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Journal of Grace Theology

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Editorial

This issue of the *Journal of Grace Theology* marks two years of publication. I confess editing the *Journal* has been more work than I anticipated, but it has also been a "labor of love." Although we have reached our minimum goal for subscribers, I hope to continue to expand this base in the future. There are a number subscriptions from Bible College and Seminary libraries and I have personally has several contacts from people asking about the *Journal*. I highly encourage readers to subscribe and renew subscriptions.

I am often asked how people might participate in the *Journal*. First, please subscribe and/or renew your subscriptions. The subscription price covers most of the cost of printing and mailing; without sufficient subscriptions it would be impossible to produce the Journal. Second, you may give a special gift to the GGF to help defray the cost of publication. The first issue was supported by a generous gift, for which we are extremely thankful. Third, contribute an article. The last pages of this issue has a short description of what sorts of articles would fit the Journal. I am personally encouraged when people tell me they are working on an article, short note or book review. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have questions about the journal or if you are able to help in any of these ways.

This issue begins with an article by Dale DeWitt on salvation in the Old Testament. This has always been a sensitive issue among dispensationalists, therefore DeWitt examines the salvation events in the Pentateuch in order to clarify our understanding of what salvation at Passover meant. Adam Renberg (GBC 2014, now a graduate student at St. Andrews) examines the three healings of lame men in Luke and Acts in order to demonstrate not only the unity of these two books, but also to argue the miracles serve to authenticate the message of Peter and Paul. Pastor Jim Shemaria (Seattle, Washington) offers some thoughts on Peter's "times of refreshing" in Acts 3:19-21. Cameron Townley (Rush Creek Bible Church, Byron Center, Michigan) presents an exegetical study of Ezekiel 28 and its relationship to Garden of Eden imagery. Reflecting on his own experience in ministry, Art Sims (Naples, Florida) discussions the Pauline revelation of the mystery. Finally, I offer an extended review of *Hidden but Not Revealed*, a new book by Greg Beale and Todd Still. Since this book is a coherent biblical theology of mystery it is of great interest to dispensationalists.

As always, the Journal concludes with a series of book reviews on topics of interest to pastors and teachers. If you are interested in contributing a book review to the Journal, please contact the editor. A book review is a good way to share something you have found valuable with other pastors and writing the review may encourage you to think more deeply about the topic.

I want to sincerely thank Tim Conklin for his help editing articles as well as my intern Zach Niles. Both have read through the articles several times and have offered excellent guidance and suggestions in terms of style.

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

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Salvation In The Old Testament: An Essay on Where to Begin

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Problem and Prospect: Old Testament Salvation in Evangelical Theology

Evangelical Christians often raise questions about the basis, nature and proclamation of salvation in the Old Testament because salvation is the most central subject of both Testaments.

In the mid-1940s, a national synod of the Presbyterian Church condemned dispensationalism because its leaders appeared to teach salvation by works in the Old Testament; there was some truth in this perception. Even today within the Grace Movement, discussions linger on works in the Old Testament, particularly under the Mosaic Law. Old Testament salvation was discussed during the proceedings of the Grace Gospel Fellowship's Frankfort (IL) Theology Summit of 2012. Agreement was reached about the need for further study of the role of works in Old Testament salvation. Little or no further work on the subject has been published since Frankfort. This article deals only with what the first detailed model of salvation (the Exodus) provides.

In the Pentateuch, Deuteronomic History (Joshua-Kings) and Psalms, salvation often refers to Israel's national deliverance from slavery in Egypt, or a hostile neighbor nation (Judges, *yasha`* 21x) or individual (Psalms). Isaiah 40-66 refers to a more complete future salvation based on an outpouring of the righteousness of God tied to an atoning messianic Servant. Paul re-opens the theme in Romans where salvation is deliverance from sin, its power, its destructive effect on human behavior and relations, and

eternal death. However, the progressive revelation of salvation suggests its incomplete character in the Old Testament. Hebrews 11:39-40 (and other Hebrews texts) speak of salvation's limits in the Old Testament with striking sweep, boldness and clarity:

> These [Old Testament people] were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

In the New Testament, both the salvation event—Christ's completed atonement and resurrection—and its proclamation are covered by the terms *kerusso* (proclaim) and *kerygma* (the thing proclaimed) and by *euaggelizomai* (preach the gospel) and *euaggelion* (gospel) when used alone or in combination. For example, the verb *kerusso* ("act as a herald"), a cognate of *kerygma*, was sometimes used in a short formula of definition as in "we *preach* Christ crucified (1 Cor 1:23)." Several times it is followed by "the gospel," as in "preach the gospel (*kerussein* or *kerusson to euaggelion* (cf. Mark 1:14)," or in Paul's "the gospel which I preach . . . (Gal 2:2 *to euaggelion ho kerusso*)." The *euaggelion-euaggelizomai* group may cover the same ground as the *kerusso/kerygma* group as happens in longer passages on the gospel and its local implications (1 Thes 1-2, Gal 1-2, and 1 Cor 1-2). With some regularity the verb "be saved (*sozo*)" appears alone or with a statement about faith in what is preached (1 Cor 15:1-11). This salvation vocabulary is not just ideas, but always refers to the concrete event and its retelling. The question then arises, does the Old Testament have *anything like this* as a preliminary saving event or events plus their proclamation?

Most Christians believe the Old Testament had at least some preliminary sketch of salvation; else how could the Psalmists speak of it so often. Some say whatever salvation was present in the Old Testament must have been by grace through faith, human sinfulness being what it is. Even when sharp disagreements occur on the matter, there is usually recognition of some form of salvation—Abraham's faith in the Lord and his promises, or salvation gained by personally offering an animal sacrifice. A problem with the second view is that the sacrifices of Leviticus may not be for initial salvation of the individual at all, but to symbolize aspects of the Israelite's continuing communion with God, the nation already having been "saved"

in the Exodus.[1] If this is so, the Passover (Exod 12:1-30), can be viewed as the atonement provision per family for the Exodus, just as Christ, the second Passover, was the single sacrifice for the final salvation.

A Larger Christian Perspective

The best possibility for the last alternative is *Israel's Exodus from Egypt as the Old Testament's salvation event*.[2] Two features of this theme-event encourage the identification: (1) The narrative of the Exodus contains the first concentration of salvation terms in Scripture (Exod 1-15); (2) the event is remembered repeatedly in the Old Testament as Israel's national redemption. The Passover provided for Israel's escape, just as Christ's Passover sacrifice of himself is the atoning provision in the New Testament; the Red Sea crossing was a life-giving event of God's power, just as the resurrection and believers' new life actualize the New Testament's atoning provision. Certain passages in the early chapters of Exodus also correlate Abraham's faith (Gen 15:6) in God's promise with the coming Exodus (Exod 3:5-10; 6:2-8).[3] If Israel's Exodus from Egypt is the Old Testament's salvation event, then C. I. Scofield and his influential teacher, Walter Scott, were correct in seeing the Exodus as *the* redemptive event in the Old Testament; they thought it established a standard typology (example, form) of redemption which anticipated the later perfected form.[4] It

[1]This view is similar to E. Martens, *God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1981), 47, 56-59. Martens' initial definition is limited to only celebrative sacrifices; others were for some aspect of sin, i.e., of an Israel already redeemed at the Exodus. Martens is skeptical about full disclosure of the immediate or longer-term meaning of sacrifice and ritual in the Old Testament.

[2]Several twentieth century studies of Old Testament theology offer generalizations about the importance of the Exodus as the Old Testament's salvation event, but only a few understand it as a formative event in the biblical theology of salvation; two such are G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (Trans. D. Stalker; New York: Harper & Row, 1962); Martens, *God's Design.*

[3]W. Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 163-174.

[4]C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1917), 84-88 including note 1, p. 84 and note 1, p. 88. Scofield adopts Walter Scott's (1) idea of the Exodus as *the* typological salvation event of the Old Testament, and (2) his two-stage view of the event as redemption by (a) blood (the Passover provision) and (b) power (the Red Sea crossing). Scofield adds a third stage which he calls (3) "by experience"; if he had continued to

cannot be the case that Exodus 14:30-31, standing at the end of the Exodus prose story, and just before Israel's celebrative Song of the Sea (15:1ff), is merely an aside with little relation to the miracle at the Sea; this text is better viewed as crucial, since it brings forward into the Exodus the renewal of Abraham's *faith*, linking it with the Exodus *faith*; both Genesis 15:6 and Exodus 14:31 use a basic term for faith: Hebrew *'aman* means believe, trust; Septuagint *pisteuo* also means believe, trust.

> That day the LORD *saved* Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the great power of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

In Exodus 14:13, 30, the terms "salvation" (*yeshu`ah*) and "saved" (*yasha`*) appear and are joined in the same chapter with Israel's "faith"—a striking convergence within the Exodus story identical to how the same concepts occur together in the New Testament's salvation by faith. In fact, this is the first biblical statement of *salvation by faith* using the group of salvation terms.[5] With this clue, and what we know of Abraham's faith in the promise of God by which he was "justified," a provisional statement is possible on how to think about Abraham's promise and faith feeding into Moses' Exodus and Israel's faith.

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follow Scott he might have called this third stage "by relationship (Exod 15ff)." See W. Scott, *Bible Handbook* (London: G. Morrish, c 1887), 83. One could be skeptical about this "borrowing" were it not for Scofield's acknowledgement of Scott as one of his primary teachers (*SRB*, p. iv) and Scofield's exact correspondence in terminology and concept to that of Scott. As a matter of historical theology, we do not yet know Scott's own sources, but Darby and other Plymouth Brethren teachers are likely prospects.

[5]Martens, *God's Design*, 42.

A Perspective on the Exodus Salvation in Context

1. Abraham's *faith* was one ingredient in the Old Testament's "salvation." Other signs of Abraham's faith are also visible earlier in Enoch and Noah and later in Isaac, Jacob (barely) and Joseph (very fully) despite absence of explicit salvation and faith language in the Joseph story. Abraham's faith leads to Joseph's works, just as the Exodus and the Law are sequenced in the same respects.[6] Joseph is rightly said to be a type of Christ; he is also the best embodiment of how Abraham's faith emerged in a descendant's behavior.

2. The *object* of Abraham and Israel's faith is clearly either (a) in *God's word of promise* (Abraham) or (b) in *God's act of deliverance* (Moses and Israel). Faith in an animal sacrifice is not what saves, but faith in either *the word or act of God,* or both when these words or deeds happened at the same time. It is not faith in the coming Christ as reformed covenant theology has always maintained; for this to be true some explicit indication in the texts that faith in Christ was already the meaning would help or even be needed. The emphasis should be faith in *God's prior word or action at the time*.

3. The Exodus salvation event also gave renewed direction to the main Abrahamic *promises* of multiplied offspring and land. Thereby the typological elements of salvation are revealed progressively in steps through the whole story—not in one single pinpoint moment, but in a process. This in turn means the typological illustration is the salvation of the whole nation—the nation and its individuals, with the land promises again renewed (Exod 3:8; 6:4; 15:17). Exodus 14:31 simply states Israel responded by faith in the Lord's actions on its behalf.

4. Like Abraham's justification by faith, the Exodus was an act of *grace*. Israel did not merit it, although it is proper to say Israel's helpless condition in slavery warranted an act of *mercy* out of God's love. However, according to Joshua's covenant renewal speech (Josh 24), in addition to slavery,

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[6]W. Nicholson, *Exodus and Sinai in History and Tradition* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1973), 1-33 in a section he called "The Separation of the Exodus and Sinai in History and Tradition." The separation Nicholson speaks of was in scholarship's perceptions of the two events; the current treatment also separates them theologically, but only to relate them as two events in sequence, not in the scholarly literary sense.

Israel was living in idolatry in Egypt; therefore its salvation was also a salvation from sin. By placing the Exodus event before the revelation of Law, the book of Exodus avoided salvation by works of the law, attributing it rather to an act of God's pre-Law grace. The Hebrew *khan* (grace, favor) appears three times in Exodus 1-15 of Egyptians to be made favorable by God toward Israel in the coming salvation event (Exod 3:21; 11:3; 12:36).

5. These elements also suggest the addition of moral and ceremonial *laws* to provide detailed directions on behaviors becoming for a people of God. Thus the Mosaic Law and covenant entered the picture only after the actual saving event itself (something like the relation of the American Revolution to the Constitution), not as a way to be saved by works, but as a set of community values to be lived in consequence of the prior national redemption from Egypt by a provisioning sacrifice (Passover), and a combination of grace, power and faith.

6. The salvation of the Exodus, then, is limited as *typological and preliminary only*—a general outline of major elements of the future completed salvation. This limit on salvation's fullness is also visible in the Exodus salvation's limited range of reference: no eternal life; no regenerative work of the Sprit and resurrection; and no stated final forgiveness of sins.[7] But we cannot say *merely* "earthly" or "external" since the Exodus was a theological-spiritual event bringing Israel into real fellowship with Yahweh (Exod 14:30-31), even if incomplete within the Old Testament, until full in Christ.

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[7]None of the primary verbs of forgiveness appears in the Exodus narratives (Exod 1-15). This may be due to implicit atonement in the Passover, or to the character of the redeeming God—his mercy and compassion. Atonement provisions and scenes begin shortly after Exodus 24 and continue through Leviticus. R. Bultmann notes of the Greek verb for forgiveness that it "significantly modifies the Hebrew verbs of remission or forgiveness, since the original sense of the Hebrew verbs is that of the cultic removal and expiation of sin." See Bultmann, *aphiemi*," etc, *TDNT* 1:508. This suits the observations above; forgiveness appears to be limited at first to a people already in a redemptive relation with God (the Exodus) and then bound into covenant with him but who continue to sin after their initial national salvation; when they do, forgiveness (*nas*a' lift up, carry away) appears in the record for the first time (Exod 32:31-32). Even here, the New Testament's legal sense of forgiveness is not in view.

Central Passages and Concepts in Exodus[8]

The sketch above leads to the question of where and with what vocabulary the Exodus picture of salvation appears. Exodus 1 and 15 frame the event narrative. In the preliminary salvation conversations between Moses and Yahweh (Exod 3, 6), a promise appears of what the Lord is about to do; then the event occurs and Israel offers its salvation praise as a conclusion (Exod 15), reciting the event in terms similar to the first promises of Exodus 3.

Vocabulary of the Saving Event in Exodus 1-15

No less than seven Hebrew verbs represent *God's saving action*, occurring in aggregate more than eighty times in Exodus 1-15 alone. Two of the five are geographical-movement terms found also in Genesis; five are specific salvation terms and sparse in Genesis—a pointer to their importance in Exodus. (1, 2) *`alah* is a general term for rising ("go up") occurring often in Genesis and fourteen times in the Exodus events; its partner, *yatza'* ("bring out") is also general and used often in both Genesis (77x) and the Exodus stories (50x). "Bring up" and "bring out" refer to leaving Egypt and movement-toward-destiny. The other five terms are less frequent—about twenty uses (20x) for the five in aggregate in Exodus 1-15.[9] (3) At the burning bush (Exod 3) the Lord proclaims he will "rescue" (*natzal*, 3:8, 10; "snatch, save, rescue") Israel from Egypt; *natzal* occurs eight more times in Exodus 1-15 for God and Israel.[10] (4) *yasha`* and *yeshu`ah* (verb

[8]For example G. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament* (First German Edition, 1873; trans E. Smith and D. Taylor, 1875), 71; P. Hyatt, *Exodus*, 148: ".the climactic and decisive act of salvation for the people"; E. Nicholson, *Exodus and Sinai*, p. 2: "Yahweh's saving deeds on Israel's behalf . . . were fundamental in the faith of the community of Israel"; G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology,* 1:176: "In the deliverance from Egypt Israel saw . . . the absolute surety for Yahweh's will to save"; G. Knight, *Theology as Narration* (*Exodus*) (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1976), 102: "The salvation that God had wrought in Israel at the time of the Exodus ." W. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1978), pp. 59, 62: ". . . that grandest moment of them all . . . the portrayal of salvation in the Exodus itself."

[9]Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology,* 1:297, suggests the richer sense in context of "out from under the burdens of Egypt."

[10]Of the seven verbs, *natzal* is used in Genesis 4x; in three of the four it is used of removals, including three removals from hostile persons; *`alah* occurs

and related noun) mean "save" and "salvation," in the sense of rescue or preserve" from a hostile enemy. Exodus 14 uses both the noun (14:13) and the verb (14:30); the noun occurs again in 15:2. The first Old Testament use of the verb *yasha`* for a saving act of God, occurs in the Exodus story.[11] (5, 6) Other related terms are used in the story like *qanah* ("acquire, purchase for oneself," Exod 15:16) and *padah/peduth* ("ransom, release," Exod 8:19 [Eng. 8:23]);[12] these are socio-economic terms. (7) Finally, in 6:6 and 15:15 *ga'al* is used meaning "redeem, return" (to one's family or community); it is a family term with economic overtones.

Concentrated use of these terms in Exodus 1-15 warrants Exodus studies speaking so often of redemption in Exodus 1-15. Within the dispensational stream, the same terms also caught the attention of Walter Scott and C. I. Scofield, leading them to see the Exodus as a type of New Testament salvation. Their treatment correctly assumes the reuse of most of the terms' Greek counterparts as New Testament salvation words.[13]

Two Pre-Exodus Passages in the Book of Exodus.

Two pre-Exodus texts tie together the revelation history and promises from the patriarchs through the imminent Exodus.

> Exodus 3:6-14: Then [God] said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The LORD said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt. . . . I will be with you. And this

about 45x in Genesis and *yatz'a* 77x, both for man in varied kinds of going up or going out. Of the other four verbs, *ga'al* is used 1x, *qanah* 9x, and *padah* and *yasha`* not at all.

[11]Martens, *God's Design*, 42; *yeshu`ah* is used in Genesis only at 49:18.

[12]The last two of these salvation words are noted from G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:177.

[13]On the terms, see also Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 173-181; J. Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology* (3 vols; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003), 1: 297-298.

> will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.' . . . God said to Moses, 'I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'

The passage deals with Yahweh's identity, emotions, thoughts and plan for the saving and sequel events. (1) The passage begins and ends with God's identity: he is Yahweh. "I am," reads best with F. Cross as a causative (hiphil) form meaning "I am he who *causes [events to happen]*,[14] thus relating his name to the mostly hiphil (causative) forms of the Exodus salvation verbs; Israel's potential confusion over deities is implied. (2) He is the same God who spoke to *the patriarchs*; continuity is thus created with the earlier narrative (Gen 12-Exod 3).[15] (3) Twice Yahweh says he *hears the cries* of his enslaved people (3:7, 9); hence he is a God of compassion, intent on acting in mercy to bring Israel out of slavery. (4) A longer view of *blessings* to follow the Exodus is articulated; two blessings appear—the gift of *the land* (repeated) and the gift of *serving* God in a living relationship.[16] (5) The causative form of *yatza'* (hiphil) is used three times for the saving action (3:10, 11, 12, "cause to come out"), and *natzal* is used once in causative form (hiphil, 3:8, "snatch").

A second passage tying together the narrative whole from Abraham to the Exodus repeats thoughts of the first passage and adds further details.

> Exodus 6:2-8: God also said to Moses, 'I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived as aliens. Moreover I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant. Therefore say to the Israelites: I am the LORD and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves

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[14]F. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 60-75.

[15]Although the text begins the story with Abraham, there is continuity in themes beginning with Genesis 1. See Kaiser, *Toward a Theology of the Old Testament*, 55-63. Kaiser's purpose in this study is to establish literary-thematic ties of biblical narrative across eras—themes like promise, blessing, territories and fruitfulness in reproduction—so as to read the narrative holistically rather than divided into separate pieces as in much critical analysis.

[16]For Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology,* 1:322-323, the meaning is "serve" not "worship" as in modern translations.

> to them and will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.

The thoughts of the second passage parallel the first, but expand them with repetition, detail or new elements. (1) The same divine *name* (Yahweh) reappears in 6:2a and 8c to frame the portion; the name is intensified by repetition in 6:6, 7 and contrasted with *El Shaddai*, "God Almighty," God's name among the patriarchs. (2) The patriarchal *covenant* is mentioned twice (6:4, 5) for continuity with Abraham. (3) The *oath* is noted to assure Yahweh's loyalty to the land promise (6:8) which is also repeated twice (6:4, 8). (4) Israel as a people of God appears (6:7), being assured it will "*know*" by the Exodus who he is (6:7), alluding again to the earlier implied crisis of Israel knowing God's identity.[17] (5) Most importantly, the passage uses *more terms of salvation* than does 3:6-14: *yatza'* appears twice (6:6-7); *natzal* in its intensive form (piel, suggesting God "busying" himself with "snatching" Israel away); and *ga'al* in its kal form for simple action.

The Poem of Exodus 15

Moses (and Israel's) song of praise celebrates the Exodus as a unique salvation event. Amid the epic poem of Yahweh's warrior victory the following lines appear:

> The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation (*yeshu`ah*). He is my God and I will praise him, my father's God and I will exalt him (v. 2).

> In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed (*ga'al*). In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling (v. 13).

> By the power of your arm [the nations] will be as still as a stone—until your people pass by, O LORD, until the people you bought (*qanah*) pass by (v 16).

[17]T. Mann, *The Book of the Torah: Narrative Integrity of the Pentateuch* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988), 79-80.

> You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance (v 17) . . .The LORD will reign for ever and ever (v 18)

These lines include three of the seven salvation terms identified above (salvation, redeem, purchase). In addition the following ideas appear: (1) the Exodus salvation was both p*ersonal and national* (15:2, 13); (2) the LORD will guide the nation (v 13) toward his goal—the promised *place of their dwelling* where they will be "planted" (v 17); (3) the event was an act of God's *kingship*: Yahweh reigns "for ever and ever (v 18)"; for the first time *salvation and kingdom* are correlated; this detail anticipates Isaiah 52:7-10 where the same terms are again correlated as an introduction to the suffering Servant passage. This revelation reappears with decisive force in Jesus' mission and message of the available kingdom, the major aspect of which at his first advent is the presence of the kingdom's salvation.

The Exodus Salvation as Israel's Confession-Kerygma

"Kerygma" here means what the nation, its individual members or its leaders confess or proclaim as the basis and details of a personal and national relationship with Yahweh.

Unleavened Bread and Firstborn Confessions

Even before the Exodus, the LORD prescribed that Israel later re-tell the event as a confession of Yahweh's salvation in a personal and individual way: family heads confess their faith by affirming the Exodus salvation as their own.

> Unleavened Bread: Exodus 13:8-10. On that day tell your son, 'I eat unleavened bread because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt . . . .' This observance will be for you a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the LORD is to be on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year.

In the confession, the future Law of the LORD and its observance are mentioned; but the Law is viewed as a *consequence* of the liberation from Egypt which will occur *prior to* the ordinance (13:10). Unleavened Bread is to be kept at an appointed time each year. "When I came out of Egypt" confesses the union of father and family with the event, even though he was not actually a participant. When Israel was saved the later confessing member of Israel was also saved.

> Firstborn Redemption: Exodus 13:14-16. In days to come, when your son asks you 'What does this [firstborn redemption] mean?' say to him, 'With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed every firstborn in Egypt, both man and animal. This is why I sacrifice to the LORD the first male offering of every womb and redeem each of my firstborn sons.' And it will be like a sign on your hand and a symbol on your forehead that the LORD brought us out of Egypt with his mighty hand.

There is more detail here just as happens in the kerygma speeches ("sermons") of the apostles in Acts. In both provisions, the details may be more or less of the story as needed for a new occasion. What matters most is the reappearance of the Hebrew verb *yatza'* ("brought out") with the LORD as subject. Both future remembrances are confessions of the divine action prior to the "ordinance."

Echoes of the Exodus in Exodus 16, 18

After the Exodus, and responding to Israel's anxiety about food and water in the desert, Yahweh told Moses he would rain down "bread" from heaven. Moses, realizing Israel's crisis of understanding Yahweh's identity and actions, (suggested earlier but now closer to realization), told them (Exod 16:6): In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD.

Again, the story of Jethro's (Moses' father in law) visit to Moses packs no less than four allusions to the Exodus in just ten verses (Exod 18:1, 2, 8, 9-11). The longest of these reads:

> Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the LORD had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians. He said, 'Praise be to the LORD, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh, and who rescued the people from the hand of

> the Egyptians. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly.'

These accounts are interested in how Israel and Jethro understood the powerful events of Yahweh's rescue: (1) in Exodus 18:8-11 the verb *natzal* (snatch, rescue, save) is used four times; (2) both portions confess the identity of Yahweh as the God of the Exodus, and suggest Israel does not understand his identity; (3) both accounts show concern about the knowledge of Yahweh's name as revealed in Exodus 3. (4) Jethro follows his confession with a burnt offering. His words—"Now I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly"—identify Yahweh as the God who acted to "rescue" Israel and judge their oppressors. Only *after* Jethro recognizes Yahweh and the Exodus does he offer a sacrifice, speak of reorganizing Israel, and of teaching laws and decrees to the people (18:13-20).

The Exodus as a Short Prologue to the Mosaic Covenant: Exodus 20:2.

In this verse the salvation event is a compact confession-proclamation as part of the larger vassal treaty (usually "covenant") between Yahweh and Israel; the treaty occupies the whole of Exodus 19-24. More than seventy ancient treaty texts of neighbor nations have been archaeologically recovered from sites all over the region. Treaties tended to follow a more or less fixed *format of inclusions* referred to as "the treaty formulary." Its elements included (with texts for Exodus' adaptations):

> A *Preamble* stating the date and place of the treaty, the principal parties and their identities, and honorific titles and acts reflecting the sovereign's grandeur (Exod 19).
>
> A *Historical Prologue* narrating the history of the principals' relations (20:2).
>
> A series of *Stipulations*, sometimes in "thou shalt . . . thou shalt not" style, *and Case Laws* in "if…then" style (20:3-23:19).
>
> A list of *Blessings and Curses* for compliance or non-compliance with the stipulations (limited to Exod 23:25 and context).

> A list of *Witnesses* to the treaty including the gods and the physical world: rivers, oceans, streams, forests, sun and moon (not included).
>
> *Document Clauses* providing for deposit of the treaty in temples, prohibitions on tampering with the text, and provisions for public re-reading (combined with next feature, but note reference to the "book of the covenant," 24:7-8).
>
> A *Ceremonial Conclusion* or inauguration with animal sacrifice (24:5-11).

Not all ancient Near Eastern treaties have every feature of this form, nor are the features always in the same language or detail.[18] The Exodus proclamation occupies a single verse sandwiched between the long Preamble (Exod 19) and the Stipulations (Exod 20:3-23:19). The sovereign God proclaims his removal (salvation, bringing out, *yatza'*) of Israel from Egypt. This short form illustrates the flexibilities of the treaty formulary. But the effect is the same—the saving event is proclaimed as a work for Israel's salvation in history by its Sovereign. It reads simply and straightforwardly:

> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery (Exod 20:2).

The priority is the treaty formulary's declaration of God's sovereignty and initiative—his gracious saving action before stating specific behavioral expectations (law) as in other vassal treaties. Even the acceptance agreement between God and Israel (19:7-8) mentions the Exodus just *before* Israel's "yes (19:4)."

Other Echoes and Reuses of the Exodus in Scripture

The Exodus salvation echoes through the books of Exodus (20 more allusions), Leviticus (11 allusions), Numbers (28 allusions) and Deuteronomy (50 allusions); Joshua also alludes to the Exodus (14 allusions). At least fifteen Psalms echo the Exodus salvation; all seven salvation terms in the

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[18]G. Mendenhall pioneered recognition of this "formulary" in his essay, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *Biblical Archaeologist* 7 (1954): 50-76. D. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978) criticized application of this outline to Exodus 19-24; however, subsequently recognition of the outline in a modified form in Exodus 19-24 continued, on which see, for example W. LaSor, D. Hubbard and F. Bush, *Old Testament Survey*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 72-75.

story are re-used in these Psalms. In Isaiah 40-66, the Exodus theme recurs frequently as a salvation pattern to be repeated in a second "Exodus"—the release of exiled Israel from its Babylonian captivity.[19] In Isaiah 40-66 a fully completed salvation is prophesied in the sin-bearing Servant Messiah (Isa 52:7-53:12; cf 60:1-3) accompanied by a revelation of God's righteousness. The seven-verb Exodus salvation vocabulary also reappears in Greek equivalents, first in the Septuagint and then sparingly and unevenly in the New Testament, except for *yasha`* and *yeshu`ah*, which by that time far outpaced other salvation terms.

In the New Testament, Matthew opens his Gospel with a series of events recycling major Exodus themes: Jesus' family takes him to Egypt (2:13-15); Matthew quotes Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt I called my son (Matt 2:16)," citing an Old Testament prophecy and identifying Jesus with Israel. Herod is the New Testament's Pharaoh. The wilderness testing follows, then the new messianic law (Sermon on the Mount) and ten miracles reversing the evil of the ten plagues. Jesus becomes the new and final Passover (1 Cor 5:7-8). For Paul, as Israel was united with Moses in the Red Sea, so Christians are united with Christ (1 Cor 10:1-4) and the church; its temptations are like Israel's in the wilderness (1 Cor 10:6-10).

Conclusion

The atoning provision which saved Israel from slavery and death was the *Passover*. The origin of the Exodus salvation event is the unilateral, sovereign *compassion* of Yahweh in seeing, hearing and feeling Israel's suffering in slavery and in his determination to "save." Israel's salvation from Egypt is narrated with seven Hebrew verbs which are then reused in other texts proclaiming the Exodus. The event itself is achieved by *grace*, not by Israel's merit or good works. Israel responds to God's action by *faith* in the Lord and in Moses (14:31) and thus continues Abraham's faith, implying national justification. Social laws were added as a c*onduct pattern* along with sacrificial laws as part of maintaining relationship with God by *periodic symbolic cleansings*.

A completed salvation is not gained. Instead, a preliminary *pattern of salvation concepts* is used and later applied to the New Testament's com-

[19]B. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenberg*, ed B. W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson (New York: Harper, 1962), 177-195.

pleted redemption.[20] *Eternal life, forgiveness of sins*, *regeneration*, *internalized transformative salvation, and compound* New Testament blessings are not visible in Exodus. The event combined earthly physical, spiritual and social liberation. How the Israel of the Exodus salvation joins the eternal status of New Testament believers cannot be determined from the old Exodus and its earth-bound typological status; more exploration of this persistent question is needed.

[20]Similarly, J. Sailhammer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grov, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2009), 570-1, speaking of "progressive revelation."

Theological Implications of Lukan Miracles: A Survey of Luke 5:17-26, Acts 3:1-10 and Acts 14:8-10

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Introduction

Embedded in Luke's Gospel and the book of Acts lie three distinct, yet (seemingly) connected healing miracles. While small, these pericopae mark significant theological motifs in Luke's writings. Luke 5:17-26, Acts 3:1-10, and Acts 14:8-20 are three passages Luke seems to intentionally tie together to mark a development in his theology, and to give authority to the speaker and the message that is given.

The goal of this essay is to track the progression of these three miracles through Luke's writings and to seek to understand his theological aims. I will first express the use and purposes of miracles inside and outside the Scriptures, particularly in the Second Temple Period. I will then demonstrate common elements throughout the three Lukan miracles and pursue Luke's apparent original intentions. Drawing from these miracles, I mark a progression in Luke's theology through the ministry of Jesus, Peter, and Paul. My goal is not to create systematic theology from this material, but to understand Luke's original goals in tying these passages together. The systematic implications, though important and relevant, I wait for another paper.

Miracles in the Second Temple Period

While miracles are common throughout the synoptic Gospels, they are often side notes in accomplishing something of greater value.[1] But this

[1]Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical*

certainly does not mean these pericopae were recorded superfluously. According to Talbert, there are three purposes to miracles: legitimation, evangelism, and instruction.[2] When an individual performs a miracle, it authorizes[3] both his message and his identity as the messenger. In the Old Testament there are numerous examples of this authentication, one of the prime examples being Moses in Exodus 7:9; Pharaoh asks Moses and Aaron to "Prove themselves through a miracle." Another example can be found in 1 Kings 18:37, where Elijah is asking to God to send a miracle of fire so the people may "know" him and turn their hearts back. This miracle is authenticating the message Elijah is seeking to convey: God is above all others. This method of preforming miracles for authentication or authorization seems to be in place throughout the Old Testament[4] and is a trend continuing throughout the Graeco-Roman age.

Miracles during the Graeco-Roman age were used as propaganda for Greek cults, and to authenticate deities through Graeco-Roman literature.[5] In an interesting story, Vespasian (Emperor of Rome from A.D. 69-79) lacked "prestige and a certain divinity" after being acclaimed as emperor. His right to lead was soon authorized after he healed a blind and lame man in Alexandria upon his journey back to Rome.[6] Another example from Roman literature can be found in Dio's Roman History,[7] where the Romans were saved in battle due to a rain miracle. They were cut off without water and supplies, but were able to carry on and win the battle when the gods sent a giant rainstorm providing them with water and rejuvenated strength. This miracle was attributed to Marcus Aurelius when he once again became the Roman imperator.[8] These types of miracle are also seen in Juda-

Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 841.

[2]Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 162.

[3]Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2011), 61. "Authorization" is the terminology that Keener takes, and for the purposes of this study, I will use.

[4]Other examples: 1 Kgs 18:37; Num 14:11; Ex 18:11; 2 Kgs 5:15, Deut. 13:1-2; Dan 3:28-29; 6:27-28; Isa. 7:10-14; 44:25

[5]Keener, *Miracles*, 61-62.

[6]Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* 7, 2-3.

[7]Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 72.8.

[8]John F. DeFelice Jr., "The Rain Miracle Legend: Investigating the Dichotomy of the Pagan and Christian Traditions," *Fides Et Historia* 26:2

ism through men such as Hanina 'Ben Dosa'[9] and Honi Ha-Me'aggel (the circle drawer),[10] who are said to have used miracles within rabbinic circles, accumulating followings based around the miracles they performed through prayer.[11]

As shown in the Gospels, miracles are a major aspect of Jesus' ministry. His miracles attracted large crowds (Matt 12:23// Luke 11:14; Mark 1:45; Matt 4:25; John 6:2; 12:9-18), and in Mark it seems they came for the miracles alone (Mark 1:32-34; 45; 2:1-2:13; 3:7-12).[12] The Jews asked for signs and miracles of Jesus to authenticate his ministry as prophet and Messiah (Matt 12:38-29; 16:1-4; Mark 8:11-13; Luke 11:16, 29; John 2:18-22; 6:30). This also lies within the messianic expectations throughout Judaism of the healing of the sick (Jubilees 23.26-30; 1 Enoch 5.8-9, 96.3; 4 Ezra 7:123; 2 Baruch 29.7).[13] This authorization was not only to set the miracle worker apart, but also to distinguish which individual was the true messenger from God.[14]

Josephus speaks of three separate men who claimed to be a prophet. One claimed to know where the "sacred vessels" of Moses were ((Antiq. 18.85). Theudas took a great crowd to the Jordan and claimed he would part the river (Antiq. 20.97).[15] An Egyptian took a group to the Mount of

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(1994): 37.

[9]Daniel Sperber, "Hanina' Ben Dosa,'" *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, (New York: Oxford, 1997), 299. Hanina' lived in the first century A.D.

[10]Isaac B. Gottlieb, "Honi Ha-Me'aggel." *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion,* 335-336. Honi died about 65 B.C.

[11]John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking Historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 625. Meier notes the earliest mention of these rabbis was a fleeting note in the Mishna, written over 200 years and later developed in the Talmud. With this being said, it is wise to hold the historical value of these traditions lightly.

[12]Graham H.Twelftree, "Miracles and Miracle Stories., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2013), 594.

[13]Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 1:1-9:50* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1994), 465.

[14]Darrell L. Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2012), 249.

[15]In Acts 5:36, Gamliel references Theudas when talking about the Christian movement in advising the Pharisees to wait and see if the apostolic ministry was "of God." In vs. 37, there is a reference to Judas the Galilean, a Pharisee who led a revolution over taxation. This account can be found in Jos.

Olives and said that he was going to make the walls of Jerusalem fall (Antiq. 20.169).[16]

In all three of these cases, the individual claimed to be a messianic figure and used biblical language and stories to gather a following. All of these accounts end the same, with much bloodshed as the Romans cut down the revolution and killed the leader (although the Egyptian seems to have slipped away). As such, it makes sense the Jews would want signs of authorization from Jesus because they did not want to be deceived and follow a false prophet. Ironically, Jesus is still killed as a messiah figure and the Jews lump him into the category of false prophet, despite his ministry of miracles, which attracted so many.

Healing the Lame Man in Luke

In Luke 5:17-26, Jesus performs a healing miracle which garnered much attention, both positively and negatively. There is a crowd surrounding Jesus and the Pharisees and other religious teachers are present (apparently sitting) with him. Some men lowered their paralytic friend through the roof into the house where Jesus was teaching to be healed. Upon seeing the effort and faith it took to bring the man, Jesus forgives them of their sins. This is obviously upsetting to the religious teachers who cry blasphemy when Jesus backs up his words (authorization) with a healing miracle. While the miracle itself is not unique,[17] the addition of foreign material such as the forgiveness of sins, the reaction of the Pharisees and the self-designation as "Son of Man" make for a complicated narrative.[18]

The purpose of this miracle is to demonstrate Jesus' power and create a more distinctive identity for him. In the Lukan narrative, Jesus has already carried out a number of miracles, including an exorcism, healings, and a nature miracle (the multitude of fish in the net, Luke 5:1-11). His power over nature, demons and sickness has been validated; but Jesus further displays his power over the spiritual realm in telling the paralytic, "Friend,

Antiq. 18.4-6.

[16]"The Egyptian" appears in Acts 21:38; the tribune thinks Paul is this revolutionary.

[17]"Miracle," *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 722. This article lays out the basic format of recorded miracles through the New Testament as need, request, healing, sign of the healing, and reaction.

[18]Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 1:679.

your sins are forgiven." He also calls himself "the Son of Man" who was pictured in Daniel 7.[19] This language has strong messianic undertones, proclaiming an individual with the authority to deliver and to judge.[20] Jesus in this miracle story is declaring forgiveness of sins as a judge and messianic figure and demonstrating the power to do so. This proclamation leads to several miracles stories in which religious leaders directly oppose Jesus because of his bold claims.

Healing the Lame Man in Acts 3 and 14

In Acts 3:1-10, one of these miracles is performed by Peter in Jerusalem. At the Temple gate called "Beautiful," Peter and John come across a crippled beggar who asked them for money. In response, Peter gives him a much better gift and heals his legs in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The man jumps up praising God, and many are filled with awe and wonder. The importance of this miracle is better understood in the light of another healing miracle found in Acts 14:8-10.

In this account, Paul and Barnabas come across a crippled beggar who was listening to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked at him and healed him. When the man jumped up and walked, the people of Lystra were in awe. As another common healing miracle story, it makes sense to see coincidental parallels between the two narratives, but Luke may have been more intentional than some suppose. Here are the parallels that are found in the stories.

Peter's Miracle in Acts 3:1-10	Paul's Miracle in Act 14:8-10
Lame from birth (3:2)	Lame from birth (14:8)
Peter gazes intently at the man (3:8)	Paul gazes intently at the man (14:10)
Once healed, the man leaps and walks (3:8)	Once healed, the man leaps and walks (14:10)
Near temple gates (3:2)	Near temple gates (14:13)
Through faith (3:16)	Through faith (14:9)
Human "adulation" rejected (3:12)	Human "adulation" rejected (14:15)

While certain elements, such as the Temple gates, are less persuasive, the connection seems to be clear. But there are significant differences in

[19]He is also referenced in *1 Enoch* 37-71 as a judge who is preexistent (1 En. 46; 62-63), and in *4 Ezra* 11-13 as a judge associated with the Daniel 7 imagery. While important, *4 Ezra* post-dates the Synoptic Gospels and should be viewed as contemporary thought in Judaism, not a source for Jesus' use of this phrase.

[20]Darrell L. Bock, "Son of Man." *DJG*, 895.

these accounts as well, especially regarding to the audience.

In Acts 3, Peter and John are in Jerusalem speaking to a Jewish audience. The man they healed would have been a Jew (as they would not have allowed a Gentile near the Temple gates), and he praised God. Peter then delivers a sermon using evidence from the Torah (3:12-13) to argue they had killed the "Holy and Righteous One, the Author of Life," in ignorance (3:14-15; 17). But by faith in Jesus and repentance, God would wipe their sins away (3:19) and fulfill his promises from long ago.

In contrast, Acts 14 is directed at what seems to be a totally Gentile audience[21] as there is no record of a synagogue or Jews from Lystra in this narrative. The man being healed is a Gentile, and he makes no effort to praise God (in the recorded account). There is adulation from the crowd, and Paul and Barnabas are worshiped as the Greek gods Zeus and Hermes. Paul then delivers a sermon oriented towards natural theology from creation (although he still uses OT language),[22] telling the audience they were in ignorance before (14:16) but not without sign. He calls them to turn from their idols to the Living God (14:15), but Jews from Iconium and Antioch show up and stone Paul.

While differences remain, the root of these accounts lies in the group of people to whom Peter and Paul are talking. As Peter is performing a miracle for Jews, they automatically think of Moses, Elijah, and the Messiah. As Paul works a miracle in front of Gentiles, they associate miracles with Greek gods.[23] Peter is speaking to Jews, so he uses the language and background of the Jews from the Second Temple period. In his sermon, Paul

[21]James D. G Dunn, *Christianity in the Making: Beginning From Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009), 430. Schnabel notes we cannot conclude there is no Jewish community because of the absence of Jews in the pericope. Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission: Paul and the Early Church* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004), 2:1114. Although, It would seem to break the mold of Paul's mission strategy if he went to the Gentiles in a city before finding the synagogue, and it seems equally as odd that Jews from Antioch and Iconium were the ones who stirred up the crowd with no reference to Jews from Lystra. For the purposes of this study, I will work under the assumption there was no Jewish presence in the crowd.

[22]F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1988), 276.

[23]To see the similarities between this healing miracle and Graeco-Roman myths concerning gods (Ovid), see also Witherington, *Acts*, 422; Keener, *Acts*, 2:2143-52.

uses language that a rural Gentile community would understand. As we will come to find, these differences are as important as their similarities.

Jesus, Peter and Paul

Looking back to Luke 5:17-26, there are notable comparisons to our passages in Acts 3 and 14 as well. The paralytic, the miracle itself, and the faith element have strong undertones of Lukan theology across all three stories. The question then arises, "Was Luke trying to tie these passages together?" One of the most important elements in answering this question is the placement of these miracles in the ministry of Jesus, Peter and Paul.

Luke 5:17-26 is not the first miracle of Jesus, but it is a defining moment in his ministry. His distinctive identity is revealed through his title "Son of Man" and his authority over sin. Luke uses this narrative to authorize Jesus' ministry as the Messiah, revealing his nature as Divine. The healings Peter and Paul perform in these passages are, non-coincidentally, their first recorded miracles. Miracles, in the literal event, served to authorize the message of the speaker to teach and evangelize in that moment. But in the recording of the event, Lukan miracles are used to authenticate the ministry of Peter and Paul.

In Peter's case, his role as leader is realized from his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:14-39) but rooted in God's power from this miracle.[24] Peter's ministry was validated because God is working through him to perform the healing, as shown through his calling on "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (3:6). This is a literary queue from Luke for readers to recognize Peter's authoritative mission. In the same sense, Paul's ministry is validated through his miracle even though he does not speak the name of Jesus.[25] The miracle itself is authentication, and due to their important location in each of their respective ministries, it seems as if Luke is intentionally tying them together, or at the very least creating a literary allusion.

During this time period, a messengers or envoys were backed with the authority of the one who sent them. They were commissioned and authorized as a representative authority to carry on the work of their master.[26]

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[24]Dunn, *Beginning in Jerusalem*, 208.

[25]It would appear Paul was speaking about Jesus as the man he healed "listened to Paul" and had the faith to be healed (14:9).

[26]Craig S. Keener, T*he Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), 313-5.

This seems to be the picture Luke is giving us of Peter and Paul as agents of Jesus Christ carrying out his mission. Their authority did not lie in their own power, but in the one who sent them: Jesus Christ. When Jesus was working with the disciples he gave them the power to drive out demons, cure diseases, and heal the sick as his agents to preach the Kingdom of heaven (Luke 9:2, 10:9). Jesus uses this form of representational authority for his disciples to continue his ministry even after his death and ascension.[27] It seems, then, that Luke is endorsing the ministry of both Peter and Paul. The question is, why would he need to do this? There are a number of possibilities.

Peter was an apostle of the Lord, and the "rock" on which Christ was going to build his church (Mat. 16:18). Throughout Jesus' ministry, Peter is portrayed as holding a level of leadership amongst the 12 disciples, and he was one of the three or four in the "inner circle."[28] He is recorded as the sole orator of the sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40), and in Acts, the leader of the early church. He is personified as dedicated (Luke 9:20), yet not necessarily the most stable or reliable of disciples, the biggest example of this being his denial of Jesus (Luke 22:54-62). While Peter was reinstated by Jesus, the only recording of this narrative is found in John 21:15-19.

Therefore, it is possible Luke was restoring the reader's faith in Peter after his denial with this miracle. As the sequel to the Gospel of Luke,[29] this may have been an area Luke needed to address to explain Peter's return to leadership. But this restoration seems to have happened at the Pentecost sermon, or even prior in Acts 1:15-26 at the appointing of Matthias, where Peter assumes the role of spokesperson.[30] I would argue this miracle is authenticating the message or ministry as much as it is Peter. This message is not only the sacrifice Jesus paid on the cross; it is a specifically Jewish message.

As already noted, the miracle in Acts 3:1-10 is performed on a Jewish

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[27]John B. Polhill, *Acts* (NAC 28; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 125.

[28]B. Van. Elderen, "Peter," *The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2009), 814.

[29]Darrell L. Bock, *Acts* (BENTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2007), 25.

[30]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 222.

man before a Jewish audience, which garnered a Jewish reaction. Peter then used Jewish proofs from the Old Testament, Jewish debate tactics, and a quote from Moses (Acts 3:22//Deut 18:15-20)[31] in the speech he delivers at Solomon's Colonnade. At this point in the Lukan narrative, this is the sole mission of apostles. It would not have been specifically identified as Jewish until Acts 10 (the vision of Peter and the conversion of Cornelius) because the original apostles simply could not think of a mission to the Gentiles.[32]

While Peter denied Jesus, Paul was at one time a Pharisee (Phil 3:5) and a persecutor of the church (1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Acts 8:3). Luke narrates Paul's conversion in Acts 9 where Jesus reveals himself to Paul on the road to Damascus. If a revelation from the Lord is not enough to convince Lukan readers that Paul is a changed man, his preaching in the synagogues of Damascus should be (Acts 9:20-22). Yet again, Luke employs this type of miracle to authenticate the man, but more importantly his message.

Paul's message was revolutionary and garnered a significant amount of attention to his ministry. Up until Acts 10, only Jewish people had received the Holy Spirit, as Jews were still the recipients of the Apostle's mission work.[33] Peter even has to explain his actions in Jerusalem (Acts 11), as preaching to the Gentiles was such a foreign concept to the "circumcised" believers. I argue that, as this message was so revolutionary, Luke was again using this miracle type to authenticate the message to the Gentiles.

Luke's Use of Miracles

It appears Luke uses these miracles as pivotal moments in his writings to communicate and authenticate a new or revolutionary message. In Luke 5:17-26, the revolutionary component was that Jesus was the "Son of Man," the Messiah who has power over the physical as well as the spiritual dimensions of this world. The next pivotal moment in Luke's writings is in Acts 3 after the death of Jesus when Peter develops and declares a "Jewish" message.[34] This message was that Jesus was the Messiah (whom the

[31]Mikeal C.Parsons, *Acts* (Paideia; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008), 60-1.

[32]Ernst Haenchen, T*he Acts of the Apostles* (NTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 356.

[33]Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 467.

[34]I use the term "Jewish" because this message is best understood in light of the inclusion of the Gentiles later in Acts, not because Jews were the only

Jews killed), but that through repentance and God's grace he will forgive them of their sins (Acts 2:28) and return when God will restore everything (Acts 3:19-21). Another development occurs in Acts 14 where we see Gentile inclusion in the gospel on a large scale as shown through the missionary work of Paul.

In all three of these cases, we see significant push back from the religious leaders. Luke 5:17-26 starts a series of controversies where Jesus is in direct opposition to the Pharisees and Sadducees.[35] These oppositions are the "eating and drinking with sinners" (Luke 5:27-31), "questions about fasting" (Luke 5:33-39), "picking grain on the Sabbath" (Luke 6:1-5), and "healing on the Sabbath" (Luke 6:6-11). All of these instances are used to demonstrate the growing rift between Jesus and the religious leaders as he is living out his identity as the Son of Man.

In the ministry of Peter, we see hostility after this pericope as well. After this miracle the apostles are called before the Sanhedrin and rebuked (Acts 4), imprisoned (Acts 5:17-18), flogged (Acts 5:40), and in the case of Stephen, stoned (Acts 7:54-60). The Sanhedrin are involved in all of these incidents and endorsed the persecution of the early church in Acts 8 when the church is scattered. The same men who persecuted Jesus in life are now opposing his disciples after his death.

Paul faces opposition throughout his entire ministry. This persecution occurs throughout Acts[36] and is evidenced in the Pauline Epistles,[37] as Paul is not only preaching Jesus was the Messiah, but that Gentiles were invited into the grace of God and no longer had to follow the Law. This was a shock to Jewish believers (Acts 10:45) and some attempted to rebuke the apostles for it (Acts 11:3) while others wanted to make Gentiles follow the Law (Acts 15, Gal 2). Because this concept is completely foreign to them,

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ones who were able to be included in the message at this point. By the grace of God, Gentiles had the ability to enter salvation at this point, but we do not see the outpouring of this until Acts 10, and more broadly in the ministry of Paul. While a flawed term, I will continue to use it for the purposes of this study.

[35]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX* (AB 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1981), 577.

[36]Acts 9:23; 13:50; 14:2; 14:19; 17:5; 18:6; 21:27-28; 23:2; 23:12-15; 24:9; 25:2-3.

[37] P. W. Barnett, "Opponents of Paul," *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1993), 644-52. See also Gal 1:18-19; 2:9; 11-14; 1 Cor 1:12; 9:5.

this message finds opposition from both Jews and Jewish Christians.

Why does opposition come in these cases? It seems there is opposition because of the theological change each of these respective ministries brings about. The Jews were looking for a Daniel 7 type Messiah to liberate them from the Romans. When Jesus did not fulfill their typology, the Jewish leadership rejected and opposed him. In the case of Peter, they continued to oppose Jesus Christ and his return as King. Lastly, both Jews and Christians opposed the work of Paul because they could not picture religion without the Law, and certainly not Gentile acceptance into that work. Luke notes opposition so he can speak to and identify theological change for his readers (the religious leaders opposed the "new" messages brought through these individual's work).

If these observations are correct, there are several implications which need to be considered. First, Luke wants to authenticate both the miracle worker and the message in these three accounts. In Luke and Acts there is a considerable number of miracles at the start of Jesus', Peter's, and Paul's ministry, but those miracles quickly diminish (by number and importance) throughout the remainder of their work.[38] There are two possible reasons for this. The first being that the miracle worker stopped performing as many miracles, the second being that Luke simply did not record as many miracles in his writings. In either instance, the theological point is that their role as appointed messenger of God (or the Son of Man in the case of Jesus) has been authorized, and they no longer needed to perform miracles to achieve their purpose. The healing miracles we have observed are much more important, as they are foundational to the start of their respective ministries.

Second, Luke identifies a specific development in theology throughout his writings. While we hold limited knowledge of Luke's audience, it seems they consisted of a mixed Jewish and Gentile background.[39] There would have been individuals who struggled with some of these changes, so Luke uses these narratives to clarify the challenging new theology. This identification is not only found in these specific miracles, but also in the formation of his writings.

[38]Graham H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1999), 188. Gary W. Derickson, "The Cessation of Healing Miracles in Paul's Ministry," *BibSac* 155 (1998): 303-6.

[39]Keener, *Acts*,1:434.

The Gospel of Luke focuses on Jesus' ministry as the "Son of Man" and Messiah, the One to fulfill the Scriptures, for which the Pharisees rejected him (Luke 24:27).[40] In Acts, Luke records the early ministry of the church as the continuation of the ministry of Christ but with a new focus on the Kingdom and the return of Jesus. There is then an obvious transition in Acts 13, the first missionary journey, where Paul dominates the remainder of the book.[41] This movement seems to support this theological change as Acts 13-28 solely follows the ministry of Paul and supports the "Gentile" mission. Thus, in Luke's writings, the theological concept is directly demonstrated by the miracle and the focus on the miracle worker's ministry through Luke and Acts.

Third, if Luke was intentionally comparing these narratives, he is making a statement about the ministry of Jesus, Peter, and Paul. In the case of Peter and Paul, he is establishing the importance of both men's ministries and demonstrates both were working according to God's plan. There is no superiority between the two in light of Acts 3 and 14 but authority to both. When compared to Luke 5 and the ministry of Jesus, their work develops significant gravitas. But Luke is certainly not placing Peter and Paul at the same authoritative level as Jesus. Rather, Peter and Paul become representational authorities by evoking the name of Jesus, who attests the power working through them.[42] By creating allusion to the work of Christ in the healing miracles in Acts, Luke is ultimately showing that it is Jesus working through Peter and Paul.

Conclusion

The miracle accounts in Luke 5:17-16, Acts 3:1-10, and Acts 14:8-10 contain a number of parallels which Luke seems to have intentionally recorded to subtly express theological nuances. These miracles authenticate the speaker, not unlike the prophets and kings recorded in the Old Testament and literature contemporaneous to it. This authentication, when

[40]George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Son of Man," *ABD* 6: 145.

[41]D. A. Carson, and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005), 288.

[42]Keener, *Miracles*, 1:64.

established through these miracles, diminishes throughout the rest of the Lukan writings. Another way these miracles are unique is they mark a significant development in theological concepts such as Jesus as the Son of Man, his forgiveness of sins and future kingdom, and that the gospel is being opened to the Gentiles. The allusion to Jesus' miracle in the case of Peter and Paul is significant, demonstrating that their authentication comes from Jesus as his agents or representational authority.

As we read these miracle stories, it is important to understand God is doing an amazing work through these miracles, but also that Luke is using them for important theological goals. As the readers of Luke, it is important we identify these distinctions and learn from the movement we see throughout Luke and Acts, a movement critical for understanding God's work throughout Israel and the world as seen through the ministry of Jesus, Peter, and Paul.

Acts 3:19-21 Waiting For the Rains

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Introduction

The last few weeks in Seattle, where I live, we have been enjoying a respite from the very hot summer we experienced (and endured) this year. We are known as the "Evergreen" state because the adequate rainfall and moderate temperatures are conducive to evergreen trees and plants; however, this past three months our lawns are evidence of an 'ever-brown' condition. We greatly anticipated and welcomed the return of the few days of hard rain that fell in the Puget Sound region and we are actually beginning to see green once again in our lawns. The rains for us have been quite refreshing.

In the Old Testament we find the rains and the refreshments they bring are an indication of God's blessings. Moses tells Israel if they obey him, "then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil" (Deut. 11:14). On the other hand, if they rebel against God an indication of his cursing them will be the withholding of rain: "The sky over your head will be bronze, the ground beneath you iron. The Lord will turn the rain of your country into dust and powder" (Deut. 28:23-24). The fulfillment of this prophecy is too well known, as we see in the OT that Israel suffers the cursing and punishment of God for their disobedience which is often compared to prostitution, as they prostitute themselves to worship the gods of the land. Jeremiah reminds them because of this: "Therefore the showers have been withheld, and no spring rains have fallen" (Jer. 3:3). As we track

this theme throughout the prophets we find God's grace revealed in that he promised to Israel "As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth" (this from the clear Messianic passage, Hosea 6:3). So the theme of the future rains, winter and spring, become associated with the restoration of Israel and the coming Messianic Kingdom, to literally be established on earth. For a people who live in the Middle East, where the rains in season are so crucial for their lives, this is a very appropriate sign of God's blessings.

Refreshing in Acts 1-8

This brings us to a crucial passage of Scripture in helping us to understand what God is offering to Israel in the early chapters of Acts. This article represents the view that the offer of the literal Messianic Kingdom is made to Israel through the now Christian Jewish apostles of Jesus Christ via the preaching found from Acts 1-8. The establishment of this promised Kingdom will take place if Israel repents and turns to God through receiving the resurrected Jesus as their Messiah. If you were to put yourself in the context of the apostles, you would have to admit a full understanding of the need for Messiah's death, burial and resurrection could not have been grasped until after the resurrection. Now that this has taken place, the offer of the Kingdom can be given to Israel, if they will repent and receive it.

Our Lord spent forty days with his disciples (Acts 1) teaching and preparing them for their ministry. Just before his ascension, he instructs them to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is in this context they ask the most natural, reasonable and expected question: "are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). Many suggest the disciples' question places the kingdom in the present spiritually (as opposed to literally) when they ask if the Lord "is" restoring the Kingdom. For an understanding of the tense, refer to Alford, who gives a strong case for the future aspect "wilt thou restore"[1] so that the sense is "at this time wilt thou restore the kingdom." His emphasis is an understanding of the word "wilt" (KJV), in the near future, and their understanding is the Kingdom restoration will soon come to pass.

Many commentators throughout the years have suggested the disciples have a lack of understanding of the new "spiritual nature" of the Kingdom.

[1]Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 3.

Consequently, the suggestion is implied that the Lord's response is given to correct them when he responds, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set" (v. 7). F. F. Bruce states: "Their present question appears to have been the last flicker of their former burning expectation of an imminent theocracy with themselves as its chief executives. From now on they devoted themselves to the proclamation and service of God's spiritual kingdom."[2] This would imply the spiritual kingdom has replaced a literal Messianic kingdom which had been their hope for so long.

It is certainly true the kingdom would have a spiritual foundation (as all of God's redemptive work does), and this, of course, is emphasized with the pouring out upon the apostles of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. At the same time the question must be asked: 'Is there anything in the sermons from the apostles in the next chapters indicating they are no longer anticipating the return of the Messiah and the kingdom restored?' I would offer that indeed, in Peter's sermon at Pentecost in the next chapter, he associates the miracles at the Feast of Pentecost with the context of Joel 2. In this prophetic book, Joel speaks not just of divine utterings and tongues, but "The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord" (Acts 2:20, Joel 2:30-31, note that in Joel the day of the Lord is also described as dreadful). Peter quotes this entire section, not just the portion currently being fulfilled at Pentecost, so we can assume they were looking for the rest of the prophecy to be fulfilled. Given the prophecies of Daniel, can this be any other than the Tribulation period which precedes the Messianic kingdom? There is great anticipation in the company of new Christian Jewish believers in Jerusalem as the Holy Spirit is working mightily in their midst. They even begin to experience some of the practical aspects of the kingdom in the communal life they shared (Acts 3:44-46).

[2]F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1988), 36.

An Offer of the Kingdom

This brings us to what I consider one of the pivotal passages that helps us to understand this bona fide offer of the Kingdom, assuming Israel will receive it. The crowd gathers to hear Peter as a result of the miraculous healing of a crippled beggar. After reminding them they had a hand in murdering the Anointed One, Peter goes on to explain God was now extending the offer of forgiveness upon repentance. He tells them: "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that the times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you-even Jesus" (Acts 3:19-20). The phrase "time of refreshing," given the prophetic promise of God sending the early and latter rains as a mark of blessing, would be significant to the teachers and leaders of Israel who are listening. Undoubtedly, they are well aware of these promises and the importance of the theme of the "refreshing rains" upon people and a nation so in need of God's salvation and deliverance.

The key term, anayucis (anapsyxis) "refreshing," is one suggesting the idea of relief, a respite and recovery. This is the only NT occurrence of this exact word, but we will find in the LXX it is used to explain the respite from the plague of frogs on Egypt when God removed that plague from their land. In Exodus 8:11 (8:15 in English Bible) we read: "but when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart." The relief was the restoration to life as it was before the plague. It is also worth noting the Latin Vulgate uses the term refrigerium in Acts 3:19. Surely we can make the connection with our English word 'refrigerate,' to bring cooling and respite from heat. The "times of refreshing" are a crucial phrase in understanding the Messianic Kingdom indeed is being offered to Israel. Thayer describes anayucis as relating to "the messianic blessedness to be ushered in by the return of Christ from heaven."[3]

In his comment on Acts 3, F. F. Bruce cites E. Schweizer as saying, "possibly more than a respite is intended here, if 'the times of refreshing'; are the definitive age of salvation."[4] Indeed, Schweizer goes on to explain the term anayucis: "the expression is undoubtedly apocalyptic in origin, as is the accompanying phrase 'from the face of the Lord.' The reference,

[3]Joseph Thayer, *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: Harper), 43.

[4]Ibid, 84.

then, is to the eschatological redemption which is promised to Israel if it repents."[5] This is not to suggest either of these authors would agree to the mid-Acts beginning of the Church; however, it does demonstrate this promise in the context of first-century Judaism is helpful and appropriate. In fact, one could assume the Jews hearing Peter's sermon would think of nothing else but the imminent approach of the Kingdom; no one contests this aspect of Peter's sermon.

While many commentators note the reality of the Kingdom context of the apostles preaching, they still deny in practice it is being literally offered. Henry Alford is in an example of this. On one the hand he states:

No other meaning, it seems to me, will suit the words, but that of the times of refreshment, the great season of joy and rest, which it was understood the coming of the Messiah in His glory was to bring with it. That this should be connected by the Apostle with the conversion of the Jewish people, was not only according to the plain inferences from prophecy, but doubtless, was one of those things concerning the kingdom of God which he had been taught by his risen Master.[6]

But on the other hand, he goes on to state that in reality the conversion of Israel as a prerequisite is not really indicated in this passage. However, is not the most obvious reading of this passage indeed that the message is clearly "repent and God will send the Christ," and does this not suggest it is connected with the conversion of the Jewish people (and especially those who "sat in Moses' seat")?

We will also find contemporary Dispensational theologians who see the promise of the "times of refreshing" as referring to the spiritual presence of the Kingdom in the apostles current time. In the recent book Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism, Stanley Toussaint challenges Darrell Bock's assertion that Luke refers primarily to a present spiritual fulfillment. Toussaint states, "This simply does not suit the Greek text. Two purpose clauses separate two time periods. The first is the present time and deals with forgiveness of sins. The second looks ahead to the future return of Christ."[7] In other words, we could say "if A, then B." If (A) Israel repents and receives, then (B) the Messiah would return and establish the

[5]E. Schweizer, "ἀναψύχω," TDNT, 9:664.

[6]Alford 14.

[7]Herbert Bateman, IV, ed., *Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 1999), 242

"times of refreshing." It is my contention Acts 3:19 strongly suggests Peter's preaching is clearly an offer to Israel of the establishment of the long awaited Messianic Kingdom, contingent on repentance and acceptance of Christ as Messiah. This could only have been fully offered after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus as they now understood it from the apostle's preaching.

"He Must Remain…"

One final verse to be considered is also found in this section of Acts 3 (please take time to read the entire chapter for the full context). In 3:21 Peter preaches, "He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything." This brings us back to our starting place, Acts 1:6, where the same word apokaqisthm (apokathistemi) is used for "restore." This word has the sense "to set in order, to set in place." In the field of medicine it could be used to describe setting a broken bone. In the context of Peter's preaching, Cleon Rogers states it is "an eschatological term for the restoration of the right order through God in the end time."[8] Therefore, it very likely in the preaching of Peter in this section of Acts the offer of restoration of the Kingdom, accompanied by the times of refreshing, is genuinely being offered to Israel upon repentance and conversion. Otherwise, it seems the only viable alternative is to see the Kingdom being spiritually restored in their midst and therefore no longer having a literal prophetic fulfillment. Consequently, all of Peter's preaching and references to OT prophecies would need to be similarly understood.

As you take time to read Acts 3, note the entire context has to do with the response of the people to the miraculous healing of the lame beggar. However, it is in Acts 4 we are told: "For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old" (vs. 22). It is likely this significant time period, 40 years, would not be lost on a people whose history was so influenced by a 40 year wandering from the Promised Land due to their rejection of God's offer to give them the Land if they would have faith in his deliverance. I agree with Parsons when he states, "It is difficult to resist giving symbolic value to the more than forty years of the lame man's illness in terms of the exiled and restored Israel."[9]

[8]Cleon Rogers, *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1998), 229.

[9]Mikeal Parsons, Acts (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008), 58.

The offer to Israel of the promised Messianic Kingdom recorded in the early chapters of Acts seems to be the most natural reading of the apostles' preaching when it is considered in the historical context. Everything from the preaching at Pentecost to the preaching of Stephen is focused on this critical juncture in their history: repent and accept God's message concerning Christ and he will return. If Bruce is correct that "they devoted themselves to the proclamation and service of God's spiritual kingdom" in Acts 1, then why in Acts 3 is the offer so clearly given of the literal Messianic Kingdom? Would they have continued preaching this message if they had come to the realization it was to be spiritually fulfilled and not literally?

Conclusion

The rejection by the leadership of Israel, especially by those who sat in Moses's Seat, led to the setting aside of this Kingdom being established literally and physically. With this setting aside, God introduces the mystery of the Body of Christ, the new humanity as described by Paul in Ephesians 1-3. This Church, the Body of Christ, is open to all Jews and Gentiles apart from any works of the Law. The historical rejection by Israel of the offered "times of refreshing and restoration" will not negate the promise of God.

When this Dispensation of the Body of Christ comes to a close, God will once again not only offer but ensure Israel accepts his message (Jer. 31-33), and the times of "refreshing" will surely come, administered through Israel's Messiah. What a joyous time it will be for humanity when Israel's Kingdom is restored, for it will be a Kingdom encompassing the entire world, and the "times of refreshing" will be shared by all. As we see the heartache and turmoil in our world today, we can certainly appreciate the heartfelt plea of the Apostle John, "even so come Lord Jesus."

An Exegetical Examination of Ezekiel 28:11-19 "A Lament over the King of Tyre"

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Introduction

The book of Ezekiel, like many other Old Testament prophetical books,[1] contains a number of oracles against foreign nations. Within these oracles, the nation of Tyre is often an addressee. Such is the case in Ezekiel 26-28, where both the nation of Tyre (chapters 26-27) and its ruler (chapter 28) are each the intended recipient. The "Lament over the King of Tyre" narrative found in Ezekiel 28:11-19 falls within this category of oracles directed at Tyre, and depicts the downfall of Tyre's ruler through the imagery of a paradise which has been lost because of the ruler's hubris.

Context of Ezekiel 28

When attempting to exegete Ezekiel 28:11-19, it is imperative to understand that it is part of a bigger pericope that begins in verse 1. Scholars consider verses 1-19 to be single combined unit, which contains two smaller units: verses 1-10 and verses 11-19.[2] This assumption is based upon the presence of similar word phrases in verses 1, 11, and 20 [The word of the Lord came to me; Thus says the Lord God] which introduce the reception of a message, and a distinct word phrase in verse 10 [For I have spoken, declares the Lord God] which denotes the conclusion of the first

[1]See Isaiah 13-24, 34; Jeremiah 46-51; Obadiah 1; Nahum 1-3; Zephaniah 2-3.

[2]Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48* (WBC 29; Waco: Word, 1990), 92.

message.[3] Furthermore, when compared to the pericopae in Ezekiel 26:1-21 and 27:1-36, a second concluding formula is found [You have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever], which seems to indicate that while 28:1-10 and 28:11-19 are in fact separate prophetic units, 28:1-19 is also a complete unit of thought in the same vain as 26:1-21 and 27:1-36. This approach is further supported by Zimmerli who states,

> …The complex 28:1-19 is proved by the closing v 19b to be an independent unit alongside the units 26:1-21 and 27:1-36, which close with the same refrain. But, as is shown by the twofold occurrence of the formula for the receiving of God's word in vv 1 and 11, it again consists of the two self-contained units vv 1-10 and vv 11-19. The redactor who brought them together and concluded them with the refrain in v 19b wished them to be understood as a pair of oracles belonging together."

Daniel Block agrees with Zimmerli, saying "while formally distinct [that is vs. 1-10 and vs. 11-19], a series of stylistic features combine to create the impression of an intentional overall unitary composition."[4] Block then lists six different facets which support his position. 1) Addressee: While most of Ezekiel's other oracles are leveled at nations and countries, both of these passages in chapter 28 are addressed to the leader of a city, specifically Tyre. 2) General Theme: The primary issue that is addressed in both passages is the hubris of the leader. 3) Subthemes: The two units are linked by similar secondary themes such as "lifting up the heart" (vs. 2, 5, 17); wisdom (vs. 3, 4, 5, 12); trade (vv. 5, 16); beauty (vs. 7, 12, 17); splendor (vv. 7, 17). 4) Other Lexical Connections: The passages share similar homonymous roots: halal and hillel; sahat and sihat. 5). Chapter 28 is placed after two oracles (chapters 26, 27) which both address Tyre and consist of doom and lament. 6) Formulaic Punctuation: The use of the aforementioned second concluding formula that is found in 26:21, 27:36, and 28:19, that serves to punctuate the end of each pericope. Thus, it is with these six unifying factors that 28:1-19 is seen to be both a cohesive unit of thought and two distinct passages.[5]

Greenberg makes the connection that the two sections found within

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[3]Ibid.

[4]Daniel Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25-48* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 88.

[5]Block, 89.

Ezek 28 form a parallel with the previous two chapters: 26, 27.[6] Greenberg notes that "Ch. 28 contains two oracles against Tyre's ruler, the first nonfigurative, the second figurative (similar to the sequence of chapters 26 [nonfigurative] and 27 [figurative]). In both there is a movement from prideful height to abased lowliness, from sanctity to profanation."[7] Thus, just as chapter 26 contains a prophecy against Tyre, 28:1-10 contains a prophecy against the prince of Tyre. Chapter 27 contains a lament for Tyre, just as 28:11-19 contains a lament for the king of Tyre. Thus, the parallel looks as follows:

Ezek 26 "Prophecy against Tyre" (non-figurative)	Ezek 28:1-10 "Prophecy against the Prince of Tyre" (non-figurative)
Ezek 27 "A Lament for Tyre" (figurative)	Ezek 28:11-19 "A Lament for the king of Tyre" (figurative)

Author and Setting

Most scholars would agree that Ezekiel is the author of the passage. However, it is generally believed that there have been numerous editorial additions to the passage since Ezekiel authored it. Robert Wilson suggests that "Although form and tradition critics usually agree on the general sense of Ezek 28:1-10 and 28:11-19, they also agree that the units contain a number of later editorial additions which must be eliminated before coherent interpretations can be obtained."[8] Included amongst these additions are: verses 3-5, which speak to the wisdom of the prince, seem to have no relation to the pride of the prince which is being discussed; verse 13, which contains the list of the gems, is normally considered simply an elaboration of an original vague reference to precious stones; verses 16, 18a, which point to trade as the source of the king's sin, seem to be intrusive and are most likely influenced by similar expressions in chapter 27; and verses 12, 17, which once again reference the wisdom of the king, are thought to be

[6]Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, Anchor Bible 22a (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 576.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Robert R. Wilson, "The Death of the King of Tyre: The Editorial History of Ezekiel 28," in J. H. Marks and R. M. Good, eds., *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of Marvin H. Pope* (Guilford, Conn: Four Quarters, 1987), 212.

the work of the same editor who added the wisdom section to verses 3-5.[9] However, these additions should not be exaggerated, for as Wilson correctly identifies,

> "The removal of supposed editorial additions does not shed any light on the factors that motivated the editors' work in the first place. Unless one wishes to believe that the editors were totally unconcerned about the overall meaning of the text, one must assume that they intended their work to clarify of modify the text in a comprehensible way."[10]

With regard to the setting of the passage, there is a small yet notable debate. Scholars generally believe that "The chronological setting of both oracles was evidently the long siege of Tyre, while the Babylonians were endeavoring to subdue the island fortress. The second oracle [28:11-19] seems consciously to echo the first in places, a phenomenon that must have encouraged its redactional combination."[11] Thus, a majority of the debate revolves not around what historical events are being discussed, but whether Ezekiel wrote this oracle before these events had taken place so as to be considered truly prophetic, or if Ezekiel penned the passage after the events had taken place, as in a history of sorts. While scholars have argued for both, Zimmerli's arguments for the earlier authoring of the oracle seem the most compelling. He proposes:

> "Since, however, it becomes clear in 29:17-21 that Ezekiel assessed the end of the siege of Tyre with an essentially more subdued judgment, the second assumption [that Ezekiel wrote the oracle before the events occurred] is more likely. In 28:11-19 Ezekiel is still awaiting the fall of the city of Tyre, which is here included in the figure of her king, in the large dimension of a total deprivation of power."[12]

Literary Style

It is interesting to note the difference in the literary styles of the two sections in chapter 28. The first section (vs. 1-10) is considered a doom or judgment oracle and focuses primarily on accusation and then a pronouncement of punishment upon the ruler of Tyre, which is brought to fruition through divine intervention. The second section is a self-titled lament

[9]Ibid.
[10]Ibid.
[11]Allen, 93.
[12]Zimmerli, 89.

which reflects upon the judgment which has just been meted out.[13] Therefore, referring to verses 1-10 Block identifies that, "The manner in which the addressee is introduced and the employment of the sequence ya'an… laken, 'Because… Therefore,' establishes this oracle clearly as a judgment speech to an individual."[14] That verses 1-10 are rightly seen as a judgment oracle makes logical sense in relation to the lament of the king of Tyre (vv. 11-19) which follows it. As Block affirms, "Following the pronouncement of the death sentence on him in vv. 6-11, a funeral song would indeed be appropriate."[15] Thus, the judgment in the first pericope makes the lament possible in the second. In essence it sets the stage for the lament found in verses 11-19.

Form

The form of the lament pericope requires some investigation. Though the passage describes itself as a lament (הניק) in verse 12, and is therefore considered a prophetic dirge, there are multiple elements found within it that serve to both support and reject this claim. In typical lament style the passage is divided into two parts: a description of past glory and an account of present disaster (which is here justified as punishment).[16] This division comes in verse 15, where even the verse itself is split: "You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created/till unrighteousness was found in you." Furthermore, there are obvious elements of the poetic form which is typical of the lament style, viz., heavy use of figurative language, unusual vocabulary, archaisms, parallelism, the absence of prose elements, unusual word order, and a breakup of stereotyped phrases.[17]

However, the passage also seems to stray from the lament form in certain areas. Block points out four aspects which indicate that though Ezekiel is well versed in the lament/dirge form, the expected patterns of that form seem to be lacking: 1) there seem to be no overt expressions of grief as are often found in laments. In fact, the oracle seems to be almost a justification for Yahweh's judgment which will be poured out upon the king of Tyre, rather than just lamenting the king's judgment; 2) The style of the

[13]Allen, 92.
[14]Block, 92.
[15]Ibid, 102.
[16]Greenberg, 587
[17]Block, 102. n. 73.

pericope is so irregular that it is difficult to determine whether it should be considered poetry or prose[18]; 3) Only a select number of lines adhere to the 3:2 qina meter, and any attempts to force the text into fitting said meter require such substantial alterations that such an approach seems unwise[19]; 4) Though the "once/now," "past glory/present demise," scheme is apparent, the entire panel is cast in the past tense.[20] In light of these observations, one is inclined to conclude that though the passage labels itself a lament, the absence of key lament characteristics and the presence of fundamental elements of judgment oracle leave us with a hybrid of the two forms.

As Zimmerli states, "In this respect the הניק ('lament') comes very close to the prophetic judgment-oracle, from which it is distinguished only in that it turns towards the past and describes in the style of a lament a judgment which had already happened instead of proclaiming a judgment which is still to come."[21]

Structure

While Block claims that formal structural indicators are absent from verses 11-19,[22] Greenberg identifies a structure which revolves around the division in verse 15.[23] Breaking up each part into a pair of stanzas (A1, A2, B1, B2 as vs. 12b-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18 respectively), a parallelism takes shape that serves as a structure for the majority of the pericope. This structure can be seen in the following chart:[24]

[18]Despite the aforementioned elements of poetry that do exist within the pericope, certain aspects remain missing: lines of consistent length, balanced parallelism, a lack of *waw*-consecutives.

[19]See Zimmerli, 87-89 for an in depth look at the meter of the passage and the corresponding changes that must occur in order to make the text fit the mold.

[20]For all four points, Block, 102.

[21]Zimmerli, 89.

[22]Block, 102.

[23]Greenberg, 587.

[24]Ibid.

A1, verses 12b-13 1. You…sealer…full of wisdom… beauty 2. In Eden the garden of God, you were every precious stone. 3. … in you on the day you were created.	B1, verses 16-17 1. Because of you many dealings… was filled 2. I desacralized you… from the mountain of God, from amidst fire-stones. 3. To the ground… before kings I set you, to gaze on you.
A2, verses 14-15 1. You…shielding cherub, I set you. 2. In the holy mountain of God you were, amidst fire-stones you walked about. 3. From the day you were created… in you.	B2, verse 18 1. By your many… dealings. 2. You desecrated your holy precincts, fire from your midst. 3. I turned you… on the ground, before the eyes of all who gazed on you.

Exegesis of Ezekiel 28

"Prince vs. King"

Verse 11 begins with the Lord delivering the oracle to Ezekiel, instructing him to raise a lament (קינה) over the king of Tyre. Interestingly, here in 28:12 Ezekiel uses מלך (*king*) to address the ruler, which is different from the word נגיד (*prince*) which is used in 28:2. This change in title has caused some scholars to propose a shift in focus from the ruler of Tyre to its divine patron: 'Melkart.'[25] However, the parallels between the two pericopes seem to identify this מלך with the נגיד of v. 2. Furthermore, in Ezekiel מלך always refers to an earthly king.[26] Thus, though the two different titles are used in verse 2 and verse 12, the same Tyrian ruler is being addressed.

"Seal of Perfection"

The first of the difficult interpretations is found in verse 12. It is here that Ezekiel describes the king of Tyre by using the phrase אַתָּה חוֹתֵם תָּכְנִית which literally means "seal of consummation," or the "seal of perfection."[27] However, this is an obscure phrase that has little precedent within the Scriptures. Block indicates that in the Old Testament seals functioned

[25]Block, 103, indicating a position held by Steinmann, Mackay, and Dus.

[26]Ibid., Zimmerli, 90.

[27]Greenberg, 580.

as a sign of authority and authenticity.[28] The seals were made of precious stones and were exquisitely crafted; they were the ultimate in beauty. Thus, it seems as though the point Ezekiel is trying to make is simply to emphasize the status, beauty, and magnificence of the king. The word used here to indicate perfection תִּינָךְ is used only one other time (Ezekiel 43:10), being used to indicate the perfect proportions of the temple.[29]

This metaphor of a seal of perfection is then followed by the statement that the king is full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, seemingly building upon the perfection that is indicated through the seal analogy. Greenberg goes so far as to say the seal of perfection indicates that he was a perfect creature or he capped a perfect design.[30] However, some scholars have pushed against this interpretation, as C. H. Cornill argues, "One thing is very certain, the words *hwtm tknyt* could never mean an artistically wrought seal… In the words must be hidden somewhere a mythological allusion…"[31] Nevertheless, the general consensus among scholars is that the phrase likens the ruler to a "seal of perfection," which "hints at a special status, conferred by one higher than himself."[32]

"Garden of Eden"

In verse 13, Ezekiel writes that the king of Tyre was in מיהלא ןג ןדע, "Eden, the garden of God." Interestingly enough, the LXX translates ןג as "paradise," while interpreting ןדע as "luxury or splendor." This understanding of the Edenic garden leads Block to state, "In placing the king of Tyre in Eden Ezekiel is adapting a well-known biblical tradition of the garden of God as a utopian realm of prosperity and joy."[33] However, this is not an exact replica of the Eden found in Genesis 2-3. While the Edenic reference in this passage does include a garden, expulsion from that garden, moral perfection which precedes a fall and a cherub who is the agent of expulsion, at the same time it lacks any reference to the serpent or the first woman, and it

[28]Block, 104.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Greenberg, 580.

[31]Cornill, as quoted in H. J. Van Dijk, *Ezekiel's Prophecy on Tyre: Ez. 16,1 – 28,19: A New Approach* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1968), 114.

[32]Block, 105. For further study see Van Dijk, 113-116; Greenberg 580-581; Zimmerli, 91; and Wilson, 215.

[33]Block, 106.

speaks of man being adorned with bejeweled clothing.[34] Thus, Allen comments, "To what extent Ezekiel is retelling an oral tradition known to him we cannot know. He obviously adapts the tradition to the Tyrian situation, but whether to this end he created other elements that do not belong to the Adam and Eve story in Genesis and/or whether he is fusing different creation myths known to him is tantalizingly uncertain."[35] All in all, it seems that through this garden imagery Ezekiel was attempting to indicate that just as the king was a seal of perfection, so too was his kingdom perfect in that it was like Eden, the garden of God.[36]

"Gems and Jewels"

The majority of verse 13 is a list the precious stones which served as the king's covering. This record of the jewels mirrors the precious stones that adorn the chest-piece of the High Priest of Israel in Exodus 28:17-20 and 39:10-13. While the lists are not identical, "a comparison between Ezekiel's list of gemstones and those of the high priest suggests that his catalogue was inspired by this chest-piece."[37] Both lists begin with the same two jewels, both group the jewels in threes, and Ezekiel's second triad is identical to the fourth triad in Exodus.[38] However, Ezekiel deletes an entire triad from the list (though the LXX adds the fourth triad back into the Ezekiel passage), and mentions some gemstones that are not found in the Exodus catalog. The question, then, is what purpose do the gemstones serve? While Allen states that, "The role of the precious stones in v. 13 is not clear,"[39] Block answers the question by asserting that "Ezekiel is now mixing his metaphors. The king of Tyre is not only a beautifully crafted jeweled seal himself; he is adorned with a series of gemstones, many of which were exploited by ancient jewelers in the crafting of signets."[40]

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[34]Allen, 94.

[35]Ibid.

[36]For an in depth look at the possible garden narratives Ezekiel may have drawn from see Norman C. Habel, "Ezekiel 28 and the Fall of the First Man," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 38 (1967): 516-524.

[37]Block, 106.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Allen, 94

[40]Block, 106.

"Anointed Cherub"

Verse 14 marks the final verse of the glorious description of the Tyrian king, in that Ezekiel compares the king to an anointed cherub. However, there are two schools of thought concerning this phrase. Some scholars translate the phrase בּוּרְכִּ֥תְאַ "with the cherub," which leads to the understanding that the king of Tyre is in the garden with the anointed cherub: "accordingly there were two beings in the garden, a resplendent inhabitant and a cherub."[41] Still other scholars claim that the passage should read בּוּרְכִּ֥תָּא "[you] were a cherub," which would indicate, not that there were two beings in the garden, but that there was just one, the king, who was the cherub.[42] It would seem as though the latter understanding, that the king was the cherub, is in keeping with the theme of the king's perfection and glory that runs throughout the first half of the pericope. For the king to be the cherub gives greater weight to his perfection, as opposed to if he was simply allowed to be in the presence of the cherub. This position is supported by the NJPS which translates *'t krwb . . . wnttyk* "I created you as a cherub." However, while the Old Testament never uses *ntn* as 'create,' it is often used as 'but as 'turn into/make into.'[43] Thus, while the NJPS slightly misunderstands the nuance of *ntn*, they are right in indicating that the king *is* the cherub, rather than *with* the cherub.

"Accusations and Declarations of Judgment"

It is in verse 15 that the passages shifts drastically. As Allen puts it, "The narrative takes a sinister turn, with a willful moral decline. Vv. 16-18 present an emphatic threefold account of human sin and divine punishment."[44] It is at this point that the pericope begins to lose some of the elements which classified it as a lament, and it starts to take on some aspects of the judgment oracle.[45] This is seen through a specific pattern of accusation followed by a declaration of judgment that occurs in three consecutive verses.[46]

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[41]Greenberg, 583.

[42]Block, 113.

[43]Greenberg, 584.

[44]Allen, 95.

[45]Block, 115.

[46] Block, 116 makes the astute observation that all of the verbs used in the declarations of judgment are cast as prophetic perfects, indicating that they

The first of these pairs is in verses 15-16. Ezekiel begins the fall of the king in very general terms. Verse 15b says, "Till unrighteousness was found in you." Up until this point in time the reader has seen only the perfection and blamelessness of the Tyrian king. Thus, the fact that unrighteousness has suddenly been found within in him should come as a bit of a shock. This is not an expected ending to the perfection that is seen in verses 12-14. The king finds great success in his trading, and as a result, he becomes violent; and in his violence, he sins and allows unrighteousness to consume him. The judgment for his sin is found in verse 16b, and is an antithetical parallel to the holy imagery found in verse 14. Because of his unrighteousness God casts him out from the mountain of God, where he once dwelt in perfection; God destroys him, calling him the guardian cherub, the imagery that was given to him when he was blameless in verse 14; and God destroys him from the midst of the fiery stones which are repeated from verse 14. It becomes clear then, that Ezekiel is making a point to say that which was given to the king in his righteousness, will in the same manner be taken away in his unrighteousness.

The second accusation and declaration of judgment falls in verse 17. It is specifically in verse 17a that the hubris of the king begins to become apparent as Ezekiel writes, "Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor." This reminds the reader of 28:2, 7 in the first pericope, in which the ruler is seen to have a proud heart, having said, "I am a god. I sit in the seat of the gods." Thus, it is ultimately the king's desire to be proud of his beauty and splendor that initiates his fall from grace. However, Block rightfully acknowledges that "Neither beauty nor wisdom itself is to be disparaged. After all, these are qualities with which he was endowed that he might rule the garden for God. Imaging himself to be the lord of the holy mountain, however, he strutted his splendor before the rulers of the world. How appropriate, therefore, that he should also be cast down in their sight."[47]

The final pair, found in verse 18, serves to tie the preceding two pairs together. Hence, in verse 18a we read these accusations: "the unrighteousness [v. 15] of your trade [v. 16]," "you profaned [v. 16] your sanctuaries [v. 14, 16, 'holy mountain of God']." In conjunction we read these decla-

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are imminent future events being treated as having been already accomplished.

[47]Block, 117.

rations of judgment: "so I brought fire out of your midst [v. 14, 16]," "it consumed you [v. 16, 'I destroyed you']," "and I turned you to ashes on the earth [v.14, 16, 'stones of fire']," "in the sight of all who saw you [v. 17]." The idea of the Tyrian king being thrown down in the sight of other kings only adds to the insult of his fall. As Greenberg notes, "Misfortune is more painful when its victim is exposed to the curious, if not scornful, stares of unscathed erstwhile peers…"[48]

Summary

The accusation and judgment declarations of verses15-18 pave the way for the complete demise of the ruler in verse 19. Here in the final verse of the pericope is found the connective concluding formula which both echoes 26:21, 27:36 and brings a definitive end to the king of Tyre: "you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever." Just as the previous two oracles to Tyre have ended with dread and annihilation, so too does this one. To this extent Block aptly concludes, "The refrain with which the oracle against the king of Tyre concludes bears a horrifying note of finality. The proud ruler, the envy of the nations is gone – forever, leaving the bystanders paralyzed with shock."[49]

Having discussed some of the key exegetical issues in Ezekiel 28, we are now in a position to examine several possible interpretations of this passage.

Interpretation(s) of Ezekiel 28

Scholars have typically espoused one of three different approaches to the application of Ezekiel 28:11-19. The first approach attempts to see Adam, the first man, within the passage. This stems from the natural allusions to Gen. 1-3 and the Edenic story of which Adam participated in. Similar to the king of Tyre, Adam is created by God, dwells within Eden (which is the garden of God), is given dominion over the garden, becomes unsatisfied with his position, attempts to become like God, and is ultimately punished for doing so through humiliation and death.[50] However, as mentioned earlier, the Adamic correlation is not perfect in that Ezek 28:11-19 fails to mention the first woman, the serpent, or the specific sin of disobeying God

[48]Greenberg, 586.
[49]Block, 117.
[50]Block, 118.

by eating the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Thus, while the obvious parallels are most likely intended to make a connection between the king of Tyre and Adam in Gen. 2-3, it seems as though it is just a parallel and nothing more.

The second approach scholars take in their attempts to apply Ezekiel 28:11-19, is to suggest that the passage is "based on a tradition of an angelic 'fall,' closely associated with the 'fall' of humanity."[51] Those who would adhere to this position naturally see an association between the king of Tyre and Lucifer. Thus the passage recounts the story of the fall of Satan, who was at one time a cherubim of God, and yet wanting to be God, was punished for his hubris and cast out of heaven, being destined for an eternal death. However, this approach also has its difficulties. With regards to this approach, Allen states, "It is a case of exegeting an element of Christian belief by means of Scripture and so endeavoring to provide it with extra-biblical warrant and to fit the passage into the framework of the Christian faith. However, it is guilty of detaching the passage from it literary setting."[52] Block agrees, noting, "Ezekiel's prophecy is indeed couched in extravagant terms, but the primary referent within the context is clearly the human king of Tyre."[53]

A third approach to the lament oracle by some scholars tries to interpret and understand the passage in light of the historical and mythological traditions of the foreign cultures which surround Israel. One such example is the myth of the Ugaritic deity El, a story that is quite similar to Ezekiel 28:11-19. Wilson writes, "The actual account of El's fall is reflected in Ezekiel 28:11-19. Although he once lived on the cosmic mountain in a swelling constructed by a fiery fusion of precious metals and gems, he was cast down from the mountain and consigned to the underworld."[54] Thus, on the basis of their similarities, the mythological allusions found in Ezekiel 28:11-19 seem as though they could have been drawn from such an origin. However, like the scholars who wished to see Satan in the king of Tyre, those who try to see El in the king must realize that within the context of the passage and its limits, the ruler seems much more human than divine.[55]

[51]Ibid.
[52]Allen, 95.
[53]Block, 119.
[54]Wilson, 213.
[55]Ibid. See Wilson, 213-214 for further insight. See also John L.

Conclusion

While scholars continue to try their hand at understanding Ezekiel 28:11-19, attempting to read into it the Adamic Eden of Gen. 2-3, the original fall of Lucifer or the mythological traditions borrowed from foreign cultures, it seems as though some simple yet essential truths can be found no matter which background one wishes to read it against. First, pride goes before a fall. The king of Tyre was the seal of perfection, having beauty, wisdom and wealth. Yet, he became prideful, thinking highly of himself, lifting himself up to be on the same level as God. For this, the Lord brought him crashing down, even to the point of death.[56]

Second, God is the God of all. The Lord controls all people, nations, and nature. No one is equal to Him, and all must answer to Him. Even the great ruler of Tyre, who was perfect and blameless from birth, found himself at the mercy of the almighty God.[57] In the end, it is the ruler's pride that causes his fall. However, he is not the only one to struggle with such an issue. As Block concludes, "The biography of this ruler is repeated every day. [For] none is so vulnerable to the judgment of God as the one preoccupied with his or her divinely endowed beauty, wisdom, prosperity, [and] status."[58] Thus, the king of Tyre serves as a constant reminder of the consequences of haughtiness, arrogance, and conceit. His example makes certain the fact that no matter one's status, hubris leads to death, while humility leads to life.

McKenzie, "Mythological Allusions in Ezek 28:12-18," *JBL* 75 (1956): 322-27.

[56]Block, 120.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Ibid.

Was Paul the First Apostle to Know the Mystery of the Church?

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Introduction

This question is one that easily gets directed into a discussion about when the Body of Christ began to be formed. The reason for this is, logically, the beginning of the Body of Christ coincides with its revelation. But not all Bible teachers have agreed with this logic. Many well-known teachers have held the Body began to be formed on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, but the revelation was held back until later when Christ made it known in the ministry of Paul. For example, C. I. Scofield (of the Scofield Reference Bible), Clarence Larkin, Harry Ironside, Arno. C. Gaebelein (*Our Hope* Magazine), Mark G. Cambron (Tennessee Temple), and numerous others have held this view. If we should agree the beginning of the Body of Christ and the revelation of its beginning might be separate issues, then the more important of these will necessarily be its revelation because this is the issue which enables us to identify where our existence as Body members begins to be spoken about in Scripture. This is far more important than a theoretical, unknown existence of the Body prior to knowledge of its existence could possibly be.

This being so, it is significant that the men mentioned have understood and taught Paul was indeed the first apostle to know the mystery of the Church. While it is true they also believed the Body existed secretly for a while before anyone knew about it, that wrinkle in their thinking has actually been beside the more important point. Most certainly, the disciples at

Pentecost didn't operate with any knowledge that Gentiles could become members together in one Body with Jewish believers. Their understanding and behavior at that time cannot teach us about the Body of Christ and cannot serve as our pattern for ministry today. So while men like Scofield, Larkin and Gaebelein did believe there was temporarily a secret existence of the Body, more significantly, these well-known, highly respected Bible teachers have grasped that none of the disciples, prior to Paul, had any knowledge of the Body due to the revelation of it being held back until it was made known by Christ in Paul's ministry.

However, beginning about 1965 serious challenges to this understanding were taken up by professors at Dallas Theological Seminary; two in particular, Charles Ryrie and John Walvoord. These professors denounced the teaching other dispensationalists presented, insisting on the contrary, that Paul wasn't the first apostle to know the mystery of the Church. Arguments were advanced especially by means of a book by Ryrie, titled, Dispensationalism Today, published by Moody Press in 1965. In the very title of that book, the word "Today" represents Ryrie as saying something different from before, which curiously is something that somehow seems to escape the notice of many readers. Nevertheless, Ryrie essentially rewrote the story of dispensationalism, discussing previously understood definitions, offering his own definition of a dispensation instead [1] and stating that if men like Scofield were still living their "unguarded statements" about dispensationalism "would have been more carefully worded," [2] presumably agreeing with him more than with things they actually said.

The reason Ryrie's work has been widely accepted, I think, is because he effectively dealt with non-dispensationalists. In this respect I see his materials as very valuable. But Ryrie's case gives up important ground with regard to our present dispensation. It is unfortunate many Christians today do not seem to be aware of what has taken place. While there have been highly respected, well-known Bible teachers who have indeed taught Paul was the first apostle to know the mystery of the Church, the false impression has been created that those who have truly been solid dispensationalists have all along held the mystery of the Church was known by other apostles prior

[1]Charles Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody, 1965), 23-29.

[2]Ibid. 112.

to Paul. The result of this impression is that most preachers and teachers today view the mystery of the Church as something to be seen in Scripture prior to Paul, a perspective I believe that produces serious loss of clarity about dispensational truth. This is a subject well worth careful focus.

Dispensationalism and Mystery

Numerous well-known teachers have indeed held Paul was the first apostle to know the mystery of the church. Clarence Larkin wrote, "The Church is a MYSTERY and was first revealed to Paul."[3] Harry Ironside, Arno C. Gaebelein and William R. Newell agreed:

> The mystery of the Church as the Body of Christ was never made known in Old Testament times, nor yet in the days when our Lord was on earth. We are told distinctly it had been 'hid from ages and from generations but now is made manifest to His saints.' The divine method of making it known was by a special revelation to the apostle Paul as he tells us in Ephesians 3.[4]

> The Lord chose Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of the church, as steward of this hidden mystery. It was revealed to him. When he states, 'it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit,' there is no clash whatever with the previous claim of the Apostle, 'He made known unto me the mystery.' The apostles and prophets (New Testament prophets and teachers) received also the truth concerning the mystery, but as under him, to whom the Lord gave the revelation first of all. They were acquainted through Paul's revelation with the mystery, and the Holy Spirit led them into the knowledge of it.[5]

> Just as God chose Moses to be the revelator of Israel for the Ten Commandments, and all connected with the Law dispensation; so God chose Saul of Tarsus to be the revelator and unfolder of those mighty truths connected with our Lord's death, burial and resurrection and His ascended Person. And all the 'mysteries' or 'secrets' revealed to God's people in this dispensation by the Holy Ghost are revealed by Paul. Finally, Paul is the unfolder of the great company of God's elect, called the Church, the Body of Christ, the individuals of which body are called members of the Body of Christ - members of Christ Himself. No other

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[3]Clarence Larkin, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Philadelphia: Erwin W. Moyer, 1920), 45.

[4]Harry Ironside, *Lectures on Colossians* (Neptune, NJ.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1929), 58.

[5]Arno C. Gabelein, *God's Masterpiece, Commentary on Ephesians,* (New York: Our Hope, 1913), 120-1.

> Apostle speaks of these things. Peter himself had to learn them from Paul (2 Pet 3:15-16). [6]

However, more recent teachers have disagreed with these well-known Bible teachers, claiming instead Paul wasn't the first to know this mystery. And yet in verses 8 and 9 of Ephesians 3 we find Paul states it was given to him "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." This surely would include making this mystery known to the other apostles. Additionally, we are told in Galatians 2 Paul communicated his gospel privately to James, Peter and John, taking no chance they might publicly reject it. Again, in 1st Timothy 1:16 he says, "I obtained mercy that in me first, Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." In light of such passages, it is easy to understand why Bible teachers like Clarence Larkin, Arno Gaebelein, Mark Cambron and others have taught Paul was indeed the first apostle to know this mystery.

But there most definitely are teachers who disagree with this. Charles Ryrie has insisted the mystery of Ephesians was already known by other apostles prior to Paul. Referring to Ephesians 3 he states, "To say, as Paul does in this passage, that he received something from God is not to say that God had not also given it to others, as indeed He had to the apostles and prophets."[7] Likewise, John Walvoord has said, "The truth of the Church as the Body of Christ is, therefore, not exclusively a Pauline revelation, but was given by Christ to the faithful eleven who gathered with Him in the Upper Room."[8] Here then, is a real disagreement. Ryrie, Walvoord, and others who have followed their way of thinking, have most definitely taught a different point of view from Larkin, Scofield, Ironside, Cambron and numerous others who agree with them.

Why It Matters

Considering this disagreement, two questions must be asked: Does it matter? If it does matter, how can we know who is right? As to the first of these questions, it does matter because our understanding about this will

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[6]William R. Newell, "A Voice from the Past: Paul's Gospel," *JOTGES* 7 (1994), 46.

[7]Charles Ryrie, *Biblical Theology of the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1976), 190.

[8]John Walvoord, *The Church in Prophecy,* 36

determine where in Scripture we acknowledge the Body of Christ comes into view. That is, if Paul was the first of the apostles to know this mystery, then we won't find things written about it in the Old Testament or even in teachings Christ gave during His ministry on earth. We will only find it after Paul's ministry began.

This understanding was once emphasized to me personally by Dr. Mark Cambron. I had the privilege of learning in classes he taught in the 60's at Florida Bible College and during that time of knowing him personally and working with him in meetings he conducted. One conversation stands out vividly in my memory. It was during a week of meetings across the state. Daily, he taught classes at the college in Miami and after lunch traveled across the state to speak in the evening. I led the singing during those meetings and drove for him as he traveled back and forth from Miami to Naples each day. What a great time that was for me as we traveled and talked! At that time I was trying to figure out Matthew 24 and the rapture of the Church. So I asked, "Where in Matthew 24 are we told about the rapture?" Cambron replied "It's not there, remember, Ephesians 3:1-10: the Church, the Body of Christ was a mystery until Christ revealed it to Paul." Yet I still wondered about the rapture. "Don't forget," he said, "it's the rapture of the Church, and the Church doesn't come into view until Paul."

Dr. Cambron stressed it as strongly as he could, impressing upon me that all the teachings about the Church, including its departure from the world, are found only after we come to the ministry of Paul. As we talked I remembered John 14:1-3 and asked about that passage too. "What about John 14," I asked, when Jesus said, 'I will come again and receive you unto Myself.' Surely that's the rapture, isn't it?"" Reaching over with the touch of his hand he repeated yet again, "Listen to your Uncle Mark. Ephesians 3:1-10, the Church, the Body of Christ, was a mystery until Christ revealed it to Paul."

There was no question in my mind as to what he was saying, and knowing Dr. Cambron's reputation as a Bible teacher, I listened carefully. Other Scriptures came up too and I understood that day how significant it is that the mystery of Ephesians 3 was first made known to Paul. If this concept is true, then teachings about believers as members of the Body of Christ really don't come into view until Paul. Having tested this viewpoint, I am convinced it is indeed true. As noted, however, many Bible teachers dis-

agree with this, claiming instead Paul wasn't the first to know this mystery, which brings us now to this next question:

How Can We Know Who is Right?

The second question is, "How can we know who is right?" Since it matters, and since well-known teachers have disagreed, how can we know the truth of it? Well, we cannot know the truth by how many people think it, or who thinks it, or by the intensity of feeling someone may express. The only way we can know is by the testimony of the Bible. We must read and study the Scriptures and think for ourselves, otherwise we will be at the mercy of teachers who often disagree among themselves. This is not to say we shouldn't consider what various teachers say, because they, in fact, may have insights we have not thought of and should consider. But we must test their insights, as well as our own, by the testimony of Scripture and accept only what can be borne out by the Bible itself.

C. I. Scofield

It is well-known C. I. Scofield produced a reference Bible with very valuable footnotes. His way of viewing the mystery of the Church was that Christ mentioned it in Matthew 16 but didn't explain it. That was reserved for Paul to do. He put it this way: "The revelation of this mystery, which was foretold but not explained by Christ (Mt.16:18), was committed to Paul. In his writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church." [9] It should be noted this quote is taken from the Old Scofield Reference Bible, 1917 edition, because later, Scofield's notes were revised in the New Scofield edition so as not to say, "In his writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church," but instead to say, "The details concerning the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the Church were committed to Paul and his fellow 'apostles and prophets' by the Spirit (Eph. 3:5)." That is quite a change. Scofield died long before the New Scofield edition was published. The reason for the change is obvious. The revisers didn't agree with what Scofield originally wrote.

Scofield's actual view was no explanation about the Church was given until its revelation was given by Christ to Paul. That is, Christ mentioned

[9]C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1917), footnote at Ephesians 3.

it in Matthew 16 but didn't explain it. This is why Scofield said, "In his [Paul's] writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk and destiny of the church." If Scofield was right about this, let us appreciate what this would mean. It would mean the apostles who heard Christ mention the Church received no understanding about it from what he said. Most certainly, just mentioning it wouldn't explain it. That was the view of Scofield and many others.

Charles Ryrie

In 1965 Charles Ryrie re-wrote the story of dispensationalism. At the heart of his case is his insistence Paul was NOT the first to know the mystery of the Church. He says, "however, certain other considerations make it clear that Paul was not the first or only one to speak of the mystery."[10]

No one I know says Paul was the "only one" whoever spoke about the mystery. My guess is Ryrie threw that in to imply "Paul first" is the same thing as "Paul only," which seriously overstates the matter and isn't what Scofield or Larkin or any of these other teachers said. Rather, Bible teachers like Clarence Larkin, Arno Gaebelein and Mark Cambron have believed and taught the mystery of the Church was first revealed to Paul but they have also understood others after Paul did learn it too. Ryrie is against the idea of Paul being first, and to bolster his case, he apparently wants readers to think saying Paul got it first is the same thing as claiming Paul was the only one to ever speak about it. But that is misleading. The disagreement isn't at all whether Paul was the only one to speak of the mystery but whether he was the first.

John Walvoord

Walvoord's view has been pretty much the same as Ryrie's. Both these men have been long-time professors at Dallas Theological Seminary, well known writers, highly respected, with much influence among Christian people in many places. But let us remember, these famous Bible teachers are fallible humans just like the rest of us. Their writings are not inspired by God like the Bible, and while it's good to hear or read what they have said, we must weigh all of it by what we can see for ourselves in Scripture. Here again is Walvoord commenting on Paul and the mystery of the

[10]Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today,* 202.

Church: "The truth of the Church as the Body of Christ is, therefore, not exclusively a Pauline revelation, but was given by Christ to the faithful eleven who gathered with Him in the Upper Room."[11]

Clearly, this is different from Scofield's view. Remember, we've seen that Scofield believed Christ foretold the mystery of the Church but didn't explain it. He said, "In his [Paul's] writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church." But Walvoord thinks the revelation of the Church was given by Christ to the eleven apostles when they were with Him in the Upper Room.

Ryrie, of course, agrees with Walvoord about this, and in his book, Dispensationalism Today, included a number of arguments intended to prove their claim. In particular, he has cited several verses, largely in John's Gospel, where he thinks the mystery of Ephesians was explained by Christ to His Jewish apostles. I will comment on these verses. First, Ryrie cites John 10:16, where Jesus said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, and one shepherd."[12] These "other sheep" are taken to be Gentiles who were saved or were going to be saved and brought into the Body of Christ. We do know that the Body of Christ in Ephesians is a joint-body consisting of believing Gentiles and Jews, so from Ryrie's use of this text, he evidently thinks these other sheep were Gentiles living at the time Jesus was here on earth who were going to be brought into the Body of Christ.

To me, it is puzzling he would think this way. How can he not recall the passage in Ezekiel 37 and see that prophecy in connection with the "other sheep" of John 10? Ezekiel's prophecy predicts the divided tribes of Israel will be brought together and made into one people once again. Our Lord had other sheep in other places besides Judea where he presently was, because the lost sheep of the house of Israel had been scattered in many places. Daniel 9:7 also says "all Israel that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou has driven them because of their trespasses." These far off sheep of Israel were yet again spoken about in Acts 2:39, where Peter said, "For the promise is unto you (you Jews in Jerusalem), and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." I really do not see any need to think any of

[11]John Walvoord, *The Church in Prophecy*, 36.
[12]Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today,* 202

this refers to Gentile members of the Body of Christ.

But there is more. Ryrie also thinks the "ye in Me and I in you" of John 14:20 reveals the mystery of the Church. He says "the 'ye in me" relationship is that of being in the Body of Christ of which he is the Head. The "I in you" relationship is that of His indwelling presence (Col. 1:27)." [13] But isn't it a fact Christ will say of his brethren who will live in the Tribulation, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye did it unto me" (Matt 25:40). How will anyone, by doing things unto Christ's brethren, be doing anything to him unless those brethren will be in union with Him? Apparently, Ryrie thinks being joined to Christ is exclusively true of the Church in our present dispensation. I gather this must be why he said "the 'ye in me' relationship is that of being in the Body of Christ." But he has overlooked important information about believers at other times.

Charles Baker, answering Ryrie about "added to the Lord" in Acts 5:14, says this: "Even in the Old Testament there is a reference to being joined unto the Lord (Isaiah 56:3). Everyone who is saved in any dispensation is joined unto or added to the Lord."[14] The fact is, all people have been either "in Adam" or "in Christ" all along (see 1 Cor 15:22). Therefore, this isn't something new due to the mystery of the Church. Nor is Christ's indwelling of believers the mystery in Colossians 1:27, but rather, we read there about "this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you (i.e., you Gentiles)." The fact Christ told his Jewish disciples he would be in them was not a revelation of the mystery of Colossians 1:27 that he would indwell Gentiles.

Nevertheless, Ryrie thinks when Christ told his Jewish disciples the Holy Spirit would be in them he was revealing the mystery of the Church. But the indwelling of the Spirit is part of the New Covenant, not an exclusive truth of the Mystery. We find in Matthew 10 in the day when "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come" (Mt.10:23) that Jesus says of Tribulation believers, "It is not ye that speak but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:20). Thus, the Spirit of God will be in them just as Jesus said in John 14:20. The fact we too in our dispensation have the Spirit within us doesn't mean Jesus

[13] Ibid., 203

[14]Charles F. Baker, *A Dispensational Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Bible College, 1972), 500.

was revealing the mystery of the Church by saying the Holy Spirit would be in His Jewish disciples.

My opinion is Ryrie and Walvoord, like many others who have followed after them, have made mistakes in studying about the mystery of the Church and have, in fact, compromised the dispensational teachings of Scripture with conclusions not necessarily true. These conclusions cause them to disagree with other Bible teachers like Larkin, Scofield, Ironside and Cambron.

Non-Dispensationalists

Walvoord's view is certainly better than teachers who are against dispensationalism altogether. He believes the mystery of the Church was unknown in the Old Testament, and while this does understate the matter, it is indeed better than what non-dispensationalist, John Gerstner, has claimed. Gerstner has argued "it is one thing to say that all the details of the church were not revealed to Old Testament believers but quite another to say that the church was not in view at all."[15]

Walvoord doesn't like that argument because he doesn't believe the Church was revealed in the Old Testament at all. But he does understand how that idea gets injected into the text of Scripture and it's very interesting in addressing this he stresses the mystery of the Church being given to Paul. Note this interesting paragraph by Walvoord.

> Paul reveals that the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ was a subject of special revelation to him (Ephesians 3:1-3). He further states that the truth of the Church as the Body of Christ, 'in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.' In an effort to evade what seems to be the plain teaching of this passage of Scripture, that the Church is something new and the subject of new revelation, these verses have been interpreted by some as merely indicating additional truth rather than a new revelation. Seizing upon the word as, the thought is advanced that the truth concerning the Church was revealed in the Old Testament but not in the same way as it is revealed now.[16]

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[15]John H. Gerstner, W*rongly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Brentwood: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1977), 199.

[16]Walvoord, *The Church in Prophecy,* 45-6

He goes on to show from Colossians 1:26, and from what is evident in Old Testament Scripture, that the notion of the Body of Christ being somewhat known in the Old Testament is a mistake. Regarding the "as" of Ephesians 3:5, Baker agrees, explaining "In the light of Paul's positive, unqualified statements elsewhere that the mystery had never before been revealed (Romans 16:25; Colossians 1:26), we cannot understand the 'as' referring to the degree to which the mystery was revealed in other ages."[17]

Of course, everyone knows the word "as" can carry a concept of degree rather than contrast. But as Mr. Baker's illustration shows, the meaning can just as well be absolute contrast. So how do we know which meaning is intended in Ephesians 3? Very simple. As both Walvoord and Baker demonstrate, by comparing Paul's statements in Romans 16:25 where it was "kept secret" (*sigao*, silent) and Colossians 1:26 where it said to have been hidden with no "as" in the text at all. Even in Ephesians 3 where the "as" modification is attempted, we have Paul's statement that this mystery "from the beginning of the world was hid in God." (v. 9). We surely should not think God did not hide it very well.

In Ephesians 3:8 Paul further describes this mystery as the "unsearchable riches of Christ." To "search" is to trace out, track something, or find details about. But since this mystery is "unsearchable" no one can trace it out in earlier Scripture. It is simply not there.

Could Paul Have Meant This Mystery Cannot be Found in the Old Testament?

It is important to realize the idea presented by Ryrie and Walvoord that the Church cannot be found in the Old Testament is indeed an understatement of the case. It is true, of course, the mystery of the Church cannot be found in the Old Testament, and it is fine to point this out. But I'm afraid the purpose for saying this has been to justify meanings desired for statements in Matthew and John. That is, it appears to me Ryrie and Walvoord desire to believe Matthew and John contain teachings by Christ about the mystery of the Church, so they cast this mystery as a difference purely between Old Testament and New Testament truth. By doing this, they obviously make room for statements in the Gospels which they desire to believe are about

[17]Baker, *A Dispensational Theology*, 502.

the Body of Christ. Christ said, "I will build My Church" (Matthew 16:18), and these teachers do think this prophesied Church refers to the mystery Church which was never prophesied. Never mind Christ is going to have a great congregation of worshippers in his millennial kingdom (Psalm 22:22, Hebrews 2:12, Zech.14:16,17, Rev. 20:9), these men nevertheless take this mention of a "church" as referring to the Body of Christ. So of course, they need the time of non-speaking about the Body of Christ to be back before the time of the Gospels.

Here is Walvoord advancing this idea. "Because the concept of a church formed of Jews and Gentiles alike – all of whom are saved and joined together by eternal life – is not found in the Old Testament, only the New Testament gives the divine revelation on this important subject."[18] So according to Walvoord, the Old Testament is where the mystery of the Church cannot be found. But hold on to your hat, dear reader, because here is a startling fact. Walvoord actually believes the Old Testament remained in effect during the time of the Gospels and did not end until the cross. This means therefore, Jesus' statement about the church in Matthew and His remarks in John are actually statements made while living in Old Testament times.

As to the Old Testament, Walvoord says "According to Scripture the dispensation of the law ended at the cross (2 Cor. 3:11, Gal. 3:25, Col. 2:14)"[19] and "in one sense the dispensation of the law ended at the cross (Rom. 10:4, 2 Cor. 3:11-14, Gal. 3:19, 25). But in another sense it was not concluded until the day of Pentecost, when the dispensation of grace began."[20]

So here is a remarkable thing. Walvoord holds that the Church wasn't spoken about in the Old Testament, and yet according to his own teaching, it turns out it was spoken about in the Old Testament in both Matthew and John because the Old Testament did not end until the cross. For me, this is painfully inconsistent and is not a persuasive arguement.

My opinion is the supposed references to the mystery of the Church prior to Paul do not hold up under scrutiny. Instead, I think Clarence Lar-

[18]John Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1974), 237.

[19]John Walvoord, *The Rapture Question* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1979), 126.

[20] Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes*, 134.

kin, Harry Ironside, C. I. Scofield, Mark Cambron, and others have been correct in saying Paul was the first of the apostles to know the mystery of the Church.

Why Follow Ryrie?

There are two main reasons I see for this: the influence of numbers and a fear of where the mystery may lead. First, if the number of people on your side determines whether or not you are right, then the dispensational view of Ryrie and Walvoord must be correct because there are currently more teachers of dispensationalism who follow their ideas than any other. But be careful here, because this kind of thinking also makes Catholicism right rather than Grace Truth. Let us never forget Jesus spoke of the wide and narrow ways with few finding the right way; Noah who preached 120 years with the result of just 8 people on the ark; Isaiah who cried, "Lord, who hath believed our report?"; and Paul who said, "All that be in Asia are turned away from me." We must not fall into the trap of nose counting, taking a vote or a poll, choosing what is popular, how many you have on your side, to know what is true. But unfortunately, that is pretty much what seems to be happening.

The terms "Classic Dispensationalism" or "Normative Dispensationalism" are commonly used in recent writing. What do these terms convey? We should realize these terms have nothing to do with whether or not a belief is true, but only with how many people you have on your side. Certainly, in our day, more people have been led to believe the Body of Christ was revealed prior to Paul than believe it was made known to him first. But this says nothing about whether this is good or bad. Think about it. The use of these terms actually means some people want us to operate as if truth is determined by taking a poll, by counting noses. They are saying, in effect, "We hold the classic position; we've got more people on our side than you have on yours, so we're normal and you're not." That's the role these terms are playing.

The same thing is true about the terms "ultra-dispensationalism" and "hyper-dispensationalism." By saying people who differ with you are "ultra," you paint them as extremists, unbalanced, foolish, unwise people to be avoided, whereas you are wise, safe and solid. It's a vocabulary intended to create an attitude in which your ideas are acceptable and other people

had better not disagree with you. When Ryrie wrote his book, Dispensationalism Today, he said there were some who charged him as "ultra." Responding to this, he pointed out this was either confusion or deliberate ridicule. He explained:

> Some who are anti-dispensational label as ultradispensational what has been set forth as dispensationalism in this book. Anybody who divides Biblical history into various dispensational periods is in their judgment ultradispensational. This is either a confusion due to misapprehension or a deliberate attempt to ridicule by the use of the ultra label. It is usually a successful tactic in these days, for we tend to shy away from anything that is ultra and not in the mainstream of thought or life. [21]

Then remarkably, after saying this, Ryrie himself joined in, applying this label to people who differ with him. "It is usually a successful tactic," he said, and having said that he then put this "successful tactic" to use. [22] I think, in this matter, his own words condemn him. That is an aspect of the story that is troubling because a large number of unworthy talkers have taken up this vocabulary and regularly use this "successful tactic" to intimidate and frighten people away from teachings they really should be free to study in God's Word and decide for themselves. It is a most unworthy tactic. So, dear reader, understand the role this terminology plays and do not let those who use it intimidate you.

Fear is indeed a big factor. Among those who recognize Paul as the first apostle to know the mystery of the Church are some who do not practice water baptism and others who do not observe the Lord's Supper; not all, but some. J.C. O'Hair, C.R. Stam and Charles F. Baker are well-known names of teachers who have acknowledged Paul as the first apostle to know the mystery of the Church, and with this understanding have seen water baptism as unnecessary for members of the Body of Christ today. In 1 Corinthians, Paul thanked God he had only baptized a few and stated "Christ sent me not to baptize." Peter and the apostles with him could not have said "Christ sent me not to baptize," because Christ most definitely did send them to do this (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16). But Paul said it, and thus, water baptism wasn't included in the commission Christ gave to him. He also said in Ephesians 4:5, there is "one baptism," which cannot be water baptism because some believers have never been water baptized

[21]Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, 193.
[22]Ibid., 196.

and never will be, but has to be our baptism by the Spirit into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). In 1 Corinthians 11, we find Paul did teach the Lord's Supper for members of the Body of Christ.

But the matter regarding water baptism is a frightening prospect for a lot of preachers and therefore they are motivated to do whatever they must to "protect" people from being influenced by ideas of dispensationalism which might result in conclusions different from their own. Name calling, intimidation, whatever it takes! Generally, these preachers think water baptism is important, and seeing that some who view Paul as the first apostle to know the mystery do not agree, they fear that if others learn to think the mystery of the Church was first made known to Paul, they might also be led to a discontinuance of water baptism. What really should matter to all of us is knowing the truth of God, wherever it leads. Let the Bible itself teach us whether or not Paul was first. If he was, and if this leads to discontinuing the waters of religion, so be it. But let us get our beliefs from Scripture rather than from men who don't want us to look into such things. Rather than fearing where a knowledge of Paul's distinct ministry may lead, what these teachers should really fear is whether they themselves are failing to learn the truth, whatever it is, and failing to abide by what it is. Thus, fear with intimidation tactics is a factor keeping many people in line with the dispensationalism promoted by these teachers.

Conclusion: Paul's Testimony Concerning Himself

In conclusion, read the Scripture and think carefully about them, keeping in mind the words written by Paul are inspired words from God the Holy Spirit.[23] Observe the constant emphasis Paul was directed by the Spirit of God to place upon himself. No other New Testament writer speaks of himself like the Holy Spirit directed Paul to speak of himself. Paul does indeed say these things, and we should take them to heart.

In 1 Timothy 1:16 Paul speaks of a "pattern" which was shown "in me first." Some think this pattern is the way Paul was saved, but I would ask, how many people other than Paul have been saved through Jesus Christ reappearing from heaven, confronting them and speaking verbally? I think zero. Thus, the "pattern" is not Paul himself, but something shown "in"

[23]Acts 20:24; Romans 2:16; 11:13; 12:3; 15:16; 16:25; 1 Cor 3:10; 4:16; 11:1; 15:10; 2 Cor 13:3; Gal 1:11-16; 2:2-9; Eph 3:1-4, 7-9, Phil 1:7; 3:17, 4:9. Col 1:24-26; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8, 12, 2:2; 2:7, 3:10-14; Titus 1:2-3.

him that is, in his ministry. "Pattern" is the same word translated "form," where he tells Timothy, "Hold fast the form [pattern] of sound words, which thou hast heard of me" (2 Tim 1:13). I take this to be God's sound words about his long-suffering grace, first made known in the ministry of Paul, the grace of God for all people alike, both Jew and Gentile, the dispensation of the mystery. According to this text, something started with Paul. I am persuaded it was God's truth about the Church, the Body of Christ, with all the teachings this pattern of truth involves for believers to follow today.

"In me first," Paul wrote. If this is correct, then it means, dear reader, the portion of God's Word which deals directly with you and me as members of the Body of Christ consists of the epistles of Paul. Think carefully, for this is no small matter.

Hidden but Now Revealed: A Review Article

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Introduction

Since the publication of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, dispensationalists have been interested in Paul's concept of mystery especially as found in Ephesians 3:3 and Romans 16:25-27. Chafer, for example, defined the mystery as "the distinctive elements of the truth concerning the church."[1] Charles Ryrie narrowed this definition to Jew-Gentile equality in the body of Christ.[2] Although progressive dispensationalists tend to see more unity between the church and Israel in the present age, Robert Saucy still can say the mystery is a revelation of a "new action of God" in the present era.[3]

Mid-Acts dispensationalism (MADT) also has a vested interested in the proper definition of the biblical concept of mystery, perhaps more so than other forms of Dispensationalism. Charles Baker referred to the present age as "the dispensation of the Mystery"[4] and Cornelius Stam famously stated the "most important division in the Bible is that between prophecy and the great mystery proclaimed by the Apostle Paul."[5] Joel Finck agrees,

[1]L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1948), 4:76.

[2]Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationaism Today* (Chicago: Moody, 1965), 134.

[3]Robert Saucy, *The Case For Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1993), 167.

[4]Charles Baker, *Dispensational Relationships* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Bible, College 1989), 119. *A Dispensational Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Bible College, 1971),

[5]Cornelius Stam, *Things That Differ* (Chicago: Berean Bible Society,

the mystery is "that God would do a Gentile work during a period of Israel's blindness."[6] Dale DeWitt devoted the better part of two chapters in his *Dispensational Theology in America* to the idea of mystery in the Pauline letters.[7] He surveys the contributions of several classic studies of the word (Lightfoot, Bornkamm, Brown, Caragounis) and concludes the idea of the church as a Pauline revelation has remarkable support.[8]

In his influential essay in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Günther Bornkamm merged several nuances of the meaning of *musterion* in the New Testament into a single meaning.[9] For example, the mystery of Christ as found in 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 is "Jesus crucified," and the mystery in Ephesians and Colossians which refer to the formation of the church.[10] For Bornkamm, these are essentially the same. DeWitt criticizes Bornkamm's explanation of mystery in Ephesians 3:4 and Colossians 2:2 since there are a number of other alternative interpretations possible. In addition, there is a textual variant in 1 Corinthians 2:1 reading "testimony" not "mystery."

Chrys Caragounis's 1977 study focused primarily on Mystery in Ephesians.[11] Caragounis attempts to correct what he saw as an error in scholarship. Citing J. B. Lightfoot as an example, many scholars emptied the word *musterion* of the idea of secrecy when it is used in the New Testament. For Caragounis the idea of *musterion* as "hard to understand" or "incomprehensible" is common from the most ancient uses of the word, through the New Testament era. In Romans 16:25-26 Paul says the mystery is revealed in prophetic scripture and in Ephesians 3:5 the mystery was hidden from people in past ages. Caragounis suggests Paul uses mystery for "concealment in the open."[12] The new factor in Paul's revelation of the mystery is

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1951), 47.

[6]Joel Finck, *The Mystery* (Rapid City, SDak.: Grace Bible Church, 1997), 96.

[7]Dale S. DeWitt, *Dispensational Theology in America* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Grace Bible, College, 2002), 202-47.

[8]DeWitt, *Dispensational Theology in America*, 247.

[9]Günther Bornkamm, "μυστήριον," *TDNT* 4:802-27.

[10]Dale S. DeWitt, *Dispensational Theology in America*, 202.

[11]Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mysterion: Meaning and Content* (Gleerup: Coniectanea biblica, 1977).

[12]See also Michael G. Vanlaningham, "Romans 11:25-27 and the Future of Israel in Paul's Thought," *Masters Seminary Journal* 3 (1992): 141-75.

that the Holy Spirit now makes an understanding of the early mystery possible. It is not that the Spirit is revealing mysteries, but rather he is making the "incomprehensible mysteries of God" understandable to people in the present age. A mystery is therefore "some truth related to a mystery may be the subject of revelation in the Old Testament, but the mystery itself is hidden until at God's appointed time it becomes a manifest event."[13]

Beale and Gladd's *Hidden but Now Revealed*[14] builds on the observations Caragounis by viewing mystery in the New Testament as a "totally hidden—now revealed" revelation of God which has some application to the eschatological age. Since MADT has placed such emphasis on the church as a Pauline revelation, it is important to pay attention to this recently published book. Beale and Gladd examine the use of mystery in Daniel, the Gospels, Paul's letters and Revelation and makes several suggestions which both support and challenge aspects of a dispensational view of mystery.

Overview of Hidden But Now Revealed[15]

Greg Beale is well-known for his work on the Old Testament in the New, including *The Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Baker, 2007) and an important monograph on *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (LNTS; London: T&T Clark, 1999). His commentary on Revelation in the NIGTC series was especially interested in allusions to the Old Testament in the book of Revelation. Ben Gladd published his Wheaton dissertation as *Revealing the Mysterion: The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Its Bearing on First Corinthians* (BZNW; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008). *Hidden but Now Revealed* is popular presentation of the findings of these more technical works as well as an opportunity for both scholars to revisit the idea of mys-

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Vanlaningham argues that the word mystery in Romans 11 refers to the order of salvation: first the full number of Gentiles will come in and then all Israel will be saved.

[13]Vanlaningham, "Romans 11:25-27 and the Future of Israel in Paul's Thought," 145.

[14]Gregory K. Beale and Benjamin L. Gladd. *Hidden but Now Revealed: A Biblical Theology of Mystery* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2014).

[15]The book includes a chapter contrasting the Christian idea of mystery with pagan "mystery religions" and an appendix on "cognitive peripheral vision of the biblical authors."

tery in the New Testament.

Beale and Gladd propose to re-visit the idea of mystery in Daniel in order to read the New Testament uses of mystery in the context of the eschatological worldview of Daniel. They argue in this book that "the revelation of mystery is not a totally new revelation but the full disclosure of something that was to a significant extent hidden" (30). This is a tension between two opposing ideas since the content of a mystery is "totally hidden" but "significantly present." In order to prove this point, Beale and Gladd will begin with Daniel (the only use of mystery in the Old Testament) and then argue most (if not all) the uses of mystery in the New Testament use the word mystery similar to Daniel.

The main proposal of this book is the suggestion that a mystery refers to something that was always present, but veiled in some way in order to make it unknowable until it is unveiled, or revealed. Does this present a challenge to the way classic dispensationalism conceives of the church as a Pauline revelation? Is the content of the mystery in Ephesians 3, for example, already present in the Old Testament but not made clear until Paul "reveals the mystery"?

Intertextuality and Daniel 2

In the introduction of the book the authors deal with the problem of intertextuality. Intertextuality is a broad term often used without definition in recent works on how the New Testament uses the Old. Beale and Gladd recognize the term intertextuality has become "faddish" (22) and is usually not well-defined. In their book, intertextuality will refer to "inner-biblical allusions." An allusion is an intentional reference to an earlier text without a formal quotation. This may be a few words or a conceptual allusion. As Beale has said in other studies on biblical allusions, recognizing allusions more of an art than an exact science (25). This is an important issue for Beale and Gladd since they will argue the use of the word "mystery" in the New Testament often alludes to the book of Daniel even if the allusion is not clear.

Hidden but Now Revealed therefore begins with a survey of the use of mystery in Daniel. The authors provide several examples from Daniel. First, in Daniel 2 Nebuchadnezzar has a dream which he cannot remember (Dan 2:3). It is a revelation from God, but it is totally hidden until Daniel

reveals the mystery to the king. In 2:27 Daniel makes it clear that only God has revealed mysteries to the king, but they are not clear until Daniel reveals the content of the dream and then interprets the dream. It is the content of the dream that is important for Beale and Gladd. The unveiled mystery in Daniel 3 refers to hidden end time events (34) which are cryptically described (39) and not clear until they are clarified by a later interpretation.

The second example Beale and Gladd use is Daniel's own visions. He receives a cryptic revelations which must be interpreted by angelic message (for example, 8:19-26). A potential problem here is that the word mystery is not used for these visions. Unlike Nebuchadnezzar's vision, the reader knows what Daniel has seen and there are elements of the vision which are not particularly cryptic. The reader could understand the ram and the goat refer to Persia and Greece from the content of the vision. Nebuchadnezzar's vision was totally hidden, but Daniel's vision in chapter 8 is not really hidden even if he did not understand it.[16]

A third example of mystery is Daniel's realization that the seventy years of captivity were nearing completion (39). Daniel comes to this conclusion while reading the book of Jeremiah. God had previously revealed the duration of the exile to Jeremiah and Daniel observes what God revealed to the earlier prophet as applicable to his present situation. While Beale and Gladd see this as "partial hiddenness—fuller revelation" (39), the words of Jeremiah are not described as a "mystery" either in Jeremiah or Daniel. In fact, the prediction of a seventy year captivity seems fairly straightforward and obvious to anyone reading Jeremiah 25:11-12 or 29:10.

From these three examples, the authors argue the twofold structure of partial hiddenness and fuller revelation is what makes something a "mystery" (40). A revelation is mostly hidden but needs to be interpreted in order for the mystery to be fully known. Throughout the book Beale and Gladd use phrases like "mostly unknown" or "partially hidden." If the mystery is unknowable until the time of the interpretation is given, I do not see how this is much different from the usual explanation of a mystery as unknowable until it is revealed. In each of the examples from Daniel, the content of the mystery is unknown to the reader until God choose to reveal it to Daniel.

[16]In fact, most commentators have no trouble detecting allusions to Antiochus IV Epiphanes in Daniel's description of the blasphemous little horn.

The second chapter of the book extends the definition of mystery into the Second Temple Period, beginning with the Dead Sea Scrolls. After examining several examples, the authors conclude in Qumran, "the Old Testament text, particularly prophecies are hidden mysteries lacking a full or complete interpretation" (51). In an excursus, the authors indicate the Apocrypha does not significantly develop the notion of mystery, with the exception of Wisdom of Solomon 2:21-22. "The apocryphal writers rarely depend on or even a knowledge the apocalyptic side of the term" (55).

Mystery in the Gospels

Turning to the only use of mystery in the Gospels, Beale and Gladd examine the Matthew 13, the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." For Beale and Gladd, what Jesus means by the mystery of the Kingdom is the contrast between his ministry as a suffering servant and the Second Temple Jewish expectations for a Davidic messiah and a visible kingdom (75). Jesus established the kingdom with his death on the cross, but it is not fully established until his second coming. This is the standard already/not yet explanation of the Kingdom. "The upshot of the disclosed mystery of the kingdom is that it is somewhat different from Old Testament and Jewish expectations of the kingdom" (73). The parables are cryptic revelation which must be decoded (66), they are the "hidden things" which Jesus now reveals to his disciples.

If the parables are the content of the "mysteries of the kingdom" in Matthew 13:11, I do not think they are particularly cryptic, and Jesus only explains two of the parables, the Sower (13:11-23) and the Weeds (13:37-43). Although the Weeds has eschatological application, Jesus explains the rejection of his own preaching by the crowds in the parable of the Sower. I agree with Beale and Gladd's contention that Jesus' kingdom is unlike the typical Jewish expectation for the coming of the Messiah, but the parables in Matthew are not unlocking a previously veiled mystery, they are explaining what is happening at that moment in Jesus' mission to Israel.

Mystery in the Pauline Epistles

Since the bulk of occurrences of mystery in the New Testament are in the Pauline letters, Beale and Gladd devote six chapters to the use of mystery in Paul. The letters are approached canonically rather than chrono-

logically. Beale and Gladd do not approach the issue of when Paul was given a revelation which made the mystery clear; they are only interested in the evidence from the letters of Paul. Beginning with Romans 11:11-12, Beale and Gladd argue there is a two-stage salvation in the present age, "to the Jew first and then to the Gentiles." They argue Paul alluded to the "plot line" of Deuteronomy 27-32 by blending it with Gen 49 and Psalm 2 (85). In Romans 11:25, the mystery describes Gentile salvation and the restoration of Israel. Since this is a reversal of Jewish Old Testament expectations, it is not surprising Paul would label it a mystery.

The authors detect an allusion to the book of Deut 32:21 in this passage since that is the only place in the Old Testament where there is a reversal of the pattern "Gentile first, then the Jew." For the authors, that Gentiles would be the catalyst of Israel salvation is "largely hidden in the Old Testament" (93). For the use of mystery in Romans 16:25-26 they detect an allusion to Genesis 49:10, which predicts the scepter will not depart from Judah until the nations are obedient. The unanticipated element of the earlier text is the Gentiles would yield themselves voluntarily to the messiah's reign by the "obedience of faith" (96). Once again the authors detect a two-fold pattern of in Paul's use of mystery not present in the Old Testament. There is no clear prediction of a two-stage fulfillment of Jew and Gentile redemption. While there might have been hints, it was unknowable until Paul revealed it in the book of Romans.

With the exception of Ephesians, the letters to the Corinthians refer to mystery more than any other Pauline letter. In 1 Cor 2:1, 7, the mystery is a "paradoxical event of the crucifixion" (110). Gladd argues Paul alludes to Daniel 2:20-23. First, the word mystery appears in both texts. Second, in both texts a godly prophet receives a revelation and passes it on to others (2:10-16). Third, the prophet understands revealed mysteries because God is revealed to him. Fourth, to know the mystery is to have wisdom. Fifth, the mystery concerns the establishment of the kingdom in the end times (2:7-8). Finally, there is an emphasis on wisdom together with power (Dan 2:20-23). The disclosed mystery is therefore the "exalted, kingly, divine messiah affixed to the cross" (121). This is all very possible, but there is nothing in Gladd's evidence that convinces me Paul has Daniel in mind in this passage.

The second use of mystery in 1 Corinthians is Paul's self-description as a "steward of the mysteries" (4:1). Here Gladd detects an allusion to the book of Dan 6:4, Paul's faithfulness as a steward of the mysteries is similar to Daniel as a faithful steward of God's mysteries. But there is simply no use of mystery in Daniel 6. Daniel is described as a faithful servant/steward in the service of Babylonian and only two words actually echo the LXX of Daniel 6:4.

The third use of mystery in the book is in the context of prophecy and tongues in 1 Corinthians 13-14. Here the "mysteries" seem like prophetic revelations. Beale and Gladd find this use "certainly ambiguous" (126) and may refer to the phenomenon of angelic prayer in early Judaism. Rather than force this use of mystery into the paradigm of hidden/now revealed, it may be better to use Greco-Roman mystery religions or mystical forms of Judaism as the background. Having love is still superior to access to so-called "deep secrets."

The final reference to mystery in 1 Corinthians is Paul's description of the resurrection (15:51). Following Richard Hays, the mystery in this context is that even living believers will undergo a transformation into a new form, a resurrection body. The reason Paul says this is a mystery is there is simply nothing in the Old Testament anticipating this transformation. For Gladd, however, it is possible this mystery is an allusion to God providing new garments Adam (132). It is true Paul has referred to the first Adam in 1 Corinthians 15, but it there is little evidence that Paul is "using the Genesis 3 clothing language analogically, but perhaps he even uses it typologically" (133).

Conclusion

Hidden but Now Revealed is a serious contribution to our understanding of mystery and there is much here which is conducive to dispensational thought, especially as articulated by MADT. But I do have several reservations about the argument of the book. First, I am not sure the word mystery must always have the same nuance of meaning in every context. This is certainly the case for 1 Corinthians 13:2 and likely the case for Revelation 17:5. It is a mistake, for example, to read the "mysteries of the Kingdom of God" in Matthew 13 and Paul's used of mystery in Ephesians 3 with the same "cryptically hidden—now revealed" nuance of meaning. Beale and

Gladd seem to back away from this somewhat in their chapter on Ephesians, but to argue every time the word mystery appears it must follow the same two-fold revelation pattern as Daniel 2 is not possible.

Second, the main contribution of the study is that the idea of mystery refers to something which is not knowable until it is revealed. The revelation of a mystery tends to be a major stage in God's plan of salvation. To me, this is not all that different than the way musterion has been defined in other studies of the word. What Beale and Gladd add to this definition is an emphasis on the actual presence of information in the Old Testament, even if it cannot be understood until God reveals the mystery at a later point. But using Nebuchadnezzar's vision as a model, the dream was known only in the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, but no one knew what the details were. To be completely unknowable is more or less the same as totally hidden. I am not sure what motivates this book to argue Paul's use of mystery is hidden in the Old Testament.

Applied to the mystery in the Pauline letters, Beale and Gladd argue Gentile salvation was always there in the Old Testament, even if no one realized what the Old Testament really meant until God revealed the mystery to Paul. Certainly the Old Testament describes Gentiles as streaming to Zion and the nations do recognize the God of Israel and dispensationalists have always agreed with this obvious fact. But that these Gentiles would stream to Zion and be accepted as God's people without obedience to the Law is simply unknown in the Old Testament. Beale and Gladd recognize this, describing Judaism of the first century as believing "Gentiles win the eschaton will join themselves to Israel by taking on the covenantal badges of Israel's law—external indicators that demarcate them as part of God's chosen people group" (191). Yet they also recognize the radical element of Paul's gospel as the way in which Gentiles become part of God's people, "without taking on the covenantal markers of Israel, which they were formerly required to do so to be considered Israelites according to an Old Testament perspective" (164). Beale and Gladd insist there are hints and anticipations of that mystery in the Old Testament, but the evidence they offer is limited and open to interpretation (Isaiah 56:3-5 and a strange interpretation of the Noah story).

What is unanticipated is the Gentiles coming to the God of Israel without keeping the Jewish Law. I cannot see this element of Paul's teaching as

"totally hidden but actually present" in the Old Testament. If this was the case, then Paul's argument of Galatians would have looked different. He does not argue from the Law or prophets that Gentiles are not required to keep the Law, nor does he cite the eunuch passage in Isaiah 56:3-5 or refer to Noah's preservation of all mankind. Rather, he goes back to Abraham, who was declared righteous when he believed God (Gal 3:1-6, cf. Rom 4). Perhaps this mystery was so hidden not even Paul could find it in the Old Testament.

Book Reviews

Bock, Darrell L. and Mitch Glaser, eds. *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Academic, 2012. 369 pp. Pb. $16.99.

If one wants to know the issues and overall importance of Isaiah 53, this is the book to read. It grew out of a conference by Chosen People Ministries and was "written to help readers to utilize the truth of this magnificent chapter in bringing the Good News to those who do not yet know Jesus" (p. 21). It was written "to pastors, missionaries, and lay leaders who regularly preach and teach the Word of God" (p. 28). To accomplish its task, it deals with this great chapter in three parts: Interpretation, Biblical Theology, and Practical Theology.

The first part of the book is titled "Interpretation," although this title is somewhat deceptive since it deals more with the history of interpretation than actual interpretation. It is divided into two chapters beginning with "Christian Interpretation of Isaiah 53" (Richard Averbeck). Averbeck clearly declares his conservative approach believing against many scholars in one Isaiah as the author who went through a number of stages in life and prophetic activity. He upholds the older view that there are three historical types of interpretations of the servant passage: (1) the single servant view; (2) remnant within Israel; and (3) the nation as a whole view. He argues for the single servant view, centering upon the idea of suffering, sacrifice, and atonement by the servant. The heart of the debate, as well as the heart of this chapter, has centered upon the vicarious, sacrificial substitution in Isaiah 53. It spends considerable time on the idea of the guilt offering, and upholds that the suffering servant brings redemption and restoration to the Jews and the world.

The second chapter in this section is "Jewish Interpretations of Isaiah 53" (Michael Brown). He identifies his purpose: "to summarize the main lines of traditional Jewish interpretation...with special reference to the ob-

jections to Jesus that arise from the text, offering concise responses..." (p. 62). He confesses the predominant view in Jewish thinking is corporate Israel. He looks at this interpretation with excerpts from the main Jewish commentators (Raski, Ibn Ezra, and Radak). His objections center on linguistic issues. Contextually the servant is a person and cannot be dismissed as something other than this. He spends some time showing the contention that Gentile nations are speaking throughout Isaiah 53 cannot be sustained. He notes the inconsistency of the main Jewish interpretation and upholds the chapter speaking of the suffering servant making atonement for sin.

The second part of the book concerns Biblical Theology. This part is clearly the heart of the book and is divided into 6 chapters. Walter Kaiser writes on "The Identity and Mission of the Servant of the Lord." Overall he does a good job showing that the servant is Jesus. However, I do not think he handles the plural references well; his treatment seems to be somewhat weak. It is also a difficult chapter to follow and challenging to grasp. Michael Wilkins takes on "Isaiah 53 and the Message of Salvation in the Gospels" but centers more on Matthew. He focuses on two questions: Did Jesus see himself as the servant of Isaiah 53? What is our perspective of Jesus in light of Isaiah 53? He answers that Jesus understood his mission as the Servant was fulfilled in his obedience, which the church (or disciples) did not fully understand until after the resurrection. "Isaiah 53 in Acts 8" by Darrell Bock is one of the shortest chapters, but one of the most powerful. He deals with the conflict between the Hebrew texts (Masoretic / LXX) and the interpretive problems. It deals with why the use of Isaiah is important. He deals with the problems very fairly. Craig Evans deals with Isaiah 53 in the letters of Peter, Paul, Hebrews, and John, dealing with the contribution of the theologies of these men. David Allen deals with Substitutionary Atonement and Cultic Terminology in Isaiah 53. It is the key mission of the suffering servant. The result of the work of the suffering servant is reinforced by Robert B. Chisholm, Jr in the chapter "Forgiveness and Salvation in Isaiah 53."

Although these chapters are very important, several observations are in order. First, much of the book is technically intense, which limits its use by laymen. Second, knowledge of Hebrew is helpful and needed in some cases. Third, there is much repetition and rehashing of points, a result of the nature of different writers. While not necessarily a drawback, these do

complicate things for an average reader without some specialized training.

The final section of the book (Practical Theology) begins with John Feinberg's contribution on "Postmodern Themes from Isaiah 53." He shows Isaiah is relevant even in the postmodern age. Glaser discusses "Using Isaiah 53 in Jewish Evangelism." He notes the merits of using this passage with Jewish people and its foundational use for their coming to an understanding of the work of Jesus as the suffering servant. Finally, Donald Sunukjian gives us helpful steps in preaching Isaiah 53. The book's conclusion is written by Bock, giving a summation and providing some helpful charts. This is followed by two Appendixes; one is an Expositional Sermon, the other a Dramatic-Narrative Sermon, both written by Sunukjian.

Overall, this work is a unique, thorough, comprehensive apologetic resource. It is an indispensable resource for the evangelical view of Isaiah. Its value outweighs its weaknesses and it is a welcome addition to any Pastor's library.

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Green, Bradley G. *Covenant and Commandment: Works, Obedience and Faithfulness in the Christian Life*. NSBT 33; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2014. 208 pp. Pb; $22.

In this new contribution to the NSBT series, Bradley G. Green (PhD, Theology, Baylor University) explores the role of works as a necessary part of salvation. In his introduction, Green acknowledges most evangelicals recognize *sola fide*, salvation is by grace apart from works, but the role of works after salvation is less clear. Green argues in this book that works are necessary for salvation because "part of the newness of the new covenant is actual, grace-induced and grace elicited obedience by true members of the new covenant" (17). Real and meaningful obedience flows from the cross as part of the promised blessings of the new covenant and is "sovereignly and graciously elicited by the God of the Holy Scripture" (19).

In order to make this argument, Green first examines the New Testament texts which discuss the reality and necessity of works, obedience and faith-

fulness (chapter 1). He identifies fourteen key groups of texts and briefly summarizes the categories as a foundation for understanding the way the New Testament uses the Old with respect to works and faithfulness (chapter 2). Green argues there is continuity between the Old and New Covenants with respect to obedience, but the New Covenant includes "Spirit induced, God-caused obedience" (54). For Green the New Covenant foreseen by Jeremiah and Ezekiel is initiated by Jesus at the Cross.

In his third chapter, Green expands on the unity between the Old and New Covenant within the history of redemption. While some forms of Covenant theology assumes continuity and Dispensational theology often assume discontinuity, Green argues reducing the discussion to either continuity or discontinuity misses the point of the historical-redemptive nature of the canon. Following the work of Henri Blocher, Green argues there is real spiritual power in the Old Covenant which can provide an overarching unity between the Old and New Covenants. While all are saved by God's grace as manifest in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, Green thinks Old Testament saints experience that grace proleptically (59).

This view of Old Testament faith naturally calls into question the classic Reformation dichotomy between Law and Gospel. Here Green follows John Frame by arguing God saves people by his grace "across the canon of Scripture," but once people are in a covenant relationship with him, God then gives his people commands and expects those people to obey him (65). But Green has to deal with texts like Galatians 3:10-12, which creates a strong contrast between Law and grace. He argues the problem in Galatians 3:12 is not the Law itself, but the approach to the Law advocated by Paul's opponents. For Paul, true righteousness is by faith and the law was never intended as a "way of justification" before God (71).

In chapter 4 Green describes the relationship between the cross, the reality of works, obedience and faithfulness. He surveys a number of New Testament texts and concludes the cross leads to human transformation and sanctification. This leads to the thorny issue of imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, although Green does not really develop the issue nor does he engage the objections of N. T. Wright to the doctrine of imputation. He concludes the believer receives righteousness (imputation) and is justified by faith alone. Later in the book Green states "we should continue to affirm imputed righteousness vigorously, and that we need an

imputed and perfect righteousness that is ours by faith apart from works" (101). While I agree with Green's conclusions here, he needs to interact with both sides of the debate on imputation. Citing a series of Reformed writers in support of imputation does not deal with Wright's objections to imputation, nor do I find his summary statements compelling. Part of the problem is this is only a brief chapter rather than a monograph on imputation, but some awareness of the larger theological discussion would have been helpful.

For Green, the best way to understand the role of works and salvation is Paul's emphasis on the believer's union with Christ (chapter 5). Citing Todd Billings, Green argues union with Christ is "theological shorthand for the gospel itself" (99). There is far more to be said on identification with Christ in Paul; Green can only cover six passages in as many pages. Again, the brevity of this chapter hinders a fuller presentation of the data from Paul. There is reference to Constantine Campbell's excellent monograph *Paul and Union with Christ* (Zondervan, 2012), although this may simply be a matter of Green completing his book before Campbell's appeared.

In chapter 6 Green deals with a sometimes problematic issue, justification and future judgment according to works. As he does throughout the book, he briefly surveys seven pertinent texts and then the history of interpretation of the texts. Green discusses John Calvin, John Owen, Jonathan Edwards, Geerhardus Vos, Richard Gaffin, Simon Gathercole, and Greg Beale and N. T. Wright (curiously labeled an "excursus"), and then concludes the chapter by citing Augustine at length. Green concludes evangelicals should affirm a future aspect to justification as well as a future judgment according to works (142), but also that our future judgment is based on our union with Christ and our identity as "persons who are 'in Christ" (144).

Finally, Green discusses three related topics which touch on the issue of works and salvation (chapter 7). First, he interacts again with Henri Blocher on the headship of Adam and the so-called covenant of works sometimes considered to be essential for the gospel in Covenant Theology. Green suggests by using a "covenant of works" schema, works become a merit system for salvation and something quite different than grace. A second issue in the chapter is the headship of Christ as the obedient one who kept the covenant. We obey because Christ obeyed, Green says (159). In

the end, Green concludes inaugurated eschatology is key to understanding the "real but imperfect nature" of the believer's good works (170).

In summary, while the role of works for those coming to salvation and in the coming future judgment have often been the topics of discussion of New Testament theology, Green's book fills a gap by focusing on the role of works in the ongoing life of the believer. His emphasis on the cross and grace-enabled good works in the life of the believer is a helpful correction to sweeping statements concerning the ongoing role of good works in the life of the believer. I find the brevity of the chapters frustrating, especially when exegesis of Scripture is too brief. Occasionally I thought historic and contemporary (usually reformed) theologians dominated the discussion, especially in chapter 6. However, this is certainly a case of "that's not the book I would write" and should not distract from the value of Green's book.

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Smith, Gary V. *Interpreting the Prophetic Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 2014. 224 pp. Pb; $22.99.

This is another volume in Kregel's *Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis* series. Like the earlier works in the series, the same helpful layout is found with the same basic features. Each chapter begins with an overview and ends with a summary of the chapter. This aids the reader in knowing where the chapter is going. There are very usable charts within the chapters which are understandable. Each chapter concludes with a selected bibliography. The book includes a glossary at the end for terms readers may not understand. Finally, there are indexes for Scripture and subjects.

The author states his purpose is to help with "the proper interpretation of biblical texts from the prophets based on an appreciation of their historical setting and an understanding of the characteristics of prophetic literature" (p. 18). He fulfills this through six chapters guiding the reader from the nature of prophetic literature to major themes. In addition, Smith offers advice for the student who is preparing to proclaim prophetic texts. He does well in fulfilling his goals and presents a very satisfactory handbook.

I found this book helpful in three ways. First, the book helps in understanding and clarifying the nature of prophecy or prophetic literature. This is important in light of the popular understanding of prophecy as simply foretelling the future. Smith does a good job of showing the different aspects of prophecy. However, in chapter 4 he deals with interpretive issues within prophetic texts that should be considered in conjunction with understanding prophecy. Second, one of the best features of the book is the section on major themes in which Smith gives a brief overview of the theology of each prophetic book. Third, this book will be helpful to any preacher or teacher when moving from text to application in a sermon. Smith gives sound practical advice on how to teach and preach this complicated subject. I especially like Smith's principles of application—find the timeless aspects of the prophecy; go beyond the cultural limitations; be consistent with other Scriptures; and be relevant to your audience. He points out that application "should include a challenge for people to move from where they are now to where God wants them to be" (p. 162).

Overall, this is a good handbook for the exegesis of prophecy. I found it an insightful and helpful guide. It is designed for Bible students, pastors, and teachers and would make a good textbook on the subject. It is a must-read for those who desire an overall grasp of the subject. Concise and reader friendly, *Interpreting the Prophetic Books* is a worthwhile addition for your library.

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Boda, Mark J. *'Return To Me': A Biblical Theology of Repentance*. NSBT 35; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2015. 232 pp. Pb; $22.

Mark J. Boda (PhD, University of Cambridge) is professor of Old Testament at McMaster Divinity and a coeditor for IVP's *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets*. Boda is well-suited for a monograph on repentance: more than two pages of the bibliography of *Return to Me* were written or edited by Mark Boda, primarily works dealing with repentance and penitential prayers. He has been extremely active in SBL/AAR groups studying repentance and related themes.

This new contribution to New Studies in Biblical Theology is an excellent example of the theory and practice of biblical theology. He examines a narrowly defined topic in all of the genre of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. After collecting and analyzing this data, he summarizes his findings in order to create a biblical theology of repentance. Boda is sensitive to both the text of Scripture and its message to the original readers of the Scriptural canon. Occasionally I find his exegesis lacking depth, but this is the result of restrictions on the size of the book in the NSBT series. Boda has pointed the way for future exegetes to explore repentance in these texts in far more detail.

In his introduction, Boda states that careful observation of both the Old and New Testament will show "the striking similarity in their expression of the theology of repentance" (20). He begins by reviewing the various vocabulary of repentance used in both Testaments, but he is well aware the idea of repentance may be present even when specific vocabulary is not (29). Boda defines repentance as "a turn or return to faithful relationship with God from a former strain of estrangement" (31). Here he cites Zechariah 1:1-6 and Acts 26:16-20 as illustrations of this definition.

Boda develops this definition by surveying the texts on repentance in eight sections of the Hebrew Bible. Beginning with the Torah, he briefly examines every example of repentance. These texts are selected because of the presence of repentance language or because the idea of repentance is clearly in the background. Several patterns emerge as this survey progresses. First, repentance is necessary because of human obstinacy. Second, an invitation to repent is initiated by God through his leaders or prophets. Third, repentance is accompanied by physical rituals (washing with water, weeping, tearing clothes, etc.). When humans respond to the prompting of God and repent, there is a need for covenant renewal. This renewal is often a sacrifice or other act of worship.

From the Latter Prophets, for example, Boda develops what he calls the "Penitential Process." Using 2 Kings 17:12-15 as his model, he outlines the basic structure of the penitential process as: Israel sins, Yahweh warns through the prophets and their message of repentance, Israel "stiffens the neck" and refuses to repent, so Yahweh responds with judgment (62). This is a pattern found throughout the prophetic books explaining Israel and Judah's need for repentance and return to covenant faithfulness. For some

readers, this may sound a great deal like Deuteronomic theology.

Chapter 11 is a summary of Boda's reading of all of the texts on repentance in the Old Testament. First, in the Old Testament repentance is relational. Often this shift in relationship is rejection of a foreign god and a return to Yahweh. That return is accompanied by inner conviction (sincerity, contriteness, etc.) and demonstrated by a ritual (fasting, tearing of clothes, ashes on the head, etc.) Repentance most often is a response to God's wrath, although this is not always the case. Like Josiah, one might hear the words of the Torah and return to the Lord. While in some cases God prevents repentance (Pharaoh, for example), he also enables his people to repent and return to him. Using Deuteronomy 30:6 as an example, Boda points out Moses looked forward to a time when God would "circumcise the heart" of his people and enable them to return from exile (158).

After ten chapters on repentance in the Old Testament, Boda dispatches the issue of repentance in the New Testament in two chapters. One surveys the texts, the second summarizes this data into a coherent New Testament "biblical theology of repentance." For the most part, Boda finds the same themes in the New Testament as the Old. Beginning with the command to "repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand," Boda shows the Synoptic Gospels and Acts are filled with the language of repentance (166). This is perhaps a good opportunity to create continuity between Jesus and the Hebrew Bible since Jesus' call to repent is more similar to an Old Testament prophet than personal repentance of sin. To a certain extent Boda achieves his summary of the New Testament: "repentance in redemptive-historical perspective is the posture of those who will participate in the kingdom in the present age and the age to come" (181). Here he highlights the continuity between this age and the age to come, but I think more can be done do connect the repentance called for by the prophets and the preaching of Jesus.

Boda says Paul uses penitential vocabulary to describe the "normative Christian life" (172), although the data he provides does not always illustrate the point. For example, "setting one's mind on things above" in Colossians 3 is suggested as an example of repentance since this involves putting off the old self and putting on the new. It is possible repentance is required if one is to put to death the old self, but Paul does not make that point in Colossians 3. His brief comments on sowing and reaping in Gala-

tians 6:8-9 also seem too straining to find repentance in a text which is not obviously about returning to a former relationship.

In his final chapter, Boda discusses a few theological implications of repentance based on his findings, especially as related to the "hyper-grace gospel." This is a more recent version of the Lordship Salvation debate of the 1980s. Having surveyed the whole Bible, Boda concludes repentance is a core element of the gospel that is in fact a human act, but a human act which is prompted by God. To overplay either one of these elements is dangerous and risks obscuring the gospel.

Since the book follows the canonical order or the Bible, I wonder if a trajectory could have been established by treating post-exilic sections of the prophets in the same unit as Ezra-Nehemiah, Daniel and Lamentations. Perhaps Isaiah 40-55, 56-66 alongside these early Second Temple works would have yielded interesting results. It is possible dividing Isaiah is the problem, but that is not an issue addressed in the book. While this book is excellent as is stands, a chapter on Second Temple literature may have been helpful to set the stage for the New Testament. He indicates very early in the book that repentance in the Second Temple Period is an important area of research (citing N. T. Wright, for example), but he has defined his study as limited to the canonical texts.

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Chambers, Andy. *Exemplary Life: A Theology of Church Life in Acts*. Nashville: B&H, 2012. 292pp. Hb.

Andy Chambers is Senior Vice President for Student Development and Professor of Bible at Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis. This study of Luke's summary narratives is clearly evangelical. Chambers approaches Acts from the perspective of Christian faith and offers this study as a way of applying the book of Acts to contemporary church life.

In the opening chapter of this monograph, Chambers describes how we "lost Luke's theology of the church life" as a result of an over-emphasis on historical critical method. He is concerned here with the view Luke created fictional situations to present his view of how the church developed. The long shadow of F. C. Baur has prevented scholars from seeing Luke's intention to describe the ideal life of the church in the summary narratives in Acts. Literary criticism and narrative theology has corrected this to a certain extent since these methods are focused on Luke's rhetorical strategies as an author. Chambers will therefore make qualified use of contemporary narrative criticism, although he thinks Luke had specific intentions as the author of the text.

In his second chapter he describe summarization as a rhetorical feature of Acts. The first four of the features of summary narratives are found in a variety of Greco-Roman literature and Acts tends to include similar information. First, the summary narratives tell about church life as opposed to describing them dramatically. Second, summary narratives are unfocused general statements about church life. Third, narrative time accelerates in the summary narratives. Fourth, summary narratives depict an ongoing way of life in the Jerusalem church. One way that Luke describes this ongoing state is switching from an aorist to an imperfect verb in the summary statements. Chambers argues the change in sound of an inflected verb would be picked up by an oral culture hearing the text read publicly.

In addition to these for standard features, Chambers notices a number of other items found in the Book of Acts. For example, since these statements are brief transitional summaries, they make only general references to time. Luke's summaries usually follow a chiastic ABA pattern and make frequent use of repetition. In addition, the summary statements tend to be culturally neutral. By this Chambers means they are not tied to Jewish

practice.

His final and perhaps more controversial observation is that Luke only emphasizes the positive aspects of the Jerusalem congregation in summary narratives. Chambers does not think Luke downplays controversy or division in the early church in the narrative portions of his book, but he does omit this material in the summary statements. It is hard to imagine why Luke would include negative items in a summary statement intended to be an example to later church readers for how to "do church."

Having clearly described Luke's summarization strategy, chapters 3-5 of *Exemplary Life* carefully study each of the three summary narratives in the book of Acts. These summaries, Chambers argues, are Luke's description of the "exemplary life" of the early church. A chapter is devoted to each summary narrative (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35; 5:12-16) in order to develop a long list of commitments made by the earliest believers. For example, it is well-known the believers in Acts 2:42-47 were committed to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to breaking bread together, and to prayer. But Chambers argues there were other defining features as well, such as fear of the Lord, signs and wonders, sharing in each other's lives and possessions, daily fellowship (which included the practice of the Lord's Supper). One important characteristic of the early Jerusalem church was caring for the needs of the community as well as whole city of Jerusalem.

Having created an impressive list of features of the ideal community from the three summary narratives, Chambers then examines four texts in which Luke describes Gentile communities. The goal is to demonstrate these Gentile communities share the same kind of features as the ideal, exemplary community found in the summary narratives. What he is looking for are "enriching echoes" of these summaries in the Samaritan mission (8:1-15 9:31), Antioch (11:19-30, 13:1-3), Ephesus (19-20), and Troas (20:7-12). Presumably these were chosen because they most clearly demonstrate the point Chambers wants to make, the ideal of Jerusalem was replicated in the Gentile churches.

Two minor critiques come to mind here. First, the Samaritans are not exactly Gentiles, nor are they exactly Jews. A Christian community in Samaria may be implied by 9:31, but I am not sure 8:1-25 can be fairly described as the establishment of Gentile churches in the Pauline sense. Second, Chambers omits Thessalonica and Corinth, even though there are

certainly Gentile churches established in both locations. This may simply be a matter of limiting the study to make the material manageable, or perhaps because these two particular Gentile communities would yield negative data not helpful for the ultimate thesis of the book. There is simply not much to work with for Thessalonica, but Luke devotes a nearly as much attention to Corinth as he does Ephesus, and far more than Troas. (To be fair, he frequently cites Acts 18 in his final chapter.)

In chapter 7 Chambers sums up his findings in order to demonstrate Luke offered the Jerusalem Community as an ideal for the later, primarily Gentile church to follow. This is the reason the summary statements are culturally neutral, lacking specific reference to the Jewish boundary markers. The boundary markers were undoubtedly practiced by the Jerusalem community, but since they were no longer relevant to the Gentile churches reading Acts, Luke has omitted them from the summaries.

He begins with a long list of some 24 items found in the summary narratives and then uses these to create a biblical theology of "Church Life in Acts." In the explanation following his list, Chambers shows how these items turn up in one or more of the later Gentile churches, indicating Luke's intention to encourage later readers to follow the model of the earliest church. For the most part, this chapter lists non-controversial topics which ought to characterize any healthy church

However, some of the "exemplary features" are not necessarily found in the later texts, even if they are important features of church life. Chambers says "an exemplary church deliberately assimilates new believers," citing the summary narrative in Acts 2:42 (147). But the later texts he cites in Acts do not necessarily support this point. Acts 11:26 only implies ongoing training and discipleship and 13:21 simply notes the proconsul Sergius Paulus believed and was astonished at the teaching of the Lord, but this is far from being assimilated into a community committed to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, prayer and breaking of bread. Of the verses listed, only 20:18-20 (Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders) clearly describes a community like Acts 2:42. Ultimately I think this extremely long list of characteristics of an exemplary church could have been more efficient, combining similar points in order to avoid this kind of problem.

In conclusion, Chambers has done what he set out to achieve. The summary narratives in the early part of Acts do indeed seem to be general

enough to provide an example for later churches looking for a model for how to live as Christians. While I am less convinced the later reports in Gentile churches are true echoes of these summaries, in general Chambers makes an excellent argument that Luke's intention was to provide a model of an ideal church for later generations to emulate. What is more, this point is quite preachable in an evangelical context. It is always difficult to know how to apply the book of Acts, especially the activities of the earliest church. Chambers does not want to apply the specifics, only the general example found in the summary statements. In the end, Chambers would say, this was Luke's purpose for including such summaries.

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Pietsch, B. M. *Dispensational Modernism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pp. 212; endnotes; author and topical indices. Hb.; $74.00.

This volume reads like a sequel to G. Marsden's *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (1980). Like Marsden's widely acclaimed study, *Dispensational Modernism* explores the cultural context of early dispensational theology in America from 1870 to 1920. The title at first sounds like an attack, but is actually the opposite. Whereas Marsden sought the context of dispensational theology's rise in American social and intellectual culture in the same period, Pietsch looked for developments in western *science* during the period. He thinks of these developments under the heading of "engineering," identifying its main elements as methodologies like taxonomy (classification), quantification, differentiation, comparison, charting, diagraming and clarifying.

In his first chapter, Pietsch studies these scientific-method elements in later nineteenth century American thought along with how American evangelical leaders adopted the practices and thinking of these "engineering" concepts. He views these developments as a new "epistemic" (ways to know) sense aimed at producing new knowledge and public confidence in truth claims. Early American dispensationalists were not anti-modern or anti-science; they rather availed themselves of these new or newly em-

phasized epistemic categories of analysis and applied them to the study of the Bible using a new form of group Bible study. The rise of *taxonomy* (technical classification and quantification of objects of study) and growing interest in *time and measurements* gave the new late nineteenth century science animus and effectiveness.

The author finds striking pronouncements on the value of these scientific forms of thought among early North American dispensationalists, especially F. W. Grant, A. T. Pierson and C. I. Scofield. Their main reason for adopting these analytic forms from science was their promise of more precision in analyzing the Bible's teaching, and of competing with the larger scientific world in encouraging public certainty, confidence and respectability for their Bible teaching. After his initial chapter on "Taxonomic Minds and Technological Confidence," Pietsch proceeds to a point by point analysis of the social confidence the millenarian-dispensationalist Bible Conference movement produced among its clerical attendees after 1870, the new status and confidence the classifying-quantifying dispensational analysis created for ministers who adopted it, the effects of these analytic techniques on dispensational hermeneutics, and especially how the early dispensationalists constructed the dispensations by vigorously using these analytic methods.

In the chapter on "Building the Dispensations" he suggests recent "ruptures" in history such as the Civil War and World War I created new starts after the testing and judgments of war, and what such ruptures contributed to popularizing Scofield's "test—failure—judgment—new revelation" analysis of the dispensations. For these and other reasons, Pietsch thinks popular negative views of dispensational theology are off the mark if not misguided by blind spots. All this methodological and analytic energy drawn from popular scientific thought shows how dispensationalism was anything but a backwater, anti–modern movement; the early American dispensationalists were actually "modern"!

Pietsch does not pay much attention to other roots of negative attitudes toward dispensationalism—traditional Christian theologies which vested so much thought and energy in the unity and sameness of biblical texts. Instead he sought a new way to understand the early dispensationalists in the positive light of how they adopted popular scientific methods. He finds many negative evaluations of dispensationalism doubtful, and accounts

for its early twentieth century popularity by noticing American scientific thought, and American and British publishing and marketing techniques used to promote the *Scofield Reference Bible*. However, his "engineering science" analysis of early dispensationalism's context seems too narrow. He does not especially care to defend early American dispensationalism's theology, or rather, as sympathetic as he sounds, it is not sympathy about its theology, but about its adopted methodologies and smart publication and marketing practices. One can read this analysis as though Pietsch's tongue is in his cheek; but this is not a safe or necessary way to read him.

Readers may at times feel confused about Pietsch's use of "engineering" as a general term for classification and quantification methods, although he usually made clear what he meant. The weakest part of the analysis is the dominion he assigns to scientific populism; he might have added to the science analysis a chapter or two on the conceptual history of dispensational thought. Pietsch seems not to fully understand or fully credit the literal-historical-grammatical exegesis tradition received by dispensationalism from the Reformation. Scientific categories adopted by early dispensationalists tended to create certain kinds of novelty hermeneutics like numeric treatments of Scripture or hyper-analytic categorizing, for example ("this has nothing to do with that").

Dispensational theology's way forward lies in identifying itself as a form of biblical theology with rigorous use of historical-grammatical methods. Biblical theology too, like developments in science at the turn of the twentieth century, is based on a newer set of methodologies different than those of systematic theology, drawn not from the world of math, engineering, and binary logic ("if this, not that"), but from the world of languages and literatures which are more akin to the Bible's character than math, engineering and taxonomy.

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Carson, D. A. *The Intolerance of Tolerance*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2012. Hb. 196 p. $24.00

Tolerance has risen to the status of supreme virtue in our multi-cultural, pluralistic age. There is no higher praise than to be considered open-minded and accepting of all. By the same token, the most disparaging charge that can be leveled against someone is being intolerant. The mere accusation is enough to humble even the mighty. In much of the western world, tolerance is woven into the culture in such a way it is widely assumed and almost never questioned. But what if the prevailing notion of tolerance is not nearly as charitable as imagined? That is the premise of D.A. Carson's recent book, *The Intolerance of Tolerance.*

Carson begins by explaining a seismic shift has occurred in recent years as to how tolerance is understood. The old definition meant accepting the existence of diverse views. There are many people in the world with values and beliefs quite different from our own, and even though we might not necessarily agree, we can still make efforts to get along, treating others with dignity and respect. The new tolerance, however, goes even further, requiring us to accept the legitimacy of all views. Opposing thoughts or values are regarded as a matter of preference. There is no right or wrong answer. He draws the distinction saying, "We move from allowing the free expression of contrary opinions to the acceptance of all opinions; we leap from permitting the articulation of beliefs and claims with which we do not agree to asserting that all beliefs and claims are equally valid. Thus we slide from the old tolerance to the new," (p.3-4). Of course, both views of tolerance must set some limits. After all, no one can tolerate everything. But they will draw lines in different places for different reasons.

These two sides have conflicting ideas of truth. The old tolerance assumes objective truth exists and can be pursued. Various groups might vigorously debate an issue, each believing they are correct while the other is in error, but they concede the best way to uncover truth and persuade others is with reason rather than coercion. On the other hand, the new tolerance rejects all absolutes and accuses any sort of exclusive-truth claim of being grossly intolerant. To insist something is wrong, or to suggest someone is mistaken, has become the chief sin which must be condemned. No wonder Christians who proclaim Jesus as the only way to God are met with open

contempt by proponents of the new tolerance.

Carson goes on to cite examples of how the new tolerance seeks to silence critics, forcing those with deeply held convictions to retreat from the public square. He looks at a variety of realms. In the world of academics, student organizations face the threat of expulsion from college campuses because their religious convictions are "discriminatory." In the medical profession doctors and nurses who have been protected in the past by "conscience clauses" from performing certain procedures, like abortion, are now being told this is a violation of patients' rights. Businesses are also beginning to wade into the culture war. A bank in England closed the accounts of a Christian organization because its views were deemed incompatible with those of the financial institution. In a public statement they explained, "It has come to the bank's attention that Christian Voice is engaged in discriminatory pronouncements based on the grounds of sexual orientation.… This public stance is incompatible with the position of the Co-operative Bank, which publicly supports diversity and dignity in all its forms for our staff, customers and other stakeholders," (p.22). Apparently the bank did not see a contradiction in eliminating one of its diverse customers in the spirit of diversity. Some examples border on the ridiculous. A city in England actually banned all images of pigs from government offices (calendars, figurines, Winnie the Pooh and Piglet tissue boxes), because the growing Muslim population considers swine an unclean animal. When pressed for explanation, one official responded, "It's a tolerance of people's beliefs," (p.24-25). Carson reacts, "Stunning doublespeak! What about tolerance of those who think differently about pigs?" Instances abound as to how this new tolerance has proven more than willing to harass, intimidate, or bully those who do not conform to its ideals.

Much of this intolerance, masking itself as tolerance, seems to be directed against Christianity. After 9/11, an article in the New York Times Magazine compared Christian fundamentalists with Muslim terrorists, both of whom hold exclusivist beliefs. Carson answers, "Mutually exclusive beliefs, religious or otherwise, are not dangerous, provided there is also a mutual commitment to ongoing discourse, *to the older kind of tolerance*" (p.46). Comparing Jerry Falwell to Osama Bin Laden is more than a stretch. It is "both unfair and misguided."

Carson gives a brief historical sketch, glancing at noteworthy writers

and movements which have wrestled with these issues in past centuries. We get the sense this chapter could have easily been expanded into a separate work, but the footnotes are helpful for those wanting to delve deeper into the subject.

One of the most important chapters in the book deals with the issue of truth. While the new tolerance would like to reduce all of the world's religions to a set of shared ideals, following this agenda would mean denying essential tenets of the gospel. Carson says, "Christians who attempt to be faithful to the Bible are bound to uphold certain truths—truths that remain true whether anyone believes them or not, truths that are bound up with the gospel, truths that cannot be sacrificed on the altar of the great goddess of relativism.... If they are judged intolerant in the new sense, the price of escaping the charge is too high to pay: it would mean abandoning Christ," (p.111). Christians believe truth can be known because God has revealed himself to us through nature, through Scripture, and by sending his Son. The message of the gospel is intended for the whole world, addressing the issue of sin and our common need for redemption. What God has accomplished for us in Christ is good news, and ought to be shared with others. Though proponents of tolerance have incredible disdain for evangelism, our love for others prompts us to reach out humbly and graciously with the only message that can save.

The chapter on morality is also of crucial importance. Because the new concept of tolerance rejects absolutes, it inevitably leads to moral relativism. There is no longer an all-encompassing standard of right and wrong that is respected in our culture. Anything goes. Those who gladly embrace every lifestyle are upheld as model citizens. The only thing that will not be tolerated is throwing around words like "sin" or "evil," terms which have gone out of style. As in the days of Israel's judges, everyone does what is right in their own eyes (Judges 17:6). Carson warns, "Once the category of evil disappears, our moral discernment has no structure…. The failure to recognize the evil in our own hearts is precisely what convinces so many of us that our opinions and motives are above reproach while those who contradict us are stupid or malign" (p.130).

The final chapter offers guidance for followers of Christ who face the challenges of interacting with a culture that increasingly labels our beliefs and core convictions as "intolerant." Among his ten points, Carson encour-

ages us to remain committed to the truth of the gospel while exhibiting a spirit of Christ-like love. Don't be afraid to challenge the inconsistencies of the new tolerance. He explains, "…in this book I have tried to show that as a way of looking at the world secularism is no more neutral than any other ism; indeed, it regularly functions as religions do," (p.170). We must practice and encourage civility as we interact with others. And it is imperative for the Church to maintain its commitment to evangelism, for when men and women experience a genuine conversion they will become salt and light in a dark and decaying world. Finally, believers must be prepared to suffer. It should come as no surprise to us if we are ridiculed and mistreated in this world. The Lord tells us again and again throughout the New Testament to expect nothing less (John 15:18-25; Philippians 1:29). Our attitude should not be one of defeatism or despair, but may we emulate the apostles who rejoiced when they were counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus.

In conclusion, *The Intolerance of Tolerance* would make a valuable resource for anyone who wants to better understand the mindset of our culture and be better equipped to respond. Unfortunately, relativism and the new tolerance are not likely to fade away overnight. How will we handle the growing pressure to compromise our message and conform to the philosophy of this age? May we stand firm on the truth of Scripture, sharing the love of Jesus Christ in our world.

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Ingraham, Dale. *Tear Down This Wall of Silence: Dealing with Sexual Abuse in Our Churches*. Greenville, South Carolina: Ambassador International, 2015. Pb.; 280 pp.; $14.99

Warning! This book is terrible! You will read things you will wish you could forget! The author even includes a section titled "Caution" before the first chapter. It is for these reasons you need to read this book.

There are two types of victims in this world. One type includes people who rarely talk about the crime perpetrated against them. They prefer to try to forget what happened and really hope it never happens again— to them or anyone else. The other type includes people who are very vocal about what happened to them. They are determined this crime should be made public so everyone is aware this crime happens. They become advocates for those who have been victimized and those who might be victimized in the future. The primary goal is to prevent what happened to them from ever happening again to anyone else. As you begin to read this book, there is no doubt in your mind Dale Ingraham is an advocate for victims of sexual abuse.

You might ask, "Is Dale a victim? If not, why is he so passionate about this topic*?"* As Ingraham quickly brings to light, anyone who loves someone who has been impacted by sexual abuse also becomes a victim because of the great losses sexual abuse survivors' experience. Individuals having experienced sexual abuse may experience "recurring nightmares, dissociation, sudden flashbacks into the event, and a desperate desire for suicide" (p. 35). Ingraham reports that in all cases of sexual abuse, the perpetrator grooms and manipulates the victim in such a way the victim feels powerless, whether the victim is a child or an adult (p. 42). In the church, the offender has the added advantage of instilling guilt and shame to prevent the victim from telling someone who could prevent the abuse from happening. The fear of someone finding out keeps victims silent and impacts future relationships with parents, spouses, and children. (p. 45). Victims become emotionally wounded and, as a result, have little to give to those who love them (p. 85). Family members are at a loss to understand a victim's inability to have intimate relationships, causing doubt, frustration, and mistrust (p. 82).

How widespread could the problem of sexual abuse possibly be? Ingra-

ham shares empirically supported statistics indicating "one in three girls and one in six boys will be raped or molested by the time they're 18 years old" (p. 34). Ninety percent of molesters will molest children they already know because they are in a position of perceived authority over the victim.

Why does Ingraham target the church in his book? Ingraham provides evidence the church and Christian ministries are prime venues for perpetrators because of self-preservation, a desire to protect the offender, and opportunity. Perpetrators seek out churches as ideal sites because of the variety of positions of perceived authority (p. 54). There is frequently little screening, little supervision, and frequent access to lots of children. Often, offenders are well-loved members of the congregation or ministry. Those who have not been molested by these offenders are quick to come to offenders' defense and offer unconditional forgiveness (p. 91). This position often results in no punishment, allowing the perpetrator to continue the abuse. Ingraham further reports that in an attempt at self-preservation, some ministries prefer to take care of the problem in house in an attempt to prevent a stained image on the church and to protect the church's reputation (p. 134). He reminds the reader that the fallout from a discovered cover-up is many times worse than the actual issue.

What does Ingraham want ministries to do about it? Ingraham pleads with the church to "believe and speak the truth about sin and its consequences." (p. 139). He asks Christian ministries to recognize the far-reaching consequences of sexual sin and the impact sexual sin has on the health of the ministry and its constituents. As uncomfortable as it will be, he asks that the church enforce consequences which fit the crime (p. 142). Until offenders are allowed to experience consequences, and potential offenders recognize there will be consequences for sin, these heinous crimes will continue. Further, Ingraham asks Christian ministries to "believe and speak the truth about mercy and justice, grace and love" (p. 159). Ingraham asks Christian ministries to become places where victims can find a safe place to talk about their experiences without fear of not being believed or shamed (p. 173). Part three of Ingraham's book provides practical advice for churches and Christian ministries who desire to protect victims.

Ingraham recognizes the resistance his message faces, but is committed to bringing to light an issue which has been kept in the darkness too long. *Tear Down This Wall of Silence* is an important book for those with the courage to take a stand for those who cannot defend themselves.

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Michael, Larry J. *A Necessary Grief: Essential Tools for Leadership in Bereavement Ministry.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel, 2015. 186 pp.; Pb. $15.99.

The author purports this book to be "a handbook to enable ministry leaders to help others through bereavement." The title indicates *A Necessary Grief* contains essential tools for leadership in bereavement ministry. In order to be as useful as possible, the book should be organized much like my father's toolbox. In my father's toolbox there was a separate drawer for each type of tool, and in some cases, there were hand-drawn outlines where specific tools belonged. There are many critical moments when ministry leaders are called upon to tend to the specific needs of death, dying, grief, and mourning. At those times, a well-organized handbook would assure needs are met in a timely manner. Unfortunately, *A Necessary Grief* reminded me more of my brother's toolbox. My brother did not know the difference between a wrench and a set of pliers. Because all of his tools were thrown into a big box, he frequently could not find the tool he needed at a critical moment. *A Necessary Grief* contains a great deal of helpful insight and information; however, the benefits of reading the book are overshadowed by grammatical and typographical errors, lack of sourcing, and disorganization.

In his introduction, the author indicates *A Necessary Grief* is intended to help leaders in three ways: understanding grief, practical tools, and ways to reach out to those who are grieving. This assurance is foreshadowed by the titles of the three main sections of the book outlined in the table of contents: comprehending grief, competency in grief, and coaching others in grief. The reader soon discovers, however, there are tools and ways to

reach out in the corresponding chapters; ways to reach out in the competency chapter; and anecdotal examples of understanding in the coaching chapter. Due to the lack of organization, it would be difficult for the reader to pick up the book three months later and be able to find and reread a specific section to know how to help in an urgent situation.

A reader may also wonder if the information provided in the book would apply to a specific situation since much of the information is anecdotal or not sourced. For example, in the chapter "How Grief Impacts Individuals," the author gives "possible physical sensations/reactions that are considered to be a normal component of grief" (p. 35). This list is not supported by empirical evidence. In addition, the advice to wait until "physical difficulties persist and symptoms increase," (p.36) before advising the bereaved to contact a physician is not empirically supported. Empirical evidence supports advising the bereaved to have a complete physical as soon as is practical rather than waiting (Buckley et al., 2012). Without adequate support and sourcing, the credibility of the information is questionable, making it difficult for the reader to have confidence in the advice given.

Numerous grammatical and typographical errors also impact credibility. The first error is three pages into the first chapter. The errors are distracting and make reading the material cumbersome.

The author includes many anecdotes speaking to his many years of experience in helping grieving individuals. These anecdotes give the reader a good perspective of the types of situations a ministry leader may face when working in a bereavement ministry. With better organization and attention to detail, this book could be a helpful tool. Just as a toolbox has compartments for specific types of tools, so this book should be organized so that after the book has been read, and as the reader needs to refer back to specific tools, they are easily found.

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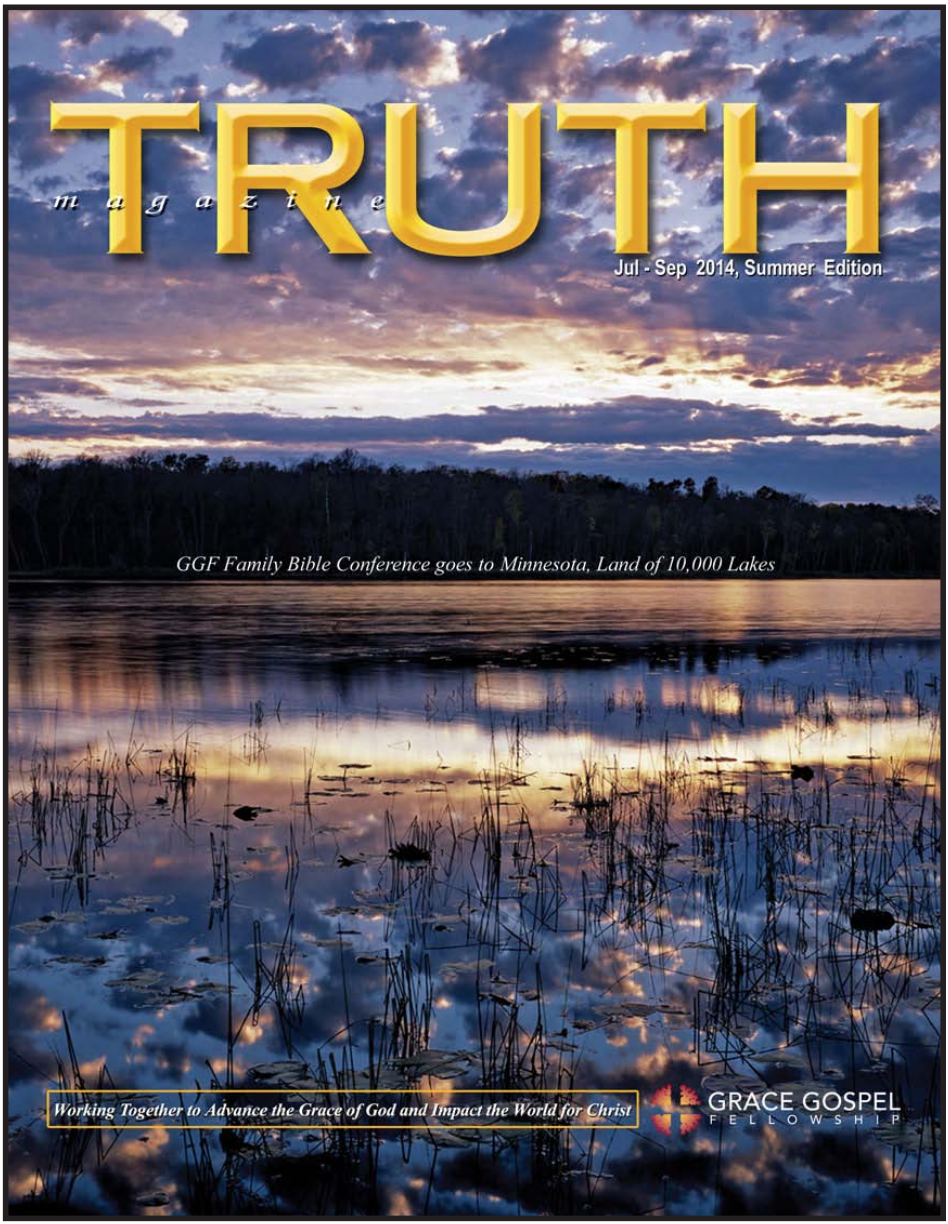

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