Editorial

Apologies are in order for the lateness of this issue. Several things made it impossible for me to complete work on the *Journal* including several late articles. I take full responsibility for the delay. I have articles promised for issues to be published in the summer and fall, completing the 2017 schedule. As always, I would encourage readers to submit articles for consideration. As you will see in this issue, there are several shorter articles and book reviews from pastors. I would love to see more pastors adapt sermons and Bible studies into short articles in order to benefit our readers.

In this issue David Sterchi offers an overview of the book of Romans, attempting to show the logical flow of this important letter. Dale DeWitt contributes the second in a series of articles on salvation in the Old Testament. In this article he examines salvation in the Exodus. Leah Befus, a recent graduate of Grace Bible College, presents an analysis of the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). The article sets the parable in the context of the Second Temple Period and offers a dispensational application to this parable of the return of Jesus. Jim Gray contributes a shorter article on the Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-56) which demonstrates the clear Old Testament allusions in this song celebrating the coming of the messiah. Pastor Timothy Conklin takes a "Closer Look at Jonah," examining the mercy of God to both Israel and the nations. Craig Apel's article invites the reader to "celebrate Pentecost" by examining the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 and the Pauline epistles. Finally, John Cook offers a study of the marriage imagery in Jesus's encounter with the Samaritan woman in John 4.

As always, the *Journal* has a number of book reviews on a wide variety of topics which may interest pastors and teachers. The goal of a book review is to both summarize the contents of the books as well as a constructive critique of the author's work. So many books are published these days it is impossible to read them all. Book reviews provide some sense of what is being published and what books would be a good investment for a professional library.

Book reviews are an excellent way for readers to contribute to the Journal. The final pages of this volume has a short Books Received section. If you would like to volunteer to write a short review of one of these books, please contact the editor and I will provide you with further details and ship the book to you.

Once again, thank you for your support of the *Journal*, I look forward to our future discussions in the *Journal of Grace Theology*.

Phillip J. Long, Editor
Professor of Biblical Studies
Grace Bible College
plong@gbcol.edu

Discerning the Coherence of Romams

David A. Sterchi

dsterchi@indiana.edu

Introduction

Bendix Woods is a county park in northern Indiana where I skied away my winter days as a young man. Some days it was alpine skiing (as close as the Midwest can approximate it) and other days it was Nordic skiing cross country. One of the most beautiful Nordic trails passed through a conifer forest. Even though I skied through those trails many times, I was oblivious to an interesting fact. When viewed in Google Earth, it is clear some of the trees spelled out STUDEBAKER, the name of the once famous covered wagon and automobile manufacturing company which occupied the site before it became a park. The saddest part of my oblivion is both my grandfather and great uncle worked for Studebaker before it closed. Yet I did not have a clue about the trees I skied though and around.

Reading Romans has often given me a similar experience. I have always identified individual structural blocks used by Paul to build his epistle. But until recently, I never had a clear sense of the mortar that held the blocks together and what the blocks constructed as a whole. Surveying structural outlines and introductions published in the academic literature, few even attempted to put forward a unified compositional strategy.[1] The scholars

[1]To his credit, V. Furnish argues forcefully for the unity of Rom 1-11 and 12-15. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968), 102-5. He cites multiple examples of inner-textuality between these two blocks. However, no compositional strategy is offered. Attempts to organize an outline

made the attempt usually succeeded in unifying Rom 1-11 or Rom 12-16, but not the entire epistle.[2] As Douglas Moo observed, "outlines of the structure of the letter tend to resemble headings in systematic theologies."[3] These outlines and their headings generally left me with the impression Romans is more like a disjointed concatenation of arguments and exhortations. But my most recent study of Romans was more productive than my earlier efforts.[4]

Textual And Structural Evidence Of A Compositional Strategy

The first indication of a compositional strategy emerges from the literary block identified by Jewett and Witherington as the first proof of the *probatio*.[5] This pericope (Rom 1:18-32) follows a chiastic structure; Introduction · AB · CD · *CD* · *AB* · *Conclusion*. Each couplet displays corre-

around a single idea include the gospel (B. Byrne, *Romans* [SP; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1996], vi-viii); the righteousness of God (P. Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* [trans. by Scott Hafeman; Louisville: Westminster, 1994], 14-60); the lordship of God (P. Achtemeier, *Romans* [IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1985]). While I applaud these attempts, the text of Rom 12:1-15:13 provides little if any evidence to warrant being subsumed under any of these central ideas.

[2]Additional surveyed works included, C. Bence, *Romans* (BCWT; Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 1996); F. F. Bruce, *Romans* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985); C. Cranfield, *Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975) ; J. Dunn, *Romans* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1988); L. Keck, *Romans* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2005); R. Jewett, *Romans* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007); D. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996); L. Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988); J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NIBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959); G. Osborne, *Romans* (IVPNTC; Downers Grove: InterVarsity; 2004); C. Talbert, *Romans* (SHBC; Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2002); B. Witherington, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) ; K. Wuest, *Romans in the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955).

[3]Moo, *Romans*, 32.

[4]My latest reading of Romans was largely informed by the textual approach proposed by J. Sailhamer, *Reading the Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 1-59; *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 199-214. His method was then masterfully applied in his final book, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition and Interpretation* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009).

[5]Jewett, *Romans*, vii; Witherington, *Romans*, 21.

spondence across the chiastic structure. This correspondence is based on related concepts or vocabulary. The correspondences between the couplets are identified as follows:

Rom 1:17-32 Introduction: Wrath of God
Rom 1:21-22 A They knew God
B Their thinking became futile
Rom 1:23-24 C Exchanged glory for images
D God gave them over to sexual impurity
Rom 1:25-27 C Exchanged the truth for a lie
D God gave them over to degrading lusts
Rom 1:28-31 A Knowledge of God not discerned to be worthwhile
B God gave them over to undiscerning minds
Rom 1:32 Conclusion: Decree of God

While most of the correspondence is across the chiastic structure (A *knew = A knowledge*, etc.), there is one notable exception. The last couplet *AB* contains "did not discern" (οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν) in *A* and "undiscerning" (ἀδόκιμον) in *B*. This *AB* couplet functions as the climactic couplet and declares the summary judgment against these wicked and godless people: a complete lack of discernment. The change from correspondence across the chiasmus to correspondence within the couplet emphasizes Paul's assessment of their inability to discern. The conclusion reiterates their inability to properly discern by stating these people discerned together to esteem and value (συνευδοκοῦσιν) the enumerated evil practices. But this intextual clue in the *AB* couplet and its repetition in the conclusion also prepare us to observe the "discerning" (δοκιμάζεις) in Rom 2:18 in the next literary block.

In Rom 2:1-24, Paul attributes the skill of "discerning superior things" (δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα, v. 18) to a Jewish teacher, functioning as a rhetorical foil. This attribution of skill is dosed with scathing sarcasm. Paul effectively says this teacher is a prime candidate for being one of his own students—a blind, child-like dullard who wanders aimlessly in the dark. He accuses the teacher of confusing his hollow knowledge of God's will with fulfilling God's true will.[6] This hypocritical teacher placed his faith in the physical and external aspects of the Law (e.g. physical circumcision,

[6]M. Thompson, *Clothed with Christ: The Examples and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12.1-15.13* (Worcester: Sheffield, 1991), 81, n. 2.

Rom 2:27) and ignored the spiritual and internal aspects of the Law (e.g. circumcision of the heart, Rom 2:29) and thereby inverted their true importance. My structure for this second block (Rom 2:1-24) is found below.[7]

Rom 2:1 A Accusation
Rom 2:2-5 B God's judgment
Rom 2:6-11 C Man's just deserts from God (Jew and Greek)
Rom 2:12-15 C Man's just deserts from God (with and without the law)
Rom 2:16 B God's judgment
Rom 2:17-24 A Accusation

The epic failure to discern the value of knowing God or the superior things of the law is the backdrop for the next literary block. When placed in the context of the failures of the people of Rom 1 and the teacher of Rom 2, the lofty theological arguments of this large block reveal their compositional purpose. Paul embarks on a series of diatribes which demonstrate by example how to properly discern superior things in the Law. He first discerns the superiority of spiritual circumcision of the heart over the physical circumcision it symbolizes (Rom 2:25-29); the superiority of spiritual righteousness over ritual righteousness (Rom 3, 4); the superiority of our spiritual identification with Christ over our physical identification with Adam (Rom 5, 6); the superiority of life in the Spirit over life in the flesh (Rom 7, 8); the superiority of spiritual identification with Abraham over physical identification with Abraham (Rom 9a); spiritual righteousness over ritual righteousness is reprised (Rom 9b, 10); and finally spiritual holiness over ritual holiness—being a wild branch grafted in to the holy root by faith against nature is superior to being a natural branch that is faithless and broken off (Rom 11). Paul then concludes his diatribes discerning the superior spiritual and inner truths in the Law from the subordinate rituals

[7]Most commentators recognize one structural break between Rom 2:1-16 and 2:17-29 (e.g. Jewett, *Romans*, vii). However, E. W. Bullinger has structural breaks after Rom 2:1, 2:5, 2:12 and 2:16. *The Companion Bible* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1990), 1664-66. Dunn has structural breaks at 2:11, 2:16, and 2:24 (*Romans*, viii). Byrne also has a structural break at Rom 2:24 (*Romans*, vi). While my chiastic structure may not have complete corroboration in the literature, similar structural breaks have been observed.

and external signs that exalt them. Once again the literary block exhibits a chiastic structure.[8]

Rom 2:25-29 A Spiritual circumcision of the heart is superior to physical circumcision
Rom 3 and 4 B Spiritual righteousness by faith is superior to ritual righteousness by law
R**om 5 and 6 C** Spiritual identification with Christ is superior to physical identification with Adam
Rom 7 and 8 D Life in the Spirit is superior to life in the flesh
Rom 9:1-13 C Spiritual identification with Abraham is superior to physical identification with Abraham
Rom 9:14-10:21 B Spiritual righteousness by faith is superior to ritual righteousness by law
Rom 11 A Spiritual holiness from being grafted in by faith against nature is superior to physical holiness from being a natural branch but faithless

Following his diatribes, Paul resumes his original line of inquiry; how discernment is practiced by others. Despite the difficult challenge sound discernment presents, he exhorts the Christians at Rome to practice it in Rom 12:2 (δοκιμάζειν). He later encourages them with the blessing that flows from sound discernment (δοκιμάζει) in Rom 14:22b. The occurrence of δοκιμάζειν in Rom 12:2 is connected to the discernment in Rom 1 and 2. The failed discernment in Rom 1 foolishly valued creation, the visible evidence of God's invisible qualities, over the Creator himself. The failed discernment in Rom 2 valued being physically circumcised over being spiritually circumcised by obedience to the Law. Therefore we should first observe the exhortation to properly discern God's will in Rom 12 is in direct contrast to these specific failures. The contrast of Rom 1 and 2 against Rom 12 can be seen clearly in the table below.[9]

[8]Note that both physical and spiritual circumcisions indicate participation in a relationship with God. Similarly, the metaphorical grafting of wild branches into the cultivated olive tree also indicates participation in a relationship with God—the holy root that sustains the branches. So what may appear to be disconnected is in fact connected conceptually, preserving the chiastic correspondence.

[9]M. Thompson, *Clothed with Christ*, 81, 88. Thompson draws out the relationship between Rom 1 and Rom 12. I have modified and expanded his work to include more from Rom 2 with insights from V. Furnish, *Theology and* Ethics, 102-5.

Romans 1	**Romans 2**	**Romans 12**
Wrath Revealed (1:18)	Wrath Revealed (2:5)	Mercy Shown (12:1)
Degraded Bodies (1:24)	Circumcised Bodies (2:17)	Holy Bodies (12:1)
False Worship (1:25)	Ceremonial Worship (2:27)	Spiritualized Worship (12:2)
Undiscerning Mind Not Valuing Knowing God (1:28)	Failed To Discern Superior Things (2:18)	Renewed Mind To Discern The Pleasing And Perfect Good (12:2)

Second, the source of revelation from which the will of God is discerned is clarified. All creation reveals things about God (e.g. his invisible qualities). But the most intelligible expression of God's will is none other than the Jewish *Tanakh* in general and the Mosaic Law in particular.

> Rom 2:18-20
> καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα καὶ δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα … ἔχοντα
> and you know [God's] will, and discern the superior things ...having
>
> Rom 3:1-2
> τὴν μόρφωσιν τῆς γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν τῷ νόμῳ …
> the embodiment of the knowledge and the truth in the law …

Peterson appears to extend the contrast of Rom 1 and 2 versus Rom 12 beyond contrasting the discerners to include a contrast between sources of knowledge to be discerned. It is important to Peterson that Paul's ethic in Rom 12 is not "law-dependent."[10] However, the various aspects of discernment Paul is contrasting all pertain to the individuals in the act of discerning. Paul does not contrast the sources of knowledge in Rom 1 (creation) or Rom 2 (the law). Thompson provides references from Romans and other

[10]D. Peterson, "Worship and Ethics in Romans 12," *TynBul* 44 (1993), 284. Dunn also sees Paul advocating for a new Christian ethic that is "not law-determined" (*Romans*, 715,717-8). I do not see Paul sending Christians on a legalistic scavenger hunt in order to cull Mosaic statutes that apply to Christians. To the contrary, Paul is teaching how to discern the "superior things" in Mosaic Law that transcend rituals and rules. Concepts like a "circumcised heart" or "rest" point toward something spiritual beyond legal prescriptions. Yet these things are found in Torah because it is spiritual (Rom 7:14).

Pauline epistles to demonstrate Paul's expectation of using "the entirety of Jewish Scripture … for the instruction of Christians."[11] Additionally, every example provided by Paul in his diatribes uses the Tanakh as the source of revelation from which "superior things" may be discerned.[12] His arguments from Mosaic Law are not just contiguous with Rom 12; the very wording of Rom 12:2 mirrors the same internal/external and spiritual/physical contrasts from Paul's diatribes. Wuest's translation of Rom 12:2a conveys this leitmotif very effectively.

> And stop using an outward expression that does not come from within you and is not representative of what you are in your inner being, but is patterned after this age; but change your outward expression to one that comes from within and is representative of your inner being, by the renewing of your mind …[13]

Finally, the large literary unit containing Paul's exhortation to discern (Rom 12:1-15:13) also uses multiple citations from Mosaic Law and the rest of the *Tanakh* to buttress his ethical exhortations to the Christians at Rome. Toward the conclusion of this block Paul declares these Scriptures were "written for our instruction" (Rom 15:4). Therefore, the ethical injunctions of Romans 12-15 are grounded in the Jewish *Tanakh* in general and the Mosaic Law in particular.

In short, leading up to the exhortation to discern God's will are the negative examples of those who failed to discern the value of knowing God and his will from creation and those who feigned discernment "superior things" from the Law, all of whom stand subject to God's judgment. Paul then puts forward his positive examples of properly discerning the "superior things" from the *Tanakh*. In light of the two negative examples and the judgment they incurred, Thompson rightly observes that "Paul's readers should think soberly" about the exhortation in Rom 12:2 of discerning God's will.[14] To highlight the momentous nature of this exhortation, Paul precedes it with a warning to avoid judgment in Rom 11 by becoming arro-

---

[11]Thompson, *Clothed with Christ*, 225. He cites Rom 4:24 & 15:4, 1Cor 9:10 & 10:11, 2 Tim 3:16.

[12]The JB lists 39 references to the Pentateuch alone in Paul's diatribes (Rom 2:25-11:36).

[13]K. Wuest, *Romans in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955) 209.

[14]Thompson, *Clothed with Christ*, 88.

gant (v. 20) or conceited (v. 25). After Paul exhorts the Christians at Rome to discern, he immediately returns to another warning of humility and sober judgment in 12:3. Having explored how Paul laid this foundation for a call to discernment in Rom 1-11, we are ready to examine how he develops and illustrates what he expects of his readers.

Readers of the English Bible may find Paul's choice to address the corporate functions of the church at Rome in Rom 12:3-8 to be an odd digression. However, as Jewett points out, the discernment in verse 2 is not merely a private and individual task.[15] The Greek text in verses 1 and 2 supports this public or communal sense of discernment by use of the second person plural for all conjugated verbs, the second person plural for pronouns and the plural for nouns whenever these various parts of speech refer to the Christians at Rome. Peng observes 12:1, 2 and 12:3-8 share an introduction by a first person singular present indicative active verb with διᾰ (12:1 Παρακαλῶ … διὰ and 12:3 Λέγω … διὰ), shared body imagery in vv. 1-2 (σώματα) and vv. 3-8 (σώματι, σῶμά) and the use of prohibition-exhortation pairing (12:2 μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε … ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε and 12:3 μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν … ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν) and concludes Rom 12:1-8 is a single structural element.[16] Once Rom 12:1-8 is seen as a single literary unit, the message comes into focus. Paul is explaining how the community of faith at Rome should function collectively as a body to discern the pleasing and perfect good from creation and Scripture.[17] What appeared to be a collection of miscellaneous exhortations in Rom 12:1-8 in fact coheres. Indeed the coherence and intentional structure of the entire block, Rom 12:1-15:13, will be demonstrated.

---

[15]Jewett, *Romans*, 733.

16K. Peng, H*ate the Evil, Hold Fast to the Good: Structuring Romans 12:1-15:13*, (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 129-30.

[17]bid, 127-8.

Talbert identifies four structural units within Rom 12:1-15:13 I find compelling and useful. The first unit is Rom 12:1-13:14. The structure is found in figure below with a minor structural change.[18]

Rom 12:1-8 A Ethical implications of an eschatological existence
Rom 12:9-13 B Love applied to relationships
Rom 12:14-21 C God's wrath and Christian vengeance
Rom 13:1-7 C God's wrath and government
Rom 13:8-10 B Love applied to the law
Rom 13:11-14 A Ethical implications of an eschatological existence

The first structural element, Rom 12:1-8, employs a hendiatris in v. 2 is the key to unlocking the higher order structure of Rom 12:1-15:13.[19] The appositional phrase, "the will of God—the pleasing and perfect good" (τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον) identifies "the pleasing good," which Paul addresses later, and "the perfect good," which Paul addresses here (12:1-13:14). To illustrate the power of the perfect good, Paul explains good, ἀγαθός, is the antidote to evil, κακὸς, ("overcome evil with good" in 12:21b) and is able to avert evil ("magistrates are not a terror to good deeds" in 13:3a). Furthermore, love is presented as a perfect expression of "the good." To alert readers to the perfect goodness of love, Paul first inserts the exhortation "hold fast to what is good" between exhortations of genuine love, ἀγάπη and brotherly love, φιλαδελφίᾳ (12:10). Second, Paul's entire legal argument that love fulfills the law is distilled down to the laconic quotation "love commits no evil (κακὸς) against a neighbor" (13:10a; Ps 15:3 LXX).[20] Love is void of evil and therefore

[18]Talbert, *Romans*, 281. Talbert places 12:3-8 with 12:9-13, whereas I follow Peng and place 12:3-8 with 12:1, 2. Some of my descriptors for the structural elements vary from Talbert as well.

[19]Most scholars address the nature of the phrase and how it should be translated in light of the adduced presence or absence of apposition. Unfortunately, the choice to focus on this question of apposition ignores the hendiatris and overlooks the inner-textuality associated with it.

[20]Jewett's analysis of OT quotations in Romans is especially thorough and insightful (*Romans*, 804-15). He and Dunn were the only scholars to identify this Ps 15:3 quotation from the LXX during the course of my research for this article. In addition, Jewett constructively speculates about laws that are conspicuously missing from Paul's discussion and why they may have been

is the perfect good. And every aspect of Christian behavior that expresses the incorruptible goodness, evil-averting and evil-quenching qualities of love is conduct answering the opening call to "present holy and acceptable bodies" (12:1) and the closing call to "put on Christ" (13:14). When love is applied to human relationships, it helps Christians discern goodness in our relationships.[21] But Paul also applies love in way that has escaped notice. Recall Paul's concept of discernment has been developed to identify the following; the value of knowing God (Rom 1:28), superior moral matters over inferior ritual matters (Rom 2:18 vis-à-vis Paul's diatribes in Rom 3-11), and God's will—the pleasing and perfect good (Rom 12:2). Love as a principle can be applied to the *Tanakh* to discern hermeneutically the superior spiritual matters, the inner moral reality, from the inferior physical matters—the outer rituals that merely signify the inner reality.[22] This application of love to relationships and to the *Tanakh* is demonstrated later in the second half of Rom 14.

Talbert's second unit is Rom 14:1-13a has parallelism within an *inclusio*. His structure is follows.[23]

Rom 14:1 Exhortation (Welcome the weak)
Rom 14:2 A Contrary Views (diet)
Rom 14:3a B Exhortation (no judging)
Rom 14:3b-4 C Rationale (God is master of both)
Rom 14:5a A Contrary Views (days)
Rom 14:5b B Exhortation (be convinced)
Rom 14:6-9 C Rationale (Christ is lord of both)
Rom 14:10-13a Exhortation (No judging)

omitted. Dunn also contributes to this legal discussion (*Romans*, 777-8).

[21]Commentators often debate whether the scope of love's reach in this literary block is limited to the Christian community at Rome or extends beyond it. While the reference to love in Lev 19:18 can be construed to limit love's reach to the community of faith, Lev 19:34 extends it to aliens. While Paul may be emphasizing a parochial application of love within the churches at Rome to address exigent circumstances there, that in no way negates the call to love the rest of humanity, even if they are alien to our community of faith. Stuhlmacher offers a similar view (*Romans*, 209).

[22]Dunn observes that Paul's focus on the love command "would be enough to set him within a liberal Judaism which was willing to differentiate between primary and secondary, between fundamental and consequential in matters of law" (*Romans*, 782).

[23]Talbert, *Romans*, 315-6. Descriptors for the structural elements are my own.

This structural unit addresses how Christians are to treat other Christians with whom they disagree. When people of faith begin to discern for themselves the physical and ritual from the spiritual and moral, disagreement is inevitable. Opposing viewpoints are to fully accept one another without judgment. The foundation for their unity—their reconciliation to God and each other through faith in Christ is not open for dispute.[24] But all other matters to be discerned are open for discussion.

Talbert's third unit is Rom 14:13b-23. This block has another parallel structure but no *inclusio*. See his structure below with several structural modifications.[25]

Rom 14:13b A Exhortation (no judging one another; no stumbling blocks)
Rom 14:14a B Declaration (nothing is unclean)
Rom 14:14b C Qualification (can be unclean in one's mind; can cause moral offense)
Rom 14:15-16 D Exhortation (no ruining your brother; give no cause for good to be blasphemed)
Rom 14:17-18 E Ethical Principle (righteousness, joy and peace are acceptable to God)

Rom 14:19,20a A Exhortation (pursue peace and edification; no tearing down God's work)
Rom 14:20b B Declaration (everything is clean)
Rom 14:20c-21 C Qualification (can be evil to eat unclean food; can be good to not eat unclean food)
Rom 14:22 D Exhortation (keep your faith between you and God; follow your discernment)
Rom 14:23 E Ethical Principle (whatever is not of faith is sin)

In this section, Paul applies love as a principle to discern the good (ἀγαθός) from the evil (κακὸς). Recall in Rom 13:8-10 Paul concludes love is the fulfillment of Law, using a quotation of Ps 15:3, "love does no harm (κακὸς) to a neighbor." He previously cited adultery, murder, stealing and coveting as examples.[26] Each prohibited act results in harm

[24]Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*, 205.

[25]Talbert, *Romans*, 317. Talbert has ABCD ABCD in parallel not ABCDE ABCDE. Descriptors for the structural elements are my own.

[26]Coveting is an example of a spiritual sin similar to having an uncircumcised heart (Lev 26:41). This citation is consistent with Paul's emphasis on the superior spiritual aspects of law.

(κακὸς) to a neighbor. Therefore, they are not good acts and should never be committed. The application of love as a "no harm" principle to Scripture empowers Christians to discern superior things and the will of God—the pleasing and perfect good from the Law. Paul implicitly applies love as a "no harm" principle to legal dietary restrictions and concludes unclean food causes no harm (κακὸς). Since unclean food does not cause harm, all food is good (ἀγαθός). Similarly, failing to observe special days (festivals, Sabbaths, fasts, etc.) does not cause harm. Therefore treating all days the same is good. This freedom of conscience through discernment is good (Rom 14:16).[27] However, each Christian must be convinced in his or her own mind of this truth (Rom 14:5) or eating unclean food or failing to observe a special day is an act against conscience. Acting against your own conscience is not an act of faith and is therefore, a sinful act (Rom 14:23).

Love is also applied as a principle to Christian relationships. Love constrains how we express the good we discern to the members of our faith community. Freedom of conscience is not a license to impulsively display or declare anything we discern to be a pleasing and perfect good. Freedom of conscience is limited in at least two ways. First, freedom of conscience is always subordinate to the peace and edification of the community (Rom 14:19). Convincing others of the good we have discerned is less important than harmony. Open discussion cannot lapse into dissention. Second, if any pressure to conform to our good freedom becomes a stumbling block or hindrance (Rom 14:13), pricks another's conscience (Rom 14:15) or causes our discerned good to be blasphemed (Rom 14:16), then we are no longer constrained by love (Rom 14:15) and our good—freedom of conscience—has been distorted into something causing harm to our neighbor (Rom 14:20).

[27]Moo, *Romans*, 855.

The fourth unit is Rom 15:1-13. Talbert shows another parallel structure.[28]

Rom 15:1, 2 A Exhortation (accommodate the neighbor; for the good and for edifying)
Rom 15:3 B Rationale (example of Christ's accommodation)
Rom 15:4 C Lesson (Scripture and endurance gives us hope)
Rom 15:5-6 D Priestly Prayer (for unity)

Rom 15:7a A Exhortation (welcome one another)
Rom 15:7b B Rationale (example of Christ's acceptance)
Rom 15:8-12 C Lesson (Christ served Jews and Gentiles)
Rom 15:13 D Priestly Prayer (for hope)

As Paul unfolds the discerning of God's will—the pleasing and perfect good, he presented love as the perfect good in the first block of Rom 12:1-15:13. In this final block he presents welcoming the neighbor and accommodating (ἀρεσκέτω) the neighbor as the pleasing good (εὐάρεστον). Christ's example as a servant to Jews and Gentiles welcoming them both for God's glory is the very definition of accommodating another instead of one's self (οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ἤρεσεν, Rom 15:3). Just as love, the perfect good, can constrain our freedom of conscience, so too the pleasing good also constrains it for our neighbor's good (15:2).

The higher order structure of Romans 12:1-15:13 derives from the emphasis of each block within it. Rom 12:1-13:14 highlights how love discerns the perfect good. Romans 14:1-12 emphasizes not judging one another because all of us are subject to only to God as our Master. Romans 14:13-23 emphasizes not judging one another because freedom of conscience is subordinate to love. Romans 15:1-13 highlights how discerning the pleasing good leads to welcoming and accommodating your neighbor for the sake of unity. Once this macrostructure is observed, it confirms Romans 12:1-15:13 is not a collection of miscellaneous exhortations. The resulting higher order structure for the second half of Romans is shown in below.

Rom 12:1-13:14 A Discerning the perfect good (love)
Rom 14:1-12 B Do not judge (it is not our place)
Rom 14:13-23B Do not judge (love supersedes freedom)
Rom 15:1-13 A Discerning the pleasing good (acceptance and accommodation)

[28]Talbert, *Romans*, 319. Descriptors for the structural elements are my own.

Similarly, the highest order structure for the entire epistle can be derived from the emphases of the lower order structures. Section I (Rom 1:1-17) inserts an epistolary introduction (vv. 7-15) between two gospel declarations (vv. 1-6 and vv. 16-17). Section II (Rom 1:18-32) explains how the people failed to discern the value of knowing God (οὐκ ἐδοκίμασαν τὸν θεὸν ἔχειν ἐν ἐπιγνώσει, v. 28a) and so God gave them over to undiscerning minds (ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, v. 28b). Section III (Rom 2:1-24) exposes the hypocrisy of discerning superior things (δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα, v. 18) but valuing the physical (e.g. circumcision) over the spiritual (e.g. circumcision of the heart). Section III (Rom 2:25-11:36), which corresponds chiastically to section III, illustrates the superiority of spiritual realities in the Tanakh over the physical realities which signify them. Section II (Rom 12:1-15:13), which corresponds chiastically to section II, is a call to discern God's will—the pleasing and perfect good (τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον, 12:1). This is in complete contrast to the people in section II who failed to discern the value of knowing God at all. Section I (Rom 15:14-16:27), which corresponds chiastically to section I, also inserts an epistolary conclusion (15:22-16:24) between two gospel declarations (Rom 15:14-21 and 16:25-27). The highest order structure for the entire Epistle to the Romans is shown in below.

I. Rom 1:1-17 Gospel declaration and epistolary introduction
II. Rom 1:18-32 Lack of Discernment
III. Rom 2:1-24 Hypocritical discernment
III. Rom 2:25-11:36 Authentic discernment exemplified
II. Rom 12:1-15:13 Call to authentic discernment
I. Rom 15:14-16:27 Gospel affirmation and epistolary conclusion

Conclusion

The Epistle to the Romans presents two major literary units that must cohere; the diatribes dominate Rom 1-11, and the exhortations dominate Rom 12-16. This study has attempted to demonstrate how the diatribes and exhortations are integrated under the concept of discernment. The diatribes in Rom 2:25-11:36 provide positive examples of discerning superior things in contrast to the negative examples of discernment in Rom 1 and 2. But the principal validation of discernment as the mortar holding together all the literary blocks is the organic way it has been derived from the text and the intentional structural design it yields from lower order to higher order

structures. The fact all the literary units focused on discernment share a chiastic structure and all the literary units focused on the parameters of discerned knowledge share a parallel structure is further aesthetic evidence of an intentional structural design with the discernment of superior things and the pleasing and perfect good, at the heart of the compositional strategy.

The heuristic nature of this compositional strategy identifies multiple lines of inquiry. It presents a structural framework for tracing the development of various concepts sequentially through sections I, II, III, III, II and I and also across the corresponding parts in the chiasmus. This study has examined how discernment unfolds both sequentially and across corresponding parts of the chiasmus, but similar analysis can be extended to wrath, judgment, righteousness/unrighteousness, ritual/spiritual worship, faith/unbelief, good/evil, and any other major concepts in Romans.

Beyond Romans, discernment provides a hermeneutical lens for identifying superior spiritual truths in Torah and Tanakh that transcend legal stipulations and rituals. The scope of investigation could be as narrow as the spiritual significance of becoming "one flesh" or as broad as the spiritual truths of legal corpora in the Pentateuch such as the Holiness Code. In fact discernment is intended to reach beyond Scripture. We are exhorted to discern the pleasing and perfect good in all creation, including all of life's experiences within Christianity and outside it in the world at large. There is good to be found in the unlikeliest places in the world, and we should be looking for it, finding it, and appropriating it for God's purposes. Paul was able to find good in the Greco-Roman philosophy and appropriated it for the Church at Rome.[29] And finally, the Christian discourse that ensues about all this discerned knowledge should conform to the parameters of love as the perfect good, and acceptance and accommodation as the pleasing good.

[29]The concept of reasonable worship (λογικὴν λατρείαν) is one example. Jewett, *Romans*, 730.

SALVATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:
The Exodus in Israel's History

Dale S. DeWitt
dalesdewitt@cox.net

As an historical event the Exodus created a national-spiritual relationship with Yahweh in Israel. Thereafter it echoes repeatedly through Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua through Kings as the root of Israel's saving relationship with Yahweh and the Mosaic Covenant; it is also proclaimed for the salvation of individuals. After the first national idolatry (the golden calf, Exod 32-34), Moses appealed to the Exodus at least six times in three chapters (Exod 32-34) as a basis for repairing the apostasy. In addition to proclaiming salvation, this negative, corrective use of the Exodus becomes a theme in the passages. The article gathers the proclamations of the event from Exodus 25 through Kings for both its positive and negative applications.

The basic salvation provision of the Old Testament is not Levitical sacrifices but the Exodus,[1] to which the Passover is preliminary. In these Exodus-Kings repetitions the Exodus event is the root of many related implications—holiness, forgiveness, power, righteousness and justice, and why the Law should be obeyed. Most but not all passages are cited; the study focuses on passages judged important. The purpose of the article is to illustrate the sustained appearance of repetitions and implications of the Exodus event in Exodus-Kings in both positive and negative contexts.

The Exodus Salvation in Exodus and Leviticus

In the previous article, details of the Exodus narrative's salvation language were identified along with some cases of its proclamation and its role as an event of grace prior to the covenant and laws of Exodus 19-24. Like their appearance as

[1]D. DeWitt, "Salvation in the Old Testament: An Essay on Where to Begin," *Journal of Grace Theology* 2 (2015): 3-18; on the sacrifices see pp. 4-5.

the Law treaty's Historical Prologue in Exodus 20:1-2, later allusions to Israel's salvation in Exodus 25ff include reviews and implications of the saving event and its powers.

Israel's Holiness

In a short paragraph on the consecration of the Tent of Meeting and the altar, Yahweh himself makes the Exodus the foundation of the priests' consecration and his presence among them:

> Exodus 29:44-46: So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.

In the passage (1) the Hebrew word qadash (consecrate, be holy, make holy) is used.[2] Making Israel a "holy nation" was already introduced in the treaty proposal of Exodus 19:6; soon thereafter, qadash appears in dense frequency (about 50x in Exodus 22-40), centering on the tabernacle and priesthood. (2) God speaks of his dwelling among the Israelites within the Exodus-holiness context. (3) Israel's recognition of its God, which remained a crucial issue, reappears: their God is the God who delivered them from Egypt as "I am," referring to the God who causes events to happen as in Exodus 3:15. Thus Israel's is now a holy people.

The Idolatry Crisis of Exodus 32

Soon after the priests were consecrated, Israel turned to idolatry. The Exodus salvation was invoked as a basis for correcting this breach. Moses appeals several times over to the Exodus as the ground of Israel's worship, spiritual life and relationship with God. While Moses was still on the mountain receiving tabernacle and priesthood laws, the people, impatient over his absence, asked Aaron to make a gold calf-idol. He did so and said:

> These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.

Israel, already confused over God's identity, was further confused, now about its own identity.[3] In confronting and rectifying this deviation, the Exodus is invoked five times in thirteen verses (32:1-13). The final recital of the Exodus in this cluster (32:11-13) affirms Yahweh as Israel's God, but this time to protect against Egypt's

[2]Note the range of applications for the verb, for example, in W. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1972), 313-314.

[3]On this identity crisis, see J. I. Durham, *Exodus* (Waco Tex.: Word, 1987), 417-418.

taunt that their God brought them into the desert to kill them (32:12). The idolatry is resolved with Moses' plea to Yahweh to remember his promise of multiplication and land (32:13), again correlating the Exodus salvation and the Abrahamic promise. Shortly thereafter the story line again ties the Exodus to Israel's holiness, since in the Exodus and Mosaic covenant together, Israel gained the status of a holy people (Exod 19:5-6). In Exodus 32:32-33:1, the first mention of forgiveness of sin (32:31-32) appears in relation to the calf idolatry (32:31-33:1). Thus, repair of the idolatry episode includes holiness and forgiveness of sins in the relationship established by the Exodus; forgiveness in turn also includes a chastening judgment and a renewal of the promises to Abraham:

> Exodus 32:31-33:1. So Moses went back to the LORD and said, 'Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.' The LORD replied to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of,and my angel will go before you . . . .' And the LORD struck the people with a plague because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made. Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, I will give it to your descendants.'

With similar holiness connections Exodus allusions reappear through Leviticus. It is cited as the basis for food abstentions, just use of weights and measures (Lev 19:35-36), Yahweh's name (22:32-33), the feast of Tabernacles/Booths (23:42-43), prohibiting loans at interest (25:36-38), and slave sales (25:42). More such laws undergirded by the Exodus salvation appear in Numbers and Deuteronomy.

The Exodus in Numbers

In Numbers the Exodus salvation is used to date the origin of Israel, to chide Israel for wanting to return to Egypt (a special emphasis of Numbers[4]), to introduce census lists, and to proclaim the event to the Edomites to gain passage through their territory (Nu 20:15). In an unusual application, Balaam proclaims the Exodus salvation to Balak after he tried to hire Balaam to curse Israel. Balaam is unable to curse; instead he blesses Israel by proclaiming its invincible power beginning with and extending forward from the Exodus (23:22-24). This development adds

[4]This theme in Numbers is part of Numbers' intensified attention to Israel's grumbling in the desert, an emphasis studied in detail by G. W. Coats, *Rebellion in the Wilderness* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968); it also belongs to the book's old generation-new generation structure which includes its double census. See D. Olson, *The Death of the Old and the Birth of the New: The Framework of the Book of Numbers and the Pentateuch* (Chico Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985).

to the holiness elements of the Exodus an enhancing power motif grounded in the Exodus itself. Balaam says:

> God brought them out of Egypt; they have the strength of a wild ox. There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel. It will now be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'See what God has done!' The people are like a lioness; they rouse themselves like a lion that does not rest till he devours his prey and drinks the blood of his victims.

Balaam's inability to curse Israel is an example of opponents trying to stop Israel's advance toward its goal (Canaan) while admitting the reality of the Exodus, but either turning away (Balaam) or trying to manipulate away Israel's power like the Gibeonites (Josh 9). Thus Israel's power is added to holiness and forgiveness of sins as another implication of the Exodus salvation.

The Exodus Salvation Vocabulary in Deuteronomy

In Deuteronomy, references to the Exodus increase to about fifty allusions spread unevenly through the book; not all use an Exodus deliverance term, however. Deuteronomy is in the same vassal treaty form as Exodus 19-24, but with each part of the treaty formulary more filled out;[5] Deuteronomy's interest is in renewal of the Exodus treaty-covenant in preparation for entering Canaan.

Terms from the Exodus Salvation Narrative

The Exodus salvation verbs are (or are not) used in Deuteronomy in the following unusual patterns. The allusions are mostly formula-like.

1. *yatsa'* "go out": 64x; 32 uses are for the Exodus; of the 32, 21 are concentrated in the narrative chapters (1-12, 27-34). Thus the book uses this term with reserve in its case law chapters (13-26) .
2. *`alah* "go up": 29x; never for the Exodus—a surprising omission. Most uses are for Moses "climbing" Mt. Sinai and Mt. Nebo or Israel "going up" to highland Canaan.
3. *yasha`* "save": 5x; one use (33:29) is for all past "deliverances" almost certainly including the Exodus; this too is surprising.
4. *ga'al* "redeem": 2x; none for the Exodus.
5. *natzal*. "rescue," "snatch": 4x; never for the Exodus. This too is unusual compared to its use in Exodus 1-15.
6. *padah* "ransom," "redeem": 5x; all 5 uses are for Israel's "ransom"

[5]M. Kline, *The Treaty of the Great King* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1963).

from Egypt—a clear preference for this term, usually translated "redeem."

7. *qanah* "purchase": 2x; reference to the Exodus is not clear.

A few generalizations are suggested. (1) Deuteronomy employs only four of the seven old narrative terms for the Exodus salvation; of these, yatza' is favored with `alah, while padah and yasha` are used somewhat sparingly. (2) yatsa' is not a technical term for the saving event, since about a third of its uses are in varied legal texts. Overt or subtle Exodus echoes are unlikely or unclear in these texts. (3) The dominant but not only uses of yatza' are in narrative portions of Deuteronomy 1-12, 27-34; the book minimizes its use in legal texts.

Deuteronomy's Allusions to the Exodus

The many allusions to the Exodus in Deuteronomy are formula-like, except for one passage (26:5-11, Israel's "old credo"); they include enhanced descriptions of the preceding slavery and saving event itself with exhortations to obey the Law in consequence of the Exodus redemption. Only 26:5-11 is entirely a confession of the Exodus faith. Allusions to the Exodus include the following enhancing themes.

Slavery and Salvation. The Egyptian slavery is imaged as Egypt's "iron furnace (4:20)." Slavery included diseases, planting and harvesting, and idolatry with Egypt's gods (7:15; 23:7-8; 11:10). Israel's escape was an act of God's compassion (4:37; 7:7-9). Though emphasizing Law, Deuteronomy sees the Exodus as salvation before the Law—an act of power, miracles, wonders, victory, a mighty hand, an outstretched arm, and great and awesome deeds (4:34; 6:22; 9:26; 11:2; 34:11-12). Deuteronomy recognizes the Abrahamic land and multiplication promises.

Exodus and the Law. Many of Deuteronomy's legal-moral issues are supported by appeals to remember the Exodus as a guard against forgetting salvation after enjoying the benefits of the land—houses, herds, and plenty to eat. Just treatment of dependent persons is based on Exodus allusions: children, aliens, Levites, slaves, orphans and widows (5:14-15; 15:12-15; 16:11-12). Avoiding idolatry, false prophecy (18:1-22) and foreign nation entanglements is encouraged by remembering the Exodus salvation (9:14; 23:1-8). Memorial festivals originating at the Exodus must be observed: Passover, Weeks (16:1-12) and Tabernacles (Lev 23:42-43).

*Negative Developmen*ts. Israel could not clearly identify the God who saved it in his love; only prophets seem able to do this. Persistent misunderstanding is mentioned (1:27; 29:2-4). Fear and dread of the Canaanites appears in Exodus allusions—both Israel's dread of the coming wars against the Canaanites and how

the laws relate to them (4:35-38; 20:1-4ff). Curses for disobedience include Yahweh's threat of returning Israel to Egypt, a new enslavement (28:68), and renewed Egyptian diseases and worse (28:27-29); thus the negative warning theme advances with Exodus allusions.

The Confession of Deuteronomy 26

In his Old Testament Theology (Vol I, 1957), Gerhard von Rad found the Exodus to be the central event around which the whole Pentateuch was organized.[6] This thesis did not imply a rejection of the foregoing patriarchal traditions, but only that the Exodus was the central saving event of Israel's consciousness to which the patriarchal promises and faith are tied as prelude. The Pentateuch's clearest statement, he thought, was the individual Israelite's confession of Deuteronomy 26:5-11.

Then you shall declare before the LORD your God: 'My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, putting us to hard labor. Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the LORD brought us out (yatza') of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

The confession declares Israel's Exodus to be an act of God which made it a nation and more—a people to be aware of God's unique saving action and bound to him by it. The text restates the patriarchal prelude with its sequels as earlier divine acts. Here the Exodus national salvation must also be that of individuals as in Exodus 13:8-10, 14-16; these scenes of individual faith point to two further individual or small group salvation events.

The Salvation Confession in Joshua

In at least seven passages (2:10-11; 4:23-5:1; 7:7-9; 13:21-22; 21:43-45; and 23:3-5, 9; 24), Joshua proclaims Yahweh's "saving" after the Exodus in other subsequent events: dangerous wilderness journeys, defeat of Sihon and Og, crossing the Jordan, and military victories in Canaan. These expansions proclaim Yahweh did yet more mighty works as sequels to the Exodus in the journey and invasion stages of Israel's history. In addition, the Exodus event and its salvation language

[6]G. Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols; trans D. M. G. Stalker; New York: Harper&Row, 1962), 1:176.

are applied to at least one individual and one group. In these scenes, they too become "saved," i.e., rescued from almost certain death because they came to believe the proclamation of the saving actions of God.

The Exodus and Rahab's Salvation

In Joshua's brief proclamations of Israel's Exodus salvation, the Exodus is normally the primal event, while other acts of the LORD are added as noted above. Rahab (Josh 2:1-21) was an innkeeper (prostitute?) at Jericho. Two Israelite "spies" arrived looking for overnight lodging; she engages them in a roof-top conversation:

> I know the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out (yatza') of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed.. When we heard of it, our hearts sank and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save (natzal) us from death.

Rahab confesses the identity and reality of Israel's God and the Exodus, and several more mighty acts including victory over two Amorite kings of Transjordan. The first is the basic stable element in all such Exodus salvation texts. There is no mention of Sinai, only a negotiated mutual kindness (khesed) between Rahab and the Israelites after her confession.

Several important salvation elements emerge here. (1) Rahab's motivation for the confession and hoped-for relief is fear of death, especially Israel's dreaded ban (kherem) in which everything conquered is subject to destruction. She uses three Hebrew terms for the Canaanites' fear: 'aymah (terror, dread, v 9); mog (melt, of her people's hearts); and masas (dissolve, v 11, of their hearts dissolving). (2) She is sure (yadah, know, v 9) that the salvation events happened as reported. (3) Two salvation terms from in the original Exodus story reappear: yatza' (brought out [of Egypt]) and natzal (rescue, snatch, save), the first for Israel's rescue from Egypt, the second for herself and her family's salvation from death (v 13). (4) What she wants is "life (khay, v 13)." After confessing the reality of the Exodus, she negotiated an agreement of mutual "lovingkindness" (khesed, v 12 [2x]) and expected the agreement to be supported by the reliability ('emeth) of their word. They agree

with an oath to spare her and her family. She became a believing Israelite (6:24-25).[7] Salvation was at work in report and proclamation.

The Salvation of the Hivite Gibeonites

The Gibeonites (Josh 9:1-27) also sought safety from Israel's advance into Canaan. Like Rahab they confess Israel's God including his Exodus and post-Exodus acts; like Rahab they propose a protective agreement (berith, treaty); and like Rahab they are "saved (natzal, Josh 2:13; yasha`, 9:26)," and in the end, like Rahab, they are preserved. But the story is dominated by more than a half-dozen details of a not-very-sly trick to lure the Israelites and Joshua into their proposed covenant of safety (9:9-10).

> . . . we have heard of the fame of the LORD your God. For we have heard reports of him: all that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan—Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan who reigned in Ashtaroth.

The Gibeonites say they have heard about Israel's God and what he did; Rahab said she "knew (yada')" what Yahweh had done. The Hivites "confession" was fraught with pretense; nonetheless Joshua and Israel agreed to the protection treaty. But unlike Rahab whose straightforward confession of Yahweh and the Exodus gained her "salvation" and citizenship in Israel, the Gibeon Hivites were "saved," but reduced to slavery as Israel's water-haulers and woodcutters. Their confession shows how proclaiming Yahweh's Exodus acts was the basis of salvation (yasha`, 9:26).

Salvation and the Second Commandment

At the end of Joshua (24:2-24) Israel gathers at Shechem in the central hill country for a covenant renewal event. Joshua's speech includes the Exodus as the basis of Israel's living relationship with Yahweh. For Joshua, Yahweh's lordship and salvation acts should lead Israel to renounce foreign gods. Two statements of Israel's Exodus salvation are included, one by Yahweh himself (24:5-7), the other by Israel (24:16-18). Yahweh proclaims the event; the people confess their faith in it. The two passages read.

> [Yahweh] Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I afflicted the Egyptians by what I did there, and I brought you out. When I brought your forefathers out of Egypt,

[7]R. Hawkins, *How Israel Became a People* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2013), 156: "When Rahab went to the roof . . . she herself becomes an Israelite and a devotee of Yahweh." This is the opposite of Achan, an Israelite who tried to become a Canaanite.

> you came to the sea, and the Egyptians pursued them with chariots and horsemen as far as the Red Sea. But they cried to the LORD for help, and he put darkness between you and the Egyptians; he brought the sea over them and covered them. You saw with your own eyes what I did to the Egyptians. Then you lived in the desert for a long time (24:5-7).

> [Israel] It was the LORD our God himself who brought us and our forefathers up out of Egypt, from the land of slavery, and performed those great signs before our eyes. He protected us on our entire journey and among the nations through whom we traveled. And the LORD drove out before us all the nations, including the Amorites, who lived in the land. We too will serve the LORD, because he is our God (24:17-18).

These two allusions are brief compared to the whole speech; but the recurring deliverance confession vouches for its importance. The salvation proclamation is the basis for Joshua's plea to abandon idols; he does not say—abandon idols and be saved. In other words, the prohibition of idols is not a precondition to salvation, but its first major consequence as in Exodus 20:2-3. Israel—for the moment—believes.

Proclamation of the Exodus in Judges

Judges too proclaims the Exodus salvation as the ground-action of the Yahweh-Israel relationship, remembrance of which, if considered seriously, would have prevented Israel from being overwhelmed with idolatry and oppressors from which it pleads for deliverance.

The Weepers at Bokim

The first Exodus allusion in Judges (2:1, 12) is limited to a brief, formulaic rehearsal of the event; still, it is a proclamation by an "angel of the LORD" who speaks for and as Yahweh.

> The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, 'I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land that I swore to your forefathers. I said, "I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall not make a covenant with the people of this land, but you shall break down their altars. Yet you have disobeyed me."

Several points are pertinent. (1) As in the Pentateuch, the Exodus is the start of Israel's national saving relationship with Yahweh; the Exodus verb `alah (brought up) is used. (2) The land promise to Abraham with its oath follows. (3) A reference to the covenant of Sinai (2:2) follows the Exodus and promise allusions, preserving the principle of salvation by grace followed by law. (4) Israel is accused of

breaking the covenant in failing to drive out the Canaanites. The Exodus is sustained as the origin of Israel's relationship with Yahweh, and coordinated with the Abrahamic promise and the crucial second commandment prohibiting other gods.

Gideon's Resistance

In the second appearance of a pair of Exodus recounts, Yahweh responds to Israel's plea for deliverance from Midian by sending a prophet who re-proclaims the salvation event (Judg 6:8-10):

> [Yahweh] sent them a prophet, who said, 'This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says, I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. I snatched you from the power of Egypt and from the hand of all your oppressors. I drove them from before you and gave you their land. I said to you, I am the LORD your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live. But you have not listened to me.'

Yahweh then announces to Gideon, "The LORD is with you"; but Gideon wants to know, if the LORD is with Israel,

> (6:13): 'why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt? But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.'

The first re-proclamation (6:8-10) begins again with the Exodus. (1) It is slightly thicker in detail: Egypt and slavery are both mentioned; the Exodus verb "snatched" (natzal) is used which is more frequent in the original story of Exodus and more closely parallel to yasha` ("save"). (2) Other oppressors are mentioned after Egypt, probably referring at least to Amalek and perhaps Edom. (3) The gift of the land follows. And (4) the identity of Yahweh is re-affirmed. The second re-proclamation (6:13) includes (1) going up (`alah) from Egypt, (2) the miracles of the event (6:13a, "wonders"), and (3) Gideon's stifling doubt: "the LORD has abandoned us (6:13b)." Gideon knows Israel's salvation story from his fathers; nonetheless he is far away from it in doubting the continuing relationship and its divine powers. This re-proclamation of Israel's salvation is that of a later Israelite who has fallen away.

Jephthah's Diplomatic Message

Yet another use of the Exodus salvation occurs in Jephthah's diplomatic message to the king of Ammon (11:13, 16). The Ammonite king accused Israel of taking and occupying his territory in East Jordan. Jephthah, an East Jordan Israelite warrior, answers that Israel did not occupy Ammon when it came from Egypt to

East Jordan. The Ammonite king was aware of Israel's Exodus from Egypt and journey to East Jordan. The historical background of this situation is complicated and entailed settlement of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh in East Jordan as well as land occupied by Midianite and Amorite groups.[8]

The Ammonite king says:

> (11:13) 'When Israel came up out of Egypt, they took away my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, all the way to the Jordan. Now give it back peacefully.'

Jephthah's messengers answer:

> (11:15) Israel did not take the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites.
> (11:21) Israel took over all the land of the Amorites who lived in that country...

These uses of the Exodus are limited. (1) The Ammonite king knows about the Exodus, but unlike Rahab this does not make him a believer since he is hostile and joins the allusion to a falsehood, similarly to Joshua's Gibeonites; the Exodus salvation is reduced to a political ploy. (2) For both the king of Ammon and Jephthah, the Exodus is the origin of Israel's national life and power. (3) Later in the message Jephthah speaks of "the LORD, the God of Israel" and says "whatever the LORD our God has given us we will possess," affirming the Exodus' revelation of Yahweh's name and his promise of land to Israel (11:23-24). Jephthah was a believer in God's saving Exodus even while much of Israel was turning to other gods.

The final reference in Judges to Israel's salvation (19:30) uses it only as an event-date for the beginning of Israel but with a shocking moral point. Of a Levite's dismemberment of his concubine and distribution of her body parts to all Israel (!), Israel exclaims,

> 'Such a thing has never been seen or done, not since the day the Israelites came up out of Egypt.'

Certainly this Exodus note, though isolated, belongs to the Deuteronomic History's theme of Israel's departure from its tie to Yahweh established by the Exodus. But Israel is far out of fellowship with its God and has turned away from its Exodus origin. The holiness aspect of Israel's relation to Yahweh is again in view.

---

[8]For a discussion of these multi-tribal movements see F. Cross, *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 53-70. This essay is exploratory, based on a combination of recent archaeological discoveries and a reconstructive reading of Israel's early history.

Judges' Use of "Saved, Savior"

In response to Israel's pleas, the Exodus salvation verb yasha` (save, deliver) reappears as a major term for the work of the savior-judges; they arise among various tribes of Israel through Yahweh's charisma-power to engage in wars of liberation. The wars were occasioned by oppressive or invading nations as chastisements for Israel's idolatry. These stories use yasha` for successful counter-insurgencies with the same meaning: "save" means a war-executed deliverance from oppression or slavery. As in Exodus and Psalms the hiphil (causative) conjugation dominates. In Judges' formula, "The LORD raised up for them a deliverer," yeshu`ah refers to military victory over oppressive enemy nations. Of these victories, the Exodus salvation is the prototype; continuity with the Exodus' events prevails.

Samuel's Exodus Allusions

Of the nine uses of the Exodus salvation in Samuel, seven are in Samuel's speeches in covenant renewal or other special situations; the other two are in the narrative of the Davidic covenant—one in the mouth of Nathan the prophet, the other in David's prayer. These uses follow the "remember your salvation from Egypt" motif, but are expressed only by prophets.

Israel and Monarchy (1 Sam 8:6-8). That Israel would become a monarchy had been included in the promises since Abraham (Gen 17:6). Judges records Israel's impulses toward monarchy without judgment; now Israel's elders ask for it directly (1 Sam 8:4-5), and the LORD reacts (1 Sam 8:7-8):

> And the LORD told him: 'Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they rejected as their king, but me. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you.'

The negative theme is centered here. The problem of what's really wrong with the monarchy does not need to be resolved here. The text notes (1) Israel's history as Yahweh's nation began with the Exodus. (2) The verb for deliverance is `alah, a geographical (go up) term for leaving Egypt. (3) Samuel repeats Israel's larger struggle with Yahweh's identity as a prelude to warnings about monarchy. (4) Samuel re-proclaims the Exodus salvation as the root of Israel's responsibilities to Yahweh including the prohibition on idols.

Saul and Kingship (1 Sam 10:17-19). Chosen by Yahweh, Saul engages in bizarre behaviors even before his acceptance by Israel (1 Sam 10). The backdrop scene of 10:17-19 appears to be a treaty of kingship; it calls for a review of Israel's

history, acceptance of the new king, and of laws for the monarchy—a limited appearance of the standard treaty elements (1 Samuel 10:17-19).

> Samuel summoned the people of Israel to the LORD at Mizpah and said to them, 'This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says, 'I brought you up out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the power of Egypt and all the kingdoms that oppressed you. But you have now rejected your God, who saves you out of all your calamities and distresses. And you said, 'No, set a king over us. So now present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and clans.'

The passage clusters three Exodus salvation verbs—the topographic verb "go up" (`alah), the more colorful natzal (snatch), and yasha` (save)—in another re-proclamation of Israel's founding salvation event. The Exodus allusion is apparently required by the kingship crisis and a start-over for Israel involving a new agreement if not a new treaty.

Samuel's Covenant Mediator Speech (1 Sam 12). As D. McCarthy observes, this speech is not "Samuel's Farewell" since after it his prophetic mission continues. Its function is "the final step in a basic change in the people's institutions."[9] This seems to be a treaty mediator speech, or as Klein thinks, a treaty lawsuit. Samuel wants to protect the parties to the treaty actions of the last four chapters (Saul, Samuel himself, God and Israel) from possible covenant lawsuits, and perhaps raises his own lawsuit to this end.[10] At the beginning he says,

> It is the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your forefathers up out of Egypt. Now then, stand here, because I am going to confront you with evidence before the LORD as to all the righteous acts performed by the LORD for you and your fathers.

The text makes a special appeal to the Exodus salvation. (1) The common narrative verb "brought up" (`alah) is used again for the basic story. (2) Calling the saving events "all the righteous acts performed by the LORD" is a new but compatible description; it sets the pattern for Israel's righteous behavior which it has yet to fully comprehend and carry out under the Law.

The Exodus and the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:23). David's prayer of humility and thanks after Nathan's announcement of the covenant—the promise of a greater king and eternal kingdom among David's descendants—makes a lyrical appeal to the Exodus.

> 2 Samuel 7:22-24: 'How great you are, O Sovereign LORD. There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. And who

[9]McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 206.

[10]As R. Klein, *1 Samuel* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1983).

> is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out the nations and their gods from before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt.'

Several elements from the Exodus story appear. (1) David proclaims his faith in Yahweh as the God of the Exodus (cf Exod 14:31); he has learned what Israel had still not fully learned—a serious recognition of Yahweh as the only God, his God and Israel's God. (2) Israel's existence and history belong to Yahweh—a relationship entered at the Exodus ('established your people Israel as your very own forever,' 7:24). (3) The Exodus term padah is used twice (redeem, purchase, 7:23, 2x), adding "for himself" to strengthen the relational thought. (4) God's glory is recognized ('make a name for himself'). (5) Yahweh drove out the nations from before Israel, thus recalling the Abrahamic land promise. (6) David mentions Israel's 'great and awesome wonders' among the details of the salvation event. This citation of the Exodus is one of the fullest since the event itself, especially in its lavish language about David and Israel's relationship with Yahweh. The positive side of the Exodus salvation reappears.

Solomon's Temple Dedication Prayer. 1 Kings 8:22-61 is a long Deuteronomic style prayer. In its nearly forty verses, the Exodus is cited twice; but the allusions are routine and formulaic. Otherwise it repeats Deuteronomy's language for Israel, its land promises, and its life in the land, with several references to David.

Summary and Conclusions

The Exodus is regularly recited as Israel's salvation event using salvation terms like yasha` (save), natzal (rescue), padah (redeem) and the two related geographical terms 'alah (go up) and yatza' (go out). The terms are tied to Yahweh's identity which Israel struggles to recognize. Allusions to the event sometimes relate the Abrahamic promise of land with the Exodus, after which both holiness and forgiveness appear when Israel goes astray. Numbers (Balaam) adds the idea of the Exodus as an empowering event along with God's righteousness and justice, and terrifying miracles and their effects on other nations. Rahab acknowledges the God of the Exodus, is "saved" thereby and is rendered secure as a member of Israel.

Parallel to these positive implications, a negative theme begins with the idolatry of Exodus 32; the Exodus becomes the basis for scoldings, warnings and threats. This aspect is sustained until David's robust confession; only Deuteronomy 26:5-11 is longer. The negative motif is that Israel can reject the Exodus by its disobe-

dience and idolatry. Amid these negative scenes, David's confession of the Exodus restores the saving motif using the salvation term padah (redeem, purchase); the Exodus was Israel's primal event of grace. It established Israel's relationship with God and formed the basis for its values. As David Daube said,

> . . . from that moment . . . Biblical salvation acquired that connection with ethics and justice, social and international, which marks it off . . . its role in national redemption is related to its role in redemption of the individual.[11]

[11]D. Daube, *The Exodus Pattern in the Bible* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963), 12-13.

An Analysis of the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25:1-13

Leah Befus

What is a parable about ten virgins doing in Jesus' discourse on end times? Why would he compare the kingdom of heaven to a first century wedding celebration? What was his purpose in telling parables? Jesus told parables when speaking to people in order to convey specific messages. Hultgren defines a parable as "a figure of speech in which a comparison is made between God's kingdom, actions, or expectations and something in this world, real or imagined" (3). Jesus himself in Matthew 13:13 admits to his own usage of parables – it was not merely a title given afterward to one of His styles of teaching. This kind of storytelling was typical of Jewish apocalyptic literature and would have been recognized as a parabole, the Greek word stemming from its Hebrew original mishal (Keener, 371-372). Using parables in comparison to real life scenarios helped Jesus' hearers to better grasp what he was saying, or sometimes to not understand His message, as for some who did have "ears to hear."

Context of the Parable

Matthew places the parable of the ten virgins in the middle of the Olivet Discourse. In Matthew 21, Jesus enters Jerusalem and it is from that point he begins his path to the cross. His location on the Mount of Olives could be drawing the image to his followers of his identification with Moses, "receiving revelation of the future on the mountain" (Keener, 559). Occurring directly in the following chapter is the celebration of Passover between Jesus and his disciples. Luke 21:34-38 also tells us Jesus would go into Jerusalem during the day and return for the night to the Mount of Olives where he would stay until morning. In Matthew 24:3, indicates the disciples privately asked Him how they would know when the end of the age would be near. In Mark 13:3 Jesus privately shares these parables and teachings

with the disciples Peter, James, John and Andrew. So we see Jesus even used parables to share important insights with His disciples, not just the crowds (Carson, 304).

The theme of the Olivet discourse in Matthew is focused on end times, primarily Christ's return. The surprise of his coming again is emphasized in the parables surrounding the Ten Virgins parable. The parable of the fig tree, the comparison of His coming to the flood in Noah's time, the parable of the faithful and wicked servants, the parable of the talents, and the analogy of a shepherd separating his herds of sheep and goats all have a similar connotation: the hour and exact timing of Jesus' return and final judgment is unknown. And in each, the one escaping judgment is prepared and expectant; part of being ready and alert is living faithfully as expressed in the parable of the tenants (Turner, 594; 598).

Snodgrass does a great job of putting together a good list of canonical material, early Jewish writings, Greco-Roman writings, early Christian writings and later Jewish writings, each of which share particular elements of significance with the parable of the ten virgins. One of notable mention comes the late Jewish document Mekilta Bahodesh 3:115-19. It "interprets Exod 19:17 (which tells of Moses bringing the people of God at Mount Sinai) of the Lord coming to receive Israel as a bridegroom comes forth to meet his bride" (507). And in the same section from Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 41, the people of Israel are said to be awakened by Moses in order to receive the Law. The desire of God to give the Law to Israel is compared to a groom longing to take his bride into the bridal chamber.

To make the comparison of the kingdom of heaven to a wedding ceremony and feast is not unusual. A short time before Jesus tells this parable, he shares the parable of the wedding feast to which the comparison is also made of the kingdom. In Second Temple Period weddings, the celebration of a wedding lasted seven days and consisted of celebrating and feasting. It was even considered important enough to halt scholarly schools in order to join in on the celebrations, as those who witnessed the celebration were obliged to participate. The height of joy for a wedding was contrasted by the deep grief of a funeral, the epitomes of human experiences (Evans, 686). Festivities began when the groom left his house to receive his bride who would normally be waiting at her father's house. From there they would be accompanied by "a procession through the streets – after nightfall – to his home" (Carson, 513). These festivities were not just Jewish but similar to the practices of Palestinian, Roman and Arabian customs (Achtemieier, 1205; Jeremias, 172-173; Evans, 686). The difficulty in fully understanding the progression of the wedding festivities of this parable is the fact it does not give the location

of the waiting virgins (Snodgrass, 510). Carson makes a good point by saying if the virgins are waiting at the bride's house with her for the groom's arrival then it would have been the father of the bride who would have shut the door on the foolish maidens (513). Snodgrass also points out the possibility of the maidens waiting at the groom's house for the groom to bring his bride home after a celebration at the bride's house. This he suggests is most likely (513). Hultgren also agrees with Snodgrass and Carson, though he points out. Others such as Smith and Manson, would say otherwise. The point of the parable does not lie with this disgruntled detail, as we are more concerned with what is mentioned than what is not (Hultgren, 171; Carson, 513). It truly was a cultural tradition for weddings to be a long ordeal including a large entourage and ongoing celebrations. The theme of a delay for the bridegroom's coming would have been something the disciples nodded their head with understanding and relevance.

Structure of the Parable

The three-point structure of this parable consists of the bridegroom and the two sets of maidens, those who are wise and those who are foolish. When Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to the circumstances and occurrences which take place in this parable it seems obvious the bridegroom is representative of God "and the wise and foolish virgins as those who, spiritually are either prepared or unprepared for Judgment Day" (Blomberg, 195). But as Hagner points out, Matthew's use of the particular word for "bridegroom" is only ever used by Matthew in 9:15 where he directly references himself as the bridegroom, thus it is implied Jesus is also the one inferred in 25:1 (728). As a narrative parable, the sequence of the wedding is important as the maidens await the bridegroom and the feast is then to follow (Hultgren, 3). The whole of what is going on is what is described as being an important comparison to the kingdom of heaven, not the individuals or elements in the narration. Blomberg points to the climax in verse 11-12 where the groom does not allow the foolish virgins to enter the wedding feast after they waited unprepared, which is analogous to the long wait Jesus is saying will accompany his return, along with judgment and separation. The build-up to the climax includes (1) the long delay of the bridegroom and (2) the preparation of the virgins for the wait (195).

Exposition of Matthew 25:1-13

Verse 1. Jesus begins this parable by likening it to the kingdom of heaven. Matthew's use of the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is discussed by Keener, Turner,

Mann, and others. Turner points out many dispensationalists will make a distinction between the use of "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" saying that they each refer to two different realms (38). Strauss points out however, that the two are seemingly synonymous among the Gospels and Matthew's use of heaven instead of God could be out of reverence, since he typically emphasizes a much more Jewish influenced style of writing (246). The hearers of this phrase would know it as being eschatological, noting especially the expectations for God to "establish his kingdom, deliver the righteous, judge sinners, and bring in the age to come" (Strauss, 138). It is this frame of mind the disciples have developed this narrative parable from as they are seeking an answer to their initial question in 24:3 on the end times.

The narration of the parable starts then with the setting of the virgins going out to meet a bridegroom with lamps in hand. The use of the word "virgin" (parthenos) does not refer to these girls' virginity. The noun could also mean "maidens" or "bridesmaids" or simply that they were young women of age for marrying (Carson, 513, Hultgren, 169). "Lamps" here is lampas, which is also translated, "torches" which burned "coarse olive oil or fat and could stay alight for 2 to 4 hours" ("Lamp"). The term is also found in John 18, Acts 20, and Revelation 4 and 8 where it is translated frequently as torches. Keener also observes they were most likely not the smaller indoor kind of lamp, but rather larger light giving illumination which would have produced more light for the procession outside (596). Regardless, it is evident that it was dark and thus lamps were needed, which is customary ("Lamp," cf., Long, 22).

Verses 2-4. The bridesmaids are divided in half on the grounds of being foolish and wise. Half were foolish because they did not have oil to keep their torches lit for the arrival of the bridegroom, and the other half were wise because they brought enough oil for the night. The foolishness hinges on being prepared for a possible delay in the bridegroom's coming (Turner, 596). Though they brought lamps, the foolish maidens do not have a sufficient supply of the oil they need. The phrasing of "foolish" has Old Testament roots that would have sparked the listener's ear. "In the LXX the word is used for people who do not have the true knowledge of God and therefore must face the justice of God. The fool is not ignorant, but one that chooses not to act wisely" (Long, 220). This aligns with the theme of the parable as a whole.

And this is exactly what comes to these maidens in the end of the parable due to not acting wisely. Gundry, who is quick to analyze parallelism the parable, says the oil is a reference to good works representative of not obeying Jesus' teachings

(499). However, Hagner and Carson note the oil has no pressing intent and should not be understood to mean anything more than the fuel source for the maidens light at night (Hagner, 728; Carson, 513). Hagner says, "The focus of the parable is the simple matter of preparedness verses unpreparedness and the tragic character of the latter" (728).

Verses 5-7. As with the oil, there is no intended meaning in the sleeping of the maidens as both the foolish and the wise fall asleep and the basis of the judgment is not on account of their falling asleep (Hagner, 729). Though Hultgren and Keener believe that upon falling asleep the maidens are awakened at midnight to the arrival of the groom, Hagner makes no mention of the exact time and Snodgrass suggests it could be translated as "well into the night" (510). Upon hearing the cry to get up and join the bridegroom, they all wake up and trim their lamps.

Verses 8-9. "It was only then that the foolish maidens realized that they had brought no oil" (Walvoord, 100). The foolish maidens thought they would be ready, but were not. The imagery of the wicked's light going out has reference to Prov. 13:9 and Job 18:5 (Hagner, 729). Verse 8 suggests the maidens were waiting with burning lamps, which would necessitate the need for more fuel (Jeremias, 175). Though the wise maidens brought enough oil, they do not share with the foolish, but instead admonish them to go and purchase more of their own. Though it may seem concerning that the wise did not share with the foolish, I appreciate what Snodgrass says to this concern: "If the oil the wise brought for their lamps was divided with the foolish, all the lamps would go out, and the celebration would not proceed in the dark. More to the point, these complaints show a dismal failure to understand how parables work" (517). Also, for a small village celebrating a wedding, it would not be hard to find a place to get oil for such a festivity, even well into the night (Hagner 729).

Verse 10. While the foolish are gone purchasing oil, the bridegroom arrives and takes the wise maidens into the wedding banquet. The wise in this verse are called, "those who are ready" and fit in with the over-all function of the parable (Snodgrass, 517). An emphasis is on the closing of the door is common throughout Matthew's gospel. Chapter 7:13-14 Jesus says the door is narrow that leads to life, but the door is wide that leads to destruction. The shutting of the door draws a clear division between the two groups of maidens whose fates are unalterable (Hagner, 729). It is the finality of their possible inclusion or exclusion.

Verses 11-12. The foolish maidens arrive late and inquire at the door for access into the feast, but the response of the bridegroom is, "I do not know you." Donfried observes Jesus ends his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount addressing daily

living (preparedness) with a similar phrase. Matthew 7:23 says, "I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers." This phrasing draws the teachings together to emphasize the kingdom content (422).

For the bridegroom to respond to the pleading maidens outside the door by saying he does not know them would sound strange to the listener, for why would they be awaiting his arrival if they are not friends of the bride and groom (Pagenkemper, 322). Keener suggests the foolish maidens have insulted the bride and groom by not being prepared with lighted lamps and thus were not allowed entrance on the basis of shameful actions. The phrase "I do not know you" could be used as a way of treating them as strangers for such shame (598-9). Jesus makes it clear in this parable the time of his return will be characterized by separation and judgment (Snodgrass, 517).

Verse 13. This verse seems to serve as a bookend of purposeful meaning for the parable as a whole, stepping out of the parable itself to speak to the disciples about the lesson of the parable by telling them to watch. The arrival of the kingdom of heaven will come at an unexpected time (Hagner, 730). Though scholars such as Jeremias claim this verse to be a later addition, Carson sees this phrase as the "dominant exhortation" not to stay awake so as not to sleep, but to be prepared and alert for the coming of the kingdom of heaven (514).

In the World of the Gospel

What was Jesus' intent in telling this parable? What was he trying to communicate to his disciples who were listening? As we have already seen, weddings would have been known to the disciples as an incredibly joyous celebration. But through this parable, Jesus makes it evident to his followers there is a coming time of judgment and a dividing of the foolish and the wise. Snodgrass pulls together this point of the parable may have seemed divisive for such a joyous unifying event in one's life. He says, "The parable underscores that wisdom means understanding the eschatological outlook of Jesus' teaching and then living in a way that fits with the expectation of vindication and the full coming of God's kingdom" (517-518).

The disciples asked Jesus, "When will these things be, and what will the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (24:3). They were concerned with the prophesied events of the establishment of the kingdom and perceived Jesus would come, not in the present veiling of his glory, "but as the clearly revealed Son of God for all to see" (Hagner, 689). As "the marriage feast represents the gatherings of the Messiah and his people," the disciples would understand the parable of the ten virgins and their awaiting and entrance into the wedding feast as a symbol

of Messiah's gathering of his people to himself which they are to be prepared for as he exhorts through this parable (Hultgren, 176). The result of unpreparedness then is clearly made known: judgment and exclusion. "Matthew's initial readers would likely have understood that the parable is not about those who clearly and blatantly reject the gospel." (Pagenkemper, 323). Jesus emphasizes though someone may participate in preparing, they may not truly be prepared and separation among "the supposed insiders is an application of Jesus' parables to the Matthean community" (Long, 223).

Bridging the Context

Christ's return still has not come, so the principle of this parable can apply to us today as we live expectantly for the things of the eschaton (Snodgrass, 518). Charles Baker makes a good case Jesus will return to earth again. This return would fulfill Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah establishing his kingdom and reigning on David's throne (619). As dispensational theologians, we interpret this kingdom as a promise made to Israel which the disciples would have understood. As the body of Christ awaiting the Rapture, we too are awaiting the coming of eschatological events, including the second coming of Jesus. As Bauckham says, "The delay of the Parousia is filled with the mission of the church" (Snodgrass, 518).

In talking about what is and is not pleasing to the Lord, Paul encourages the Ephesians toward a life that pleases him: "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph 5:15-16). This kind of language is not absent in the dispensation of Grace and is reflective of the parable of the ten virgins, some of whom acted wisely, and some of whom did not. A "preparedness" for the judgment day to enter into the messianic wedding feast is an eschatological concept for us to grasp today, that our actions might stand the test of fire (1 Cor 3:13).

Works Cited

Achtemeier, Paul J., editor. Harper's Bible Dictionary. Revised ed., New York: Harper One, 1996.

Albright, W F., and C S. Mann. *Matthew*. Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1971.

Baker, Charles F. *A Dispensational Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Publications, 1994.

Blomberg, Craig L. *Interpreting the Parables*. Second ed., Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2012.

Carson, D. A. "Matthew," pages 1-599 in *Expositor's Bible Commentary* Vol. 8. Ed. Frank Gaebelein, Frank E. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1984.

Donfried, Karl P. "Allegory of the Ten Virgins (Matt 25:1-13) as a Summary Of Matthean Theology." *JBL* 93 (1974): 415-428.

Evans, Craig E., and Stanley E. Porter, editors. *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2000.

Gundry, Robert H. *Matthew, A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*. Second ed., Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994.

Hagner, Donald A. *Matthew 14-28*. WBC; Dallas, Word, 1995.

Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*. Revised ed., New York: Scribner's, 1963.

Keener, Craig S. *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999.

"Lamp." New Bible Dictionary. 2nd ed., 1982.

Long, Phillip J. *Jesus the Bridegroom: The Origin of the Eschatological Feast as a Wedding Banquet in the Synoptic Gospels*. Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2013.

Pagenkemper, Karl E. "Rejection Imagery in the Synoptic Parables." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (1996): 308-331.

Pagenkemper, Karl E. "Rejection Imagery in the Synoptic Parables." Bibliotheca Sacra 153 (1996): 179-198.

Snodgrass, Klyne R. *Stories with Intent*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008.

Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus*. Grand Rapids, Mich,: Zondervan, 2007.

Turner, David L. *Matthew*. BENTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008.

Walvoord, John F. "Christ's Olivet Discourse on the End of the Age: The Parable of the Ten Virgins." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 129 (1972): 99-105.

Mary's Magnificat: Luke 1:46-56

Jim Gray

Berean Advocate
Maricopa Arizona
jimbibmag@yahoo.com

In reply to the praise of Elizabeth (Luke 1:42-45), Mary give what is known as the Magnificat (from the Latin), a song of praise. It ranks with the magnificat of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10) and David (Psalm 136). It is also known as the first psalm of the New Testament. Some view this simply as Luke's imagination, making up the hymn and inserting it into the event. That goes completely against the tone of the text. Luke puts the words in Mary's mouth and there is no reason to reject that reality. Koontz points out: "there is nothing to hinder Mary from partaking of the same inspiration which came upon Elizabeth and upon Zacharias (Luke 1:41-42; 66 ff)."[1] Its characteristics are: 1. The focus is on the praise of God. 2. It is an act of worship. 3. It is an outgrowth of the message and work of God. 4. It was an inspired psalm as evidenced from it being included in Scripture. All Scripture is inspired by God.

The Magnificat has several important elements: First, there are a number of parallels to the Old Testament in this hymn (see the chart). This is evidence Mary was well versed in the Scriptures. "She skillfully weaves together line after line of quotation or allusion to the Old Testament."[2] It is an outburst of praise replete in Old Testament language.

[1] John V. Koontz, "Mary's Magnificat," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 116 (1959): 336-349, 338.

[2]Douglas Connelly, *Mary: What the Bible Really Says*, (Downers Grove Ill: InterVarsity 1998), 29.

Luke	Phrase	Psalms	Other
1:46	My soul exalts the Lord	34:3; 35:9; 103:1-2; 145:21	Isaiah 61:10
1:47	My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior		Habakkuk 3:18
1:48	He has regard for the humble state of His bondslave		1 Samuel 1:11; Genesis 30:13; Malachi 3:12
1:49	Mighty One has done great things	126:3; 71:19-21	Job 5:9
1:49	Holy is His name	111:9	Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 47:4; 6:3
1:50	His mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear Him	103:17; 118:4; 145:19; 147:11	Exodus 20:6; 1 Kings 8:23
1:51	He has done mighty deeds with His arm	89:11; 98:1	Exodus 15:6-7; Isaiah 40:10; 51:9; 52:10
1:51	He has scattered those who were proud	33:10; 59:11	Job 5:12-13; Daniel 4:27
1:51	The thoughts of their hearts		Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Deuteronomy 29:19
1:52	He has brought down rulers		Job 12:19
1:52	Has exalted those who were humble	107:40-41; 113:6-8	Job 5:11; 24:24; Ezekiel 17:24
1:53	He has filled the hungry with good things	34:10; 107:9; 146:7	Isaiah 65:13
1:54	He has given help to Israel His servant		Isaiah 41:8
1:54	In remembrance of His mercy	98:3	
1:55	As he spoke to our fathers	105:8	Genesis 18:18; 22:17; Isaiah 46:3-4; 49:14-16; 63: 7-16; Jeremiah 31:3; 33:24-26; Micah 7:20;
1:55	To Abraham and his descendants forever		Genesis 17:7

Second, the song is attributed to Mary. Some Greek manuscripts read "Elizabeth said" in Luke 1:46. Terry comments on this variant of the text:

> "Although there is a possibility that the original read 'and she said' omitting any name, the fact that so many manuscripts read 'Mary' would seem to indicate that this was original. The reading 'Elizabeth' perhaps comes from a few Latin copyists who continued Elizabeth's speech that she gave when she was filled with the Holy Spirit."[3]

[3]Bruce Terry, *A Student's Guide to New Testament Textual Variants*, www.ovc.edu, 1998.

Third, it vindicates the humble over the proud. Fourth, it implies Mary is conscious of her role in the messianic factor and fulfillment.

There are three features of this song: First, it offers praise to God for sending the Messiah. Second, it binds the event together with the promise of the Hebrew Scriptures. Third, it reveals the expectation the Jews had for the Messiah.

The hymn of praise centers upon three elements: grace, humility, and God's faithfulness. Mary is not the main focus of the song; God is. The hymn has a progression of thoughts about God: Exaltation of God (1:46-48); the working attributes of God (1:49-50); God's Sovereign action over the proud (1:51-53); and God's mercy to his people (1:54-55). The song has four stanzas, each with four lines:[4]

Stanza 1: 1:46-48

My soul exalts the Lord,

And my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior

For He has had regard the humble state of His bondslave;

For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed..

This stanza centers upon praise to God who is personal and working in Mary's life. God is actively vindicating the hopes and prayers of Israel by his choice of Mary. It was a choice of grace. The realization of grace should lead to praise. The text is in the present tense, indicating a continual praise of her soul to God. There is no need to seek a difference between soul and spirit, as it is a poetic parallelism.[5] She exalts God completely. The word means to make great, to extol and it parallels the idea of rejoicing, describing the large place Mary gave the Lord in her heart. The promise being performed is her enlarged vision and capacity to praise God. It is the lifting up of God (cf. Psalm. 34:3). It is to grant to God preeminence, sovereignty, and worship; to describe to his rightful place.

Her spirit has rejoiced in God (1:47). Notice there is a change of tense here to the aorist tense—"has rejoiced." It as an ingressive aorist which should be translated "my spirit has begun to delight."[6] This was a continual process, as indicated in

[4]R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1946), 83. William Hendricksen, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker 1978), 103; Koontz, "Mary's Magnificat," 338.

[5]Leon Morris, *Luke* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1984), 76.

[6]Darrell Bock, *Luke 1-9:50* (BENTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1994), 149.

Luke 1:19. In the song Mary is referring to her initial reaction to the announcement made to her by the angel. The rejoicing began at a point of time. It is the result of the past event of meeting with the angel and the message she was the chosen one to bring forth the child (Messiah). Her spirit rejoiced in God her Savior. Savior further describes God. It also implies the recognition of her need for a Savior and the realization of God as the fulfiller of that need. God is her Savior. Rejoicing filled her from the moment of her trust in God's promise and Word (cf. Luke 1:38). The emphasis of Mary's rejoicing was not in her being the chosen one, but in God her Savior. This is a clear indication the idea of Immaculate conception is completely wrong. This doctrine holds that Mary was kept free of original sin. This fallacy can be seen in two ways: First, she gave evidence in her life of error and sinful as displayed in Luke 2:19; 2:48-50; Mark 3:31-35. Second, she needed a Savior (which one without original sin would not need). Bromiley notes: "We honor Mary best by giving her the dignity that is hers in Scripture and not by indulging in speculative glorification."[7] It reflects her humility. It was God's person and work that produced the rejoicing.

"For" is a conjunction of purpose and gives the reason or basis she exalted and rejoiced in God. It was because "He had regard for the humble state of His bondslave" (1:48). The word regard is found only three times in the New Testament (Luke 1:48; 9:38; James 2:3) and has the basic meaning of to look upon with loving care. The Greek text literally reads "because He looked upon the lowly state of his slave girl." The text is an immediate past aorist, used of an event which recently happened.[8] It speaks of the moment she found grace with God (cf. 1:30), and submitted to the will of God (1:38). The phrase "low estate" is objective and refers to her external, social, and economic condition; not her internal humility. It refers to her standing in society. Koontz suggest this indicates "that she ranked least in her father's house."[9]

From now on, Mary throughout future generations will be known as blessed (1:48). We should not take this blessedness above what we ought. Luke presents her as a model servant (cf. Luke 11:27-28). She is blessed "among" women, not "above" women (1:42). She is to be congratulated by future generations, not worshipped by them. She is not to be worshiped; but is so blessed that she is the

[7]G.W. Bromiley, "Mary," *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia: Revised Edition* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans), 3:271

[8]Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996), 565.

[9]Koontz, "Mary's Magnificat," 342.

worshipping one. The context speaks of her as a privilege. Jesus condemns such thoughts of Mary's deification in Luke 11:27-28.

The theme that dominates the hymn is the rejoicing of grace. There had been a change in Mary's life because she was confronted with the grace of God (1:28, 48). One cannot read the magnificat without seeing the influence of grace upon Mary. This is an important principle once we are touched by the gracious acts of God, things change. We are never the same. We are blessed, as was Mary.

Stanza 2: 1:49-50

For the Mighty One has done great things for me;

And holy is His name.

And His Mercy is upon generation after generation

Toward those who fear Him.

While the first stanza centers on praise, this second stanza centers upon God and his character. This is a Psalm of celebration contemplating the work of the communal attributes of God. There are three main attributes communicated to her and celebrated by her:

First, Mary celebrates His powerful work—"for the Mighty One has done great things for me" (1:49). The word "for" accounts the reasons or bases why future generations will pronounce Mary as blessed. It happened because God is Mighty—having power, ability and authority. It speaks of God's omnipotence. He has the power to bring about the events and make them effective in the life of Mary. He exercises this power in Mary. Note the personal application in the words, "for me." By grace she is the object of God's power. It stands in parallel with Luke 1:48. The words "great things" equates and refers to the virginal conception of the Son of God. It will be brought about by the "power of the Highest" (1:35)—for with God nothing is impossible (1:37). The phrase alludes to God's power in the act of God in making Mary a vessel in the realization of God's virgin birth promise (cf. Isaiah 7:14). She will be the humble fulfillment. God creatively exercises his power to bring about his Messianic promise.

Second, Mary amplifies his holiness—"And holy is His name" (1:49). Holiness is the most basic attribute of God, as well as being descriptive of his mighty acts. No other attribute can violate God's holiness. God is above all holy, it is his chief

attribute.[10] Holiness is "the absence of evil and the presence of positive righteousness."[11] All the other attributes work in harmony with this characteristic of God. Some try to limit the idea of holiness here to his act of holiness, not his attribute. However, I disagree for two reasons: first, the text does not make such a limit. Second, one cannot separate his attributes and the action of these attributes since they are all harmonious and interactive.

Third, Mary magnifies his mercy—"and his mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear him" (1:50). Mercy is a key motif in the Magnificat (cf. 1:54). The whole act of God centers upon His mercy to Mary. In the Old Testament the word speaks of "the loyal, gracious, faithful love that God has in covenant for his people."[12] Bultmann notes mercy is seen in the gracious faithfulness of God which saturates these events.[13] It seems to be a quote of Psalm 103:17. Mercy reveals the compassionate heart of God. There are three effects concerning God's mercy are evident: First, it is related as an element of grace, thereby unmerited in the display of compassion. Second, it is unending for it is from generation to generation. It conveys the idea of faithfulness (cf. Psa. 89:1). Third, it is selective for it is to "those that fear him." The idea of fearing God is frequent in Luke (cf. 12:5; 81:2, 4; 23:40). Fear speaks of reverence, respect, and honor—not the act of being afraid.

In this stanza the power, holiness, and mercy are the gloriously united actions of God toward Mary. They act in harmony.

Stanza 3: 1:51-53

He has done mighty deeds with His arm;

He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones,

And has exalted those who were humble.

Stanza 3 has caused some debate. Some see this stanza as six verses, tied together by the six aorist phrases in the remaining hymn. They certainly denote a divide in the hymn between Mary (in the first two stanzas) and the remaining hymn. There are three main views about how to take this portion of the hymn:

First, the historical view.[14] Mary is referring to past acts in the Old Testament.

[10]James R. Gray, *Who Is God & What Is He Like?* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: BDTLB, 1995), 36.

[11]Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Wheaton, Ill.: Moody, 1986), 38.

[12]Bock, *Luke*, 1:152.

[13]Rudolf Bultmann, "ἔλεος," TDNT 2:483.

[14]Lenski, *Luke*, 91.

The aorist is viewed as historical denoting what God has actually done.

Second, the timeless view.[15] The gnomic aorist describes what God habitually performs, and should be translated in the present tense.[16] This view seems the weakest. Bock identifies three problems: (1) this meaning of the aorist is rare in Hellenistic Greek. (2) It tends to ignore Mary's future perspective in the introduction of the hymn. (3) It discounts the covenant fulfillment motif expressed in verses 54-55.[17] Marshall confirms that the gnomic use is improbable.[18]

Third, the prophetic view.[19] The aorist is taken as prophetic, portraying the ultimate eschatological victory of Jesus. This view holds Mary is looking forward using the spirit of prophecy and counts what God will do as so certain—it can be viewed as accomplished (a frequent use in Old Testament prophecy).[20]

However, I question the prophetic view. I neither see any hint Mary is thinking prophetically, nor get that impression from reading the text, although there may be prophetic implications. The historical is mainly in play in this hymn. The remaining hymn is clearly divided among the two parts consisting of two stanzas each. The four-stanza view is more consistent because of the change of subject evident in verse 54. Verses 51-53 center upon his mighty deeds on behalf of his people (past history), and in verses 54-55 we have the merging of the historical with his promise to Israel (the historical promise). However, this prophetic promise is viewed through the lens of the historical and can be viewed as a general secondary promise awaiting fulfillment.

This stanza progresses from the character of God (stanza 2) to the works or acts of God (Stanza 3). The mighty deeds of God have been displayed (1:51). The emphasis is on the outward manifestation of his power—He has done mighty deeds. It points to God's sovereignty and omnipotence which has been displayed in past historical deeds. These mandate the principle of "a complete reversal of all human opinions of greatness and insignificance."[21] While this mandate climaxes with eschatological fulfillment, in the overall context of the hymn, Mary seems to

---

[15]A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1935), 836-837.

[16]Hendricksen gives examples from the Old Testament. *Luke*, 108.

[17]Bock, *Luke*, 155.

[18]Marshall, *Luke*, 84.

[19]A. Plummer, T*he Gospel according to St Luke* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1910), 32-33; Bock, *Luke*, 155

[20]Morris, *Luke*, 77.

[21]Norvel Geldenhuys, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971), 86.

be praising God for what he is doing in her case. The historical is used to reinforce the present fulfillment of the birth of Messiah in the experience of Mary. She uses the historical experience as an example of her own experience of God. She centers upon the faithfulness of God in history as an indication of his faithfulness to her. Marshall observes, "that God's dealings with Mary are in keeping with his general attitude to his people.'[22]

There are two antitheses contained in this third stanza which have bearing on the faithfulness of God to Mary:

First, the proud/humble contrast. He has scattered the proud (cf. James 4:6). The word proud is always used in a bad sense in the New Testament. Those who exercise such pride are the object of God's judgment. In history this judgment has taken various forms—scatter, resist, and dissipate, or disperse. Mary is making a historical observation which was true in the past and will be true in the future. It should be noted that being proud is not necessarily an action, it is attitude which may manifest itself in action—"in the thoughts of their heart" (1:51). The word "thoughts" is the Greek word dianoia, in the dative form which defines and limits the idea of proud. It is the mind which controls thought, emotion, and will. The proud are the arrogant, haughty, and the puffed up with own knowledge, ability, and power. This is confirmed by the fact God "has brought down rulers from their thrones" (1:52). These rulers are identified with the proud. This is in contrast to the humble. The proud are "brought down" indicating judgment. The humble are "exalted," indicating glorification (cf. Psa. 75:7). The inference is the humble are unjustly oppressed by tyrants and the proud. The humble are vindicated while the proud are vigorously harmed. An element of the power of God is his judgment. This power judges or it vindicates (cf. Psa. 75:7). God is sovereign in his mercy as he is in his judgment. God in his mercy honors the humble and lifts them up to a place of significance. He had done it in history, and now to Mary, and will continue to so until the consummation.

The second contrast is between the hungry/rich (1:53). The contrast seems to be a variation of the pride/humble contrast, but with an economic emphasis. The word "hungry" speaks not only of humility, but those who are in need. The word speaks of a characteristic is beyond physical hunger; it speaks of want or need generally.[23] The word "filled" denotes the idea of satisfied (reflecting 1 Sam. 2:5; Psa. 72:11-12; 107:9). This is echoed in the words of Jesus (cf. Matt. 5:3-6). Mary and

[22]I. H. Marshall, *Luke*, (NIGTC; Grand Rapids. Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978), 83. Although he would not agree with my view, his observation is relevant none the less.

[23]Ibid, 84.

Elisabeth are examples of the hungry who are satifisfied by claiming the greatest of events—the time of the Messiah.

Stanza 4: 1:54-55
He has given help to Israel His servant,
In remembrance of His mercy,
As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and his descendants forever.

Mary ends her song where God "is seen to be in fulfilment of his covenant with Israel."[24] His faithful action was seen in his help to Israel. A key word is "help," the Greek word antelabeto means literally "He hath laid hold of with a purpose of supporting."[25] The reason for this is seen in Isaiah 41:9, 42:1—they were his chosen. Israel is God's servant. In the praise, Mary's focus is on national and spiritual deliverance which will climax in the reign of Messiah and the kingdom. God has helped in two specific ways: (1) in his gracious remembrance; (2) and faithfulness performance through his Word, as he spoke to the fathers, Abraham, and his descendants forever (1:55). Mary ends her hymn by recalling God's covenant promise to the nation. A promise by which she has become an integral part as the chosen vehicle of his Son. It denotes her confidence, humility, faith, and praise.

[24]Ibid, 85.
[25]Koontz, "Mary's Magnificat," 347.

A Closer Look at Jonah

Timothy F. Conklin
timnlota@gmail.com

Introduction

While the story of Jonah may be one of the best known accounts in the Bible, I cannot help offering some pastoral counsel. Specifically, I strongly recommend before you read this article you ought to read the book of Jonah . . . again. It is a short book, only four chapters, and is easily and quickly read. My urging is to simply encourage you to experience afresh this portion of Scripture which the Holy Spirit has inspired for our learning.

Background

Jonah, whose name means "dove," is presented in the Bible as a real person. He is referred to as the son of Amittai, of the tribe of Zebullun (Jonah 1:1). He lived in Gathhepher in the province of Zebullun (2 Kings 14:25) and was one of Jehovah's prophet's to the Northern Kingdom at the time of Israel's divided monarchy in the reign of Jeroboam II (c. 825-782 B.C.) during the Assyrian period. His contemporaries were Amos and Hosea (likewise prophets in the Northern Kingdom), and also Joel if he is understood to be one of the earliest prophets (in the Southern Kingdom).

Jesus refers to the account of Jonah in the New Testament—Matthew 12:39-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29-30—and appears to consider the record authentic and genuinely historical.

Jewish tradition accounts for three interesting but altogether unsubstantial special aspects about Jonah. First, he is supposed to be the son of the widow of Zarephath, whom Elijah raised from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24). Second, he is said to be the servant who accompanied Elijah when he fled from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:3). Third, he was thought to be the youth whom Elisha sent to Ramoth-Gilead

to anoint Jehu King of Israel (2 Kings 9:1-10). However, there is no evidence to support any of these claims.

The character of Jonah is comparable to Peter. Both men are a bit rash but great patriots and strongly prejudiced toward their own nation (Acts 10:28; Galatians 2:11-13). Consequently they appear stubbornly uninterested in other peoples and cultures. Still, they come across as likable persons.

Key Issue

While there is much in the book of Jonah worth serious consideration, too often attention about the curious details of the story obscure the central focus of the book, which is not a great fish but the surpassing greatness of God's compassion and mercy. These qualities of God's character are the core truths of the Jonah story. Graham Scroggie wisely observes:

> The object of the writing seems to have been to correct the extreme form of Jewish nationalism which then prevailed, and to proclaim the mercy of God for Gentiles as well as for Jews. [1]

There is no question the book of Jonah is skillfully composed to enhance its message and meaning. Of course, the ultimate author is the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16) but there is no reason not to recognize that God oversaw the ingenuity of human compositional experts to accomplish the final structure of this book (compare Luke 1:1-4).

The story of Jonah begins with an anticipated external *horizontal* flight—from Joppa (in Palestine) to Tarshish (in Spain); literally from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, about 2500 miles. Jonah is attempting to escape his commission from God by sheer physical distance.

His inner experience, however, is *vertical* and cleverly detailed as we are told he went "down" to Joppa, "down" into the ship, "down" into the lower hold of the ship, "down" into the sea, "down" into the fish's belly, and finally "down to the bottoms of the mountains."

The spewing forth of Jonah from the belly of the great fish is in correspondence with Jonah's first being swallowed up by this specially prepared ocean denizen at the beginning of this drama. Both of these events are clearly at the command of the Lord; an affirming example of God's sovereignty over man and nature emphasized throughout the book.

---

[1]W. Graham Scroggie, *Know Your Bible* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1972), 159.

The first three verses of chapter one are counterbalanced with the first three verses of chapter 3:

Jonah 1:1	Jonah 3:1
The word of the Lord came to Jonah saying, 'Arise and go to Nineveh.' But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.	The word of the Lord came unto Jonah a second time saying, 'Arise, go unto Nineveh.' Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh.

The Larger Setting

While there are many more points of interest and literary devices in the story, at this point it will be helpful to pause and consider the greater context of the book of Jonah; namely, the history of the people of Israel. We do well to recall God's commission to Abraham in Genesis was for him to be the head of a divinely chosen nation. But the intent of Jehovah in selecting Abraham and his seed was not to be exclusionary. Indeed, it was God's purpose that through Abraham's seed (the forthcoming nation of Israel, including the prophet Jonah) the favored nation should be an avenue of blessing to all other nations of the world.

> Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and *all the nations of the earth* shall be blessed in him (Genesis 18:18).

Jesus Christ rehearses this fact as he says to the people of Israel in the Sermon on the Mount:

> You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:14-16).

Refocusing on Jonah, we see at the end of the book after Jonah proclaimed the message of God in Nineveh about either repentance and faith or certain judgment that the people responded:

> So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them . . . . And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Jonah was sullen and frustrated by God's exhibition of mercy and reconciliation; "It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry" (4:1). Jonah wanted the Gentile Ninevehites to be judged and condemned by God because of their reputation of ruthlessness and threat of invasion into Israel. But it is precisely here

where the central message of the book of Jonah rings out.

A doctrine of Israel alone and Israel only is not what God entrusted to that nation. That isolationist falsehood, however, is what Jonah and the leaders in Israel came to represent. This same mentality continued to worsen over time so when Jesus Christ came he lamented:

> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves (Matthew 23:15).

Jonah is a Jewish prophet of rigid justice. In this role he is a reflection of a national Israel who had become insular, self-centered and unwilling to share God's privileged blessings with other peoples. Israel (and Jonah) embraced exclusive particularism and lost sight of God's intended universalism. The national arrogance of Jonah and his compatriots in this story is set forth in stark contrast to the worldwide care and compassion of Jehovah as exemplified in his show of mercy to those who repented at Nineveh. One commentator ironically notes:

> The God who moved the people of Nineveh to repent of their evil ways hints that his prophet should repent of his excessive righteousness.

In this perspective, Jonah is much like the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), who himself in turn is a caricature of the Jonah-like Pharisees.

I believe the book of Jonah is best understood as an exhortation to the nation of Israel to come to grips with the fullness of God's intention in showering upon her his peculiar blessings. Those blessings were not intended for her alone but to be shared with all her neighbors. Israel was to be a champion of what we today call foreign missions. Rather than exult in her own pride and prejudice, Israel needed to appreciate the Lord delights in having mercy on the weak and is forbearing with the wicked.

> If you, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with you that you may be feared (Psalm 130:4).

> The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works (Psalm 145:8-9).

> To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him (Daniel 9:9).

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgres-

sion of the remnant of his heritage? He retains not his anger forever, because he delights in mercy (Micah 7:18; Jonah 4:2).

Grace and Reconciliation

God is merciful! God is gracious! God is forgiving! God longs to make peace with rebellious people. Yes, Israel was special and chosen and blessed beyond measure with divine benefits. But those blessings were not meant for Israel exclusively. She was supposed to share them with anyone and everyone, understanding that any/all who would join with her in obedience to and faith in Jehovah would also experience forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

> Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, 'For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.' And again he says, 'Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.' And again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; and laud him, all you people.' And again, Isaiah says, 'There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust' (Romans 15:8-12).

Jonah—and his countrymen in Israel, even to the time of Jesus Christ—were in sore need of being reminded of what God so clearly intended for his chosen people:

> Go . . . and teach ***all nations*** (Matthew 28:19).

In solemn punctuation of this critical lesson for Israel, it is to be observed during the time of Jonah's ministry the Gentile rascals and rebels in Nineveh did indeed repent and believe God. But alas, from the record left by Jonah's contemporaries Amos and Hosea, it is woefully clear the chosen people Israel refused to do likewise.

Journal of Grace Theology 3.2 (2016): 59-73

Let's Celebrate Pentecost

Craig Apel
Berean Bible Church
Muskegon, Michigan.
craigapel@aol.com

Introduction

In most of our Grace Churches we pay scant attention to the Christian calendar. We celebrate Christmas on December 25th and Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after March 21st. Perhaps, during the week before Easter we might observe Good Friday, or more recently in some churches Maundy Thursday. But other than these few select days we seldom mark additional holidays of the church year, unless we count giving kids candy on All Hallows Eve, the last day in October. I propose we should consider adding the day of Pentecost and celebrate the baptism of the Holy Spirit, traditionally observed 50 days after Easter, to our short list of church holidays. While we may not want to make it the elaborate celebration we have with Christmas and Easter, I believe we should at the very least acknowledge its importance to the Body of Christ

Some of you reading this may already be formulating objections, even before you've read my reasons proposing it. If so, I simply ask for you to be as noble as the Bereans of Acts 17 who as they listened to Paul preach examined the Scriptures to test the truth of what they heard.

Baptism *By* the Spirit or *With* the Spirit?

In our Grace Churches we emphasize the necessity of "rightly dividing the word of truth." And we love to point out the differences between the various dispensations, especially between God's prophesied plans for the

nation of Israel and his mystery program for the church the Body of Christ. But we are in error if we make distinctions and divisions between Israel and the church where God himself has not done so. For example, it would be a serious error to hold there was a different basis of salvation for Israel under the Law than there is for the church today under Grace. The forgiveness of sins has always been based upon either the future or the finished sacrifice of the Lord Jesus who paid for all sins upon the cross. It is true ancient Israel did not understand that as we do today in the Body of Christ. But we would be in error if we saw a different basis at any time in God's redemptive plan than the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus. Still, while recognizing this commonality of their redemption, we are quite able to maintain the distinctive programs of God for both Israel and the church. It is my belief we can and must do the same thing concerning Israel's Spirit baptism at Pentecost, and the Spirit baptism which Paul writes about to the church the Body of Christ. I believe we can maintain the distinctive programs of God for both bodies of believers while acknowledging the commonality of their spiritual baptism. And I believe that we are in error and "wrongly divide the word of truth" when we do not.

Distinct from the majority of evangelical Christians, we in the "Grace Movement" believe the church, the Body of Christ did not begin at Pentecost. We see the events of Acts chapter 2 as the continuation of God's dealings with the nation of Israel, confirmed through the partial fulfillment of a prophecy made specifically to her by the prophet Joel. Indeed, when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the disciples at Pentecost Peter quotes that very prophecy and tells his Jewish audience what they are witnessing is exactly what Joel foretold would happen. Through fulfillment of Joel's prophecy and Peter's sermon in Acts chapter 2, we see God was still at that time dealing with Israel as his unique people by seeking to bring the nation to repentance for having crucified her Messiah. To us these things make it obvious Israel was not yet set-aside in unbelief (Romans 11) and therefore the Body of Christ had not yet begun.

There are other indications in these early chapters of Acts that Israel was still central to God's work in the world. But a favored means many of us often employ to show Pentecost was not the beginning of the church is calling attention to what we believe to be the difference between the Spirit baptism at that time and Spirit baptism found later in the letters of

the apostle Paul.

In his booklet *Three Bible Churches* Pastor Vernon Schutz writes,

> There are at least twelve kinds of baptisms in the Word of God, and only five have any connection with water, and two are connected with the Holy Spirit. In Luke 3:16 we have three baptisms in one verse. These are: water, Holy Spirit, and fire.
>
> It should be noted however, that there are only *two* Baptizers, that is, only *two* agents doing the baptizing. John is the baptizer with water, and Christ is to be the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit. After the resurrection Christ made it clear that he would baptize them on the day of Pentecost "not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). On that day Christ is the Baptizer, baptizing *with the Spirit*.
>
> In 1 Corinthians 12:13 we read: 'For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.' The Baptizer here is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is associated with a "baptism" in each case; however, these passages are not referring to the same baptism, for the Baptizers are different.
>
> At Pentecost Christ is the Baptizer, baptizing in or with the Spirit. On the other hand, in 1 Corinthians the Holy Spirit is the Baptizer, baptizing into Christ. These are two separate and distinct baptisms**.**

Further Schutz says,

> Only when the Spirit is the Baptizer can believers be made members of the Body. Christ, and not the Spirit, was the Baptizer on the day of Pentecost. Since the baptism which puts believers into the Body of Christ was not functioning on that day, how could it be the beginning of the Body of Christ?[1]

In his booklet *Real Baptism*, Charles F. Baker, founder and President Emeritus of Grace Bible College, makes the same point. He begins by listing every New Testament occurrence of the word *baptism* where it is used in association with reference to the Holy Spirit. These are the passages to which he refers.

1. John the Baptist foretold the coming of one mightier than he who would baptize "with the Holy Ghost;" Matt 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3: 16; John 1:33.
2. After Jesus' resurrection he told his apostles they would soon be

[1]Vernon A. Schutz, *Three Bible Churches* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Publications, 1974), 24-25.

baptized "with the Holy Spirit," which promise was fulfilled at Pentecost, Acts 1:4,5.

3. Before the Jerusalem Council Peter recalls how eight years after Pentecost the family of Cornelius was baptized "with the Holy Spirit" just as the believers had been at Pentecost; Acts 11:25,16.
4. The only other New Testament passage in which the Holy Spirit is mentioned in connection with the word baptism is in 1 Corinthians 12:13 where Paul tells the members of the Body of Christ "by one spirit" they have been baptized into one body.

Commenting on these passages Baker writes,

> It has been the practice of Bible teachers to make all of the above passages refer to exactly the same thing, since the name of the Holy Spirit is associated with the baptism in each case. But this is not necessarily true. It is evident, of course, that 1, 2 and 3 above refer to exactly the same work of the Spirit in baptism, but the scripture under 4 is diverse in many ways...

In the former group of Scriptures it is plainly stated that Christ is the Baptizer, and that He baptizes with the Holy Ghost. Paul on the other hand, represents the Holy Spirit as the Baptizer, who baptizes into Christ.

At Pentecost Christ baptized with the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians the Holy Spirit baptizes into Christ. These are two separate and distinct baptisms.[2]

I have nothing but the greatest respect and admiration for both Pastors Schutz and Baker as teachers of the Word of God, and I am indebted to both of them for much of my own understanding of the Scriptures. President Baker taught me theology when I was a student at Grace Bible College, and Pastor Schutz was my pastor during my college years. I thank God for both of these godly men. But in this matter of separating the Spirit baptism at Pentecost and the Spirit baptism of 1 Corinthians 12 I must disagree. I believe this has been done in an over zealous effort to distinguish between Israel and the church, and that in this case it is a "distinction without a difference." I'm convinced what we have in both cases is the same baptism for the same ultimate purpose but with some different attending results.

In Appendix II of his booklet Pastor Schutz responds to Charles C.

[2]Charles F. Baker, *Real Baptism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Line Bible Lessons, N.D.), 9.

Ryrie, then President of Dallas Theological Seminary, who in his book *Dispensationalism Today* rightly points out the Greek construction in both Acts 1:5 and 1 Corinthians 12:13 is identical. In both passages the Greek preposition *en* is used with the word Spirit. Ryrie contends while *en* can sometimes mean "with," "by," or "in," it should be translated consistently in all verses referring to spiritual baptism. He maintains because Christ is clearly the baptizer "with" the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:5, to be consistent the baptism in 1 Corinthians 12:13 should also be read as baptism "with" the Spirit and Christ assumed to be the baptizer here also. Ryrie admits *en* can at times be translated "by" but asks us to face the possibility that in both passages it means the same thing and refers to the same baptism.

In His response Pastor Schutz writes,

> It is important to see that we do not actually build our position on the preposition *itself* even though at first glance it may seem as though we do. I agree that the English translation of the preposition *en* does seem to be the main argument. We depend more upon the sense of the passage than does Dr. Ryrie.[3]

But do we? In the Gospel passages noted by Pastor Baker the promise of John the Baptist was of someone greater than himself, Christ, who would follow him and baptize with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:5 and 11:16 that same baptism is referred to again. There is no question in these passages Christ is the baptizer and the Holy Spirit is the element he baptizes with. There is a double contrast made in these texts. Instead of John being the baptizer, Christ would be. Instead of water being the element, the Spirit would be.

When we come to 1 Corinthians 12:13, who is the baptizer and what is the element? Ryrie and most other Evangelicals say although he is unnamed, based upon the earlier references to Spirit baptism, Christ must be the baptizer in this text also. They certainly have the weight of Scripture behind them. But historically we in the Grace Fellowship, eager to distinguish between Israel and the Church, have disagreed. We have embraced the translation of the preposition *en* found in the King James Version as "by," and have said unlike the other passages it's the Spirit who does the baptizing here. But as Pastor Schutz honestly admits, the question cannot be decided by the preposition. He says more important for him is "the

[3]Schutz, *Three Bible Churches*, 43.

sense of the passage." So let's look more closely.

In coming to a correct understanding of 1 Corinthians 12:13 two significant questions beg for an answer. First, if, as we maintain, the Holy Spirit is the baptizer in the first half of the verse, who is it who gives us the Spirit to drink in the second half? And does not the fact that in the second half of the verse the Spirit is compared to a liquid we are given to drink suggest in the first half rather than being the baptizer the Spirit is the element we are baptized *with*; "living water" (John 7:38-39) that is poured out both upon us and into us?

To make good sense of 1 Corinthians 12:13 the baptizer and the baptismal element must be the same in both halves of Paul's statement. And the verse makes the clearest sense only when as in all previous references to the Spirit and Baptism Christ is seen as performing the action and it is the Spirit being poured out.

I do not believe we can make a solid argument for a difference between the Spirit baptism in Acts 2 and in 1 Corinthians 12 based upon *either* the translation of the preposition *en*, or upon "the sense of the passage." In fact both, Ryrie's request for consistency with other Scripture and the sense of the passage itself convince me we are reading of the same baptism in both cases. Yes, we can point to some distinctly different attendant results the speaking in tongues at Pentecost and later the addition of believers to the Body of Christ. But the baptism itself, in both cases, is most certainly *by* Christ as the baptizer, *with* the Holy Spirit as the element.

Before taking up the single purpose of this Spirit baptism, I ask you to consider a scripture where the Apostle Paul clearly and convincingly speaks of Christ as the being the baptizer and the Holy Spirit as the element.

> **Titus 3:4-7** But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Although the word "baptism" does not appear here in connection with the Holy Spirit it seems obvious the subject is spiritual baptism. That being so, this is a text that we must not ignore in reaching a proper understanding

of 1 Corinthians 12:13. The baptizer here is without question Christ. The element of our baptism that is "poured out" upon us and which "washes" us spiritually clean is without question the Holy Spirit.

These verses are either in conflict with 1 Corinthians 12:13 or they interpret the verse for us. These verses alone should convince us Spirit Baptism for the Body of Christ is the same baptism Israel experienced at Pentecost; baptism *by* Christ with *the* Spirit.

Now we come to the matter of the shared purpose of both Israel's Spirit Baptism and ours. As I alluded to previously, some of the results of Israel's Spirit Baptism at Pentecost and Spirit Baptism in Paul's letters to the church, the Body of Christ are arguably different. These differences can be attributed to the fact Israel had not yet been set-aside in unbelief and the Body of Christ had not yet begun. However, for both groups of believers their Spirit baptism served the same foundational purpose. It was the means of their entry into the New Covenant relationship with God established by the blood of Christ shed upon the cross.

The Promise of the New Covenant in the Old Testament Scriptures

The following Old Testament passages all make reference to a New Covenant God will one day establish with his people Israel in which a Spiritual baptism is a vital part. In each case I won't quote the entire passage but encourage you to read the passage and take note of several observations.

Jeremiah 31:31-34. This is the classic Old Testament passage on the New Covenant. In verse 33 we find the nature of this promised new relationship God will establish with Israel.

> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (ESV)

Note the promised blessings of the New Covenant are all spiritual in nature, not material. This becomes important in understanding other New Covenant passages, both in its relationship to God's other covenants with national Israel and in how the New Covenant applies to the Body of Christ today. The New Covenant is strictly spiritual in its blessings.

This new relationship will be based upon an action of God which will touch his people at the very core of their beings when he gives them changed hearts that desire to live holy lives. God says the result will be, in a new, deeper and more intimate way than ever possible under the Old Covenant, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This final sentence in verse 33 appears several other places in the Old Testament and I believe it is a "tag" that frequently identifies a passage as an expanded explanation of the New Covenant, as noted in several other Old Testament texts.

Jeremiah 32:36-41. The promise in verse 37 and 41 to gather Israel from banishment and bring them back and plant them in the land will be the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 17:1-8. There, God promises Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. For Israel the New Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenant, and as we will see later, the Davidic Covenant will be fulfilled concurrently when Christ comes to establish his Kingdom. However these are two separate promises of God. And while I believe the Scriptures show us the spiritual promise of the New Covenant applies to us today, the material promise of the Abrahamic Covenant does not.

Notice again the "relational tag" in verse 38, "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God," connecting this passage with the previous chapter. Notice in verses 39 and 40 the repeated promise of changed and obedient hearts. And also in verse 40, while it isn't specifically called "new" this will be an everlasting relationship between God and his people.

Ezekiel 11:17-21. Notice once again the reference to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant in verse 17. There is a "relational tag" at the end of verse 20, "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God," connecting it with the passages in Jeremiah. A significant addition to our understanding of how this new relationship with God will be accomplished is that verse 19 describes a spiritual surgery, a heart transplant in which God removes the sinful heart and replaces it with a new one. We'll observe this again later. Notice also here in verse 19 for the first time we find reference to receiving a "new spirit." My Bible translates the word "spirit" with a lower case "s," but if this is not a direct reference to the Holy Spirit surely we know it is only the Holy Spirit of God who can change the nature of one "whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations."

Ezekiel 36:24-28. There are many things this passage holds in common with the previous ones. In verses 24 and 28 there is another reference to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. In verse 28 we find once again the "relational tag," "*you shall be my people, and I will be your God."* In verse 26 there is again the promise of change at the very core of their being by means of spiritual heart surgery. And in verse 27 is the promised result of living in obedience to the Lord. In verses 26 and 27 we find for a second time the promise of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

But here in verse 25 we find mentioned for the first time as basic to this new relationship with God a spiritual baptism; "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you." When I read this I can't help but think of Paul's words in Titus 3 concerning our baptismal "washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" as members of the Body of Christ.

Ezekiel 37:11-27. In verses 14 and 25 we find once again the promise to settle them in their "forever" home in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. In fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, God promises in verse 22 to bring the divided kingdom together under one king, specifically identified in verses 24 and 25 as David, whose reign is also said to be "forever." These two covenants will be fulfilled concurrently when Christ returns to establish his kingdom and places his sanctuary among them to live with them "forever" in verses 26-28.

Concurrent with the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants the New Covenant will be fulfilled as well. We find the evidence of this indicated by the twice-repeated "relational tag" in verses 23 and 27, "I will be their God, and they will be my people." In addition, in verse 14 God repeats His promise to put His Spirit in them. In verse 23 and 24 he promises to save them from their idolatry and backsliding and to cleanse them, with the result they will follow his laws and keep his decrees.

These are all provisions of the New Covenant, which although it is unnamed in this passage is referred to in verse 26 as an everlasting covenant of peace God will make with Israel.

Ezekiel 39:25-29. Verses 26-28 refer to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. Verse 28 contains half of the "relational tag" when it says Israel will know the LORD their God. Verse 29 refers to a spiritual baptism in

which God pours out his Spirit upon his people Israel.

Joel 2:28-32. This of course is the passage Peter quotes in Acts 2 at Pentecost, where clearly God (Christ) is the baptizer and the Spirit is the element he pours out upon his people.

Deuteronomy 30:1-10. I have reserved this to be my final Old Testament text because the Covenant is not obviously mentioned here. It makes no reference to the baptism or outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the "relational tag" is absent here also. However, the passage tells of Israel's future re-gathering to the Promised Land in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (v. 3-5), setting the time frame for us as being the time when the promise of New Covenant will also be fulfilled.

There can be no doubt from the Old Testament passages we've looked at the New It also says at this time Israel will keep the commandments of God with all her heart and soul (v. 2, 8,10). This desire and ability to obey God had been lacking in the past under the Old Covenant but will be the result of spiritual surgery, God's circumcision of the hearts of His people (v. 6). Here I believe we have a labeling of the spiritual surgery referred to in Ezekiel chapters 11 and 36. It is identified as a "spiritual circumcision."

While there are other Old Testament passages to which we might refer, these should be sufficient to convince us that even while Israel struggled to maintain her relationship with God through obedience to the Law as God required, he frequently spoke to her of a new relationship with himself which he would one day establish by a New Covenant. In this new relationship spiritual baptism and spiritual circumcision performed by God Himself through the Holy Spirit would result in change at the very depths of their beings, giving them both the desire and ability to do God's will. It would occur concurrently with the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant bringing them back into the Promised Land where they would live forever, and with the Davidic Covenant which would place a descendent of David forever upon Israel's throne. We understand this all to be yet in Israel's future at the coming Kingdom of her Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant and the Body of Christ

There can be no doubt from the Old Testament passages we have looked at the New Covenant was specifically promised to the nation of Israel. So then what if any relationship does the New Covenant have to believers

today, the members of the Body of Christ?

We must understand the basis for the fulfillment of New Covenant was established by Christ's blood shed upon the cross. This was the necessary payment for sins committed in violation of the Old Covenant without which payment in full the new relationship could not exist.

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20) all record the final Passover meal Jesus ate with His disciples at which he established a new feast to be kept in remembrance of him. At that time he pointedly told them the cup of wine they shared represented the New Covenant established by his blood which would be poured out for the forgiveness of their sins. After his crucifixion in which his blood was shed, at Pentecost the spiritual baptism of all who were believers inaugurated the New Covenant. The new relationship with God had begun. At that time Peter makes it clear that this relationship of forgiveness of sins and receipt of the Holy Spirit was for all in Israel who would believe (Acts 2:36-41). We know that by faith thousands were saved at Pentecost, but relatively few in the nation responded.

As a result God did something previously unrevealed to the Old Testament prophets. Paul explains in Romans 11 that because Israel as a nation continued to be obstinate in unbelief and to refuse this New Covenant relationship with God, he temporarily took away Israel's privileged nation status. He suspended dealing with her as a nation and completely apart from Israel extended his grace to the Gentiles. It was at this time, as Paul says in Romans 15:27, the Gentiles came to share in Israel's spiritual blessings. By this he can only be referring to the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant. That this is true is confirmed by the fact that in 2 Corinthians 3:6 Paul calls himself and his companions "ministers of a new covenant." Some have contended because there is no definite article in Paul's statement and he speaks of "*a* new covenant" rather then "*the* new covenant" he must have another covenant in view, not the New Covenant of which the Old Testament prophets and Jesus spoke. Apart from the fact there is no other covenant identified, the context doesn't permit such an interpretation. Paul here contrasts letters written on tablets of stone and letters written upon human hearts; letters that kill and the Spirit who gives life. He is obviously making a distinction between the Old Covenant which was the Law of Moses and the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31.

That Paul clearly believed and taught the church today exists in relationship to Christ based upon the New Covenant is seen in the appearance of New Covenant language in many of his letters. The following is not an exhaustive but representative list of passages in which Paul employs New Covenant language and imagery in reference to the Body of Christ. Once again, to save space, I am not printing out the passages but asking you to read them carefully and give thought to the observations made.

Romans 2:25-29. Here Paul refers to a spiritual circumcision, a circumcision not of the flesh but of the heart, performed by the Holy Spirit rather than according to the "written code." In addition to the obvious contrast between the Old and New Covenant, can we fail to see the connection between these verses and the promised spiritual surgery of the New Covenant described in Deuteronomy 30 and in Ezekiel 11 and 36?

1 Corinthians 11:23- 26. Here Paul establishes the memorial celebration of communion for the Body of Christ. The Spirit causes him to quote to us the very words Jesus spoke to His disciples at a time before the church of this dispensation even existed, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood," establishing an irrefutable connection between the Body of Christ and Israel's New Covenant blessings.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13. I wrote of this passage in detail in the opening pages of this paper because it describes our spiritual baptism *by* Christ *with* the Holy Spirit. This is in keeping with the Old Testament prophecies of spiritual baptism under the New Covenant. However, the result of this baptism today was not prophesied in that by it we become members of the Body of Christ. It was both God's prophesied plan for Israel and his unprophesied plan for the Body of Christ salvation would come only through a New Covenant made in the blood of His Son. The "mystery" introduced through Paul was national Israel's setting aside because of unbelief, and that individual Jews and Gentiles on an equal basis would be welcomed into this New Covenant relationship, thus forming the Body of Christ.

Galatians 5:1-6, 6:11-15. Here Paul makes it clear it's by the cross of Christ believers are set free from the bondage and slavery of the Old Covenant and our relationship with God is now by the Spirit who alone is able to produce the righteousness which the Old Covenant could only demand

but not empower us to perform.

Ephesians 1:13-20. In verse 13 Paul tells us "you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit." Where was this promise of the Spirit made, and by whom and to whom? Where else but in the Old Testament and the Gospels, by God the Father and God the Son, and to the nation of Israel (Acts 1:4-5)? Now, here, Paul tells us the promise is for us Gentile believers also.

In verse 17 Paul prays for a specific ministry of the Holy Spirit to the Ephesians; "wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him (Jesus Christ) better." This more intimate knowledge of God was a specific blessing of the New Covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:34, "No longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord." While the full realization of this is yet future it can't be denied this promise is in effect in us today.

Ephesians 2:11-13, 3:6. In chapter 2 Paul describes how in the past Gentiles were "strangers to the covenants of promise." This same fact is emphasized in Romans 9:1-5 where he lists the covenants as being one of the unique privileges of the nation Israel. God never obligated himself by covenant to the Gentiles. But in Ephesians 3:6 Paul now proclaims, "This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel." The NIV reads the Gentiles have become "heirs together with Israel." And while "Israel" is an interpolation, this is certainly what Paul means here. So to what which once belonged exclusively to Israel have we as believing Gentiles become coheirs? Paul tells us, "the promise in Christ Jesus." Certainly not to all "the covenants of promise," but to one specific promise. By which I believe he is referring to the New Covenant.

Paul warns his readers to beware of "those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh;" false teachers who insist that obedience to the Old Covenant and circumcision in particular is essential for salvation. Then he tells this essentially Gentile Church, "it is we who are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit," by which he can mean nothing other than the spiritual circumcision of the New Covenant.

Colossians 2:8-15. Here is certainly one of the clearest references to the New Covenant in all Paul's letters. In verse 11 he says we have been circumcised in Christ, "in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ;" a spiritual circumcision. In verse 12 we read of our "having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead;" a spiritual baptism. By these two spiritual ordinances it says in verse 14 God has done away with the Old Covenant, "having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross." This passage cannot be understood apart from the New Covenant having replaced the Old and applying to the Body of Christ.

Titus 3:3. I have dealt with this passage previously but include it here again because it so clearly teaches our spiritual baptism has been performed *by* Christ *with* the Spirit, according to the promise of the New Covenant.

Hebrews. The book of Hebrews contains numerous references to Christ having by His death replaced the Old Covenant with the New. But because some question Paul's authorship of this letter, and its being addressed to Jewish believers in the Body of Christ, I resist listing them here.

Comparing the Old Testament promises of a New Covenant with these references from Paul's epistles should be sufficient to convince us the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant promised first to Israel by the Prophets, confirmed by Christ in the Gospels, and offered to the nation Israel in the book of Acts, now by the grace of God belongs to the church the Body of Christ. I am not in any way suggesting that the church the Body of Christ is "spiritual Israel." The blessings of the New Covenant will be Israel's when Christ returns to earth to establish his Kingdom. But until he does, because Israel rejected him at his first coming, God by grace has given to us today the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant, which should have been hers.

The blessings of this new relationship with God, replaced the Mosaic Law and were paid for by Christ's blood shed for Israel's salvation and our own. Both for Israel in the future and for us today his blood is the blood of the New Covenant. As redeemed Israel will one day drink the fruit of the vine with him and celebrate this Covenant in his Father's kingdom, (Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:22-25) so we today celebrate it now "until he comes."

Conclusion

So I conclude with my initial proposal. Because the blessings of the New Covenant inaugurated at Pentecost today belong to us today, we who are members of the Body of Christ, even we who are mid-Acts Dispensationalists, should add Pentecost to our church calendar, along with Christmas and Easter, as a special day of celebration for God's grace and our salvation.

Journal of Grace Theology 3.2 (2016): 75-81

The Bride of Christ (John 4:1-42)

J. H. Cook IV
Ocean University, China
hazencook@gmail.com

Introduction

The pericope of the Samaritan woman that runs from John 4:1-42 is one of the longest continuous narratives in John.[1] It is a rather surprising account for three reasons: (1) Jesus is dealing with a Samaritan, (2) he is dealing with a strange woman in a public place, and (3) this woman is found to be immoral. The fact that she is a woman is surprising because, according to tradition, Jewish men were "to avoid unnecessary conversation with women."[2] It is a problem to speak with the woman in public because of the time of day she visits the well. Most women come to gather water together and often during the cool parts of the day. The fact that this woman comes alone and at the hottest part of the day tells the readers something is not right with her character.[3] The fact that she was a Samaritan is equally surprising for a Jewish readership, however, the fact that John draws attention to this detail in 4:9 may be a hint that whoever his audience is, is not readily familiar with the political affairs of the Jews.[4] The most fascinating part, even still, about this narrative is the way that John presents it. A strange man meets a woman near a well. This is highly suggestive of the well stories found in the Pentateuch. The setting is perfect for a betrothal narrative. Before this can be explained, however, it is beneficial to highlight, as John does, the relationship between Jews and Samaritans. This understanding will help inform how a Samaritan can act as a surrogate for the bride of Christ, the Bridegroom Messiah.

---

[1]Ben Witherington, *John's Wisdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 115.
[2]Andreas Kostenberger, *John* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2004), 596.
[3]Craig Keener, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2003), 593.
[4]Witherington, *John's Wisdom*, 115.

Who Are the Samaritans?

It is well known that there is a long standing rivalry between Jews and Samaritans. John makes this abundantly clear in 4:9, "For Jews had no dealings with Samaritans." This proves to be an overstatement since Jesus' disciples did just go into a Samaritan village to get supplies to continue their journey (4:8).[5] Nevertheless, there is a deep-seated hatred and prejudice for each other that cannot be ignored, and indeed, it was important enough for John to tell his audience.

Origins

To understand the dispute between the two ethnic groups, it is important to discuss the origins of the Samaritans. The Samaritans believe that they are the faithful remnant of Israel; Israel's apostasy began with Eli in the 11th century BCE.[6] Furthermore, they insisted that they are the direct descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, who remained after the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians in 722 BCE.[7] However, according to Jewish sources, the Samaritans are a mixed race of Israelites and Assyrians.[8] The ethnic group began as colonists brought by Assyria into the land of Samaria from the other places they have conquered.[9] These colonists adopted the Israelite religion and mixed it with their various Mesopotamian religions (1 Kgs 17:41).[10] "The Jews have argued that the veneer of Israelite religion displayed by the Samaritans is the result of instruction by an Israelite priest repatriated from Assyria after the colonists had been attacked by lions sent by God."[11] Josephus adds that Manasseh was expelled from Jerusalem and that the form of worship that started in Samaria started as other priests joined him, thus Josephus gives the Samaritans some form of legitimacy.[12]

---

[5]Leon Morris, *John* (NICNT, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 228; Kostenberger, John, 149.

[6]This is when the nation's center of worship was moved from Gerizim where the Samaritans worship to Shiloh. H. G. M. Williamson and C. A. Evans, "Samaritans," *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove, Intervarsity, 2000), 1057.

[7]Robert Anderson, "Samaritans," *ABD 5:*941.

[8]George Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC; Waco, Word, 1999), 60.

[9]Anderson, "Samaritans," 941.

[10]Williamson, "Samaritans," 1057.

[11]Anderson, "Samaritans," 941.

[12]Williamson, "Samaritans," 1058.

Worship

As a result of this conflict, the Samaritans only hold to the validity of the Pentateuch.[13] For the Samaritans, because Israel became unfaithful so early, only the Pentateuch can be seen as the true Word of God. The rest of the Old Testament scriptures are seen as propaganda drawn up by a corrupt and evil people. (1) Monotheism in Samaritan theology, as Anderson notes, is quite different than other forms of monotheism. He compares them to the militant monotheism of later Islam, and their concept of God is distant and detached from creation apart from Israel.[14] (2) Moses is seen as the "last and most exalted of the prophets." [15] (3) Mount Gerizim is seen as the true place of worship by the Samaritans and not Jerusalem (John 4:21-26). In the Samaritan Pentateuch an altar was built in Deut 27:3 at Mt. Gerizim.[16] A temple was built at the site but it was later destroyed by the Persian Empire in 128 BCE,[17] even still, the Samaritans continued to worship at the site.

Conflict

The conflict between Jews and Samaritans runs deep. The theological differences provide a great tension between the two ethnic groups. There is a lot more to say, though, about the history between the two regions than just theology. Ezra 4 records the earliest conflict. The Samaritans resented the Jews for both the building of the wall around Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 4:7-23). Anderson mentions that this first conflict was strictly political and not religious.[18] There are four major contributing factors to the conflict to consider: (1) political tension between the Ptolemies and Seleucids, (2) Jewish resentment of the Hellenization of Samaria and their failure to join the resistance to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, (3) disputes between their communities, and (4) Hasmonean expansion.[19] This last factor was perhaps the biggest factor in the schism between the two groups. As was mentioned above, their temple was destroyed in 128 BCE, it was at this point that the Samaritan Pentateuch "began its own separate history" and "became crystallized by…its wholesale rejection of Jerusalem-centered wor-

[13]R. T. Anderson, "Samaritan Literature" *DNTB,* 1053.

[14]Anderson, "Samaritans," 946.

[15]Anderson, "Samaritans," 946; Morris, *John*, 236.

[16]Beasley-Murray notes that this might be the correct account of events and was later edited out of the Old Testament due to later anti-Samaritan sentiments; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 61.

[17]Anderson, "Samaritans," 941.

[18]Anderson, "Samaritans," 941.

[19]Williamson, "Samaritans," 1058.

ship."[20] Furthermore, relations between the two groups became terse when a group of Galileans were passing through Samaria and a group of Samaritans slaughtered them.[21] Additionally, "Jews regarded the Samaritans with contempt, considering them fools (Sir 50:25-26; T. Levi 7:2) and idolaters (Gen Rab 81:3)."[22]

The Bridegroom and the Well

There is a second setting, much more subtle that should not be missed when considering the Samaritan narrative. The meeting of the Samaritan woman bears striking resemblance to the three well stories in the Pentateuch: Isaac (Gen 24:10-61), Jacob (Gen 29:1-20), and Moses (Ex 2:15b-21).[23] The connection is not made by John, like he made the connection between Jews and Samaritans, but the narrative follows several literary cues that each of these narratives share.[24] If this is true, the main theme of 4:4-42 is Jesus as the Bridegroom. Even though it is not immediately obvious, the reference to Jacob's well and the fact that Jesus and the woman meet privately is enough for an attentive reader to notice the similarities.

The Pattern

Before these well stories can be compared it is important to establish the pattern. If a pattern can be found between the Old Testament narratives, it will be possible to then compare these narratives to John's account of Jesus' meeting at the well in chapter 4.

The first step in the narratives is that the identities of the women are stressed.[25] Abraham's servant in Gen 24 specifically seeks out a woman from Abraham's family (24:3-4). Rebekah's identity is revealed in verse 15 and to the servant in verse 24. This is repeated again in the servant's tale in 37-38 and 47-48. In Gen 29, it is Jacob that finds himself at a well in search of Laban. Instead he meets Rachel who is revealed to be Laban's daughter in verses 4-5. Like Rebekah in chapter 24, Rachel's kinship to Abraham's descendants is stressed in verse 10. The second detail in these plots that should be observed is that the identity of the traveler is

[20]Williamson, "Samaritans," 1058-1059; Bruce Waltke, "Samaritan Pentateuch" *ABD 5:*934.

[21]Williamson, "Samaritans," 1060. Passage through Samaria for Galileans was in evitable during festivals since it was the quickest way to get from Galilee to Jerusalem: Morris, *John*, 226; Witherington, *Wisdom of Jesus,* 115; Kostenberger, *John*, 147.

[22]Williamson, "Samaritans," 1060.

[23]Witherington, *Wisdom of Jesus*, 118.

[24]Jocelyn McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah and the People of God* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 58.

[25]McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah,* 60; Witherington, 118.

hidden from the woman.[26] In Gen 24, Abraham's servant doesn't introduce himself until Rebekah gives him water from the well (24:22-27). In Gen 29, Jacob rolls the stone away from the well before he tells Rachel who he is (29:10-12). Lastly, the revelation of the stranger's identity is heralded at the woman's home.[27] In 24, Laban eagerly receives the servant of Abraham who has given gifts to Rebekah (29-33). Likewise, in 29, he rushes out to greet Jacob and hospitality (13-14).

Alternatively, these narratives can be outlined in a slightly longer fashion.[28] (1) The future bridegroom or his substitute travels to a foreign land. (2) He encounters a woman at a well. (3) The woman gives the stranger water. (4) The woman rushes home to bring news of the stranger's visit. (5) A betrothal is concluded between the stranger and the woman.

Jesus the Bridegroom

Using this outline, the connection between the narrative in John 4 and the Genesis narratives becomes evident.[29] First, as stated above, is the mention of Jacob in 4:5-6. Second connection is the appearance of a man on a journey (3-6). Third, Jesus appears at a well (4:6). It is noon in John's narrative. This points specifically to some of the characteristics of the Samaritan woman. Whereas the women in Genesis are virtuous and described as beautiful, it is odd that the Samaritan woman would be at the well alone and in the heat of the day.[30] McWhirter posits that John's narrative most closely parallels Jacob's narrative.[31] This makes the most sense since the woman draws the parallel herself during the dialog and asks, rhetorically, if Jesus is greater than Jacob (4:12). Most striking from the pattern, however, is when Abraham's servant reveals himself after receiving water (Gen 24:22-27). In this way, Jesus is revealed as the Messiah (4:25) after he offers the Samaritan woman the living water (4:10-13).

In each of the well stories, the meeting at the well leads to betrothal.[32] Witherington asks, "who will be the one(s) to be Jesus' people, the true bride of Christ?"[33] John ends the scene with Jesus replying to his disciples, "I have food to eat that you do not know about" (4:32). When the disciples ask him what he means (4:33), he

[26]McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah,* 61.
[27]Ibid.
[28]Witherington, *Wisdom of Jesus*, 118.
[29]McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah,* 64.
[30]Morris, *John*, 225; Keener, *John*, 593.
[31]McWhirter, *Bridegroom Messiah,* 64.
[32]Witherington, *Wisdom of Jesus*, 118.
[33]Ibid.

replies that his food is to do the will of the Father (4:34). "Jesus speaking of what his true food is, and indicates his sharing a meal with the Samaritans, the implication being he is seeking union or fellowship with them as Savior."[34] Jesus' message is not for the Jews alone, but his message is for everyone. This betrothal, then, is not a physical betrothal, but rather a spiritual community through worshipping in Spirit and in truth (4:23).

The Bride

Both McWhirter and Witherington focus of Jesus as the bridegroom, but little seems to be said of the Samaritan woman, other than she is there to make the allusion work.[35] Everything John writes seems to have a purpose, so there is something lacking in not examining the Samaritan woman close enough. If John is purposefully replicating these well scenes, then the Samaritan woman must be the one betrothed. At the end of his Gospel, John says that, "these things were written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (21:31). The Samaritan woman, then, serves as the archetype for those who are receptive to the Gospel, and those who are betrothed, hold union, with Christ as Messiah.

With this in mind, it is best to go through the narrative and examine how the Samaritan woman responds and her character. There is some debate as to the attitude of the woman at the well. Some believe that she is hostile with Jesus, at least for the first half of the dialog.[36] However, based on close exegesis of the passage, it may be surprising for some that the Samaritan woman handles Jesus with respect, cautious at first to be sure, but leans into the truth as Jesus continues to dialog with her. In the first exchange (4:9-14), Jesus makes the statement that if the woman knew who he was, she would be asking him for a drink of living water (4:10). Her response seems to be one of confusion as noted by others;[37] however, this is in keeping with John's use of dramatic irony, and consistent with the allusion to the well stories. What is most interesting here is the use of Κύριε. She is the first in John's Gospel to address him as such and she does so with increasing respect (15,

---

[34]Ibid.

[35]McWhirter makes mention of her marital status and meeting place, *Bridegroom Messiah.,* 61, 64. Witherington connects the Samaritan community with a spiritual community. *Wisdom of Jesus*, 118.

[36]Beasley-Murray, *John*, 61; Kostenberger, *John*, 149; Morris, *John*, 231.

[37]Beasley-Murray, *John*, 62; Kostenberger, *John*, 148; Morris, *John*, 231; Keener, *John*, 586.

19).[38] She does temporize but she does not do so out of spite, but out of curiosity.

The next section of the conversation (15-18), Jesus had just finished explaining how he is greater than Jacob (from the question she asked in 11). John uses the construct λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν, which is more formal and respectful, noting the seriousness and sincerity of her next question.[39] Others, however, have noted that she continues to misunderstand. She wants this water immediately, as if she still things of physical matters.[40] However, she was able to draw the comparison between this stranger and Jacob in 11, and noting the sincerity by which John describes her request,[41] why would she be attempting to undermine Jesus at this point? It is best to take her as being open to what Jesus is saying.

In verse 17, Jesus begins a conversation that highlights the sinfulness of the woman he is dealing with. This is the most striking difference between Jesus' encounter at the well and the Old Testament well stories. The women at those wells were specifically mentioned to be virgins and of good virtues, this Samaritan woman is revealed to be unfaithful[42] and living with a man who is not her husband (17-18). If we keep in mind that John is using her as an archetype of the kinds of people that can find life in Jesus, then there is a specific reason why John chooses to highlight the woman's sinfulness. The woman is a sinner and a Samaritan, but through all of that Jesus proves that he cares nothing for rivalries and hatreds, his ministry is for all people.[43]

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Samaritan as an archetype for the Bride of Christ is obvious when set against these other betrothal-well narratives. If this passage is pointing to Christ as the Messianic Bridegroom, then, to continue the allusion to the well, it is necessary that the woman be the betrothed, or at least the representative. This narrative is a great evangelistic story that the audience can easily slip into the role of the Samaritan woman, an outcast even to an outcast people, and yet the Savior brings her the living water. Its evangelistic value is given more weight given that that is the purpose behind John writing his Gospel.

---

[38]John F. McHugh, *John 1-4* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2014), 270.
[39]McHugh, *John 1-4,* 272.
[40]Morris, *John*, 234.
[41]And the continued use of Κύριε in her request.
[42]Or at least assumed to be because 5 men found cause to divorce her.
[43]Morris, *John*, 225.

Journal of Grace Theology 3.2 (2016): 83-111

Book Reviews

Graham, Jack. Angels: W*ho They Are, What They Do, and Why It Matters.* Bloomington, Minn.: Bethany House, 2016. 220 pp. Pb; $19.99

Angels is mostly devotional, not theological in presentation. This is clear from the chapter headings. The chapters are divided into four sections: The Wisdom of Angels as You start your Journey; The Protections of Angels as You Sustain Life's Blows; The Encouragement of Angels as You Soar on Eagles' Wings; The Presence of Angles as You Stay the Course with Christ.

All of these are important aspects of Christian living. In each chapter the reader can find encouragement. However, I have some major problems with the book. First, it is weak on the theology of angels. It is more on the presentation of his sermons which are devotional, than of theological substance or teaching concerning angels. Second, it has the underlining principle that the work of angels is the same throughout redemptive history. The writer presents the work of angels as always the same, overlooking the dispensational aspects of their work. He makes this clear when he writes: "…the same angelic presence and protection that enveloped Jesus Christ at all points along his early journey remains in service to those who love God here and now" (p. 14). That is a questionable concept he nowhere proves, but only assumes. Third, there is an absence of Pauline teaching for the church the body of Christ. This is natural, since he sees no dispensational distinctions of angels' work. Fourth, the book emphasizes Christian living rather than teaching on angels.

I read this book with mixed feelings. I was disappointed the actual teaching about angels is superficial at best. At the same time, I was uplifted at times by the devotional truths of the book. However, there are better books on angels available.

Jim Gray
Berean Advocate
graysinmaricopa@gmail.com

DeYoung, Kevin. *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?* Wheaton: Crossway, 2015. Pp. Pb., $12.99.

DeYoung describes his book as "a Christian book, with a narrow focus, defending a traditional view of marriage" (p. 15). This means he believes God's Word is an "inspired, authoritative, unbreakable, fully trustworthy account of divine revelation" (p. 15). Rather than focusing on other fields of study, he approaches same-sex behavior from the biblical perspective as a sin which places it always outside of God's will. Therefore, it is not a book which directly addresses specific questions one may have regarding one's own or another's homosexual impulses, such as how to tell one's parents or how to help a friend who has same sex urges. Because of his basic beliefs, DeYoung concludes same-sex marriage also is wrong, unlike some who believe committed same-sex relationships are not wrong.

He then describes his audience as one of the following: the convinced, the contentious, and the confused. The convinced are those who will agree with his contention that all practice of homosexuality is sin. He warns the convinced against becoming haughty and/or trying to "fix" the gay person. The convinced must also realize they, too, are sinners and need to be empathic and loving toward the gay person rather than feeling "better" than him/her. The contentious are those who have concluded the Bible is not as cut and dried as DeYoung concludes. They believe some (or all) homosexual behavior is not sinful because they choose to interpret certain passages in another way. DeYoung hopes they will at least weigh his interpretation of Scripture against how they interpret it. Thirdly are the confused. These are people who are hearing from both sides and wondering which is right. Some friends, acquaintances, theologians, etc. are saying one thing and others are saying another. Which is right?

DeYoung divides the book into two parts. The first five chapters examine the five most popular scriptural references usually used against the practice of homosexuality. The final seven chapters look at "…historical, cultural, pastoral, or hermeneutical reasons for setting aside the plain meaning of the Bible as it has been understood for nearly two millennia" (pp. 19-20).

DeYoung does delve into the five passages quite well. These include

Genesis 1-2, Genesis 19 (Sodom and Gomorrah), Leviticus 18 and 20, Romans 1, and I Corinthians 6/I Timothy 1. Like many who advocate for alternate translations of these passages, DeYoung looks at the Greek and Hebrew in an effort to better understand the passages. Although I believe he did explain the passages well, I did question some of his arguments. For example, on page 31, he says acceptance of same sex marriage may lead to the acceptance of polygamy. I really see no relationship between these two events, but I believe statements like this only add to the beliefs of the "convinced" that they are right.

I believe his arguments about Sodom and Gomorrah are the weakest. For example, he makes the statement: "The bottom line: Sodom had a reputation for more than social injustice. The city was a byword for sexual sin, and likely (italics mine) for homosexual sin" (p. 37). Later he argues some scholars believe the sexual sin was having sin with angels. DeYoung writes, "this interpretation is possible, but it is better (italics mine) to take 'other flesh' as a reference to men lying with a male instead of a female" (p. 38).

In chapter 3, DeYoung gives various arguments as to why the passages in Leviticus are still relevant today. He ends by saying the sins of adultery, incest, and even polygamy are reiterated as sins in the New Testament, so questions why homosexuality would be set aside is not clear. According to DeYoung, the Romans passage involves three exchanges: idolatry, serving the creature rather than the Creator, and giving up natural relations (i.e., same sex instead of opposite sex). In the third exchange, DeYoung describes various uses of the word "nature," concluding it refers to the male-female complementarity.

Finally the Corinthian and Timothy chapters involve the words malakoi and arsenokoitai and how to translate them into English. DeYoung gives several arguments regarding the meanings of the two words when translated, finally concluding when combined with other biblical teachings, the practice of homosexuality is not biblical.

Chapters 6-12 deal with the following arguments from cultural, historical, etc. perspectives: the Bible seldom mentions homosexuality when compared with other sins; homosexual promiscuity versus same-sex long term relationships; other sins such as gluttony and divorce and how they are dealt with today; the church's response to people who are hurting; his-

torical beliefs such concepts as the world is flat and slavery and racism are biblically supported; the unfairness of having to remain chaste because of one's sexual orientation; and finally how can a God of love be also a condemning God. Space does not allow for looking at each of these, but for the most part, DeYoung presents some good arguments using biblical truths.

In conclusion, I believe the "convinced" will have no trouble with this book. As DeYoung indicates in the beginning, he pretty much follows the Christian historical belief about the practice of homosexuality. I do appreciate he reminds those of us who are the "convinced" we must reach out in love, not condemnation. On the other hand, I have also read books written by the "contentious" who have responded to the arguments presented by DeYoung and others. People such as David Gushee, Matthew Vines, Alan Chambers, Justin Lee, Jack Rogers, James Brownson, etc. present their take on the various topics presented by DeYoung. Just reading books written by the "convinced" limits one to one view. Reading the perspectives of others gives one a good idea of where they are coming from. This then prepares the "convinced" for possible discussion with those who have a different view. Loving and caring for the person who is attracted to those of the same sex in the same way we love and care for all of our fellow sinners is the model given to us by Jesus Christ!

Janice Schregardus, Ph.D, LPC
Professor of Psychology & Sociology
Grace Bible College

Daniel L. Akin, Editor. *A Theology for the Church*, Revised Edition. Nashville: B&H, 2014. 770 pp. Hb.; $54.99

At first glance, one might suppose this book is an extended treatise on ecclesiology. It is not. This is a full treatment of the standard loci of systematic theology filling nearly 800 pages in a large page format (8 ½ by 9 ½). However, it offers a different approach than classical systematic theology texts. In the nine sections (fifteen chapters) outlining the book, there are multiple contributors; sixteen total, but only one who writes two separate

chapters. Each contributor is a confessional theologian and churchman, and baptistic in his commitment.

The authors work from the premise it is essential to wed doctrine to life, "to recognize the unity of faith and practice." Keying off the apostle Paul, they declare: "He saw no dichotomy between the theology of the church and the mission of the church." The unique strategy and pattern they have developed to work out this perspective is to organize each section around four main questions: What does the Bible say? What has the church believed? How does all this fit together? How does doctrine impact the church today?

The last chapter is "The Pastor as Theologian," by R. Albert Mohler, Jr. (President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary). He presents a brief but passionate and powerful exhortation: "Every pastor is called to be a theologian." Mohler goes on to say:

> Theological education exists, at least in part, to equip believers with the ability to think, to reason, to analyze, to learn, and to synthesize biblical truth so that this truth may be imparted to others through preaching and teaching and ministry. We dare not lose sight of this great purpose.

I would heartily recommend this last chapter be read first! I find it a bit curious the editor determined this wonderfully expounded principle would be the last rather than the opening chapter in the volume.

The first Section begins with the doctrine of revelation. The first chapter deals with Theological Method before moving to chapter 2, Natural Revelation, then chapter 3, Special Revelation. In chapter 1, unquestionably, the authors assert the primacy of the Bible for shaping and informing theological truth. Their survey of historical theological process is succinct but thorough, moving from patristics to Schliermacher and Barth to modern evangelicalism. They continue by providing ten guiding theological principles with a framework of four basic steps theologians can take in order to put those principles into practice.

In section 2, "The Doctrine of God," I was disappointed to see there was extremely little discussion about the Trinity. Beyond citing Tertullian as the one who came up with the term trinitas, not much else is said about this important doctrine. Nonetheless, Section 5, "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" is thorough going and orthodox.

In Chapter 6, "The Angels of God," Peter R. Schemm, Jr. takes the less popular position that "…a typological understanding of both Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 is warranted. The language of both texts transcends the earthly rulers being described and points to an evil spiritual power working in and through these rulers." He sees the fall of Satan and the angelic rebellion occurring sometime between Genesis 1:31 (everything was "very good") and 3:1-5 (the temptation in the Garden). In an excursus on Genesis 6 ('sons of God"), he favors the position these are "sons of princes" or "sons of lords"—royal men marrying women of a lower social status—rather than fallen angels cohabiting with women in an egregious sin with horrific results.

Chapter 10, "The Work of Christ," has an extended discussion of key concepts in the doctrine of the Atonement. I was surprised there was not a more extensive survey of the historical expositions of this important doctrine, although there is a large footnote citing references which discuss the extent of the atonement. While not fully resolving the issue, the text favors a four point Calvinism like in the Amyraldian persuasion; "…it should be maintained that God's calling of the elect to salvation does not infringe on the responsibility of sinners to repent and believe the gospel." Overall, this chapter is an outstanding presentation of Christology.

In Chapter 13, "The Church," there is a brief mention of Dispensationalism's distinction between Israel and the New Testament church, but there is no discussion about when "the body of Christ" began, which would be of interest to those in the Grace Gospel Fellowship. Likewise, the discussion of eschatology in Section 8, "The Doctrine of Last Things," is not concerned with acute dispensational considerations.

As the Sections/chapters progress—The Doctrine of God (three chapters), The Doctrine of Humanity (two chapters), The Doctrine of Christ (two chapters), The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, The Doctrine of Salvation, The Doctrine of the Church, and the Doctrine of Last Things—the established allegiance to the Scriptures, high level scholarship, lucid and penetrating insights and applicational suggestions continue apace. There is nothing quirky or peculiar, all is straight forward conservative evangelical commentary. However, while the text is eminently readable and well laid out, there are a small number of visuals, like charts, comparisons or illustrations; a few more of these would have been an enhancement.

Overall, this is a book for pastors and teachers well worth having and studying. In fact, this would be an ideal book for re-engaging in theological thinking. After graduation and ordination, too often it seems "theology" is a neglected area in pastoral reading. If you have not "read theology" in some time, here is an opportunity to revisit familiar themes in a refreshing, practical and challenging presentation with solid references for particular interests in ongoing personal research.

Timothy F. Conklin, D.D.
timnlota@gmail.com

Moo, Douglas J. *Galatians*. BENTC. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2013. 469 pp. Hb.; $44.99.

This commentary is part of a series by Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [BECNT]. It is one of the better sets of commentaries published in the last few years. Douglas Moo, professor at Wheaton College, has written volume one on Galatians. It is one of many he has written on the books of the New Testament. His work is always beneficial. This work on Galatians is a very fine, detailed, scholarly work; yet very accessible, understandable and reader friendly.

His introduction is somewhat long (64 pages), detailed, but does not bog down the reader. It is enjoyable to read and gives insight and understanding to the epistle. He argues for it being the first epistle written by Paul, and was penned before the Council of Acts 15. He holds a key to understanding of the book is the Law-grace contrast, especially in relation to the Gentiles. Unlike those of the new perspective on Paul, he defends it as completely valid to see works of the Law and works as an important element of the book [p. 27-28]. The key to the logic of Paul is Deut. 27:26 and his emphasis on the inaccuracy of the Law to deliver from the curse of the Law. He points out the agitator's presentation shows a reliance on human achievement, which Paul argues against. He sees several theological themes important to understanding the epistle: Salvation History and Apocalyptic; The Gospel; Christ; The Spirit; The Law; The Christian Life; the faith of Christ (which he views as meaning faith in Christ); and Justification/Righteousness, which seems to be the heart of his introduction as he

spends a great deal of space on this truth (48-62).

The last point has been subject to debate throughout history. He breaks down this point to the following subtitles: Righteousness Language in the OT and Judaism; The Meaning of Righteousness Language in Galatians; and The Importance of Justification in Galatians. He gives a good survey of the subject and comes to the conclusion righteousness carries the idea of vindication, apart from national identity and Torah observance, but by Jesus Christ by faith. There is a serious error on page 48 where the number of verses in Romans and Galatians are way off. Hopefully that will be caught and corrected in the next printing.

The major element is the commentary itself. It has the standard from of the series: a brief structure of the paragraph; exegesis and exposition, with additional notes centering upon textual items. He sees various forms of rhetoric engaged in this epistle (forensic, deliberative, and epideictic). He brings out the defensive posture of the epistle against Paul's unique apostleship, and what he defines as a perverting of the gospel. This perversion centers upon the Jewish Gentile conflict; as well as the law-grace conflict. His verse-by-verse treatment is careful, thoughtful, and reflects his high regard for the epistle. His deals with the critical issues in a fair and balanced way. He does not favor the new perspective in regards to Paul or the subject of grace. His exposition is detailed (but not overbearing), conservative, and theological centered. Both academic and non-academic readers can benefit from this commentary. It is one of the finest commentaries available on Galatians. It is a must have for any Pastor's library.

Jim Gray, Berean Advocate
graysinmaricopa@gmail.com

Schmitt, John W. and Laney, Carl J. *Messiah's Coming Temple: Ezekiel's Prophetic Vision of the Future Temple.* Updated Edition. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 2014. 248 pp. Pb., $16.99.

There are few places on earth so highly revered, by so many people as the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The site is considered sacred ground by the three Abrahamic religions. For Muslims it is the location of the golden domed "Dome of the Rock" (Haram esh-Sharif), a key landmark of the

Islamic faith. For the Jewish people, it is a place associated with heartache and longing. At one time, the temple of the Lord stood glorious in that space, representing God's presence among his people, but now only rubble and debris remain. For Christians, this was where Jesus spent a great deal of time, during his earthly ministry, pointing to a much greater sacrifice only he could offer. It is also the place where the Lord will one day establish his throne on earth, during the future millennial kingdom.

The authors explore the vision of Ezekiel 40-48 concerning a future temple in Israel. They ask if it is conceivable for the prophecy to be literally fulfilled. Schmitt and Laney make the case it is not only possible, but promised in Scripture. Schmitt is the executive director of Future Hope Ministries, an organization devoted to helping people explore the future and its relevance to our lives today. He has spent decades researching the Jerusalem temple, and the fruit of his study has led to the construction of a detailed model depicting the features of Ezekiel's temple. During his many travels to Israel he has forged relationships with Jewish leaders who are already preparing for a new temple. Laney is a professor of biblical literature at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon and has authored numerous books and commentaries.

The book explores the topic from multiple angles. The first few chapters look to the past, examining the significance of the temple in the Old Testament. This brief walk through biblical history reminds us Solomon's temple, constructed nearly a thousand years before Christ, was the center of Israel's worship. It was a visual reminder the Lord was the true King over his people. Sadly, the nation fell into idolatry, which ultimately led to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. when the army of Babylon marched into the city, destroying everything in their path, including the temple. The Jewish people would spend the next seventy years in exile, but they would eventually return, and rebuild. When the second temple was finished, it was not quite as spectacular as the first but continued to play a vital function for the spiritual life and identity of the nation. Later, at the dawn of the New Testament era, Herod the Great initiated a massive remodeling project, but the work was barely finished before the temple was once again demolished, this time at the hands of the Romans in 70 A.D. Looking back, from the perspective of the New Testament, there is much symbolism in the various features of the temple. The bronze alter and laver, the

table of showbread, the golden lampstand, the altar of incense all point to Jesus and his work as our Redeemer. He is the bread of life, the light of the world, and our atoning sacrifice. During the crucifixion, the veil covering the entrance to the most holy place was torn in two, showing us Christ has opened the way for unprecedented access to the Father.

A brief sketch is presented, in chapter 4, of various attempts to rebuild the temple after its destruction in 70 A.D. Of course, every effort has proven unsuccessful. The most recent endeavor took place during the Six Day War in 1967 when a group of Israeli soldiers captured the temple mount. They celebrated their victory by raising the Israeli flag, bearing the Star of David atop the Dome of the Rock. Many believed their dreams would soon come to realization. However, in the peace treaty that followed, control of the land was returned to the Palestinians. Disappointed, several young leaders made a vow if they are ever that close again, in their lifetime, they will be ready. Organizations have been formed with the goal of constructing all of the priestly vestments and ritual instruments required for temple services to resume. There is a common prayer offered by many in Israel today that petitions, "May it be Thy will that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our days" (p. 133).

After a quick archeological survey of several ancient temples in Egypt, Syria, and Mt. Gerizim in chapter 5, the focus of the book shifts to the future. Chapters 6 & 7 explore the major events yet to unfold on the prophetic calendar. First, the authors look to other prophetic books, to explore key passages beyond Ezekiel speak of a future temple. Malachi 3:1-5, Jeremiah 3:16-17, and Zechariah 8:22-23 are just a few references depicting Messiah taking up residence in Zion, and ruling as king over all the earth. The authors then proceed to give context to these events by laying out a basic premillennial timeline including the Rapture of the church, a period of tribulation that follows, the antichrist's reign of terror, the restoration of Israel, and the second coming of Christ to earth. Ezekiel's vision of the temple fits within the period of Christ's Messianic Kingdom. While there is certainly a great deal of Messianic fervor in Israel today, the authors point out many will be led astray by the antichrist when he enters the scene. This chapter is more of a survey than a defense of the premillennial position, but it is necessary to set the stage for Ezekiel's vision.

The central focus of the book is reached in chapters 8 and 9 as the

authors begin to deal with the specifics of Ezekiel's prophecy. They acknowledge the vision, found in Ezekiel 40-48 is one of the most intriguing yet controversial revelations in the Bible. During the twenty-fifth year of his captivity, the prophet was taken up to a high mountain outside the city of Jerusalem and given a measuring rod for the purpose of recording the dimensions of a new temple. What he saw would have been especially relevant for the Jewish people living in exile. It would have seemed impossible for God's promises to be fulfilled while Jerusalem lay in ruins, but these verses provided assurance that they wouldn't remain in exile forever. As the people realized their God remained faithful, despite their unfaithfulness, it would have prompted a spirit of repentance. Schmitt and Laney explore the details of Ezekiel's temple moving from the Eastern Gate, to the outer court, into the sanctuary. Photos of a scaled model bring to life verses which can be difficult to visualize. The authors also give helpful insight into the units of measurement used by Ezekiel, helping the reader to grasp the scope of the temple's size. While there are similarities in Ezekiel's vision to the first and second temple, there are also many points of divergence as well. An entire chapter will be devoted towards the end of the book on explaining the significance of these differences.

Ezekiel's temple vision has been interpreted by biblical scholars in numerous ways, and the authors weigh the merit of each option (p. 100-101). Some suggest these chapters should be read as a "literary memorial" of Solomon's temple, honoring the once glorious sanctuary which had only recently been laid waste. The trouble with this view is it is unnecessary: the first temple was described in detail elsewhere in Scripture, and Ezekiel presents a very different picture. A second perspective understands these chapters as blueprints given to the exiles for a second temple. But this was not the temple they built, and it would have been impossible for them to do so without major changes happening in topography of Jerusalem. Others look at these chapters as a heavenly temple, or a spiritual depiction of the Church. Both of these views read too much into the passage and impose unwarranted allegory onto the text. The final option is to regard Ezekiel's vision as a literal temple that will exist during the millennial age. This is the view of the authors, and they make the case this best fits with other passages of Scripture.

The greatest challenge against a literal interpretation of Ezekiel's tem-

ple vision has to do with the sacrifices he describes. If Christ has already offered himself as the perfect sacrifice, once for all, how could ritual sacrifices ever again be a part of God's program at any point in the future? The authors devote two chapters to this important question. First, they look back at the different types of sacrifices given by God's people in the Old Testament. A detailed chart on pages 150-151 highlights important differences between the sacrifices of the Old Covenant and those envisioned by the prophet Ezekiel. Under the Mosaic code, burnt offerings were required to make atonement for sin. The sacrifices themselves could not remove guilt, but served as a token payment until a time when a better sacrifice could be presented (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 10:5-10). Schmitt and Laney make the case sacrifices in the millennial age could point back to the cross, commemorating the finished work of Christ. To bolster their argument they cite an interesting choice of words in Ezekiel 43:15 where the Hebrew word ariel is used to describe the altar in the Messianic temple. This is the only place in the entire Old Testament where this word is used in connection with sacrifices (p.136). It is noteworthy because ariel means "lion of God," a designation for Christ. There were other sacrifices, in the Old Testament, as well. The peace offering described in Leviticus 3 was given as a voluntary expression of praise and thanksgiving. The authors ask why sacrifices in the future kingdom could not have a similar meaning. They suggest that in the millennium, sacrifices will take the place of communion, serving as a reminder of what Christ has accomplished on behalf of his people and providing an expression of praise.

The authors use the closing chapters to offer practical application to our lives today, showing us how prophecy was meant to instill in God's people a hope and a longing for the future. Rather than leaving the reader dwelling on concepts that relate to the future, Schmitt and Laney return to the cross and the ministry of Jesus which has the power to change lives in our present world. "Messiah's Coming Temple" would be a valuable resource for anyone studying the temple or leading a series through Ezekiel. It certainly offers helpful guidance to navigate through some of the most challenging passages of the book.

Trent Boedicker
Pastor, Grace Gospel Church,
Ada, Ohio

Mancini, Will and Warren Bird. *God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates for Finding and Focusing Your Church's Future.* Nashville: B&H, 2016. 288 pp. Hb; $19.99.

"Ministry without clarity is insanity." This is an undeniable statement, but how many of us do ministry in an unclear environment? You may say, "Well, it is because I am no visionary," or you might say, "It takes too much time, effort, and energy to even attempt such a project. That time would be better spent 'doing real ministry.'" Yes, vision casting is difficult, time consuming, and has even been muddied by poor methods and books in the past. However, the confusion around vision casting does not permit us to disregard the value it can bring. The ultimate desire in vision casting is to provide intense clarity and purposeful practice to a church.

God Dreams begins with an introduction to the idea of vision casting and context on where the author is coming from. He encourages us to be ready to use the material and prepares us for how to introduce it to others. The middle of his book contains the "meat and potatoes" of what he is writing about. The author details and explains his 12 vision templates and how we can use them. There are illustrations, biblical support, and worksheets for each area you can assess if this resonates with your church context. Finally, he concludes with how to breathe life into the vision templates and begin implementing his suggestions. He gives a very practical and impactful strategic plan for everyone to use.

The book has several strengths. First, the author truly delivers when he claims he will help you "to overcome the fruitless planning efforts that many church team's experience. (http://goddrea.ms/summary)." He makes the process obtainable for those who are novices or believe they are inept at vision casting. Second, Mancini provides charts and pictures you can draw to explain the process of vision casting and strategic planning—and it works! I explained his method called the "horizon storyline" in seven minutes to a group who is going to do strategic planning in the near future, and they all understood. I am highly confident I can explain the method just as well at a coffee shop using a napkin as at a board meeting where I have access to a white board.

Third, he also incorporates vivid and descriptive language into his pre-

sentation. The book encourages and helps the vision caster know what illustrations connect and inspire people. For each segment of the strategic plan he provides metaphors, illustrations, and connections you can use to help people understand and capture the vision.

Fourth, Mancini connects the different "visions" with Scripture. While we may or may not agree with his verses, I appreciate he is using Scripture as his standard. This is not another "how-to" book to add to our pile. He acknowledges church and ministry is far larger in scope and intensity than a 5-step process. He leaves a lot of room for us to align the method with our own church culture. He is aware it is not ideal for every church leader to read the book in its entirety; it would be overwhelming for some. Instead, he highlights where it would be helpful for some elders or lay-leaders to read so they can understand and be excited about being a part of the vision casting process.

Fifth, he presents the formula of how big your vision can and should be. Yes, that raised my eyebrows at first considering you can hardly fit churches, much less the people who comprise the churches, into a formula. But sure enough, his formula is one of my favorite items I took away from the book. He gives a self-assessment to determine how long-ranged focused and aggressive you can be as you vision cast. The formula is based on the Dynamic of Trust inside the church, the History of Progress your church is currently experiencing, and the Culture of Mission. This outreach is in perspective of how stable your church leadership is. This perspective is extremely helpful in slowing the organization down or encouraging the organization to dream bigger.

The book has a few weaknesses. At the beginning of the book I was lost in some of the author's jargon. I have not read through his other book (Church Unique) so I was somewhat at a loss to understand what he was saying at first. Second, I got the sense he is very proud of his material. He talks frequently of himself, which I am not overly fond of. However, I do greatly appreciate his work and ideas so I am able to tolerate the egotism that appears to come through his writing. Third, the middle section outlines the different types of "visions" and can get a bit overwhelming for a first time reader and new pastor. There is a lot of content presenting very good things, but it is difficult to absorb the information all in one sitting.

I recommend this book. If you are looking into establishing a vision for

your church this book will help you understand what can be done, illustrations of how it is accomplished, and biblical examples of how vision casting is good and even necessary in the local church. If you are not in a position to have a new vision, I continue to recommend learning his "horizon storyline". If anything, you can learn how to incorporate this into your own life. On a church organizational level, Will Mancini helps you break down the yearly calendar and gives you guidance on how to lead people. Personally, I have worked through my own "horizon storyline" and it is helping me pursue the next steps in my philosophy of ministry. As a young leader, I am excited to have a practical model of leadership for staff and major volunteers. It helps me tell a story of where the church believes it should be heading and how we can individually join in on this journey. This book helps me find clarity in ministry.

Brent Befus
Pastor, Bethesda Church
Prior Lake, Minnesota

Longenecker, Richard N. *The Epistle to the Romans.* NIGTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2016. 1208 pp. Hb; $80.

I long waited for this commentary. Richard N. Longenecker is one of the premier scholars of our day. His work on Romans will be useful for some time to come. It is clearly directed toward those who know and use Greek, however, it is useful to the Pastor as well. It is technical, but there are gems for the non-Greek scholars as well.

The introduction is directed more toward an historical approach of how this book has changed from an earlier view of being a compendium of Christian doctrine to today it is mainly seen as an epistle by much of modern scholarship. This has come about because the absence of some major doctrines in the epistle (i.e. the resurrection; the Lord's Supper). Much of the introduction deals with critical issues, not suppressing them since its major emphasis the Greek text. It is relatively short and concise, but detailed enough to make the reader think. His gives the two main thesis of the epistles as (1) To impart what he calls a "spiritual gift" which is unique and is also known as "my gospel" (2:16; 16:25). (2) To seek the Romans

assistance for the extension of his mission to the Gentiles (1:13; 15:24). There are subsidiary purposes of defending the gospel, to strengthen the believers, and direct they relation to the Roman government (pages 10-11). These certainly fall in line with the dispensational position that Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles. He holds the central thrust of the epistle is more Gentile than Jewish.

The main element of the commentary proper. It is massive, technical, and somewhat reader friendly. However, at least a basic knowledge of Greek is needed by the reader. The commentary is laid out differently than other volumes in this series. In this volume each section includes Textual notes; Form/Structure/Setting; Exegetical Comments; Biblical Theology; and Contextualization for Today. That is not the case in earlier books in the series. One wonders if this format will be used in future contributions to the NIGTC series. It certainly changes the consistency and uniformity of the series.

He presents the book as being structured in a fourfold way: Romans 1-4; 5-8; 9-11; 12-16. He sees the main thrust of the epistle as being Romans 5-8. His exegesis and comments are sound, detailed, helpful, and challenging at times. He gives somewhat a balanced and fair views of the text. One will not always agree with his conclusions, but his reasoning for them are clearly presented. He seems to hold reconciliation as the heart of the gospel and epistle instead of the more common view of righteousness (pages 566-570). I enjoyed much of what he wrote and gained new insights.

There are two weaknesses I see in the commentary—weaknesses about which the reader needs to be aware. First, in places he is too brief for a commentary of its stature. A prime example is Romans 3:10-18, which is a long quote from the Old Testament. He does a good job on the handling of the Old Testament but never really deals with the Greek text of the quote. He deals with the passage in only two and a half pages, and rarely mentions the Greek text (contra Cranfield, who in a little over four pages refers to the Greek text a number of times). This brevity seems odd for a commentary of the Greek text.

Second, Longenecker does not always deal with the views of his fellow commentators. For example, in Romans 9:22-23 he says nothing about Moo and Schreiner's view of double predestination, although he interacts with both commentaries. That disappointed me; I was looking for some

interaction on the subject. He does not even interact with N.T. Wright and simply states he was influenced by Dunn, but gives no details of his teaching, although he deals with the Law and the New Perspective on Paul (p. 362-370).

Overall, this is a good commentary and anyone studying this great epistle will be aided by it. Despite its weaknesses, it is a worthwhile investment. But is it worth the high price? Its price may make it out of reach for many; so evaluate carefully before you invest. Make sure before you purchase. I would not rate it as the best but certainly in the upper tier of commentaries available on Romans.

Jim Gray
Berean Advocate
Maricopa AZ

Longenecker, Richard N. *The Epistle to the Romans.* NIGTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2016. 1208 pp. Hb; $80.

It is clichéd to call this new contribution to the New International Greek Text Commentary "highly anticipated." Richard N. Longenecker is one of the premier New Testament scholars of the last fifty years and his contributions to Pauline studies have been considerable (*Paul, Apostle of Liberty,* Second Edition, Eerdmans 2015; *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary, 1990). His brief *Introducing Romans: Critical Concerns in Paul's Most Famous Letter* (Eerdmans, 2011). This magisterial commentary builds on a successful career spent studying Paul by digging deep into the details of this most important book of the New Testament.

Longenecker states in his preface he desires to spell out a proper interpretation of Romans by building on the work of past commentators, being critical, exegetical, and constructive in his analysis of the text of Romans, and to set a course for future study of Romans (xv). He certainly achieves these goals in the commentary. First, with respect to "building on the work of past commentators," The beginning of the commentary lists seven pages of previous commentaries divided into Patristic, Reformation, and Modern Critical commentaries. Second, Longenecker seeks to "be critical, exegetical, and constructive in his analysis of the text of Romans." It is certain-

ly the case that his comments are judiciously critical and sensitive to the wider range of theological interests current in Pauline studies today. Third, one goal of a commentary of this size is "to set a course for future study of Romans." Only time will tell if Longenecker achieve this goal, but it will be difficult for the next generation of writers to ignore this commentary.

With respect to typical introductory material, Longenecker only briefly sketches the major critical issues in the book, referring readers to his recent Introducing Romans for greater detail. Briefly, Paul wrote the book from Corinth in the winter of 57-58woth the involvement of both Tertius, Phoebe and perhaps input from members of the Corinthian congregation (5-6). These are not controversial conclusions. He deals with two "matters recently resolved," including the presence of glosses or interpolations (a possibility, but unlikely if textual criticism is properly applied to the text) and the original form of the book. Longenecker agrees with Harry Gamble's Textual History of the Letter to the Romans as well as Hurtado and Marshall on the authenticity of the final doxology (8).

He devotes more space to several extensively debated topics. First, with respect to the identity and character of the recipients of the letter, Longenecker argues the recipients are both Jews and Gentiles who think in "Jewish categories," but are not Judaizers. Second, Paul's purpose for writing the letter is both pastoral and missional. Paul desires to impart a "spiritual gift" to the Roman believers but also to seek their support for his Gentile mission to Spain (10). The book also serves to defend Paul against misrepresentations of his mission and theology as well as offering council regarding a dispute between the "weak" and the "strong." Third, the epistolary genre of the letter is a "letter essay," setting instructional material in an epistolary format (14). His fourth issue is related to the third, the rhetorical genres of the letter. Although scholars have identified Romans as forensic, deliberative, or epideictic models for Romans, Longenecker considered the letter to be protreptic, a "word of exhortation" (15) with some influence from Jewish remnant rhetoric (especially in chapters 9-11). Finally, the focus of the book is to be found in Romans 5:1-8:39. This unit of the letter is the message of the Christian Gospel contextualized for Gentiles who have no prior interest in Judaism of Jewish Christianity (17). Longenecker thinks Paul found the story of the Exodus and forensic justification to be unknown and insignificant to Gentiles. His presentation

of the Gospel to the Gentiles therefore focused on peace with God, and the relationship of sin and death. All people are equally unable to overcome death by their own strength, therefore all people need to enter in to a new relationship, to be "in Christ."

Paul quotes approximately 100 Old Testament texts in 83 places in the letter and alludes to many more. This is a much higher rate than any other of Paul's letters and the quotes are not evenly distributed throughout the book. Romans 5:1-8:39 has only two quotes. Unlike Galatians or the Corinthians letters, Longenecker does not think Paul's use of the Old Testament is a result of some Jewish opponent in the Roman churches. Paul's exegetical strategies are sometimes difficult to follow, these will be discussed as the commentary proceeds. In addition to quotations, Romans may have use confessional material, religious aphorisms, Jewish and Jewish Christian devotional and catechetical material (23). These materials will be identified in the commentary in the Structure/Setting section.

The body of the commentary is divided into several major units with introductions (chapters 1-8, 9-11, 12-15). Longenecker begins each subunit with a new translation of the text followed by notes on textual variants. The inclusion of a translation is not found in all of the NIGTC series and is welcome here especially given the extensive textual notes Longenecker provides. The introduction has a twelve-page summary of the manuscript evidence for Romans. Longenecker uses the United Bible Society's GNT4 and NA27 as his base text and he discusses every variant appearing in the GNT4 in Romans and many of the variants found in NA27. The introduction also includes a chart listing the manuscripts for Romans including date, contents, Aland category (32-34).

Following the translation, Longenecker offers a section entitled Form/Structure/Setting, reminiscent of the Word Biblical Commentary series, a feature not found in other NIGTC commentaries. This section any special problems in the unit. For example in this section for Romans 2:17-29, Longenecker has brief comments on who is addressed by the pericope, the two prominent rhetorical conventions in the passage, the possibility of chiasmus in the passage, the use of Scripture and traditional material, and the structure and setting of the passage and a short note on theological issues. The Form/Structure/Setting section is flexible so that Romans 4:1-24 has an excellent section on the Example of Abraham in Second Temple period;

for Romans 9:6-29 Longenecker covers major proposals for interpreting the section.

Longenecker's exegetical comments are divided by verse and the commentary proceeds phrase-by-phrase. Greek and Hebrew appear without transliteration, although the exegesis is not dense with syntactical observations. For the most part he is able to stick to his intention to provide a faithful explanations of the text without being bogged down by minute details. This makes for a very readable commentary. Faithful to his intentions stated in the preface, Longenecker interacts with ancient and Reformation commentaries as well as a full range of modern writers. For example, the index lists some 27 references to Origin, 20, to Tertullian, 22 to Calvin, and 18 to Luther. Pages are not overly cluttered with references to secondary literature; it is remarkable how few footnotes there are in this commentary. This indicates original commentary rather than reporting what other commentators have already said.

After the exegetical comments, Longenecker includes several pages under the heading of "Biblical Theology." These sections Longenecker builds on his exegesis by integrating Romans into wider Pauline and systematic theology. This is refreshing since commentary writers often ignore the contribution of their exegesis to the larger world of theology. Commenting on Romans 8:31-39, Longenecker says interpreters of Romans have "atomized what Paul writes…bringing everything under only one particular theme" or are "at a loss to understand the coherence of what he has written" (761). Following the biblical theology, Longenecker concludes with a brief "contextualization for today." These are not "pastoral comments" by way of application. In fact, there is sometimes only a slight difference between these sections and the biblical theology sections.

The commentary includes a number of short excurses. For example, after commenting on Romans 3:25a, Longenecker includes an excursus entitled "Three Exegetical and Thematic Matters in Romans 3:25a that Are of Particular Importance (Though Also Frequently Disputed) and Therefore Deserving of Special Consideration." (Yes, that is the title!) What follows is seven pages of slightly smaller print discussing the meaning of "whom God presenting publically," "Sacrifice of Atonement," and the prepositional phrase "through his faithfulness, by his blood." This excursus is more detailed than the rest of the commentary, but it should not be assumed

an excursus is not critically important to the commentary. For example, Longenecker's nine pages of comments on the righteousness of God (Romans 1:17) are an excellent summary of the state of the discussion of this important phrase. His eight pages on "'Works of the Law' and the 'New Perspective'" is worth reading before working through the commentary on Romans 3:20. Another critically important note is his more than eight pages on the remnant in rabbinic writings and non-conformist Judaism in the first two centuries B.C.E. A list of all of the excurses ought to be included in the table of contents or indices.

Any commentary in the New International Greek Text Commentary is worth buying and often becomes the first resource I consult. Longenecker's contribution to this series takes its place along a handful of recent major commentaries on the book of Romans which will set the agenda for the study of this important book for the next generation of biblical scholars.

Phillip J. Long, Ph.D
Professor of Bible and Biblical Languages
Grace Bible College

Abner Chou, Editor. *What Happened in the Garden?: The Reality and Ramifications of the Creation and Fall of Man.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Academic, 2016. 301 pp. Pb. $19.99.

It was with anticipation I looked to and wanted to read this book. In recent years a renewed effort among evangelicals questions the historical reliability of Adam, the Garden, and the fall. The book reasons for the importance of the beginning chapters of the Bible; it is foundational for the whole Bible and the reliance on theology to life itself. This book answers the issues and defends the orthodox view of these three chapters of Genesis. It is a work by the faculty of The Master's College. In light of the allegations by some evangelicals in the recent debate, a new defense is necessary.

The book is divided into three sections. These sections deal with the historicity, theology, and scientific elements of the revelation of these chapters section by section. Section 1: Reality of Genesis 2-3. This is di-

vided into four chapters. In this section the foundation of the book is being laid. Chapter 1 deals with Hermeneutic and History in Genesis 3. Abner Chou does a good job of identifying the issues involved. The issues revolve around exegetical issues; issues of history and theology which he identifies as the thesis that history is the ground of theology. It is the way theology works. He debunks the mythology view.

Chapters 2 and 3 (Todd Charles Wood and Joseph W. Francis) deal with Adam and the animals and the genetics of Adam. In regard to Adam and the animals the authors make clear Adam was a product of special creation in the image of God, and for the purpose of dominion over the earth. They deal with this in contrast to evolution. They bring out the distinction between humans and the higher forms of life in the animals (i.e. apes). Creation of kinds can be distinguished. We need to recognize the difference between as well as within evolution and creation. They continue to examine evolution and creation with a chapter of Genetics of Adam. In this chapter they argue for the young earth model of creation and history. This chapter is one of the most difficult for understanding of the problem and not reader friendly. However, they do show their intended purpose that evolution is not the only way changes in the human race could take place.

Chapter 4 is on Map of Misreadings (Grant Horner). This chapter brings us back to basics, which is understanding the text correctly. This is vital for it is the core of understanding of the Bible, theology, and its practice. He suggests the text is not the problem; it is in the explanation of the text which misreading occurs. Because of our sin, our tendency is to explain away, de-historicize, and misread Genesis 3. We must read the text features as a story, told simply and clearly, meaning exactly what it says.

Section 2 deals with Theological Ramification of the Creation and Fall. This section contains only two chapters. First, Genesis 3 and original sin by Paul R. Thorell. He approaches the subject in what I would regard in reverse order—beginning with the historical church view; to Paul's view of Genesis 3; back to the prophets; and ending with Pentateuchal context. All the areas uphold Adam's transgression had universal consequences on his posterity: sin, death, and judgment. The second is on the Seed and Schaeffer by William Varner. Francis Schaeffer advocated dualism of history (lower story) and faith (upper story) strongly influenced religious thought; faith does not need some objective verifiable events in space-time history.

He views Schaeffer's philosophy in the context of Genesis 3. Varner upholds the Messianic promise of Genesis 3:15 and the reality of Adam and Eve as historical. One needs to read this chapter on Genesis 3:15 in regard to the promise.

Section 3 is the largest section of the book. It consists of seven chapters. The section deals with the reality of sin and its effects upon this world and mankind. Each chapter looks at the fall through different lenses. R.W. Mackey deals with three effects on Human enterprise (Chapter 7). Taylor Jones has an excellent chapter of the effects of the curse through the lens of thermodynamics (Chapter 8). This chapter will speak to those that have a scientific orientation. For those with legal minds, George Crawford looks at the legal aspects of te fall (Chapter 9). Ernie Baker looks through the lens of psychology (Chapter 10). Jo Suzuki deals with the subject through the lens of the topic of gender. Alexander Granados deals with the importance of the Historical Adam in education and our Christian curriculum. John MacArthur concludes this section by upholding the doctrine of original sin.

The book focuses on the important and vital issues of Genesis 3. In light of developments in theology, history and world events. This book is timely and important. It upholds the historical interpretation of this key chapter. In reality, our interpretation of the events of the Garden influence our whole theological viewpoint. The details do matter. This book is a must in everyone's library. It is coherent, clear, and compelling. One of the best books I read this year.

Pastor Jim Gray
Berean Advocate
Maricopa AZ

Gorman, Michael J. *Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul and His Letters*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2016. 731 pp. Pb; $48.

In the introduction to this second edition of Gorman's textbook on the Pauline letters, Gorman offers ten approaches to the Apostle Paul's letters. As is common in a Pauline introduction, the first two are the familiar traditional and new perspectives on Paul, but he also includes narra-

tive-intertextual (Richard Hays), apocalyptic (Martyn, Gaventa, and Campbell), anti-imperialist (Richard Horsley), the "Wright-ian perspective" (N. T. Wright), Paul within Judaism (Mark Nanos), social scientific (John Barclay), feminist (Lynn Cohick, Amy-Jill Levine), and participationist (Douglas Campbell, Morna Hooker, Udo Schnelle). The reader of his introduction to Paul will find references to all of these perspectives in Gorman's presentation since all make a contribution to our understanding of Paul.

The first six chapters of the book deal with background issues (Greco-Roman context, Pauline Mission and Paul the letter-writer) and theology (the Gospel, Pauline Spirituality and Theology). Since Gorman's other work on Paul reflections a participationist model, it is not surprising to find this language throughout the book. For example, Gorman Romans 8 as the "cruciform life in the Spirit" and 1 Corinthians 13 is the "rule" of cruciform love. Gorman understands justification through this lens as well. Justification in Paul is both a liberation from sin and a transformation to righteousness (175).

In his chapter on Pauline theology, Gorman offers twelve fundamental convictions (which he summarizes in a single sentence, albeit about a half-page in length). Rather than list these, I will focus on what I think are the most important for understanding Gorman's approach to Paul over all. First, following N. T. Wright, Gorman sees Jesus's death on the cross was the "climax of the covenant." What the cross accomplished in Jesus what Israel could not and initiated the new age of the spirit. The present age is the overlap of this age and the age to come. Second, Gorman describes the "law of the messiah" as cruciformity, the cross is not just the source of salvation, but also the shape of salvation (177). In a text like Philippians 3:10-11 Paul can claim to be like Jesus in his death, even though he is still in this life. Third, Gorman has always challenged readers by describing the church as an alternative community. The ones who participate in the new cross-shaped life in Christ form an alternative to the world in which they find themselves. For Gorman, this is a rich source for the application of Pauline theology to present church life. If churches are to be an alternative community, then they ought to model their participation in new life by transforming communities through justice and peace-making.

Following these introductory chapters, Gorman provides a chapter on each of the thirteen Pauline letters. He begins with the title of the book with a short tagline and key verse. The first section for each chapter is the "story behind the letter." This section briefly sets the letter into the proper cultural and historical context (including the context of the book of Acts). The second section of the

chapter, "the story within the letter," works through the outline of the book the book offering a short running commentary of each pericope. Occasionally Greek words appear transliterated in footnotes, so a student with little or no Greek will have no trouble reading the body of the chapter. Gorman provides bullet-point summaries at the end of sections for larger books. The third section in each chapter is the "story in front of the letter." Here Gorman collects a series trenchant quotations from historical and contemporary commentators on the letter (and occasionally a non-specialist). Each chapter concludes with a series of questions for reflection and a "for further reading" list, divided into both general and technical works. This provides a student with resources to write responses and papers based on the reflection questions.

Rather than survey each chapter, I will highlight a few of the usual things people want to know about a textbook on Pauline letters. Gorman lists 1-2 Thessalonians first, and although he considers the north Galatia theory to be the scholarly consensus, he thinks the south Galatia better accounts for the data and considers Galatians to be written between 48-51. With respect to the unity of 2 Corinthians, Gorman surveys the major view for dividing 2 Corinthians into three separate letters and suggests that Paul's use of rhetoric may account for the apparent disunity of the book. He says what unifies 2 Corinthians is the "Spirit-filled cruciform shape of the transformed life" (346). With respect to the purpose of Romans, Gorman argues the main purpose is Jew-Gentile friction in Rome, but there is far more to Romans than this one issue.

With respect to the Prison epistles, Gorman thinks an Ephesian imprisonment for Philippians is simpler, but it does not make much difference for the interpretation of the letter. His comments on Philippians 2:5-11 are the most detailed in the book primarily because Gorman considers these verses to be Paul's "master story." Understanding Paul's presentation of Philippians 2:5-11 will help to interpret other problem texts in the Pauline letters. Gorman does not think the a decision on the authorship of the unit is necessary, Paul may have used a preexisting hymn, adapted a hymn, or composed the text himself.

The authorship of Ephesians and Colossians is always a major point of discussion in introductions to Paul. Gorman concludes Paul likely did not write Colossians word-for-word, but it is so close to Paul's thought that it must be written by someone close to Paul who knew him well (551). He suggests Tychicus, the bearer of the letter, is the most likely candidate since he may have acted as scribe for Paul and then interpreter of the letter when it was first delivered. He thinks this is the same case for Ephesians, Tychicus wrote the book "maintaining the

voice of Paul" (580).

For the Pastoral letters, Gorman discusses 2 Timothy first because he thinks the content of the letter comes from the time of Paul and accurately represents his thoughts, but may have been written after Paul's death. 1 Timothy and Titus come from a later time and reflect the church after Paul's death (614).

There are illustrations and maps throughout the book. The map of Corinth is particularly well done, I would have liked to see these for each of the locations (although that is not always possible based on the evidence). Many of the photographs were taken by Gorman or his students on his trips to Pauline sites in Europe and Turkey. Although they are reproduced in black and white, they are not the usual photographs found in these sorts of textbooks.

Conclusion. Apostle of the Crucified Lord continues to be a valuable introduction to the Pauline letters. Gorman's presentation of Pauline theology challenges contemporary church leaders not only to know Pauline theology, but to live as cross-shaped people who seek to transform their world.

Phillip J. Long, Ph.D
Professor of Bible and Biblical Languages
Grace Bible College

Walton, Benjamin H. *Preaching Old Testament Narratives.* Grand Rapids, Mich. Kregel, 2016. 254 pp. Pb; $18.99.

This short book is based on Walton's 2012 D.Min thesis for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary ("Enhancing Hermeneutical Accuracy for the Preaching of Old Testament Narratives Using 2 Samuel 11-12 as a Case Study.") The book offers a methodology for both the interpretive and practical skills necessary for preaching Old Testament narrative.

The first three chapters deal with hermeneutical concerns. First, Walton explains preaching with "biblical authority" means accurately proclaiming and applying the message of biblical preaching texts (29). This necessarily requires a proper hermeneutic for the genre. Since the genre of Old Testament narrative is quite different than a New Testament epistle, Walton argues this difference in genre requires hermeneutical steps in order to write a sermon with an appropriate application.

Second, Walton deals with the often difficult problem of selecting appropriate

texts from the Old Testament to preach and making them applicable, what he calls "take home truth." He offers five steps, beginning with identifying a complete unit of thought (CUT), the moving from the original theological message (OTM) to the take-home truth (THT). These abbreviations are used throughout the book. Although chapter 2 is a basic introduction to reading narrative, it goes beyond identifying a narrative to demonstrating how a large narrative can be captured in a short, crisp original theological statement. If that statement is clear and concise, then "crafting the take-home truth" will be easier and more accurate. I suspect pastors usually start with what they want their application to be, then drive that thought into a text whether it belongs there or not. Walton's method starts with a serious reading of the text using all of the exegetical skills and tools available so that the final application arises from the text itself. Walton provides a short example of his method in chapter 3 using 1 Samuel 11-12.

One thing missing from Walton's discussion is some advice on "what not to preach." A pastor might decide to preach through a series of stories in the Old Testament, but not every paragraph needs to be read and explained. In fact, there are texts that do not make appropriate preaching texts. For example, when preaching through the life of David, it is important to illustrate Saul's jealousy of David and the loyalty of Saul's children to David rather than to their father. But it might not be appropriate to treat the dowry Saul demands of David in detail (1 Sam 18:24-28). I might discuss this unusual bride-price in a Sunday School class or a small group Bible Study, but most morning worship service sermons are not quite ready for this particular paragraph.

Walton indicates chapters 4-10 are a "conscious attempt to apply, in my own way, Donald Sunukijan's homiletic to the preaching of Old Testament narratives" (19). Some of this is generic enough to be used for any text in the Bible (creating introductions and conclusions, applications as "picture painting, etc.) Where Walton excels is his principles for preaching through a text in complete units of thought, rather than verse-by-verse. He recommends summarizing texts without reading whole sections. Certainly some verses ought to be read with the congregation, but to read twenty verses of an Old Testament narrative will not engage the congregation. Another way to do this is to explain the text as it is read, so that the preacher is creating a running commentary, explaining details of the text in order to bring the focus back on the take-home truth.

In Chapter 11 Walton outlines a method for moving from the text of the Old Testament to Christ. Since evangelical pastors want to preach Christ in every sermon, they often avoid the Old Testament because it can be difficult to draw a reasonable

and appropriate application from an Old Testament narrative that somehow can be tied to the Gospel. Walton uses an "old covenant to the new covenant" method, similar to apostolic preaching in Acts or Paul in the epistles. By preaching new Covenant theology or ethics, Walton asserts, we are preaching Christ (185). If the take-home truth is well-crafted and attentive to the theological meaning of the original text, then a preacher might as how Christ makes that application possible in the present, New Covenant age. Walton highly recommends the work of Sidney Greidanus, Preaching Christ from the Old Testament (Eerdmans, 1999) as well as his Preaching Christ from Genesis (Eerdmans, 2007).

In his final chapter, Walton offers advice on developing from a good preacher to an excellent preacher. These nine sections apply to any sort of preaching, whether expository from the Old Testament or not. Two sections of this chapter stand out to me. First, he recommends fifteen hours dedicated to sermon preparation, not including practicing the sermon. I suspect most pastors would like to dedicate this much time, but few are able to do so because of other demands on their time. Walton cites his mentor Donald Sunukjian as describing sermon preparation as "the hardest and best thing we will ever do" (200). Second, he recommends writing a manuscript for the sermon, then ditching it. I almost always create a lengthy manuscript of my sermons, although I cannot quite "ditch it" when I preach; it functions like a security blanket for me, and I am OK with that. But Walton is correct that the best preachers have prepared well and should not need the safety net of a manuscript.

Walton includes several appendices demonstrating his method and offering a short overview of the story of the Old Testament.

With five pages of endorsements from academics and preaching experts, the book certainly comes well recommended. Walton's book does in fact provide a useful method for preaching the narratives of the Old Testament. The value of the book is often in the form of brief advice from an experienced preacher.

Phillip J. Long, Ph.D
Professor of Bible and Biblical Languages
Grace Bible College

Books Received

Reviewers interested in a particular book should contact the editor via email. Notice here neither implies nor precludes review in subsequent volumes.

Baker, Mike, J. K. Jones, and Jim Probst. *We Speak: Proclaiming Truth in and Age of Talk*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Borthwick, Paul. *Great Commission, Great Compassion*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Johnson, Patrick. *The Mission of Preaching: Equipping the Community for Faithful Witness*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2015.

Jamison, Bobby. *Church Basics: Understanding Baptism.* Nashville: B&H, 2016.

Johnson, John E. Under an Open Heaven: A New Way of Life Revealed in John's Gospel. Grand Rapids, Mich. Kregel, 2017.

Johnson, Patrick W. T. *The Mission of Preaching: Equipping the Community for Faithful Witness.* Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Joy, Trevor and Spence Shelton. *The People of God*. Nashville: B&H, 2014.

Laurie, Greg. *Tell Someone: You Can Share the Good News*. Nashville: B&H, 2016.

Leeman, Jonathan. *Church Basics: Understanding the Congregation's Authority.* Nashville: B&H, 2016.

Mason, Eric. *Beat God to the Punch: Because Jesus Demands Your Life*. Nashville: B&H, 2014.

Moore, Russell. *Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel*. Nashville: B&H, 2015.

Mouw, Richard and Robert L. Millet, editors. *Talking Doctrine: Mormons & Evangelicals in Conversation*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Niringiye, David Zac. *The Church: God's Pilgrim People*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Olson, Roger E and Christian T. Collins Winn. *Reclaiming Pietism: Retrieving an Evangelical Tradition.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Payne, J. D. *Apostolic Church Planting: Birthing New Churches from New Believers.* Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Pelton, Randal. *Preaching with Accuracy*. Grand Rapids, Mich. Kregel, 2014.

Phillips, Susan S. *The Cultivated Life: From Ceaseless Striving to Receiving Joy*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

Rainer, Thom. *Autopsy of a Dead Church*. Nashville: B&H, 2014.

Rainer, Thom. *I Will*. Nashville: B&H, 2015.

Shaw, Joey. *All Authority: How the Authority of Jesus Upholds the Great Commission*. Nashville: B&H, 2016.

Yong, Amos. *The Future of Evangelical Theology: Soundings from the Asian American Diaspoa*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2014.

Turner, Jim. *So-Called Christian: Healing Spiritual Wounds Left By the Church*. Greenville, S.C.: Ambassador International, 2014.

Tyra, Gary. *Pursuing Moral Faithfulness: Ethics and Christian Discipleship*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Following the lead of the original *Grace Journal of Theology*, the present Journal is intended to stimulate constructive thought, awareness, devotion and practice in matters of ministry, biblical, theological and dispensational studies. The Journal will publish articles and reviews of merit with preference of acceptance given to credentialed and experienced writers. Articles are to be well researched, documented and relevant to the objectives of the Journal. Publication decisions will be made based on the consensus of the editorial committee. A full article will be between 4000 and 6000 words including footnotes. A "short note" on a text or topic will be between 1000 and 2000 words. Book reviews will be about 1000 words. Several books are available for review; contact the editor for more information.

GUIDELINES FOR MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

- All articles are to be in English and submitted by email attachment. Please use Word or convert your file to .doc or .rtf format. Do not submit articles in .pdf format.
- All submissions ought to be double spaced and using Times New Roman, 12 point. For Greek and Hebrew, use a Unicode font (Times, for example). Transliteration of Greek or Hebrew is acceptable (use www.transliterate.com).
- Use footnotes rather than endnotes
- For other questions of style, consult the SBL Handbook of Style. The guide is available at the SBL site: http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/SBLHSrevised2_09.pdf
- Include a cover page with author's name, article title and a brief abstract of the article (less than 250 words).
- Email articles to the editor: plong@gbcol.edu.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Two issues will appear each year. Issue 3.2 will be published Fall 2016, with a deadline for articles of September 15, 2016. The subscription price for two issues is $25 postpaid. Subscriptions are available on the GGF website (http://www.ggfusa.org/giving) or via email (attention Cindy Carmichael, cindy@ggfusa.org), or by contacting the Grace Gospel Fellowship office: 1011 Aldon St SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49509; (616) 245-0100.

General Inquires may be made to the editor: Phillip J. Long, 1011 Aldon SW, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49509; plong@gbcol.edu