pp. 274–76.

[52] This is precisely where Strobel is mistaken. He reads this through a particular NT lens, thinking that the coming reference is limited to three other possibilities. He explains: "Drei Möglichkeiten bieten sich zur Erklärung an: Der kommende Äon im engeren Sinn…, der erhoffte Messias, oder die letzte große Selbstoffenbarung Gottes." He argues against the first option, but it is a straw man argument. The third option has real promise if placed within the context of Habakkuk's vision(s) of judgement, which is the literary context. This final *Selbstoffenbarung* saw God as both judge and judged, which thematically agrees in one sense with the context of Habakkuk, rather than "Hab 2,3 LXX erweist sich demnach als das *älteste* Zeugnis." Cf. Strobel, *Unterschungen, Verzögerungsproblem*, pp. 53–54, 56.

erence in 2:4b could either refer to this future judge, which would make sense when this motif is rightly grasped (Isa 45:1, 13 is a corollary),[53] or it could function as an interlude (a "parenthesis") to the whole passage (vv. 2–5), which Watson, working from MT, nicely suggests.[54] The veracity of the judge is set on edge by the introduction of conditionality in Amb 2:4a.

Now, none of this indicates the coming of a messiah, someone sent or anointed of God, to restore the Davidic kingdom, or reinstitute the temple system, etc. The reference to Ambakoum stands out as quite possibly the oddest so-called messianic reference. It has no clear royal, prophetic or priestly dimension to it. Manson's bold assertion that the text is "through and through Messianic"[55] rings hollow against the evidence. Dodd might have felt this lack of textual clarity, stopping short of making the claim that the individual of 2:4b refers to the messiah.[56] The only indication is that it refers to someone who "will come",[57] which is contextually linked to the coming of a vision that will reach its goal.[58] This person is an end-time judge. Verse four could either indicate that the judge will walk by faith, and therefore his judgements are the result of the Lord's administration (my faith), or it could indicate that the end-time period will be marked by him who does not recoil but lives by faith. The subtlety of a new subject in v. 3 could be true also of v. 4.

Having looked at Amb 2:2–5, let's now examine whether this contextual, literary and linguistic reading of the historical artefact of

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[53] In the end the historical Chaldean withdrew and is found wanting throughout the woe oracles, of which he is indeed a wine bibber, Amb 2:5. In the end he trusted in his gods and not the Lord who raised him up (2:18–19, cf. 1:11). It is the truly righteous one who will live by the faith of the Lord.

[54] Because of the structure of the passage in OG Watson's point is harder to prove apart from MT, Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith*, p. 152.

[55] Manson, "Argument from Prophecy," p. 134.

[56] Dodd, cf. Hanson and Hays However, cf. Hays, reference to Isaiah, which seems very close to Ziegler's point.

[57] Also, simply because Hab 2:3 refers to someone who "will come" does not mean it is messianic, as Gathercole and Bird note with respect to the "have come" statements of Jesus, cf. Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?*, pp. 113–14.

[58] Strobel, *Unterschungen, Verzögerungsproblem*, pp. 49–53; Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, n. 266.

OG sheds further light on its use in the NT about two centuries later. Although Amb 2:3–4 was not translated from a messianic point of view, we shall now see that the eschatological context of the passage allowed it to be interpreted messianically, especially in light of the Christ event. But—and I emphasise—the *openness* of the text (to borrow from Eco),[59] was still controlled by the basic meaning of the passage, which was rooted in its exegesis.

IV.

As stated, it seems that we know this text was translated as a messianic reference based on how it was read by later communities, which again raises the spectre of proper methodology. The interpretations that are formed in the transformational process of translation (as, for example, the translation of the Septuagint) can be quite different from those that are formed by its recipients. The later traditions of interpretation in Second Temple Judaism, which all vary,[60] and that of the NT and its recipients (e.g. the early Church Fathers) indicate that a messianic interpretation for Amb 2:4b is by and large not confirmed.[61] Nor—and this is key—do these later traditions prove a messianic interpretation by the *translator* of Ambakoum. Since the translator did not introduce a messianic point, we therefore cannot say that Amb 2:3–4 refers to the messiah; we can only say that a NT author(s) interprets the text this way. On this point Lust helpfully suggests that we should, then,

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[59] I got this point from Bird who links this to other passages, see Bird, *Are You the One Who Is to Come?*, p. 44. This seems very similar to the term "meaning potential" from pragmatics (linguistics).

[60] Cf. n. 7; Seifrid, "Romans," pp. 609–10; Thierry Legrand, "« Son interprétation concerne tous ceux qui pratiquent la Torah... » Relecture et interprétation d'Habacuc 2,4 dans le Pesher d'Habacuc (1QpHab VII-VIII) et le Targum d'Habacuc," in *« Le juste vivra par sa foi »* (eds. Matthieu Arnold, Gilbert Dahan, and Noblesse-Rocher Annie; vol. 3; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2012), pp. 11–40.

[61] On the Church Fathers, see Roy A. Harrisville III, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ: Witness of the Fathers," *NovT* 36/3 (1994): pp. 233–41; Martine Dulaey, "Habacuc 2, 1-4 dans les premiers siècle du christianisme," in *« Le juste vivra par sa foi »* (eds. Matthieu Arnold, Gilbert Dahan, and Noblesse-Rocher Annie; vol. 3; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2012), pp. 41–73. And also Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*, pp. 274–76.

consider these things (which exist for other parts of the Septuagint, e.g. Num 24:7) as christological—interpretations in light of Christ.

The thrust of this article is, therefore, that Paul would have been aware of the eschatological character of his ST. His reading of Amb 2:4 would have been within the context of Amb 2:2–5. He would have seen the parallelism of 2:3 with 2:4,[62] so tat the vision is connected to "he who is coming", and the one that lives by faith is in turn connected to him who is coming, viz. in response he must persevere, walk by faith. The NT authors' interpretative adaptations of Amb 2:2–5 appear sensitive to the structure of OG and the eschatologically charged context:[63] The vision in which the coming one will come is of the final end-time judgement—something seldom considered within the OG literary context. The text looks forward to the final age, at least that's how Paul and the author of Hebrews understood it *ex eventu* of the first coming.

It is because of this that the NT authors saw it as open to a messianic interpretation in light of Christ's appearance. A messianic NT interpretation is, therefore, not unwarranted. The NT authors worked within a post-resurrection eschatological framework; Christ was understood to have mediated God's judgement through his suffering on the Cross. This act of mercy meant that God's people were entirely rescued from holy, divine wrath. So from within this general framework, the NT authors considered the text of Ambakoum that spoke of a vision of end-time judgement that would arrive with its judge. This eschatological Chaldean is sent by God to judge his people. In this sense Jesus takes on the mantle of the Chaldean, God's judge, but controverts the point by taking on the judgement himself. The text was open to such a reading, but only after Jesus fulfilled the various facets of his ministry, both past and present. In another way, this is why pre-Christian interpretations do not follow the line of NT thinking, which harkens to the point made earlier on method.

The author of Hebrews picks up on this theme of judgement. Heb 10:30–39 indicates that the Lord will judge his people. The

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[62] Cf. n. 37.

[63] For the purposes of this study I am referring to the Apostle Paul and the author of Hebrews when I say, NT authors. This is a shorthand phrase, and I do not mean that they share the same theology on all things, but in this case there is some overlap in the use of the Ambakoum reference.

author offers a stern warning to those who drift away: It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Confidence is commended in light of the temporariness of present afflictions. A reward awaits those who press on. In verse thirty-seven the author seems to have "conflated"[64] the Ambakoum text as, ἔτι γὰρ μικρόν ὅσον ὅσον (see chart below).[65] What this probably means is that the entire section of Amb 2:3–3bAα amounts to this phrase. There is no need to repeat the conditionality of 3bA, Jesus has already come. The time of the vision has been revealed, and the identity of the coming individual has been made known. The author then does something unexpected with the text; a future judgement is *still* yet to come, being accompanied, once more by the same person who appeared in the time of the vision. This could not be any more eschatological! Jesus has come and will come again to render judgement.[66] This is further adduced by the definite article of the verbal adjective, ὁ ἐρχόμενος in v. 37.[67] The citation of Amb 2:4 is inverted so that it made sense in context:[68]

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[64] Joseph A. Fitzmyer S.J., "Habakkuk 2:3–4 and the New Testament," in *De la Torah au Messie* (eds. M. Carrez and J. Doré; Paris: Desclée, 1981), p. 453.

[65] Numerous references within Daniel make use of ἔτι γάρ in the context of a coming eschatological vision. The use of μικρόν ὅσον ὅσον may have been drawn from Isa 26:20 for similar reasons; Fitzmyer thinks that "the author of Hebrews has conflated the verses of Habakkuk with a phrase from Is 26,20 LXX". Cf. Ibid.

[66] The event of the coming one is, however, once more set again in the future, but based upon the accomplished work of Christ's Cross (Heb 10:1–22). The author obviously has identified the Messiah with Jesus of Nazareth, for "we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10). Yet at the same time he is coming again, and this is still part of the same vision of final judgement. This already/non-yet paradigm means that the believer is to have confidence in the finished work of Christ, where the punishment for the sins of worshippers was abolished, and also a fearful confidence to persevere in light of the future coming judgement mediated through Christ as sovereign.

[67] Cf. n. 4.

[68] I take a different approach to Manson who over-reads the text as being messianic, cf. Manson, "Argument from Prophecy," pp. 133–35.

§	Amb 2:3–5bB	Heb 10:37–38	§
3aA	**διότι** ἔτι ὅρασις εἰς καιρὸν	ἔτι **γὰρ** μικρόν ὅσον ὅσον	37aA
3aB	καὶ ἀνατελεῖ εἰς πέρας		
3aC	καὶ οὐκ εἰς κενόν		
3bA	**ἐὰν** ὑστερήσῃ		
3bAα	ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν		
3bB	ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἥξει	ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἥξει	37aB
3bC	καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίσῃ	καὶ οὐ χρονίσει	37aC
4aA	**ἐὰν** ὑποστείληται	ὁ **δὲ** δίκαιός **μου** ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται	38aA
4aB	οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῳ	**καὶ** ἐάν ὑποστείληται	38bA
4bA	ὁ **δὲ** δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται	οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ	38bB

Dogniez has pointed out that this inversion was most likely to avert any consideration that Jesus would have even possibly displeased God.[69] But the text of Amb 2:4 is applied not to Jesus, the person identified in the vision, but to a newly introduced subject: the believer. And it is only this new subject that has any grammatical conditionality associated with the practical outworking of his life.[70] The contrast from Amb 2:4 is removed. Now the contrast is between the future prospect of the Lord's return in judgement and how one lives in light of this. A christological interpretation of the eschatology of Ambakoum is here creatively handled.

With respect to Paul's use of Ambakoum, the point is not much different. The eschatological context of Paul's experience with the risen Christ meant a re-thinking (re-reading) of OT texts, a matter of searching the scriptures to understand wherein the Christ is.[71] As Amb 2:3–4 did not originally make a messianic claim there is no

[69] Cf. Harl et al., eds., *Les Douze Prophètes*, p. 275.

[70] Hanson thinks that Jesus's test in Gethsemane is the fulfilment of this part of the text, hence Jesus obtains the pleasure of the Lord. There are numerous problems with this, most notably the Father already pronounced his pleasure with Jesus at his baptism (Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22), and on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:5; 2 Pet 1:17). Cf. Hanson, *Paul's Technique and Theology*, p. 45.

[71] As Strobel explains, "Das messianische Zeitalter ist angebrochen und von hierher stehen alle Begriffe unseres Textes in einem neuen Licht", see p. 177

reason to think that the connection between 2:3 and 2:4b should be for Paul a messianic one. There is clear evidence here that one should read Hab 2:4 in reference to the believer or worshipper.

Both the Apostle Paul and the author of Hebrews have referenced Amb 2:4 within the context of end-time divine judgement, seeing the fulfilment of the prophecy in the kind of person that shall mark the final age. The idea that Jesus has met the lawful demands of holy justice is implied in the core thesis: the just shall live by faith and not by works of the law. The text of Amb 2:4 comes alive in the post-resurrection hermeneutic employed by the Apostle and author of Hebrews. It is the eschatological character of Amb 2:2–5 that gave it air under its wings in Pauline hermeneutics, for example, not because it was already considered explicitly messianic. The righteousness of God (Rom 1:17) then seems to be implicitly related to the announcement embedded in Amb 2:2-3.

In summary, it is only when *the righteous one* of Amb 2:4b is read intertextually with messianic texts, e.g. Ps 2; 110, that its integration with the larger discussion on messianism may apparently be understood: Jesus (the messiah) will shepherd his flock faithfully (ἐκ πίστεως), thus becoming a better king than David, etc. Much of this seems driven, however, by a subjective reading of Rom 1:17b on theological grounds—Amb 2:3–4 is a messianic reference *ipso facto* it refers to Jesus. But on this basis it can just as easily indicate the kind of people that would mark the eschatological era about which Ambakoum speaks. The case for messianism in Amb 2:3–4 quite simply rests upon a certain kind of NT scholarship: 1) a subjective reading of Rom 1:17b; 2) affirmation that the epithet ὁ δίκαιος refers to Jesus; which, when combined, fulfil the expectation and identity of the referent in Amb 2:3a, of a person who will come in the future.[72]

In light of this study, it is then incorrect to use Amb 2:4b as a reference to Jesus (as fulfilment of it) in order to postulate a subjective genitive reading of Rom 1:17b. The particular character of the text's eschatology would have given the NT authors good reason for using it in the messianic context of their time. Although the text of Amb 2:2–5 became messianic, it only did so in part. Because of the transformation into Greek, the alternate target text's structure

[72] Of course the many studies of the period do indicate that the idea of messianism and a sense of future hope existed. I am here only addressing the question of whether this was true for Ambakoum.

meant that the messiah could be adapted to v. 3 and his adherent to v. 4. My intention in this study was not to directly disprove the argument for a subjective reading of Rom 1:17b. But, in addition to the linguistic evidence for an objective genitive reading recently published by Porter and Pitts,[73] it seems to me that this brief discourse analysis further points away from using this text to prove such a claim. This was clearly not a messianic text, and only part of it became so.

[73] See Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, "Πίστις with a Preposition and Genitive Modifier: Lexical, Semantic, and Syntactic Considerations in the πίστις Χριστοῦ Discussion," in *Faith of Jesus Christ* (eds. Michael F. Bird and Preston M. Sprinkle; Milton Keynes, Bucks.: Paternoster, 2009).

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Introducing Christian Mission Today

STR Interviews Dr. Michael Goheen

Introduction

It is a delight for *STR* to interview Dr. Michael W. Goheen on the publication of his recent monograph *Introducing Christian Mission Today: Scripture, History and Issues* (IVP Academic, 2014). Dr. Goheen is a friend of *STR,* having been interviewed in the 2/2(2011) edition of *STR* (pp. 117-26). He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Utrecht, writing on Lesslie Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology. He has taught at a number of institutions, including Calvin Theological Seminary, Regent College, Trinity Western University, and Dordt College. Currently he splits his time between Vancouver, Canada and Phoenix, Arizona. He is Director of Theological Education and Scholar-in-Residence at the Missional Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona, and Adjunct Professor at Redeemer Seminary, Dallas. Dr. Goheen has served as a church planter and pastor to several churches and is presently a minister of preaching at New West Christian Reformed Church in the Vancouver area.

Interview with Michael Goheen

STR: *Michael, thank you for speaking with STR. Why did you write this introduction to Christian mission?*

Goheen: In 1989, while I was still a church planter and pastor, I was asked to teach an introductory university course on mission. I was not sure how to proceed. I knew that the colonial paradigm that had shaped mission for years was obsolete. But there were no models of how to structure such a course in missiology in our new setting that would bring together the various strands of missiology in a unified way. The second or third time I taught the course I was still struggling with this when I stumbled on David Bosch's *Transforming Mission* literally just days off the press. I read that book carefully two times as I prepared for the course again. We know now that this book changed the discipline of missiology. His structure and treatment of missiology helped many rethink how to approach the discipline in a new time. His book, however, is long, dense, and difficult. I have used it many times but students have

found it tough going. I was hoping someone would write something a little more manageable but it never happened. So I decided to do it. I put into print the course I had been teaching for twenty-five years. But it is not simply a shorter and more popular version. There are a number of other differences. It treats topics he did not—for example, a missiology of Western culture, a survey of the global church in mission, Pentecostal mission, urban mission, and mission*s*. Moreover, my theological perspective is explicitly evangelical and self-consciously in the Reformed tradition.

STR: *You say you were looking for another more popular book along the lines of Bosch's* Transforming Mission *but did not find it. What about books like* Introducing World Missions *(Scott Moreau, Gary Corwin, Gary McGee)* or Introduction to Global Missions *(Zane Pratt and David Sills)? There do seem to be other surveys out there on world mission. How is yours different?*

Goheen: Those are very good books and there are others like them. But I wanted to cast a wider missiological lens. Similar to my structure, they divide their books into sections on Scripture, history, and mission today. Their historical section tells you how they treat mission: the operative word is *expansion*. They are concerned to deal with mission in terms of its geographical expansion. The sections on mission today deal with various issues of cross-cultural mission—calling, preparation, anthropology, living as a family in a foreign culture, strategies, and so on. They treat subjects like contextualization and world religions in that framework as well. The geographical dimension of mission is a key part of the broader mission of the church, and we need books to introduce and prepare students for their experience of cross-cultural mission.

But I wanted to cast a wider theological lens. If mission is in, to, and from all six continents, then that will impact the way missiology is structured, what topics are selected, as well as how they are treated. For example, there are a number of issues in my book you don't find in most mission textbooks: missiology of Western culture, a survey of the global church in mission, missional theology (not just theology of mission), and more. It also means I deal with some traditional subjects within missiology differently. I narrate the history of mission, for example, not solely in terms of expansion, but also in terms of how the church embodied and carried out its mission at various points in history both within its own culture as well as reaching beyond its borders. How did the church understand and practice mission in each era and how did it impact their

culture? So my book is a missiology that works out from the theological starting point that the church is missional by its very nature—wherever it is. It is a missiology for the church-in-mission in whatever context including the West.

STR: *The books you mention have "missions" in their title and yet you have "mission." Is there a difference between "mission" and "missions" and, if so, why is it important?*

Goheen: It is important for me how I use the terms. However, I can't project my usage onto others. Words are tricky. People use words differently and make distinctions in various ways. Like the words "Trinity" or "providence," the word "mission" is not found in Scripture. It comes from the Latin word *mittere* ("to send") and was first used by the Jesuits centuries after Christ. So as one employs extra-biblical words to capture Scripture's teaching and make important distinctions, one has to be strategic. And we all do it in different ways.

I make two distinctions early in the book that are foundational for my understanding of mission. Both distinctions come from Lesslie Newbigin who, on the one hand, appreciated the wider view of mission that was developing in the 20th century that viewed all of life as mission. But at the same time, he wanted to protect intentional evangelism and cross-cultural missions as essential tasks within that wider mission.

The first distinction is between missional *dimension* and missional *intention*. Every part of the Christian life has a dimension of mission; that is, the whole of our lives—individual and communal, private and public—witness to the transforming power of the gospel. However, not everything we do has the intention of reaching out with the gospel and inviting unbelievers to embrace it in faith. So my marriage, for example, may have a missional dimension but, unlike evangelism, say, it doesn't have a missional intention.

The second is between mission and mission*s*. Mission is as broad as life. The church has been sent by Jesus to make known the good news across the whole spectrum of its life (John 20:21). As part of that mission the church is called to establish a witness in places and to peoples where there is none. Since the horizon of mission is the ends of the earth, the church everywhere must raise their eyes to see where there is no witnessing community to make known the good news, and establish a witness there. Newbigin called that mission*s*.

Missions is not simply cross-cultural work. It strategically targets places and people groups in the world who have never heard the good news, and establishing a witness in their midst

with the goal of bringing into existence a Christian church. So, for example, I may be a professor of theology training pastors in Kenya. But I am not doing missions but, as Newbigin called it, cross-cultural partnership. This is an important part of the church's mission. However, it is not missions just because it takes place beyond our borders. Missions is defined by the task of making known the good news in places and to peoples that have never heard.

This is not a mere haggling over letters and terms. Bryant Myer speaks of the disproportionate allocation of missionary resources and says we are spending over 90% of our money and even more of our personnel resources on cross-cultural partnership rather than missions. Urbana too has called attention to this problem. I once had an Indonesian theologian speak to my mission class. He argued, quite passionately in fact, that because the church in the West was still defining mission in terms of anything that happened overseas—very much in line with a colonial paradigm—we were not making headway on the missionary task of taking the gospel to parts of the world that had never heard it. I am convinced he is right. Recently I asked a leader in a denominational mission organization how many missionaries were actually engaged in missions and how many in cross-cultural partnership. He admitted that he was not sure if *any* were engaged in missions!

So the majority of my book is dealing with mission—the calling of the church in every place to make known the good news. But in the last chapter I deal with missions as an essential aspect of the mission of the church. In that chapter I ask questions like: Where are the places where there is no Christian witness? What are the problems hindering a fresh missions initiative? And what kind of structures and partnership are needed to do the job?

STR: *Who are the people that influence you in this book?*

Goheen: The two missiologists that have shaped the deepest theological structures and core convictions for my thinking on mission are J.H. Bavinck and Harvie Conn. If I can use an architectural metaphor, they established the foundation for my thinking in missiology. Theologically I fall most in line with the neocalvinist tradition as represented by Bavinck and Conn. After that, the three most influential figures on this book would be Lesslie Newbigin, Hendrik Kraemer, and David Bosch, in that order. I believe it is safe to say that these are three of the most important mission thinkers of the 20th century. I have attempted to read all their written work. I did my

PhD work on Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology and worked on his thought and life for a decade. Kraemer was one of the most influential figures in Newbigin's life, and so my dissertation launched me into Kraemer's work. I spent a fair bit of time assembling and reading Bosch's body of work as I taught mission courses. Although there are differences, I believe there is a lot of overlap in emphasis between these five writers: the importance of starting with God's mission as narrated in Scripture, a fully missional understanding of the church, a broad view of mission rooted in a gospel of the kingdom, the already-not yet period of the kingdom as a time of mission, a rich understanding of the relationship between gospel, culture, and church, a profound theology of religions, and more.

STR: *You have mentioned in your book and in this interview several times a "colonialist paradigm" for Christian mission. What do you mean by this? Do you think that the church is (still) participating in this paradigm?*

Goheen: Yes, the church's mission over the past few centuries has been shaped by colonialism. That is, mission moved along the tracks established by the colonization of much of the non-Western world by Western countries. And so mission moved from the West to the non-West, from wealthy countries to poor ones, from what was perceived to be a superior culture to inferior ones, and so on. For example, Dutch missions moved from the Netherlands to Indonesia, the British missions to India, since Indonesia was a Dutch colony and India a British one.

Today rightfully there has been a strong reaction against colonialism. And so, more liberal churches have abandoned mission because for them mission and colonialism are synonymous. There is embarrassment and guilt that makes them want to distance themselves from cross-cultural mission work. Unfortunately, in the evangelical tradition we have sometimes been less critical and are still more indebted to the colonialist paradigm than we realize.

The reason for the discrepancy between these two responses is that colonial mission combined both biblical and unbiblical elements. For example, the biblical impulse to take the good news to places where it has never been heard was right. The majority of the Christian church was in the West in the 19th century. Many of the motivations that went along with that were biblical as well: a desire to obey the Great Commission, a love for Christ and for people who were lost, a recognition of the universal truth of the gospel, and so on. However, this biblical impulse was also corrupted by many

factors associated with colonialism that were deeply problematic: a sense of the superiority of Western culture and the inferiority of non-Western cultures, complicity in political and economic dimensions of colonialism, and so on. What is needed is a careful assessment that struggles with both the unfaithfulness and the faithfulness of this era.

As for today, however one judges this period of mission history, the colonialist paradigm is not adequate. The church in the non-Western world has exploded and makes up the majority of the church. The church in the Western world is shrinking and has capitulated to secularistic humanism. It is rather clear we can no longer think of mission as flowing from the West to the non-West. So what is needed is a fresh understanding of mission that sees mission as making known the gospel in life, word, and deed—*in, to, and from* every continent. Global partnership and the worldwide church-in-mission provide the new context in which we need to understand and practice mission.

STR: *What are some other areas of the church's life that need rethinking in the light of this shifting paradigm of understanding mission?*

Goheen: One of the tasks that missiology can do is remind both the local congregation and the seminary of the centrality of mission. The way Harvie Conn puts it is that mission interrupts at every point in the process with the words "among the nations." There are many areas in which missiology can interrupt the life of the congregation and the seminary with a reminder of its missional calling, but I'll mention three.

The first is in the internal life of the institutional church. For too many years the church has understood the means of grace, for example—preaching, Lord's Supper, prayer, fellowship, worship, and so on—solely as channels of salvation for members of the church alone. The benefits that Christ has accomplished in his death and resurrection are distributed to God's people for their benefit through these means. While that is true, it is only a half-truth, and a half-truth that distorts. Karl Barth famously warns of "sacred egocentricity." That is, we see the benefits of Christ only as salvation to be enjoyed by God's people. Barth asks how can it be that a people who follow the One whose whole life was about total self-giving can exist only as selfish benefactors of Christ's work. We need to rethink each of the means of grace from the standpoint of nourishing a people for mission. What I mean by nourishing *for mission* is not that that it equips people to do evangelism; I hope it does that. But I mean something more than that. We

need to ask how can the means of grace equip us to receive the benefits of Christ as stewards called to make them known to others. N.T. Wright suggests that a church that understands the covenant simply in terms of benefits is like a mailman who believes all the letters in his bag are just for him! Rethinking the means of grace does not mean eclipsing the dimension of nourishing the church for its salvation. It asks how the means of grace can also equip a people who understand they exist for the sake of the world.

Another aspect of the internal life of the church has to do with structures. This is an unfinished agenda. Many of our congregational, denominational, and ecumenical structures hinder us from being faithful in our missional calling. What kinds of structures do we need that would enable us to be missional.

Mission can also challenge the seminary in terms of its theology and theological education. Three or four decades ago Bosch, Conn, Newbigin and many others point out that the divisions of our theological disciplines, the method and content of theology, and the way we do theological education developed at a time when the church had forgotten its missionary calling. As the church in the Third World exploded in the middle of the 20th century many of these mission leaders rejected western theological education because they believed that it was shaped by the Enlightenment. They probed what theology and theological education might look like if mission was central to all disciplines and to the enterprise as a whole. Much of their insight has gone unheeded. Today with institutions for theological educational in trouble, perhaps it is again time to recover their insights. If the mission of God and the missional nature of the church are central to the Bible how would that reshape theology and theological education? In the second chapter of my book I take a first step by sketching what a missional theology might look like.

A third area that comes to mind is evangelism. Perhaps it is particularly appropriate for me to mention this in a journal with roots in the Southern Baptist denomination. This has certainly been one of your strong points and emphases through the years. I wholeheartedly endorse that. Of course, evangelism has never been eclipse. But times are changing and we need to ask some hard questions about evangelism in our growing neopagan context. Has it been too individualistic? And why has the biblical category of the kingdom of God—so central to the "evangelism" of Jesus—disappeared from evangelism? Why have we simply emphasized the future bene-

fits of the gospel without including the demands as Jesus did? Has this kind of evangelism weakened our discipleship from the outset? Has our evangelism been too programmatic or methodological? Have we separated evangelism from everyday life including our life in the public square? I believe a broader view of mission and a fresh understanding of our new missionary situation will call us to rethink how we practice evangelism.

STR: *You speak about mission to western culture in the volume. In your view, what momentous challenges face the Western Church that need to be addressed?*

Goheen: Lesslie Newbigin suggested that a missiology of western culture had to be a priority on the agenda of missiology. Many have concurred, but interestingly, few have attempted to articulate the contours of such a missiology. David Bosch wrote a little tract, published posthumously, that described those contours. He noted that this should have been part of his bigger book, but that the realization of the importance of the issue came too late to be included.

There were two reasons that this was urgent according to Newbigin. First, because the church in the West had confined mission to other parts of the world, he believed there was a need to wrestle with the same issues in our own context. In fact, he believed that the church in the West was the most syncretistic church in the world! Second, western culture is becoming a global culture being spread around the world in the processes of globalization through business, economics, education, technology, media, popular culture, and so on. Therefore, there is a need to analyze western culture from the standpoint of mission and foster a missionary encounter with this culture.

In my book I speak of three important tasks in this regard. The first is concerned with our understanding the gospel itself: the gospel has been adapted to western culture in such a way that it scarcely presents a radical call to conversion. We have individualized and privatized the gospel; we need to recover it as public truth. We have propositionalized and fragmented the gospel; we need to recover it as the true story of the world. We have often made the gospel a message about otherworldly salvation; we need to recover it as an announcement about God restoring creation and human life now and in the future.

The second task is concerned with the church: we need to recover our missional identity as a people who exist for the

sake of the world. Our Christendom past has caused us to be preoccupied with the inner life of the church and our own salvation. We need to be reoriented toward the world.

The third task is concerned with culture: we have been deceived by the myth of a Christian culture or the myth of a secular or pluralistic culture that is supposedly religiously neutral. These myths have hindered us from analyzing our culture properly. We are the only culture in history and in the world today—very odd indeed!—that doesn't realize that the worldview shaping our culture is religious and in conflict with the gospel. We need a deeper understanding of the religious nature of humanism—how it is in conflict with the gospel, and how the gospel says both *yes* and *no* to it. It is the *no*, the countercultural aspect of an encounter with our culture that needs to be recovered.

STR: *You address mission in majority world contexts as well. Your global survey was very helpful in this regard. In light of your analysis, how must the Church witness in majority world contexts?*

Goheen: I don't think there is just one way to witness to the gospel in the majority world contexts. It will differ from place to place. A look at the major struggles in various macrocultural settings is a helpful way to illustrate the differences. The African church has lived much of its life in the shadow of an outright racist rejection of its traditional culture by the West including, sadly, Christian missionaries. What about that traditional culture is good? This question is complicated by the powerful cultures both of the West entering Africa in globalization and of Islam descending from North Africa. The Asian church faces different issues. It lives as a minority religion in the midst of very powerful religions. These religions do not see themselves as occupying a private, spiritual realm as we in the West misunderstand religion. They believe these religions are culturally formative worldviews. How can the church live in the midst of this kind of religious pluralism? The Latin American church lives in a setting where over three-quarters of the population live in poverty as a result of unjust global and domestic structures as well as corrupt local powers. What does the gospel say to situations of economic, political, and social injustice? Of course, there are many differences within the various areas of these macrocultural contexts, and there are other contexts not mentioned. This is rather an illustration of how witness in various settings will differ. It is important to know well and understand deeply the context in which we are set.

I end the survey of the global church in mission by observing that there are common issues the church faces in every part of the world—how to relate evangelism to social issues, relating the gospel to its cultural setting, religious pluralism, the impact of western culture, religious pluralism, and urban mission. But even here there are major differences from place to place. One can only understand and practice mission faithfully as one attends to their particular place and the challenges it raises.

STR: *One of the significant features of your work (as it has been for years) is rich biblical and theological grounding for Christian mission. Why is this so important for you?*

Goheen: The quick answer is that is important because the Bible is the Word of God. Our mission is only authentic and faithful to the degree it is aligned with the Scriptures. But our new setting calls for a fresh approach to Scripture. One of the things that has unwittingly happened in the past is that we have used the Bible selectively to authenticate what we already knew mission to be beforehand. We knew mission was cross-cultural activity and so we found verses in Scripture that fit that paradigm. It is a blessing that we are now struggling in a new global situation that won't allow us to simply repeat the biblical foundations of previous generations. We are required to return to Scripture and ask: what does the Bible say?

A number of things are becoming clear in this process. First, mission is not simply one task of the church that can be appended to the rest of the church's ministry. The mission of God is the central motif of Scripture. The mission of the church as it participates in God's mission is central to its very being and identity. It defines the role the church is called to play in the biblical story. Second, we cannot simply treat various texts in isolation from the whole story of God's mission. Rather the Bible tells one unfolding story of redemption, and we must ask how the overarching theme of mission impacts every text. And finally, we have to take seriously the literary structures of entire books. For example, the Great Commission is the climactic moment in the whole book of Matthew. When one understands the structure and narrative of Matthew's gospel, those last five verses taken on a much deeper significance. A missional hermeneutic that probes some of these questions is developing among biblical scholars, and this is exciting.

If our understanding and practice of mission is to be authentic, we must return to the Scriptures and allow them to

speak to us and shape our mission today. But we also need fresh theological reflection in the area of a theology of mission as well as a missional theology. In terms of a theology of mission I believe distinctions like mission of God and mission of the church, missional intention and missional dimension, mission and missions can be helpful toward rethinking a theology of mission for the global church today. In terms of a missional theology, we need to ask how the centrality of mission in Scripture shapes the whole spectrum of the theological disciplines—biblical studies, systematic theology, church history, so-called 'practical' theology, and so on. Only then will we be able to train pastors with the missional consciousness they need to be faithful to Scripture.

STR: *In the Church today, we often hear of relating the gospel to the whole of life. But this could be understood in a variety of ways. In your view, how do you relate the gospel to the whole of life? Is this the same thing as "mission"?*

Goheen: The gospel that Jesus first preached was a gospel of the kingdom (Mark 1:15). That is, it was an announcement that in Jesus and by the Spirit, God was coming back in power to defeat all powers that had corrupted creation and to restore the entirety of human life and the whole creation to again live under the rule of God. The gospel of the kingdom is about "creation healed" as Hans Küng puts it. So the gospel is, by its very nature, "related to the whole of life" in the sense that it is a message about the restoration of all of human life to God's original creation design and purpose.

Mission is about embodying, demonstrating, and announcing that gospel in the midst of the world. It is a matter of making known in life, deed, and word the good news that God is renewing all things—including the whole of human life. If the gospel is about being restored to being fully human as God intended it to be, then mission is about the vocation of the church to show to the world what that looks like across the whole spectrum of human life—personally, socially, culturally, economically, politically, educationally, aesthetically, and so on.

Large questions remain about what that looks like. David Bosch has identified five different approaches to relating the gospel to public life—Constantinian, pietist, Anabaptist, liberationist, and reformational. He dismisses the first two as unbiblical since they narrow the gospel to an otherworldly or "churchly" message. He sees the other three as both offering insight and harboring dangers. As I have mentioned I am lo-

cated in the reformational tradition but I believe it is important to know the dangers as well as the benefits of that tradition. I have learned a great deal from the critiques of the other traditions.

Perhaps it is important to observe that the mission of the church in the public life of culture will vary according to different kinds of cultural settings. The Bible already shows us this. In Romans and 1 Peter it appears to encourage the church to be involved in the various spheres of public life in a context where there is a degree of freedom. In Revelation the same comprehensive mission calls the church to resistance and suffering in a totalitarian setting. Sometimes the church will have social and cultural power, and they are called to use it in a non-coercive way. At other times, a suffering witness is all that the church may have to witness to the Lordship of Christ. Today in the West, the biggest danger may be to resist the privatization of our faith that reduces the gospel to individual, "spiritual", and ecclesial matters. This is precisely the danger the early church resisted when it proclaimed that "Jesus is Lord" (*kurios*) and when it referred to itself as a "public assembly" (*ecclesia*) rather than a religious body (*thiasos, heranos*).

STR: *You have a keen sense of the history of Christian mission and missiology. Why is history important?*

Goheen: In his massive book on the history of secularization of the West, Charles Taylor says that it is indispensable to tell a story in order to understand our culture. That it is the only way we can understand who we are and where we're at today. The reason is that our past is sedimented in our present, and we are doomed to misunderstand the present if we neglect the past. So narrating the story is not an optional extra but the only way to understand our present. I believe that is right, not just if we are to understand our current cultural situation, but if we are to understand our missional calling as a church. We have to comprehend how we have understood and practiced mission in the intervening centuries between the New Testament and today if we are going to be faithful in the present.

STR: *You devote an entire chapter to the topic of urban mission, labeling it the "new frontier." But surely the Church has impacted urban areas since its inception! What is distinctive about the need of urban mission today?*

Goheen: Indeed, the church has been part of the city and witnessing to Christ since its inception. But I believe there are a number of reasons that urban mission is urgent today. First, the sheer growth of cities in the past 100 years has been dramatic. 14% of the world's population lived in cities at the be-

ginning of the 20th century and it is expected that by 2050 that will rise to 80%. As Tim Keller put it, in cities "you have more 'image of God' per square inch than anywhere else in the world." Second, cities are centers of cultural power and influence. They are the nerve centers that disproportionately impact the rest of the country as well as the world. You find political power, institutions of higher education, business and finance, venues for leisure and entertainment, media centers and more in the city. Impact the city and you'll impact the world. The third reason is the remarkable poverty and socioeconomic need that is found in cities. Today the poor are primarily found in the cities. Over a billion people live in absolute poverty and over 75% of that number live in urban slums without water, sanitation or basic services. Those numbers are expected to climb in the future. A fourth reason is that cities in every part of the world are the place where western culture is making deep inroads into public life through the processes of globalization. This is the place of a missionary encounter with the powerful global culture. The final reason we need to highlight urban mission is the decreasing presence of Christians in the city. In 1900 70% of the population in the city was Christian yet today it is about 40%. So while the urban context has never been absent in church history there is need today to highlight this context.

STR: *You have planted churches and worked with church planters and pastors on a regular basis. In your estimation, what do urban church planters and pastors need most to equip them for mission?*

Goheen: This book offers insight into the mission of the church in light of Scripture. Certainly they need insight into these issues and should be struggling with all of these areas. And so all need a good education and sound training. But there is something far more fundamental that church planters need. Without diminishing the importance of insight in all these areas I would want to highlight and prioritize three things. First of all, pastors and church planters need a deep and rich prayer life. The kingdom comes as the Spirit works in response to prayer. We western people too easily capitulate to what one author calls a managerial missiology or ecclesiology. We plan and strategize before we pray. The power of the gospel and the life of the Spirit come—to use John Calvin's metaphor—as we dig up their benefits through the shovel of prayer. Second, a confidence in the power and truth of the gospel that comes from a life rooted in it. The kingdom comes into the world through the seed of the gospel. Before we can proclaim it and

make it known our own individual and corporate lives must be deeply rooted in it. Only through prayer and an ongoing encounter with God in the Scriptures will we be prepared for our missional calling. But this must be communal—and this is the third point. Mission has not been given to individuals alone but to a community. Mission will mean living out the "one-anothers" of the New Testament, an important aspect of biblical ecclesiology. Prayer and the Word of God in community: this is how we are rooted in Jesus the Christ. The line from the old hymn *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* has so often come to my mind when I think of the difficulties facing the church in mission: "Ponder anew what the Almighty can do if with his love he befriends you."

STR: *The word "contextualization" and "missions" often go together, but sometimes in contentious ways. How do you think your book helps Christians with contextualization?*

Goheen: Contextualization is a difficult, and as you mention, controversial issue. But it is essential to the gospel. It is clear that it is not a matter of whether we will contextualize the gospel; it is only a matter of whether we will do it faithfully or unfaithfully. The gospel by its very nature demands contextualization as it will always take cultural shape. Therefore reflection on what that means will be essential if the church is not to be accommodated to the idolatrous forces of its culture.

The western church has not always understood this. This misunderstanding comes from a view of truth as timeless ideas. It has also come from a long history of the gospel being limited to a western form. However, the advent of missions to other parts of the world has challenged all of that. Trying to communicate and embody the gospel in other parts of the world began to shatter this misunderstanding. So contextualization was associated with missions and the process of trying to insert the gospel, so to speak, in new cultural contexts. However, the growth of the church in the non-Western world has made it clear that contextualization is not just a pedagogical strategy for communicating the gospel in new cultural settings. It is constitutive of the very gospel itself. The good news will always take cultural form.

Sometimes the word "contextualization" is heard as making the gospel familiar and relevant only. And indeed that is important. The gospel must be heard and seen as good news in each cultural setting. Some feel the need then to add words like "prophetic" to say that the gospel not only affirms culture and speaks a relevant word to it, but also, it judges the idolatry

of culture. There are various models of contextualization but the best ones in my judgment, represented by Bavinck, Conn, Newbigin, and Kraemer, for example, use the word contextualization both to affirm the creational good of every culture as well as to challenge the idolatrous spirits at work in every culture. The gospel speaks both a "yes" and a "no." This is the pattern already within the New Testament, for example, when the gospel of John or the letters of Paul speak good news into the pagan Roman setting. The crossing of cultural boundaries from the Jewish to the Greco-Roman world affords us bblical insight into how contextualization took place very early in the history of the church. Indeed Dean Flemming shows in his excellent book *Contextualization in the New Testament* that this is the pattern of the entire New Testament.

So I think my book may help readers see that contextualization is not just about relevance but also has a countercultural thrust. Introducing readers to the robust model of Bavinck, Kraemer, and Newbigin should challenge the simplistic notion that contextualization relativizes truth. It should also provide deep insight into what faithful contextualization looks like.

STR: *In your view, what do you hope your volume offers so that the Church might serve our Lord better?*

Goheen: I hope for many things. First, I would hope that this book will help the reader reflect again on the nature and content of the gospel. If the church is not grounded in the gospel, it cannot make it known. As I suggested earlier, our lack of a critical consciousness of western culture has led us down the path of a reductionist gospel, and this has crippled our mission. Second, I would hope that reading this book will challenge the church in the West to understand its missional nature. Mission is not just one task given to us but it defines our identity. What does this look like in our western setting? Third, I would hope that each chapter and section would provide insight into the various aspects of the church's mission that would enable us all to be more faithful. Certainly topics like the calling of laity in the public life of culture, relating the gospel to culture, living in the midst of religious pluralism, understanding our urban future, locating and strategizing to make the gospel known to the lost—all these and many more are essential to our calling. One day we will stand before Christ to give an account of how faithful we have been. I pray that this book may raise the consciousness of Christians to

various aspects of the task and provide insight that may help them to be more faithful in it.

STR: *You have worked faithfully for years planting and pastoring churches alongside of your academic responsibilities. This book develops out of those years of ecclesial and academic service. What fruit have you seen emerge from the approach to Christian mission offered in this volume?*

Goheen: This is a missiology that, indeed, has come out of two contexts—teaching missiology and worldview within an academic setting, and struggling with these issues in the context of the local congregation. By way of example, I can point to two places where these have met. The first was a pastoral calling I was involved with in the first decade of the 21st century. I had just finished my PhD dissertation on Newbigin. I was invited to become a preaching pastor at an inner city church that had shrunk to a small number of mainly older folks. Since I had a university post I was given permission to invite one of my former students to become the senior pastor. One of the reasons I decided to accept this invitation was that I was curious if and how the things I had studied in missiology and missional ecclesiology for over a decade might have traction in the local congregation. Together, we self-consciously worked out many of the things that I have written about in this book. To make a long story short, we saw that church renewed, grow significantly, and plant another church.

A second situation is one I am working in today in Phoenix. Not many years ago I received a call from some pastors who were interested in the kind of missiology I was working on and how it would translate into their local congregations and context. I began to work with some of those leaders and am now in the process of training pastors and struggling with what theological education looks like if it takes mission seriously. We have seen some very exciting things take place in that setting. Perhaps most noteworthy is a program of discipleship, now involving twenty or thirty churches training 150-200 folk each year for their callings in the public square.

STR: *Mike, thanks for giving of your time to talk with us about your important volume. We pray that it would continue to serve to lift high the Name of Jesus.*

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Reading the Gospels Smithly: Thinking Upon and Loving the Gospels in Dialogue with James K.A. Smith's *Desiring the Kingdom* and *Imagining the Kingdom*[1]

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Introduction

James K. A. Smith is a remarkable scholar. From technical articles in philosophy to paradigm-shifting work on worship and Christian education, from an analysis of the massive work of Charles Taylor to spearheading editorial work for the Church and Postmodern Culture series, Smith has produced both quantity and quality. Moreover, he is a fine and creative writer, making his important ideas very accessible.

One of the projects Smith has been working on is his Cultural Liturgies series, a sequence of books in which he is unpacking his understanding of a philosophical anthropology for the purpose of helping theological educators. The first two books in this series of at least three planned are *Desiring the Kingdom* and *Imagining the Kingdom*.[2] These two books are different in argumentation and topics covered, but with an overlap in purpose and a shared foundation of understanding. It is appropriate then, and helpful, to treat them together as the (hitherto produced) two parts of the Smith canon on this subject.

The purpose of this essay is to engage with Smith's philosophical work in these two books from the perspective of NT studies, specifically my own area of interest in the Gospels. I will suggest that Smith's philosophical anthropology is paradigm-shifting and of great value even though ultimately it is in need of more balance

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[1] This essay is a revision of a paper I read at the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Ph.D. Colloquium in July 2014. I am grateful for the many in attendance and the stimulating environment and dialogue.

[2] James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009); *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013).

from a biblical and theological perspective. To explore this thesis I will present my argument in three steps. First, I will give significant space to hearing Smith's voice and seeking to understand his thoughts, loves, and concerns. Second, I will take several of the summarized points and put them in dialogue with some of my own thoughts regarding the nature and function of the Gospels. Third, I will offer some dialogical critiques about Smith's project and raise some questions for further discussion.

Hearing Smith's Thoughts and Loves

While *Desiring the Kingdom* (DTK) and *Imagining the Kingdom* (ITK) are not Smith's first books nor his last, they are a significant part of his overall, developing corpus and the place where he is unpacking at the broadest level, it seems to me, his way of thinking and acting Christianly.

The first volume, DTK, has the subtitle, "Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation." The second volume, ITK, continues in the same vein with the descriptor, "How Worship Works." Neither these titles nor subtitles are particularly clear at this point in relation to what Smith is going to actually argue, however, as the issues of worship and cultural formation as we typically think of these do not appear woven throughout or even explicated very much. Nor does he end up giving much by way of practical application to Christian education, which is one of his stated goals. Nonetheless, despite these rather generic subtitles, what Smith does offer is significant.

Smith is, as I noticed especially on my second reading of both books, a rather circuitous writer. He strikes me as a good teacher, one who says very insightful things, repeating himself, but not exactly in the same way each time. So too with these books. One can easily find a statement at the beginning or the end where Smith says, in grand summarizing form, "The point of this book is…" or "what I'm suggesting in these volumes is…" or "the goal to what I'm suggesting is…" These are always good and appreciated as a reader. I was struck at the same time, however, that I actually ended up finding several of these statements throughout the books, not just at the beginning and the end, but sometimes in the middle too! This is not a criticism; indeed, as noted, Smith strikes me as a great teacher, doing what a great teacher does: he puts the same sentiment and idea in different turns of phrase and different appli-

cation contexts. I like that and it works. It makes summarizing his point succinctly, while at the same time, a bit more difficult.

Smith says that his goal for the Cultural Liturgies project concerns both worship and Christian education, which are intimately interwoven and really have the same purpose, the *missio Dei*. As a philosophy professor at Calvin College and part of the great Dutch Reformed heritage, he is well aware of and indeed cut his intellectual and spiritual teeth on the notion of worldview. He wants, however, to "push down through worldview to worship as the matrix from which a Christian worldview is born" and then to consider what this means for both Christian education and Christian worship. (DTK, 9)

As Smith notes, typically (particularly in the Modern period) education is viewed as the imparting of *ideas*. Correspondingly, then, Christian education is typically approached as the imparting of Christian ideas, or the development of a Christian worldview, understood as a system of Christian beliefs, ideas, and doctrines. It is a way of understanding the world, not just with human knowledge, but also with faith, informed by Holy Scripture and the Church. (DTK, 18) Who would fault that?

But, Smith asks, what if Christian education is not actually primarily about ideas and *information* but primarily about the *formation* of hearts and desires? What if, Smith asks, Christian education was primarily concerned with shaping our hopes and passions—our visions of 'the good life' or the kingdom—and not merely about the dissemination of data and information as inputs to our thinking, even Christian worldview thinking? What if education wasn't first and foremost about what we *know* by reason or by faith, but about what we *love*? (DTK, 18)

Smith believes in and is involved in Christian education and understands that a biblically-based, theologically-informed, ecclesially-practiced *worldview* is important. Knowledge matters, both broad understanding and micro-details. Any Christian educator worth his or her salt knows that we are not just training believers with a skill set / vocational training that happens to be for the church, especially not at the undergraduate level. Rather, we are seeking to bring Christians to a greater understanding of the world and their faith. But even this, Smith argues convincingly, is inadequate; even the best education toward a Christian worldview as an understanding of the world is insufficient.

Why? Because typical Christian worldview education is reductionistic—speaking as if the goal is to train Christians to *think* a certain way and therefore act a certain way. But, Smith argues, such construals of worldview "belie an understanding of Christian faith that is dualistic and thus reductionistic: It reduces Christian faith primarily to a set of ideas, principles, claims, and propositions that are known and believed. The goal of all of this is 'correct' thinking." This is fine if we are merely what Descartes described us to be—thinking things. But what if, Smith asks, that is only a slice of who we are and not even the most important part of humans as creatures of God? What if we are instead created as *embodied* creatures and our identity is located more in the body than the mind? (DTK, 32) If so, and he spends two books making an incredibly convincing case for this, then Christian education has got to be more than about training Christians how to think.

As Smith rightly notes, "Being a disciple of Jesus is not primarily a matter of getting the right ideas and doctrines and beliefs into your head in order to guarantee proper behavior" (DTK, 32). Anyone who has ever tried to raise children, discipled another Christian, been friends with a Christian who went off the rails, or has just tried to be a Christian themselves and seen that knowledge is not enough for transformation knows this to *not* be the case! Right beliefs do not guarantee proper behavior. "Rather," Smith notes, being a disciple of Jesus is "a matter of being the kind of person who *loves* rightly—who loves God and neighbor and is oriented to the world by the primacy of that love." (DTK, 32-33)

This is very good. And this fits very well with the older, pre-Modern, pre-rationalist view of education that was dominant throughout all of antiquity and the West—Christian and not—that education is about *paideia*, the formation of the person to have virtue, resulting in full human flourishing.

But here is where Smith's genius shines through and where he is powerfully provocative and transformative in what he offers. He argues not just in a grenade-throwing or in a shrill-cried, foot-stomping way that: "We need better Christian education!!" Rather, he presses into this and argues that the real problem with even the best Christian worldview-based education is that it rests on a faulty philosophical anthropology.

This faulty philosophical anthropology – or way of understanding the human being – is at least as old as Plato but finds its dominant and ultimately domineering form in the Modern period, espe-

cially with Descartes. The "Human Person as Thinker" gets its big boost through Descartes' famous existential crisis resulting finally in his only assured basis for knowledge, "I think therefore I am." Smith notes that this model of humanity as fundamentally a thinking thing—though note, radically different than the great heritage of the Church via Augustine—was cultivated throughout Modernity. The notion becomes that *what* humanity is is an immaterial mind or consciousness, occasionally and temporarily embodied, but not essentially so. (DTK, 41) (As an aside, I may note that this same issue engendered a large debate between Aquinas and his contemporaries, whom Thomas saw as neo-Platonists.[3]) As Smith cleverly says, "This is a broadly intellectualist or rationalist account of the human person, fed on a diet of ideas, intravenously into the mind through the lines of propositions and information." (DTK, 42)

While this model of humanity assumed different forms throughout Modernity (Kant, Hegel, etc.), unfortunately, "this rationalist picture was absorbed particularly by Protestant Christianity (whether liberal or conservative), which tends to operate with an overly cognitivist (and individualistic) picture of the human person and thus tends to foster an overly intellectualist account of what it means to be or become a Christian." This does much to explain the rationalist distortions of "worldview" that he mentioned earlier. (DTK, 42)

The result of this reductionistic, rationalistic understanding human nature is a Christianity that is fixated on doctrines and ideas, even while ironically often being allied with a certain kind of anti-intellectualism. This looks like a bobble-head Christianity: "mammoth heads that dwarf an almost nonexistent body." (DTK, 43)

As Smith rightly notes, this overly rationalist view of humanity has been critiqued already by Christians, especially by Reformed tradition. The criticism one will find in great Christian philosophers and theologians such as Alvin Plantinga or John Frame is that we need to recognize how much of our thinking actually operates on the basis of faith, not a neutral, objectivity activity, but a particular way of seeing the world. This is where worldview comes in, noting that our primary orientation to the world is not thinking but believing. Beliefs are more basic than ideas. In this model, humans are not understood as fundamentally thinking machines but believing

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[3] For discussion of this See Denys Turner, *Thomas Aquinas: A Portrait* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

animals, or essentially religious creatures. We are defined, it is observed, not by what we think but by what we believe. This generates the line of worldview thinking common in the Reformed tradition, developed precisely as a critique of more rationalistic construals of Christianity. (DTK, 43)

But while this is commendable and helpful, Smith has two reservations about this improvement over bald Cartesian rationalistic anthropology:

> 1) This model of humanity really just moves the clash of ideas down a level to a clash of beliefs—beliefs which still often look like the propositions and ideas of the rationalist model, only they've been given the status of Ur-ideas.
>
> 2) This "person as believer" model still tends to operate with a very disembodied, individualistic picture of the human person. (DTK, 44) My beliefs are still quite detached from my body and from what I *do* as an embodied creature. While this model is better than the "brain in a vat" rationalism, it seems still like a person as an isolated, disembodied island of beliefs; the believer is a chastened rationalist, certainly. But beliefs in this improved Christian model still seem to be the sorts of things are more commensurate with thinking rather than doing and loving. (DTK, 45)

So Smith here is not rejecting worldview models; they are a step in the right direction, he says. But ultimately they are insufficient and insufficiently Augustinian. "We still get a somewhat stunted anthropology that fails to appreciate that our primordial orientation to the world is not knowledge, or even belief, but *love*." Smith wants to offer a robustly Augustinian anthropology that sees humans as most fundamentally oriented and identified by love, as manifested through embodiment. (DTK, 46)

This is the big idea—or big desire—that undergirds both *Desiring the Kingdom* and *Imagining the Kingdom*. Smith then spends the rest of DTK and most of ITK unpacking and developing this love/desire-based philosophical anthropology from a number of different angles. And it is all very fascinating and well done, brimming with insights on nearly every page.

In DTK he begins constructing an alternative philosophical anthropology by arguing that we are creatures motivated by loves before and more deeply than by thoughts. This is not to say we are non-rational or that a proposition (such as this sentence) is nonsensical, but rather that primarily we are affective, imaginative in

nature and that propositions don't get into our bones in the same way. (DTK, 53) We are actually motivated in our lives by a *picture* of the good life that "captures our hearts and imaginations not by providing a set of rules or ideas, but by painting a picture of what it looks like to flourish and live well. This is why such pictures are communicated most powerfully in stories, legends, myths, plays, novels, and films rather than dissertations, messages, and monographs." (DTK, 53) Again, we are lovers before and more profoundly than we are thinkers.

The question, then, is *how* do we develop, affect, and change our loves/desires, which can obviously be disordered and perverted. The answer is *habits*, or better, *habitus*, learned dispositions. Habits/Dispositions are, Smith says, "love's fulcrum" – the hinge that turns our heart/loves/desires to be predisposed in certain directions (DTK, 56). Habitus is our "precognitive tendencies to act in certain ways and toward certain ends" (DTK, 55). Habits are a kind of second nature; while they are learned, they become so intricately woven into the fabric of our being that they function as if they were natural or biological. "They represent our default tendencies and our quasi-automatic dispositions to act in certain ways, to pursue certain goods, to value certain things, to cherish certain relationships, and so forth." (DTK, 56) "Our habits incline us to act in certain ways without having to kick into a mode of reflection … this precognitive engine is the product of long development and formation—it's *made*, not some kind of 'hard wiring'—but it functions in a way that doesn't require our reflection or cognition." (DTK, 56)

Smith goes on to explore more deeply how this happens and what it looks like, but I will skip ahead to a comment he makes near the end. The big bang for the buck comes when he ties this anthropology to worship:

> The practices of Christian worship *do* this work nonetheless because of the kind of creatures we are. The practices carry their own understanding that is implicit within them (*pace* Taylor), and that understanding can be absorbed and imbibed in our imaginations without having to kick into a mode of cerebral reflection…. A way of construing of the world becomes 'automated,' and this will affect our actions and behaviors outside the context of gathered worship in ways we don't always 'think' about. (DTK, 166-167)

Or even more succinctly, "I worship in order to understand." (223) Worship is "the crucial incubator for hatching Christian accounts of the world." (224)

In the subsequent volume ITK Smith revisits this same philosophical anthropology and both deepens it through another angle of insight, the work of two French thinkers, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Peirre Bourdieu. Smith's goal, using philosophy, social psychology, and cognitive science of literature, is "to articulate a liturgical anthropology that accounts for the importance of the kin-aesthetic and the poetic—that recognizes and explains the intertwinement of the body and story as the nexus of formation that ultimately generates *action*." (ITK, 16)

This second volume supplements DTK's account of desire with an account of the imagination, because Christian formation is a conversion of the imagination effected by the Spirit. (ITK, 15-16) Smith observes that imagination is the way in which we make sense of the world; it is the orientation to the world and vision that motivates what we do even though it is visceral and bodily more than cognitive. (ITK, 19)

Using the work on perception by Merleau-Ponty Smith develops the idea of *praktognosia*, that mysterious kind of knowledge that we have that is acquired over time by habit and hands-on experience, a how-to knowledge that is non-rational. This might be best summed up with the brilliant Mark Twain quote: "A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way."

Coming at it from another angle, chapter 2 of ITK explores the work of Pierre Bourdieu, a very influential 20th century French sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher. Bourdieu observed the great problem that marks the work of anthropologists and sociologists—that their supposed objectivity and their objectification of what they are studying is precisely what prevents them from truly understanding it! By removing themselves from the real sense of the *practices* of the community they insert an "epistemological break" into their ability to truly understand those they are studying. Wisely, Bourdieu didn't give up on the science itself or castigate theoretical reflection as inherently problematic. There is a virtue to theoretical reflection on practice and the attempt to understand what's at stake in communities of practice. It's not a matter of choosing theory *or* practice. Rather, Bourdieu promotes an adequate understanding of the practice as its own irreducible know-how as well as theoretical reflection on the practice. (ITK, 76)

In chapters three and four Smith delves more deeply into the issue of how imagination affects us. Narrative, poetics, and metaphor are the scaffolding of our experience and how we intend to the world and are oriented to it. Because the nature of humanity is centered not in thoughts but desires, it makes sense that the greatest effect on us will come through story, narrative, poetics, and metaphor; these affect us at the level of desires and loves. (ITK, 108-109)

This again, is why we need to focus on our practices—our 'liturgies" whether they be in or outside of the church—because our practices or habits form us at the poetic and kinesthetic level and therefore, most profoundly. "Liturgies are compressed, repeated, performed narratives that, over time, conscript us into the story they 'tell' by showing, by performing." (ITK, 109)

Dialoguing with Smith and the Gospels

I have spent considerable time here summarizing and rehearsing Smith's arguments because of their weightiness and worthiness of consideration. His work has helped shape my thinking in many ways and I think there is much to commend. Continuing in this positive assessment and coming from my own perspective as a Gospels scholar, I want to offer a few dialogical thoughts about how Smith's insights interact with some issues that I have observed in terms of reading the Gospels well.[4]

1) Different Discourses of Truth

One of the things I argued in my *Reading the Gospels Wisely* book is that there are in fact many different discourses of modes of truth telling. Smith's insight into the power and importance of story made me sing here and he does a great job of articulating this. I want to affirm wholeheartedly with Smith that narrative/story/poetic/artistic truth is powerful and essential to our human existence. As Smith and I have both argued in our own way, there is an irreducibility to poetic or narrative truth. One cannot just take a story or poem, getting its "meaning"—defined as the propositional truth contained within the supposed husk of the story—and then discard it.

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[4] Some of the issues below I have raised and treated in part in my volume, *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Literary and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012).

Yet—and this is a big part of my whole goal in writing *RGW*—this is precisely how we have often read and interpreted and preached the Gospels, as if their narrative form is at best something to get through to the real, meaty, doctrinal truth, and at worst is an embarrassment and inferior form of truth-telling.

So a big, hearty Amen to Smith's beautiful explanation for the irreducible and irreplaceable mode of discourse in poetry and story. This bespeaks the non-negotiable, and I would push, central role the Gospels play in our theological and spiritual understanding.

2) Primacy of Love in Jesus' Teaching

Foundation to Smith's arguments is the central place that our loves and desires play in our human nature. Subsequently, as Smith argues, we need to intend or attend to this and how the liturgies of our habits affect these loves. Thinking about this from the perspective of the Gospels one immediately recalls that Jesus puts precisely this same emphasis on love as the apex of Christian life and life together. At the deepest level of Jesus' teaching is the call to intend to our hearts, to our love and affections as the most important thing about who we are and as the necessary root of all true righteousness.

In the Gospel texts there is the easy, low-hanging fruit of the explicit statements Jesus makes about what the first and second greatest commandments are—loving God and loving neighbor (Matt 22:34-40 and parallels). This is taken up and made even more clearly and dominantly the great theme of the Gospel of John (the Beloved Disciple) where Jesus' love for the Father, the Father's love for him, the disciples love for Jesus and vice versa, God's love for the world (John 3:16) is the grand and glorious love-fest theme. But it goes beyond this also to the way in which the Gospels, maybe especially Matthew and John emphasize that to be a Christian means to live in a relationship of love with other believers. In John, again, this is obvious with the High Priestly Prayer (John 19:XX) and other teachings (John XX). In Matthew it appears particularly through the great Matthean theme of showing mercy/compassion toward others and forgiving one another (Matt XX). This constant refrain in Matthew is the most practical, pointed way Jesus teaches his disciples to fulfill the second greatest commandment, through forgiving one another. In terms of righteousness, Matthew also particularly emphasizes throughout the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) that one's *heart* is the center of the issue.

3) Education is about Formation—Through Discipleship

A third parallel to draw between Smith's work and my understanding of the Gospels is the mutual emphasis on education as being about formation, not just information. This relates to work I have been doing on a "*paideia*-understanding" of Christian higher education, both in theory and practice at my own institution, including a short piece I recently wrote on Christ as Educator or Pedagogue.[5]

In brief, the point is that although in our tradition we often think of Jesus as Teacher—meaning the conveyor of true content or revelation—in the ancient world education was understood much more robustly as *paideia*, or the bringing of the individual to maturity and flourishing through training in virtue. Education is about the formation of the whole person, not the training in certain skills. When read in light of Jewish and Greco-Roman understanding of education the Gospels make much more sense in portraying Jesus as a Pedagogue who has "learners" (*mathetes*) who follow him and learn not just his content-teaching but his way of being in the world. The letter to the Hebrews interestingly reflects this same understanding with its very Greco-Roman language of Jesus as the one who brings his followers into *teleios*-ness or maturity through suffering. So too in the Gospels.

This has deep congruence with Smith's arguments in that being a disciple means being conformed over time *through practice and habits*. This is what Smith talks about in light of the kind of practical knowledge—what both Aristotle and the Jewish biblical tradition would call Wisdom—that we gain through practice. I think the Gospels depict precisely the same vision, that we are transformed through following and worshipping. This is, indeed, the kind of children the Father is seeking—those who worship by the Spirit and faithfully (what John means here by 'in truth').

4) Following Christ is Entailed with Belief and Understanding

Closely related to the preceding observation, we can also note that the Gospels confirm with different language what Smith argues when he says that our learned *habitus* or dispositions (affected by our liturgical practices) affect our believing and understanding. Recall that Smith is arguing that there is something going on pre-

[5] http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/christ-the-educator.

cognitively/under the hood that is fundamental to our perception, knowledge, understanding, and belief.

I think the Gospels witness the same reality through the emphasis on the foundational matter of the heart, or inner person. To use the helpful philosophical term of "entailment"—that is, that one idea necessitates and is necessarily interwoven with another—our following or discipleship is *entailed* with our understanding and believing. That is, our obedience is not separate from our ability to understand; it is a habitus that primes and shapes our belief and knowledge. This is most clearly and easily seen in Jesus' epistemic earthquake statement in John 7:17: "If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority."

5) Doing Affects Being, and not just the Other Way Around

Fifth and finally, I find Smith's arguments correspond well with the work I have been doing for the last several years on Virtue Ethics in the Gospels and the relationship of human transformation, justification, and salvation. To say it most succinctly, I believe that to correspond with both the scriptural witness and experience, our theological anthropology must understand that *doing affects being,* and not just the other way around*, that being affects doing.*

This is a massive issue and deserves a very nuanced discussion, but I must be necessarily brief here. In short, the Protestant tradition, especially its reductionized Modern forms, has had only a unidirectional anthropological understanding on this being-doing issue. Namely, Protestantism has emphasized that our *doing* is the fruit or result of our *being*. So we typically observe that in Paul's letters he always starts with the truths about us (usually rendered as propositions) and then and only then exhorts us to living differently based on these. This is the classic Indicative-Imperative sequencing that Protestants often discern and emphasize in Paul's theology. Deeply interwoven with this is the great Protestant emphasis, of course, on justification only coming to us as a gift of grace. This is a being-doing understanding. We are something (being) that results in and produces action (doing). To confuse this or somehow muddle it is, for those Protestants who have considered it, anathema.

This much is easily notable in Protestantism. I would suggest, however, that this approach reflects and effects a stunted anthropological and sanctification view. The Protestant emphasis on this being-doing relationship is fully true but not the whole truth. In

reality, we also become as we act; doing also affects being. I fully realize these are "fightin'" words! But let me painfully clear: I am not talking about the narrow topic of forensic justification and imputation. As a Protestant, I agree that this is a gracious gift that fundamentally changes our being, resulting in doing (or fruit). This is a biblical idea. This is settled and is our only hope. Rediscovering this fundamental truth is at the bedrock level of the Protestant Reformation.

But I am also saying that when it comes the fullness of human experience and human development (physically, mentally, spiritually) this true view is too static when applied across all of our experience. It is also profoundly true that as we act we become; we are ever changing. If we don't have some mechanism for understanding this dynamic of human experience then we cannot explain how people really change and grow in sanctification other than in a deterministic way, making the exhortations to growth meaningless.

This relates to the Gospels in many ways, including the notions of discipleship I've already mentioned, but particularly here the vision of *human flourishing* that is found in places like the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes and the entirety of the Sermon are inviting us in to a way of being in the world that transforms us and promises us true human flourishing now and ultimately in God's coming kingdom. This is not just an unreachable ideal on the one hand nor an earning of one's salvation on the other. It is an invitation to grace-based, God-directed, Spirit-empowered, kingdom-oriented virtue, or what Matthew calls "righteousness" (which is defined as "whole person behavior that accords with God's nature, will, and coming kingdom").

While none of this is Smith's language nor the framing of ideas he is addressing, I think it clearly connects in that his philosophical anthropology is seeking to explain how we change. His explanation includes a strongly body/kinesthetic element—we change as people through our actions. Of course, we don't change at the DNA level, but most of life is not experienced at this level, but at the level of customs, habits, mindsets, experiences, etc., all of which are greatly affected by our actions and customs, and habits.

A Brief Dialogical Critique

With this summary and positive exploration in place we can now conclude by offering a few constructive thoughts of dialogue and critique. These are given in the context of great appreciation

and sympathy and in the spirit of good Gadamerian dialectic, which I'm sure Smith would welcome. I'll offer my dialogical critique in the form of a few questions.

1) Is this an Imbalanced Reaction?

Whenever someone is so bold as to offer a radically new paradigm for understanding a common response is dismissal and/or vehement attack. Neither of those are options for me. Nevertheless, there have been a few thoughtful respondents—and I hope I'm one of them—that have rightly raised the question of whether what Smith is arguing here, hugely beneficial and true as it is, might be an imbalanced overreaction; another example of the famous Kierkegaardian quip about the drunken peasant climbing up one side of the donkey only to fall off the other.

I am quite sympathetic to Smith's arguments and largely persuaded, but I can't help but raise the question of whether the strong emphasis Smith has put on our non-cognitive functioning is not ultimately synthetic and holistic enough to account for the whole of human experience and development.

What I mean is that while it is absolutely essential that we reconsider the inherently embodied nature of our existence and the profound ways in which we are motivated by habits and desires, Smith does not offer a model that is convincingly comprehensive enough on what role cognition/thinking *does* play in our formation and ongoing existence and development as rational animals.

He acknowledges this partially in his opening to ITK in which he responds to the ironic charge that he has written a very rational, cognitive, propositional book to argue for the essential non-propositional nature of our knowing! His response is fairly satisfying, actually, noting that there are different discourses of truth and, quoting Proust, that there is a mysterious irony that it is the intellect that is required to understand that the intellect is not the superior or most foundational aspect of our existence. Smith also is careful to ward off any charge of anti-intellectualism or any misreading that he thinks cognitive content in any way unimportant. That is all good.

But again, what is lacking is a coherent philosophical anthropology that notes the position and role of cognition in our nature and development. Liturgies do form and shape us profoundly, but so does revelation and cognition. And moreover, not all liturgies

are the same or equal. There must be some way for cognitive evaluation of them.

I think (feel) that Smith is probably right that the center of gravity of human existence is affectional more deeply than intellectual so I'm willing to side with him on that over against much of our own tradition. But the solution must be a both/and, not an either/or that is more than lip service to the ongoing importance of cognition. (He gives what seems to be only lip service to this by noting that he agrees we should continue to have physics classes as Christian colleges.) In this I wonder if Kierkegaard's understanding of human development might be one important interlocutor who is noticeably absent from Smith.

2) Where are the Existing Categories, Concepts, and Conversation-Partners?

Smith is so brilliant, so engaging, and so enlightening that it took me quite a while before it began to dawn on me that several of the matters he was articulating have already long existed in our communal dialogue in the form of various categories, concepts, and conversation-partners. For example, I realized that much of what Smith was articulating about habits and *habitus* largely stems from Aristotelian notions of virtue ethics *mutatis mutandis*. Related, remarkably, the discussion of *habitus* mentions Aquinas not at all, the giant theologian who bequeathed to Christendom much reflection on this topic. Further, as my friend Dr. Ben Mast, clinical psychologist at the University of Louisville and expert on neuroscience of memory noted, much of what Smith discusses about habits and non-cognitive knowledge/*praktognosia* has been dealt with quite extensively and with a different interpretation in the field of neuroscience.

The question that dawned on me is not "Why did Smith not know everything and say everything there is to say?" I realize this is impossible and unrealistic to expect. But rather, the question in my mind (and heart) was, why is he not availing himself of the language, concepts, and insights that have already been explored and debated for centuries on many of these same topics? Why talk about these matters of virtue without exploring the topic of virtue and the nuanced debate that has already occurred on this?

I am certain as a philosopher he is well aware of most of these topics and debates. The most sympathetic reading—which may indeed be the case—is that he intentionally did not use the catego-

ries and interlocutors common to many of these discussions so that he would not get bogged down in the ruts of the old debates and entrenched warfare on issues such as grace versus virtue, nature versus nurture, etc. If this is the case I'm quite in support largely, as Smith is very fresh and stimulating by virtue of his *not* getting bogged down but instead bringing new and exciting voices to the table.

Yet I can't help but wonder if something is lost in *not* tying in his arguments to Aristotle and Aquinas and others—lost both for the qualifications and enrichment they would bring (and I do think Aristotle and Aquinas would have more to say along the lines of an *integration* of reasoning and affection, intellect and love) and for the help in our overall understanding of how to integrate his arguments into those already existing debates and concepts.

3) Where is Holy Scripture, Theology, and the Kingdom?

Finally, I might ask, where is in all of this philosophical anthropology and vision for Christian education Holy Scripture, Theology, and Kingdom? That is, not as a biblicist who is counting references to Bible verses in his indices, but as a fellow Christian and theologian and Christian educator I think it is fair to remark that in these theological books there is in fact little to no engagement with Scripture or dogmatic theology, and maybe even more ironically, no discussion of the kingdom of God, either its shape, purpose, or form, despite its appearance in the title of both books!

Now if Professor Smith were here, I can imagine he might respond that he is doing prolegomenon work, preparatory work to help us understand *philosophical* anthropology that precedes such cognitive endeavors such as Scripture, Theology, and the content of the Kingdom. He might say that as a non-biblical scholar and non-theologian this part of the story is left to others. Fair enough. I can be sympathetic and charitable.

Yet he never says that he's only doing preparatory work and it seems on the contrary that he is offering a view of how humanity functions—a philosophical anthropology. As a Christian offering such a view it seems to me that his discussion of liturgy and desire should evidence at least basic revelatory content, especially when the nature and content of Jesus' transformative, love-based teaching is inherently *non*-intuitive and *not* discernible from human nature and natural theology; it is radically topsy-turvy and eschatological unexpected!

It seems any philosophical anthropology for a Christian needs to be a theological anthropology that has all the Smith offers but includes also the fundamental realities of sin and its (noetic and affectional) effects and the role of the Holy Spirit as illuminator and transformer. Along these lines, Smith says a few times that his view is actually the more Augustinian view than others, yet I see no wrestling at all with Augustine or what he said and how he articulated things. Augustine certainly addresses the issue of sin and God's redeeming work in his understanding of humanity.

This potential problem may indeed relate to and stem from my two preceding critical questions—the imbalanced de-emphasis on cognition and ignoring of earlier debates and interlocutors. If Smith does not give enough credence to the role of cognitive/intellectual content to our shaping and formation it would naturally lead to a de-emphasis on the revelatory content of Holy Scripture and dogmatic theology via the Holy Spirit, both of which cannot be written off as a tack-on to our development as liturgical animals. It is the content of Holy Scripture and its outworking in the tradition of Theology that has and does shape both our liturgy and our formation through reflection and meditation and instruction. Similarly, if Smith were to engage more deeply with the Aristotelian virtue tradition, Aquinas' wrestling with it, Barth's insights on the radical in-breaking nature of revelation, to name a few, then it would, I suspect, provide a bit more balance and a more comprehensive philosophical anthropology than Smith has thus far provided us, beautiful though it is.

Despite these challenges, I am grateful for the stimulating and challenging scholarship of Smith's work. I recommend that Christians read and ponder what Smith is presenting and continue to do so as we stumble towards understanding and faithful witness in the world.

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More than Just Torah: God's Instruction in the Psalms

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Approaches to Psalm 119 and the Psalter

Neither scholarly nor popular attitudes towards Psalm 119 have been uniformly positive. Weiser, for example, after providing his translation and notes, offers just over one and a half pages of comment on it.[1] He regards it as an 'artificial product of religious poetry'[2] and though he does offer some slightly more sympathetic comments, concludes that the psalm 'carries with it the germs of a development which was bound to end in the self-righteousness of the Pharisees and scribes.'[3] Others seem to find its unrelenting focus on God's word as rather more than can be taken in, so that in the lectionary used by the Church of England for daily prayer it is the only psalm that is not read whole,[4] with segments of it punctuating the cycle of readings at various points. And, from the perspective of personal experience, there is undoubtedly a look of terror from the congregation when one announces that there is a reading from it that is usually soothed only by subsequently mentioning that only specific verses will be read. Indeed, the length of the psalm is itself problematic for many, with Anderson commenting that this, along with its rigid structure, prevents 'any real development of thought within the poem.' He then adds that its variations on its main theme become a 'monotonous repetition' though he does concede that it 'is impressive even in its repetitiveness.'[5] For Mowinckel, it is a 'styleless' mixture of types and representative

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[1] Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1962), pp. 739–41.

[2] Weiser, *Psalms*, p. 741.

[3] Weiser, *Psalms*, p. 743.

[4] Strictly, Psalms 78 and 89 are also divided because of considerations of length, but the second half is then the next lection.

[5] A. A. Anderson, *The New Century Bible Commentary: Psalms* (2 vols, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), vol. 2, p. 806.

of a type of didactic poetry that, in its lack of connection with the cult has failed to understand what a psalm should be.[6]

Mowinckel's concerns of course preceded the more recent interest in Psalms as a book, but in a curious way they have paved the way for at least some initial reflections on how this psalm might contribute to this discussion. From Mays' perspective, it is the very fact that Psalm 119, along with Psalms 1 and 19, does not easily fit into any of the established genres that makes them important for this purpose. Their very distinctiveness, which he thinks points to them being among the latest psalms composed, makes them important precisely because we need to read them in terms of their place within the Psalter rather than seeking a *Sitz im Leben*.[7] For Mays, therefore, the interesting thing about the *Torah* psalms is that each one seems to be placed in a pair. As such, Psalm 1 is linked to Psalm 2 so that together they form the introduction to the Psalter, whilst both Psalms 19 and 119 follow psalms which are subject to an eschatological re-reading.[8] Jamie Grant has developed this insight further, arguing that each of the *Torah* psalms is placed with an immediately adjacent royal psalm, so that *Torah* and kingship go together.[9]

That Psalm 119 may have been placed intentionally relative to the psalms around is now something that is increasingly being recognised. Such concerns can, more generally, be traced back to the work of Brevard Childs,[10] and then through him his student Gerald

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[6] Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), vol. 2, p. 139.

[7] James L. Mays, *The Lord Reigns: A Theological Handbook of the Psalms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), p. 128.

[8] Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, pp. 132–34.

[9] Jamie A. Grant, *The King as Exemplar: The Function of Deuteronomy's Kingship Law in the Shaping of the Book of Psalms* (Academia Biblica 17, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), pp. 11–12. Grant notes that Psalm 19 is both preceded and followed by a royal psalm so that it has a higher concentration of this feature, but the principal does not require that each *Torah* psalm have exactly the same relationship to the royal psalms. The important point for Grant is that these links point readers back to Deuteronomy 17:14–20. Whether or not Psalm 118 is a royal psalm is a point that might be debated, but his emphasis on the link between king and *Torah* seems sound.

[10] Especially Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (London: SCM Press, 1979), pp. 511–22.

Wilson. It was the published version of Wilson's doctoral thesis that really gave impetus to consideration of the shape of the Psalter as a whole, [11] though in his thesis he did not really focus to any great extent on Psalm 119.[12] However, reflecting on Mays' work, he did later point to a more significant role for Psalm 119.[13] Wilson thus opened the way for consideration of the function of Psalm 119, especially because of the importance he attached to Psalm 1's function as an introduction to the Psalter,[14] though it was only his later work that began to explore the particular significance of Psalm 119.[15]

However, it is striking that each of the scholars that we have so far noted as seeing a significant role for Psalm 119 do so in terms of its relationship to Psalms 1, 19 and 119, which together form a group recognised by some as *Torah* psalms.[16] That there is an obvious link between these three psalms has seemed apparent to most interpreters, even if debate continues about the best way to classify them, with some preferring to focus on their didactic goal and thus consider them as wisdom psalms.[17] Each approach has some bene-

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[11] Gerald Henry Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBL Dissertation Series 76, Chico: Scholars Press, 1985).

[12] In this, he is followed by other early studies on the formation of the Psalter such as Matthias Millard, *Die Komposition des Psalters: ein formgeschichtler Ansatz* (FZAT 9, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1994) and Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford, *Reading from the Beginning: The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997), though K. A. Reynolds, *Torah as Teacher: The Exemplary Torah Student in Psalm 119* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 147–60 has given further consideration to this theme, extending the insights of Mays.

[13] See Gerald H. Wilson, 'The Structure of the Psalter', in Philip S. Johnston and David G. Firth (eds), *Interpreting the Psalms: Issues and Approaches* (Leicester: Apollos, 2005), p. 236.

[14] See also Gerald H. Wilson, 'The Shape of the Book of Psalms', *Interpretation* 46/2 (1992), pp. 132–33.

[15] Though of course Claus Westermann, 'Zur Sammlung des Psalters', *Theologia Viatorum* 8 (1961–62), pp. 278–84 that Psalm 119 may have been the end of an earlier edition of the Psalter.

[16] For Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, p. 128, these three represent the whole of this group.

[17] For example, the recent textbook of W. H. Bellinger Jr., *Psalms: A Guide to Studying the Psalter* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), pp. 129–40, prefers to treat them as wisdom texts.

fits through where it causes us to focus in our interpretation, though equally it means we tend to overlook other features But irrespective of whether it is their linguistic content (specifically focus on *Torah*) or their didactic purpose, it has seemed clear to most interpreters that these psalms need to be seen in light of one another.

Nevertheless, prior to the contemporary focus on Psalms as a book, these psalms tended to play only a small role in Psalms-studies. This is evident already in Gunkel's work, since he regarded *Torah* as a minor genre that could be treated in a fairly cursory manner.[18] But Mays' work has opened up new possibilities for considering these psalms. However, a crucial difficulty remains in identifying them, and here we might return to Mowinckel for an insight which has not been developed as it might, perhaps because it was offered as a criticism of these psalms. As we have noted, he regarded Psalm 119 as a 'styleless mixture' which drew on the existing types.[19] Although making this sort of aesthetic judgment is something that would be better resisted, nevertheless it is founded on something quite important, and that is that Psalm 119 is rooted in a range of existing psalm types. Thus, at various points it approaches the thanksgiving (e.g. Ps. 119:56) whilst at others it is more like the complaints (e.g. Ps. 119:25). But more than just the types, it also draws on language that we find throughout the Psalter, so that Goldingay can observe that 'Ways of speaking to and of God characteristic of the Psalter reappear here.'[20] So, although it has appeared to be a stranger in the Psalter because of its massive size and extended use of the acrostic structure, its thought and language are more at home in the Psalter than was perhaps recognised by previous generations of scholars. Indeed, as we shall see, this provides us with a mechanism for realising that its associations within the Psalter are far wider than have been traditionally recognised, and that contrary to Gunkel, the theme of *Torah* is quite widespread within the Psalter so that it forms one of its central theological themes. Hints of this may be seen already in the work of Botha and

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[18] Hermann Gunkel with Joachim Begrich, *Introduction to the Psalms. The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel* (trans. James. D. Nogalski, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998), pp. 249–50.

[19] Mowinckel, *Psalms in Israel's Worship*, vol 2, p. 139.

[20] John Goldingay, *Psalms. Volume 3: Psalms 90–150* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), p. 379.

Potgieter[21] and also Hossfeld and Zenger,[22] both of whom have recently identified certain psalms as '*Torah* psalms'(33 for Botha and Potgieter, 111 for Hossfeld and Zenger) even though they lack the word תורה which has previously been regarded as essential to making this identification. Recognising that the word itself is not determinative for this theme enables us to see the wider ways in which the theme of God's instruction is expressed in the Psalms.

To recognise this, we need to appreciate that we understand the importance of *Torah* by looking for considerably more than just the word תורה itself. Rather, it is only when we realise that Psalm 119 draws on a range of forms and expression found across the Psalter that we begin to realise that this theme may be more integrated into the theology of the Psalter than has usually been recognised. Most obviously, we see this in the fact that Psalm 119 makes use of eight synonymous terms for God's instruction, and in particular his written instruction. In effect, the hermeneutical key for seeing how Psalm 119 interacts with the rest of the Psalter lies in its use of language that draws on key theological terms so that its emphasis on the supremacy of God's instruction, an emphasis already seen to a lesser extent in Psalms 1 and 19, is in effect a capstone to a larger theological concern of the Psalter, which is to emphasise the importance and power of God's written word. Although we shall see that this theme is widespread within the Psalms, it has played a remarkably small role in discussions about the theology of the Psalms, perhaps because of the focus on the word תורה rather than seeing it as one term that brings us into the semantic domain of God's instruction.[23]

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[21] P. J. Botha and J. H. Potgieter, "'The Word of Yahweh is Right:" Psalm 33 as a Torah-Psalm', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 31 (2010), Art. #431

[22] Frank Lothar Hossfeld and Eric Zenger, *Psalms 3* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011), p. 166.

[23] Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), pp. 35, 161, briefly discusses the theme of *Torah* in Psalms, but does so by focusing on Psalms 1, 19, 119. However, it does not emerge as a major theme within the Psalter. For some important reflections on how we move to thinking about exegesis within the context of the Psalter as a whole, which is a necessary precursor to thinking about their theology, see Beat Weber, 'Von der Psaltergenese zur Psaltertheologie: Der nächste Schritt der Psalterexegese?! Einige grundsätzliche Überlegungen zum Psalter als Buch und Kanonteil', E. Zenger (ed.), *The Composition of the Book of Psalms* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), pp. 733–44.

The Vocabulary of God's Instruction in the Psalms

In order to appreciate the extent to which the theme of God's instruction is woven into the whole Psalter,[24] we need to examine the terms used for it, because doing so enables us to see the breadth of terminology that addresses this issue. As such, it seems better not to use any one Hebrew term to describe this concept, such as *Torah*, since this privileges it above the others. 'God's instruction' is thus chosen to provide a relatively neutral label for this domain. Although we cannot restrict the relevant terminology to that used in Psalm 119, its eight roughly synonymous terms[25] provide us with an entry point to the process of formulating this semantic domain. Although there are also a range of verbs which can be applied to God's instruction in Psalms,[26] we will keep our focus for this paper to substantives which consistently apply to God's written instruction. We can work through these in their order of frequency in Psalm 119.

תורה is most common term, occurring twenty-five times in Psalm 119 (119:1, 18 29, 34, 44, 51, 53, 55, 61, 70, 72, 77, 85, 92, 97, 109, 113, 126, 136, 142, 150, 153, 163, 165, 174. In addition, it occurs a further eleven times in the rest of the Psalter (1:2 (x2), 19:8, 37:31, 40:9, 78:1, 5, 10, 89:31, 94:12, 105:45). The term thus occurs in books one, three and four. Although often translated as 'law', it is perhaps best to think of it as 'instruction' or teaching.

Almost as common is דבר, which occurs some twenty-four times (119:9, 16, 17, 25, 28, 42 (x2), 43, 49, 57, 65, 74, 81, 89, 101, 105, 107, 114, 130, 139, 147, 160, 161, 169). Although it has a broader semantic range than most of the other terms for God's instruction, a good case for it referring to God's instruction can be made for about twenty-three occurrences (17:4, 33:4, 6, 50:17, 56:5, 11 (x2), 103:20 (x2), 105:8, 105:19 (?), 28, 105:42, 106:12,24, 107:20, 130:5, 145:5 (?), 145:13 (1QPs^{a}, not MT) 147:15, 18, 19, 148:8).

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[24] Psalm 119 also uses a range of verbs found across the Psalter to express piety. See Reynolds, *Torah as Teacher*, pp. 31–43.

[25] Although it is possible to trace different meanings for these eight terms, it is more likely that they are used as synonyms, and we are not intended to see any significant differences in meaning. See also Charles Augustus Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (2 vols, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1907), vol. 2, p. 415. All refer to God's written instruction for his people.

[26] E.g. ידע, ירה, למד.

Some of these are not absolutely clear (105:19, 145:5), whilst including Psalm 145:13 depends upon us accepting the reading of 1QPs[a], though there is good reason to think that it provides a נ-verse that is otherwise missing from the acrostic structure of the psalm.[27] Even if we discount the more debatable readings, then it is still clear that this term is well-represented across the whole Psalter with the exception of Book 3.

עדות occurs twenty-three times in Psalm 119 (119:2, 14, 22, 24, 31, 36, 46, 59, 79, 88, 95, 99, 111, 119, 125, 129, 138, 144, 146, 152, 157, 167, 168). In addition, it occurs a further nine times in the rest of the Psalter (19:7, 25:10, 78:5, 56, 81:6, 93:5, 99:7, 122:4, 132:12), covering books one, three, four and five. It is usually translated as 'testimonies'.

משפטים also occurs twenty-three times in Psalm 119 (119:7, 13, 20, 30, 39, 43, 52, 62, 75, 84, 91, 102, 106, 108, 120, 121, 132, 137, 149, 156, 160, 164, 175). In addition, and allowing that the singular can serve with the same meaning, it occurs a further fourteen times in Psalms (10:5, 18:23, 19:10, 36:7, 48:12, 72:1, 81:5 (singular), 89:31, 97:8, 103:6, 105:5, 105:7, 147:19, 20). Even if we discount the use of the singular in 81:5, it still occurs in all five books of the Psalter. It is most commonly translated as 'ordinances.'

מצות occurs twenty-two times in Psalm 119 (119:6, 10, 19, 21, 32, 35, 47, 48, 60, 66, 73, 86, 96, 98, 115, 127, 131, 143, 151, 166, 172, 176). However, this word is not widely used in Psalms, occurring only four other times (19:9, 78:7, 89:32, 112:1), though these occurrences leave only Books two and four unrepresented. It is most commonly translated as 'commandments.'

חקים also occurs twenty-two times in Psalm 119 (119:5, 8, 12, 16, 23, 26, 33, 48, 54, 64, 68, 71, 80, 83, 112, 117, 118, 124, 135, 145, 155, 171). It is more common than some of the words noted, occurring a further eleven times in the rest of the Psalter[28] (2:7, 18:23, 50:16, 74:11, 81:5, 89:32, 94:20, 99:7, 105:10, 45, 147:19, 148:6) and

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[27] With Peter W. Flint, 'The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls: Psalms Manuscripts, Editions, and the *Oxford Hebrew Bible*', in Susan Gillingham (ed.), *Jewish and Christian Approaches to the Psalms: Conflict and Convergence* (Oxford: OUP, 2013), p. 25. For a defence of MT omitting this verse, see Mitchell First, 'Using the *Pe-Ayin* order of the Abecedaries of Ancient Israel to Date the Book of Psalms', *JSOT* 38 (2014), p. 479.

[28] Three times in the feminine form—18:23, 89:32 and 119:16—though there is no discernible difference in meaning.

thus represented across all five books of the Psalter. It is most commonly translated 'statutes.'

פקודים occurs twenty-one times in Psalm 119 (119:4, 15, 27, 40, 45, 56, 63, 69, 78, 87, 93, 94, 100, 104, 110, 128, 134, 141, 159, 168, 173). It is even rarer than מצות in the rest of the Psalter, occurring only three times (19:9, 103:18, 111:7), though this still covers books one, four and five. It is most commonly translated 'precepts.'

The least common term in Psalm 119 is אמרה, which occurs only nineteen times (119:11, 38, 41, 50, 58, 67, 76, 82, 103, 116, 123, 133, 140, 148, 154, 158, 162, 170, 172). It occurs a further seven times across the rest of the Psalter (12:7 (x2), 17:6, 18:31, 105:19, 138:2, 147:15), occurring in books one, four and five. Although perhaps closest as a synonym to דבר, it is most commonly translated as 'promise.'

As is clear from this, although the distribution of terms is uneven (reflecting the fact that in aiming for a number of synonyms, Psalm 119 has been forced to draw on some less common terms), it is worth noting that the language of God's instruction employed by Psalm 119 is well represented across the Psalter. That is, although Psalm 119 is relatively unusual in its concentration of terms for God's instruction, its decision to focus on it draws on a theme that, linguistically at least, is well represented across the Psalter. Indeed, taking these eight terms as our guide, we can tabulate the distribution as follows:

Term	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Book 4	Book 5
דבר	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
תורה	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
עדות	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
משפטים	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
מצות	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
פקודים	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
חקים	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
אמרה	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

All statistical analyses such as this can hide as much as they reveal, but it is immediately apparent that the theme of God's instruction, at least in terms of the language of Psalm 119, is most fully represented in Book 1, with all terms represented, but closely followed by Books Four and Five, where all but one of the terms

for God's instruction are present. One might argue that the level of influence in Book One is distorted by the inclusion of Psalms 1 and 19, which are the other traditional '*Torah*' psalms, and it is true that if we discount these texts Book One would be missing מצות and פקודים. Even if we allowed this, Book One would still have a significant number of texts that reflect on the theme of God's instruction. But of course the compilers of the Psalter have included these Psalms in Book One, presumably because they wanted to emphasise the importance of God's instruction.[29] That we have a higher concentration of terms for God's instruction in Books One, Four and Five could then suggest that this theme is thought to be important for readers of the Psalter, so we enter it through the theme of reflection on God's *Torah* in Psalm 1 and then move into the closing burst of praise by noting its presence in Psalms 145, 147 and 148, each of which have at least two references to God's instruction.[30] Such an observation would extend Janowski's argument about the architecture of the Psalms as building on the theme of *Torah* which then recurs as we come to the concluding universal praise of Psalm 150.[31] Theories about the overall structure of the Psalter are still much disputed, but if we accept the possibility that the Psalter has an intentional introduction in Psalms 1 and 2, then it is highly probable that what seems an intentional closing of the Psalter in Psalms 145–150 might want to return to the themes initially established whilst summoning praise.[32] If so, then this struc-

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[29] See also Mark J. Whiting, 'Psalms 1 and 2 as a hermeneutical lens for reading the Psalter' *EQ* 85 (2013), pp. 246–62. On the relationship between Psalms 1 and 2, see Robert Cole, 'An Integrated Reading of Psalms 1 and 2', *JSOT* 26 (2002), pp. 75–88 and P. J. Botha, 'The Ideological Interface between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2', *OTE* 18 (2005), pp. 189–203.

[30] For Psalm 145, this depends on accepting the reading of 1QPs[a] with its additional נ-verse.

[31] B. Janowski, 'Ein Tempel aus Worten. Zur theologischen Architektur des Psalters', in E. Zenger (ed.), *The Composition of the Book of Psalms* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), pp. 281–84, 301–304. Janowski highlights the importance of Psalms 1 and 2 as an entrance to the Psalter, but although he points to the importance of *Torah* for the concluding burst of praise, does not note the importance of these psalms for this theme.

[32] It goes beyond the scope of this paper, but apart from God's instruction we should also note the presence of themes such as the king and the need for the nations to submit to Yahweh's purposes as other motifs that link the opening and closing of the Psalter.

ture has the effect of pointing to reflection on God's written instruction as both the start and finish of the Psalter, so that as one works through it then we are not only informed its importance at the start of our journey, we are reminded of it as we conclude, and are thus brought back to the start of the Psalter to make the journey again.

However, in thinking about the vocabulary of God's instruction in the Psalter we actually have to go beyond the terminology of Psalm 119. Its structure requires that it stays with the same eight terms and so does not explore in full this semantic domain, with the most direct way of exploring this further being to note terms used in parallel to those from Psalm 119 in other psalms. The most obvious evidence for this comes from the fact that Psalm 19, which of course closely parallels Psalm 119, does not use the same terms for God's instruction, including יראת יהוה among its terms for this field. In this context, the fear of Yahweh refers to the inward effect of God's instruction on those who read it.[33] Indeed, this sense of יראת יהוה recurs in Psalm 111:10. In addition, the closely related ירא יהוה is also paralleled to God's commandments in Psalm 112:1, whilst in Psalm 25:10 we are told that Yahweh will instruct (ירה) the one who fears him. However, in these psalms is not the fear of Yahweh itself that acts as God's instruction whereas in Psalms 19 and 111 it is this which stands for the instruction.

Another term closely related to those found in Psalm 119 is אמר, which seems functionally indistinguishable from אמרה, and indeed BDB makes no distinction in their meaning.[34] This term refers to a word from God in Psalms 68:12, 77:9, 107:11 and 138:4, though in 68:12[35] it is perhaps more likely to refer to a prophetic message

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[33] With Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 1 (1–41)* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), p. 466. On the basis of this interpretation he rightly rejects the proposal of Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988), p. 268 that יראת be emended to אמרת and thus bring it into line with Psalm 119.

[34] Indeed, there appears to be no obvious difference in meaning between אמרה in Psalm 138:2 and אמר in verse 4 of the same Psalm.

[35] Frank Lothar Hossfeld and Eric Zenger, *Psalms 2* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), p. 165, point to the analogy of the war prophecy in 1 Kings 20.

from God, whereas in 77:9, 107:11 and 138:4[36] it refers back to God's written word.

Another term that is closely parallel to those of Psalm 119 is עצה. It can be used without reference to God's written word, most obviously in Psalm 1:1 where the counsel of the wicked stands in opposition to God's instruction in his תורה or in Psalm 20:5 where it refers to the desires of the king. However, it can also refer to God's instruction Psalms 33:11, 73:24(?), 106:13 and 107:11. In Psalm 119:24, it is Yahweh's testimonies (עדות) that become the psalmist's counsellors. עצה in turn can also be paralleled with מחשׁבה, which refers to God's instruction in 33:11 (in contrast with the fallible thoughts and counsel of the nations in 33:10) and 92:6.

Apart from יראת יהוה, the additional terms noted so far can all be easily recognised as fitting into the semantic domain of speech. However, just as we noted that יראת יהוה can point beyond itself to the inward effect of God's word, so also the psalmists sometimes draw on other terms which, though not self-evidently in this domain, can be drawn into it because they point to God's greater purposes and the need for conformity to it. Three words which might not self-evidently be drawn into this domain but which occur in parallel with other terms in this domain and refer to God's instruction are ברית, דרך and ארח. Since דרך occurs thirteen times in Psalm 119 (119:1, 3, 5, 14, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 37, 59, 168), mostly as a term which stands for God's instruction or its effects (e.g. Psalm 119:3, a verse which does not otherwise use one of the eight terms but where דרך stands for this), we should not be surprised that this term occurs with this sense elsewhere in the Psalter. The word itself occurs sixty-seven times in Psalms, but apart from Psalm 119 it refers to God's instruction ten times (Psalms 18:22, 31, 25:4, 8, 9, 12, 81:14, 86:11, 103:7, 143:8). Closely related to this word is ארח, which occurs with this sense five times in Psalm 119 (Psalm 119:9, 15, 101, 104, 128) and a further four times (Psalms

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[36] Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), p. 507, believes that the reference here is back to a salvation oracle delivered by a cultic prophet in verse 2. However, the exaltation of Yahweh's name is paralleled with his word (אמרה) in verse 2, and here the paralleling of these elements makes more sense if the reference is to the written word since these are points of reference that allow the exaltation of both name and word in a way that is not possible with a prophetic oracle that is not then recorded.

25:4, 10, 27:11, 44:19). Finally, ברית stands for God's instruction seventeen times, in Psalms 25:10, 14, 44:18, 50:16, 78:10, 37, 89:4, 29, 35, 40, 103:18, 105:8, 10, 106:45, 111:5, 9, 132:12. In this case, ברית covers both the relationship that exists between the worshipper and God and also the particular instruction that regulates that relationship.

If we tabulate these terms relative to the five books of the Psalter, then we obtain the following result:

Term	Book 1	Book 2	Book 3	Book 4	Book 5
יראת יהוה	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
אמר	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
עצה	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
מחשׁבה	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
דרך	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
ארח	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
ברית	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Although care must be taken because we are here dealing with less common usages, it is still notable that this distribution of the vocabulary of God's instruction follows a similar pattern to what we saw above for those terms which are explicitly used for God's instruction in Psalm 119.[37] So, although no one Book has all seven terms, only one (אמר) is absent from Book One, which also had the highest concentration of vocabulary in this domain from Psalm 119. Book two once again has the lowest concentration of terms, with only three of the seven terms occurring. Book Five again has the second highest concentration of terms with five represented, while Books Three and Four each have four terms. The close parallel in distribution of terms concerned with God's instruction demonstrates that the distribution of terms from Psalm 119 can legitimately be seen as demonstrating the interest of each Book in this theme, and that the vocabulary used in Psalm 119 is representative of the theme without being exhaustive. Moreover, it shows that with the possible exception of Book two, the whole of the Psalter

[37] That is, excluding דרך and ארח since these are not usually included among Psalm 119's core terms, though as we have noted they function as close parallels.

demonstrates an interest in this theme and that Psalm 119 is therefore highlighting a key moti that runs throughout the Psalter. It is thus a text that differs from others in the Psalter by the degree of its interest in God's instruction rather than anything more fundamental. In addition, since this distribution of terms shows that interest in God's instruction is widespread in the Psalter, we also need to revise our understanding of the *Torah* psalm since the concept occurs in so many forms. Indeed, if we note only Psalms in which there are two or more references to the theme of God's instruction (allowing that a single reference might be incidental to a given psalm) then we would have to consider Psalms 1, 2, 17, 18, 19, 25, 33, 37, 50, 56, 78, 81, 89, 94, 99, 103, 105, 106, 107, 111, 119, 132, 138, 147, 148—twenty five psalms in all. But in reality, there are times when a single reference is sufficient to establish the importance of this theme. For example, Psalm 93:5 asserts that Yahweh's 'testimonies (עדות) are very trustworthy.' Although this is the only reference to God's instruction in this Psalm it, along with the holiness of the temple, is the point to which this psalm builds.[38] But this merely reinforces the point that the theme of God's instruction is of great importance for the theology of the Psalms.

The Function of God's Instruction in the Psalms

It is one thing to find the vocabulary of God's instruction across the Psalter, but to appreciate the importance of this theme for the theology of the Psalms we also need to see how it is used. This is because simply finding the words enables us to say that the theme is present, and on the basis of the extent to which it is present important, but how that theme is understood depends on actual usage. This is because, as James Barr stressed, meaning does not reside in words themselves, and in particular their etymology, so much as the utterances in which they are used.[39] So noting that

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[38] As Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100* (Dallas: Word, 1990), p. 480, observes, the juxtaposition of this theme here 'implies that Yahweh's guidance for human conduct has proved true and reliable—as stable as the throne of God and the earth.' Note also the three references to stability (verses 1–2, 5), which refer to the world, the throne and Yahweh's testimonies. Cf. Konrad Schaefer, *Psalms* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001), p. 232.

[39] James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

the vocabulary of God's instruction occurs across the Psalter simply tells us it is something that is referenced relatively frequently, and more often than most summaries of the Psalms' theology might suggest, but it does not tell us how the Psalter develops this theme. Accordingly, we need to turn to explore some of the ways in which the theme is explored in the Psalms, though given the frequency with which the theme occurs this can only be a survey rather than an in-depth examination of the topic. To do this, we will note the presence of some recurring motifs in the Psalter as a whole, though setting aside Psalm 119. Since the relationship of Psalms 1 and 19 to Psalm 119 is well-known, we shall omit them from this survey too, though of course all points noted here should be supplemented by an exploration of how these psalms also explore this. For reasons of space, these are only initial soundings in this theme.[40]

God's Instruction is the Measure of Israel

The theme of God's instruction is particularly important in the psalms which recount Israel's story, most notably in Psalms 78, 105 and 106. So, Psalm 78 recounts Israel's story as a 'parable' (מָשָׁל, Psalm 78:2), running from the wilderness period to the rise of David. From the outset, it establishes the theme of God's instruction as crucial to the interpretation of this history that is offered. So, although it refers to the poet's parable as 'instruction' (תורה), the larger point of the poem is that subsequent generations would know about Yahweh's glorious deeds (Psalm 78:4). However, the later generations need a grid through which they can interpret these deeds and Israel's response to them, and this is clearly set out in verses 5-8, and it is these later generations which are in effect addressed by the psalmist with the goal of encouraging faithfulness to God's instruction among them.[41] Here, the psalmist draws on a range of terms from the theme of God's instruction, describing it in terms which suggest that it is Yahweh's gift to his people. Hence, we are told he 'established his testimony (עדות) in Jacob, he set his

[40] Gordon J. Wenham, *Psalms as Torah Reading Biblical Song Ethically* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), pp. 77–138, explores this area in terms of ethics, also starting from Psalm 119, though of course (as Wenham recognised), the Psalms use this motif for considerably more than ethics.

[41] See also Walter Brueggemann, *Abiding Astonishment: Psalms, Modernity and the Making of Modern History* (Lousiville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), p. 34.

instruction (תורה) in Israel' (Psalm 78:5). It was this instruction that was to be taught to subsequent generations so they might not forget God and also 'keep his commandments (מצות, Psalm 78:8) since they had set their hope in him. Hence, it was God's instruction that was to shape the life of the nation, and which also becomes the means by which the nation will be assessed, so that it was failing to keep covenant (ברית) and refusing to conduct themselves in accordance with God's instruction (תורה, verse 10) which provides the basis for the psalmist's critique of them. Apart from a passing reference to the nation's failure to keep covenant (ברית) in verse 37 the rest of the psalm does not draw directly on this theme, but it is clear from the language that is used that the assessments of them are drawn from earlier texts, so that both the narratives and the laws that had come down to the poet form part of his teaching, but a teaching which aims to point readers back to these texts that they may learn from them.

Psalms 105 and 106 form a pair of psalms[42] which also interpret Israel's story. Psalm 105 stays largely with the wilderness period in order to present a more positive account of Israel's story, whilst Psalm 106 also focuses on the wilderness period but then extends this to consider the exile as something that came about because of Israel's sin.[43] The psalms are joined by more than just a shared interest in Israel's story , for both are concerned with the means by which Yahweh remembered his covenant with them through Abraham (Psalms 105:8–11, 42, 106:44–46).[44] Such a strong focus on covenant (ברית) leads naturally to consideration of God's instruction, and it is therefore not surprising to note that there is a high concentration of terms drawn from this semantic domain placed at significant points in these psalms. The Abrahamic covenant is thus presented as a sworn statute (חק, Psalm 105:10) and something Yahweh has spoken (דבר, verse 8), though this also occurs in the context of Yahweh's spoken משפטים in verses 5 and 7. That these משפטים are in all the earth probably alludes to the title

[42] See Walther Zimmerli, 'Zwillingpsalmen,' in J. Schreiner (ed.) *Wort, Lied, und Gottespruch:Beiträge zu Psalmen und Propheten: Festschrift für Joseph Ziegler*, (Würzburg: Echter, 1972), pp. 105–13.

[43] The prayer of Psalm 106:47 presumes that the nation is in exile.

[44] Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3*, p. 75.

Abraham gave Yahweh in Genesis 18:25 as he interceded for Lot,[45] though that this is in terms of a covenant in all the earth might also refer back to the covenant with Noah.[46] Later references to God's word (דבר) refer to Moses and Aaron's faithfulness to the word they had received (Psalm 105:29) and Yahweh's faithfulness to his promise to Abraham (Psalm 105:42). As with Psalm 78, these references all point to God's instruction as comprising both the narratives that had come down to the poet and the laws that framed and interpreted them. But crucially, the recital of the nation's history reaches its climax in the claim of verse 45, which asserts that the reason Israel received the land was that they might keep Yahweh's statutes (חקים) and instruction (תורה). The placement of such a claim as the climax of this psalm means it also becomes the prism through which we can then read the story of Israel's failures and sin in Psalm 106 as it becomes the measure of the nation.

From this point, Psalm 106 can then review Israel's history up to the exile as a story of failing to remain faithful to God's instruction, though in fact only one of the key terms from Psalm 119 occurs in Psalm 106.[47] In its first occurrence it refers to nation believing Yahweh's promise as they passed through the Sea of Reeds, whereas in verse 24 it refers to their failure to believe Yahweh's promise that they would enter the land. However, this psalm also draws on the wider range of terms available within this domain, noting in verse 13 that they did not wait Yahweh's counsel (עצה). Hence, although the language of this domain is not as prevalent as we saw in Psalm 105, the fact that key moments of sin are introduced by reference to God's instruction means that it continues to shape the life of the nation. Conversely, the final prayer for deliverance from exile responds to the fact that Yahweh has remembered his Yahweh's covenant in the past (106:45), and this in turn gives hope for future deliverance. But since this hope is grounded in both the laws and the narrative of Israel's story, it becomes clear that both form God's instruction to this point on which the psalmist draws. The nation is thus measured by God's instruction, but it

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[45] So, David Emanuel, *From Bards to Biblical Exegetes: A Close Reading and Intertextual Analysis of Selected Exodus Psalms* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2012), p. 34.

[46] Genesis 9:1–17.

[47] דבר in verses 12 and 24.

is this same instruction that gives hope even in the midst of the struggle of the exile.

God's Instruction is the Measure of the King

Closely related to the theme of God's instruction as the measure of the nation is that of God's instruction being the measure of the king. Obviously, we here encounter the problem of determining exactly which psalms are royal, but for our purposes we can stay with those psalms which make an explicit reference to the king. There is also an obvious interrelationship between these psalms and those of both the nation and the individual (below) in that the king is the one who holds individual and nation together. Grant has already shown the close relationship between Deuteronomy's kingship law and the psalms,[48] so our focus can examine other elements.

Since the meaning of חק in Psalm 2:7 is open to debate, the first expressly royal psalm we encounter is Psalm 18. Although the central text of the Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7:1–17, does not make reference to God's instruction, it is notable that many of the psalms do make this connection. Thus, in Psalm 18:23, the king proclaims that he has been faithful to God's משפטים and חקת, whilst verse 31 points to dependability of God's אמרה. Given that this is linked to God's perfect way (דרך) we should probably understand this also as a reference to God's instruction, something that experience has proved to be true, which in turn also points back to the reference to the דרכי יהוה in verse 22 being to that which God has revealed in his word. If the king is meant in some way to typify the reader described in Psalm 1, then in these verses he claims not only to have read God's instruction but to have lived by it.

God's instruction is more explicitly presented as the means by which the king is assessed in Psalms 89 and 132. In Psalm 89:31–32, presented as part of an oracle quoting Yahweh, we have a cluster of terms associated with the importance of faithfulness to God's instruction since they provide the criteria by which Israel's kings are to be assessed. Indeed, in these verses this particular theme is made explicit as faithfulness to Yahweh's תורה, משפטים, חקת and מצות all determine whether or not the king reigns under Yahweh's blessing or experiences punishment. In addition, we are told in verse 35 that Yahweh would keep his covenant (ברית) which is defined in terms of that which has gone from his lips, thus pointing back to an exist-

[48] Grant, *The King as Exemplar*.

ing body of material that could be known.[49] This material is already acknowledged in the references to the covenant with David in verse 4 which refers to specific words God has uttered, suggesting that the reference to ברית in verse 29 also references previous texts. Although the psalm will go on to complain that Yahweh has in fact broken this covenant (Psalm 89:40), the reason it can do is precisely because it believes that God's instruction is known, and this therefore provides the proper basis for complaint since the king was to be measured against this instruction. These themes recur in Psalm 132:12, which also makes the king's faithfulness to Yahweh's covenant and testimonies (עדות) the measure of whether or not he stands under Yahweh's blessing.

God's Instruction is the Measure of the Individual

In that the Psalm considers God's instruction to be widely available and the measure of both nation and king, it is not surprising to note that it often explores this theme in terms of the individual as well. Given the extent to which this theme occurs across the Psalter, we will note this element only briefly.

Like Psalm 119, Psalm 25 is also an acrostic, and though it covers a wider range of topics than Psalm 119, it is notable that it includes within it a number of themes associated with God's instruction. Central to the psalm is the prayer of verses 3–4, where the psalmist asks Yahweh to make known his ways (דרך) and paths (ארח). Given that the psalmist asks to have these made known, one could argue that the reference is to guidance on specific issues rather than to the existing body of God's instruction. However, in verses 9–10 the way-metaphor recurs, this time insisting that Yahweh does indeed teach people his way, before insisting that those who keep Yahweh's ברית and עדות walk in Yahweh's חסד ואמת. Here, the reference must be to an existing body of material, and it is this collection of God's instruction that the psalmist desires to know precisely because it is what is intended to shape one's life. As such, when Yahweh makes known his covenant (ברית) to those who fear him in verse 14,[50] then we are to understand that this re-

[49] Most English versions, such as ESV, include 'word' here, but there is no Hebrew term which

[50] For our purposes, it is not necessary to decide on whether סוד refers to Yahweh's friendship or counsel, but given that סוד is normally a secret

fers to those whose life is shaped by the existing body of God's revelation.

This theme also occurs in Psalm 111, another acrostic. This psalm initially focuses on Yahweh's great works, alluding to events such as the exodus, wilderness wanderings and entry into the land.[51] But in verse 7 it introduces a variant motif, speaking now of Yahweh's פקודים, a term which is quite rare outside of Psalm 119.[52] Since these are here within the context of Yahweh's historical works, then it seems likely that this psalm shares with Psalms 78, 105 and 106 the belief that God's instruction is both the laws which have been received and also the narratives that frame them, a narrative that frequently takes us well into the period of Israel's occupation in the land. In particular, the פקודים are here part of Yahweh's historical works for his people, and these are to be done 'with faithfulness and uprightness' (באמת וישׁר). God's instruction thus constitutes both law and story, and together they are to form the practice of each member of the community of God's people forever, as is seen in the enduring nature of his covenant (ברית). Thus, God's instruction can be seen as the fear of Yahweh, an expression which here points to the internalisation of God's instruction which is to be done.[53] But however complex God's instruction might be in its combination of story and law, it is all meant to be done because it provides the measure of the individual.

Conclusion

Rather than standing outside the mainstream of the book of Psalms, Psalm 119 stands near its theological heart. That heart is not only seen in its use of poetic forms and structures found elsewhere in the Psalter, but also in the fact that its exaltation of God's instruction represents a theological theme that is widespread within

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counsel (Jer. 23:18, 22), albeit counsel that is rooted in what is already known.

[51] See Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), p. 419.

[52] Elsewhere only Psalms 19:9 and 103:18.

[53] Exactly what is to be done is problematic. The only possible antecedent for the suffix on the verb עשׂיהם is the פקודים (so NIV), but this requires a reference back several verses. It is perhaps more likely that יראת יהוה is being generalised, though in either case it is God's instruction that is the point of reference.

the Psalms, albeit one that has not featured to any significant degree in Psalms-research in recent years. God's instruction to both the nation and individual, and therefore by implication the king, covers not only the laws which have been received, but also the narrative traditions that joined them. That is, there is a significant literary deposit that worshippers could come to know and which is summed up in the concept of covenant. The whole of this is meant to shape worshippers so that fidelity to God's instruction is the fundamental means of assessing faithfulness to Yahweh. The theme of God's instruction goes beyond this, so that for example in Psalm 33 there is a close link between creation and God's instruction, pointing to the fact that there are other themes to which the psalmists relate the theme of God's instruction. But all this points to the fact that, for the Psalms, God's instruction is more than just what we might traditionally have conceived as *Torah*. This is not the beginning of Pharasaic legalism (though it might be distorted in that way) but rather a genuine delight in discovering the range of ways in which God's instruction writes for, and so shapes, his people.

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The Steward of God: Exploring the Role and Function of Elders

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Introduction

A variety of titles and images are used in the Scriptures to describe those who commit their lives to serve in pastoral ministry. Those who are called to such a vocation are described as shepherds or pastors (Eph 4:11), elders (1 Pet 5:1–5), and overseers (1 Tim 3:1), which are all terms replete with meaning and significance. Through these various titles we receive a more full-orbed understanding of what the role and function of a minister truly is. This is due to the fact that words like shepherd and overseer can function as metaphors, describing the realities of pastoral ministry.[1] Therefore, if a term used to describe pastoral ministry were to be overlooked it would leave a considerable gap in understanding regarding the true nature of the pastorate.

It is my contention that terms such as "steward" (οἰκονόμος**)**, and "stewardship" (οἰκονομία) have been relatively overlooked in conceiving of the function and role of one who serves as a pastor.[2]

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[1] For a helpful discussion of metaphors in Scripture, specifically in regards to shepherding, see Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 2006), pp. 31–41.

[2] Throughout this paper I will be using the terms of pastor, elder, and overseer interchangeably (cf. Acts 20:17–35; 1 Peter 5:1–5). For a recent argument in favor of elder and overseer being one office in Scripture, see Benjamin L. Merkle, *The Elder and Overseer: One Office in the Early Church* (Studies in Biblical Literature 57; New York: Peter Lang, 2003). See also Mark E. Dever, "The Church," in Daniel L. Akin, David P. Nelson, and Peter R. Schemm, eds., *A Theology for the Church* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007), pp. 800–805; John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Philippsburg: P & R, 2013), p. 1026; John S. Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), pp. 159–89; Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids:

This paper will demonstrate through an exegetical analysis of these words—along with relative cognates—that the overseer is responsible as a steward for rightly proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, and for overseeing the souls of the people in their local church. This metaphor for pastoral ministry reveals a crucial connection between preaching the Word of God and the shepherding and oversight of the congregation as a whole.[3] If this is true there are implications for pastors as they seek to responsibly proclaim the truth of God's Word and watch over the spiritual temperament of the people within their congregation, knowing they will have to give an account to God as a steward. As such, it will be argued that this image gives greater depth and clarity to the role and function of one who serves in pastoral ministry.

This work will begin to delve into this matter by looking at the literal occurrences of the terms οἰκονόμος and οἰκονομία in the NT, followed by the metaphorical uses, noting most specifically those texts that give clarity to the meaning this metaphor brings to the pastoral task. After observing these occurrences and their significance, the way in which stewardship language influences and unites the ministerial responsibilities of preaching and shepherding will be taken into account. Finally, a theological synthesis will be proposed regarding our findings and the implications that this metaphor may have for pastoral ministry in a present-day local church context.

The Use of οἰκονόμος and οἰκονομία in Scripture

Before we delve into the biblical material, it should be noted that these terms were commonly used in the OT (cf. 1 Kgs 4:6; 2

Zondervan, 2011), pp. 856–57; Phil A. Newton, *Elders in Congregational Life: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005); Samuel E. Waldron, "Plural-Elder Congregationalism," in Steven B. Cowan, ed., *Who Runs the Church?: 4 Views on Church Government* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), pp. 212–21. This list is certainly not comprehensive, but gives the reader an ample starting point for further research.

[3] Thomas Oden uses similar terminology when defining the pastoral office: "'The Pastor,' concisely defined, is a member of the body of Christ who is called by God and the church and set apart by ordination representatively to proclaim the Word, to administer the sacraments, and to guide and nurture the Christian community toward full response to God's self-disclosure." Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 50.

Kgs 18:18, 37; Isa 36:3, 22) as well as the culture of the NT era. Thus, there would have been a degree of understanding attached to this concept for those living in biblical times. In the Roman empire of the first century, absentee landlords dominated the landscape. These wealthy landowners typically lived in the city and visited their farm estates only occasionally. As a result, these landlords utilized people known as stewards to inspect, certify, manage, oversee and report on the household and its accompanying land.[4] Though much more could be said regarding stewardship in the first century, for our purposes it is sufficient to note that the terms have a tangible background to draw from in elucidating how stewardship was conceived of in that time, which gives helpful grounding for the topic at hand.

Literal Occurrences

The idea of stewardship is depicted in a literal manner in several places throughout the NT. The first occurrence canonically is found in Matthew 24:45–51 and Luke 12:42–48, which are parallel accounts. Contextually the Matthean passage is located in the midst of Jesus' Olivet Discourse in a section where Jesus is emphasizing the imminent coming of the Son of Man and the demand for readiness at his return (Matt 24:29–51). Luke is similarly dealing with Jesus' exhortation for readiness at the return of the Son of Man (Luke 12:35–48). Jesus tells a parable about stewardship to his dis-

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[4] So F. Alan Tomlinson, "The Purpose and Stewardship Theme within the Pastoral Epistles," in Andreas J. Köstenberger and Terry L. Wilder, eds., *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), pp. 75–77. See also See K. H. Rengstorf, '*Hupēretēs,*' *TDNT*, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), p. 539. He states, "The steward is an assistant to another as the instrument of his will." Additionally, Tidball defines the relationship between the steward and his master in the following way: "[The steward] completely identifies with the aims of his master and knows how his master would wish his desired objectives to be brought about. Moreover, his master has put all the necessary resources for their achievement at his disposal. The relationship between master and steward is close and it gives the steward a certain independence from the criticisms and designs of others. He is, however, unlikely to abuse his master's trust, for the steward knows that accountability is another mark of their relationship." Derek Tidball, *Skillful Shepherds: An Introduction to Pastoral Theology* (Grand Rapids: Ministry Resources Library, 1986), p. 105.

ciples as a concrete example for how they should ready themselves for his return.

It should be noted that in Luke 12:42 Jesus uses the term οἰκονόμος, while in Matthew 24:45 the term δοῦλος is used to refer to the servant overseeing the estate. This is not problematic, however, when one considers the fact that stewards were often indentured to their masters, but received this privilege of overseeing the estate due to their garnering favor with their master.[5] Also, one can see from the near identical wording of this parable in both Matthew's and Luke's Gospel account, and the use of δοῦλος later in Luke's account (12:43, 45), that they are referring to the same kind of idea.

Jesus tells this parable in a contrastive sense, noting both a faithful and wise steward and a wicked steward. The faithful steward is in charge of all the other servants, dispenses food at the proper time, and works diligently in overseeing his master's estate. Because of his faithful work his master rewards the steward when he returns to the property and sees its good condition (Matt 24:45–47; Luke 12:42–44).[6] However, Carson notes, "The wicked servant is faithless in his responsibilities, abusive to fellow servants, lax in waiting for his master's return, and ultimately earns the punishment

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[5] See Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1993), p. 225; Tomlinson, "The Purpose and Stewardship Theme," pp. 73–77. It was not uncommon for there to be rankings of sorts even between slaves in Greco-Roman society. Clarke states, in relation to leadership and rank in first-century Roman culture, "In this chapter it has been made clear that the careful gradations of honor were not the sole prerogative of the aristocracy. Comparison of honor took place even amongst slaves; and the anomaly should be noted of those slaves and freedmen who were attached to the imperial household, that, although they could never climb the ranks of aristocracy, theirs was an honor which surpassed that of other slaves and freedmen." See Andrew D. Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church: Christians as Leaders and Ministers* (First-Century Christians in the Graeco-Roman World; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 75.

[6] Estate-holders often arrived without warning at the estate in order to check on accounts to get an honest appraisal of their property and the steward's management. See Jo-Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (2nd ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 170.

that is his due."[7] Thus, Jesus is likened in this parable to the master who could come at any time to take account of his estate, and Jesus' followers, likened to stewards, must realize that life can be terminated by the master's coming at any moment, and therefore they must live accordingly so that they will be able to give a good account.[8]

Similarly, Jesus tells a parable in Luke 16:1–13 regarding faithful stewardship. The interpretation for this particular parable, which is unique to Luke, is somewhat contested,[9] but for our purposes it is sufficient to say that Jesus used the example of a rich man and a servant, acting as a steward, who managed his accounts poorly. The point Jesus is making, according to Bock, is that, "Just as the unrighteous manager was prudent in considering what the future required, so we must be prudent in considering how God desires us to handle his resources."[10] God gives us resources in this life that we are to handle with integrity, generosity, and grace, and God will reward us at His return depending on how we have managed those resources (cf. Luke 16:10–13).

Two other texts that deal with the concept of stewardship in a literal sense are seen in Romans 16:23 and Galatians 4:1–2. Erastus is referred to as ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως in Romans 16:23, which is typically translated as "city treasurer," though we cannot be sure if this was significant office, or a minor financial official.[11] Again, for our purposes here it is sufficient to say that this type of position would have been an administrative role, looking over the financial affairs of the city, and quite possibly servile in nature, meaning the

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[7] D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in Frank E. Gaebelein, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), p. 510.

[8] David L. Turner, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), pp. 592–93.

[9] For a helpful study of this passage in the history of interpretation see Dennis J. Ireland, *Stewardship and the Kingdom of God: An Historical, Exegetical, and Contextual Study of the Parable of the Unjust Steward in Luke 16:1–13* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum 70; Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 5–47. In the discussion of this text Ireland notes six prominent interpretive options.

[10] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (The NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), p. 421.

[11] See Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 6; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), p. 808; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), pp. 935–96.

treasurer was accountable for his actions to a higher-ranking official.[12] The passage in Galatians describes redemption through Christ in the picture of a child in relation to the household slave. The slave is referred to as ἐπιτρόπους καὶ οἰκονόμους, which, though possibly connoting slightly different roles, should most likely be viewed as synonymous terms.[13] Keener avers that this passage is communicating that, "Minors were required to be under legal 'guardians' even if their father was deceased."[14] This denotes another possible function a steward may have had in a first-century Roman context.

In summary, the οἰκονόμος, who was typically a slave himself, held responsibility over the properties belonging to their master, were accountable for the other slaves of that particular estate, performed administrative duties in caring for the estate, at times may even have been involved in the upbringing and education of the children of their master, and would have to give an account for their actions. All of these literal uses of this particular word in the NT give us a helpful interpretive lens to better understand its metaphorical usage, to which we now turn.

Metaphorical Uses

The terms οἰκονόμος and οἰκονομία are used in the Scripture to denote an actual manager of an estate, as we noted in the previous section, but these words are also used to describe pastoral ministry in the NT. The Apostle Paul uses these terms the most extensively of all NT writers, though they can also be found in the writings of Peter (1 Pt 4:10). With an understanding of what a literal steward was in Greco-Roman culture we now have a better grasp of the concept in seeking to understand how stewardship relates to the role and function of the pastor.

1 Corinthians 4:1–2. The first metaphorical usage that occurs canonically is found in the apostle's first letter to the Corinthians. Contextually, Hamilton notes, "Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 1–4 that God has outmatched worldly power through the weakness of

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[12] Wilfred Tooley, "Stewards of God: An Examination of the Terms OIKONOMOS and OIKONOMIA in the New Testament.," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 19/1 (March 1, 1966): p. 75.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Keener, *Bible Background Commentary*, p. 528.

the cross, perplexing human wisdom with its folly."[15] Paul is addressing division among the Corinthian people over who they espouse as their leader (1 Cor 3:1–4). Paul reiterates the fact that they are merely "servants" (διάκονοι) of God (3:5–9) and it is by His grace and His Spirit that they are able to be built up as God's people (3:10–17). Therefore, they should not boast in men, for all things belong to them in Christ (3:18–23).

Paul states that the Corinthians should regard him and the other leaders of the church as "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (ὑπηρέτας Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμους μυστηρίων θεοῦ; 1 Cor 4:1). Fee rightly asserts, "Thus apostles are to be regarded as 'servants of Christ,' reemphasizing their humble position and their belonging to Christ alone; at the same time they are 'stewards of the mysteries of God,' emphasizing both their trusted position and their accountability to God."[16] Specifically, the apostle is a steward of the "mysteries of God," a phrase that appears to be referring to the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, now known through the Spirit and especially entrusted to the apostles to proclaim. This rendering is supported by the preceding context, particularly in 2:7 where the same kind of language is used to de-

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[15] James M. Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), p. 457. For a fuller explication of this theme in 1 Corinthians see D. A. Carson, *The Cross and Christian Ministry: An Exposition of Passages from 1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993).

[16] Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 159. Martin Bucer comments on this text and states, "And in all this these ministers of the church are *servants of Christ and stewards of the secret things of God*, that is, of Christ's salvation and of the Holy Spirit, not merely of the letter. They take the elect of God and raise them up into the new eternal covenant which has been established through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ with all God's elect throughout the whole world. They also serve the Lord in ministering the holy gospel to the elect, teaching and admonishing them and also administering the holy sacraments, so that people might come to him, Christ our Lord, and be saved." Martin Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls* (trans. Beale, Peter; Carlisle, Penn.: Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), p. 21. Bucer might be pressing a bit in this last sentence in seeking to interpret 1 Cor 4:1–2 as saying all that he says it does, but I would argue that when one looks at the "stewardship" texts cumulatively in the NT Bucer is accurately translating the nuances of this idea.

scribe the "wisdom" decreed before the ages, which seems to be clearly referring to God's plan for the world in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 2:1–16).[17] Paul, as a steward of God—specifically the revelation of the mystery of the gospel in this context—aims to be found faithful by his Lord (1 Cor 4:2) in proclaiming the message of "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). Therefore, he exhorts the Corinthians not to judge him, knowing that he will answer to God for his stewardship, no aspect of which will be hidden at His coming (1 Cor 4:3–5).

1 Corinthians 9:17. Later in the same book Paul again takes up this idea of stewardship and again the term is connected closely to the gospel (1 Cor 9:15–18). Paul has been addressing the issue of eating food sacrificed to idols and claims that he will never eat this kind of food if it will make his brother stumble (8:1–13). Paul is very aware that the actions of a leader can have a profound influence on the people to whom he is ministering, and therefore he seeks to approach his apostolic task as a servant, not in an overbearing way.

Paul transitions into a defense of his apostleship and the way in which he ministers (9:1–27), and in the midst of this defense he speaks of his ministry as a necessity (9:16), knowing that he has been "entrusted with a stewardship" (οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι; 9:17).[18] Paul is entrusted with the preaching of the gospel, and he does so free of charge in order that he might be a servant to all and win some to Christ (9:18–19). His apostleship is similar to that of a steward (usually a slave) who has been entrusted with managing a household. Such a person is entitled to no pay, which is exactly the point he will make in the next verse.[19] Thus, while we can observe

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[17] Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* pp. 159–60. See also Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians* (Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), p. 65; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 337.

[18] For helpful commentary on the complexity of the syntax of the second clause of verse 17 and its proper rendering see Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, pp. 419–20. His final rendering of the verse is, "If not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. What then is my reward?"

[19] Ibid., p. 420. Hays also states, "The language here suggests once again the image of a slave as steward (cf. 4:1–4). Paul preaches because 'necessity' has been laid upon him by God. (We might recall the image of Jeremiah, for whom the prophetic word is 'something like a burning fire

the proclamation of the gospel again connected with stewardship, we also see language that is obligatory in nature,[20] meaning it is a job given him by God that must be done (cf. Luke 17:7–10)

Ephesians 3:2. Paul's letter to the Ephesians seeks to make central the glory of the grace of God in Christ (Eph 1:1–14)—who is the head of the church (1:15–23)—by grace through faith in Jesus (2:1–10), for both Jew and Gentile (2:11–22).[21] This grand reality touches on the way in which Paul conceives of his ministry as the steward of God.

In this letter Paul addresses the issue of stewardship as an apostle of Jesus and links it with "the mystery of Christ" (3:1–6; cf. 1:9–10). Paul is writing to Gentiles in Ephesus regarding the "stewardship of God's grace" (οἰκονομίαν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ), which was given to him that he might understand the mystery about Christ and make it known to them for their full inclusion into the people of God (3:1–4).[22] Schreiner elaborates,

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shut up in my bones,' Jer. 20:9.) He has no choice but to proclaim the gospel. Therefore, his 'reward' is, paradoxically, to make the gospel available to others 'free of charge,' thereby not making use of his rights." Hays, *First Corinthians*, p. 153.

[20] Garland helpfully notes, "The problem with the slavery imagery is that it might give the impression that Paul carried out his ministry only reluctantly. Nothing could be further from the truth. He is talking not about his feelings concerning his calling but about his status. He chooses not to receive fees from those to whom he preaches because he understands himself to be under a commission (*oikonomia*) as Christ's slave." David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), pp. 425–26.

[21] See Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment*, p. 479, who states, "Paul's letter to the Ephesians celebrates the glory of God in salvation through judgment demonstrated in the 'mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to the holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit, for the Gentiles to be co-heirs and co-bodied and co-partakers of the promise in messiah Jesus through the gospel' (Eph. 3:4b–6). It is this radical assertion that Paul explains in the first two chapters of Ephesians, and then he makes it explicit in Ephesians 3 before addressing the life that corresponds to this gospel in Ephesians 4–6."

[22] Gentile inclusion is an issue Paul addresses in detail in Ephesians 2:11–22. For a helpful discussion of this text in relation to the unity of the Church see G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), pp.

> The administration of God's grace has been vouchsafed to [Paul] (Rom 15:15–16; Eph 3:2; Col 1:25), for the mystery of Gentile inclusion has been revealed to him (Eph 3:3). God has given him this ministry according to his grace, and even though Paul is unworthy, he has the task of preaching the riches of Christ to the Gentiles (Eph 3:8–9; Col 1:28–29). He is a specially appointed 'minister [*leitourgos*] of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles,' and he functions as a priest in his proclamation of the gospel (Rom 15:16).[23]

Therefore, Paul is speaking of stewardship in relation to God's grace, and this grace is now extended to the Gentiles through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, Paul stewards the grace of God by revealing the mystery of Gentile inclusion through Christ so that "through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3:10). Ultimately, this is done according to the "plan," or "dispensation" (οἰκονομία) of God, who is uniting all things in Christ, both in heaven and on earth (1:10).

Colossians 1:25. The apostle in his letter to the Colossians seeks to make much of the glory of Jesus Christ (cf. Col 1:15–22). In so doing, Paul calls the Colossians to persevere in their faith (1:23) and also to understand the kind of ministry Paul seeks to embody (1:24–29). Paul highlights his ministry, which is one of suffering, and actually "filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (1:24).[24] Paul ministers in this way, once again, to be a faithful steward to God.

Paul writes in a similar fashion in this context as he did in 1 Corinthians 4 and fills out this idea of stewarding the mysteries of God, asserting that he "became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me" (ἧς ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ διάκονος κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι; Col 1:25). The con-

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538–40; Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), pp. 714–17. It should also be noted that the declaration of the gospel to the Gentiles was a central and unique salvation-historical aspect of Paul's apostolic ministry (cf. Acts 13:47).

[23] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001), p. 60.

[24] For a pastoral exposition of this particular text see Ajith Fernando, *The Call to Joy & Pain: Embracing Suffering in Your Ministry* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007).

tent of Paul's stewardship is to "fulfill" the Word of God, which, according to O'Brien, refers to "the notion of an effective and dynamic preaching of the gospel on the part of the apostle."[25] Specifically, the message of the Word of God, which Paul now seeks to "fulfill," is defined as "the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints" (1:26). Like 1 Corinthians 4 this text also points to Christ as the center of this "mystery," who indwells believers and is proclaimed by Paul for the salvation and maturity of his hearers (Col 1:27–28).

Therefore, one can observe in these passages from the NT that Paul has been entrusted with a commission and is responsible for managing the "mysteries of God" obediently as he proclaims Christ as the center of God's plan in salvation history.[26] Thus, it can be clearly seen throughout each of these passages that proclamation of the gospel message is central to Paul's stewardship, which has been given to him by God.[27]

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[25] Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon* (Word Biblical Commentary 44; Waco: Word, 1982), p. 83. O'Brien continues, "The Word of God is "fulfilled" not simply when it is preached in the world, but when it is dynamically and effectively proclaimed in the power of the Spirit (cf. Rom 15:19; 1 Thess 1:5, 6; Eph 6:18–20; Col 4:2–4; 2 Thess 3:1–3)." See Ibid.

[26] Ibid., p. 81.

[27] One other passage that uses the term οἰκονόμος and relates, albeit indirectly, to our study is found in 1 Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ). Contextually Peter is speaking to Christians scattered abroad and giving them various exhortations about Christian living in light of Christ's sacrifice (1 Peter 4:1–19). Therefore, Peter is not speaking directly to pastors here, but to all Christians, telling them to use their gifts in service to one another, whether they be speaking gifts or serving gifts (4:10–11). Achtemeier states, "The word 'steward' (οἰκονόμος) originally designating the purely secular position of household manager (as in Luke 16:1) and then expanded to describe one who undertook broader duties (e.g., city treasurer as in Rom 16:23), is used here figuratively in the former sense, perhaps influenced by the author's concept of the Christian community as a household (e.g., 2:5; 4:17). Being good stewards of God's grace involves therefore employment of one's gift for the good of the household of faith, not for one's own benefit, surely an appropriate reflection on the nature of the mutual love mentioned in v. 7, and an equally appropriate introduction to the further description of how those gifts are to be used in the following verse." Paul J Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commen-*

Titus 1:7. At this point some may question the validity of the category of "steward" and "stewardship" being applied to contemporary pastoral ministry due to the fact that all of the passages that have been cited thus far relate to apostolic ministry, which was temporary in nature (cf. Acts 1:15–22). Therefore, some would say, though there are certainly similarities between the apostle and pastor, one cannot simply draw complete parallels between the two. Certainly more could be said regarding the ministerial relationship between the apostles and pastors, but for our purposes it is fitting to note that while Paul may not have served as a "traditional pastor" and was deeply ingrained in the salvation-historical plan of God, Paul did serve churches "pastorally" and there are foundational principles that one can draw from his apostolic work for pastoral ministry.[28] Additionally, several other texts should be considered, since they use the terms "steward" and refer specifically to the office of elder/overseer. Drawing upon the background information and the insights garnered thus far from the other texts we have observed, we will now look specifically at two key passages

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tary on First Peter (Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), p. 298. See also, Wayne A. Grudem, *The First Epistle of Peter: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 17; Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 1988), p. 175; Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), pp. 281–82.; Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (The New American Commentary 37; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), p. 214. While not relating specifically to the function and role of elders, this is another helpful text in grasping the concept of stewardship.

[28] Tidball is helpful on this topic: "Admittedly, Paul is difficult to categorize. He was a gifted pioneer evangelist and an astute theologian as well as being an accomplished pastor…Nonetheless Paul serves as an exemplary pastoral model, if not a perfect one. His theology arises out of the questions thrown up by pastoral and everyday situations in the churches. And his writings constantly reveal his pastoral heart, his pastoral ambitions, his pastoral techniques, his pastoral advice, and his pastoral frustrations." Derek Tidball, *Ministry by the Book: New Testament Patterns for Pastoral Leadership* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2008), pp. 107–108. To see how he fleshes out this claim see Ibid., pp. 108–61. One can also take note of the fact that the apostle often held himself up as a paradigm and model to follow in ministry (cf. 2 Tim 2:1–2; 3:10–14; 4:6–8).

from the Pastoral Epistles that will elucidate our understanding of pastoral ministry by the use these terms.

In the letter from Paul to Titus[29] we find a seasoned apostle addressing a younger man ministering on the island of Crete. Paul addresses a number of issues as he assists Titus in knowing how to "be firm in the apostolic faith, to communicate it to new disciples, and to defend it against attackers."[30] Among the various exhortations that Paul gives to Titus, the apostle points out that he left Titus in Crete so that he would "appoint elders in every town" (Titus 1:5). Paul then begins to list off specific criteria for elders in relation to their character and teaching ability (Titus 1:6–9; cf. 1 Tim 3:1–7), and he specifically addresses the overseer[31] "as God's steward" (ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμον). This is a very brief reference and could be somewhat difficult to identify and define.[32] However Paul, who has used this term to define his own apostolic ministry, is now identifying the elders as stewards of God. It must be noted as significant that the man who has used the terms οἰκονόμος and

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[29] For a helpful discussion on the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles being Pauline see Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2009), pp. 638–42; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Hermeneutical and Exegetical Challenges in Interpreting the Pastoral Epistles," in Köstenberger and Wilder, *Entrusted with the Gospel*, pp. 1–8.

[30] Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment*, p. 509.

[31] Some question whether elder and overseer are referring to the same office in this context due to the fact that πρεσβυτέρους in verse 5 is plural, while ἐπίσκοπον in verse 7 is singular. So R. Alastair Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority Within Earliest Christianity* (T & T Clark Academic Paperbacks; London: T & T Clark International, 2004), p. 244. However, the connective γάρ in verse 7 suggests that Paul is referring to the same office; William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary 46; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), p. 390. Also, it is not uncommon for Paul to alternate between singular and plural generic nouns, particularly within the Pastoral Epistles (cf. 1 Tim 2:8–9, 15; 5:3–4. 17–20). See Merkle, *Elder and Overseer*, pp. 142–48 for several more compelling reasons to consider elder and overseer to be one office in this context.

[32] See F. Alan Tomlinson, "The Purpose and Stewardship Theme within the Pastoral Epistles," in Köstenberger and Wilder, *Entrusted with the Gospel*, pp. 52–83. In this chapter he helpfully demonstrates the importance of the theme of stewardship throughout the Pastoral Epistles, which helps give clarity to a text like Titus 1:7.

οἰκονομία to describe his own ministry is now using the same vocabulary to describe what an overseer actually is. Therefore, a conceptual link can be tentatively made in relating Paul's stewardship to that of the elders. This link becomes more concrete when analyzed alongside another passage in the Pastoral Epistles.

1 Timothy 3:15. To acquire a more accurate conception of what Paul means in this brief phrase (θεοῦ οἰκονόμον) in Titus 1:7, it will be helpful to also look at Paul's first letter to Timothy, who served in pastoral ministry at Ephesus (cf. 1 Tim 1:3). After citing nearly identical qualifications for an overseer as he did in Titus 1 (1 Tim 3:1–7), as well as qualifications for deacons (3:8–13), Paul addresses Timothy about rightly leading the church should he be delayed in coming (3:14–15). Here the apostle refers to the church as "the household of God" (οἴκῳ θεοῦ),[33] an image that has distinct connections to stewards who, as noted earlier, were typically responsible for overseeing the household and property of their master. Merkle explains:

> The metaphor [used to describe the church] that is mostly used in the Pastoral Epistles is that of the family or house-

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[33] Knight gives helpful commentary regarding the relationship between οἶκος and ἐκκλησία in the Pastoral Epistles: "The standards of conduct prescribed are no mere rules of etiquette, they are standards for the house/household that is none other than God's. They provide directions for conduct in his temple, where he dwells by his Spirit, and they provide directions for relationships among his people… An analogy had already been drawn between οἶκος and ἐκκλησία at the first occurrence of both in 1 Timothy (3:4, 5). Now what was implicit is made explicit: God's οἶκος is his ἐκκλησία. The three occurrences of ἐκκλησία in the PE (all in 1 Timothy: 3:5; 3:15; 5:16) provide a description of the church similar to what we see elsewhere in Paul and the NT. 3:5 depicts the church as a family under the oversight of the ἐπίσκοποι, 3:15 depicts it as the house/household of God and on that basis calls for godly conduct on the part of those who are the possession and locale of the living God and the structure undergirding God's truth, and 5:16 depicts the church as the caring community (next to the actual family itself). Since the whole letter is about the church, it would be inappropriate to restrict the description of the church in it to the three occurrences of ἐκκλησία, but the emphasis on order and oversight, on godly conduct and on God's people upholding his truth, and on caring for those in need is striking and noteworthy." George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), pp. 180–81.

> hold. For example, in 1 Tim 3:5 and 12 a person qualified to be an overseer or deacon must know how to manage his own household well before he is fit to hold an office in the church. An overseer is also said to be God's steward or manager (Titus 1:7)—one who manages the affairs of God's household or family. In 1 Tim 3:15 Paul explicitly calls the church 'the household of God.'[34]

Thus, the concept of the "steward of God," which was cited in Titus 1:7, is given greater clarity when one understands the connection to household imagery.[35] The elder/overseer is the steward of God overseeing His household, the church.

This conclusion yields crucial implications for understanding pastoral ministry, as Tooley, speaking directly of Titus 1:7 and its relationship to 1 Timothy 3:15, points out. He says:

> The essential qualities of such elders are listed and among them is the reference to the ἐπίσκοπος as God's steward [Titus 1:7] who 'must hold firm to the sure word as taught so that he may be able to give instructions in sound doctrine' [Titus 1:9]. The whole clause, as J.H. Bernard states, 'indicates the functions of the ἐπίσκοπος as the guardian of the deposit of faith,' and we may relate the office to the reference in 2 Tim. 2:2, to 'faithful men' whose task is to transmit the Church's teaching…The Church is the 'pillar and bulwark of the truth' [1 Tim 3:15] and so the guarantor of right doctrine. The function of leadership is to teach what befits

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[34] Benjamin L. Merkle, "Ecclesiology in the Pastoral Epistles," in Köstenberger and Wilder, *Entrusted with the Gospel*, p. 174. Likewise Knight, who states, "An οἰκονόμος, 'steward,' is one chosen by his employer to manage his business or his household (cf. Lk. 12:42). The elder/overseer is a person chosen by God to be a manager and entrusted with the church as God's household (cf. 1 Tim. 3:5–6, 15)." Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 291.

[35] So Towner: "Theological description of the church is most evident in 1 Timothy where household imagery provides the dominant components. The church is God's household (3:15; Gk. *oikos theou*). This phrase ties together related concepts in key places to describe God's rule in life in terms of household order (1:4; Gk. *oikonomia theou*), and the overseers' leadership in terms of household management (3:4–5). P. H. Towner, "The Pastoral Epistles," in T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner, eds., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 2000), p. 334.

> such doctrine and so to 'superintend' the life of the Church as to preserve the purity of its gospel.[36]

Like Paul, the elder is responsible for being a good steward of the message of the gospel.[37] This may differ in some ways from Paul's apostolic ministry, as has been noted, but the overseer, as we will see in greater detail momentarily, is called by God to give instruction in sound doctrine in accordance with the gospel and be able to refute false teachers (cf. 1 Tim 1:10–11; Titus 1:9). It can also be seen from these texts that the elder is called to be a steward of the "household," namely the people of God who have been entrusted to him.[38] The church is God's household, and like any steward in the first century the pastor must manage, oversee, care for, be an example to[39] and give an account for the people God has assigned to him.

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[36] Tooley, "Stewards of God," pp. 78–79.

[37] So Tooley who writes, "The true sign of the steward, therefore, is that he will faithfully proclaim God's '*musterion.*'" Wilfred Tooley, "Shepherds of the Flock and Stewards in the Household of God.," *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* 190 (January 1, 1965): p. 64.

[38] This conclusion is derived from the fact that in 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul writes so that "you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God. God's οἶκος is defined as His ἐκκλησία. The term can be defined as a legislative body, assembly, or congregation, all signifying groups of people. See BDAG 303–04. Dever rightly points out "Etymologically, a connection exists between the Old Testament word for 'assembly,' *qahal,* and the New Testament word from which 'church' is translated—*ekklesia*…This word for assembly, *qahal*, is closely bound up in the Old Testament with the Lord's distinct people—Israel. The rich association between the assembly of God and the distinct people of God then carries over to the New Testament by the word now translated in the New Testament to describe God's distinct people—the church." Dever, "The Church," pp. 768–69. See also Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church* (Contours of Christian Theology; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1995), pp. 37–47; Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, pp. 25–31. The point for our purposes here is that Paul is calling for pastors to oversee the church of the living God, which means they are responsible before God for a local congregation of believers.

[39] Though a neglected aspect of pastoral ministry at times, setting an example of godliness is key to being a pastor, who is God's steward. One can note in Titus 1:7 that the overseer, who is God's steward, is told that he must be "above reproach." The apostle explicates this phrase in verses 8–9, stating specific qualifications that all deal with exemplary character.

Other Texts in the Pastoral Epistles

The frequency and emphasis that is laid upon preaching and shepherding in the Pastoral Epistles as a whole gives further evidence that this metaphor is central to Paul's understanding of pastoral ministry. First, as it relates to preaching, Timothy is told to refute false teachers with sound doctrine (1 Tim 1:3–5;[40] 2 Tim 1:13–14; Titus 1:9–2:1), appoint overseers that have an aptitude for teaching (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9), be a good servant of Christ by giving sound doctrine to the church (1 Tim 4:6, 11), devote himself to reading Scripture privately and publically while exhorting and teaching from the Word (1 Tim 4:13, 16; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:14–16), labor in preaching and teaching (1 Tim 5:17), entrust sound doctrine to other men who will be able to teach it to others (2 Tim 2:1–2), and preach the Word faithfully, both in season and out of season (2 Tim 3:14–4:4). Moreover, as it relates to shepherding, Paul instructs Timothy to oversee the way in which his people are relating to one another, particularly in their care for widows (1 Tim 5:1–16), continually instruct masters and slaves how they are to interact as Christians (1 Tim 6:1–2), admonish the rich on how they are using their wealth (1 Tim 6:17–19), see that people are living out the real-

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Towner, commenting on this text, states, "To be a 'steward' was to acknowledge the requirement of utter faithfulness (Lk 12:42; 1 Cor 4:2). In God's house faithfulness is required in every part of life." Philip H. Towner, *1–2 Timothy & Titus* (The IVP New Testament Commentary Series 14; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1994), p. 226.

[40] Though we have not used it as an example, the phrase οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ occurs in 1 Timothy 1:4. In seeking to understand whether the phrase in this context is referring to God's administrative activity in salvation history, or to a stewardship that is issued by God to a particular person, Knight states the following: "God's οἰκονομία is certainly in view in 1 Tim. 1:4, as the qualification θεοῦ makes plain (genitive of possession), but it is, at the same time, one that must be responded to and that is operative in the realm of faith. Further, this οἰκονομία is in v. 5 called παραγγελίας, i.e., 'apostolic instruction with divine warrant.' Since the concept seems to be set in such a context not only here but also in Ephesians, where it is spoken of as being brought to light or communicated (Eph. 3:9), it seems that neither of the two extremes is in view here, i.e., God's plan without reference to human stewardship, or Paul's stewardship in the most specific sense. Rather, what is referred to is the outworking, administration, or stewardship of God's plan of salvation through the gospel and its communication." Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 75–76.

ities of the gospel (Titus 2:1–15), and exercise discipline within the church as is necessary (Titus 3:10).

Some may question whether these latter texts are specifically dealing with issues of shepherding, however none of these tasks can be done merely through preaching and teaching, there must be a closer connection and a personal dimension of accountability to ensure that what Paul said is actually being accomplished in the lives of the people in that church. In this way there is a definite connection between proclaiming God's Word and shepherding His people as a steward of God. To ensure that the teaching is bearing fruit, elders must take it upon themselves to watch over the lives of their people, and this is why we find the two concepts linked together so often.

The Ministerial Tasks in Acts 20

One final passage that will now receive our attention is Acts 20:17–38. This text will be analyzed due to the fact that it is a primary example of Paul addressing elders about their specific role and function. The connection between preaching and shepherding will be more readily seen now that the metaphor of stewardship is incorporated into our conception of pastoral ministry.[41] Though one does not actually see the terms "steward" or "stewardship" in the passage itself, the discourse is directed to the elders—addressed with the task of oversight and shepherding— who are considered by Paul as stewards of God who keep watch over His household, the church (cf. 1 Tim 3:15; Titus 1:7). Paul thought of himself as a steward, which was a metaphor that shaped his ministry, and in Acts 20 he is seeking to pass on similar ministerial priorities in light of the reality of their stewardship as elders.

In Acts 20 Paul is in the midst of his third missionary journey as he ministers in Ephesus. Paul's ministry there had resulted in rejection of the gospel message as well as conversions (Acts 19:1–10), extraordinary miracles and a prevailing of the Word of God (19:11–20), and even a riot of the citizens in response to the decline of sales for their Artemis idols (19:21–41). At that point Paul had

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[41] Though somewhat outside the purview of this study, a detailed analysis of this text in relation to its ANE, Jewish, and Greco-Roman background can be found in Bernard Aubert, *The Shepherd-Flock Motif in the Miletus Discourse (Acts 20:17-38) Against Its Historical Background* (Studies in Biblical Literature 124; New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

left the disciples in Ephesus to go and visit Macedonia and Greece (20:1–12). He then makes his way back, knowing that he is destined to go to Jerusalem, and stops by Miletus, where he sends for the elders of the church at Ephesus (20:13–17).

Prior to moving into the details of the text, it should be noted exactly who Paul is addressing in the discourse. As previously stated, it was the elders (πρεσβυτέρος) that Paul called to meet with him (20:17). A few verses later in the same speech, however, the same men are called "overseers" (ἐπισκόπους), and their position as overseers is ascribed to the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). It seems safe to conclude, therefore, that elders and overseers are two different designations for the same office.[42]

Paul begins addressing the elders by looking back at his own ministry, emphasizing the kind of lifestyle he had adopted. Paul has served in great humility and with tears (20:19), passionately committed to serving the Lord, even if it may not have been popular (20:20). Committed to finishing his ministry, which has been filled with hardship and oppression (20:23–24), Paul declares that he has declared the Word of God fully and faithfully (20:26–27), and now he desires that these leaders would have the same heart and determination (20:28–32).[43]

Preaching

Having viewed the context we are now in a position to look at this passage and its emphasis on the proclamation of the Word of God and shepherding the people of God. First, Paul puts an immense amount of emphasis on the proclamation of the Scriptures, which is in concert with how he describes his own ministry in stewarding the gospel of Jesus Christ. He begins by stating he has not been cowardly in his approach, but rather he "declared" and "taught" anything that was profitable to the people there, both in

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[42] Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, p. 693. See also Merkle, *The Elder and Overseer*, pp. 129–35. It should also be noted that the elder/overseer has been instructed to "care for the church of God" (ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ). The term ποιμαίνειν is a verbal form of the term ποιμήν, which is the idea behind our English word "pastor" (cf. Eph 4:11). Thus, this passage of Scripture contains all three of the terms that are attributed to pastoral ministry in the NT. For an excellent study on the connections between the shepherd and the pastor and its ministerial implications see Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*.

[43] This summary was derived from Tidball, *Ministry by the Book*, p. 103.

public and from house to house (20:20).[44] Specifically, in verse 21, he has proclaimed the gospel, which is in accordance with the stewardship Paul has received from God (cf. 1 Cor 4:1–2; Eph 3:2; Col 1:25). Bock, commenting on this verse, writes, "Repentance to God represents a change of direction in how one relates to God. It entails faith in Jesus, so that the turning results in one placing trust in what God did through Jesus as one embraces his person and work. This is a message for both Jews and Greeks, considering that both need to hear the same thing."[45] This is certainly something Paul did on a consistent basis, and he is now implicitly calling for these elders to do the same.

Paul continues and asserts that he is innocent of all of their blood (Acts 20:26). The ground for this claim (γὰρ; 20:27) is that Paul did not "shrink" from declaring the "whole counsel of God" (20:20, 27). In referring to "the whole counsel of God," Paul appears to have in mind all that is part of God's plan as it is tied to the preaching of the gospel (1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:4).[46] Thus, one can see a connection between Acts 20:20–21 and 20:27 in that Paul proclaimed the whole counsel of God to these people, which certainly comprised a great amount of material, but central to that proclamation was the reality of the person and work of Jesus, who was the center of God's redemptive plan in salvation history (cf. Luke 24:27, 44).

One final point Paul makes in this discourse in reference to preaching is in the final commendation given to these elders before his departure (Acts 20:32). Here Paul entrusts these leaders "to God and the to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." In Paul's absence these men still have God's Word to turn to for instruction and edification. This will be beneficial both for themselves as well as their churches to continue to grow in their

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[44] For discussion on the cultural background of references to speaking "in public and from house to house" see Jerome H. Neyrey, "'Teaching you in Public and from House to House' (Acts 20.20): Unpacking a Cultural Stereotype." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26/1 (September 1, 2003): pp. 69–102.

[45] Darrell L. Bock, *Acts* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), p. 627.

[46] Ibid., p. 629.

faith.[47] Thus, one can see in this discourse to the Ephesian elders that proclamation of the whole counsel of God, especially the gospel, was central to Paul as the steward of God, and he is passing on this same responsibility to the elders, who are also God's stewards.

Shepherding

Alongside of preaching, the apostle also exhorts the elders at Ephesus to shepherd the people within their church. This is taken up most directly in Acts 20:28, where Paul tells these elders, "Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock [ποιμνίῳ], in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [ἐπισκόπους], to care for [ποιμαίνειν] the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood." The verb ποιμαίνω in this verse carries the idea of serving as a herder of sheep, protecting, caring, leading, and nurturing.[48] Marshall rightly asserts, "The metaphor of shepherding the flock of God takes up a familiar OT picture of God's people under their rulers (Ps. 100:3; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 13:17; Ezek. 34) and applies it to the task of caring for and directing the church."[49] Therefore, the elders, in continuity with OT leadership, function as overseers who are to care for the people that God has entrusted to their care.[50]

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[47] Bruce states, "Though Paul might go, God was ever with them, and so was God's word which they had received—the word that proclaimed His grace in sanctifying them…By that word, as they accepted and obeyed it, they would be built up in faith and love together with their fellow Christians; by that word too, they were assured of their inheritance among all the people of God, sanctified by His grace. In due course Paul and all the apostles passed from earthly life; but the apostolic teaching which they left behind as a sacred deposit to be guarded by their successors, preserved not merely in the memory of their hearers but in the scriptures of the NT canon, remains with us to this day as the word of God's grace." F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts; the English Text, with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), pp. 417–18. These elders were, in effect, Paul's successors, and as such they took up the task of proclaiming the whole counsel of God, which is the word of His grace.

[48] BDAG, p. 842.

[49] I. Howard Marshall, "Acts," in G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), p. 596.

[50] So Bock, *Acts*, pp. 629–30; Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts; the English Text, with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes*, pp. 415–16; John B. Polhill, *Acts* (The New American Commentary 26; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), pp. 426–27.

Paul follows up this imperative by warning the Ephesian elders that "fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29; cf. Ezek 22:27; Zeph 3:3; Matt 7:15; Luke 10:3; 2 Cor 10–13). These wolves would come from within their own ranks, speaking "twisted things" (i.e. false doctrine) to draw people away from the truth, and therefore the leadership are to be alert (Acts 20:30–31).[51] The work of the elders was to guard themselves and their congregation from false teachings and false teachers that will inevitably come. They are also commanded to "shepherd" the church of God (cf. John 21:16; 1 Pet 5:1-2; Eph 4:11) and to "be alert" (20:31). [52] This admonition involves both preaching and shepherding, as the leadership must concentrate on being able to refute false teaching as well as guide and protect the flock from being drawn away in a more personal manner.

Acts 20:28 is quite similar to the exhortation Peter gives to his fellow elders in 1 Peter 5:1–5. They are told to "shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight" (ποιμάνατε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπισκοποῦντες).[53] Laniak offers the following assessment of these two passages.

> The shepherds are to shepherd (*poimanō*) God's flock under their care. Only here and in Acts 20:28 is the imperative form of the verb used in this way…In both contexts the association between shepherding and careful oversight is clear. In Acts the 'overseers' (*episkopoi*) are expected to guard or pay close attention to (*prosechō*) the needs of the flock (in the context of wolves; v. 29). Similarly, leaders in Hebrews 13:17

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[51] So Bock who asserts, "The threat is of teaching that takes one off the 'straight' path and pulls disciples away (*apospan*) from God's direction and leading. …The image is of pulling someone in a direction that the person should not go, as here, or of leaving a former location (Luke 22:41; Acts 21:1). The elders should prevent false teaching at all costs. They are 'guardians of the tradition of the apostles' and are entrusted with the guidance of the community." Bock, *Acts*, p. 631.

[52] Merkle, *The Elder and Overseer*, p. 130.

[53] Regarding the participle ἐπισκοποῦντες, Schreiner notes, "The participle is missing in some early manuscripts (**א**, B, 323), but the majority of witnessed include it, and we should not put much confidence in B, which also wrongly omits v. 3. The corrector of Sinaiticus includes the participle, and it may have been omitted by some scribes because they distinguished the offices of elder and overseer and thought the text was mistaken in correlating them. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, p. 234.

> 'watch over' (*agrypneo*) your souls as they serve the 'great Shepherd of the sheep' (Heb. 13:20). In 1 Peter 5:2 the elders are to oversee (*episkopeo*) the flock. This is the flock of the 'Shepherd and Overseer (*episkopon*) of your souls' (2:25). Watching, noted frequently in this study, is a comprehensive summary of shepherding tasks. It is the vigilant attention to threats that can disperse or destroy the flock.[54]

As Laniak states the elders are to watch over the church of God, which was obtained with His own blood (Acts 20:28), and the flock entrusted to them by the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:2, 4). Thus, while the apostle was God's steward of the good news of Jesus Christ, overseers likewise are the stewards of God's gospel message, as well as His people to the degree that they can work to see God's people entrusted to their care living worthy of the gospel of Christ (Phil 1:27).

Theological Synthesis

With this understanding in place we must now look at the way in which this metaphor, rightly understood in relation to pastoral ministry, will affect the way in which an elder/overseer conceives of his ministerial task in the present. The idea of stewardship gives greater weight and meaning to two duties in particular: preaching the Word[55] and shepherding the flock of God. Having examined

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[54] Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, pp. 232–33.

[55] When conceiving of this concept theologically, one could also say that as the steward of God the elders should have a direct leadership role in the observance of the ordinances. This is due to their close connection to the task of preaching, as noted by Moore and Sagers: "When the church is gathered together in a covenant community, with the Word of God faithfully proclaimed, Jesus is present as King (Matt 18:20; 1 Cor 5:4). The ordinances are themselves a continuation of the preaching ministry of the church. The very fact that Jesus promised that he "will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mark 14:25) conveys a certain confidence within the church in the ultimate victory of God. The church proclaims "the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26), a death that was overcome in resurrection, and a triumphant return that is certain. Partaking of the Lord's Table is no light matter (1 Cor. 11:27-32), and unbelievers or those in persistent sin are not to partake of this church ordinance (1 Cor. 5:6-13). The Lord's Supper, then, is to look forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb, when all the redeemed of all the ages will eat with a slain and resurrected King Jesus of

the relevant texts in this study I would argue that the concept of stewardship is paradigmatic for rightly understanding the task of present-day pastors.

The Modern Pastor as the Steward of God

Though this is not a term frequently used to describe the function and role of a pastor in Scripture, there is a great amount of significance for ministry, and thus it should not be neglected. God has given pastors a tremendous amount of responsibility, and those who serve in ministry should feel the weight of this calling. Com-

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Nazareth seated at the head of the table (Rev 19:6-9). But until that day, the church eats together of the broken bread and the fruit of the vine in anticipation of the Kingdom to come and in celebration of the Kingdom at hand. No doubt many Baptists have misunderstood the sign nature of the Lord's Supper and baptism, translating the ordinances into hyper-Zwinglian terms. Baptists are right to deny sacerdotalism, but we would not speak of the baptismal waters or the Eucharistic bread and wine as "just symbols" any more than we would speak of the Bible preached as "just words." All of these are proclamations—the voice of Jesus announcing an invading Kingdom through the first stage of the invasion force, his church. Where Jesus speaks, he is *there*. And he is there as King and Lord." Russell D. Moore and Robert E. Sagers, "The Kingdom of God and the Church: A Baptist Reassessment," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12/1 (March 1, 2008): pp. 80–81. See also Stott, who states, "In laying this emphasis on the Word of God as indispensable for the church's welfare, I am not forgetting the gospel sacraments…The major difference between them is that the message of the one is directed to the eye, and of the other to the ear. So the sacraments need the Word of God to interpret them. The ministry of the Word and sacrament is a single ministry, the Word proclaiming, the sacrament dramatizing, God's promises. Yet the Word is primary, since without it the sign becomes dark in meaning, if not actually dumb." John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (1st ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 114. This is also an interesting connection to make, in that the link between preaching and the ordinances helps to strengthen the link between preaching and shepherding. Pastors must proclaim the truths of Scripture and explain how they are then visualized in the ordinances. It must then be noted that the elements are for those who have confessed faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and are persevering in that faith (cf. 2 Cor 13:5). Therefore, pastors must proclaim the gospel verbally and through the ordinances, and, while doing so faithfully, watch over those in their local church to as to rightly administer the sacraments and shepherd God's people.

menting on this biblical understanding of stewardship, Ferguson looks at its implications for ministry:

> The language of stewardship refers to the practice in the ancient world of giving to a trusted slave or employee the administration of the owner's property or business…The biblical theme of stewardship derives from the premise that God creates all and so owns all (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 24:1). His claims as creator are enhanced by his redemptive activity, his saving plan itself referred to as a 'stewardship' or 'administration' (Eph. 1:3–5, 9–10; 3:9). Hence, human beings are accountable to God for their use of what he placed at their disposal (Gen. 1:26–30).[56]

It must be noted, therefore, that elders are not simply taking on some unimportant leadership position in a local church; rather they are overseeing the property of God, namely His Word and His people.

It is needful that pastors begin to see their ministries in these categories in a fresh way. Their ministry, as with all of life, is a gift from God, and they will one day give an account for the kind of stewardship they administered. This is spelled out clearly in Hebrews 13:17, where the church is told to obey their leadership, and they must do this because the leaders are keeping watch over the souls of their people since they will have to give an account for their oversight.[57] The leadership will give account to God, as has

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[56] Everett Ferguson, *The Church of Christ: A Biblical Ecclesiology for Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), p. 276. Ferguson goes on regarding stewardship, specifically in reference to Titus 1:7, and states, "The church is presented as the family or household of God the Father (1 Tim. 3:15); the stewards take care of its affairs for him. Since a steward took care of what was not his own but belonged to another, he was expected to be prudent (Luke 12:42) and above all faithful (1 Cor. 4:1–2), for he would have to give an account to the owner (Luke 16:2; cf. Heb. 13:17)." Ibid., p. 323. Similarly Hammett, "As it is a position of considerable trust, the key requirement of a good steward is faithfulness to the master." Hammett, *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches*, p. 164.

[57] It must be noted that the term ἡγέομαι is used in Hebrews 13:7, 17 to conceive of the church's leadership rather than the more commonly used words (elder, overseer, pastor), and the question must be asked as to whether this text refers to pastoral leadership. This word was used in Greco-Roman culture to refer to civic leaders, while later Jewish sources often associated this word with elders who looked after the affairs of the

been evidenced by the texts on stewardship noted previously. Pastors would do well to remember that everything they have in ministry is a gift from God, for which they will one day give an account to God.

The Modern Pastor as Preacher

In being a faithful steward of God, the pastor of a local church must be in continuity with the apostle Paul and proclaim the "whole counsel of God," which is centered on the gospel of Jesus Christ. As one who is responsible for communicating the very Word of God to the people in his local church, it seems there are several theological implications for preaching in relation to the concept of stewardship.

First, since God gave us His Word, it would seem that a pastor would desire to proclaim biblical truths as accurately as possible, which means that exposition would be the primary way in which Scripture would be communicated.[58] This type of preaching will

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community. So BDAG, p. 433. Thus, it is a more generic term, but the author also places qualifications on who this leadership consists of: they have spoken the Word of God to the people and possess a faith that is imitatable (13:7), and keep watch over the souls of the congregation (13:17). In regards to the term ἀγρυπνέω in 13:17 Guthrie states, "The same verb is used in Ephesians 6:18 in an injunction to keep alert in prayer. The task of the leaders is to maintain constant watch over those committed to their care. This is reminiscent of Paul's care of all the churches (2 Cor. 11:28) and of Peter's injunction to the elders to tend God's flock (1 Pet. 5:2), which is itself reminiscent of the words of Jesus to Peter (Jn. 21:15ff.)." Donald Guthrie, *The Letter to the Hebrews: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), pp. 276–77. Thus, the leadership described here appears to be that which is carried out by pastors, and this assertion is further supported by the author's reference to Jesus as the great Shepherd of the sheep in 13:20 (cf. 1 Peter 5:1–4). See also David Allen, *Hebrews* (New American Commentary; Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2010), 624–25; George H. Guthrie, *Hebrews* (The NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), pp. 438–42; Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Hebrews* (Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 529–30.

[58] So Vanhoozer, who writes, "To preach is to address people in God's name, and address 'directed to men with the definitive claim and expectation that it has to declare the Word of God to them.' This is precisely why preaching ought to be an exposition of Scripture, the objective

focus most intensely upon the actual words of Scripture, and as such serves as the greatest possible means to being a faithful steward of God's Word. Second, if we are to be faithful preachers we must recall that we are specifically stewards of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and as such it must be clearly communicated to the people in our church. This does not simply mean that a preacher tags the gospel onto the end of any sermon he preaches without making previous reference to it; rather Christ will be the culminating focus and aim of every exposition, regardless of the text being preached.[59] Finally—and this transitions into the concept of shepherding—preaching, by God's grace, brings about the realities of the gospel in the lives of God's people. Preaching is not only doctrinal and moral instruction, though it includes these; it is also the means by which God, through the Spirit, creates and sustains Christians and churches in their union with Christ.[60] Pastors must rightly conceive of their stewardship of God's Word, knowing that by rightly proclaiming the truths of God, His people, under the

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or written form of God's Word. To be sure, the ultimate authority over church proclamation is God in triune communicative action, and those who proclaim the word are not able to coerce the Spirit to accompany it so that it will unfailingly achieve its purpose. Nevertheless, we are responsible for preserving as much of the communicative action in Scripture as we can." Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), p. 74. Certainly various preaching texts espouse different models of preaching, but for a sampling of recent works that argue for the primacy of expository preaching see Daniel L. Akin, David Lewis Allen, and Ned Lee Mathews, eds., *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010); Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Dennis E. Johnson, *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures* (Phillipsburg, N. J.: P & R Publishing, 2007); John MacArthur, *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992); R. Albert Mohler, *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008); Ramesh Richard, *Preparing Expository Sermons: A Seven-Step Method for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001).

[59] For a helpful text that seeks to equip preachers to make Christ central in every sermon see Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

[60] Michael Scott Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), p. 253.

sovereignty of God, will be transformed progressively into the likeness of Christ (cf. John 6:63; Acts 10:44; 12:24; Phil 2:14–16; 2 Tim 2:9; Heb 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23). God has given His Word to elders that they may oversee the people God has entrusted to them through the proclamation of biblical truth, and shepherding their overall spiritual vitality and perseverance in the faith.

The Modern Pastor as Shepherd

Finally, the contemporary minister is called to steward the people of God in his local church responsibly and faithfully. Though preaching has been a frequent topic of conversation in recent days, the same cannot necessarily be said of shepherding. One possible reason for this, Laniak asserts, is, "For most modern readers in the industrialized, urbanized West there is little first-hand familiarity with the cultural realities that inform the *meaning* of the metaphor."[61] However, there is a desperate need for pastors to recover an understanding of the concept of shepherding in order to serve faithfully as God's stewards.

Thus, it must be noted that preaching and shepherding are closely connected for the steward of God, and as such overseers cannot concentrate on one while neglecting the other. In other words, pastors must not only preach, they must shepherd their people in such a way as to watch over their lives and assist them in pursuing godliness on a personal level.[62] Shepherding and oversight can readily be seen in pastoral visitations, counseling, and even over meals in a home, but another key area that shepherding must take place in the church is through church membership and discipline. Commenting on Acts 20:28 and Hebrews 13:17, Leeman

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[61] Laniak, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, p. 21.

[62] Bucer insists on both public and private ministry as being priorities for the minister: "Christian doctrine and admonition must not be confined to the assembly and the pulpit; because there are very many people who will take what they are taught and admonished in the public gathering as being of only general application, and consider it to apply more to others than to themselves. Therefore it is essential that people should also be instructed, taught and led on in Christ individually in their homes." See Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls*, p. 181. This is especially pertinent to megachurch and multi-site models of ecclesiology that, with increasing membership, may find it difficult to oversee their people effectively. However, churches will need to think through this if pastors are to fulfill their roles as the stewards of God.

states, "the plainest way to read these two passages is to say that the elders of a church, collectively, should be able to pay careful attention to every member of the flock, because they will give an account for every member of the flock before God."[63] Thus, shepherding involves the admittance, the edifying, and, when necessary, the exclusion of persons from the local church. This must be done if the overseers are to steward the people of God in a responsible fashion.

It is difficult to press on this issue too definitively and say that no oversight can be delegated to lay ministers such as small group leaders, but it should at least be conceded that every mediating step placed between the elders and a believer moves that individual one step further away from careful, shepherding. The church should receive oversight, not just from a senior pastor, but from a plurality of elders who are committed to their spiritual well-being.[64] Thus, as a steward of God's Word and His people, pastors must aspire to preach accurately, know their people well, and work to see individuals grow in conformity to that preached Word, by the grace of God and the power of His Spirit.[65]

Conclusion

The concept of stewardship demands a particular role and function for those who would serve as elders in a local church. They must recognize that God has granted them a responsibility in giving them the Scriptures and a people to watch over. They are gifts that must be handled faithfully, for they will one day give an account to their master. This kind of work is summarized by James Thompson, who defines pastoral ministry in the following way: "Ministry is participation in God's work of transforming the com-

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[63] Jonathan Leeman, *The Church and the Surprising Offense of God's Love: Reintroducing the Doctrines of Church Membership and Discipline* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), p. 308. This is also a pragmatic argument for a plurality of elders serving in a local church, particularly as churches grow.

[64] For a convincing argument on the church being led by a plurality of elders and governed by the congregation see Waldron, "Plural-Elder Congregationalism," in Cowan, *Who Runs the Church?*, pp. 187–221.

[65] Leeman, *The Church and the Surprising Offense of God's Love*, pp. 308–309.

munity of faith until it is 'blameless' at the coming of Christ."[66] Certainly, even when a pastor faithfully does his work there will be seeming shortcomings in his congregation, preaching, and his own life, but no matter what the results may be God calls for His stewards to be faithful to their calling. Since pastors are to give an account to their Master, they must be sure to work diligently in proclaiming God's Word concerning the good news of Jesus Christ and in leading the congregation in applying that proclaimed Word and walking in the ways of God. With this kind of faithful pastoral ministry God will be well pleased.

[66] James Thompson, *Pastoral Ministry According to Paul: A Biblical Vision* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), p. 20. Thompson spends the rest of the book teasing out that thesis in a convincing fashion by concentrating specifically on the apostle Paul.

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Book Reviews

Daniel I. Block. *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. xix + 410 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0801026980. $34.99 (Hardback).

Daniel Block stands among the finest evangelical Old Testament scholars in our day, and this work on worship reflects his stature, his scholarship, and his heart for the church's faithfulness. The book's topical arrangement makes for a somewhat abrupt read at points, with no obvious strategy for the order after the first few subjects. But all of them are full of exegetical work and reflect the author's deep and careful reading of the Old Testament in particular. And here lies the great strength of the book: giving the OT its full weight in discussions of Christian worship.

Block begins at the outset with the most poignant (if still respectful) polemic, aimed at those who would seem to resist the authority and importance of what he calls the "First Testament"—including John Piper, David Peterson, and D.A. Carson to varying degrees. It was a relief and joy to hear him dispute the caricatures that tend to denigrate both the nature and practice of worship in the OT. And from a scholar who knows the OT as deeply and widely as Block, I hope such critique will have a lasting effect.

One cannot fault the bravery of the author. Not only do we find a wide and direct array of subjects—daily life as worship, family life and work, preaching, prayer, music, sacred space—but he takes minority positions on many subjects. He argues for an enjoyment of Sabbath rest principles for Christian treatments of Sundays; the importance and goodness of the tithe; and the importance of theological architecture. And all comes with patient and direct interaction with the whole Bible, rather than just the final quarter.

Two faults, however, cannot be entirely ignored. First is the near silence of ecclesial tradition and reflection. What role should the reflections of the church have when mounting theology of any sort—and more pointedly about something the church has been doing for a very long time? One can agree with the Bible as the "primary" source for such theology without ruling out the years of wisdom (and its opposite). Most striking here though is the suggestion that, since we find no reference to the Holy Spirit receiving

worship in the NT, we therefore should (apparently) not do so in our own worship. Common liturgical acts like the Doxology or the Gloria Patri are thus disputed. Of course almost all Trinitarian theology moves beyond a simple repetition of NT statements, and so we would expect that to be the case for Trinitarian doxologies. An enormous amount of historical and theological work has been done in liturgics and Trinitarian theology. And at least some acknowledgment of this would have helped the tone of the book. We could say much the same for nearly every part of the work: it provides much of the biblical material necessary for the discussion, but then offers the impression that it is sufficient to have recounted that material and drawn various lessons from it.

More disappointing is the almost complete silence of any form of sacramental theology. The wonderful emphasis on the "First Testament" mentioned above could have led directly to a full discussion of sacramental theology—by whatever name desired. Such sacramental or ritual action was at the heart of what we read as appropriate worship in the OT, even if we grant that such never came at the exclusion of concern for faith and faithfulness. Block admits as much himself, disputing the old external vs. internal caricature of OT vs. NT worship. But the sacrifices are not even treated in the section on "ordinances," reserved rather for later discussions of offerings. Some rituals of Leviticus emerge in discussions of feasts and ethics, but are never explored for their power as ritual practices that shape a community. These are rather basic parts of OT worship and sacramental theology, underlying many (Lutheran, Anglican, some Presbyterian) views on worship generally. But their role seems dismissed almost at the start by statements of "fulfilment" or a NT "hesitation" to use cultic terms for corporate worship. Of course this forgets that the apostles and early Jerusalem Christians—and perhaps others who could—continued to worship using the same cultic activities in the temple well after Pentecost. Perhaps the power of ritual to shape the community was assumed in the first century Christian community, as Block rightly suggests for other matters. In any case, the consequence is that his (self-confessedly) Anabaptist approach to the "ordinances" of the Christian church—or to liturgy in general—feels unconvincing simply because it lacks the weight of so many centuries of the church's reflections, and lacks discussion on the divine approval for rituals as shaping a worshipping community.

In the end, however, I have not seen another work on Christian worship from an evangelical perspective that has so much exegetical patience and authority undergirding it, and certainly none that has offered a full voice to the OT. Block has drunk deeply from the wells of OT studies, and here offers some wonderful and useful reflections on the central activity of the Christian community: worshipping God.

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Haddon W. Robinson. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. xi + 244 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0801049125. $22.99 (Hardback).

When a book is on its third edition, with the editions spanning a period of thirty-four years, one should take note. If this same book is on the topic of preaching—a discipline in which some can be given to trendiness—one should particularly pay attention. The book concerned is *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Preaching* by Haddon W. Robinson, the Distinguished Professor of Preaching and senior director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

In chapter one, Robinson makes his case for expository preaching. He defines expository preaching as "the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher, applies to the hearers" (p. 12). In short, the passage should drive the message and not vice versa.

In chapter two, Robinson stresses that every sermon should be focused around one big idea: "a sermon should be a bullet, not buckshot" (p. 17). He argues that not only do the "experts in both communication theory and preaching" tell us that a sermon should have one central unifying idea, this claim also finds biblical support. He notes that the sermons of the Old Testament prophets, as well as those found in Acts, stick to this one "big idea" principle.

Chapter three turns to an overview of the "tools of the trade." Robinson teaches students the tools that can be effective in helping prepare to preach. This chapter also introduces the first three of ten stages in the development of expository messages: selecting a

passage, studying the passage, and discovering the exegetical idea. Chapter four examines how to analyze a particular text. Robinson uses three questions to frame this fourth stage in the preparation process: (1) What does this mean? (2) Is it true? and (3) What difference does it make? These questions help move the text into a sermon. Chapter five adds formulating the homiletical idea and determining the sermon's purpose as the fifth and sixth stage in Robinson's paradigm. He advises the preacher to come up with a single sentence to summarize the exegetical idea and to make sure the purpose and goal of each sermon is clear.

Building upon the determination of a sermon's purpose, chapter six moves to deciding how to accomplish this purpose and then offers an explanation of how to outline the sermon. Robinson advises preachers to decide whether they are primarily explaining or convincing. He contends that after this decision is made, the preacher should determine the most logical argument shape and then proceed to outline the sermon. Chapter seven explains how to fill in the sermon outline, and chapter eight elaborates on the final step, preparing the introduction and conclusion. Robinson proposes that in preparation, one should add various kinds of supporting materials to make the sermon stronger (i.e., graphics, illustrations, videos, quotes, etc.). He stresses that illustrations should be honest, detailed, and personal.

Moving from preparation to delivery, chapter nine guides readers in how to convey their exegetical thought in an attractive verbal manner. Robinson instructs preachers to have a clear style with strong transitions and simple words and sentences, even when conveying the most complex of topics. Finally, Robinson turns to the physical delivery of a sermon, advocating that this will often determine if people listen intently to the message or not. He meticulously covers details, which include dressing in a non-distracting manner, grooming appropriately, using gestures to draw in the attention of the audience, and making sure one's voice changes in pitch, speed, and intensity (a diagram of the human anatomy associated with vocals is even included).

The changes from the second to third edition appear to be subtle: footnotes are updated, the font and page format is different, and more student exercises are given (these are in the back of the book rather than dispersed at the end of the related chapters as in the second edition). More experienced preachers will likely find the step-by-step process a bit too rigid, but his ten step approach is

likely aimed at the student whose inexperience in the discipline requires more structure in training.

Occasionally, some of the arguments need more substance, or at least nuancing. For instance, it is not difficult to provide examples from the Bible that support the claim that each message should have a "big idea." However, one does not have to look hard for examples from the OT (e.g., the Proverbs) and the NT (e.g., the Sermon on the Mount) where the author/preacher jumps from topic to topic. Certainly, one can draw very broad themes from any section of scripture (e.g., Proverbs = Wisdom; Sermon on the Mount = Kingdom Living), but I am not sure if this accomplishes the purpose of honing in on a particular theme for a sermon. As much as having one major theme may make good sense heuristically, at times biblical texts are making multiple major points. Thus, it seems prudent for expositors to be free to draw out multiple "big ideas."

Despite a few potential limitations, this volume stands as a classic among preaching textbooks. Thirty-five years since its initial publication, it remains a quality introduction to preaching that is worthy for consideration when training new preachers

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Robert Kimball Shinkoskey. *The American Kings: Growth in Presidential Power from George Washington to Barack Obama.* Eugene, OR: Resource Publications (Wipf and Stock), 2014. xii + 428 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1625641946. $48.00 (Paperback).

Robert Shinkoskey is an independent scholar about whom little can be discovered either at his Facebook page or the Wipf and Stock website. The Utah resident, nonetheless, previously authored two other books with Resource Publications imprints, *Do My Prophets No Harm: Revelation and Religious Liberty in the Bible* (2011) and *Biblical Captivity: Aggression and Oppression in the Ancient World* (2012). Both of the earlier volumes hold relevance for Shinkoskey's most recent project; he is apparently a theist who regards scriptural principles—particularly those rooted in the Law—as foundational for religious liberty. At the same time, he plainly endorses an open canon and a continuing line of prophets from the ancient world to the present.

In *The American Kings*, Shinkoskey boldly dons the prophetic mantle to offer an extended jeremiad that focuses on the sins of the American presidents—especially from Andrew Jackson on—who strayed from the constitutional ideals of the Founding Fathers and ruled as despotic tyrants. At some points in the book, the author sounds like Glenn Beck or members of the Tea Party; at others, he echoes New Left radicals from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Shinkoskey's assumption of seemingly contradictory postures allows him to be thoroughly bipartisan in his denunciation of the imperial presidency. He aims his oracular venom chiefly at Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama. To a slightly lesser degree, he targets Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Bill Clinton. All of these chief executives are found wanting in comparison to our first six presidents, largely because many leaders from Jackson on exploited religion, contributed to the expansive growth of the federal government, encouraged "idolatry" in the presidency, and fostered corruption.

Perhaps the greatest merit of this unusual book is that it puts the administration of the current occupant of the White House in historical perspective. In this narrative, Barack Obama has simply followed his predecessors in utilizing executive orders and agreements, memoranda, impoundments, and other extra-constitutional means to circumvent the legislative branch. Shinkoskey rightfully sounds a necessary alarm about the recurrent abuses of presidential power since the early nineteenth century, although his cynical and ceaseless grousing eventually becomes irksome. Moreover, he seems uncomfortable even with presidential prerogatives like vetoes and pardons, even though the Constitution clearly allows for them.

Unfortunately, *The American Kings* suffers from some manifest weaknesses. First, Shinkoskey depends almost totally on secondary sources, including suspect ones like Wikipedia. Furthermore, his footnote citations are bunched and lack publishing details, making it difficult to tell exactly where some of his direct quotations originated. Second, the author unloads a barrage of historical material, but does not always process it well. For example, he ends virtually all the sections on individual presidents very abruptly, providing no substantive conclusions. Even worse, the volume closes in a similarly terse manner with a story about a Marine who was discharged

from the military over critical remarks that he had posted about Obama in social media. Shinkoskey provides no epilogue or closing chapter to bring together all the loose threads.

To make matters worse, Shinkoskey's manuscript evidently was not copyedited. As a result, there are numerous errors relating to spelling, verb tense, and verb-subject agreement; this reviewer circled close to twenty such mechanical and stylistic mistakes, most of which would have been eliminated with careful proofing. Moreover, the book contains some factual blunders, including the placement of Texas's admission to the Union during John Tyler's presidency when it actually occurred in the Polk administration (p. 68), and a reference to Lyndon Johnson as a senator in 1937 when he had recently been elected to his first term in the House of Representatives (p. 271). In addition, Shinkoskey omits important items from the last several decades of presidential history such as the McCarthy hearings, the Cuban missile crisis, the Camp David accords, the Panama Canal treaty, and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall.

In the final analysis, the role of a prophet can be lonely and certainly risky. Nevertheless, Shinkoskey willingly charts a prophetic trajectory through the complex and often messy annals of the American presidency. Although he makes some noteworthy points about the abuse of executive power in Washington, he ultimately falters because his assertions are not fully grounded on the sure word of biblical revelation.

James A. Patterson
Jackson, Tennessee

J.P. Moreland, Chad Meister, and Khaldoun Sweis, eds. *Debating Christian Theism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. v + 554 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0199755431. $35.00 (Paperback).

This is a collection of essays examining Christian theism. The book has two unique strengths. The first is its range of topics. Its twenty topics include God's existence, miracles, science and Christianity, the Incarnation, Jesus' resurrection, and religious diversity. The second is its methodology. Two authors defend opposing positions on each topic. Overall, the essays are well written.

The book is divided into two parts. Part one deals with God's existence and human nature. Contributors include Paul Copan,

Louise Anthony, Richard Gale, Chad Meister, Stewart Goetz, and Kevin Corcoran. Copan and Anthony debate whether morality supports theism. Copan contends it does. For instance, consider the atheist that believes the world is nothing more than a collection of moving atoms. Copan maintains this person has no plausible way to explain how moral values emerge from valueless atoms. By contrast, Anthony contends atheists have no problem here. Regardless of God's existence, she argues something such as murder is wrong simply because it inflicts pain on other people. Gale and Meister debate whether evil disproves theism. Gale argues it does. He contends that traditional explanations regarding why God may allow evil fail. For instance, consider the famous free will theodicy. Gale maintains it doesn't explain particularly horrendous evils such as the Holocaust. Even if God is concerned with creating free creatures, Gale thinks that an all-powerful and all-good God would block people from exercising their freedom in such terrible ways. By contrast, Meister contends that evil does not disprove theism. He argues that an important reason why God allows evil entails helping creatures develop moral maturity. Just like children mature morally by being allowed to face the consequences of their bad decisions, so, too, in order to help adults mature morally, Meister argues they need to face the consequences that result from their decisions, even if this involves bringing about terrible evils. Goetz and Corcoran debate whether humans have a soul. Goetz contends they do. He argues that one reason to believe people have a soul is that such a belief is a part of commonsense. Both now and in the past, Goetz contends most people have found it natural to believe they have a soul. By contrast, Corcoran argues against souls. For instance, some have maintained the idea that people have a soul is supported by the biblical point that people are made in God's image. Just like God is a spirit, some believe being made in God's image entails that people have a spiritual component, a soul. Corcoran disagrees. Being made in God's image just involves the capacity to reflect God's attributes. For instance, it involves a person's ability to reflect God's love through performing loving acts.

Part two of the book assesses specific Christian beliefs. Contributors include Stephen Patterson, Craig Evans, Gary Habermas, James Crossley, Jerry Walls, and Keith Parsons. Patterson and Evans debate whether the Jesus of the Christian faith was historically real. Patterson contends He was not. The Jesus of the Christian faith is a Jesus with superhuman powers. He performed miracles

such as raising the dead. However, Patterson contends that just like it is implausible to believe in superheroes like Superman, so, too, it is implausible to believe that this superhuman Jesus was historically real. By contrast, Evans contends the Jesus of the Christian faith was historically real. Regarding Jesus' ability to perform miracles, Evans argues that it was Christ's ability to perform such deeds that accounts for his immense popularity throughout Israel. Habermas and Crossley debate Christ's resurrection. Habermas argues this happened. For instance, he contends the fact that Jesus appeared to many people after his death is best explained by believing that Christ rose again. By contrast, Crossley counters this point by citing recent literature on bereavement visions. This literature shows that, in many cultures, people have visions of loved ones after they die, even though these deceased have not risen again. In turn, he contends that the appearances of Jesus after His crucifixion may have been an instance of such visions. Walls and Parsons debate the plausibility of Heaven and Hell. Walls defends both. For instance, Walls argues that insofar as people have a desire for perfect happiness that can't be satisfied in this life, it is plausible to believe there is a Heaven in the afterlife where people can be perfectly happy. By contrast, Parsons contends that Christians believe implausible things about Heaven, such as the idea that if Hitler were to have repented and believed shortly before dying then he would have spent eternity in paradise.

The editors have done an excellent job bringing together a first-rate group of thinkers. Scholars will want to use this book as a starting point for further discussion on these issues. Though the purpose of this book is to present opposing views on each topic covered and not simply to present a defense of evangelical positions, nonetheless Christian laity will find the book profitable as an introduction to some of the scholarly debates on topics of importance to them.

Allen Gehring
Owensboro, Kentucky

Rainer Albertz, James D. Nogalski, and Jakob Wöhrle, eds. *Perspectives on the Formation of the Book of the Twelve: Methodological Foundations, Redactional Processes, Historical Insights*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 433. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012. x + 414 pp. Hardback. ISBN: 978-3110283761. $182.00 (Hardback).

Rainer Albertz, James Nogalski, and Jakob Wöhrle, all three accomplished scholars in their disciplines and areas, have marshaled an array of up-to-date and well-articulated essays on the formation of the Book of the Twelve. The volume, the contents of which originally stemmed from an international conference concerning the formation of the Book of the Twelve in 2011 at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, contains twenty-four essays, each assigned to one of four areas: Methodological Issues, Editorial Issues, Historical Issues, and Issues Concerning the Canon.

A collection of essays can seldom boast of uniform quality across the board although each is helpful in its own way. Other than the three editors' contributions, the volume contains essays from noted scholars such as Jörg Jeremias, Aaron Schart, Marvin Sweeney, and Mark Biddle, besides a few others. In a review of this size, there is not space to summarize each essay. Instead, I will summarize notable essays and leave room for a few brief comments at the end.

Wöhrle opens the volume with an essay that addresses methodological issues related to research on the Book of the Twelve. This essay (and others) could serve to introduce a less advanced audience to research trends and methods not only in the Book of the Twelve but also in Old Testament studies in general. He commences with a brief word about intertextuality before moving on to methodological considerations related to redaction analyses and composition criticism. His interest is to show how the two methodological procedures can act as a control on results. Wöhrle tests his methodology through the case of the grace formula in the Book of the Twelve with perhaps mixed results.

In another essay related to methodology entitled "Synchronic and Diachronic Concerns in Reading the Book of the Twelve Prophets," Sweeney skillfully lays out four methodological issues related to study on the Twelve—which one could again extend to Old Testament studies in general—that are almost worth the price of the book. (I say "almost" because the book retails from its

publisher for a mind-boggling $182.) His first point concerns the steps in analysis; whether redaction criticism should occur at the end of analysis or at the beginning. Concerning this step, he concludes, "The final form of the text must be critically analyzed first to understand fully the organization, conceptualization, and concerns of the text as a whole. Only then may the text be probed for evidence of earlier levels of composition that must be reconstructed as well as the settings from which those levels of composition would have derived" (p. 22). A second point ventures into the integration of literary criticism and textual criticism, an issue that the essay by Russell Fuller also broaches. Recent research has argued that these two areas are related and the inter-relationship has implications for methodology (see Fuller's essay in the volume for a bibliography). His third point deals with the "disappearing redactor" whereby "Scholars must now reckon with the possibility that a coherent text in fact is a redactional text and a discontinuous or gapped text may we be the work of an original author" (p. 23). His final point aptly brings in the role of later communities in the reception of these ancient texts.

The second portion of Sweeney's essay argues that the LXX order of the Book of the Twelve is the earlier order. While this portion of Sweeney's essay lacks explicit analysis (he summarizes from his earlier research and analyses), he does point to a rather significant conclusion, "Analysis of both the final forms of the Book of the Twelve and its constituent prophetic books points to a very different model for reading the Book of the Twelve as a whole and for reconstructing its compositional history" (p. 25).

A final statement from Sweeney segues nicely into the thrust of Albertz's essay. Concerning a text's connection to a setting and occasion, Sweeney writes, "The differing sequences of books and the underlying concerns that come to expression in these sequences demand consideration of the socio-religious, historical, and political settings that would have produced each" (p. 29). In other words, sequence reveals message and purpose, which in turn plausibly discloses the setting and occasion of their composition. Similarly, Albertz desires to utilize "insights into the formation of a biblical corpus … to reconstruct the political, social, and theological history of ancient Israel" (p. 303). While Albertz is quick and careful to recognize the limits of such pursuits, he wants to execute redaction criticism in order to discern the setting and occasion for such literary layers, and then use the results to establish a relative

chronology. Once a relative chronology materializes, the analyses yield historical background with a higher degree of probability.

This discussion of methodology reveals the trajectory of recent research in Old Testament scholarship in German-speaking Europe, at least, if not the majority of higher education universities and institutions. In my opinion, scholars perform redactional and compositional analyses with a high degree of probability because of the adequacy of language. However, once methodology moves beyond linguistic signs, which, by design, convey information through convention, a diminishing certainty will result.

Another important contributor, Paul Redditt, utilizes redaction criticism—one could correctly call some of his argumentation composition criticism—to argue his case. Like so many redaction analyses, one is hard pressed to follow all of Redditt's evidence because of the plethora of associations drawn between words and verses in addition to connections between passages, editorial hands, and putative settings. However, this is another example of the type of scholarship—with its positive results and negative excesses—arising from this cadre of Old Testament Studies.

In summary, this volume is very important because it reveals the positive methodological advances in the field and yields a number of significant findings for the formation of The Book of the Twelve. Notwithstanding differences between essays—a situation that is difficult to ameliorate—and an uneasiness on the part of this reviewer to follow the contributors in many of their conclusions, I highly recommend this volume for any reader who desires to learn more about the state of Old Testament studies or for an advanced reader to engage recent findings dealing with the formation of the Book of the Twelve.

Tracy McKenzie
Wake Forest, North Carolina

Kathryn Joyce. *The Child Catchers: Rescue, Trafficking, and the New Gospel of Adoption*. New York: Public Affairs, 2013. xvii + 332 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1586489427. $26.99 (Hardback).

Adoption among evangelicals has become popular in recent years with much time, money, and effort being spent in the process. Kathryn Joyce, a journalist from New York City, who has written pieces in publications such as the *Atlantic* and *Harvard Divinity Bulletin,* writes about this development in *The Child Catchers*. Joyce argues

evangelicals, albeit with "altruistic" motives, are harming the very people they are trying to help. She believes because of the evangelical adoption movement, birth mothers and adopted children have become cogs in a multi-million dollar economic scheme that has led certain evangelicals to "adopt" illegal and cruel methods to secure children.

Joyce's work is divided into eight themed chapters, each having special tales to substantiate her claims. She uses these stories, some of them horrifying miscarriages of justice, to personify what she believes is common in the evangelical world of adoption. In short, Joyce seems concerned that evangelicals have taken a theology of adoption to its extreme and allowed for abuses to occur—some of them unthinkable. She believes that not only has the evangelical community's support of adoption led adoption agencies to bribe, falsify records, and improperly identify actual orphans; child trafficking, forced adoptions, and willingly separating biological parents from their children have occurred. Some birth parents and adoptive children have even been deceived into believing that adoptions are temporary.

Interestingly, Joyce does not argue with all of the theology behind Christian adoption, especially when she interacts with Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission's Russell Moore (then a professor at Southern Seminary). Joyce does not oppose Christians adopting either. Joyce's desire is to expose the corruption in the world of adoption, particularly international adoption among Christians. Sadly, some of what she says is true. Certain Christian international adoption agencies' methods have been called into question.

The Child Catchers helps explain the underbelly of adoption and the adoption process. It is well written and easily readable, although, at some points, sensationalistic. Joyce is not a fan of conservative evangelicals, and her biases are reflected throughout the book, which weakens her overall thesis. However, even with these concerns, because of the evangelical movement's economic and political force, and the truthfulness in some of her assessments, a serious reading and examination of what she states is needed, especially by those evangelicals interested in adopting. A lot of money is being spent on adoptions, which can lead to all sorts of unintended consequences. More importantly, children could be harmed in the process, the exact opposite of evangelicals' intent.

Another question arises that Joyce does not ask. Many of the countries where international adoptions are occurring have a Chris-

tian presence. It has been asked whether it is missiologically appropriate to "extract" these children from their people group when local churches of that people group have Christian orphanages that could provide spiritual and physical care, particularly if more money were given. The money spent on one adopted child could help many more. Some of these children could come to faith in Christ and be leaders of their indigenous local church. Perhaps this is an insensitive question, and one the does not get to the root of the problem, but it should be investigated carefully.

Evangelicals understand the beauty of adoption; they realize that they are adopted spiritually. They are God's children because of God's choice. Evangelicals also recognize that the Bible commands them to take care of orphans and widows, an edict everyone would do well to heed. As emotional as the adoption process is, if evangelicals are going to adopt or promote adoption—as they should—let them do so with the utmost integrity. Let them do so in a way that meets the highest ethical standards, even if it means that for some the adoption process will take longer or not happen at all. When people like Joyce investigate the process, they should be able to see that evangelicals' methods stand up to the highest critical rigor.

Philip O. Hopkins
St. Andrews, Scotland

Adonis Vidu. *Atonement, Law, and Justice: The Cross in Historical and Cultural Contexts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. xviii + 286 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0801039195. $24.99 (Paperback).

Adonis Vidu, associate professor of theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, has produced in his most recent monograph an ambitious and complex study of the relationship between atonement, legal theory, and ethics. In *Atonement, Law, and Justice,* Vidu attempts to demonstrate that atonement theories throughout the history of doctrine are intricately connected to the contemporaneous philosophies of law and ethics. The outline of the book is straightforward; Vidu sets out to describe legal philosophy, atonement theory, and their relationship in each of the periods of church history. In each of these—Patristic, medieval, Reformation, modern, and postmodern—Vidu uses representative theologians as examples for his point. The book ends with a chap-

ter that appeals to the notion of divine simplicity to explain some of the so-called tension identified in different periods of atonement theory's history, the tension between God's love and his justice.

A straightforward summary of *Atonement* is not possible in a short review. Vidu's argument, that the shifts throughout church history in atonement theory are related to shifts in legal philosophy, is simple enough. But each chapter is a complex web of at least three narratives—the story of how philosophers and theologians have shifted in their understanding of law and justice, the story of how they have understood atonement, and the story of how they have understood ethics and morality. Each of these stories is told using two or three primary examples (e.g. Vidu's employment of Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl in the chapter on modernity), but in the midst of these dominant figures Vidu scatters a myriad of other thinkers, some well-known, some not. Additionally, the epistemological and cultural shift from pre-modernity to modernity to post-modernity plays a role in Vidu's tapestry. What this means for the potential reader is that some working knowledge of intellectual and theological history is needed in order to follow the argument of each chapter. This is not a criticism, but instead is an acknowledgement that what Vidu has produced is not to be approached lightly.

The threads with which Vidu weaves his tapestry—law, atonement, ethics, epistemology—can be summarized as follows. First, with respect to law, it moves from a restrictive guardrail, something to which God is not beholden (Patristic), to a punitive but morally formative measure in which human law ideally reflects natural (or divine) law (medieval), to the will of the people (modern), to coercive and violent (postmodern). With this movement comes a similar vacillation in understanding justice, one that moves from seeing justice as rehabilitation to punishment and back again. Epistemologically, the trajectory is well known—from divine revelation to reason and empiricism to relativism. With respect to atonement theories, the various thinkers throughout church and intellectual history have moved accordingly, from the "classic" theory that emphasizes Christ's victory over the powers and the subsequent freedom of man; to Anselm's satisfaction theory and the Calvinist and Lutheran Reformation theories, each of which is influenced by the medieval "legal turn" towards a positive view of law; to Schleiermacher and Ritschl's emphasis on the mystical and rehabilitating example of Jesus; and finally to the postmodern eschewing of any

sort of violence on the part of God, along with its emphasis on the victimhood of Jesus.

Vidu wants to show that, while "penal substitution" as such has not been *the* atonement theory throughout church history, the idea of punishment is included in most of the positions he surveys through the Reformation period. It wanes sharply in modernity and is virtually non-existent in postmodern theories. This is an important argument for those who wish to dismiss any penal element of the atonement as a late medieval aberration, having its seeds in Anselm's thought but flowering with Calvin. On the contrary, according to Vidu: punishment, although nuanced differently, was included in most atonement theories until modernity and postmodernity. Further, Vidu shows that modernity and postmodernity are influenced by their view of law and justice in rejecting any penal element in the atonement. Just as important, Vidu in the final chapter clearly argues for simplicity as the properly theological and traditional way to understand the relationship between God's love and justice. They are not in tension, only pacified with one another in the cross. God, in his unified divine agency and in simplicity, works in love and justice to bring about atonement through the cross of Jesus Christ.

Atonement, Law, and Justice is an important work in its demonstration that punishment regularly occurs in atonement theories from the earliest period of theology through the Reformation, in its articulation of the relationship between legal and atonement theories, and in its call for a return to divine simplicity as the theological linchpin that shows God's love and justice as working together, not in tension. While the details of particular figures in intellectual and theological history can be overwhelming, and while I would have preferred to see a longer and more sustained biblical argument for simplicity and its relationship to atonement, this book should be commended to any reader who wishes to grasp the complexities of the history of this vital Christian doctrine more fully.

Matthew Y. Emerson
Shawnee, Oklahoma

Peter J. Morden. *Communion with Christ and His People: The Spirituality of C. H. Spurgeon*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013. xv + 318 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1625646255. $39.00 (Paperback).

Charles Spurgeon is one of those towering figures with whom many scholars are generally familiar. However, Peter Morden is among the few who could rightly be considered an expert on Spurgeon's life and thought. Fittingly, Morden serves as the vice principle of Spurgeon's College, London, where he teaches courses in church history and spirituality. *Communion with Christ and His People: The Spirituality of C. H. Spurgeon* is a revision of Morden's doctoral thesis, which was first published in 2010 by the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage at Regent's Park College, Oxford University. However, because the book was not widely available outside Europe, Pickwick has published a North American edition of Morden's monograph. Historians and theologians should be grateful.

Morden divides his book into eleven chapters. Following an initial introductory chapter that frames the study, most of the remaining chapters examine particular facets of Spurgeon's spirituality. A brief concluding chapter summarizes Morden's findings. Morden suggests that spirituality was a central theme in Spurgeon's life that ties together many strands in Spurgeon's thought. His thesis is that "'communion with Christ and his people' is the integrating theme which ties together and makes sense of the different, and sometimes seemingly contradictory, aspects of Spurgeon's life and work" (p. 15). Simply put, Spurgeon's spirituality assumed a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and was focused upon cultivating a deeper relationship with the Savior and other believers.

Following the work of David Bebbington, Morden frames Spurgeon as an evangelical who emphasized the four key distinctives of biblicism, conversionism, crucicentrism (cross-centeredness), and activism. Spurgeon's evangelicalism thus emerges as the primary grid through which Morden interprets Spurgeon's spiritual life. Spurgeon's Calvinism, though shaped by the Puritans whom he loved, was filtered through evangelical sensibilities. Morden rightly argues it is too simplistic to consider Spurgeon a neo-Puritan. Spurgeon's Baptist ecclesiology, though firm when it comes to basic Baptist distinctives, was also characterized by an evangelical catholicity. For example, Spurgeon affirmed open communion and networked widely with other (mostly Reformed)

evangelicals. His Pastor's College, though focused on training Baptists, included other Calvinistic evangelicals and was led by a Congregationalist.

Spiritual disciplines such as prayer and Scripture meditation reflected Spurgeon's evangelical sensibilities, serving the ultimate purpose of communion with Christ. Weighing in on the "Baptist sacramentalism" debate, Morden demonstrates that Spurgeon rejected any hint of sacramentalism in baptism, but affirmed a Reformed sacramental view of the real spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist; the latter particularly furthered one's communion with Christ and his church. The Reformed understanding of progressive sanctification shaped Spurgeon's view of holiness, though he tried to repackage this view in ways that connected with the common working classes to whom he was primarily ministering. Spurgeon was quintessentially evangelical in the way he related his spirituality to Christian activism; evangelism and mercy initiatives were central to his ministry (especially his famous orphanages). Spurgeon suffered much during his adult life, and he believed that suffering was a key means the Holy Spirit used to draw God's people closer to Jesus Christ.

Morden makes a persuasive case that Spurgeon's spirituality was focused upon communion with Christ and his people. He also demonstrates that Spurgeon's Victorian evangelicalism was central to understanding his views of Calvinism and Baptist ecclesiology. The result is a sweeping, integrative study of Spurgeon's spirituality that corrects simplistic depictions of the famed preacher and raises questions that should provide a springboard for additional studies in Spurgeon's spirituality. For example, assuming Morden's paradigm, how did Spurgeon understand revival and spiritual awakening? What role did crucicentrism in particular play in Spurgeon's piety? Did Spurgeon practice other spiritual disciplines such as fasting and silence/solitude and, if so, were they also closely related to communion with Christ and his people? What role did corporate worship play in Spurgeon's spirituality? Morden has provided significant fodder for other scholars.

Communion with Christ and His People makes a signal contribution to both Baptist Studies and the history of spirituality. Almost as important, Morden provides a model for how scholars can study the spirituality of other evangelical figures. Morden's book is one of several major studies of Spurgeon's thought that have appeared in the past half-dozen years. This reviewer hopes we are witnessing

the beginning of a "Spurgeon Renaissance" among scholars that will culminate in a critical biography (there is currently not a good one) and a comprehensive study of Spurgeon theology (again, there is no such work at present). If either is to be written, the author(s) will need to make generous use of Morden's fine study of Spurgeon's spirituality. Highly recommended.

Nathan A. Finn
Jackson, Tennessee

Tom Thatcher and Catrin H. Williams, eds. *Engaging with C.H. Dodd on the Gospel of John: Sixty Years of Tradition and Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. x + 297 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1107035669. $99.00 (Hardback).

C.H. Dodd's two *magna opera*, namely *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* and *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, were written in the twentieth century but in the history of Johannine scholarship, they are considered classic and pioneering studies. The volume under review, *Engaging with C.H. Dodd on the Gospel of John*, is a collection of insightful essays from fifteen scholars who provide critical and appreciative assessments of Dodd's scholarly contributions.

In the introductory chapter, "The Semiotics of History," Tom Thatcher laments the lack of a methodological introduction in Dodd's two works and attempts to fill the gap by outlining Dodd's understanding of the character and development of the Johannine tradition. Thatcher also claims that Dodd's view on the historical traditions in the Fourth Gospel is ambivalent: While Dodd successfully shows that John's witness from oral tradition is not only independent from that of the Synoptics but also preserves some historical data, Dodd rarely gets to definitive conclusions regarding the authenticity of such data.

The six essays in Part I of the volume reflect on Dodd's context and method. Alan Culpepper's appreciative essay views Dodd's organic approach to John as an important step toward narrative criticism. Craig Koester contextualizes Dodd's view of history by comparing Dodd with Bultmann in terms of their backgrounds and life stories. He also outlines the congregational theology that informed Dodd's reading of the historical tradition embedded in the gospel. He stresses Dodd's claim that the "attested facts" of Jesus' life have real content and formative influence on consequent tradition. Jan van der Watt, writing on symbolism in John's Gospel, is

critical of Dodd for his lack of a consistent methodological approach to symbols. For him, Dodd fits the Hellenistic philosophical framework into the text to arrive at a meaning of a symbol rather than allowing contextual dynamics to give rise to meaning.

Referring to Jesus' teaching regarding the master-servant relationship in John 13:16 and 15:20, Gilbert van Belle and David R. M. Godecharle raise some issues on how Dodd interprets Jesus' statement, arguing that a case can be made for its Matthean dependence. In "John and the Rabbis Revisited," Catrin H. Williams is critical of the way Dodd handled his rabbinic sources and traditions, pointing out that the rabbinic texts Dodd cites are later texts that underwent considerable development after John wrote his Gospel. Finally in this section, Jaime Clark-Soles attempts to provide an alternative to the limitations of Dodd's representative approach to character by applying a personality viewpoint to Nicodemus.

The six studies in Part II of the volume continue the conversation with Dodd on matters of history and tradition in John's Gospel. Urban C. von Wahlde opens the section by proposing a more accurate explanation for the presence and background of realized eschatology in John and shows how the Johannine tradition tolerated and incorporated differing theological outlooks. Using Pilate's repetitive statement in John 18:38b and 19:4, 6 as a test case, Hellen Mardaga argues against Dodd, claiming that it is impossible to separate the historical tradition from John's own theological thinking. For her, the multiple repetitions in John betray its oral origins; John is an "oral-derived text" or a text that shows oral features.

In discussing Johannine historicity, Paul N. Anderson focuses on how Raymond Brown carried forward and favorably developed Dodd's approach that views the various dispersed incidents in the Synoptics, unified in John, to reflect expansions of historical traditions related to the ministry of Jesus. These expansions find echoes in other traditions but are not reliant upon them. Anderson further develops this approach to John's historicity in terms of John's dialogical autonomy and offers a bi-optic perspective that acknowledges John and Mark as independent traditions. John Ashton reflects on Dodd's footnote on John 5:19-20a that deals with a hidden parable of the Son as Apprentice. Claiming that Dodd never really dealt with the question of John's justification for speaking of Jesus' direct vision of God, Ashton argues that the evangelist's description of Jesus watching and imitating the works of the Father is better explained in terms of his familiarity with a strong apocalyptic tradition of visionary ascent.

Wendy S. North revisits Dodd's argument that John wrote his account of the anointing in John 12:1-8 based on available oral tradition and that the evangelist was independent of Mark or Luke. She argues for the alternative position that John knew and relied on the synoptic accounts to compose the anointing episode for his own theological and narrative purposes. In "Eucharist and Passover," the final essay of the section, Michael Theobald re-examines Dodd's observations on the Passion and Easter narratives in the Fourth Gospel and argues that Dodd's uncertainty over whether the pre-Johannine Passion and Easter narratives contained the institution of the Eucharist or not has to be abandoned. Since the Jewish Christian festival of Passover is the locus or *Sitz im Leben* of pre-gospel Passion and Easter narratives, it is safe to say that there was an original version of such narratives that did not have the cult etiology.

John Painter's essay entitled "The Fourth Gospel and the Founder of Christianity" forms the third and final part. Assessing the value of historical tradition in Dodd's works and its contribution to the "Jesus quest," Painter emphasizes Dodd's conviction that the historical traditions regarding Jesus have been theologically transformed and interpreted in light of the Easter faith. In other words, Dodd's work on the Fourth Gospel has allowed the theological and the historical of the Jesus traditions to be seen as intimately intertwined.

Sixty years is certainly a good distance in time for evaluating the significance, the weaknesses, and the strengths of Dodd's works on John. These essays show an honest and critical engagement with Dodd's scholarship. They obviously have the advantage of hindsight and of recent studies on John's Gospel. Scholars and students of the Fourth Gospel will certainly benefit from studying this important volume as they read Dodd and it may even spur them on to take the insights and the scholarship of Dodd in varying directions. Indeed, it would be intriguing to know how Dodd himself would have responded to his critics.

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Aaron Menikoff. *Politics and Piety: Baptist Social Reform in America, 1770-1860*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014. xi + 230 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1625641892. $27.00 (Paperback).

Historians writing about social reform in America have tended either to ignore or mischaracterize the efforts of evangelicals in general and Baptists in particular. Oftentimes, those scholars who have bothered to acknowledge Christian involvement in the notable social reform movements in American history have dismissed those efforts as either counterproductive or overly-spiritual. Christian social reform efforts, they assert, advocated only minor reforms based on middle-class values, and thus actually undermined those who sought to institute the revolutionary changes necessary to produce a truly just and equitable society. If Christian social reformers were not primarily motivated by this desire to maintain the status quo, then at best it could be said they were driven by a perfectionist mindset that erroneously believed sin could be completely eradicated not only in the life of an individual, but in society as a whole.

As for Baptists, it is generally asserted that they abstained from most social reform efforts, being interested not in promoting Protestant ethics or achieving perfection, but rather in focusing exclusively on the eternal state of the souls of their fellow man. While it may be true that Baptists have prioritized evangelism and that the perfectionist strain influenced many American Protestants, a few scholars have challenged these broader stereotypes and have sought to provide a fuller, more accurate picture of the attempts made by Christians to improve American society. Beth Barton Schweiger, for instance, has taken the reform efforts of evangelicals seriously in a couple of recently published books. Likewise, Keith Harper demonstrated in his 1996 book, *The Quality of Mercy*, that Southern Baptists were notable participants in the Social Gospel movement of the early 20th century.

The recent effort to reexamine the role played by evangelicals in American social reform movements has received a significant boost from Aaron Menikoff's monograph, *Politics and Piety*, which provides a sweeping overview of Baptist efforts to improve American society from the country's founding to the Civil War. Menikoff convincingly demonstrates that while Baptists placed a premium on conversions, they did not limit their concerns to spiritual matters.

He asserts that Baptists were social reformers who did not shy away from direct action or political lobbying. Although they did not fully or blindly embrace the antebellum social reform movement, and they diligently avoided overt political partisanship, they did not limit their efforts to improve society to proclamations from the pulpit or personal efforts at evangelization.

In the course of examining the anti-slavery crusade, the temperance movement, the question of mail delivery on the Sabbath, and anti-poverty efforts, Menikoff not only highlights the role played in these matters by American evangelicals, but Baptists in particular. In these instances and others, Menikoff shows that Baptists, both in the North and the South, were active participants in the effort to improve the lives of individual Americans and society as a whole. He is to be applauded, if for no other reason, for highlighting these labors and providing both Baptist and American historians with the general details of such efforts.

Although *Politics and Piety* is a significant contribution to the literature on Baptists and antebellum social reform in America, it is not the final word on the matter. There is more work to be done. While Menikoff has thankfully dispelled the notion advocated by Rufus Spain and others that Baptists were not social reformers, there is still the question of the extent of Baptist involvement in the movement. In the course of identifying Baptist advocates of social reform, Menikoff repeatedly cites many of the same individuals, churches, associations, and newspapers. While Menikoff is careful to identify Baptist reformers in both the North and the South, he does not adequately address the extent to which these individuals, churches, associations and newspapers are representative of Baptists as a whole in America. For instance, in an attempt to prove Baptist political activism, Menikoff cites a resolution passed by the Elkhorn Baptist Association of Kentucky supporting the War of 1812 (p. 61). One wonders, however, how large, influential, and representative this association was amongst Kentucky Baptists. In addition, does Menikoff not undermine his broader argument when he remarks that the Elkhorn Baptist Association rarely addressed matter of politics? By leaving these and related questions unanswered, Menikoff invites critics to question whether the instances of Baptist social reform and political activism he uncovered were typical or mere aberrations. These and other questions remain to be answered, but Menikoff is to be commended for this ground-

breaking effort and for prompting a conversation on this important historical topic.

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Francis Watson. *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. xiii + 665 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0802840547. $48.00 (Paperback).

Francis Watson has written an ambitious and impressive work that seeks to undermine the prevailing position on the construction of the gospels and to replace it with a new paradigm.

In Part I, Watson blames Augustine for a trajectory which eventually led to a post-enlightenment, misguided approach to gospel origins. While criticizing Augustine's harmonization of the gospels, he casts Origen as the star: "As Origen recognized but Augustine did not, the apparent contradiction [between the canonical gospels] … compels the reader to seek the truth in a different place to that of sheer factuality" (p. 14). According to Watson, Augustine's source-critical hypothesis and his quest to harmonize the gospels led to a "violent dismemberment" of each gospel. Also, by detaching gospel truth from the narratives and forcing the gospels into one individual account, Augustine anticipated the rise of modern source criticism. Once later enlightenment critics demolished the possibility of harmonization, the assault on the canon soon followed, along with modern source criticism and the emergence of "Q," with Q overcoming the canonical gospels in providing the purest access to the historical Jesus.

Watson opens part II by explaining the inadequacies of the Q hypothesis. In what shapes up to be a particularly strong section, he carefully demonstrates occasions when Luke and Matthew run parallel, not simply in the so called "minor agreements" but more importantly at both the broader and more specific structures of their non-Markan material (i.e. the sermons on the mount/plain at the same point in Jesus' ministry, the genealogies towards the beginning of the gospels, the birth narratives, and the Easter narratives).

His critique of Q is then followed by a defense of his proposal—a variation of the Farrer-Goulder-Goodacre theory—with Luke as the interpreter of Matthew. Yet, unlike his anti-Q predecessors, Watson argues for the use of a Sayings Collection, which he proposes is a close descendent to the *Gospel of Thomas*. Watson

then discusses pre-canonical sources for the Gospel of John and argues that Papyrus Egerton 2 is used by John. This in turn is followed by a case that the Gospels of John, Thomas and Peter interact with the same traditions, but reinterpret them differently. This leads to a point that Watson repeats throughout this volume: "gospels … can and should initially be read as though the distinction between canonical and noncanonical did not exist. Early Christian gospel literature does not display one or another of two distinct sets of attributes, foreshadowing either canonical recognition or apocryphal marginalization" (p. 406).

Watson opens Part III by rejecting the notion that the fourfold gospels were basically complete by the end of the first century and widely recognized by the middle to end of the second century. Instead, according to Watson, two distinct phases should be recognized. First, the early pre-canonical phase was the stage in which all the gospels "proliferate unchecked" (p. 413) Second, the canonical phase—starting in the mid to late second century but extending into the fourth century—was when the four gospel entity was produced based on decisions external to the gospels themselves. This "fictive" fourfold gospel produced the severing of "the historical and literary ties that bind Matthew and Thomas, John and Peter, realigning Matthew with John on one side of the great divide, Thomas with Peter on the other" (p. 415).

After surveying the evidence for the gospel canon from the church fathers, both east and west, he turns to Origen, who again serves as a model for approaching the gospels. Watson reads Origen as not casting all non-canonical gospels as heresy, while at the same time affirming the fourfold gospels—but only because this was the church's historical decision. Furthermore, unlike Augustine and others, Origen came to affirm that the gospels should be harmonized on the spiritual rather than the empirical plane. The last chapter in Part III surveys visual arts in order to argue that the fourfold tradition was not so much defended by claims to apostolicity or chronological priority but instead by its association with the four heavenly creatures.

Watson displays an incredible depth and wide range of knowledge. At times, it is perhaps too wide ranging; one wonders if sections could have been streamlined, as they occasionally seemed only tangentially related to the main point (e.g. parts of chapters 10 and 11). Watson boldly takes on several major scholarly paradigms and is a force to be reckoned with, even if his proposals do not

ultimately win the day. It will have to suffice for now to show where a few of the scholarly fault lines exist and leave it to more exhaustive treatments to interact more substantially.

(1) Many will meet the argument against the existence of Q and the two-source hypothesis with resistance, though there are a mounting number of scholars questioning Q.

(2) The argument that a hypothetical Sayings Source was a close descendent to the *Gospel of Thomas* and a source for the canonical gospels goes against the trend of scholarship and Watson makes himself vulnerable at this crucial point in his argument by not engaging in depth with recent treatments of *Thomas*.

(3) The argument that Papyrus Egerton 2 was a source for the Gospel of John instead of the reverse will also turn heads of those within the scholarly consensus.

(4) The case that the four gospel canon was arbitrarily made in the fourth century challenges the notion that the four gospels set themselves apart and were received as authoritative writings early on in the canonical process, which was at the very least the view of many second century writers—and still of many scholars today.

Each of these points will stir up dissenters, which, along with Watson's learned insights, makes *Gospel Writing* a fascinating read and one which deserves a careful consideration by all serious scholars of gospel literature.

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J. V. Fesko. *The Theology of the Westminster Standards: Historical Context and Theological Insights*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2014. 441 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1433533112. $21.17 (Paperback).

This monograph by J. V. Fesko stands as a strong contribution to the study of the Westminster Standards and a valuable model for students of confessional statements to emulate. Fesko, academic dean at Westminster Seminary California and a professor of historical theology, establishes two goals at the beginning of his text that set his study apart from most commentaries on confessional standards. He first insists that responsible study of confessional statements must take the original historical context of the document as seriously as biblical scholars weigh the original historical context of

scripture. Fesko states, "It is often said that the three most important words in real estate are location, location, location. A similar maxim is true for good historical theology—context, context, context" (p. 25). His introductory chapter communicates to the reader the importance of understanding that confessional documents are a mix of timeless truths and contextually conditioned beliefs that have been superseded. Examples given by Fesko include the seventeenth-century belief in ghosts and dogmatic assertions that the pope was antichrist. Fesko's insistence on approaching the Westminster Standards as products of their age as well as bearers of biblical truths provides greater clarity for understanding their purpose and final form.

Second, Fesko reveals that the seventeenth century and Reformed theological contexts of the Westminster Standards are richly complex. Specialists in Reformed theology or the early modern period are generally among the few who truly appreciate the diversity of sixteenth and seventeenth century Reformed theology. Fesko effectively communicates this diversity to a wider audience. While many students of the confession assume the direct dominance of John Calvin's influence on the Westminster divines, Fesko notes, "Calvin, though influential, was but one among a host of theological contributors in the early modern period" (p. 56). Fesko compiled a chart listing the names of prominent Reformed theologians cited by the Westminster divines and the frequency with which they are cited (pp. 55-58). This list and the subsequent citations of early modern treatises in each chapter demonstrate the variety of Reformed traditions from England and the continent that flowed like streams into the creation of the Westminster Standards. The divines themselves are transformed from two-dimensional autodidacts to real believers who had differing convictions based on their unique theological influences, biblical interpretations, and personal experiences.

The bulk of Fesko's text consists of actual engagement with the process of composing the Westminster Standards. The organization of the book owes to systematic theology the identification of major theological themes in the Standards as objects for study. However, the contents of each chapter reveal Fesko's emphasis on historical theology, since the Standards were formed as the product of debate and careful deliberation. Studying the original draft of Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence in comparison to the final product signed by the Second Continental Congress pro-

vides deeper insight into the nuances of what the delegates wanted to communicate. In the same fashion, Fesko's study of the Westminster Standards in utero opens the door to understanding why the Westminster divines wrote what they wrote and, just as importantly and possibly more so, why they chose to reject certain ideas they could have included.

While it is impossible to cover all the interesting theological concepts Fesko addresses in a short review, some of the most interesting discussion covers God and the decrees, justification, church order and eschatology. The section on church order is particularly fascinating given the sharp and often polarizing convictions held on these issues by seventeenth century Reformed Christians. One weakness of the work is the lack of discussion in this section on the opinions held by representatives of the English Separatist and Independent movements in regard to the proper nature of church order and magisterial influence endorsed in the Westminster Standards. One could argue that the English Separatist influence may not have been influential enough among the Westminster divines to treat in detail, but the appearance of Henry Ainsworth's name among Fesko's list of Reformed scholars who influenced the Westminster divines makes one wonder if Ainsworth's debates with his fellow separatists over issues of church order should have been mentioned.

The Theology of the Westminster Standards is a great resource for understanding the content and historical context of these pivotal Christian confessional documents. Readers without some basic theological training may find some of the analysis difficult to navigate, but the book is a useful guide for college students, ministers, and others with a basic foundation in Christian theology and history. Fesko has rendered a great service for church and academy by giving us a deeper understanding of the Westminster Standards, their historical context, and their enduring legacy.

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Steve Wilkens and Don Thorsen, eds. *Twelve Great Books that Changed the University, and Why Christians Should Care*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014. xvi + 200 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1620327395. $25.00 (Paperback).

Steve Wilkens and Don Thorsen, the editors of *Twelve Great Books that Changed the University*, serve at Azusa Pacific University. Wilkens is Professor of Philosophy and Ethics and Faith Integration Fellow for Faculty Development, while Thorsen is Professor of Theology and Chair of Graduate Theology and Ethics. Each of the twelve chapters is written by a faculty member of Azusa Pacific University, reflecting his or her area of expertise, while the foreword is written by the provost of the school.

Wilkens provides a helpful introduction in which he gives the rationale for the book, discusses the relationship of Christianity to the university, and explains the selection process for choosing the representative great books. Each chapter represents a discipline within the academy, and is devoted to a great book considered to be the seminal work that shaped that discipline. As to the process of choosing the twelve greatest of the great books, Wilkins admits there are no criteria that would not be controversial. The editors decided to use the original definition of "classic." A classic book is a book that has been used almost universally in the classroom. Other criteria were whether or not a book has stood the test of time, and whether or not a book was pivotal in the emergence of their respective disciplines.

Chapter one covers Philosophy, and discusses Plato's *Republic*. Chapter two deals with Theology and has Augustine's *Confessions* as its subject. Each successive chapter addresses a pivotal work of that respective academic discipline: Drama—Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; Literature—Cervantes's *Don Quixote*; Physics—Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*; Politics—Locke's *The Second Treatise of Government*; Economics—Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*; History—Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Biology—Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*; Psychology—Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*; Sociology—Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*; and Education—Dewey's *Democracy and Education*.

All of the contributors follow the same format for their respective chapters. Each chapter begins with a brief introduction of the representative book which gives the author's biography and the historical context in which book arose. An overview follows which

summarizes the book. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the impact the book has had on the university in general and its academic discipline in particular, and why Christians should see the book as significant.

Often a multi-authored book of this type is uneven, with some chapters notably better than others. However, each chapter demonstrates a consistent level of clarity and readability; perhaps it is because the editors required the authors to follow a uniform outline. Wilkens correctly notes that some may disagree with the books selected. Even the choice of academic disciplines is open to criticism. Where is the discussion about Mathematics? How can Newton's *Principia Mathematica* be left out?

Quibbles aside, *Twelve Books that Changed the University* serves as a very good primer for anyone interested in the development of Western intellectual thought. It would make a good introductory textbook for any course on the history of ideas or as a secondary source in a great books curriculum.

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David R. Nienhuis and Robert W. Wall. *Reading the Epistles of James, Peter, John & Jude as Scripture: The Shaping & Shape of a Canonical Corpus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. xviii + 318 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0802865915. $30.00 (Paperback).

David Nienhuis and Robert Wall, both of Seattle Pacific University, have given the academy and the church much to ponder in their latest foray into canonical readings of the New Testament. This is the authors' first monograph together, but each has contributed to the growing body of literature on a canonical approach to the NT. In this book they hope both to help the church and academy regain an interest in the Catholic Epistles and, more prominently in this volume, to spur readers to study the CEs together as a canonical collection (pp. xv–xvi).

After an introduction to the state of CE research and to the canonical approach, chapter one argues for a specific reconstruction of the CE corpus' canonical moment, relying on historical critical conclusions about dating and manuscript evidence of circulation to determine when and why these seven letters began to be read together. Chapter two then draws theological conclusions from the previous chapter, as well as from the order of the seven-letter CE

collection and its relationship to both Acts and Hebrews. The authors' conclusion after these initial chapters is that the CE corpus, in its agreement with the Rule of Faith, provides readers of the NT with an apostolic eyewitness account of the gospel of Jesus Christ that balances out any incorrect fideistic readings of the Pauline collection. In other words, James, Peter, John, and Jude are *eyewitnesses* to Jesus' life and work, unlike Paul, and their letters balance out Paul's emphasis on faith with their own emphasis on faith that produces good works.

In a brief introduction to Part II of the book, Nienhuis and Wall argue that the Rule of Faith can help readers draw out theological themes in the CE, and the rest of the book proceeds with examining each letter in detail. Each book is treated in view of its historical authorship, canonical authorship and placement, literary structure and emphases, and theological themes in congruence with the Rule of Faith. The final chapter and epilogue summarize the conclusions of first two chapters and synthesize the theological themes discerned in the book-by-book analysis, again using the Rule of Faith as an outline.

There are many aspects to commend, more to question, and much to criticize in *Reading the Epistles*. On the positive side, the authors have ably demonstrated the importance of a canonical, intertextual reading of the NT. While this approach has found many advocates in OT studies, its appropriation by NT scholars has been scant. Wall and Nienhuis, along with Eugene Lemcio, have been among the few proponents of Childs' canonical approach to take his method to NT studies. And even then, the CE corpus is a neglected component in NT studies and in the canonical approach. Therefore the work of *Reading the Epistles* is a welcome call to read the CEs and to read them canonically. In reading this way, the authors also make a number of important intertextual and theological observations, among which this reviewer found the connections between the CEs and Acts to be the most stimulating. Nienhuis and Wall's use of Tertullian's Rule of Faith, and especially the way they break it into five parts—Creator God, Christ Jesus, the Community of the Spirit, Christian Discipleship, and Consummation of the New Creation—in order to read the CEs theologically, was also a welcome approach to a canonical reading. Finally, I became increasingly convinced of the validity of Nienhuis and Wall's argument that the CEs are collected and organized as apostolic *eyewitness* testimony to Christ and to his gospel.

While these positive aspects of the book certainly make it worth the reader's while, there are too many questions and points of criticism for me to recommend it wholesale. The most pressing question is the authors' view of Scripture. Throughout they refer to the CEs and the other books of Bible as Scripture, God's word, and testimony to Christ used by the Spirit. While appreciating their emphasis on the formational qualities of Scripture and its importance for transforming individual believers and the church into the image of Christ, and while agreeing that the Spirit guides the church in the canonization process, I was at pains to find any reference or allusion to divine inspiration. It seems as though the authors want to clearly affirm the Spirit's illumination of the church and its choice of particular books as Christian Scripture while at the same time they want to avoid any talk of the Spirit's inspiration of those same Scriptures. This is odd at best, and deeply problematic at worst. One wonders how, if the canon is simply a matter of the church's choice, Nienhuis and Wall could answer critics like Bart Ehrman with any substantive argument. "Spirit illumined choice" is in Ehrman's argument simply another term for "power." Another important question is whether or not Wall and Nienhuis have demonstrated that the CEs are included to *balance out* Paul. This is a refrain throughout the book, but I remain unconvinced that this is the main theological thread and canonical purpose of the CE collection.

More devastating in my mind is the major critique that must be leveled against *Reading the Epistles*. Throughout the book, Wall and Nienhuis argue that a canonical reading places priority not on the historical reconstruction of the supposed author but instead on the historical moment of canonization. This is problematic for a number of reasons. First, identifying this canonical moment is notoriously difficult, and at times the authors seem to strain the amount of manuscript evidence towards their reconstruction of the CE corpus' canonization. D. C. Parker is not listed in the index of modern authors, and that is because he is not mentioned in the book—and yet this expert on NT manuscripts offers alternative evidence to what Nienhuis and Wall use in their reconstruction. Further, while the authors (rightly) decry modern biblical criticism's insistence on getting behind the text to reconstruct the author, they in effect take the same approach in attempting to reconstruct the canonical moment. They have simply moved the historical critical method back a step, from author to canonical ecclesial redactor. It

is unclear to me how these methods are any different except in name and in reading books together instead of apart.

Wall and Nienhuis also fail to account for the early church's approach to canonicity. Throughout the book they want to argue that the letters of James, Peter, John, and Jude are included, and included together, because they are witnesses to apostolic testimony. On the face of it this sounds right, but the authors take late dates for the authorship of these books and so deny the actual apostolic authenticity of their authors. It is unclear to this reviewer how the authors can affirm the early church's belief that apostolicity of authorship was one of the primary criteria of canonicity while also denying that actual apostles (or those closely associated with them) authored these letters. In the end, it seems to me that Wall and Nienhuis have not escaped the trap of modernity in their reading as much as they had hoped. For these reasons, I can only recommend *Reading the Epistles* as an example of the canonical approach; I cannot, however, recommend it for anyone seeking to understand the canonical approach's proper theological or historical foundations.

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Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, Alexander Panayotov, eds. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures Volume I*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013. 808 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0802827395. $90.00 (Hardback).

The disciplines of biblical scholarship, Jewish studies, ancient history (and others!) benefitted tremendously from the two volume collection *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* edited by James H. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983–1986). It has now been supplemented by *More Noncanonical Scriptures Volume I*.

Charlesworth opens this substantial follow-up work with a foreword on the importance of such a collection. He notes that "Scholars will debate the criteria for inclusion …. [However, the collection] does mirror the unparalleled influence of the Bible on Western culture and thought" (p. xv). As the editors note:

> The Old Testament pseudepigrapha are an important and much neglected part of the biblical tradition. The earliest of them were written down at the same time and in the same geographic area as the Hebrew Bible, and some are even cited therein. They continued to be composed and copied

> throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages and, indeed, new pseudepigrapha are still being written in the modern era. The corpus being published in these two volumes adds a great many texts to those already known from earlier collections, most notably those of Sparks and Charlesworth, and together with them provides the reader with virtually all known surviving pseudepigrapha written before the rise of Islam. Some of these compositions provide us with fascinating background material to the New Testament. Others are a rich source of information on the reception history of the Hebrew Bible by Jews, Christians, and pagans through late antiquity. They frequently give us different perspectives from those found in writings of the same period which later acquired an authoritative status in Judaism (the rabbinic literature) and Christianity (the patristic literature). Together they present us with the sacred legends and spiritual reflections of numerous long-dead authors whose works were lost, neglected, or suppressed for many centuries. By making these documents available in excellent English translations and authoritative but accessible introductions we aim both to promote more scholarly study of them and to bring them to the attention of the vast lay audience who appreciate such treasures (p. xxxviii).

The volume's content is divided into two parts. The first consists of texts ordered according to biblical chronology. It contains "Adam: Octipartite/Septipartite (Grant Macaskill with Eamon Greenwood, pp. 3–21); "The Life of Adam and Eve (Coptic Fragments)" (Simon I. Gathercole, pp. 22–25); "The Book of the Covenant" (James VanderKam, pp. 28–32); "The Apocryphon of Seth" (Alexander Toepel, pp. 33–39); "The Book of Noah" (Martha Himmelfarb, pp. 40–46); "The Apocryphon of Eber" (James VanderKam, pp. 47–52); "The Dispute over Abraham" (Richard Bauckham, pp. 53–58); "The Inquiry of Abraham" (a possible allusion to the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, Richard Bauckham, pp. 59–63); "The Story of Melchizedek with the Melchizedek Legend from the *Chronicon Paschale*" (Pierluigi Piovanelli, pp. 64–84); "The Syriac History of Joseph" (Kristian S. Heal, pp. 85–120); "Aramaic Levi" (James R. Davila, pp. 121–142); "Midrash Vayissa'u" (Martha Himmelfarb, pp. 143–159); "The Testament of Job" (Coptic fragments, Gesa Schenke, pp. 160–175); "The Tiburtine Sibyl (Greek)" (Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, pp. 176–188); "The Eighth Book of Moses" (Todd E. Klutz, pp. 189–235); "The Balaam Text from Tell Deir

'Alla" (Edward M. Cook, pp. 236–243); "Eldad and Modad" (Richard Bauckham, pp. 244–256); "Songs of David" (G. W. Lorein and E. Van Staalduine-Sulman, pp. 257–271); "The Aramaic Song of the Lamb" (The Dialogue between David and Goliath, C. T. R. Hayward, pp. 272–286); "Exorcistic Psalms of David and Solomon" (Gideon Bohak, pp. 287–297); "The Selenodromion of David and Solomon" (Pablo A. Torijano, pp. 298–305); "The Hygromancy of Solomon" (Pablo A. Torijano, pp. 305–325); "Questions of the Queen of Sheba and Answers by King Solomon" (Vahan S. Hovhanessian with Sebastian P. Brock, pp. 326–345); "The Nine and a Half Tribes" (Richard Bauckham, pp. 346–359); "The Heartless Rich Man and the Precious Stone" (William Adler, pp. 360–366); "Jeremiah's Prophecy to Pashhur" (Darell D. Hannah, pp. 367–379); "The Apocryphon of Ezekiel" (Benjamin G. Wright, pp. 380–392); "The Treatise of the Vessels (Massekhet Kelim)" (James R. Davila, pp. 393–409); "The Seventh Vision of Daniel" (Sergio La Porta, pp. 410–434); "A Danielic Pseudepigraphon Paraphrased by Papias" (Basil Lourié, pp. 435–441); "The Relics of Zechariah and the Boy Buried at His Feet" (William Adler, pp. 442–447); "*Sefer Zerubbabel*: The Prophetic Vision of Zerubbabel ben Shealtiel" (John C. Reeves, pp. 448–466); "Fifth Ezra" (Theodore A. Bergren, pp. 467–482); "Sixth Ezra" (Theodore A. Bergren, pp. 483–497) and "The Latin Version of Ezra" (Richard Bauckham, pp. 498–528).

The smaller second part of the volume consists of thematic texts. It contains: "The Cave of Treasures" (Alexander Toepel, pp. 531–584); "*Palea Historica* (Old Testament History)" (William Adler, pp. 585–672); "Quotations from Lost Books in the Hebrew Bible" (James R. Davila, pp. 673–698) and "Hebrew Visions of Hell and Paradise" (Helen Spurling, pp. 699–713). Not included in the table of contents are "The Greatness of Moses" (*Gedulat Moshe*, pp. 714–725), "Legend 'Hear, O Israel'" (*Haggadat Shema 'Yisra'el*, pp. 726–728); "History of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi" (*Ma'aseh De-Rabbi Yehoshua' ben Levi*) and "Legend of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (*'Aggadat De-Rabbi Yehoshua' ben Levi*) Aramaic Recension" (pp. 729–734); "Order of Gan Eden" (*Seder Gan 'Eden*, pp. 735–737); "Tractate on Gehinnom" (*Masseket Gehinnom*, pp. 738–741); "In What Manner is the Punishment of the Grave?" (*Ketsad Din Ha-Qever*, pp. 742–745); "Treatise on the Work of Creation" (*Baraita De-Ma'aseh Bereshit*, pp. 748–750); and "David Apocalypse" (pp. 751–753). Presumably the translations and annotation are those of the editors.

The collection closes with an index of modern authors (pp. 754–762) and of Scripture and other ancient texts (pp. 763–808).

For each text, an introduction, a new translation, bibliography (subdivided into editions and studies) and, at times extensive footnotes, are offered. In some texts, extensive parallels from a broad range of ancient literature are noted. However, the structure of the introductions and the extent of notes and parallels vary. Finally, a second volume is in preparation, but no date is given on when it may be expected.

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Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, in partnership with the Kern Family Foundation, is hosting a paper competition for doctoral students as part of the Intersect Project. The Intersect Project is designed to help believers navigate faithful interaction with culture through topics such as economics, vocation, business, family and more through the lens of the gospel.

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