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The Use of the Old Testament
in the New Testament





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EDITORIAL

The Fall 2021 issue of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* is devoted to “The Use of the Old Testament in the New.” This important theme has implications for how we understand both testaments. Should we consider the Old Testament to be Christian Scripture, or should we reserve this designation for the New Testament? What do the ways that the New Testament writers use the Old Testament tell us about translation and interpretation practices? Do answers to these questions help us develop a doctrine of Scripture and understanding for biblical interpretation in the twenty-first century? The contributors to this issue wrestle with these and other questions, which are not new, but which need to be revisited by each generation.

Marcion, a native of Pontus, taught in Rome during the middle of the second century. He made an absolute distinction between the God of the Old Testament, who was perceived as harsh and rigorous, and the good God of the New Testament, who was completely love. Marcion also affirmed the common Gnostic dualism and Docetism.

During the middle decades of the second century, the interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures remained the central hermeneutical task. This held true even for Marcion, whose reduced Christian canon was most likely the signal leading to the approaches of the early church apologists who strongly pushed back against the Marcionite directions. Marcion suggested that he had to reject the Jewish Scriptures as the work of a wrathful, vicious, evil God who was opposed to the God of love proclaimed by Jesus and revealed to Paul. Suspicious of the harmonizing tendency of allegorical and typological exegesis, he declared that only the Epistles of Paul, the true apostle, and portions of Luke’s Gospel, purged of Jewish contamination, were acceptable for Christian use.

Marcion maintained that the Scriptures should be taken literally and authoritatively, but his presuppositions forced him to eliminate most of what was recognized as Christian Scripture by the professing church.

He thus arrived at a truncated canon characterized by great confusion regarding the relationship of the Old Testament to the New. The early church was now faced with challenges from two quite different directions. It was the task of the apologists to demonstrate the continuity of the two Testaments to the Gnostics and the discontinuity of the same testaments to the Judaizers. For nineteen centuries, the church has continued to struggle with the relationship of the two testaments, especially seeking to understand how Jesus and the apostles understood the Old Testament. The contributors to this issue offer much insight and guidance for contemporary readers of Scripture.

Andrew Streett, who teaches in both the Old Testament and New Testament departments at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, brilliantly surveys the landscape regarding recent trends related to the question of how Jesus and the apostles interpreted the Old Testament. His overview is essential reading before engaging the other fine articles in this issue. Craig Evans, the John Bisagno Distinguished Professor of Christian Origins at Houston Baptist University, helps us understand how Jesus read the Old Testament and how the Synoptic Gospels presented the teachings of Jesus. Andreas Köstenberger, research professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, gives us guidance regarding John's use of the Old Testament. Another Midwesterner, Patrick Schreiner, seeks to unlock Luke's approach to the Old Testament in the Book of Acts.

Clarity regarding Paul's understanding of the relationship of the two testaments is given guidance by Craig Keener, the prolific New Testament scholar at Asbury Seminary. Dana Harris, author of a recent commentary on Hebrews and New Testament department chair at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, introduces us to the extensive literature focusing on the use of the Old Testament in the Book of Hebrews. The associate dean in the School of Theology at Southwestern Seminary, Mark Taylor, offers a thoughtful look at the interpretation and application of the Old Testament by the other writers of the General Epistles. Greg Beale, professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary, completes our study with his look at the Book of Revelation. Readers of this issue of *SWJT* will be blessed to have such gifted and capable scholars supplying new insights regarding these challenging issues of interpretation.

Time and again we see that Jesus and the apostles employed hermeneutical practices established in late Judaism, but, with the enablement of God's Spirit, they adapted the methods to the church with the addition of

a Christological focus. At the heart of the early church's biblical interpretation was a Christological and Christocentric perspective. Jesus became the direct and primary source for the church's understanding of the Old Testament, transforming the Torah into the Messianic Torah for the early church. Thus, through the pattern that Jesus had set, and his exalted lordship expressed through the Spirit, Jesus served as the ongoing source of the early church's hermeneutical approach to the Scriptures. The Christological perspective of the earliest Christians, therefore, enabled them to adopt Jesus' own usage of the Scriptures as normative and to look to him for guidance in their hermeneutical task.

How grateful we are that in God's good providence the pattern of interpretation found in the New Testament itself was accepted by the post-apostolic church. Marcion's approach was condemned; the Old Testament writings were retained as the inspired prophetic witness of the truth of the Christian faith. It has been suggested that Marcion was perhaps a greater danger to the early church than any of the other early heretics. Sadly, Marcionite tendencies have continued even to the present day. Thus, we recognize the importance and relevance of once again exploring the use of the Old Testament in the New. It is my privilege to invite you to take a good look at the interpretive issues so winsomely and carefully presented by the wise and skilled contributors to this fall issue of *SWJT*. Let me add that readers will not want to miss the thoughtful book reviews found in this issue. As has been the case in recent issues of *SWJT*, I am privileged to provide a few observations about a few new(er) publications in the Book Notes section.

Let me once again express my genuine appreciation to the contributors to this fall issue, thanking them for their fine work as well as expressing appreciation to all who participated in the editorial and publication process as well. I especially want to say a big word of thanks to the excellent editorial guidance provided by Andrew Streett. With this issue, we welcome Ashley Allen to the role of assistant editor. For the good work of Alex Sibley and Katie McCoy during their days on the editorial team, we are truly thankful. We express our gratitude as well to you, our readers, for your encouragement and support for the ongoing work of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology*.

Soli Deo Gloria

David S. Dockery

NEW APPROACHES TO THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Andrew D. Streett*

The study of the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament (OT/NT) is now a subdiscipline in its own right, with burgeoning sub-specialties focused on important questions that arise from each stage of an author's reference to an OT text. The field touches on the full scope of methodologies used in biblical studies—historical-critical, literary and hermeneutical, theological, and practical.¹ We may look back with fondness on the relative methodological simplicity of earlier influential works by C. H. Dodd, Barnabas Lindars, Richard Longenecker, Donald Juel, and others.² The field has now come of age methodologically, full of vigor and excitement at the fulsome possibilities, though it has not yet reached the wisdom of advanced years capable of producing holistic evaluation from experience and hindsight.

Since many others have undertaken to provide orderly accounts of the things accomplished in the field,³ it seems best to me to provide a more

¹Leroy Huizenga, "The Old Testament in the New, Intertextuality and Allegory," *JSNT* 38, no. 1 (2015): 17.

²C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1953); Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM, 1961); Richard Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975); Donald Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988). As Huizenga, "Old Testament in the New," 18, puts it, "One sees a certain broadening from a narrower emphasis on overt quotation which seemed to give traditional philologists and historical critics such prominent points of purchase for the reconstruction of *Sitz im Leben*, to allusions and the rhetorical functions involved in their perception, and to biblical texts as part of the general system of literature and culture." One might point to the publication of Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale, 1989), as marking the "methodological turn" in the field.

³Stanley E. Porter, ed., *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); Dale C. Allison "The Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From the Beginnings to 600*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 479–502; Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in*

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modestly selective, narrower presentation of some horizon-expanding research, especially work that asks new questions or offers methodologically innovative answers to old questions.⁴

This means that I will not be directly addressing a perennial set of questions for the OT/NT concerning the hermeneutical approaches of the NT authors.⁵ Many of these questions stem from an evangelical interest in the unity of the two Christian testaments and creating a unified biblical theology.⁶ Such questions continue to be discussed in the field, and the possible answers continue to be refined against the evidence both in smaller studies and in massive undertakings, such as the *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.⁷ Greg Beale has attempted to develop a manageable methodology from such a perspective for interpreting individual instances of the OT/NT.⁸

Thus, in what follows, I will address recent research on prosopological exegesis, relevance theory, ancient media culture, and social memory theory.

the New: An Introduction, 2nd ed. (London: T&T Clark, 2015); the dedicated volume of *JSNT* 38, no. 1 (2015); B. J. Oropeza and Steve Moyise, eds., *Exploring Intertextuality: Diverse Strategies for New Testament Interpretation of Texts* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016); Matthew W. Bates, "The Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The State of New Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research*, eds. Scot McKnight and Nijay K. Gupta (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019), 83–102; David Allen and Steve Smith, eds., *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (London: T&T Clark, 2020).

⁴Although some might present such an article with an air of objectivity and comprehensiveness, without pretense I own the fact that I have selected the research presented here solely because I have found it stimulating and helpful.

⁵Do they follow the most basic modern rule for interpreting texts—that texts should be interpreted according to their literary and historical context? How do NT interpretations compare to those of Jewish contemporaries? Do they read the OT typologically, allegorically, through a promise/fulfillment grid, or in some other way? See the articles collected in G. K. Beale, *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994). For evangelicals this quickly becomes a question of whether modern interpreters should imitate the methods of the NT authors, for which see Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 214–20; and chs. 21 and 22 by Longenecker and Beale in *Right Doctrine*. Arthur Keefer, "The Meaning and Place of Old Testament Context in OT/NT Methodology," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, eds. David Allen and Steve Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 73–85, shows that many scholars working in this field use "context" in an insufficiently defined way or mean vastly different things than others.

⁶To bracket out such questions and approaches in this article should not be understood as denigrating them. I have great interest in these areas, and I trust that the other articles in this journal issue will address the field primarily from these perspectives.

⁷G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

⁸G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis And Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012). The methodology laid out by Beale is the ostensible methodology prescribed for authors of the commentary in the previous footnote.

I. PROSOPOLOGICAL EXEGESIS

Recent research on prosopological exegesis marks a fitting place to begin since it touches on perennial questions of the NT authors' exegetical techniques and hermeneutical interests, yet it does so from an expansive methodological perspective. Matthew Bates has proposed that the NT interpretation of OT passages must be understood not only with regard to the LXX source text and contemporary Jewish interpretation, but also in the context of contemporary and subsequent Christian writings that either interpret the same OT passage or comment on the NT passage incorporating the OT reference.⁹ He believes that this "fuller diachronic intertextuality" will give us a better picture of the NT authors' exegetical methods.¹⁰ One of the outcomes of such an approach is the possibility that NT authors may have been employing prosopological exegesis. This exegetical technique seeks to identify the specific speaker or addressee in ambiguous OT passages with God, the Holy Spirit, Christ, the church, or the apostles, among others. It is assumed that the Holy Spirit caused the OT authors to speak in the voice of another person (*prosōpon*). While some patristic interpreters explicitly state this as their method, Bates proposes that prosopological readings underlie several interpretations of the OT in the NT as well.

Building on the work of Carl Andresen's influential study of prosopological exegesis in patristics, Bates defines the method as "a reading technique whereby an interpreter seeks to overcome a real or perceived ambiguity regarding the identity of the speakers or addressees (or both) in the divinely inspired source text by assigning nontrivial prosopa (i.e., nontrivial vis-à-vis the 'plain sense' of the text) to the speakers or addressees (or both) in order to make sense of the text."¹¹ Similar techniques were employed by Hellenistic authors in interpreting classical texts and by some

⁹Matthew W. Bates, "Beyond Hays' *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul: A Proposed Diachronic Intertextuality with Romans 10:16 as a Test Case*," in *Paul and Scripture: Extending the Conversation*, ed. Christopher D. Stanley (Atlanta: SBL, 2012), 263–74.

¹⁰Dennis Stamps, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament as a Rhetorical Device: A Methodological Proposal," in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*, ed. Stanley Porter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 24, expresses a similar thought: "While one needs to be careful not to read back into the NT developments documented in the post-NT writings like the early church fathers, nonetheless these early writings provide further evidence of the developing perspective and practice of early Christian communities, which may shed light on the use of the OT in the NT."

¹¹Matthew W. Bates, *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation: The Center of Paul's Method of Scriptural Interpretation* (Waco: Baylor, 2012), 218.

Jewish authors in interpreting the OT.¹²

Bates identifies several criteria which the OT text and the NT text must meet in order to be considered an instance of prosopological exegesis.¹³ Madison Pierce has clarified these criteria, proposing that the base text must (1) include speech, (2) lack specificity in speaker or addressee, and (3) hold authoritative status for the interpretive community. The interpreting text must (1) identify the ambiguous speaker or addressee, and (2) may have an introductory formula using the term *prosōpon* (person). In addition, (3) presence of a prosopological exegesis of the base text in other texts makes its presence in the interpreting text more likely. Pierce notes that identification of an ambiguous speaker or addressee is the only essential feature of prosopological exegesis.¹⁴ Bates has argued for the presence of prosopological exegesis in a variety of NT texts and attempted to demonstrate that the NT use of this technique provides a starting point for further Trinitarian developments of the following centuries.¹⁵ Pierce has focused her attention on the passages in Hebrews where God, Jesus, and the Spirit are said to speak to one another and to the church, in addition to examining the way this divine discourse contributes to the author's characterization of God and the letter's overall argument.

Psalms 110 is a fitting example of how a NT author might interpret prosopologically, not only because it fits the base text criteria above, but also because it appears in two different contexts where the addressee of the speech in 110:1 is explicitly discussed. In Mark 12:35–37 (cf. Matt 22:41–45; Luke 20:41–44) Jesus asks about the discrepancy between the typical view that the Messiah would be the son of David and the address of God to one seated next to God whom David calls “my lord.” According to Bates, since the Gospel authors believe that Jesus is the Messiah and he later identifies himself the figure of Ps 110:1 in Mark 14:62, “Jesus (as portrayed by the synoptic writers) has exegetically construed himself as the person, the ‘my lord,’ addressed by God (the Father) in the text.”¹⁶ In

¹²Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 194–99, 209–12; Madison N. Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: the Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations of Scripture*, SNTSMS 178 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2020), 6–11.

¹³Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 216–20.

¹⁴Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, 20–21.

¹⁵Ch. 5 of Bates, *Hermeneutics*, focuses on several texts from the later chapters of Romans along with 2 Cor 4:13. His *The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God, and the Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretation of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2015), also treats passages from Hebrews, Acts, and the Gospels, in addition to giving more attention to Early Christian parallels to NT interpretations.

¹⁶Bates, *Birth*, 49.

Heb 1:13, this text is again introduced with the explicit question of the identity of the addressee: “But to which of the angels has he ever said...?” The context in Hebrews clearly identifies the addressee as Jesus, the Lord and Son.¹⁷ Several patristic authors implicitly interpret Ps 110:1 prosopologically and Irenaeus explicitly puts it in those terms.¹⁸

Peter Gentry, however, asserts that seeing prosopological exegesis in the NT is anachronistic since the apostles would have been familiar neither with the Hellenistic rhetorical handbooks nor with Jewish interpretive methods that ignore original context and literal meaning, which he believes did not flourish until after 70 AD. He instead argues that the apostles “base their interpretation on resolution within the storyline of Scripture” and “the predictive and prophetic nature of typology.”¹⁹ Similarly, William Dernelle notes all of the proposed instances of prosopological exegesis in the NT are unmarked, and after considering a few of those passages determines that “covenantally-informed typology seems to better account for the interpretations of the NT authors.”²⁰ Both Gentry and Dernelle seem to hold interpretive presuppositions that rule out proper prosopological readings of the OT.²¹

Bates himself recognizes a kind of typological interpretation in Paul’s reading of certain OT passages, but he argues that a prosopological understanding of other passages is simpler since it does not require an assumption of correspondence between the NT and OT where it is not clearly present.²² Such disagreements simply show the difficulty in filling the hermeneutical gaps left by NT authors when they cite the OT without describing their method. Nonetheless, Bates’s proposals offer another viable explanation for the hermeneutical assumptions of the apostolic period. Scholars ought

¹⁷Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, 59–60.

¹⁸Bates, *Birth*, 166–67.

¹⁹Peter Gentry, “A Preliminary Evaluation and Critique of Prosopological Exegesis,” *SBJT* 23, no. 2 (2019): 119–20.

²⁰William James Dernelle, “Typology, Christology and Prosopological Exegesis: Implicit Narratives in Christological Texts,” *SBJT* 24, no. 1 (2020): 151, 154.

²¹Gentry asserts that “the main problem is that if the NT authors are claiming things that an OT text does not clearly intend in its contexts (original, epochal, canonical), then the issue of warrant disappears, and you are never able to show from the OT itself that it was leading us to the NT conclusion” (“Preliminary Evaluation,” 120). Dernelle privileges typological explanations based partially on questionable logic: “Typology is broadly recognized as a feature of divine revelation and OT interpretation, whereas there is little evidence, if any, for [prosopological exegesis] in the OT. Given the privileged status of the OT as a means of preaching Christ, it would seem to follow that an event that was preached as a continuation of that history would make use not only of its texts, but also its methods” (“Typology, Christology,” 151).

²²Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 133–48, 249–53, 300–3.

to be open to the idea that NT authors used the OT in diverse ways and ought to judge each instance on its own merits with a wide range of exegetical techniques open for consideration.

II. RELEVANCE THEORY

This section focuses on the pragmatics of communication between author and reader. There is something of a divide in the field between those who take an author-focused approach (authorial intention, exegetical technique, theology) and those who take a reader-focused approach (usually a more literary, postmodern intertextuality). NT texts, however, were real acts of communication involving both a real author and real readers/hearers, so it makes sense to address the issue of the interplay between an author's production of a text and the audience's reception of it. Relevance Theory (RT) can help answer some of the major questions more holistically.

Relevance Theory is a comprehensive model of communication that seeks to explain the roles of inference and relevance in a hearer/reader's understanding of an utterance.²³ It proposes that the communicative act of the author can be understood by a reader in context. This focus on both the author's meaning and the reader's process of understanding avoids the pitfalls of an author-centered or reader-centered approach. Steve Smith explains that RT "regards the text as a communicative event where the writer provides everything the reader requires to arrive [at] a certain meaning with minimal effort; however, the fulfillment of this intention of the writer is the responsibility of the reader."²⁴

Each reader has a set of premises, a cognitive environment, from which to read the author's communication and draw inferences about its meaning. This cognitive environment includes the context of the utterance and encyclopedic information (e.g., personal beliefs, experiences, cultural values).²⁵ The reader's and the author's cognitive environment may overlap significantly, which is usually the case in the NT texts, and this overlap

²³See the classic work Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995). See also Margaret G. Sim, *A Relevant Way to Read: A New Approach to Exegesis and Communication* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), for a basic introduction to RT and its application to biblical interpretation.

²⁴Steve Smith, "The Use of Criteria: A Proposal from Relevance Theory," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, eds. David Allen and Steve Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 152.

²⁵Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 38–46.

may increase as the reader makes her way through the author's communication.²⁶ Both reader and author assume that the communication is understandable to the reader, and this provides the basis for the reader's use of their context to make inferences about the author's meaning.²⁷ An author, wanting to be understood, "will write in such a way that the author believes will minimize the processing effort of the reader to reach the communicator's goal."²⁸ A reader will try to get the most cognitive effect (an answer to a question, increased knowledge, etc.) from the text for the least amount of effort. In other words, once a reader comes to a meaningful understanding of the author's communication in conjunction with her cognitive environment, she will stop seeking for a better understanding.²⁹

The application of this theory of communication to the OT/NT can be especially helpful in explaining the process a reader goes through in identifying and understanding an allusion to another text. This issue of detecting allusions has been one of the sticking points in the field since Richard Hays's proposal of seven tests in his ground-breaking *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*.³⁰ Despite the fact that Hays did not explicitly apply his tests to most of the passages treated in the rest of the book, his methodological proposal set the terms of subsequent discussion.³¹ In spite of their influence, "criteria" is really a misnomer, lending a more scientific air to the process than is possible. David Allen notes that "even their most confident proponents recognize that they yield a more subjective than objective assessment."³² Given such a state of the question with regard to

²⁶Peter S. Perry, "Relevance Theory and Intertextuality," in *Exploring Intertextuality*, eds. B. J. Oropeza and Steve Moyise (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016), 211.

²⁷Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 155–71, 260–79.

²⁸Perry, "Relevance," 211.

²⁹Smith, "Use of Criteria," 144.

³⁰Hays's tests: availability (of source text to author and reader), volume (degree of explicit and distinctive repetition of words or patterns), recurrence (of the source text in the same authorial corpus), thematic coherence, historical plausibility (of the author's understanding and use of the source text), history of interpretation, and satisfaction (does the reading make sense?) (Hays, *Echoes in Letters*, 29–33).

³¹Nor does Hays use them extensively in his more recent work, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor, 2017). The literature discussing criteria is extensive. See the recent review of the field in David Allen, "The Use of Criteria: The State of the Question," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, eds. David Allen and Steve Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 129–41. For a particularly scathing assessment of Hays's methodology and those who have followed him, see Paul Foster, "Echoes without Resonance: Critiquing Certain Aspects of Recent Scholarly Trends in the Study of the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament," *JSNNT* 38, no. 1 (2015): 96–111, who says that "the method could be described as a radical form of modern reader-response" (109).

³²Allen, "Use of Criteria," 140.

criteria, perhaps RT can help by providing a comprehensive “framework for understanding how readers approach texts.”³³

Within this framework, in order for a reader to find relevance in an OT intertext she must make a connection “between an utterance and a remembered text within her cognitive environment that yields cognitive effects.”³⁴ She must recognize a signal to look for an intertext, identify the text, and receive a satisfying level of cognitive effect.³⁵ Smith identifies four variables that serve as guides for evaluating how likely an intertext is to be identified by a reader. First, the presence and strength of the signal.³⁶ Second, echoic strength of the intertext, which could involve verbal parallels or shared themes.³⁷ Third, accessibility of the intertext, which is more than availability or knowledge of the text. This refers to the OT text being the “most manifest context” where the reader can most easily find satisfying cognitive effect.³⁸ Finally, the fact that the text provides the all-important relevance (maximal cognitive effect for minimal processing effort) indicates that the reader would identify it as the author’s intended intertext.³⁹ This process grounds the identification of intertexts in the author’s communicative intent, attempting to discern only those references an author intended his audience to recognize and understand rather than trying to recreate the author’s thought process through tracing out overly subtle connections to other texts.⁴⁰ While the latter approach can be theologically valuable, from the perspective of RT, it shows that

³³Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 143. See also Stephen Pattemore, “Relevance Theory, Intertextuality and the Book of Revelation,” in *Current Trends in Scripture Translation*, ed. Philip Noss (Reading, UK: United Bible Society, 2003), 43–60. Nelson R. Morales, *Poor and Rich in James: A Relevance Theory Approach to James’s Use of the Old Testament* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2018), uses a process similar to what is described below.

³⁴Perry, “Relevance,” 215.

³⁵Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 146. Perry, “Relevance,” 215.

³⁶Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 147. A signal may be extrinsic (e.g., introductory formula, change in style, grammatical signal like *hoti*), making it more likely the reader will identify the allusion, or intrinsic only to the intertext itself, in which case the reader would only recognize the intertext if it is the most obvious context available.

³⁷Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 147–48. He notes, however, that shared themes need not point to a text but could point to a common motif or event that exists in the cognitive environment.

³⁸Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 148. If the proposed OT text is not “the most manifest context” to satisfy a reader’s search for cognitive effect, then the reader would have discovered relevance already in another text, motif, event, or theological idea.

³⁹Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 149. He recognizes that these guides overlap somewhat with some of Hays’s criteria but argues that they function differently because “the guides to interpretation are evaluated together as part of [an] overall theory of communication,” which “allows consideration of how important individual elements are on a case-by-case basis” (152).

⁴⁰Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 151.

“scholars have a tendency to over-process an utterance and exceed optimal relevance.”⁴¹

Since RT tries to explain the processes of real authors and readers, one must reckon with several complicating factors that provide fodder for ongoing work in the field. First, original readers of NT texts differed in their cognitive environments due to education, socio-economic level, and religious background, among many other factors. While not working from the perspective of RT, Christopher Stanley has investigated how different readers/hearers in the original audience might vary in ability to identify, understand, and test Paul’s OT references.⁴² The more we are able to discover the way different groups in the ancient world encountered texts, the more we will be able to apply RT more fully.⁴³ Second, real readers/hearers sometimes encounter the same text on multiple occasions, which might also include teaching or discussion. If NT authors intended this repeated exposure to happen, they may have included some subtler allusions that were more likely only to be understood upon subsequent readings.⁴⁴

Finally, the emphasis on the cognitive context of both author and reader places significant weight on one of the perennial issues of the OT/NT—early interpretation of the OT outside the NT. Common interpretations of OT texts may have formed part of the cognitive environment that determined a reader’s ability to detect and understand allusions. This is especially true for Jewish readers, but can also include Gentiles who spent time in the synagogue context. Without extensive knowledge of interpretive traditions, we will not be able to determine adequately if a reader was more likely to find relevance in the OT text itself or in common themes, motifs, and figures that had been taken into the cultural milieu that contributed to the author’s and reader’s encyclopedic information.⁴⁵ We ought to continue to push for fuller descriptions of common interpretive associations connected to influential OT texts, figures, and events.⁴⁶

⁴¹Perry, “Relevance,” 215.

⁴²Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* (London: T&T Clark, 2004). His main description of the diversity of the audience is in ch.3, which he then applies in later chapters to specific texts. See also *Sim, Relevant Way*, 43–44.

⁴³The section of this article on ancient media studies below is relevant in this respect.

⁴⁴Smith, “Use of Criteria,” 151.

⁴⁵Craig A. Evans, “Listening for Echoes of Interpreted Scripture,” in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, eds. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders (London: Bloomsbury, 1993), 47–51, draws attention to this shortcoming in Hays’s *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, a critique which Hays essentially accepts as valid (“On the Rebound: A Response to Critiques of *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*,” in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, 70–75).

⁴⁶Chs. 4 and 5 of Leroy Huizenga, *The New Isaac: Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of*

III. ANCIENT MEDIA CULTURE

Advances in the study of orality and memory over the last two decades hold great promise for the OT/NT. Although most scholars writing on the OT/NT recognize it to be inaccurate, much of their work assumes an anachronistic picture of a NT author sitting with paper and pen to write his letter or narrative, accompanied by a nearby collection of his favorite OT books. Every so often, he consults them and quotes from them as desired. Also assumed is a literate early Christian reading the document for themselves, perhaps even consulting the Scriptures to compare citation accuracy and context. Methodology in OT/NT must be based on a more accurate picture of the roles that orality and memory play in both the production and reception process.

1. *Production.* David Carr has drawn attention to the fact that, even in scribal transmission, orality and memory are intertwined with the textual and visual aspects of the process: “On the one hand, biblical texts and similar texts in other cultures were ‘oral’ in the sense that they were memorized, and—in certain cases—publicly performed. On the other hand, written copies of these texts were used in this process to help students accurately internalize the textual tradition, check their accuracy and correct it, and/or as an aid in the oral presentation of the text.”⁴⁷ Scribes were trained not only to copy texts but also to memorize large portions. The memorized text and the written text coexisted and shaped each other over time. Even in the actual moment of transcription, a scribe created a mental version of the relevant portion of text before adding it to the new copy.⁴⁸ This process introduced minor variations into subsequent manuscripts, which Carr refers to as memory variants—“the sorts of variants that happen when a tradent modifies elements of the texts in the process of writing or otherwise reproducing it from memory, altering elements of the text, yet producing a meaningful whole (‘good variants’).”⁴⁹ These memory variants include small omissions, transpositions, synonym

Matthew (Leiden: Brill, 2009), are exemplary in this regard though working from a different methodology than RT.

⁴⁷David Carr, “Torah on the Heart: Literary Jewish Textuality within Its Ancient Near Eastern Context,” *Oral Tradition* 25, no. 1 (2010): 18–19. See his *Formation of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011), 13–36, for a fuller description of textuality and orality in the ancient world.

⁴⁸John Screnock, *Traductor Scriptor: The Old Greek Translation of Exodus 1–14 as Scribal Activity* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 177–79. Screnock’s work shows that the same phenomenon holds true for the translation of the OT in the Old Greek manuscripts.

⁴⁹Carr, *Formation*, 17.

substitutions, form changes, and more. All of this, of course, was happening in transmission of the OT long before the NT writers ever received the text, whether orally or textually. Nonetheless, this intertwining of the oral and the written can shed light on how the NT texts were written.

The NT authors' use of memory should be given its due weight, especially considering that the physical characteristics of scrolls and the use of *scriptio continua* made *ad hoc* consultation of the Scriptures difficult.⁵⁰ Even when scholars assume the anachronistic scene described at the beginning of this section, it is often difficult to tell if an author is translating from the Hebrew or quoting from the OG/LXX because the quotation matches neither the OG/LXX nor an isomorphic translation from Hebrew. One of the issues, of course, is that we are working with incomplete data; we do not possess all of the variant manuscripts in Hebrew or Greek that were present in the first century.⁵¹ Often, the differences are attributed to an author's choice of a variant reading that fits his theological argument or to the author's purposeful adjustment of the citation, perhaps to make an intertextual connection to yet another OT passage.⁵² It has also been argued that an author's favored manuscript tradition may be discovered from such differences.⁵³

Although, some have suggested that the NT author may have been quoting from memory, this suggestion has usually been made without evidence.⁵⁴ The research on memory variants cited above, however, can provide a basis for deciding which variations could occur from memory. In addition, John Screnock has argued that the processes of transmission and translation are essentially the same and that these processes both produce the same sort of small variations introduced by memory. Thus, when

⁵⁰Catrin H. Williams, "How Scripture 'Speaks': Insights from the Study of Ancient Media Culture," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, eds. David Allen and Steve Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 54.

⁵¹R. Timothy McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 26.

⁵²An appeal to memory would not rule out intertextual connections to other passages by way of slight changes in a quotation, but these connections made by way of common vocabulary or themes are just as likely to be made in the memory. Williams, "How Scripture," 64–65, notes that "the evocation—in combined or conflated quotations—of multiple scriptural texts on the basis of their thematic and/or lexical correspondence was not necessarily the result of authors' direct and visual engagement with texts in written form (given the practical difficulties of search for 'distant' passages in literary scrolls) but the product of mnemonic processes."

⁵³See M. J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible: The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004).

⁵⁴Andrew Montanaro, "The Use of Memory in the Old Testament Quotations in John's Gospel," *NovT* 59, no. 2 (2017): 150.

looking at an OG text, one cannot tell when a change has been introduced by the translator and when it was present in the Hebrew *Vorlage*.⁵⁵ This observation can be applied to the OT/NT problem. Thus, we could argue that when a NT author's quotation of the OT shows similar variations, it is possible that his quotation accurately represents an unknown Hebrew or Greek *Vorlage*, but it is just as likely that he is quoting from memory and the differences are simply a result of that process. This means that scholars ought first to rule out the possibility of memory variants before arguing that an author has intentionally quoted a passage in a particular form.

Paul's quotation of Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11 is a classic example of this thorny issue. The MT (followed by Qumran) reads, "the righteous one will live by his faith," but the Greek reading says, "the righteous one will live by my faith."⁵⁶ Paul's quotation omits both possible pronouns. According to Richard Hays, Paul's adaptation of the passage in Rom 1:17 "yields a complex semantic transformation," resulting in ambiguity which "allows the echoed oracle to serve simultaneously as a warrant for two different claims that Paul has made in his keynote formula of the gospel: in the gospel *God's own righteousness* is revealed; and the gospel is the power of God for salvation *to everyone who believes*."⁵⁷ Before placing so much exegetical weight on the absence of a pronoun, one ought first to consider seriously that such an omission is typical of memory variants.

Andrew Montanaro has applied the idea of memory variants to the OT quotations in John, about half of which differ in some degree from their source.⁵⁸ He argues that many of the variations are of the sort to be expected when working from memory, while the quotations without variation "come mostly from the Psalms, probably due to the constraints of psalmic poetry that facilitate memorization."⁵⁹ Such a method ought to be applied more broadly to the NT to provide a baseline for judging which variants in quotations are more or less likely to reflect the authors' intentional interpretive changes.

2. *Reception*. Orality and memory also play key roles in the reception of OT references by readers and hearers. Given low literacy rates, texts were

⁵⁵Screnock, *Traductor*, 175.

⁵⁶See a convenient presentation of the major readings in Susan Docherty, "New Testament Scriptural Interpretation in Its Early Jewish Context," *NovT* 57, no. 1 (2015): 6.

⁵⁷Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters*, 40–41.

⁵⁸Montanaro, "Use of Memory," 147.

⁵⁹Montanaro, "Use of Memory," 167–68, 170.

primarily read aloud or performed for groups by trained readers.⁶⁰ With regard to the OT/NT, this oral/aural context raises anew the questions of how many allusions to the OT are intended by the author and whether an oral audience could be expected to identify them. Cynthia Edenburg has noted that a text may bring to mind other passages in a *reader's* memory, which he can later compare after obtaining a copy of the other text. For a *listener*, however, "the role of memory is all the more critical since one must retain the memory of a text as it is performed, while searching through long-term memory in order to retrieve the recollection of the other text evoked by the association."⁶¹ Thus, listeners are less likely to recognize and understand allusions in context than readers of texts.⁶² As Kelly Iverson notes, there may be a difference in how much allusive material is intended by the author and how much is detected by a listening audience.⁶³

One must also recognize varied levels of literacy among the recipients of NT texts. Stanley evaluates the effectiveness of Paul's scriptural quotations, noting that varied levels of literacy and access to physical texts resulted in different levels of understanding among the audience members.⁶⁴ He observes that many of Paul's quotations from the OT may not expect much knowledge of the Scriptures at all since Paul gives his own interpretation of the quoted texts. In other instances, however, "Paul may have targeted the more literate members of the congregations (especially those with more exposure to Judaism) on the assumption that they would explain to the illiterate majority the significance of the verses that he cites."⁶⁵ The possibility of interaction between audience members is an important

⁶⁰See the essays in Holly Hearon and Philip Ruge-Jones, *The Bible in Ancient and Modern Media: Story and Performance* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), for an overview.

⁶¹Cynthia Edenburg, "Intertextuality, Literary Competence and the Question of Readership: Some Preliminary Observations," *JOT* 35, no. 2 (2010): 137.

⁶²Edenburg, "Intertextuality," 144.

⁶³Kelly R. Iverson, "An Enemy of the Gospel? Anti-Paulinisms and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Unity and Diversity in the Gospels and Paul: Essays in Honor of Frank J. Matera*, eds. Christopher W. Skinner and Kelly R. Iverson (Atlanta: SBL, 2012), 30. It is also worth considering that references to texts of different genres may be more or less detectable and more or less meaningful. James McGrath, "Orality and Intertextuality," in *Exploring Intertextuality: Diverse Strategies for New Testament Interpretation of Texts*, eds. B. J. Oropeza and Steve Moyise (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016), 179–80, asserts that "the main function of using a hymn quotation is therefore not necessarily to call to mind other parts of the hymn but to fix the points made in conjunction with the quotation in the mind of the hearer. This may be less true of literary as opposed to hymnic allusions where the point may actually be to call to mind a whole story through an allusion to a single line or turn of phrase."

⁶⁴Stanley, *Arguing*, 38–59.

⁶⁵Stanley, *Arguing*, 58–59. The same possibility can be applied to allusions as well. Those more able to detect allusions in the oral presentation of a letter or narrative could share insight with others.

point. The idea of a singular performance with no further interaction over a text may be just as inaccurate as the above anachronistic model of a purely textual/literate situation. Catrin Williams points out that “several different scenarios can be envisaged, such as multiple recitations of a text within a communal framework, explanatory prompts provided by the lector, along with combined ‘reading’ and ‘studying’ activities during or after individual gatherings.”⁶⁶

IV. SOCIAL MEMORY

Recognizing that quotations and allusions are produced and received in the context of orality and memory broadens the discussion to consider the social aspects of a remembered past that includes both textual and oral preservation. Work in the area of social memory seeks to describe “the ways in which communities and individuals interpret the past in light of their present social realities”⁶⁷ and vice versa.⁶⁸ This approach has been more fully applied to the study of Gospel traditions, but it holds great potential for the OT/NT.⁶⁹ While interpretation of scriptural texts are involved in the social memory process for early Christian groups, biblical figures and events also function outside of textual contexts in the memory of communities. “Mnemonic scriptural evocations are not inevitably tied to identifiable verses or discrete passages; collective memories linked to Scriptures can be drawn from wide commemorative frameworks and are often filtered through known (textual and extra-textual), related Jewish traditions.”⁷⁰

Philip Esler, for instance, in a treatment of Hebrews 11 notes that the author does not present his remembrance of prominent OT figures as a textual act but as an act of oral memory. He argues, “The lengths taken by

⁶⁶Williams, “How Scripture,” 61. See also Whitney Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel: First-Century Performance of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 4–5, 143; and Thomas E. Boomershine, “Audience Address and Purpose in the Performance of Mark,” in *Mark As Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, eds. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 115–42, for more on performer and audience interaction.

⁶⁷Williams, “How Scripture,” 65.

⁶⁸See Alan Kirk, “Social and Cultural Memory,” in *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity*, eds. Alan Kirk and Tom Thatcher, *Semeia Studies* 52 (Atlanta: SBL, 2005), 1–22, for a concise introduction to this broad field of study.

⁶⁹Allen, “Use of Criteria,” 141, laments the seeming dead end of criteria for detecting allusions and supposes that social memory may “offer a different lens to the allusion discourse, one no longer predicated in terms of criteria,” although he also recognizes that “this may be dangerous ground for a scholarly sub-discipline traditionally honed on textual association and may raise even more pressing questions as to how one can confidently authenticate perceived associations.”

⁷⁰Williams, “How Scripture,” 66.

the author to detextualize the primary source of Israelite tradition that he is employing necessitate jettisoning textual interpretation, let alone intertextuality, as an explanatory framework for his aims or achievement.”⁷¹ The author presents memories of these figures that interpret them as examples of faith and righteousness for his Christian readers, “contesting central aspects of the collective memory of Israel” and establishing “a particular identity for the Christ movement in the present that also possesses a trajectory trailing into the future.”⁷²

Tom Thatcher proposes that social memory helps us understand the appeals to Cain and Abel in the NT not as references to specific texts, but as memories of important figures of the past that helped early Christians understand themselves and their opponents.⁷³ Thatcher applies sociologist Barry Schwartz’s observation that communities “key” the present to the past by aligning contemporary figures and events with similar figures and events of the past, in this case, the scriptural past. Doing so “allows the past to function as a ‘frame’ for present experience, providing patterns of coherence that help members of a group make sense of what is happening and determine appropriate responses.”⁷⁴ He argues that early Christians used the Cain and Abel memories to assert their righteousness in the midst of persecution (Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51; Heb 11:4; 12:24) and to validate their beliefs as orthodox during intra-group disputes (Jude 11; 1 John 3:12).⁷⁵

Social memory theory does not invalidate the study of the OT in the NT, but it instead places it in the broader social context of early Christianity where memories of all sorts were used to shape identity and give direction for the future. It can show that appeals to scriptural figures were not always allusions to texts; sometimes they are appeals to collective memory. For those passages that possess a closer verbal parallel to OT texts so as to be recognized as true textual allusions, this approach can shed light on the social uses of such textual memories. As Thatcher notes, social memory theory can help us “understand ‘typology’ not simply in terms of the relationships between texts, but also in terms of the social

⁷¹ Philip F. Esler, “Collective Memory and Hebrews 11: Outlining a New Investigative Framework,” in *Memory, Tradition, and Text*, 165. See also Esler “Paul’s Contestation of Israel’s (Ethnic) Memory of Abraham in Galatians 3,” *BTB* 36, no. 1 (2006): 23–34.

⁷² Esler, “Hebrews 11,” 171.

⁷³ Tom Thatcher, “Cain and Abel in Early Christian Memory: A Case Study in ‘The Use of the Old Testament in the New,’” *CBQ* 72, no. 4 (2010): 732–51.

⁷⁴ Thatcher, “Cain and Abel,” 738.

⁷⁵ Thatcher, “Cain and Abel,” 742–49.

circumstances in which the connections between prophecy and fulfillment are established.”⁷⁶ Thus, work on orality and memory in the ancient world and on social memory can help us to acquire a more realistic picture of the way that Scripture functioned in the context of early Christianity. These new approaches need not be seen as inimical to the field of the OT in the NT, but can be received as helpful correctives that expand the horizons of the field.⁷⁷

V. CONCLUSION

A major challenge within the field of the OT/NT is handling the diffuse methodologies that may be relevant. We must not only have sufficient knowledge of them; we must also discern their value and find a way to weave them together to apply them where appropriate. Certainly, one can simply choose a particular methodology with which to make a contribution to the field, but a more holistic approach is needed to render a full picture of the OT/NT. To this already crowded collection of tools must be added approaches like prosopological exegesis that place the OT/NT more fully into a diachronic view of OT interpretation in the early church, a linguistic framework like RT that provides a unified theory of communication, and a more complete reckoning with ancient media culture and social memory. These will not be the last applications of newer methodologies to this exciting subdiscipline, but they do help us take a few steps forward in understanding the OT/NT as a real-world phenomenon produced and experienced by actual people in the first-century Mediterranean context.



⁷⁶Thatcher, “Cain and Abel,” 751.

⁷⁷Williams, “How Scripture,” 69, says, “Media-sensitive approaches of the kind outlined in this study are not necessarily incompatible with predominantly text-orientated methods, nor do they strive to replace literary-based models, but they do open up the field of OT/NT studies to a whole host of different questions and to promising new methods of enquiry.”

THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Craig A. Evans*

Old Testament Scripture is foundational for the Synoptic Gospels. Indeed, without Israel's ancient and authoritative Scripture, these Gospels simply could not have presented their respective narratives of Jesus with the meaning they have. Another way of putting it is that the teaching, activities, death, and resurrection of Jesus simply cannot be understood apart from the clarifying context of Scripture. In the paragraphs that follow, I shall review what I think are the most important features related to this topic. I shall begin with the Gospel of Mark.

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

The evangelist Mark does not often quote the OT. The quotations of and allusions to the OT that appear in Mark—and they are ubiquitous¹—may have been part of the tradition that the evangelist received, such as the conflated quotation at the beginning of his Gospel (LXX Exod 23:20// Mal 3:1//LXX Isa 40:3) and various allusions to the Psalter in the Passion Narrative (15:24, 29, 36). Explicit quotations of Scripture are usually found on the lips of Jesus himself (4:12; 7:6–7, 10; 8:18; 11:17; etc.). Nevertheless, whether they were part of the tradition the evangelist received or what the evangelist himself wove into his narrative, the allusions scattered throughout Mark are of great theological significance.²

¹H. C. Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 45: The Gospel of Mark contains “hundreds of allusions to and quotations of” OT Scripture. See also M. D. Hooker, “Mark,” in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 220–30, here 220: “Jesus’ words and activities constantly echo OT scenes and language.”

²R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 15: “Many of the key images in” Mark “are drawn from Israel’s Scripture; indeed, a reader who fails to discern the significance of these images can hardly grasp Mark’s message.”

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1. *Old Testament “horizons” reflected in Markan narrative.* In the early 1970s, NT scholar Paul Achtemeier argued that Mark 4:35–8:26 contained two clusters, or *catenae*, of Jesus stories that may have served didactic and liturgical functions in early Christian gatherings.³ A few years later Robert Meye explored intriguing points of contact between this section of Mark and Psalm 107.⁴ Meye believed it is best to say that Psalm 107 provides a “horizon.” If Meye is correct, then such a horizon would have encouraged early Christians to interpret the Jesus stories through an OT lens, thus strengthening the lines and themes of continuity between Israel’s ancient story and its dramatic and authoritative fulfillment in the life, death, and resurrection of Israel’s Messiah. We shall review what appear to be the most important points of contact.

Psalm 107:4–9 recalls and thanks the Lord for delivering the faithful who wandered in the wilderness, “hungry and thirsty,” whose souls “fainted within them” (v. 5). The Lord satisfied his people, filling them with good things (v. 9). Similarly, in the Markan feeding stories (Mark 6:30–44; 8:1–10), Jesus is reluctant to send away the people, for they are in a lonely place and may “faint” (6:32, 35; 8:2–3). Jesus multiplies the loaves and fish so that all eat and are satisfied (6:42; 8:8). Psalm 107:10–16 recalls those in darkness and gloom imprisoned “in irons,” whose bonds the Lord, the “Most High,” “broke asunder” (v. 14). In Mark’s story of the demonized man (Mark 5:1–12), Jesus, addressed as “Son of the Most High” (v. 5), frees the tormented man, who had been bound with chains and fetters (v. 4).

Psalm 107:17–22 thanks the Lord for healing. In Mark (5:21–43; 6:1–5, 13, 53–56; 7:31–37; 8:22–26) Jesus heals the sick. Psalm 107:23–32 speaks of those at sea threatened by storm, wind, and waves, who in fear cried out to the Lord and were saved when the Lord “made the storm be still” and “the waves of the sea were hushed” (v. 29). One immediately thinks of the stories of Jesus and the sea in Mark (4:35–41; 6:45–52), where Jesus calms the storm that threatens the disciples, who then ask, “Who

³P. J. Achtemeier, “Toward the Isolation of Pre-Markan Miracle Catenae,” *JBL* 89 (1970): 265–91; P. J. Achtemeier, “The Origin and Function of the Pre-Markan Miracle Catenae,” *JBL* 91 (1972): 198–221. Achtemeier speculated that this material was made up of two clusters, each containing five stories, with the respective fifth stories feeding narratives (i.e., the feeding of the five thousand in Mark 6 and the feeding of the four thousand in Mark 8). Achtemeier further speculated that originally each cluster ended with a feeding narrative that then introduced observance of the Lord’s Supper.

⁴R. P. Meye, “Psalm 107 as ‘Horizon’ for Interpreting the Miracle Stories of Mark 4:35–8:26,” in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd*, ed. R. A. Guelich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 1–13.

then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?” (v. 41).⁵ Meye notes that Psalm 107 repeatedly praises God for his “mercy” (*to eleos autou*, in v. 1; *ta eleē autou*, in vv. 15, 21, 31, 43), which corresponds to the command Jesus gives the demonized man who has been healed: “Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you [*ēleēsen se*]” (Mark 5:19).⁶

The stories of Moses receiving the law from God on Mount Sinai provide the scriptural horizon against which Mark’s narrative of the Transfiguration should be read.⁷ We observe several parallels: (1) The phrase, “after six days” (v. 2), alludes to Exod 24:16, where after six days God speaks. (2) Just as Moses is accompanied by three companions (Exod 24:9), so Jesus is accompanied by Peter, James, and John (v. 2). (3) In both accounts, epiphany takes place on a mountain (v. 2; Exod 24:12). (4) Moses figures in both accounts (v. 4; Exod 24:1–18). It is interesting to note that on one occasion Joshua (LXX: *Iēsous*, “Jesus”) accompanied Moses on the mountain (Exod 24:13). (5) Jesus’s personal transfiguration (v. 3) probably parallels the transfiguration of Moses’s face (Exod 34:29–30). Matthew and Luke have apparently seen this parallel, for they draw a closer correspondence by noting the alteration of Jesus’s “face” (Matt 17:2; Luke 9:29). (6) In both accounts the divine presence is attended by a cloud (v. 7; Exod 24:15–16). Some believed that the cloud which had appeared to Moses would reappear in the last days (see 2 Macc 2:8). (7) In both accounts the heavenly voice speaks (v. 7; Exod 24:16). (8) Fear is common to both stories (v. 6; Exod 34:30; cf. *Tg. Ps.-J.* Exod 24:17). (9) Mark’s “Hear him” (v. 7), unparalleled in Exodus 24, probably echoes Deut 18:15. Again it is likely that Luke has noticed the parallel, for he makes the word order correspond to that of the LXX (Luke 9:35). These parallels, especially that of the injunction to hear, may suggest that the voice that spoke with authority from Sinai now speaks through Jesus the Son.

2. *Key Old Testament texts in the Jesus of Mark.* Jesus in Mark several times explicitly appeals to Scripture to support important points of teaching. Most of these clarify crucial aspects of Jesus’s self-understanding,

⁵Hays (*Echoes of Scripture*, 66–69) agrees that the parallels with Ps 107 are “striking,” but he also notes the parallels in Job 38:8–11 and Ps 89:9, as well as Ps 44:23 (“Why do you sleep, O Lord?”). As a parallel with Mark 6:45–52, where Jesus walks on the sea, Hays (*Echoes of Scripture*, 71–72) draws our attention to Job 9:4–11, esp. v. 8, which in the LXX reads “he walks upon the sea as upon dry ground.”

⁶Meye, “Psalm 107,” 8.

⁷J. Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 80–93.

which in turn contribute in very important ways to our understanding of Christology.

The first example is the allusion to Psalm 118 as Jesus enters Jerusalem at the beginning of Passover week (Mark 11:1–11). The excited crowd cries out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!” (vv. 9b–10). These words paraphrase some of the latter part of the Psalm: “Save us, we beseech thee, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech thee, give us success! Blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord” (Ps 118:25–26). The reference to the “kingdom of our father David” in Mark 11:10 reflects the Davidic interpretive orientation attested in the Targum and in later rabbinic midrash.⁸ Psalm 118 will play an important role in the parable of the Wicked Vineyard Tenants, where again it will add to the Davidic orientation of the text.

The second example says much about what Jesus expects of the high priesthood of his time. Although the texts to which Jesus appeals are not directly concerned with Christology, they do say a lot about Jesus’s understanding of his mission and his authority. In this sense they do contribute to Christology. I refer here to the so-called Cleansing of the Temple:

And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons; and he would not allow any one to carry anything through the temple. And he taught, and said to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a ‘cave of robbers.’” And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and sought a way to destroy him; for they feared him, because all the multitude was astonished at his teaching. (Mark 11:15b–18, RSV, modified)

Having entered Jerusalem’s temple precincts and having “looked round at everything” (Mark 11:11), Jesus returns to the precincts and demonstrates against the sacrificial animal trade.⁹ He appeals to Isa 56:7 (“My

⁸The Aramaic reads: “‘We bless you from the house of the sanctuary of the Lord,’ said David” (Tg. Ps 118:26b). See also the *Midrash on the Psalms*, where it is said, “‘This is the Lord’s doing’ alludes to king David, king of Israel” (Midr. Pss. 118.21 [on Ps 118:23]).

⁹And precisely why Jesus did so is much debated. I review the problem in “From ‘House of Prayer’

house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations”), part of a larger oracle (Isa 56:1–8), in which Solomon’s prayer of dedication of the temple will someday be realized (1 Kgs 41:41–43). It will be a time when “all the peoples of the earth,” says Solomon, “may know thy name and fear thee, as do thy people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name” (v. 43). It will be a time when the temple will be called “a house of prayer for all the nations.” Alas, the ruling priesthood of Jesus’s time have taken steps that work against this grand vision.¹⁰ Instead, the ruling priests have made the house of God into a “cave of robbers,” which is an allusion to Jer 7:11, part of the prophet’s devastating critique of the temple establishment. Jeremiah warns the ruling priests of his time that God will destroy the temple.¹¹ The ruling priests rightly recognized the allusion and what it implied about them and so “sought a way to destroy” Jesus (Mark 11:18).

It is not surprising that ruling priests and their scribal associates accost Jesus and demand to know by what authority he does and says such things (Mark 11:27–33). Although Jesus frustrates their potentially dangerous question with a counter-question about the authority of John the Baptist, he does answer their question indirectly in the parable of the Wicked Vineyard Tenants (Mark 12:1–12). The parable is based on the semi-allegorical song of the Vineyard in Isa 5:1–7, which indicts Israel for its sin.¹² The opening line of the parable, “A man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a pit for the wine press, and built a tower” (v. 1), contains about a dozen words from Isaiah’s song. The purpose of these details, which the parable as a parable does not require, is to call attention the prophet’s old song. Jesus presupposes some of the song’s allegorical features (e.g., the Vineyard represents Israel), but he also adopts the interpretive tradition

to ‘Cave of Robbers’: Jesus’ Prophetic Criticism of the Temple Establishment,” in *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders*, eds. C. A. Evans and S. Talmon, *BibInt* 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 417–42. Driving vendors out of the temple precincts may have been inspired by Zech 14:21. See Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 26–27.

¹⁰It has been suggested that relocating the sacrificial animal trade within the precincts themselves, within the “court of the Gentiles,” was the immediate cause of Jesus’s protest. Rabbinic tradition asserts that this new policy was inaugurated in the year 30 CE. On this possible explanation, see V. Eppstein, “The Historicity of the Gospel Account of the Cleansing of the Temple.” *ZNW* 55 (1964): 42–58.

¹¹Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 28–29.

¹²The ruling priests of Isaiah’s day were oppressing the poor and the powerless, which made the prophet’s song a good fit for Jesus’s parable, for similar complaints were leveled against the ruling priests of the first century.

that focuses on the temple.¹³ By introducing the wicked tenants, Jesus has indicted the ruling priests, not Israel itself. By introducing the son of the vineyard owner, Jesus answers the questions put to him in Mark 11:28: He is the son of the vineyard owner; that is, he is the Son of God.

The parable of the vineyard ends with a challenging question: “Have you not read this scripture: ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’” (12:10–11). Jesus has quoted Ps 118:22–23. The obvious implication of the citation is that Jesus himself is the “stone” rejected by the “builders.” In Jewish interpretation, the builders of Psalm 118 are the priests, and the rejected stone is none other than David, chosen to be Israel’s new king.¹⁴ Thus, Jesus has taken action in the temple precincts by the authority of his Father in heaven.

A few paragraphs later Jesus goes on the offensive and asks, “How can the scribes say that the Christ is the ‘son of David?’” (Mark 12:35). I have placed quotation marks around the epithet, “son of David,” because this is the point of the question. It is the language, not the long-held belief that the Messiah (or Christ) will descend from king David. Jesus objects to the language because in the culture of his day a son was viewed as in some sense inferior to his father. To speak of the Messiah as *son of David* implies that he will be no greater than David himself—and perhaps that was what some of Jesus’s contemporaries hoped for, someone on David’s level. Jesus challenges this assumption by appeal to Ps 110:1, saying, “David himself, inspired by the Holy Spirit, declared, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, till I put thy enemies under thy feet.’ David himself calls him Lord; so how is he his son?” (Mark 12:36–37). In uttering this psalm, says Jesus, King David declared that Yahweh (the Lord) spoke the following words to his Lord, that is, *David’s* lord, the Messiah. Consequently, if David himself regards his messianic descendant as his “lord,” that is, a figure greater than himself, how can the scribes hold to such a low view of the Messiah, as though he will be a lesser David?

¹³As in 4Q500; *t. Me’ilah* 1.16; *t. Sukkah* 3.15; *Tg. Isa* 5:1–7. For a helpful assessment of the rabbinic tradition, see J. M. Baumgarten, “4Q500 and the Ancient Conception of the Lord’s Vineyard,” *JJS* 40 (1989): 1–6; *Marcus, Way of the Lord*, 124–25. For assessment of 4Q500, see G. J. Brooke, “4Q500 1 and the Use of Scripture,” in Brooke’s collection of essays, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 235–60.

¹⁴The Aramaic version of Ps 118:22 reads: “The builders abandoned the youth among the sons of Jesse, but he was worthy to be appointed king and ruler.” The rabbinic midrash on Psalm 118 explains that one moment David was tending sheep, the next moment “he is king” (*Midr. Ps. 118.21* [on Ps 118:23]). The midrash adds that it was David who said, “Open to me the gates of righteousness” (118.17 [on Ps 118:19]).

After the Words of Institution (Mark 14:22–25), in which Jesus compares his blood to the blood that established Israel’s original covenant (cf. Exod 24:8), he warns his disciples: “You will all fall away; for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered’” (Mark 14:27; cf. Zech 13:7). The implication is that it is God who will strike Israel’s shepherd and that his death, with sacrificial and atoning significance, plays a part in God’s eschatological, redemptive plan for Israel.¹⁵

And finally, when confronted by the high priest who asks Jesus if he is the Messiah, the Son of God, Jesus replies, “I am; and you will see the ‘Son of Man’ seated ‘at the right hand’ of Power, and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven’” (Mark 14:61–62). Jesus has affirmed that he is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God. He defines his identity to the shocked and outraged high priest by a conflated appeal to Dan 7:13–14 and Ps 110:1. In the first passage, we have a vision of “one like a son of man” who “came with the clouds” and is presented to God (or “Ancient of Days”). The expression “son of man” in Daniel means no more than a figure who appears to be human (in contrast to beasts or angelic beings). It is not a technical expression, nor is it necessarily a reference to the awaited Messiah. Throughout the Gospels Jesus refers to himself as “*the* Son of Man,” which again is not technical language. Rather, the consistent articular usage of this epithet directs hearers to the eschatological passage in which the mysterious humanlike figure makes his appearance: Daniel 7.

Earlier in Mark Jesus referred to himself as “*the* Son of Man” who “has authority on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10). At first blush, the modifier “on earth” seems both strange and unnecessary. After all, where else would a charismatic Jewish healer conduct his ministry but on earth? The modifier, however, is not unnecessary. The Son of Man received his authority from God *in heaven* and now exercises it *on earth*. Proof that he possesses divine authority is seen in the dramatic healing of the paralyzed man.

The appeal to Ps 110:1 further clarifies Jesus’s identity. As the human, or “son of man,” in Daniel’s vision, Jesus not only approaches the throne of God (cf. Dan 7:9 “thrones were set up and the Ancient of Days took his seat”) and receives authority and kingdom (Dan 7:14 “to him was given authority and glory and kingdom”), he takes his seat on the divine throne at the right hand of Almighty God himself,¹⁶ even as Yahweh in Ps 110:1

¹⁵Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 81–82. For helpful discussion of Zechariah 9–14 and Mark’s Christology, see Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 161–64.

¹⁶Jesus refers to God with the circumlocution, “the Power.” This circumlocution appears in rabbinic and targumic texts (cf. *Sipre Num.* §112 [on Num 15:31]; *Sipre Deut.* §319 [on Deut 32:18];

invites David's messianic descendant. Jesus has identified himself as the Messiah, Son of God, who will sit on the very throne of God. Because both passages—Daniel 7 and Psalm 110—speak of divine judgment upon God's enemies, the implication of Jesus's statement, "You will see . . .," is that the next time the high priest and his colleagues see Jesus, they will stand before him even as the wicked who face judgment stand before God, who is seated on his throne. It is no wonder that the high priest tears his clothes and speaks of blasphemy (Mark 14:63–64).¹⁷

II. THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

Matthew brings into his Gospel the OT quotations found in Mark and in the source the evangelist shares with Luke (i.e., Q). In addition to these quotations, the Matthean evangelist introduces some twenty more. These quotations and allusions, moreover, reflect Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic text-types.¹⁸ However, the OT also functions in Matthew the way it does in Mark, in that it provides in some places a "horizon" or "backdrop" that lends meaning to the Gospel narrative. We see this in Matthew's incipit and in the genealogy that immediately follows.

As observed in Mark, we also find in Matthew subtle allusions or "horizons" that will bring to mind biblical stories and personalities. In Matthew's incipit (Matt 1:1) Jesus is identified as "the son of David, the son of Abraham." Reference to David links Jesus to the founder of the great dynasty from which the messianic king is to spring, while reference to Abraham links Jesus to the great patriarch from which the people of Israel sprang. In Jesus, Israel will find the fulfillment of messianic prophecies and fulfillment of patriarchal promises. The first two words of Matthew's incipit, *biblos geneseōs* ("the book of the genesis"), would have brought to the minds of biblically literate readers and auditors the opening words of Genesis 5: "This is the book of the genesis of humans [*hautē hē biblos geneseōs anthrōpōn*]" (Gen 5:1 LXX). What follows in Genesis 5 is a genealogy beginning with Adam. What follows Matt 1:1 is a genealogy.

The Matthean genealogy is no conventional Jewish genealogy. It

b. Yebam. 105b; *Tg. Job* 5:8: "from the Power").

¹⁷On the implications this passage has for understanding the divinity of Jesus, see the nuanced discussion in Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 164–71; Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 61–78. On tearing one's clothes as an expression of grief or horror, see Gen 37:29; 2 Kgs 18:37; Job 1:20; Bar 6:31; Jdt 14:19.

¹⁸R. H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope*, NovTSup 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 147–50.

provides attentive readers and auditors a “horizon” of matriarchal history that has puzzled and troubled interpreters down through the centuries. Four women—five if we include Mary, and we should—make surprising appearances in the genealogy of Jesus. Their appearance is surprising, for genealogies are usually comprised of male names. But the appearance of the women is especially surprising because they are hardly the kind of women one would expect to make their appearance if it really isn’t necessary. It is as though the Matthean evangelist has gone out of his way to embarrass and scandalize.

Who are these women and why has the evangelist inserted them into the genealogy of Jesus? The first woman is Tamar (Matt 1:3). She gave birth to the twins Perez and Zerah, having seduced her father-in-law, Judah (Genesis 38). Rahab (Matt 1:5a) was the harlot who hid the Israelite spies (Joshua 2, 6). Ruth (Matt 1:5b) was the Moabite widow who accompanied her mother-in-law to Bethlehem, where she married Boaz and gave birth to Obed, grandfather of David (Ruth 4). The fourth woman is Bathsheba, but she is not named. Rather, she is referred to as “the wife of Uriah” (Matt 1:7). The evangelist does this to remind readers of David’s adultery and his murder of Uriah (2 Samuel 11). Finally, Mary, the fifth woman, gives birth to Jesus (Matt 1:16).

What these five women have in common is crisis. Tamar faced an uncertain future as a childless widow. Rahab was a harlot who could have perished when Jericho was captured. Ruth was a childless Moabite widow with limited prospects. Bathsheba’s husband was murdered and her firstborn child died. Mary’s premature and very unexpected pregnancy could have resulted in her being “quietly divorced” and almost certainly thereafter living out the rest of her days as an unwanted woman. Instead, all five women are rescued; all five find security; and all five contribute a son to the messianic line that will result in Israel’s salvation and the accomplishment of God’s purposes. In the conception and birth of Jesus, strange and unexpected happenings recorded in Israel’s ancient scriptural story have come together in a way that point unmistakably to God’s providence.

In the Infancy Narrative, the evangelist Matthew cites five prophecies as “fulfilled.” At most, only one of these can be said to be fulfilled in the usual predictive sense. Micah prophecies that the anointed ruler of the Lord will come from Bethlehem (Mic 5:2), and so it happened; Jesus is born in Bethlehem (Matt 2:1–6), the home of his ancestors. But the other prophecies said to be “fulfilled” are typologies, where patterns of past redemptive

moments shed light on God's redemptive work in the life of Jesus. It was in the birth of a child that God provided the king of Judah with a sign of salvation (Isa 7:14); so also in the birth of Jesus (Matt 1:20–25). To save Israel, God called his "son" (i.e., Israel) out of Egypt (Hos 11:1); so also in the divine summons that the holy family, in hiding, depart from Egypt and return to Israel (Matt 2:13–15). Herod's massacre of the innocents (Matt 2:16–18) should be compared to the massacre of the northern tribes, especially the descendants of Joseph and Benjamin, whose mother, the matriarch Rachel, would grieve to see it if she could (Jer 31:15; cf. Gen 30:22; 35:16–20). And it is in the return to Nazareth, "Branch," where Jesus will be raised (Matt 2:19–23), that the prophecies will be fulfilled (cf. Isa 11:1 *netser*, "branch"; Judg 13:5 *nazir*, "consecrated").

We also find five citations of the Law of Moses followed by dominical corrections (a.k.a. "antitheses") of faulty scribal interpretation. Five times Jesus quotes or paraphrases Mosaic Law and then says, "But I say to you" (Matt 5:21–26, 27–32, 33–37, 38–42, 43–48).¹⁹ It is important to emphasize that Jesus is not contradicting Moses, nor is he claiming to be above the Law.²⁰ This would hardly do justice to the context, where Jesus has already said, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them" (5:17). Indeed, Jesus asserts that "not an iota, not a dot" of the law will pass away until "all is accomplished" (5:18). If Jesus thought of his teaching as setting aside the Law of Moses, then it is hard to see how his or his disciples' righteousness could *exceed* that of the scribes and Pharisees (5:20). Jesus's teaching, as expressed in what we call the "antitheses," illustrates how the law is to be *fulfilled*, not abrogated.

We again have an example of OT pattern or horizon in Matthew when we appreciate the evangelist's presentation of Jesus's major teaching in five discourses. These discourses are found in chapters 5–7, 10, 13, 18, and 24–25.²¹ By arranging the teaching of Jesus into five discourses,

¹⁹A few scholars have claimed that there are six antitheses. This number is arrived at by splitting the second antithesis into two: vv. 27–30 and 31–32. But vv. 31–32, introduced with the words, "It was also said" (and not the longer formula, "You have heard that it was said"), is the second half of the teaching against divorce.

²⁰Hans von Campenhausen asserts that Jesus "has pushed aside the commandments" of Moses. See H. von Campenhausen, *Die Entstehung der christlichen Bibel*, BHT 39 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1968), 18–19. Jesus has done no such thing. He has pushed aside the faulty and self-serving interpretation of Israel's teachers.

²¹Again, a few scholars have claimed that there are six major discourses. This number is arrived at by counting ch. 23, the diatribe leveled against the scribes and Pharisees. This diatribe is not one of Jesus's major discourses. The latter are directed to the followers of Jesus. Also, the five major

the evangelist Matthew has mimicked the five-book arrangement of the teaching of Moses. Besides the five-fold arrangement, evidence for this interpretation is seen in what the evangelist says at the conclusion of each discourse:

“And when Jesus finished these sayings [*kai egeneto hote etelesen ho Iēsous tous logous toutous*] ...” (7:28).

“And when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples [*kai egeneto hote etelesen ho Iēsous diatassōn tois dōdeka mathētais autou*] ...” (11:1).

“And when Jesus had finished these parables [*kai egeneto hote etelesen ho Iēsous tas parabolās tautas*] ...” (13:53).

“And when Jesus had finished these sayings [*kai egeneto hote etelesen ho Iēsous tous logous toutous*] ...” (19:1).

“And when Jesus had finished these parables [*kai egeneto hote etelesen ho Iēsous pantas tous logous toutous*] ...” (26:1).

These formulaic endings echo similar endings we find in Deuteronomy, the fifth and final book of Moses:

“And Moses finished speaking all these words [*kai synetelesen Mōysēs lalōn pantas tous logous toutous*] to all the sons of Israel” (31:1).

“Now when Moses had finished writing down in a book all the words of this law [*hēnika de synetelesen Mōysēs graphōn pantas tous logous tou nomou toutou eis biblion*]...” (31:24).²²

“And Moses finished speaking to all Israel [*kai synetelesen Mōysēs lalōn panti Israēl*]...” (32:45).

discourses end in a distinctive fashion that is not seen at the conclusion of ch. 23.

²²Note that Deuteronomy says that Moses wrote his words *eis biblion*, “in a book.” It is perhaps not a coincidence that the evangelist Matthew chose to introduce his Gospel as a *biblos*, “book.”

So what does the five-fold discourse structure of Matthew mean? It is intended to underscore the Moses-Jesus typology: each was a great law-giver, and each gave his law in five books.²³ The recurring “five” pattern is part of a Moses motif, in which we have five women, five prophecies fulfilled in the infancy narrative, five major discourses, and five examples of how the Law of Moses is to be fulfilled. The Moses motif is also seen in how Jesus is often portrayed praying or giving his teaching on a mountain (e.g., Matt 5:1; 8:1; 14:23; 15:29; 28:16).²⁴

The Gospel of Matthew concludes with the dramatic scene of the Great Commission, in which the risen Jesus sends his apostles into the world to make disciples. What is striking is his preface to this commission: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ...” (Matt 28:18–19). Jesus’s claim to have received “all authority in heaven and on earth” (*pasa exousia en ouranō kai epi gēs*) takes readers and auditors back to his claim, as “the Son of Man,” to possess the authority to forgive sin: “the Son of man has authority on earth [*exousian echei ho huioi tou anthrōpou epi tēs gēs*] to forgive sins” (Matt 9:6). As the human figure of Dan 7:13–14, to whom God gave authority, Jesus now charges his apostles, or ambassadors, to go forth into the world to make disciples and to teach all that he has taught them.

III. THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Of the three Synoptic evangelists Luke is the true master of weaving biblical language and themes into the fabric of his narrative. Although the evangelist does not punctuate his Gospel with OT texts cited as fulfilled, as do Matthew and John, he does draw upon key texts to advance his understanding of Jesus and the mission of the church.²⁵

The evangelist Luke’s Infancy Narrative is characterized by beautiful poetic canticles that incorporate patristic promises and prophecies that foretell Israel’s coming redemption (Luke 1:14–17, 32–35, 46–55, 68–79; 2:29–35). The birth and temple dedication of Samuel provides the OT

²³However, the *content* of the five discourses does not correspond with the content of the books of the Pentateuch.

²⁴For Moses on the mountain, see Exod 3:1, 12; 4:27; 18:5; 19:2–3, 12, 16–18, 20, 23; 20:18; 24:12; etc. One should compare Matt 4:8, where Satan takes Jesus to a high mountain and shows him the kingdoms of the world, with Deut 32:9, where Moses ascends the mountain and is shown the land of Canaan.

²⁵C. K. Barrett, “Luke/Acts,” in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 231–44.

horizon against which the birth and temple dedication of Jesus may be viewed. In gratitude to God for the birth of her son, Hannah sings, “My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in the Lord. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation...” (1 Sam 2:1; cf. vv. 1–10).²⁶ Her ten-verse song of praise is matched by Mary’s well known Magnificat, also ten verses in length, sung in response to the angelic annunciation that she would give birth to one who be called “Son of the Most High” and “Son of God” (Luke 1:32, 35): “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...” (1:46; cf. vv. 46–55). Even as Samuel is taken to the house of God as a young lad (1 Sam 1:24–28), so is Jesus (Luke 2:22–40), who also at the age of twelve spends time in the precincts with Israel’s scholars (2:41–51). Luke also deliberately mimics the summary of Samuel’s progress. Of Samuel it is said, “Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and with men” (1 Sam 2:26). Of Jesus it is said, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

Another example of what appears to be an OT horizon in Luke—though it is debated—is the theme and order of material in Luke’s so-called Central Section (Luke 10:1–18:14). The contents and order of this part of the Gospel have been described as amorphous and it is not hard to see why. The content jumps from topic to topic. More than sixty years ago, C. F. Evans showed how this Lukan material—some of it unique to Luke—seems to follow the order of Deuteronomy 1–26 and much of its contents.²⁷ What makes the proposal difficult to ignore is how much explanatory power it has. After hearing the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–35), the Scripture scholar concedes that the man who proved to be a neighbor and thus fulfilled the command to love one’s neighbor (Lev 19:18) is “the one who showed mercy” (Luke 10:36–37). This utterance echoes the Mosaic warning not to show mercy to the foreigners in the land of Canaan who

²⁶In the Aramaic paraphrase Hannah’s Magnificat takes on an eschatological orientation (esp. vv. 8–10). In *Tg. 1 Sam 2:10* the *meshiho*, “his anointed,” of the Hebrew text should probably be understood as the eschatological Messiah. The messianic interpretation of 1 Sam 2:10 in the *Midrash on Samuel* is explicit: “And when will the Holy One, blessed be he, make them return to their place? When he lifts up the horn of the King Messiah [*melek hamashiah*], as it is said: ‘And he will give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his Anointed’” (*Midr. Sam.* 5.17 [on 1 Sam 2:10]).

²⁷C. F. Evans, “The Central Section of St. Luke’s Gospel,” in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot*, ed. D. E. Nineham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), 37–53. There is of course much in Deuteronomy 1–26 that is unparalleled in Luke, for the former addresses topics (e.g., cities of refuge, women taken captive in war) that nowhere finds a counterpart in the dominical teaching recorded in the latter.

will try to lure Israel into idolatry (Deut 7:2). In later Jewish interpretation, in a grossly unfair way, the idolatrous foreigners were understood to include Samaritans (*t. Avodah Zarah* 3.11–15). The point of the parable, whose truth the Scripture scholar has conceded, warns against unwarranted assumptions about who really is just in the sight of God.

Mary's choice (Luke 10:38–42) illustrates the truth that “man does not live by bread alone, but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord” (Deut 8:3). The teaching regarding the stronger man who distributes spoils (Luke 11:22) is better understood against the backdrop of Deut 9:1–10:11, where Moses assures Israel that God will conquer “stronger” peoples in order that Israel may inherit the land. The parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15–24) is clarified by the three excuses in Deut 20:5–7 and how they were applied in later texts. The well-known parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32) is clarified by Deut 21:15–17, which articulates law regarding the rights of inheritance for the firstborn, even if the second-born is by a second, more loved wife, and by Deut 21:18–21, which spells out harsh punishment for a foolish son who disobeys his parents. The parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1–9) is clarified by the command to have compassion for a runaway servant in Deut 23:15–16 and the laws against usury in Deut 23:19–20. Many more examples could be discussed.

Finally, it is necessary to comment on how the evangelist Luke brings his Gospel to a conclusion. The risen Jesus says to his disciples:

“These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:44–47)

The risen Jesus of Luke does not explicitly identify where these things are “written” in Scripture, but hearers and readers of Acts, the second volume of Luke's two-volume work, will find out in due course. The necessity that the Messiah suffer is found in Isaiah 53, parts of which are cited in

Luke 22:37 and Acts 8:32–33. That the Messiah will “rise from the dead” is foretold in Ps 16:8–11, to which Peter will make appeal on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:27 and which Paul also will cite in Acts 13:35. That the Messiah will be raised up “on the third day” is foretold in Hos 6:2 (esp. as paraphrased in the Aramaic) and alluded to in one of the Passion Predictions (Luke 18:33) and in Peter’s proclamation of the gospel to the centurion (Acts 10:40). That “repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached” is foretold in Joel 2:32, to which Peter makes appeal in Acts 2:21, and in Isa 49:6, to which Paul makes appeal in Acts 13:47 (cf. Luke 2:32). Finally, the words “beginning from Jerusalem” probably allude to Isa 2:2–3, a prophecy that someday the “word of the Lord” shall go forth “from Jerusalem” and draw all peoples and all nations to faith in the Lord. This prophecy is presupposed in Acts 1:8 and 13:47.

IV. CONCLUSION

This brief survey hopefully has illustrated how deeply the Synoptic evangelists are engaged with Israel’s ancient Scripture and how in every way this sacred tradition clarifies and defines the theology and mission of Jesus. The function of the OT in the Synoptic Gospels ranges from the formal to the allusive, from the prosaic to the poetic, and from the literal to the metaphorical. The Synoptic Gospels cannot be understood apart from the OT.



THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND THE JOHANNINE EPISTLES

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There is no doubt that the OT was John's primary source—other than his relationship with Jesus—in composing his Gospel (and to a lesser extent, his letters). When discussing John's use of the OT, the first issue to be addressed is: Who is the author of these writings? There are not merely *texts* to be studied; rather, the texts we are called to interpret came into being because *someone wrote them*. And who that “someone” is matters, as it is that person who used the OT in certain ways. *Texts* do not use the OT; *people*—authors—do. These authors, in turn, use certain antecedent texts because of their personal experience, worldview, and theological presuppositions—which is why, after discussing the identity of the author of John's Gospel and epistles, we will examine the distinctive outlook reflected in these writings. After this, we will trace the use of the OT by tracking with the Johannine narrative before closing our discussion with a brief look at the use of the OT in John's letters (especially 1 John).

I. AUTHORSHIP

In examining the authorship of John's Gospel, we will focus on the internal evidence, that is, claims pertaining to the author contained in the Gospel itself.¹ In keeping with the narrative Gospel genre, there is no direct attribution to a person by name in the inspired text itself. We do,

¹What is said here about the author of John's Gospel derivatively also applies to the author of John's letters due to the stylistic affinity between these writings. For in-depth discussions of introductory matters for John's Gospel and letters, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), chs. 7 and 19. For a more popular, but still fairly thorough, treatment, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Signs of the Messiah: An Introduction to John's Gospel* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), ch. 1.

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however, have the title “The Gospel according to John,” which is sufficiently early to count as evidence that there was widespread ancient belief that a person named John wrote the Gospel. The first question that arises, therefore, is this: Which person in the first century, attested in the NT writings, could simply be called “John” with the expectation that readers would easily be able to identify that person?²

1. *Synoptics, Acts, and Paul.* At least as far as the NT is concerned, the only prominent person other than John the apostle named “John” is the Baptist, but because of his untimely death he can immediately be ruled out as the author (Matt 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29; cf. Luke 9:7–9; John 3:24). There is also John Mark, most commonly known simply as Mark, but as author of the second Gospel he, too, is at once disqualified.³ For these and other reasons, the only legitimate candidate emerging from the NT writings is John, the son of Zebedee. Indeed, this is the reason why the early fathers attributed the Gospel to the apostle.⁴ What, then, do we know about John from the other NT documents?

From the earlier three Gospels (the Synoptics), we know that John, the son of Zebedee, had a brother named James who was also a disciple of Jesus. Both James and John were among the twelve apostles of Jesus.⁵ Only Mark mentions the nickname “Boanerges,” which likely recalls the incident recorded in Luke 9:51–56 where Samaritans rejected Jesus’s messengers and James and John asked Jesus, “Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?” (v. 54). Their fiery zeal, in turn, is reminiscent of Elijah and his contest with the prophets of Baal in OT times (1 Kgs 18:20–40). In apostolic lists, John is normally mentioned after James (with the exception of Acts 1:13, which may prepare for the pairing of Peter and John later on in the narrative), which suggests that he may have been the younger of the two.

According to the Synoptics, John was not only one of the Twelve but also one of a select group of three in Jesus’s inner circle, along with his

²A contemporary analogy might be Portuguese or Brazilian soccer players being identified simply by their first names, such as “Ronaldo” or “Fred.”

³Cf. Acts 12:12 (“John who was called Mark”), 25 (“John who was called Mark”); 13:5 (“John”), 13 (“John”); 15:37 (“John who was called Mark”), 39 (“Mark”).

⁴See, e.g., Irenaeus, *Heresies* 3.1.2: “John the disciple of the Lord, who leaned back on his breast, published the Gospel while he was a resident at Ephesus in Asia” (note the allusion to John 13:23; cf. 21:20).

⁵Matt 10:2: “James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother”; Mark 3:17: “to James the son of Zebedee, and to his brother John, he gave the name ‘Boanerges’ (that is, ‘Sons of Thunder’); Luke 6:14: “James and John”; Acts 1:13: “Peter, John, James, Andrew.” Interestingly, there is no such apostolic list in John’s Gospel.

brother James and the apostle Peter. They were the only ones who witnessed events such as the raising of the daughter of Jairus, the synagogue ruler (Matt 9:18–19, 23–26; Mark 5:21–24, 35–37; Luke 8:40–42, 49–50), the Transfiguration (Matt 17:2, Mark 9:2–3, Luke 9:28–36), and Jesus’s prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before the crucifixion.⁶ Interestingly, none of these incidents is included in John’s Gospel. Instead, John features the raising of Lazarus (11:1–44); shows that Jesus’s glory was revealed in everything he said and did rather than merely at the Transfiguration (1:14; cf. 2:11); and focuses on Jesus’s glory rather than his suffering and agony (9:3; 11:4, 40).⁷ In addition, John would have witnessed the entire three-and-a-half-year ministry of Jesus and the vast majority of all the events and teachings recorded in the Synoptics.

Then, in the days of the early church following the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, Peter and John are shown to be closely associated in ministry, such as when “going up to the temple for the time of prayer.”⁸ There, John witnessed Peter’s healing of an invalid at the Beautiful Gate and his public address at Solomon’s Portico. They were arrested that evening and put into custody overnight (3:3). We are told that, when people “observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and recognized that they had been with Jesus” (4:13; cf. v. 19). Later in Acts, “[w]hen the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,” who authenticated the reception of the Spirit by the Samaritans (8:14).

Later still, when writing to the Galatians, the apostle Paul recalls an occasion “[w]hen James [not the son of Zebedee], Cephas [Peter], and John—those recognized as pillars—acknowledged the grace that had been given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to me and Barnabas, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised” (Gal 2:9). Here, we see that John was one of the “pillars” in the early church. There is also an indication that James, Peter, and John were to minister primarily to the Jews while Paul was to focus on the Gentiles.

This is some of the most important information we have about John, the

⁶Matt 26:36–56, v. 37: “Peter and the two sons of Zebedee”; Mark 14:32–42, v. 33: “Peter, James, and John”; cf. Luke 22:39–46.

⁷For a discussion of John’s theology of the cross, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John’s Gospel and Letters: The Word, the Christ, the Son of God*, BTNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), ch. 14.

⁸I.e., at 3 o’clock in the afternoon; 3:1, 3, 4, 11.

son of Zebedee, from the Synoptic Gospels, Acts, and Paul. Most likely, all these documents had already been written when John penned his Gospel.

2. *John's Gospel*. This, then, is the historical and literary context in which John wrote the Gospel. Interestingly, in verse 6 of John's prologue, we read, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." The informed reader quickly discerns that the person referred to here is not the apostle but the Baptist. By identifying him merely as "John," rather than as "John the Baptist [or Baptizer]," the fourth evangelist makes clear that there will be another designation for John *the apostle* later in the Gospel, and this is exactly what we find. John the apostle's call to discipleship may be referenced obliquely in 1:35–39. Beyond this, the Johannine narrative does not include a list of the names of the twelve apostles.⁹ One can reasonably assume that John, along with the other apostles, witnessed all of the events and teachings recorded in the first twelve chapters of John's Gospel (including the seven signs of Jesus).¹⁰

Starting in chapter 13, however, a new literary character makes his appearance, the so-called "disciple Jesus loved" (13:23). This disciple is found first at Jesus's side at the Last Supper and later in the high priest's courtyard following Jesus's arrest (18:15–16). He is also at the site of the crucifixion (19:35), the empty tomb (20:2, 8–9), and Jesus's third and final resurrection appearance on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (21:7). Finally, Jesus converses with this disciple and Peter in the epilogue, discussing with them their respective callings (21:20–23).

After this, we are told that "[t]his is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true" (21:24). In this way, the author claims to be that "disciple Jesus loved" who was featured alongside Jesus in the Gospel at all the major junctures of his earthly ministry, especially during the final week of Jesus. Thus, *the author is the "disciple Jesus loved," and that disciple is one of the Twelve, as only the apostles were with Jesus at the Last Supper according to the Synoptics*.¹¹ All pieces of evidence gleaned from the NT writings point in the same direction: to the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, who was not only one of the Twelve, but even one of three in Jesus's inner circle. In fact, as we will see below, John was closest to Jesus during his earthly ministry, closer

⁹The Twelve are mentioned, almost in passing, at 6:67, 70, 71, and 20:24.

¹⁰See Andreas J. Köstenberger, "The Seventh Johannine Sign: A Study in John's Christology," *BBR* 5 (1995): 87–103.

¹¹Cf. Matt 26:20: "the Twelve"; Mark 14:17, 20: "the Twelve"; Luke 22:14: "the apostles"; note that Jesus had sent "Peter and John" to prepare the Passover (Luke 22:8).

than even the apostle Peter.

As to John's relationship with Peter, we have already seen that in the apostolic lists, in events in which only the three in Jesus's inner circle were included, and in the days of the early church, John is consistently paired with Peter.¹² In keeping with this pattern, John's Gospel features John and Peter jointly, especially during passion week. What is more, in each case it is John, "the disciple Jesus loved," who is shown in a position superior to Peter's and thus more ideally qualified to bear written witness. At the Last Supper, Peter asks the "disciple Jesus loved" regarding the identity of the betrayer (13:23–24); in the high priest's courtyard, it is the beloved disciple who gains Peter access as he is acquainted with the high priest (18:15–16); both disciples run to the empty tomb together, yet the beloved disciple gets there first (20:2–9); at the Sea of Galilee, again it is the beloved disciple who first recognizes the risen Jesus, at which Peter jumps into the lake and swims toward Jesus (21:7); and in Jesus's final conversation with these two disciples, he rebukes Peter and tells him to mind his own business when Peter questions him about the destiny of the beloved disciple (21:20–23).

While not in the sense of improper rivalry or competitive one-upmanship, the beloved disciple, as the author of the Gospel, stakes a claim to unmatched proximity to Jesus and thus presents himself as being in the perfect position to reveal who Jesus truly is.¹³ All of the above-adduced evidence converges to suggest that the author of the Gospel is the apostle John, the son of Zebedee. All of the information in the four Gospels, Acts, and Paul's letters points to him. Conversely, there is no information in any of the biblical writings that points away from him. In our investigation of the use of the OT in John's Gospel, we can therefore safely proceed on the assumption that we are investigating *the apostle John's* use of the OT. This John, in turn, witnessed Jesus's own use of the OT and was doubtless deeply impacted and influenced by him.¹⁴

¹²Both, along with their brothers, were Galilean fishermen: see Matt 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20. The parallel in Luke 5:1–11 only refers to Peter, called "Simon." Interestingly, John 1:35–42 makes no reference to Peter and Andrew's vocation as fishermen.

¹³See also the connection between 1:18 and 13:23, both of which refer to a person being at another person's "side," with attendant qualification to reveal that person's unique identity. See Köstenberger, *Signs of the Messiah*, 16–17. On the alleged rivalry between "the beloved disciple" and Peter in John's Gospel, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples according to the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 154–61.

¹⁴See, e.g., John Wenham, *Christ and the Bible*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994; repr. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), esp. ch. 5. See also R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1971; repr.

II. JOHN'S WORLDVIEW

It is commonly recognized that one's worldview profoundly affects the way a person approaches a given issue. John's use of the OT is no exception; it, too, is governed by John's overall outlook.¹⁵ At the most foundational level, John, as a Jew, would have believed in the existence of one, and only one, true God, as affirmed in the preeminent confession of Judaism, the *Shema*, enunciated in Deut 6:4: "Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." In addition, John would have affirmed that this God, YHWH, is both Creator of the universe and the one who had entered into a series of covenants with Israel. He redeemed the nation from Egyptian bondage at the exodus, gave the Israelites the law at Sinai, and later sent his Son to take up temporary residence on earth to manifest God's presence (1:14, 18), to reveal his glory (2:11), and to die for the sins of his people (John 1:29, 36; 10:15, 17–18).

John, therefore, believed not only that Jesus is God's agent in both creation and redemption, but also that Jesus is himself God, a notion that would have been deeply offensive to many of Jesus's Jewish contemporaries because it seemed to violate Jewish monotheism.¹⁶ And yet, John affirms unequivocally that Jesus and God the Father are one (10:30). What is more, John believed that Jesus provided incontrovertible, tangible proof that he was the Messiah and Son of God (20:30–31). In his Gospel, he therefore sets forth seven selected messianic signs as evidence that Jesus fulfilled Jewish messianic expectations: He healed the sick (4:46–54; 5:1–15); opened the eyes of the blind (ch. 9); and even raised the dead (11:1–44).¹⁷ All these things were expected of the Messiah, and Jesus did them all.

John also believed in universal human sinfulness and affirmed that God's wrath rests on unsaved humanity (3:19–21; 5:24). He believed in God's future judgment (5:25–29) and claimed that the entire world languishes in moral darkness and must come to Jesus "the light" and believe in him for eternal life (1:4–5, 7–9; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9–10; 12:35–36, 47).¹⁸ John held that the world is currently ruled by Satan, "the ruler of this world" (12:31; 14:30; 16:11), and that the cross is at the center of a

Vancouver, BC: Regent College, 2000).

¹⁵For a thorough discussion of John's worldview, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, ch. 6.

¹⁶See Andreas J. Köstenberger and Scott R. Swain, *Father, Son and Spirit: The Trinity and John's Gospel*, NSBT 24 (Downers Grove: IVP, 2008), ch. 1.

¹⁷See Köstenberger, *Signs of the Messiah*.

¹⁸On life and light in John's Gospel, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 341–49.

battle between God and Jesus on the one hand and Satan on the other;¹⁹ however, he does not view this battle as a struggle between two equally matched foes, but rather affirms that Jesus triumphed over Satan at the cross (e.g., 16:33; 17:4; 19:30).

While John saw the world in terms of polar opposites—light and darkness, life and death, flesh and spirit, above and below, truth and falsehood, love and hate, faith and unbelief—he does not affirm a static dualism.²⁰ Rather, the Johannine mission motif shows that people can step out of darkness into the light; they can put their trust in Christ and be saved (e.g., 3:16; 5:24; 20:30–31).²¹ In terms of John's eschatology, we see John accentuate the way believers can enjoy abundant spiritual life in Jesus already in the here and now (10:10) rather than having to await the eternal state.²² In this way, the simple distinction between the present age and the age to come is partially collapsed. Not only is Johannine eschatology inaugurated, in a very real sense it is realized in that it emphasizes believers' present-day possession of salvation benefits. At the same time, a future element remains, including Jesus's second coming and God's final judgment (see esp. 5:25–29; cf. 21:22).

An essential element of John's worldview is his use of Scripture.²³ He believed in the authoritative nature of the Hebrew Scriptures and took important aspects of his theology and presentation of Jesus from antecedent texts, especially the Psalms, Isaiah, and, to a lesser extent, Zechariah. Even though this is not always acknowledged, John adopted a salvation-historical outlook toward God's dealings with his people and related the coming and work of Jesus to previous figures and events, whether Abraham and Jacob, Moses and the exodus, and others. In addition, John believed that Jesus fulfilled Jewish institutions such as the temple or various Jewish festivals such as Passover or Tabernacles.²⁴ In all these ways, John presented Jesus as the only way of salvation (14:6) and the fulfillment of Jewish hopes and aspirations.

¹⁹Cf., e.g., John 13:27: "After Judas ate the piece of bread, Satan entered him."

²⁰Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 277–92.

²¹On the Johannine mission theme, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, ch. 15; Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples*.

²²On Johannine eschatology, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 295–98.

²³See Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 298–310.

²⁴Temple: 2:18–21; 4:21–24; Passover: 13:1; 19:36; Tabernacles: chs. 7–8; Dedication: 10:22. On Jesus's fulfillment of festal symbolism, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, ch. 10. On Tabernacles, see also Köstenberger, "John," 451–59.

III. JOHN'S USE OF SCRIPTURE IN THE GOSPEL

John's Gospel starts out with a bang: An unmistakable allusion to the Genesis creation narrative.²⁵ "In the beginning," John writes, evoking reminiscences of the opening of the Hebrew Scriptures, but rather than continuing, "God created the heavens and the earth," John writes, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (1:1). John's affirmation of creation by God's word was uncontroversial. His declaration that the Word was not only *with* God, but was *itself* God would have raised many eyebrows, however, as this raised the specter of ditheism—the belief in two gods—a belief that appeared to clash with the inviolable Jewish tenet of monotheism. Undaunted, John affirms Jesus's deity at both ends of the prologue (1:1, 18) as well as at strategic junctures throughout the Gospel (5:18; 10:33; 19:7) and just prior to the concluding purpose statement (20:28). In fact, the declaration that Jesus and the Father are one comes at the very heart of the Gospel and climaxes the presentation of Jesus as God in the Festival Cycle (chs. 5–10).²⁶

Gradually in the prologue, creation language gives way to exodus terminology. Thus, John affirms that the Word that (or who) was with God in the beginning took on flesh and made his dwelling among us (1:14).²⁷ This solemn declaration of Jesus's incarnation is followed by a reference to the giving of the law through Moses (1:17; cf. Exod 31:18; 34:28). The closing words of the prologue, "No one has ever seen God," too, is reminiscent of Moses who asked to see God, but was told that no one can see God and live (1:18; cf. Exod 33:18, 20; 34:6). The prologue also includes repeated references to John the Baptist (1:6–8, 15), which prepare the reader for the beginning of the Johannine narrative in 1:19ff. In keeping with the portrayal of the Baptist in the earlier Gospels, he is depicted as the voice crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord," in the words of the prophet Isaiah (1:23; cf. Isa 40:3).²⁸ Isaiah will be John's primary theological source in the remainder of the Gospel, not only regarding Jesus's messianic signs and his "lifting up," but also John's

²⁵Due to space constraints, the following discussion can only cover some of the highlights in John's use of Scripture. For much more detail, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, "John," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 415–512. On the creation theme in John's Gospel, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, ch. 8.

²⁶See Köstenberger, *Signs of the Messiah*, 73–75.

²⁷The Greek word is *skēnoō*, "tabernacle."

²⁸Cf. Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4–6. See Köstenberger, "John," 425–28.

sending Christology (cf. Isa 55:11).²⁹

Explicit OT quotations in John's Gospel follow a symmetrical pattern. In the first half of the Gospel, variations of the introductory formula, "It is written," predominate; in the second half, starting at 12:38, John switches to fulfillment language.³⁰ Each half contains seven quotations, for a total of fourteen for the entire Gospel. It is possible that John here employs numerical symbolism, as he is fond of the number "7" elsewhere. Both halves commence with a quote from Isaiah and conclude with a quote from Zechariah. Altogether, both sets of seven quotations include four references to the Psalms, two to Isaiah, and one to Zechariah (though 19:36 also includes a reference to Exodus and/or Numbers). In addition, John's Gospel features numerous allusions and other scriptural symbolism.³¹ John strikes a note of scriptural fulfillment, especially with regard to Jewish obduracy (12:38, 40) and Jesus's crucifixion (19:24, 36, 37). Fulfillment is also indicated by Jesus's final cry, "It is finished" (19:30).³²

1. *Old Testament Quotations in Part 1 of John's Gospel (1:1–12:15)*. As John makes clear toward the end of his Gospel, it is his avowed purpose to convince his readers that Jesus is the long-awaited Christ, the Son of God (20:30–31). Correspondingly, Philip identifies Jesus at the very outset as "him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote" (1:45). Later in the Gospel, Jesus himself affirms that Moses wrote of him (5:46). When Jesus feeds the multitude, the crowd exclaims, "This truly is the Prophet who is to come into the world" (6:14; cf. Deut 18:15). When Jesus converses with Nathaniel, one of his early followers, he promises him that he "will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man" (1:51), alluding to Jacob's ladder in Gen 28:12.³³ In

²⁹Andreas J. Köstenberger "John's Appropriation of Isaiah's Signs Theology: Implications for the Structure of John's Gospel," *Themelios* 43, no. 3 (2018): 376–86; Catrin H. Williams, "Isaiah in John's Gospel," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, eds. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, *The NT and the Scriptures of Israel* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 101–16.

³⁰See Figures 1 and 2 on pages 50 and 53. Except for 1:23 (*ep̄hē*) and 12:13, all Scripture quotations in part 1 are introduced by a formula that includes *graphē* ("Scripture") or *gegrammenon* ("written"); all Scripture quotations in part 2 include *plērōthē* ("might be fulfilled"; 19:36 and 37 is a joint quotation). See Köstenberger, "John," 416.

³¹See the list of OT allusions and verbal parallels in John's Gospel in Köstenberger, "John," 419–20. See also D. A. Carson, "John and the Johannine Epistles," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 251–53.

³²See Figure 1 on page 50. Note that there is considerable variety as to who supplies the citation. Most (though not all) quotations conform fairly closely to the Septuagint (LXX), though some are independent. See Köstenberger, "John," 417–18 (esp. chart on p. 417).

³³Cf. Köstenberger, "John," 429–30.

chapter 4, reference is made both to Jacob's field and well (4:5, 6; cf. v. 12). Thus, Jesus is shown to traverse patriarchal territory in the early stages of his ministry.³⁴ The Moses/exodus connection is further reinforced by the Samaritan woman's reference to "this mountain" (i.e., Mount Gerizim, 4:20; cf. Deut 27:12). This web of allusive references shows that John's use of the OT cannot be fully gauged by explicit quotations; rather, John taps into whole chunks of OT narrative in telling Jesus's story.³⁵

Gospel of John	Old Testament Quotation	Attribution
1:23	Isa 40:3	John the Baptist
2:17	Ps 69:9a	Disciples
6:31	Ps 78:24b	Crowd
6:45	Isa 54:13a	Jesus
10:34	Ps 82:6a	Jesus
12:13	Ps 118:26a	Crowd
12:15	Zech 9:9	Evangelist

Fig. 1: OT Quotations in John 1:1–12:15: "It Is Written"

Jesus's first messianic sign of turning large quantities of water into wine unfolds against the backdrop of a wedding, which invokes the imagery of Jesus as groom, an impression that is reinforced soon thereafter when the Baptist calls himself "the groom's friend" and identifies Jesus as the messianic bridegroom (3:29). At the temple cleansing, Jesus's followers find his zeal for "my Father's house" reminiscent of the psalmist's depiction of one zealous for God and his "house" (i.e., the temple; 2:16–17; cf. Ps 69:20; see also Zech 14:21).³⁶ Speaking to the "teacher of Israel," Nicodemus, Jesus posits the necessity of a new birth (3:3, 5; cf. Ezek 36:25–27) and invokes the typology of Moses lifting up a bronze serpent in the wilderness. In the case of the latter, every Israelite who looked at the lifted-up serpent did not die of poisonous snakebites but survived; similarly, whoever would look at the crucified Christ would not perish but have eternal life (3:13–14;

³⁴Catrin H. Williams, "Patriarchs and Prophets Remembered: Framing Israel's Past in the Gospel of John," in *Abiding Words: The Use of Scripture in the Gospel of John*, eds. Alicia D. Myers and Bruce G. Schuchard, RBS 81 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 187–212.

³⁵See on this Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), ch. 4. On Moses, see John Lierman, "The Mosaic Pattern of John's Christology," in *Challenging Perspectives in the Gospel of John*, ed. John Lierman, WUNT 2/219 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 210–34.

³⁶Köstenberger, "John," 431–34.

cf. Num 21:8–9). In addition to Moses/exodus typology, “lifted up” also conjures up the memory of the servant of the LORD in Isaiah (52:13; cf. 6:1).³⁷ The evangelist’s reference to God giving “his one and only Son” (*monogenēs*; 3:16) is reminiscent of Abraham’s willingness to offer up his “only son” Isaac in Genesis 22.³⁸

References to the Sabbath in the contrasting narratives featuring Jesus’s healings of the invalid in chapter 5 and the man born blind in chapter 9 (5:9; 9:14) again hark back to the creation narrative and reinforce the notion, already present in the earlier Gospels, that Jesus has authority over the Sabbath because he is the Creator (5:18–20; cf. Gen 2:1–3). Not only this, “just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom he wants. . . . For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he has granted to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:21, 26). What is more, God has also given Jesus authority to execute the final judgment (5:27–28). In keeping with the Deuteronomic minimum requirement of two or three witnesses (Deut 17:6; 19:15; cf. John 8:17), Jesus adduces a series of witnesses to himself, ranging from John the Baptist (John 5:33–35) to Jesus’s works (v. 36), the Father himself (v. 37), and the Scriptures, and here particularly the writings of Moses (i.e., the Pentateuch; vv. 39, 45–47).

The feeding of the five thousand, another Johannine sign, continues the string of references to Moses and the exodus.³⁹ The setting is Passover (6:4), which itself invokes the memory of God’s deliverance of the Israelites at the outset of the exodus. The feeding itself is reminiscent of Elisha’s similar feat (see esp. the mention of barley loaves, 6:9; cf. 2 Kgs 4:42). The crowd, though, take matters into a different direction and ask Jesus for a sign: “What sign, then, are you going to do . . .? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat’” (6:30–31; Ps 78:24). Just as Jesus had earlier furnished demonstration that he was greater than Jacob (4:12; cf. 1:51), he now asserts that he is greater than Moses: Not only does he *give* people bread to eat, he himself *is* the bread from heaven (6:35, 51); later, Jesus will assert superiority over Abraham as well (8:58; cf. v. 53). Embedded in the

³⁷ See also John 8:28 and 12:32; Köstenberger, “John,” 436–37.

³⁸ See esp. v. 2: “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love. . . .” On *monogenēs*, see Köstenberger, “John,” 422–23.

³⁹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, “The Exodus in John,” in *The Exodus in the New Testament*, ed. Seth M. Ehorn (London: T&T Clark, forthcoming). On the use of the OT in John 6, esp. vv. 31 and 45, see Köstenberger, “John,” 443–51.

“bread of life discourse” is Jesus’s reference to the Prophets (i.e., Isaiah), “And they will all be taught by God” (6:45; cf. Isa 54:13), which implies that Jesus is God (or least God’s agent).

After a rather lengthy hiatus as far as explicit Scripture citations are concerned,⁴⁰ John features another quote on the lips of Jesus in John 10:34: “Isn’t it written in your law, ‘I said, you are gods?’” In an argument from the lesser to the greater, he adds, “If he called those to whom the word of God came ‘gods’—and the Scripture cannot be broken—do you say, ‘You are blaspheming’ to the one the Father set apart and sent into the world, because I said: I am the Son of God?” (vv. 35–36; cf. Ps 82:6).⁴¹ The interchange follows Jesus’s bold assertion, “I and the Father are one” (10:30), at which the Jews attempt to stone him on account of blasphemy. Jesus here points out that the term “god” is applied in Scripture to people who are not necessarily divine, so calling himself “God” does not by itself merit capital punishment by stoning. The account of Jesus’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem features the last two OT quotes in the first half of John’s Gospel, citing Ps 118:26 and Zech 9:9, respectively (12:13, 15). The first quote is uttered by the crowd, the second furnished by the evangelist.⁴²

2. *Old Testament Quotations in Part 2 of John’s Gospel (12:38–19:42).* Following a symmetrical pattern, as mentioned above, the second half of John’s Gospel, like the first, features seven OT quotations. The first two are by the evangelist; the next two by Jesus; and the last three (all in the passion narrative at Jesus’s crucifixion) again by the evangelist. Transitioning from the first to the second half of John’s Gospel, 12:38 serves as the pivot in John’s use of the OT, shifting from the introductory formula “it is written” (or a similar phrase) to “in order that Scripture might be fulfilled” (with slight variations). As in the first half of John’s Gospel, we find seven explicit OT quotations spanning from 12:38 (the closing of the Book of Signs) to 19:37 (the end of the Johannine passion narrative).

⁴⁰Though note that the “good shepherd” discourse in chapter 10 is predicated upon Ezekiel’s indictment of Israel’s “faithless shepherds” in Ezekiel 34. See also Jesus’s allusion to Ezekiel’s prophecy regarding a time when there would be “one flock, one shepherd” (10:16; cf. Ezek 34:23). On Ezekiel’s influence on John’s Gospel, see Gary T. Manning, *Echoes of a Prophet: The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John and in Literature of the Second Temple Period* (London: T&T Clark, 2004); Brian Neil Peterson, *John’s Use of Ezekiel: Understanding the Unique Perspective of the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015).

⁴¹Köstenberger, “John,” 464–67.

⁴²Köstenberger, “John,” 470–74.

Gospel of John	Old Testament Quotation	Attribution
12:38	Isa 53:1	Evangelist
12:40	Isa 6:10	Evangelist
13:18	Ps 41:9b	Jesus
15:25	Ps 35:19; 69:4	Jesus
19:24	Ps 22:18	Evangelist
19:36	Exod 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 34:20	Evangelist
19:37	Zech 12:10	Evangelist

Fig. 2: OT Quotations in John 12:38–19:42: “In Order That Scripture Might Be Fulfilled”

In 12:38 and 40, the evangelist quotes both Isa 53:1 and 6:10 to make his case that the Jews’ rejection of Jesus’s messianic signs was in keeping with scriptural prediction.⁴³ The Jewish rejection of Jesus was not an accident; it was foretold by Isaiah and foreordained by God. While responsible for their sinful actions, the Jews “were unable to believe” due to divine hardening (v. 39). The mention of Isaiah seeing Jesus’s “glory” in verse 41 most likely refers to the prophet’s throne room vision recorded in Isaiah 6. In this way, the evangelist continues to assert Jesus’s preexistence. Just as he previously mentioned that Jesus was the preexistent Word (1:1), that he was before John the Baptist (1:15), and that “before Abraham was, I am” (8:58), he now affirms that Isaiah saw Jesus’s glory prior to his incarnation. This is part of John’s demonstration of the superiority of Jesus to antecedent figures in salvation history, including Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and others (cf. Heb 1:1).

The next two OT quotations are again found on Jesus’s lips. In both cases, Jesus affirms that people’s hatred of him was in fulfillment of scriptural expectation. In John 13:18, Jesus declares that Judas’s betrayal, arising from within the group of his closest followers, fulfilled Davidic typology in Ps 41:9: “The one who eats my bread has raised his heel against me.” Subsequently, in the Farewell Discourse, Jesus applies Ps 35:19; 69:4 to himself: “They hated me for no reason” (15:25).⁴⁴ Thus, the first four OT quotations in the second half of John’s Gospel all focus on people’s rejection and hatred of Jesus and declare that this unprovoked and baseless animosity was in keeping with God’s sovereign plan.

⁴³Daniel J. Brendsel, “Isaiah Saw His Glory: The Use of Isaiah 52–53 in John 12,” *BZNW* 208 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014); Köstenberger, “John,” 477–83.

⁴⁴On 13:18, see Köstenberger, “John,” 485–87; on 15:25, see also Köstenberger, “John,” 493–95.

The entire Farewell Discourse, for its part, parallels Moses's farewell in Deuteronomy.⁴⁵ Just like Moses prepared the Israelites for entering the promised land, so Jesus is shown to prepare his followers for the time following his crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus's followers will no longer have his physical presence with them but instead enjoy the Spirit's indwelling presence (14:18). While the evangelist called Israel "his own" at the outset of the Gospel (1:11), he now calls the Twelve Jesus's "own" in the preamble to the passion narrative (13:1). Thus, the Twelve are the believing remnant, the new messianic community united in its belief in Jesus. This salvation-historical development is further reinforced by Jesus's depiction of himself as the vine and his followers as branches on the vine, which is reminiscent of Isaiah's Song of the Vineyard (15:1–10; cf. Isaiah 5).⁴⁶

The final three OT citations are all found in the account of Jesus's crucifixion.⁴⁷ The soldiers' actions fulfill the words of Ps 22:18, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing" (19:24). A set of Scripture passages, likely including Exod 12:46, Num 9:12, and Ps 34:20, is fulfilled when the soldiers decide not to break Jesus's bones since he is already dead: "Not one of his bones will be broken" (19:36). Instead, one of the soldiers pierces Jesus's side, fulfilling the words of Zechariah 12:10: "They will look at the one they pierced" (19:37).⁴⁸ In addition, Jesus's words on the cross, "I'm thirsty," fulfill Ps 69:22. Thus, the evangelist sees in the events surrounding Jesus's crucifixion the fulfillment of an entire matrix of scriptural expectations regarding the sacrificial death of the Messiah. This further reinforces the notion that Jesus's death on the cross was divinely and sovereignly orchestrated, human rejection and supernatural opposition notwithstanding.

IV. JOHN'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN HIS LETTERS

While, as we have seen, John uses the OT extensively in his Gospel, the same cannot be said for his letters. Apart from a passing reference to Cain, "who was of the evil one and murdered his brother ... [b]ecause his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous" (1 John 3:12), anyone

⁴⁵John W. Pryor, *John: Evangelist of the Covenant People* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1992), 216, n. 8, notes the similarity between the language used in 14:15–24 ("know," "love," "obey," "see") and language used in Exodus 33–34 and Deuteronomy.

⁴⁶On Johannine ecclesiology, see Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, ch. 12.

⁴⁷On the use of the OT in the Johannine passion narrative, see Köstenberger, "John," 499–506

⁴⁸Remarkably, in the original instance, the one pierced is YHWH; in the present case, it is Jesus. See Köstenberger, "John," 504–6.

searching for explicit OT quotations or even allusions will come up virtually empty-handed. A possible exception is the reference just prior to the above quoted reference to Cain, namely John's declaration that "[e]veryone who has been born of God does not [persist in] sin, because his seed remains in him" (1 John 3:9). While not all commentators would agree, a good case can be made that the reference to God's seed here is to the Holy Spirit, and that "seed" (*sperma*) harks back to the reference to the woman's "offspring" in the proto-evangelion of Gen 3:15.⁴⁹ While in John 8:31–47 Jesus spars with his opponents as to their true spiritual parentage, here John takes the biblical trajectory regarding offspring a step further by identifying the Holy Spirit as the seed that causes the new birth in believers. Otherwise, John's first letter is concerned primarily with reassuring readers in view of the recent departure of individuals who apparently claimed special spiritual status while ignoring their sinfulness and need for atonement (1 John 2:19; cf. 1:9, 10; 2:2). Likely written after the Gospel, John's first letter seeks to reestablish and defend the premise of the Gospel: that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God (e.g., 1 John 4:2–3; cf. John 20:30–31; 2 John 7). Second and 3 John deal with the issue of extending hospitality to itinerant teachers.

V. CONCLUSION

The apostle John, the son of Zebedee, was the closest person to Jesus during his earthly ministry. A half-century after Jesus's time on earth, John likely penned first the Gospel, and then three letters. In his Gospel, John tied the story of Jesus closely to the metanarrative told in the Hebrew Scriptures. In so doing, John connected Jesus with the Genesis creation narrative, the exodus narrative, and OT prophetic literature, especially Isaiah, but also Zechariah. In addition, he drew rather extensively on prophetic passages found in the Psalms. John's primary purpose in using the OT in his Gospel is the demonstration that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God by showcasing seven selected signs of Jesus. These signs were designed to elicit faith in John's readers that Jesus's claims were true. To this day, John asks of us the probing question: Will you believe in Jesus? Those who do, John affirms, have the right to become children of God and will not perish but have eternal life.

⁴⁹See Andreas J. Köstenberger, "The Cosmic Drama and the Seed of the Serpent: An Exploration of the Connection between Gen 3:15 and Johannine Theology," in *The Seed of Promise: The Sufferings and Glory of the Messiah. Essays in Honor of T. Desmond Alexander*, eds. Paul Williamson and Rita Cefalu (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2020), 265–85.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ACTS: A MACRO PERSPECTIVE

Patrick Schreiner*

I. THE STORY CONTINUES...

Northrop Frye, the Canadian literary critic, states the immediate context of a sentence is as likely to be three hundred pages off as to be the next or preceding sentence.¹ This is especially true in the Scriptures. The Bible is one story because it has one divine author who brings all of the disparate pieces into cohesion.

Acts continues the grand narrative of the Scriptures. Brian Rosner has argued Acts parallels the history found in the OT and therefore should be labeled simply as salvation history.² According to Rosner, five pieces of evidence support this from Acts:

1. the imitation of the Septuagint in language and style,
2. the language of fulfillment in Acts,
3. the depictions of events similar to the OT,
4. the historical summaries found in Acts 2, 7, and 13 are narrative accounts of OT history to highlight continuing participation in that history, and
5. a theological understanding of history in which God is in control.

The result of these editorial techniques communicates that Luke continues the story of Israel where it left off. If one splits Acts into three sections (as will be argued below), each of them recounts Israel's history climaxing

¹Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982), 208.

²Brian Rosner, "Acts and Biblical History," in *The Book of Acts in Its First-Century Setting: Volume 1: Ancient Literary Setting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 65–82.

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in Jesus (Acts 2; 7; 13).³ Acts is not only history, but holy history—an extension of the story that began in Genesis 1.

Though there are many ways we could examine the OT in Acts, I will look to the macro-structure of Acts, showing how it follows and fulfills the promises of the OT.⁴ Some only look to what is explicit and ignore what is implicit. I will therefore examine not only the explicit citations, but look at how Luke has ordered his narrative. Large swaths of the narrative can be seen as “fulfillment” texts, even when Luke does not make his subtext explicit. In this way, this article will be different from most “OT in Acts” examinations.

The justification for this method comes from Luke’s own writing. Luke is the only author in the NT to give us prescripts for both of his volumes (Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1–5), which end up being quite helpful in determining what he is attempting to accomplish. In Luke 1:1–4 readers learn Luke writes an “ordered” (*kathexēs*) “narrative” (*diēgēsis*) about the things that have been “fulfilled” (*plērophoreō*) among them. To put this another way, Luke writes his stories in a certain order to show that God fulfills his promises to Israel. This gives justification for examining the larger swaths of his structure to see how the OT story formed his imagination and directed his storytelling.

II. JERUSALEM, JUDEA, AND SAMARIA, AND THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Many scholars argue that Acts 1:8 functions as the table of contents for Acts.⁵ Before Jesus ascends, he gives the apostles their commission: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to

³Though I will place Acts 7 at the end of the first section of Acts, it also functions as a transitional point to Acts 8–12.

⁴Some of the following material is also contained in chapter 6 of my forthcoming book and used with permission. Patrick Schreiner, *The Mission of the Triune God: A Theology of Acts, New Testament Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2022).

⁵Luke makes very little mention of Galilee (cf. 9:31). Interpreters differ on why Luke downplays Galilee. Some say it was intentional because Galilee was already Christian land based on Jesus’s ministry. Others assume Luke simply does not know about the mission to Galilee. Kuecker is likely right to point out that in Acts 1:1–11 Jesus’s disciples operate with two layers of social identity: Galilean and Israelite. Aaron J. Kuecker, *The Spirit and the “Other”: Social Identity, Ethnicity and Intergroup Reconciliation in Luke-Acts*, LNTS 444 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 98–104. They are a regional subgroup and they are called to go to Jerusalem, Judeans, Samaritans, and the ends of the earth, all of which involve crossing boundaries. Jesus says the Spirit will come on them and they will be “his witnesses” to the “other,” thus desacralizing and decentering their ethnic identity. This does not mean they lose it, but their mission is to the “other.”

the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).⁶ A distinctly geographical presentation of the spread of the good news exists in Acts, and the order is important. The blessings to the nations will come forth from Jerusalem because God promised Abraham that his children would bless the nations (Gen 12:3; Isa 49:6; Acts 13:47). The order, however, is not only geographical (Jerusalem—Rome), but ethnic (Jew—Gentile) and theopolitical (Jesus the King—Caesar).⁷ Salvation comes to Jerusalem, Israel is reconstituted and reunified (Judea and Samaria), and Gentiles are included (the ends of the earth; cf. Acts 13:31; 26:16–23; see also Isa 48:20; Jer 10:13).

Even the commission itself in Acts 1:8 is filled with OT allusions, particularly from Isaiah. The Holy Spirit is promised in Isaiah, the servant (Israel/Jesus) is called to be Yahweh’s witnesses, and they are both called to be a light to ends of the earth. Luke has set up his narrative as a fulfillment of the new exodus prophetic predictions.⁸

Isaiah in Acts 1:8	
Acts 1:8	Isaiah
When the Holy Spirit has come on you	Until the Spirit from on high is poured out on us (32:15).
You will be my witnesses	You are my witnesses (43:10, 12; 44:8).
To the ends of the earth	I will also make you a light for the nations, to be my salvation to the ends of the earth (49:6; 45:22).

If one follows the division of territories found in Acts 1:8, then three panels for the progression of the church appear: restoring Israel, assembling outcasts, and welcoming Gentiles.⁹ Jerusalem is appropriately first as God chose Israel. Then the word spreads to outcasts in Israel (Samaritans, a eunuch, an enemy of the church, and a god-fearing Gentile household). Finally, the Gentile mission commences. God establishes a new people comprised of various people groups. We will examine each panel on the next page, looking to the large patterns in the narrative and see how Luke

⁶Translations of Scripture are from the Christian Standard Bible.

⁷The ethnic reading is supported both by the allusions to Isaiah and the intertextual connection with Matt 28:19 where Jesus calls his disciples to go out to all “nations” (*ethnē*).

⁸David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2016).

⁹This outline largely follows David Seccombe, “The New People of God,” in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, eds. I Howard Marshall and David Peterson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 349–72. Both Peter and Paul, the two main figures in Acts, portray this growth in temple terms in their letters (1 Pet 2:5–6; 1 Cor 3:9–17; Eph 2:19–22).

has ordered his narrative to display this as both a new story and an old story.

Fulfillment in Acts	
Acts 1-7	Restoring Israel
Acts 8-12	Assembling Outcasts
Acts 13-28	Welcoming Gentiles

III. RESTORING ISRAEL (ACTS 1-7)

The first stage is Israel's restoration (Acts 1-7). The first seven chapters of Acts focus on Jerusalem and the temple. As James Dunn states, "It began in Jerusalem. That is the first clear message which Luke wants his readers to understand."¹⁰ God's temple blessings flow *from* and *through* Israel. The first section thus demarcates the remnant of Israel. Some respond positively, but others, especially the temple leaders, reject this life and continue to cling to the old temple.

1. *Acts 1-2*. Acts begins with Jesus commanding his disciples to wait for the promised Spirit in Jerusalem. This is a key promise that inaugurates Israel's renewal (Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-27). After this, the narrative pattern in Acts 1-2 closely follows the promises made in the prophets: the Davidic king is exalted and enthroned (the ascension), Israel is symbolically reunited (choosing of Matthias), the exiles are gathered from the nations, and the Spirit is poured out on the new people of God (Pentecost). Then all the people are called to covenantal repentance. They turn to the Lord, becoming the ideal Torah community.

Acts 1-2 Correlated to Isaiah		
Event	Acts	Isaiah
Enthronement of the Davidic King	Ascension (1:9-11)	Isa 9:6-7; 55:3
Israel Reconstituted	Replacing Judas (1:12-26)	Isa 11:13; 49:6; 63:17
Ingathering of Exiles	Pentecost gathering (2:5, 9-11)	Isa 35:8-10; 40:11; 43:5-7
Community of the Spirit	Pentecost (2:1-4)	Isa 32:14-17; 42:1; 44:1-4

¹⁰James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 1.

Call for Repentance	Peter's Sermon (2:14-41; cf. 38)	Isa 44:21-22; 50:1
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After the prologue (1:1-5) and commission (1:6-8), the narrative centers on Jesus's ascension (1:9-11). The event is the fulfillment of the promise that a Davidic King would be enthroned and reign forever (Pss 2, 110; Dan 7). Now that the Davidic King has been enthroned, he will build a "house" for Yahweh (2 Sam 7:2). The place of Jesus's reign becomes the ground for mission to the ends of the earth. The rest of the NT essentially recounts the growth and struggle of these Jesus communities as they pop up all over the Greco-Roman world. They call all nations to believe *because* Jesus reigns over all. The spread of the gospel *geographically* and the birth of the church is inseparable from Christ's cosmic reign in the heavens.

After the Davidic King is enthroned, he will restore his people. Israel's restoration is indicated in the choosing of Matthias as the twelfth apostle (Acts 1:15-26). Though many struggle to know what to do with the placement of this narrative, at least one of Luke's points is that the choice of the twelfth disciple makes symbolic Israel whole again (Luke 22:30; Acts 26:7). This is indicated as the emphasis on "numbering" the eleven or twelve abounds in these verses (Acts 1:13, 17a, 26b). God has promised he will "raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel" (Isa 49:6) and "Ephraim's envy will cease; Judah's harassing will end" (Isa 11:13). Now Israel's reconstitution is partially fulfilled as the twelfth disciple is chosen, thus reuniting the tribes separated at the time of Solomon.

Pentecost also restores Israel by gathering exiles scattered abroad. Pentecost was a pilgrimage festival where Jews from all nations would gather into their city. The Spirit falls at Pentecost because God had regathered Israel (Isa 44:1-4). God had promised he would bring his offspring from the east, west, north, and south (Isa 43:5-7; Acts 2:9-11). Therefore, the Spirit comes at Pentecost to reconstitute the gathered people of God. Not only have the twelve tribes been symbolically reunited, but also the exiles of Israel scattered during the reign of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome are regathered. Pentecost also symbolizes the establishment of the new temple because those gathered receive the presence of God. In Ezekiel, God's Spirit departed from the temple, and in Ezra, it did not return. Now the Spirit descends again. The new era is here (Luke 3:16-17; Acts 2:22-36).

The remaking of Israel continues as Peter's Pentecost sermon is directed to Jews. He speaks to them as Jewish men (Acts 2:14), Israelites (2:22), and "all the house of Israel" (2:36). In Ezekiel 37, "all the house of Israel" is associated with the regathering of Israel's exiles (37:21), the restoration of the north and south (37:15–22), the resurrection of Israel (37:15–22), the reign of the Davidic King (37:24–25), and the dwelling of God with his people (37:26–28). Acts 2 as a whole condenses restoration images found in Ezekiel.¹¹

Ezekiel in Acts 2	
Acts 2	Ezekiel
2:5–11 Israelites gather from the entire diaspora.	37:15–22 Reunification of the divided tribes of Israel in the land.
2:4 They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.	37:14 The pouring out of God's Spirit on his people.
2:36 "Let all the house of Israel therefore know."	20:40; 36:10; 37:11 "The whole house of Israel" = the twelve tribes.
2:29–36 The risen Jesus is the royal descendant of David.	37:24–25 A new David = messianic King

Further supporting the establishment of God's people at Pentecost is the content of Peter's sermon (2:14–41). It becomes a textbook example of how God has fulfilled his promises to Israel in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit. All the passages Peter cites explain this is part of God's plan: God promised the Spirit (Joel 2:28–32), the resurrection (Ps 16:8–11), and the ascension (Ps 110:1). Peter then tells Israel they must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38) to be renewed. This message of repentance reiterates the prophets' message to Israel (Joel 2:12–14; Jer 4:28). The new people of God are defined around the ascended Christ. They are to show their participation in the new community by going through water like the Israel of old.

Three-thousand people respond to Peter's message. The 3,000 that died in Exodus 32:28 by the sword of the Levites at Sinai are raised to new life as 3,000 respond to Peter's message. Two passages (2:44–47; 4:32–35) detail the practices of this new community: generosity, teaching, breaking of bread, fellowship, and prayer. The Torah community in the OT was

¹¹This chart is adapted from notes Tim Mackie sent me in a personal email.

to be generous by cancelling debt and not having anyone poor among them (Deut 15:1–4).

2. *Acts 3–7.* Acts 3–7 can also be read through the lens of Israel’s restoration. This is indicated by the temple focus until the end of chapter seven. An *inclusio* links Acts 2:46 and 5:42, which places the intervening narrative under the banner of “temple actions”:

And day by day, *attending the temple together* and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts. (Acts 2:46)

And every day, *in the temple* and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus. (Acts 5:42)

Between these texts are two temple restoration and conflict narratives, two interludes defining the people of God, and finally the section ends with Stephen’s climactic temple sermon. It can be viewed visually like this:

Temple Stories in Acts 3–7		
1.	Temple Restoration and Conflict (3:1–4:31)	Peter heals and is arrested.
A.	Defining the True People of God (4:32–5:11)	Barnabas gives; Ananias and Sapphira lie.
2.	Temple Restoration and Conflict (5:12–42)	Healings and arrest.
A.	Defining the True People of God (6:1–7)	Hellenistic widows are cared for.
3.	Temple Sermon (6:8–8:3)	Stephen proclaims God’s transcendent presence.

In the first temple restoration and conflict story, Peter heals a lame man who sits outside of the temple (Acts 3:2–3) and who is then welcomed into the temple once he is made whole (Acts 3:8). This man symbolizes Israel’s destitution and points to the nation’s restoration. Luke closes the narrative with a seemingly insignificant note that this man had been deformed for over forty years (4:22). However, by ending this way, the lame man becomes a symbol of hope for the disenfranchised of the nation.

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years, but they did not enter their land. This man sat *outside* the temple waiting forty years; now resurrection life and rest has come through the Servant. The new era has finally dawned upon Israel, but to be healed people must follow their Servant like Moses.¹² Boundary-crossing and border-transgressing realities mark the Spirit's presence.

A rich OT tradition includes the lame at the day of salvation. Jeremiah said God would gather his people from the remote regions of the earth "the blind and the lame will be with them" (Jer 31:8). In Zeph 3:19 it says, "I will save the lame and gather the outcasts; I will make those who were disgraced throughout the earth receive praise and fame." Micah 4:6–7 speaks similarly:

On that day—this is the Lord's declaration— I will assemble the lame and gather the scattered, those I have injured. I will make the lame into a remnant, those far removed into a strong nation. Then the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time on and forever. (Emphasis added)

Peter takes the lame man by the right hand, raises him up, and the man enters the temple and begins walking, leaping, and praising God.¹³ Luke employs a rare word for the man's "jumping" (*hallomai*). This word is also found in Isaiah when the prophet speaks of the lame leaping like a deer (Isa 35:6). The priests and captain of the temple oppose the apostles (4:1); Peter preaches Jesus as the rejected stone (4:11; Ps 118:22); and then God shakes the earth again like at Sinai when his people pray (4:31). The narrative is filled with temple themes. A new temple community has arrived with Jesus as the cornerstone.

A small narrative in Acts 4:32–5:11 further defines Israel, building on the summary in 2:44–47. Barnabas's generosity in the new community is contrasted to Ananias and Sapphira. The temple was more than a religious center; it was also a social, political, and economic center from which the

¹²F. Scott Spencer, *Journeying through Acts: A Literary-Cultural Reading* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 62.

¹³Luke notes that this man's "ankles become strong." Some attribute this comment to Luke's interest in medical terminology, but Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts, Paideia* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 55–56; Parsons, "The Character of the Lame Man in Acts 3–4," *JBL* 124, no. 2 (2005): 295–312, argues this should be thought of more in terms of "physiognomy," which was the association in the ancient world of the outer physical characteristics with inner qualities. Feet and ankles were the object of physiognomic consideration indicating a robust character.

blessings of God flowed to the world. Luke highlights the gift of Barnabas, who is a Cyprian Levite. Levites were set apart to perform priestly duties (Num 1:47–53) following the golden calf incident (Ex 32:26–29). A new Levite joins the community in contrast to the priestly rulers who oppose Peter and John (Acts 4:1).

Luke, however, juxtaposes Barnabas's generosity with Ananias and Sapphira, who lie about their gift. The OT echoes point to their action being not merely an arbitrary sin, but an improper temple offering in contrast to the Levite's gift.¹⁴ Jeremiah condemned the temple for becoming a den of robbers, and God's judgment is banishment from his presence (Jer 7:11, 15). Allusions to Ezekiel 20 also arise in the midst of a restoration text when the Lord says, "I will purge those of you who rebel and transgress against me" (Ezek 20:38). Then the Lord will accept his people as a pleasing aroma and will demonstrate his holiness through them in the sight of the nations (Ezek 20:41). Ananias and Sapphira's dead bodies are removed, keeping the holy space pure as when Achan was removed in the wilderness (Joshua 7). The boundaries of the new congregation of God are defined.

The second temple narrative is similar to the first, but this time the focus is on opposition (5:12–42). Yet God redeems the new congregation from their troubles and Gamaliel notes that if these men are doing God's work it will not be stopped. A second transition occurs with the selection of the seven to serve Hellenistic widows (6:1–7). Now the concern fans out not away from Israel, but to those who are influenced by Greek culture. Their Greek inculturation caused them to be objects of scorn, but God has already indicated he is bringing people in from the margins (Acts 2:9–11; Isa 43:5–7). The barriers between Hellenized and Hebraic Jews are overcome as seven Hellenistic leaders are chosen to care for Hellenistic widows. As the community expands, God directs its generosity to all who enter and also introduces the Hellenized leaders, Stephen and Philip. Even priests end up believing (6:7).

The Jerusalem narrative cycle comes to a climax at Stephen's trial, speech, and death (6:8–8:3). Opposition has been escalating, and now a Hellenized witness is martyred. Stephen is accused of disrespecting the temple and law. He responds with a salvation historical argument about the temporary and corrupt nature of the physical temple and the reception

¹⁴Le Donne rightly argues that in Acts 1–7 the Holy Spirit restores the temple presence of the Lord and that this narrative should be viewed in that light, even though the specific location of Solomon's Portico is not explicit in this section as it is in 3:11 and 5:12. Anthony Le Donne, "The Improper Temple Offering of Ananias and Sapphira," *NTS* 59, no. 3 (2013): 346–64.

of God's prophets through history.

Stephen shows God's transcendent presence will not be limited by any building, region, or even people group; it is found only in the person of Jesus. God appeared to Abraham in a foreign land (7:2). He was with Joseph and Moses in Egypt (7:9, 20). God appeared to Moses in the burning bush while in Midian (7:30–33). God appeared to Moses at Mount Sinai (7:38). These were all outside the land and before the temple. Stephen refutes the physical temple as a necessity for God's presence, though it functioned as a blessing in its time. God is not and cannot be localized, and he spreads his temple presence to all who repent and believe. Stephen's sermon becomes the theological foundation for the gospel to go to the ends of the earth.

Acts 1–7 is about the renewal of Israel. It concerns God's temple people and the invitation for Israel to be restored to God through faith in the Messiah. Many welcome this message and are engrafted into the community, but others reject it. The good news of Jesus Christ is proclaimed to both the Hebraic and Hellenized Jews in Jerusalem. Now expansion of God's people begins as Stephen's blood colors the earth.

IV. ASSEMBLING OUTCASTS (ACTS 8–12)

In Acts 8–12, the message spreads to outcasts as the gospel goes to Judea and Samaria.¹⁵ God assembles people on the margins of Israel. The glory of the temple will no longer be restricted to Jerusalem. Rivers of living water flow to the outer courts, breaking down walls and bringing life. Not only will the new community be restored to its previous state, but new members are received into it as well.

This assembling of outcasts fulfills promises of the OT. In Isa 56:8, the prophet writes, "The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, 'I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.'" He tells them to "let the outcasts of Moab sojourn among you" (Isa 16:4). A variety of vignettes occur in Acts 8–12:

¹⁵The inclusion of "Judea" has confused interpreters. The strongest argument against this structure concerns the linking of Judea and Samaria since Antioch, Syria, Damascus, and Jerusalem are included in 8–12. Mark L. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and Its Fulfilment in Lukan Christology*, LNTS 110 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 3–4. However, Luke can use Judea in both a more proper way (the southern district of Palestine distinct from Galilee; 9:31) and a more general way (encompassing all Palestine; 10:37). I take Judea and Samaria as a merism covering that entire region. The two regions are linked grammatically and include the adjectival modifier "all" (*kai en pasē tē Ioudaia kai Samareia*). Hengel argues it stands for the land of Israel more holistically including what was current Roman Syria. Martin Hengel, "Ioudaia in the Geographical List of Acts 2:9–11 and Syria as 'Greater Judea,'" *BBR* 10, no. 2 (2000): 161–80.

Assembling Outcasts in Acts 8–12		
Agent	Recipient	Symbol
Philip	Samaria	Northern Israel
Philip	Eunuch	Ethnic and Sexual
Jesus	Saul	Enemy of the Church
Peter	Cornelius and Household	God-fearer/Gentile

The Philip narrative has two parts, both dealing with those on the outskirts of Judaism: Samaritans and an Ethiopian eunuch. Both are outcasts and have an uncomfortable relationship with the temple. Samaritans rejected the Jerusalem temple, and eunuchs could not even pass through the court of the Gentiles. But God refused to be bound by temple obstacles.

Samaria was separated socially, geographically, and even religiously from their Jerusalem kin.¹⁶ Most importantly, they worshiped on a different mountain: Mount Gerizim. The background to the relationship between Jews and Samaritans goes back to 1 Kings 12 and the rebellion of the Northern Kingdom against the Southern Kingdom. Samaritans were thus viewed as descendants of Jeroboam's rebellion against the house of David (1 Kgs 12:16–20).

Nonetheless, Samaria receives the word with much joy (Acts 8:8). Philip's mission overcomes nationalistic borders and ethnic prejudices. Before the Gentile outreach can commence, Israel's north and south must be reintegrated. The hope of the prophets was that all Israel would be reassembled through the power of God's Spirit. Ezekiel speaks of a time when the stick of Judah (the South) and stick of Ephraim (the North) will be joined together (Ezek 37:16–17). Yahweh will "make them one nation in the land...with one king to rule over all of them. They will no longer be two nations and will no longer be divided into two kingdoms. They will not defile themselves anymore with idols, their abhorrent things and all their transgressions. I will save them...I will cleanse them. Then they will be my people, and I will be their God. My servant David will be King

¹⁶Omri, of the Northern Kingdom, ended up building the city of Samaria (1 Kgs 16:24), and it became the capital of the Northern Kingdom as Jerusalem was the capital of the Southern Kingdom. Both the North and the South were exiled, but those who remained in the land intermarried with Canaanites. When the exiled came back, they sought permission from Alexander the Great to build a temple on Mount Gerizim and they had their own form of the Pentateuch. The Samaritans therefore had a different capital, customs, and temple. Bock notes how they were treated as half-breeds; to eat with a Samaritan was said to be like eating pork; their daughters were seen as unclean; and they were accused of aborting fetuses. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 324.

over them” (Ezek 37:22–24a).

This welcoming of the Samaritans into the new community is confirmed by the strange account of the delayed reception of the Spirit (Acts 8:14–17). The Jerusalem apostles must come, pray, and lay hands on them before they receive the Spirit. The “delay” of the Spirit can be confusing. To some it looks like those in Samaria were saved and then received the Spirit, indicating a second blessing or a two-stage experience of faith—water baptism and then Holy Spirit baptism. But this more likely is an exceptional circumstance recounted because of the rift between Jerusalem and Samaria. Samaria must wait for the Spirit, and Jerusalem must witness it. The outcome, therefore, is twofold—making an impression on both the Samaritans and the apostles. The Jerusalem apostles are convinced of God’s love for the Samaritans as they witness the pouring out of the Spirit, which is a mark of the new age (Acts 2, 8, 10; cf. Luke 3:16). The Samaritans see they are connected to and not separate from the Jerusalem church.

Philip then goes south to a eunuch at the energizing direction of the Spirit. As Mikael Parsons asserts, with this episode, Luke radically redraws the map of who is in and who is out under Scriptural warrant.¹⁷ Though Luke describes this character in great detail, the label “eunuch” sticks out, pointing primarily to gender and ethnic inclusion themes.

Being a eunuch means he was emasculated. Eunuchs were both demonized and prized: demonized because of their sexual ambiguity and prized because of their trustworthiness. They were considered effeminate or “non-men,” sitting between the male-female binary. Philo writes that eunuchs are “neither male nor female” (*Somn.* 2.184). Yet it is significant that the eunuch in Acts 8 is still described as a man. He is also an Ethiopian—a black man. Ethiopia was a remote land according to the Scriptures (Est 1:1; 8:9; Ezek 29:10), and Ethiopians were dark-complexioned people (Jer 13:23), often used as the standard against which antiquity measured other people of color. The Ethiopian embodied the distant south. In the Jewish Scriptures, eunuchs are ritually unclean and kept out of the temple (Lev 21:20; 22:24; Deut 23:1). Nevertheless, Philip explains Jesus to him and he baptizes him on the desert road. As the eunuch reads Isaiah 53, Isaiah 56 is fulfilled—which is only a few inches down on the Isaiah scroll.

No foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD should say, “The LORD will exclude me from his people,” and the

¹⁷Parsons, *Acts*, 124.

eunuch should not say, “Look, I am a dried-up tree.” For the LORD says this: “For the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, and choose what pleases me, and hold firmly to my covenant, I will give them, in my house and within my walls, a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters. I will give each of them an everlasting name that will never be cut off. (Isa 56:3–5)

The third narrative of an outcast welcomed is Saul. An adversary of the church is changed by a vision of Jesus. The great enemy of the church is installed as the great missionary of the church. Throughout this text, the central imagery concerns light and darkness. After Saul sees the light of Jesus, he is commissioned to bring this light to the Gentiles. Jesus’s blinding appearance to Saul reminds readers of Ezekiel’s vision when the heavens were opened and he saw brilliant light all around him (Ezek 1:1–25). In the Ezekiel scene, the creatures and throne are described in great detail, but the “human” on the throne is given only three verses because the light is too bright (Ezek 1:26–28).

Later references make it clear that the light Paul saw was Jesus himself (Acts 9:5; 27; 22:14–15; 26:16) and his heavenly glory (2 Cor 4:6). Now Saul looks up, and Jesus is revealed as the one on the throne. What Ezekiel could not see with clarity, Saul now beholds. Saul is welcomed into the new community symbolically by Ananias. In Acts 9:17–19, Ananias places his hands on Saul calling him brother. The dark state of Saul after seeing Jesus should be contrasted to Saul recovering sight. Someone from the North, the South, and now a great enemy of the church, has been welcomed.

The fourth narrative of an outcast assembled concerns Cornelius. Peter has a vision where it is revealed to him that God-fearing Gentiles (even a centurion) are welcome into the community in their Gentileness (10:34–35). Heavenly dreams, divine initiative, and the Spirit descending drive the narrative as Peter is drawn toward a Roman centurion. While Jews had little reason to resent those from Ethiopia, they had considerable problems with Romans, especially officers.

The final narrative concerning outcasts occurs in Antioch (11:19–30). Antioch was the third largest city in the Roman Empire, a cosmopolitan city full of gods, and it became a key mission base for Gentile outreach (13:1–4; 14:26–28; 15:22–23, 30–35). Though Jerusalem is not eclipsed, Antioch functions as the “mother church” for Gentiles. The narrative

about Antioch shows the inclusion multiplies as a new *ekklēsia* is birthed north of Jerusalem.

In Antioch the disciples are first called Christians (11:26). The term “Christian” parallels Latin political terms and further signals a shift of focus away from Judea to the larger Roman world. In fact, “Christian” is a Greek word of Latin form and Semitic background, thus encapsulating the cosmopolitan context of early Christianity. A new name is coined for a new identity and mission. The origin of the most popular English term for Jesus followers was based on a multiethnic reality. In Acts 13:1, Luke identifies the leaders of this diverse community in Antioch: “Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.” The extra descriptors are important.

Barnabas (a Hellenized Jew) and Saul (a Pharisee) bookend the list and will receive the attention moving forward. Three other individuals are named, indicating the assorted nature of this assembly. Simeon, is also called “Niger” which is Latin for “black,” and likely indicates a southern origin. Lucius is of Cyrene, which is in North Africa. Manaen is described as being reared with Herod the tetrarch.¹⁸ This is the same Herod (Antipas) in Luke 3:1 and Acts 4:27 who conspired against Jesus. Manaen was therefore likely of “high-society,” a childhood companion of the king.

Luke’s list is therefore quite instructive. Saul is from Tarsus but trained as a Pharisee. Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, was a Jew of diaspora with a priestly background. There are two black men from the south, and a man who had considerable social standing. The leaders in Antioch contained a pharisaical Jew, two men from Africa, a Hellenized Jew, and a privileged person. No wonder in Antioch they are first called “Christians.”

The Diverse Leaders in Antioch			
Name	Hometown	Ethnicity	Social Status
Saul	Tarsus	Jew	Pharisee
Simeon	Niger	Gentile	Foreigner (black)
Lucius	Cyrenian	Gentile	Foreigner (black)
Manaen	Samaria?	Gentile/Idumean?	High-Brow
Barnabas	Cyprus	Jew	Hellenized Jew

¹⁸The word *syntrophos* means he was reared with Herod.

Each of these narratives (Philip, Saul, Peter, and Antioch) are vignettes of God welcoming outcasts and enfolding them into his people. God had promised he would gather others besides those already gathered (Isa 56:8). Now God's plan comes to fruition as the apostles preach Christ and those that receive their message are filled with the Spirit.

V. GENTILES WELCOMED (ACTS 13–28)

Luke has traced the restoration of Israel (1–7) and the assembling of outcasts (8–12). Now the gospel will go to predominantly Gentile territories, even if they still preach to Jews first (13–28). Though I have divided these sections, there are precursors to this Gentile mission. The eunuch has been welcomed, Peter went into the house of Cornelius, and the church in Antioch has been established. Yet a sanctioned mission to the Gentiles has not commenced. Acts 13–28 marks a shift with Paul's journeys as the gospel goes to the ends of the earth.

The mission to the ends of the earth comes from Isa 49:6: "It is not enough for you to be my servant raising up the tribes of Jacob and restoring the protected ones of Israel. I will also make you a light for the nations, to be my salvation to the ends of the earth." The restoration of the kingdom of Israel comes about *by* the power of the Spirit, *through* the witness of the apostles, and *throughout* the whole world. Isaiah's new covenant predictions and servant commission are being fulfilled.¹⁹

Not every narrative will be covered in Paul's journeys. Rather, I will focus on key places that represent the welcoming of all peoples. The different areas Paul visits stand as symbols for the diverse community God builds. As there are different types of Jews, there are different types of Gentiles. All peoples are welcomed: island dwellers, rustic, intellectual, religious, and political.

Key Places of Gentile Welcome in Acts 13–28	
Cyprus	The Island Dwellers
Lystra	The Rustic
Philippi	Roman Households
Athens	The Philosophers/Intellectual Elite

¹⁹Beers has argued Luke portrays God's people carrying out the mission of the Isaianic servant. The suffering of believers, their non-violent response, and their vindication mirror the servant in Isaiah. Holly Beers, *The Followers of Jesus as the "Servant": Luke's Model from Isaiah for the Disciples in Luke-Acts*, LNTS 535 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016).

Ephesus	The Magical/Idolaters
Rome	The Political Center

Paul's mission begins with him going to Cyprus (13:4–12). Two points about this narrative should be highlighted. First, Cyprus is an island. Like mountains, islands were viewed as irregular protrusions out of the earth and therefore stood as sites for conflict, transformation, or conversion. Fittingly, Isa 49:1 begins with a call from Yahweh: “coasts and islands, listen to me; distant peoples, pay attention.” The island dwellers are welcome.²⁰ Second, at Cyprus a prominent Gentile, Sergius Paulus, comes to faith. He is an intelligent man and a governing authority, a man of high status (13:7). He is the first named Gentile convert on this mission and a prominent one who has intelligence. Therefore, on Cyprus, Luke shows the gospel message is for the high and low of society, the educated and uneducated.

This point about the gospel being for all is further established by comparing and contrasting this narrative to Paul's visit to Lystra (14:8–20). Lystra is known as a backwater, rustic, and countryside town. Its inhabitants were known as mountain-dwellers.²¹ This geographical and cultural reality becomes a key part of the narrative. Paul heals a lame man like Peter did in Jerusalem (14:8–10). The crowd's response to the healing is quite different from what Peter experienced in Jerusalem, and the geographical location largely explains this divergence. In Acts 3:10 the crowd is filled with awe and astonishment, but here the crowds shout in their own language, “The gods have come down to us in human form” (14:11). This is the only time Luke refers to a local dialect outside of the Pentecost scene.

Those in Lystra think Paul and Barnabas are gods, specifically Zeus and Hermes. Instead of accepting the bulls and wreaths, the apostles tear their clothes and rush into the crowd, explaining to the people they, too, are creatures and not gods. They came not to introduce idolatry, but to destroy it. This is an important point because many critics of Christianity accused the movement of being populated by the uneducated whom the early missionaries had duped. However, Luke shows Paul and Barnabas do not manipulate people. They disclose their true identity and the identity of the one they worship. In Cyprus, a prominent Gentile has been welcomed; in Lystra, Paul and Barnabas have not hoodwinked those off

²⁰Fittingly, Paul's journeys end with him on the island Malta (Acts 28:1–10).

²¹Strabo says those in Lystra lived in remote “mountain caves” and ate food “unmixed with salt” and were ignorant of the sea (Strabo, *Geographica* 12.6.5; 14.5.24. See Parsons, *Acts*, 200.).

the beaten path.

Philippi is also a significant place Paul visits because he establishes new Messianic-households under the thumb of Rome (16:6–40). Philippi was a Roman colony with many retired Roman soldiers. Although Paul has visited other Roman colonies, this city is highlighted for its close connection to Rome. The emphasis on the Roman nature of this episode is evident by Luke’s word choices. “Colony” is used only here and is itself a Latin loan word (16:12). The chief officials are called *stratēgoi* (16:20), which is a Greek term for Roman praetors. The police are called *rhabdouchoi*, which are Roman lictors (16:35). Finally, Paul and Silas speak of themselves as Roman citizens (16:37–38).

These details are not merely to add local color; the narrative is concerned with the mission’s penetration into the Roman world. Philippi is Rome in microcosm. In Philippi two household baptisms are mentioned: Lydia and the jailer. This is the first time since Cornelius that Luke mentions the baptism of households, which shows the success of the mission in Philippi. Lydia becomes a central figure who hosts Paul and his companions. The jailer and his household are also converted. A rich woman and a worker of the state are welcomed. Rome valued the order of households as a microcosm of their state. Luke shows new messianic households are sprouting in the midst of a Roman colony.

If in Philippi Paul confronted Roman customs and in Lystra he challenged rustic pagan practices, then in Athens he clashes with the intellectual elite (17:16–34). Luke presents Paul as a philosopher grounded in the logic of the Hebrew Scriptures as he announces a more universal message to this sophisticated crowd. Though many *universalize* the Athens speech, making it the training ground for every type of apologetics situation to a non-Christian crowd, the scene in Athens presses into the particular.²² The philosophic crowd are integral to the narrative. Even though Athens was not at its prime, it was still the center of Greek philosophy because of its association with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.²³ Luke makes sure readers do not miss this point with his mention of the agora, Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, pagan shrines, and the Areopagus.

Paul addresses Athens at their basic assumptions and deploys philosophical language to stake out common ground. Though Paul is labeled an

²²Eric. D. Barreto, Jacob D. Myers, and Thelathia Young, *In Tongues of Mortals and Angels: A Deconstructive Theology of God-Talk in Acts and Corinthians* (New York: Lexington/Fortress, 2019), 45–60.

²³Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 26.62.

amateur philosopher (17:18), he makes Yahweh known to them through Jesus Christ. Rather than explicitly employing the OT Scriptures to prove Jesus is the Messiah, as he has done at other locales, Paul speaks to them in the philosophic language of the day. He quotes their own poets and alludes to their traditions. However, he does so in order to transform their worldview. The speech is essentially a call to repentance, not a search-and-find game for commonalities.

Paul narrates the incongruity between Jesus's message and Gentile religion, while at the same time arguing the Christian movement contains the best features of Greek philosophy. It is the superior philosophy. Ultimately the dividing point is Jesus's resurrection. When they hear Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, they cut him off and mock him (17:31–32). Even though Paul's message pulled on certain commonalities, it also fundamentally challenged their social imaginary.

Many bypass this point; a church is birthed in Athens (17:32–34). Some Athenians reject Paul's message; others are interested in hearing more. A group joins Paul, of which two are named: Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris. Contrary to what some argue, Athens is not a failure. Dionysius's reception shows some from Mars Hill accepted his teaching, and Damaris's close association with him may indicate Damaris is also a distinguished Areopagite.²⁴ While many groups showed prejudice against women scholars in this time, some communities were more open to female members and Epicureans and Stoics were some of these latter groups.²⁵ This indicates Luke paints Christianity in the same way: women scholars are welcome.

The next narrative displaying the diversity of Gentiles welcomed is Paul's work in Ephesus (18:24–19:41). Ephesus was known for its magical practices and the Artemis cult. If in Athens Paul takes on the *intellectual elite* and in Rome he goes to the *political head*, in Ephesus he engages the *center of idolatry*, where he proves the forces of darkness and magic cannot overpower the name of Jesus. Luke puts more emphasis on Paul's extraordinary miracles in this narrative than any other. He even states the handkerchiefs or aprons that touched Paul's skin were carried away and

²⁴Keener doubts Damaris is an Areopagite since he thinks Luke would have repeated the title. But the opposite may be the case; he did not need to repeat the title since they are associated together. Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012–2015), 3:2678–80. Bede says this Dionysius was afterward ordained bishop, governed the church in Corinth, and wrote many volumes. Bede, *Commentary on Acts* 17.34.

²⁵Spencer, *Acts*, 183–84.

used as healing conduits (19:11–12).

Then some Jewish exorcists (sons of Sceva) try to employ Paul's power, but the evil spirits leap upon them and master them (19:13–20). Rather than displaying their power over the spirit, they are overpowered and leave defeated and shamed. The result of this humorous incident is positive for the residents of Ephesus. Many believers confess their practices and burn their books in front of everyone (the equivalent of 50,000 days' wages). The action signals the defeat of magic by the name of Jesus: "magic has become obsolete...the books are emblems of a defeated regime."²⁶

The effect is that the word of the Lord flourished and prevailed. Here Luke reports the "growth, strength, and power" of the word (19:20, my translation) rather than "multiplication" as he did in 6:7 and 9:31. This unique word choice confirms the supernatural theme in the Ephesus narrative. It signals victory for the gospel of Jesus and his community. The devil's terrain shrinks as the Lord's increases.

The final location Paul goes to is Rome: the heart of the empire. Paul has sparred with the intellectual elite, the city of magic, and the rural towns, and now he comes to the seat of power. While on trial he testifies to kings and governors. Acts 13–28 shows the message of Jesus is available to all. This is further supported because Rome was not the ends of the earth. Rather it is the center of the earth (from a Roman perspective) "with a central milepost from which all the roads of the empire radiated out."²⁷ Though the forces of nature and the schemes of man try to stop Paul, neither can hinder God's will to welcome Gentiles.

VI. CONCLUSION

In the prologue to his Gospel, Luke said he was writing an "ordered narrative" about the things that have been fulfilled among them. Sometimes when we examine the OT in the NT, we only study the explicit citations, forgetting that these are placed in a larger story.

I have argued Luke constructed his story of the early church in a way that speaks to his "fulfillment" themes. In Acts 1–7 Israel is restored. Not all Israel responds positively to the message, but God has set apart a remnant for himself. In Acts 8–12 the good news goes to those on the margins. God gathers his outcasts. Finally, in Acts 13–28 the message

²⁶Susan Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil: Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writings* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 95.

²⁷Loveday Alexander, *Acts in Its Ancient Literary Context: A Classicist Looks at the Acts of the Apostles*, LNTS 298 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 214.

goes to the ends of the earth. This includes all types of Gentiles: the rich, poor, educated, uneducated, men, women, city-dwellers, and those in the rural areas.

Luke closes Acts by noting that the proclamation of the kingdom of God continued to go forth without hindrance (28:31). Isaiah promised that “instruction will go out of Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isa 2:3). This promise is fulfilled in Acts, indicating God’s promises cannot be stopped.



READING THE TORAH AS THE LAW OF FAITH

Craig Keener*

Here I do not seek to address Paul's hermeneutic as a whole, but to focus on its continuity with earlier Scripture, especially in his treatment of the law. There is such a vast range of views and arguments regarding this subject that I can offer only some sample thoughts here.¹ I also explore some aspects of the law itself (albeit recognizing my limitations as a NT scholar) to illustrate why Paul was right to approach the law as he did.² Given limited space, I have focused on the biblical text itself rather than the voluminous secondary literature.

My emphasis, then, is Paul's consistency with the spirit of the law. Still, it bears further mention that Paul, like Jesus, models a way of reading Scripture that goes beyond merely mechanical exegetical methods.³ Paul applies biblical texts in various ways for various purposes (e.g., responding to critics' polemic, in contrast to normal exposition). In normal circumstances, however, the original sense of the text remains foundational as in exegesis today. Yet beyond mechanical exegetical method, he trusts that God still speaks in Scripture, and welcomes its principles to speak in analogous ways to new settings. In that way, the message remains alive and fresh for each generation and new cultural setting because the heart of its message addresses pressing issues that God's people continue to face.

I. TWO WAYS OF READING

Paul contrasts two ways of reading the law: the law of works and the

¹For a recent range of views, see helpfully Benjamin L. Merkle, *Discontinuity to Continuity: A Survey of Dispensational and Covenant Theologians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020).

²In condensed form, I draw here esp. on Craig S. Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 219–36.

³See Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics*, 207–18.

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law of faith (Rom 3:27).⁴ That is, we may wrongly approach the law as a means of self-justification,⁵ or we may approach it as a witness to the way of reliance on (faith in) God's covenant grace. Thus God's own people, pursuing the law's righteousness as if it were achieved by works, failed to achieve it because they did not pursue it by faith; by trusting in the God of the covenant who would graciously transform them (Rom 9:31–32).⁶ As a merely external standard, the law could pronounce death; but its principles could instead be written in the heart by the Spirit (8:2), an eschatological promise for God's people (Ezek 36:27).

In Rom 3:31, Paul shows that trust in God's action in Christ to make us right with God does not annul the law. Indeed, it supports the law's real message (Rom 3:31). In this verse, Paul concludes a line of argument, but also foreshadows what is to come.⁷ He goes on to argue his case directly from the law, which in his circles included the entire Pentateuch. Paul's interest is in God's character revealed in narratives that put the law's regulations in context. In Romans 4, then, Paul argues from Abraham's example in Gen 15:6: God accepted Abraham's trust in him as righteousness. Paul uses the context in Genesis to point out that God accounted Abraham as righteous even years before he was circumcised (Rom 4:10) so that this experience is possible without the outward sign of circumcision (4:11).

In Rom 9:30–10:10, Paul presents two approaches to the law and righteousness, but he believes that only one (the way of faith) can genuinely save sinful people of flesh.⁸ Based on the foregoing scriptural argument (that God does not save based on membership in ethnic Israel), Paul in 9:30–33 addresses the reason for Israel's failure to be saved. Seeking

⁴Scholars divide on whether to translate *nomos* here as “law” or “principle”; the English choice may be forced, but if one must choose, the context has consistently employed the term for the Torah (Rom 2:12–27; 3:19–21, 28, 31). Cf. Marius Victorinus *Gal.* 1.2.9 in Mark J. Edwards, *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, ACCS NT 8 (Downers Grove: IVP, 1999), 31.

⁵Whether individually or as part of a corporate people. I cannot here take space to address the New Perspective(s) and its detractors; Gentile converts, at least, probably found the law's stipulations more onerous than someone who grew up with them. For discussion of various perspectives, see Craig S. Keener, *Galatians: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019), 242–44; on early Jewish soteriology, 238–42.

⁶Most Jewish interpreters would have insisted that they belonged to the covenant because they belonged to God's covenant people, a belonging that they confirmed by keeping the covenant. Paul is more rigorous in demanding righteousness and expects it from hearts transformed by the Spirit and obedient to God's Messiah, but he undoubtedly uses some hyperbole; see discussion in Craig S. Keener, *Romans* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 4–9, 122–23.

⁷Ancient writers could use transitions (e.g., *Rhetorica and Herennium* 4.26.35). On Rom 3:31, cf. C. Thomas Rhyne, *Faith Establishes the Law*, SBLDS 55 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 75.

⁸I borrow this paragram from Keener, *Romans*, 122.

righteousness through the law, Israel could not fulfill the law (9:31) because they approached the law the wrong way: As a standard rather than an invitation to depend on God's kindness (9:32). In 9:32–33, Paul notes that Scripture had already indicated Israel's failure (he also notes this in 10:16): Many in Zion would stumble, except those who *trusted* in the rock of their salvation (Isa 8:14 blended with Isa 28:16).

Paul has already indicated that the *right* way to use the law is to inspire trust in God's gracious, saving acts rather than confidence in one's own keeping of its precepts (3:27, 31; cf. 8:2). Israel's wrongheaded approach to the law was by works rather than by faith (9:31–32); in 10:5 Paul offers a basic text for this wrong approach of works and in 10:6–8 counters with a text for the right approach of faith.⁹ Later Jewish teachers did apply texts like those in 10:5 (especially Lev 18:5; also Gal 3:12) to eternal life,¹⁰ even though these passages originally meant just long life in the land.¹¹ It is probable that Paul has heard this proof-text in his debates in the synagogues. Paul does not need to elaborate on why the approach to the law in 10:5 is unworkable; he has already addressed the failure of law-works due to human sinfulness in 3:10–18 and elsewhere, and most recently in 9:31–32 (cf. 3:21; 4:13; Gal 2:21; 3:21; Phil 3:6, 9).

Paul develops his case further by drawing an analogy between Moses's era and his own: Salvation and God's word came in both eras. Just as God himself redeemed Israel, bringing his people through the sea and giving them the Torah (Deut 30:12–13), so now God himself brought Jesus down and raised him from the dead (Rom 10:6–7). Just as God enjoined Israel to follow the law by keeping it in their heart and mouth (Deut 30:14), so now his message, the good news inviting faith, resides

⁹Jewish teachers often defended positions by citing counter-texts to refute what they viewed as a misunderstanding of other texts. Sometimes they even temporarily came down to the level of their erroneous interlocutors (David Daube, "Three Notes Having to Do with Johanan ben Zaccai," *JTS* 11, no. 1 [April 1960]: 54). Comparing one's argument with that of an opponent was common (R. Dean Anderson Jr., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures, and Tropes from Anaximenes to Quintilian* [Leuven: Peeters, 2000], 22).

¹⁰See e.g., Simon J. Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1–5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 100–2 (on CD 3.14–16, 20); Sigurd Grindheim, "Apostate Turned Prophet: Paul's Prophetic Self-Understanding and Prophetic Hermeneutic with Special Reference to Galatians 3.10–12," *NTS* 53, no. 4 (2007): 561–62; Timothy G. Gombis, "Arguing with Scripture in Galatia: Galatians 3:10–14 as a Series of Ad Hoc Arguments," in *Galatians and Christian Theology: Justification, the Gospel, and Ethics in Paul's Letter*, ed. Mark W. Elliott et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 82–90. Other texts make the connection between obedience and life (e.g., Neh 9:29; Ezek 20:11–13, 21; 33:12–19), probably echoing Lev 18:5; it might reflect court idiom (Gen 42:18).

¹¹Cf. Deut 4:1, 26, 40; 5:33; 8:1; 16:20; 30:16, 20. Still, they offer principles that can be extrapolated.

in the heart and is expressed by the mouth (Rom 10:8–10). (Paul adapts his chief passage’s wording (“Lest you say”) to “Do not say in your heart,” which manages to incorporate a slight allusion to Deut 9:4. The context of that passage reminds Israel that God is not giving them the land because of their righteousness.)

Deut 30:12–14 ¹²	Paul’s application in Rom 10:6–10
Do not say, “Who will ascend to heaven?” ¹³ (to bring down Torah, God’s gift; 30:12)	Do not say, “Who will ascend to heaven?” (to bring down Christ, God’s gift; 10:6)
Do not say, “Who will descend into the deep?” (to experience redemption again, crossing the “sea”; 30:13)	Do not say, “Who will descend into the abyss?” ¹⁴ (to experience salvation again, raising Christ from the dead; 10:7)
The Word is near you (the Torah; 30:14)	The word is near you (the message of faith we now preach; 10:8)
It is in your mouth and in your heart (30:14; as Torah was to be recited continually [Deut 6:6–7])	It is in your mouth and in your heart: confess with the mouth Jesus is Lord, and believe with the heart that God raised him (10:9–10)

Paul argues by analogy from God’s salvation and word in Moses’s era to God’s way of saving and God’s word in Paul’s own era of the new covenant.¹⁵ The law was not too difficult for Israel (Deut 30:11), provided it was written in the heart (Deut 5:29; 10:16; 30:6). Paul agrees (Rom 8:2–4), while expecting this heart-writing to be fulfilled widely only in the new covenant (Jer 31:33; cf. Ps 37:31; 40:8; 119:80, 112; Isa 51:7). Just as Israel did not bring the gift of God’s righteous law near by their own ability (Deut 30:12–13), so God’s righteousness is a gift. Just as God prefaced the Ten Commandments with a reminder of redemption (Exod 20:2), so now salvation from sin remained by grace through trust in God’s word, expressed by embracing his word. The heart trusts what God has done for

¹²I borrow this chart from Keener, *Romans*, 126.

¹³In later Jewish traditions, Moses ascended all the way to heaven to receive the Torah (*Sipre Deut.* 49.2.1).

¹⁴The lxx uses this term at times for the depths of the sea (e.g., Job 28:14; 38:16, 30; Ps 33:7; Sir 24:29; Pr Man 3), sometimes, as here, in contrast to heaven (Ps 107:26).

¹⁵The parallel between Christ and law here makes sense in view of early Christian association of Jesus with wisdom (e.g., 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15–17; later, John 1:1–18); wisdom was often associated with Torah (Sir 24:23; 34:8; 39:1; Bar 3:29–4:1; 4 Macc 1:16–17; *Sipre Deut.* 37.1.3). As Paul surely knew, Bar 3:29–30 in fact applies this very Deuteronomy passage to wisdom/law.

salvation, and the mouth acknowledges Christ as Lord.

II. THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW: CONTINUING PRINCIPLES, ADJUSTED CONTENT

Even apart from his Christocentric gospel, Paul's approach to the law reads it in a wider perspective than that of many of his Jewish contemporaries. The principles of the law endure, but because God gave the law in a specific cultural setting and for specific circumstances in salvation history, the specifics of obedience look different in different times.

1. *Both different and the same.* The God of the OT remains the same God in the NT and today, despite addressing different sorts of circumstances. Salvation has always been by grace through faith, expressed by following his message (Gen 15:6; cf. 6:8). God chose Israel not because of their righteousness (Deut 9:4–6) or their greatness, but because of his love (Deut 7:7–9; cf. Eph 2:8–10). The God of Deuteronomy longs for our obedience for our good (Deut 5:29; 30:19–20); likewise, Paul expects us to express genuine faith by obedience (Rom 1:5; 16:25). God writes his law in the hearts of his people by the Spirit (Rom 8:2; cf. 2 Cor 3:3); as participants in a new creation, we should live new life by God's gift of righteousness (Rom 6:4, 11).¹⁶

This does not mean that nothing has changed. In Scripture, covenant faithfulness is always expressed through obedience; it grows from a relationship with God initiated by God himself. Yet the specific content of obedience may change from one era to another, not only in response to changes in culture, but in response to developments in God's revelation or his plan in history. In Moses's day, no one could protest, "Since Abraham did not keep the law against planting trees in worship, neither will I" (cf. Gen 21:33; Deut 16:21), or, "Since Jacob could marry sisters, so can I" (cf. Gen 29:30; Lev 18:18), or, "Since Jacob could set up a pillar for worship, so can I" (cf. Gen 28:22; 31:13; 35:14; Lev 26:1; Deut 16:22).

Likewise, the coming of Jesus the promised deliverer changed the relevance of specific content, shifting the emphasis from some outward signs of the covenant to fuller inner transformation (cf. Rom 2:29; Col 2:16–17; Heb 8:5; 10:1) by the promised eschatological Spirit (Ezek 36:27). For that matter (as some other Jewish interpreters also recognized), some stipulations of the Torah could not be observed literally once the temple was destroyed,

¹⁶See at greater length Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016).

or outside the Holy Land, or in non-agrarian settings. No one by Paul's day, or for that matter by Ezekiel's day, could honestly expect otherwise.

2. *Spirit of the law in ancient Israel.* Long before Jesus came, Scripture already illustrated the difference between following God legalistically and following him from the heart. Jewish sages widely recognized this principle, even if they usually did not take it as far as Jesus did.¹⁷

One finds examples, for instance, in the life of Saul. After God gives Israel a great victory through Jonathan's courage and faith (1 Sam 14:6–12), Saul wants to kill him to honor a fast that Saul has declared (14:24, 43–45)—a fast that proves to be a bad idea anyway (14:29–34). Whereas Saul refuses to enforce the full *herem* on the Amalekites and their animals, which God had commanded (1 Sam 15:3, 14–29), he slaughters all the priests and their animals, the antithesis of God's will (22:18–19). This is because the high priest gave bread (21:4–6) to David, a man after God's heart (13:14) whom Saul feared. The priest giving David sacred bread, incidentally, is used by Jesus to illustrate his principle of meeting hunger over always observing ritual demands (Mark 2:26; Matt 12:3–4; cf. John 2:3–10); Jesus and his hearers naturally favor the high priest over Saul. Saul's zeal for Israel leads him to kill Gibeonites (2 Sam 21:2) despite the ancestral covenant (Josh 9:19–20), and thereby brings judgment against Israel and ultimately Saul's own household (2 Sam 21:1, 6).

When Hezekiah and his princes realize that not enough priests will be ready to sacrifice the Passover for all the people, they reschedule the Passover (2 Chr 30:2–5). The participation of more of the people is more valuable in God's sight than the specific date; moreover, in response to Hezekiah's prayer, God overlooks that many of the people, though seeking God, have not consecrated themselves ritually beforehand (30:17–20). The narrative is clear that God favors Hezekiah and this Passover celebration (30:12, 20, 27). The people come closer to fulfilling the spirit of the law here than they have done for generations, and God is pleased despite several breaches of ritual practice.¹⁸

Compare also the priest and the Levite in Jesus's story of the Good Samaritan. Priests and Levites could render themselves ritually impure by

¹⁷Cf. later rabbis' comments on the different kinds of Pharisees in *m. Sot.* 3:4; *Ab. R. Nat.* 37A; 45, §124B; *b. Sot.* 22b; *y. Sot.* 5:5, §2; George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, 3 vols. (New York: Schocken, 1971), 2:193.

¹⁸This is not to say that God ordinarily welcomed such breaches; disrespect to God's presence in the ark brought death (2 Sam 6:6–8; 1 Chr 13:9–11; 15:2, 15), and God was angry with those who appointed priests who were not Levites (1 Kgs 12:32; 13:33; 2 Chr 11:14).

touching a dead body, and the victim beside the road appears to be quite possibly dead (Luke 10:30).¹⁹ These ministers are not heading to Jerusalem to serve, but back to Jericho, where many wealthy priests lived; nevertheless, they do not risk helping someone who might be dead anyway. Instead, a despised Samaritan rescues the Jewish stranger (10:33–35).²⁰ The context of the passage that Jesus is explaining (Lev 19:18; Luke 10:27) includes loving foreigners in the land (Lev 19:34).

In today's language, the spirit of the law often took precedence over its details (or in some of these cases, over other attempted expressions of zeal). In Romans 7, Paul depicts a wrong approach to the law, based on the mind knowing what is right without having a new, pure identity in Christ. In contrast to the expectations of some ancient thinkers, merely knowing what was right did not produce right volition as long as the mind found itself subject to the passions rather than empowered by God's Spirit.²¹

By contrast, we can live according to the spirit of the law by the Holy Spirit in our hearts (Rom 8:2).²² The prophet Ezekiel had already promised that God would wash the hearts of his people and give them new hearts and spirits. By his Spirit in them they would fulfill his laws (Ezek 36:25–27). Paul was not the only early Christian writer to recognize this. When John refers to being born of water and one's spirit being born of the Spirit, he plainly evokes Ezekiel's promise (John 3:5–6); he goes on to compare God's Spirit with wind in 3:8, an image from Ezekiel's following chapter (Ezek 37:9–14). Fulfilling God's covenant stipulations by the Spirit *looks*

¹⁹For people who are "half-dead" appearing as if dead in ancient sources, see Euripides, *Alcestis* 141–43; Apollodorus, *Bibl.* 3.6.8; Callimachus, *Hymn 6* (to Demeter), line 59; Nepos, *Pausanias* 5.4; Livy 23.15.8; 40.4.15; Catullus 50.15; Quintus Curtius Rufus 4.8.8; Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 6; for further details on the parable, see Craig S. Keener, "Some New Testament Invitations to Ethnic Reconciliation," *EvQ* 75, no. 3 (2003): 202–7.

²⁰Some suggest that the Samaritan's action is all the more shocking because of other Jewish parables in which the third and righteous actor is an Israelite (Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 2nd rev. ed. [New York: Scribner's, 1972], 203).

²¹See here Keener, *Mind*, chs. 2–4, esp. ch. 3.

²²Patristic interpreters often welcomed the ethos of the law while rejecting its ceremonial aspects (see e.g., Ambrosiaster in Karla Pollmann and Mark W. Elliott, "Galatians in the Early Church: Five Case Studies," in *Galatians*, ed. Elliott et al., 46–47). Some distinguished between commandments of universal moral import and those limited to Israel (e.g., Theodoret, *Epistle to the Galatians* 2.15–16 in Edwards, *Galatians*, 29). This recognition does not require us to suppose that Paul's "works of the law" be limited only to ceremonial law, the position of Origen, Jerome, and Erasmus opposed by Augustine, Luther, and Calvin (see John M. Barclay, *Paul & the Gift* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015], 103–4, 121; Timothy Wengert, "Martin Luther on Galatians 3:6–14: Justification by Curses and Blessings," in *Galatians*, ed. Elliott et al., 101; Scott Hafemann, "Yacine: Yes and No to Luther's Reading of Galatians 3:6–14," in *Galatians*, ed. Elliott et al., 119).

different from the old way of keeping commandments.

3. *The heart of the law.* The Torah itself included statements that summarized the heart of what God wanted most (Deut 10:12–13), and so did the prophets (Mic 6:8). Later tradition claimed that the early Jewish sage Hillel summarized the heart of the law in a manner similar to Jesus’s teaching that we call the golden rule (Luke 6:31; esp. Matt 7:12).²³ First-century sages also debated which commandment was the greatest; although no consensus was achieved (the most common was apparently honor of parents), one rabbi later than Jesus came close to his view, citing love of neighbor.²⁴ Jesus’s joint emphasis on love of God and love of neighbor (Mark 12:28–34),²⁵ however, became a distinctive hallmark for his movement. Others valued love, but multiple circles of Jesus’s followers consistently highlighted this as the supreme commandment (Rom 13:9–10; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8; cf. 1 Cor 13:13).

III. APPLYING PAUL’S PRINCIPLES

Although Paul affirms that believers are not under the law in the sense of needing it for justification, he does expect believers to fulfill the moral principles of the law. Unfortunately, Christians disagree widely among ourselves on how to distinguish transcultural principles from their concrete applications, on the degree of continuity between the law enshrined in the Pentateuch, and on what rules we should follow as Christians.

Despite disputes regarding details, certainly we can look for areas of continuity, for example, eternal principles (albeit expressed in concrete cultural forms), as Jesus did. We can look for God’s heart in the Torah (e.g., in Exod 33:19–34:7). Similarly, the Spirit was often dramatically active in ancient Israel (e.g., 1 Sam 10:5–6, 10; 19:20–24), including in prophetically inspired worship (1 Chr 25:1–3); surely in the new covenant era (Acts 2:17–18) we should expect not less but more experience of the eschatologically outpoured Spirit.

Romans 14 suggests that Paul does not require Gentile Christians to practice the *kashrut*, or food purity customs, that were meant to separate Israel from the nations (Deut 14:2–3).²⁶ His remarks about special holy

²³See e.g., *b. Shab.* 31a; fuller discussion in Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 248–49.

²⁴*Sipra Qed.* pq. 4.200.3.7; fuller discussion in Keener, *Matthew*, 531.

²⁵Other Jewish teachers often linked texts based on a common key term or phrase; in this case, both texts in the Torah begin with, “You shall love” (Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18).

²⁶The principles of being set apart for God and that even our eating and drinking should glorify

days (Rom 14:5–6; cf. Gal 4:10; Col 2:16) appear more complicated. If Paul includes the Sabbath here, how do we reconcile his theology here with other parts of Scripture?²⁷ God himself models the Sabbath principle for Israel in creation (Gen 2:2–3); it does not begin with Moses. Sabbath violation incurs a death penalty under the law (Exod 31:14–15; 35:2; Num 15:32–36), so it appears to be among the offenses that God takes quite seriously. God promises to welcome Gentiles into his covenant, provided they observe his Sabbaths (Isa 56:6–7). Jesus used his authority to clarify the ideal character of the Sabbath in some respects (e.g., Mark 2:25–28), but he did not explicitly abolish it.²⁸

If Paul supports the spirit of the law, would he change one of the Ten Commandments with no explanation? Perhaps Paul recognized that most slaves and Gentiles could not get off work. Perhaps Paul is being flexible about how the Sabbath should be observed (for example, on which day, although Acts continues to apply the term consistently to the day of its regular observance—Acts 13:14, 27, 42, 44; 15:21; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4). Perhaps, and I think this somewhat more likely, Paul was saying that it was all right to revere special days such as the Sabbath (as among most Jewish believers) but all right also if one revered every day. In the case of the Sabbath, this would mean that we would devote not only one special day a week to God, but seek to devote all our time to him. One caveat should be noted here: using the continual Sabbath idea as an excuse not to rest at all, as I suspect some busy Christians do, defeats the still-valid point for which God originally instituted the Sabbath.

In any case, the biblical Sabbath principle applied to livestock and agricultural land as well as to people (Exod 20:10; 23:11–12; Lev 25:4; Deut 5:14), probably on the principle that living things need time to rest and rejuvenate. We are created beings who must acknowledge our good limitations. It is therefore at least wise, whatever one's theology on the particulars, that humans observe a day of rest.

Most matters are less difficult to resolve than the Sabbath question. To further understand Paul's approach to the law, it is valuable to digress to

God remain, but they are expressed differently.

²⁷For four views of the Sabbath, see Charles P. Arand, et al. *Perspectives on the Sabbath: 4 Views* (Nashville: B&H, 2011).

²⁸The text sometimes cited for its abolition (John 5:18) in fact reflects the interpretation of Jesus's enemies, an interpretation probably subverted in Jesus's following discourse (see esp. 5:19, 30; further discussion in Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003], 1:645–46).

examine the law itself. Its principles invite interpreters to sensitively apply it in new ways when it moves beyond the settings for which its concrete forms were first designed.

IV. INTERPRETING BIBLICAL LAW

Jesus's and Paul's hermeneutics value the law's principles over culture-specific applications—although it must be admitted that in practice there is a wide range of difference among interpreters today over which are the universal principles and which are the culture-specific applications.²⁹

1. *Comparing Israel's laws with those of her neighbors.* If we compare Israel's law with those of Israel's neighbors, we quickly find shared legal categories as well as some differences in ethics. The shared categories show us what kinds of issues ancient Near Eastern legal collections normally addressed.³⁰

Despite a shared legal milieu and thus many parallels, there are some noteworthy contrasts. The Ten Commandments lack any exact parallel; usually the closest cited parallels are a much longer Egyptian list of Negative Confessions, which also include such praiseworthy denials as, "I have never eaten human dung."³¹ Another major contrast was the matter of social rank. All other ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean legal collections included class-based penalties with respect to victims and perpetrators.³² Israel has the only known ancient Near Eastern legal collection that refuses to take class into account (with the exception of the division between slave and free, noted below).

Some laws might openly oppose contemporary customs or ideas; thus Exod 22:19, Lev 20:15–16, and Deut 27:21 condemn human intercourse with animals, even though pagan myths depict deities sometimes turning into animals before intercourse.³³ Sacrificing to other gods is a capital offense in Exod 22:20, but nearly all surrounding cultures promoted it.

²⁹For two helpful attempts to model a way through the morass, see Willard M. Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women: Case studies in biblical interpretation* (Scottsdale: Herald, 1983); William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (foreword by Darrell L. Bock; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001).

³⁰I chart some of these categories, with similarities and differences, in Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics*, 225–30, a work on which I draw in this section.

³¹For some parallels and contrasts, see e.g., Bruce Wells, "Exodus," in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, ed. John Walton (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 1:227, 230.

³²E.g., Hammurabi 196–206 (*ANET2*, 175).

³³"Poems about Baal and Anath," I*AB, v (*ANET2*, 139); cf. Greco-Roman myth in e.g., Varro, *Latin Language* 5.5.31.

Surrounding cultures exploited various forms of divination,³⁴ but in Israel it was a capital offense and is expressly contrasted with the behavior of surrounding nations (Deut 18:9–14).

Some contrasts appear among significant formal commonalities. Canaanites, like Israelites, had thank offerings, atonement offerings, sin offerings, and so forth, but Canaanites also had sacrifices to produce rain and fertility, whereas Israel's fertility came through observing God's covenant.³⁵ Israel had ritual purity laws about what was clean and unclean, but Hittites used such rules as magical prophylaxis against demons.³⁶ Most cultures had food prohibitions; Israel's are distinctive to keep them separate from the nations (cf. Lev 11:44–45; Deut 14:2–3), a separation no longer needed for believers under the new covenant, since they are consecrated and empowered for mission.

2. *Concessions to human sinfulness.* Jesus regarded some regulations as concessions to human sinfulness: "Moses gave you this commandment because your hearts were hard" (Mark 10:5).³⁷ Jesus taught that God's ideal was actually higher than the requirements of the law, which often made accommodations for human sinfulness. Thus the law regulated and limited sin rather than changed hearts and all mores.

Thus some laws are less than God's ideal. Take, for example, indentured servants. If a slaveholder beats the slave there is punishment, analogous to that of a free person (Exod 21:18–21).³⁸ But the slave is still called the slaveholder's "money" (Exod 21:21); that is, the slaveholder paid money for the slave. Likewise, sexual abuse of slave women was punished but not

³⁴E.g., Gen 44:5; "Taanach," 1 (fifteenth century BCE; *ANET2*, 490); Assyrian "Hymn to the Sun-God" (c. 668–633 BCE; *ANET2*, 388); Hittite "Investigating the Anger of the Gods" (*ANET2*, 497–98); "The Telepinus Myth" (*ANET2*, 128); "Aqhat," C.2 (*ANET*, 153); "Akkadian Observations on Life and the World Order" (*ANET2*, 434).

³⁵Cf. similar terminology and sometimes concepts for Canaanite sacrifices, plus some differences, in Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Lord: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 29; Richard E. Averbeck, "Sacrifices and Offerings," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, eds. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003), 712, 715–16, 718, 720; Anson F. Rainey, "Sacrifice and Offerings," in *The Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible*, rev. ed., eds. Merrill C. Tenney and Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 5:236–37.

³⁶John H. Walton et al., *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000), 25–26; Roy E. Gane, "Leviticus," in *Zondervan Backgrounds Commentary*, 1:287.

³⁷For a similar yet limited approach in the rabbis, see David Daube, "Concessions to Sinfulness in Jewish Law," *JJS* 10 (1959): 1–13 (esp. 10).

³⁸This rule treats the slave better than in some surrounding cultures. See Hammurabi 213–14; Eshnunna 23; also, Roman law in Boaz Cohen, *Jewish and Roman Law: A Comparative Study*, 2 vols (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America Press, 1966), 4.

as severely as if the slave were free (cf. Lev 19:20 with Deut 22:25–26).³⁹ The law did not institute or ratify slavery; instead, it regulated and thus reduced abuses in a contemporary custom. But despite the abolition of class differences among free persons, the law did not abolish the distinction between slave and free, in contrast to NT teaching (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28; Eph 6:8; Col 3:11). Likewise, the law regulates polygyny (prohibiting sororal polygyny and royal polygyny; Lev 18:18; Deut 17:17) rather than abolishing it. Many also place holy war in this category.⁴⁰

In *no* society do civil laws represent the ideal of virtue; they are simply a minimum standard to enable society to work together. Israel's laws at least limited sin, and they often, though not on every matter, did so more than surrounding cultures (e.g., by Israelites being expected to offer refuge to escaped slaves⁴¹ and to avoid judging by class divisions). To some extent, later rabbis recognized this: They legislated by extrapolating civil laws for particular cases, but at least in their legal traditions (later recorded especially in the Mishnah and Talmuds), they did so primarily as lawyers rather than as ethicists. Yet both Israel's history and ways that many Muslims in areas of *sharia* law circumvent it show that external laws by themselves are insufficient to transform hearts, even if in certain periods they may improve the social conditions that affect hearts. For Paul, only Christ in the heart *delivers* us from sin, and even most genuinely committed Christians do not walk in the light of that reality continually.

We thus need to be careful how we extrapolate ethics from law. Jesus was clear that God's morality is higher than the law. Whereas Israel's civil law said, "You shall not kill" or "commit adultery," Jesus said, "You shall not *want* to kill" or "*want* to commit adultery" (Matt 5:21–29). Attention to the laws' *genre* allows us to read them in the larger context of God's character and intention as the NT does.

3. *Understanding and applying God's law.* God originally gave these laws to an ancient Near Eastern people addressing a different legal milieu than ours today, although subsequent legal systems have retained many legal categories and approaches, such as *lex talionis*, issues of negligence and liability, demands for evidence, and consideration of intention.

³⁹Though the point could be protecting the slave, since she was abused rather than guilty, it also exempts her abuser from the level of punishment meted out to one who rapes a free person.

⁴⁰Cf. William Sanford LaSor, David Allan Hubbard, and Frederic W. Bush, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 148.

⁴¹Contrast Deut 23:15 with Eshnunna 49; Lipit-Ishtar 12–13; esp. Hammurabi 15–16.

Culture determined the legal issues to be addressed, but not necessarily the content. Capital sentences reveal some issues that the law took quite seriously. It prescribed death sentences for murder, sorcery, idolatry and blasphemy, Sabbath violation, persistent drunken rebellion against parents, kidnapping (slave trading), and sex outside of marriage (adultery, premarital sex with a man other than one's future husband, same-sex intercourse, and intercourse with animals). No one would suggest that Israel's laws invite us to execute capital punishment for these offenses in the church today; this was a civil law with penalties intended as deterrents in society (Deut 13:10–11; 17:12–13; 19:18–20; 21:21). Nevertheless, they do suggest that Israel's God deemed all of these offenses serious; otherwise, he presumably would have deemed execution too excessive.

But does this mean that God did not take other offenses seriously? Would it not be far better to abolish slavery than to merely regulate it?⁴² Remember that Jesus demands an ethic higher than the law, such as avoiding desiring another's spouse, breaking one's marriage, and the like.

Some principles in the law are stated overtly in ways that easily translate beyond local culture—the Ten Commandments, for example (apodictic rather than casuistic law). The law also includes other explicit principles based on God's values, such as the following:

- be kind to foreigners in the land for you were foreigners in Egypt (Lev 19:34; Deut 10:19),
- love your neighbor as yourself (Lev 19:18),
- ethical principles *behind* the mere limitations of sin, and
- God seeking to inculcate character in his people by how they habitually treat other creatures: Don't muzzle the threshing ox (Deut 25:4), don't take a mother bird with her young (Deut 22:6), and give Sabbath rest to your animals (Exod 23:12; Deut 5:14).

In other cases, however, recontextualizing the message requires more careful consideration. For example, tithing was already an ancient Near Eastern custom⁴³ and is only one facet of a much larger network of teaching

⁴²Probably the Pauline ideal points in this direction; cf. Craig S. Keener and Glenn Usry, *Defending Black Faith* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1997), 37–41.

⁴³E.g., tithes to rulers in 1 Sam 8:15–17; Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, 2 vols., trans. John MacHugh (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 140; corporate, agrarian tithes on Canaanite villages in M. Heltzer, "On Tithe Paid in Grain in Ugarit," *IEJ* 25, no. 2–3 (1975):

about stewardship in the Torah. The tithes went to support the landless priests and Levites and for a festival every third year (e.g., Deut 14:22–23; 26:12). Jesus articulates demands for stewardship more exacting than the Torah: We and therefore everything we have belongs to God (Luke 12:33; 14:33). Scrupulous tithing cannot supplant greater biblical demands such as justice and love (Matt 23:23; Luke 11:32; cf. Luke 18:12).

V. THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD OF LOVE

The supposed contrast between the NT God of love and the OT God of wrath owes more to Marcion than to the principles of the Torah. The civil and ritual laws in the Torah expressed divine righteousness in a limited but culturally relevant way. Ultimately, however, the Torah already revealed God's heart in many respects. The theology of Deuteronomy emphasizes God loving and choosing his people (Deut 7:6–9; 4:37; 9:5–6; 10:15; 14:2). Love for God likewise demands obedience (6:4–6; 11:1; 19:9; 30:16) and fidelity to God (avoiding false gods, 6:4–5; 13:6–10). God summons his people to circumcise their hearts (10:16; cf. Lev 26:41; Jer 4:4; 9:26) and promises to circumcise their hearts so they may love him fully (Deut 30:6).

The God of the OT period did not undergo evangelical conversion just prior to the NT. He had often called his people to himself for their own good (Jer 2:13; Hos 13:9). He lamented with the pain of spurned love or a forsaken parent when his people turned after other gods (Deut 32:18; Jer 3:1–2; Hos 1:2; 11:1–4), but yearned to restore them to himself (Jer 31:20; Hos 2:14–23). His heart broke when he had to punish his people (e.g., Judg 10:16; Hos 11:8–9).

Israel's loving God, her betrayed and wounded lover, is ultimately fully revealed in Jesus as the God of the cross, the God who would rather bear our judgment than let us be estranged from him forever. Paul and other NT writers thus embraced the spirit of the law far more effectively than did their detractors.



124–28. Cf. also Greek and Roman usage (e.g., the dedication in Valerius Maximus 1.1. ext. 4; Tertullian, *Apologeticus* 14.1); for a tithe of grain as tribute to Rome, see Cicero, *In Verrem* 2.3.5.12; 2.3.6.13–15. For a tenth of military plunder dedicated to deities, see Gen 14:20; Xenophon, *Anabasis* 5.3.4, 9, 13; *Hellenica* 4.3.21; Valerius Maximus 5.6.8; Plutarch, *Camillus* 7.4–5 (for a tenth of plunder offered to a brave warrior, Plutarch, *Marcus Coriolanus* 10.2).

THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Dana M. Harris*

The prevalence of the OT is one of the most striking features of the Epistle to the Hebrews. No other NT book, with the exception of the Book of Revelation, comes close in its appropriation of the OT.¹ In addition to direct quotations, the author assumes an extensive understanding of the OT on the part of his readers, confident that they will grasp allusions to OT events without explanation.² In addition to familiar OT events and people, such as the wilderness generation that was prohibited from entering the land due to disobedience, the author also draws upon less well-known events and people, such as Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek, to advance his argument. In addition to citations, allusions, and an assumed understanding of the OT, the author also uses a variety of (often sophisticated) means to appropriate the OT, such as Hellenistic Jewish exegetical techniques (e.g., "chain quotations," midrash, exempla), typology, and early Christian exegetical approaches. The saturation of Hebrews with the OT is one reason why the epistle is often neglected—to understand Hebrews, one must understand the OT. In fact, Hebrews is perhaps one of the most helpful insights into how the early church read and interpreted its Scripture.³

Unfortunately, the use of the OT in Hebrews has not always been

¹Cf. George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 919.

²It is probable that the author was male (e.g., Heb 11:32; cf. Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012], 2–3), hence masculine pronouns are used to refer to the author.

³Clearly, "OT" is anachronistic from the perspective of the author of Hebrews. My preferred term is "Scripture," although I use both terms. See Richard B. Hays and Joel B. Green, "The Use of the Old Testament by New Testament Writers," in *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*, ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 222–38; Christopher R. Seitz, "Old Testament or Hebrew Bible? Some Theological Considerations," in *Word without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 61–74.

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assessed positively. Some claim that the author appropriates Scripture without regard for its original context (e.g., Ps 40 in Heb 10); others disparage the use of etymologies (e.g., Heb 7:1–3). Thus, one aim of this article is to demonstrate the high regard for the original context (both historical and literary) that the author of Hebrews had in his appropriation of the OT.

This article will first consider the number of OT citations in Hebrews and the textual sources that the author used. I will then discuss the author's understanding of the nature of Scripture and some related hermeneutical assumptions. Then I will survey several exegetical techniques that the author uses in his appropriation of the OT. Finally, I will consider some of the author's other hermeneutical assumptions and their implications for our contemporary understanding of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

I. THE NUMBER OF CITATIONS AND THE TEXTUAL SOURCES USED

There are varying figures offered for the number of OT citations in Hebrews, due mainly to the fact that some passages are quoted more than once and in part because citations, allusions, and other references to the OT can be hard to determine precisely.⁴ Gareth Lee Cockerill, limiting his count to those places in which the author explicitly uses an introductory formula, lists twenty-eight different OT passages cited in Hebrews. Because several are quoted more than once in different parts of the epistle, he arrives at a final number of 32 OT citations.⁵ Ultimately, determining the exact number of citations is less important than understanding how these citations function in the argument and structure of Hebrews, as the rest of this article will hopefully demonstrate.

It is generally agreed that the author accessed the OT only by means of a Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures. Indeed, some parts of the

⁴For example, William L. Lane, *Hebrews* 1–8, WBC, 47a (Nashville: Nelson, 1991), cxvi, claims there are thirty-seven; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 164, lists thirty-eight; Simon Kistemaker, *The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Amsterdam: W. G. Van Soest, 196), 16, counts thirty-two; and George B. Caird, “The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *CJT* 5 (1959): 47, counts twenty-nine. George H. Guthrie, “Hebrews,” 919, counts “thirty-seven quotations, forty allusion, nineteen cases where OT material is summarized, and thirteen where an OT name of topic is referred to without reference to a specific context.”

⁵Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 41–42. Here he helpfully lists every explicit quotation, although he omits some quotations that are quoted a second time in Hebrews (e.g., Ps 95:11 in Heb 4:3, 5). See esp. the extensive chart of OT quotations, allusions, summaries, and references in Guthrie, “Old Testament in Hebrews,” in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, eds. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove: IVP, 1997), 846–49.

author's argument do depend on the Greek text.⁶ Radu Gheorghita has shown, however, that the author's *theological* points were not necessarily dependent upon the Greek text. In other words, these conclusions could also be made based on a careful observation of the Hebrew text.⁷ Some scholars have sought to determine which LXX recension the author drew upon,⁸ although recent scholarship increasingly suggests that the author has modified the Greek text in ways that amplify his argument and thus introduces readings that do not agree with known Greek versions.⁹

The citation of Ps 95:7–11 (94:7–11 LXX) in Heb 3:7–11 is a good example of apparently deliberate modifications of the Greek text. In this citation, there are three significant variations between the LXX text and its citation in Hebrews.¹⁰ In Heb 3:9, the verb *edokimasan* (“they tested”) in the LXX is changed to the prepositional phrase *en dokimasia* (“by testing”) modifying *epeirasan* (“they tried”), thereby emphasizing that the wilderness generation tested God.¹¹ The second variant occurs in v. 10

⁶Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 23, notes that some arguments in Hebrews only “work” because of the Greek text of the OT. Cf. Kistemaker: “[I]t is superfluous to mention that the use of the LXX version presented far more hermeneutical possibilities than the MT could provide” (*Psalms Citations*, 74).

⁷Radu Gheorghita, *The Role of the Septuagint in Hebrews*, WUNT 2/160 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 230. He notes that it “would be extremely difficult to confidently conclude that the Author’s use of the OT is what it is *exclusively because* the Author used the Septuagint.”

⁸For discussion of possible text types, Kenneth J. Thomas, “The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews,” *NTS* 11 (1965): 320; cf. Friedrich Schröger, *Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes als Schriftausleger* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1968), 247–51. For the complexity of determining Hebrews’s *Vorlage*, see J. C. McCullough, “The Old Testament Quotations in Hebrews,” *NTS* 26 (1979–1980): 363–79; cf. Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, cxviii. R. Timothy McLay, “Biblical Texts and the Scriptures for the New Testament Church,” in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 55, discusses the “pluriformity” of the OT texts in Hebrews. The term *Septuagint* (LXX) is used as “shorthand” to refer to whichever Greek version of the OT was used by the author, although this term is problematic; e.g., R. Timothy McLay, *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 5–7; Gheorghita, *Role of the Septuagint*, 7; Leonard Greenspoon, “The Use and Abuse of the Term ‘LXX’ and Related Terminology in Recent Scholarship,” *BIOSSCS* 20 (1987): 28; David M. Moffitt, “The Interpretation of Scripture in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” in *Reading the Epistle to the Hebrews: A Resource for Students*, eds. Eric F. Mason and Kevin B. McCrudden, *Resources for Biblical Studies* 66 (Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 78–81.

⁹See, for example, Dale F. Leschert, *Hermeneutical Foundations of Hebrews: A Study in the Validity of the Epistle’s Interpretation of Some Core Citations from the Psalms* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1994), 245–47; Herbert W. Bateman IV, *Early Jewish Hermeneutics and Hebrews 1:5–13: The Impact of Early Jewish Exegesis on the Interpretation of a Significant New Testament Passage* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 240.

¹⁰There are several differences between the chapter/verse references in the LXX and English translations. For example, Psalm 94 in the LXX is Psalm 95 in English Bible. These differences will be noted as necessary in this article.

¹¹So also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 115; Guthrie, “Hebrews,” 954–55; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 173–80. Hebrews 3:9 reads: *ou epeirasan hoi pateres hymōn en dokimasia* (“where your ancestors tested

with the insertion of *dio* (“therefore”) before *prosōchthisa*, (“I was angry”), which forces *tesserakonta etē* (“forty years”) of v. 10 to be read with *eidon ta erga mou* (“they saw my works”) in v. 9.¹² This shift also stresses the wilderness generation’s testing and observation of God’s works. The final variant concerns the near demonstrative *tautē* in v. 10, which replaces the far demonstrative *ekeinē* in the LXX.¹³ This change appears to make the psalm more urgent for the present audience. Although it is possible that the author had access to a Greek recension that contained these readings, the alterations all strengthen the author’s argument and add force to his exhortation. Elsewhere, I have argued that, by introducing this psalm in terms of the Spirit speaking, these alterations to the LXX text suggest that the Spirit is not only the inspiration of the original text, but that he is also the true interpreter of the original text in its application to the contemporary audience. Similar observations obtain for the re-citation of Jer 31:33–34 in Heb 10:15–17, which is also introduced in terms of the Spirit speaking.¹⁴ There are also passages in which the LXX text has effectively also been altered for stylistic or homiletical reasons as well as theological ones, such as the citation of Ps 40:6–8 in Heb 10:5–7.¹⁵

II. HERMENEUTICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

Perhaps one of the most remarkable aspects of the use of the OT in Hebrews is the author’s profound realization that the OT is not only God’s word that was once uttered and then inscripturated, but this word *continues to speak* at the present time.¹⁶ An excellent example of this occurs with the citation of Ps 95:7–11 in Heb 3:7–11. The psalm’s opening exhortation, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Ps 95:7–8), is presented as an exhortation to the author’s contemporary readers, hundreds

by testing”); whereas the LXX reads: *ou epeirasan hoi pateres hymōn, edokimasan* (“where your ancestors tested, they tried [me]”).

¹²E.g., “they saw my works for forty years, therefore...” The text of Hebrews reads: *kai ta erga mou tesserakonta etē dio prosōchthisa tē genea tautē*; the LXX reads: *kai eidosan ta erga mou tesserakonta etē prosōchthisa tē genea ekeinē*.

¹³In the text cited in n. 12, the demonstratives are underlined.

¹⁴Dana M. Harris, “‘Today if You Hear My Voice’: The Spirit Speaking in Hebrews—Implications for Inerrancy,” *Presbyterion* 45 (2019): 108–27.

¹⁵See Karen H. Jobes, “Rhetorical Achievement in the Hebrews 10 ‘Misquote’ of Psalm 40,” *Bib 72* (1991): 393. See also the challenge to this argument by Jared M. Compton, “The Origin of *sōma* in Heb 10:5: Another Look at a Recent Proposal,” *TJ* 32 (2011): 19–20.

¹⁶Cf. the somewhat related claim in Graham Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics*, SNTSMS 36 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

of years after the psalm was originally written.¹⁷ Thus, God's words spoken previously continue to speak "as long as it is still called 'today'" (Heb 3:13). Even promises formerly uttered in the OT are understood to apply to the contemporary audience (e.g., Heb 4:1). Remarkably, the author even claims that the oath added to the Abrahamic promises in Gen 22:16 (6:14–18) was not for Abraham's benefit, but for the assurance and encouragement of his descendants, understood in the epistle in terms of the contemporary audience (Heb 2:16).

One of the ways the author indicates that God's word is still speaking is with the introductory formulas that he uses, which always employ speaking verbs, especially forms of the verb *legō*.¹⁸ This clearly contrasts with the Pauline Epistles, where Scripture citations are usually introduced with writing verbs, especially the formulaic *gegraptai* (e.g., Rom 14:11; Gal 3:13). Hebrews also contrasts with the Gospels (e.g., Mark 1:2; Luke 20:17; John 19:24), which often also use writing verbs to introduce Scripture citations to confirm or explain a previously made point, at times in ways that parallel Paul's citation of Scripture. Thus, in Hebrews, Scripture is presented as the very words spoken by God that continue to speak (and thus must be heeded) at the present time.¹⁹

There are also clear Christological implications that flow from the author's understanding of Scripture. Consider, for example, Heb 1:1–2: "At many times and in many ways, in the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets—in these last days he has spoken to us by [the] Son."²⁰ The given in these verses is that God speaks; the contrast is between how he has spoken in the past and how he is now speaking. As I have written elsewhere: "Here there is both continuity and discontinuity.

¹⁷Although it is common to apply the comments pertaining to the word of God in Heb 4:12 to the word of God in the entire Bible, it is likely that the author primarily limited them (in their first application) to this exhortation from Psalm 95. Consider also that Moses testified to things that were to be *spoken* later (3:5).

¹⁸Kenneth Schenck, "God Has Spoken: Hebrews' Theology of Scripture," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 321, n. 1, notes the following: *laleō* occurs 16 times; *legō*, 32 times; and *logos*, 12 times. See also Daniel J. Treier, "Speech Acts, Hearing Hearts, and Other Senses: The Doctrine of Scripture Practiced in Scripture," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 337–50. See also Daniel J. Treier and Christopher Atwood, "The Living Word versus the Proof Text? Hebrews in Modern Systematic Theology," in *Christology, Hermeneutics, and Hebrews: Profiles from the History of Interpretation*, eds. Jon C. Laansma and Daniel J. Treier, LNTS 423 (New York: T&T Clark, 2012), 192; George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews' Use of Old Testament: Recent Trends in Research," *CBR* 1 (2003): 274–75.

¹⁹Caird notes, "It has often been remarked that, when the author of Hebrews quotes from the Old Testament, he quotes it as the *voice* of God" ("Exegetical Method," 46; italics added).

²⁰Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

The staggering truth is that God has always been speaking, revealing who he is and his perfect purposes. Yet previously this revelation was partial, fragmentary, anticipatory, and mediated. Moreover, no one individual received full revelation. But now, in the Son, God has spoken definitively and finally.”²¹ The effect of the author’s understanding of Scripture on Christology is also shown in the way that the words of the psalmists (e.g., Ps 22:22 in Heb 2:12 or Ps 40:7–9 in Heb 10:5–6) or the prophets (e.g., Isa 8:17–18 in Heb 2:13) are placed directly on the lips of Jesus, without explanation or justification.²²

III. EXEGETICAL TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED IN HEBREWS

Despite some overlap between exegetical techniques and hermeneutical assumptions, exegetical techniques refer to the method(s) the author of Hebrews used to appropriate the OT and to structure his interpretation of it, whereas hermeneutical assumptions refer to the interpretive framework by which the author understands God’s final speech in the Son and applies the implications of this to his audience. I will discuss some hermeneutical assumptions in the final section of this article. Here the focus will be on exegetical techniques.

1. *Allusions and echoes.* Numerous (often undefined) terms, such as *allusion*, *echo*, and *reference*, are used to describe the appropriation of an earlier text by a later one that does not involve a direct citation. George Guthrie helpfully notes that an “allusion... involves an overt weaving of at least a phrase from the antecedent text into the author’s own language, without a formal marking of that language as set apart from the author’s own words, and at times with morphological changes to words in the original quotation.”²³ He then points to Heb 1:13 as an example of a

²¹Harris, “Today if You Hear my Voice,” 111. This is discussed further in conjunction with the discussion of the function of the OT the Hebrews.

²²Cf. Karen H. Jobes, “Putting Words in His Mouth: The Son Speaks in Hebrews,” in *So Great a Salvation: A Dialogue on the Atonement in Hebrews*, eds. Jon C. Laansma, George H. Guthrie, and Cynthia Long Westfall, LNTS 516 (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 40; Schenck, “God Has Spoken,” 322. Gregory W. Lee, *Today When You Hear His Voice: Scripture, the Covenants, and the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 180, comments that in Hebrews “the address is direct and immediate” to the contemporary audience. I will discuss this phenomenon further in conjunction with prosopological exegesis.

²³Guthrie, “Hebrews’ Use,” 273. The seminal work in this regard is Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1986). Other helpful resources for determining allusive references to the OT in the NT include the criteria specified in Gregory K. Beale, *Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), and more recently, Christopher Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

quotation (with an introductory formula) of Ps 110:1 (109 LXX), whereas the prepositional phrase “at the right” (*en dexia*, altering *dexiōn* from the source text), without an introductory formula, in Heb 1:3 (cf. Heb 8:1; 10:12; 12:2) is an allusion to Ps 110:1.²⁴ Rich and often complex allusions abound in Hebrews, many of which do not involve a specific OT verse. For example, in Heb 6:19–20, the author personifies the objective hope that believers have, which is like an anchor that reaches behind the veil, where Jesus is already present. The use of “veil” (*katapetasma*) alludes to the curtain separating the inner room from the outer one in the tabernacle, and although no specific scriptural passage is in view, the allusion is unambiguous.

“Echoes” are often more difficult to recognize than allusions. Guthrie discusses the example of *onoma* in Heb 1:4, which is understood by many commentators as “Son” or “Lord.” Instead, Guthrie considers the larger context of 2 Sam 7:14, which is quoted in Heb 1:5. Guthrie focuses on 2 Sam 7:13, where God promises that the Davidic heir will “build a house for my Name.” In this way, Guthrie suggests that *onoma* in Heb 1:4 draws upon this background to indicate the “honor conferred by God on Messiah as the Davidic heir at the establishment of his throne and in association with God himself.”²⁵ Thus *onoma* links the Son with the Davidic messiah. It is also likely that the single word *onoma* also plausibly hints at the so-called “name theology” found within the OT.²⁶

2. *Midrash*. Midrash can refer to a method of interpreting Scripture (often associated with rabbinic literature) or a literary genre using such interpretation.²⁷ A common exegetical method appears to have been the

²⁴Guthrie, “Hebrews’ Use,” 273. For an interesting argument concerning the phrase *haima taurōn kai tragōn* in Heb 10:4 as an allusion to Isa 1:11, see Justin Harrison Duff, “The Blood of Goats and Calves... and Bulls?: An Allusion to Isaiah 1:11 LXX in Hebrews 10:4,” *JBL* 137 (2018): 765–83. For a likely allusion to Psalm 68 in Hebrews 13, see Adam W. Day, “Bearing the Reproach of Christ: The Background of Psalm 68 (LXX) in Hebrews 13:9–16,” *Presbyterion* 44 (2018): 126–41.

²⁵Guthrie, “Hebrews,” 925.

²⁶This suggestion is my own, although I was pointed in this direction by interaction with Guthrie’s work.

²⁷There is disagreement whether midrash refers to a genre, exegetical technique, hermeneutical approach, or some combination of the three. Midrash is often discussed in conjunction with literary concepts, such as intertextuality; e.g., Carol Bakhos, ed., *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash* (Leiden: Brill, 2006). Unfortunately, the terms *midrash* and *pesher* are used inconsistently or interchangeably. Very generally, whereas midrash starts with Scripture, pesher often begins with a current situation and looks to Scripture to interpret that event. Rabbinic midrash often presented an extended commentary on a given text, followed by the interpretations of several rabbis. See Leschert, *Hermeneutical Foundations*, 172–86; Bateman, *Early Jewish Hermeneutics*, 44–77; Susan E. Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study*

following: (a) An often lengthy section of Scripture is quoted nearly verbatim, although midrashim may substitute other words for “interpretational suitability”;²⁸ (b) words or phrases from the quotation are used in the following exposition, sometimes repeatedly and sometimes by means of rhetorical questions; (c) the text is applied, or recontextualized, for the contemporary audience.²⁹ Related to midrash is the use of rules of interpretation, or *middot*, seven of which have been ascribed to the first-century rabbi, Hillel. Only the two most relevant for Hebrews are discussed here. The first “rule” is *gezera shawa* (“rule of equivalence”), a verbal analogy “in which a term in one verse of scripture is interpreted according to its use in another.”³⁰ A good example is the link between the noun “rest” (*katapausis*) in the citation of Ps 95:11 in Heb 3:11 and the verb (*katapauō*) in the citation of Gen 2:2 in Heb 4:4. The second “rule” is *qal wahomer* (“light and heavy”), or an “inference drawn from a minor premise to a major premise.”³¹ This *a fortiori* argument is clearly not limited to rabbinic *middot*, however. A good example of such argumentation is Heb 2:1–4, in which the consequences of the wilderness generation’s disregard for the Law are the minor premise that contrasts with the major premise concerning the much greater consequences of neglecting the salvation spoken about by the Lord and confirmed to the audience by those who had heard him (Heb 2:3). Such argumentation is prevalent in Hebrews.

There are numerous examples of midrashic interpretation in Hebrews, including the citation and discussion of Ps 8:4–6 in Heb 2:6–9 and of Ps 40:6–8 in 10:5–10.³² Perhaps the clearest example, however, occurs in Heb 3:7–4:11, where half of Psalm 95 (vv. 7–11) is cited nearly verbatim (Heb 3:7–11). The ensuing exposition uses rhetorical questions (Heb 3:16–18), *gezera shawa* (the linking of “rest” in Gen 2:2 and Ps 95:11 in Heb 4:4; discussed above), and *qal wahomer* (the implicit comparison between the “good news” the wilderness generation received and the “good news” preached to the present audience in Heb 4:2) to apply the text to the current audience.

3. *Typology and typological trajectories.* Previous scholarship often

in *Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*, WUNT 2/260 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

²⁸F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 26.

²⁹See Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 75; Renée Bloch, “Midrash,” DBSup 5:1266.

³⁰Attridge, *Hebrews*, 129.

³¹McLay, *Use of the Septuagint*, 33; Bateman, *Early Jewish Hermeneutics*, 9–20.

³²Cf. the use of Gen 14:17–20 in Heb 7:1–10 and Prov 3:11–12 in Heb 12:5–11.

described the use of the OT in Hebrews as a form of allegory that paralleled Philo because of the supposedly arbitrary way that OT passages are understood (e.g., Ps 40:6–8 in Heb 10:5–7) or the use of etymologies (e.g., Heb 7:1–3).³³ Some type of extratextual “hermeneutical key” is crucial to allegory.³⁴ For Philo this “key” often involved virtue or the search for wisdom. Additionally, the historicity of OT individuals or events does not factor prominently in Philo’s writings.³⁵ For various reasons, including the importance of historicity and even the sequencing of historical events in Hebrews (such as the attribution of Psalm 95 to David in Hebrews 4, written after the time of Joshua), most scholars do not believe that allegory, as practiced by Philo, describes the appropriation of the OT in Hebrews.³⁶ Instead, some type of typological approach in Hebrews is generally recognized.³⁷ The term *figural reading* has recently been offered as a better term than *typology*. The latter term is understood differently by various scholars, ranging from narrow definitions that rely heavily on the historicity of the types to approaches that deny the relevance of history for typology altogether.³⁸ The term *typology* is retained here since it is currently the more prevalent term.

A very basic definition of typology is as follows: a *type* is a past event,

³³E.g. James Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1924), xlvi. Cf. Ceslas Spicq, *L'épître aux Hébreux* (Paris: Gabalda, 1952–1953), 1:89–91.

³⁴E.g., Gerald Bray, “Allegory,” *DTIB* 34.

³⁵Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 31, writes, “Philo usually treated the Old Testament as a body of symbols given by God for man’s spiritual and moral benefit, which must be understood other than in a literal and historical fashion.”

³⁶The definitive challenge to reading Hebrews with a Philonic lens comes from Ronald Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Leiden: Brill, 1970); his refutation of the claim that Hebrews depended upon Philo is convincing to many, even if he overstates his case in places. For more nuanced platonic/Philonic approaches, see James W. Thompson, *Hebrews*, Paideia (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008); Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: WJK, 2006). I do not intend to imply a false dichotomy between typology as historically based and thus “legitimate,” and allegory as ahistorical and thus “illegitimate.” As Mark Gignilliat notes, the historicity, or facticity, of a given biblical text was generally assumed by “precritical” writers, who would not have used this criterion to distinguish typological or allegorical readings of a text (“Paul, Allegory, and the Plain Sense of Scripture,” *JTI* 2 [2008]: 138).

³⁷See esp. Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002 [1982]), 176. For Marie E. Isaacs, *Sacred Spaces: An Approach to the Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, JSNTSup 73 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 73, typology is the author’s “dominant hermeneutical principle.”

³⁸Goppelt places much emphasis on the historical grounding of the type and antitype. Frances Young, “Typology,” in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder*, ed. Stanley E. Porter et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 48, however, denies that “history [is] the appropriate measure for identifying typology.” Both approaches offer important contributions, although these cannot be explored further here.

person, or institution that manifests in some way God's purposes and plans and which in some way corresponds to a subsequent event, person, or institution that more fully reveals God's purposes and plans (an *antitype*), especially in the person of Jesus Christ or the kingdom of God.³⁹ Several key assumptions underpin this definition: first, a fundamental unity within the Bible; second, the Bible's overall historicity; and third, a clear correspondence between the significance of the type and antitype.⁴⁰ Although this basic definition focuses on Christ, it is important to understand that some typologies are significantly developed *within* the OT itself (e.g., the Exodus event and the Exodus typology in Isaiah).⁴¹

The term *typological trajectory* is one that I have used to describe the author's appropriation and development of typologies already established within the OT to show their eschatological culmination in Christ.⁴² In Hebrews, the author often begins with a psalm that provides a later theological reflection upon an earlier event recorded in the Historical Books.⁴³

³⁹Some examples include the following: a person, Melchizedek and Jesus, Heb 7:1–3; an institution, Levitical sacrifices and Christ's sacrifice, Hebrews 9; an event, entry into the land and entry into God's rest, Hebrews 3–4; a place, earthly Sinai and heavenly Zion, Heb 12:18–24.

⁴⁰E.g., Mark Gignilliat, "Paul, Allegory," 140: "Typology, therefore, is a figural reading that takes into account correspondences... between events or people in an eschatological framework." He then elaborates: "Eschatological framework' refers to the canonical reality of biblical texts as they speak beyond their historical particularity to ultimate eschatological realities in God's redemptive economy" (140 n. 22). See also Benjamin J. Ribbens, "Typology of Types: Typology in Dialogue," *JTI* 5 (2011): 85–87, who discusses *ikonik mimesis*, in which there is a correspondence both between the *fact* and the *significance* of the type and antitype. See also Christopher R. Seitz, *Figured Out: Typology and Providence in Christian Scripture* (Louisville: WJK, 2001). Such a reading is also related to "an intertextual approach [that] illumines the way [biblical] writers use earlier texts to enrich meaning and establish authoritative testimony" (Paul E. Koptak, "Intertextuality," *DTIB*, 333–34"). There has been disagreement whether typology is retrospective (e.g., David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of the Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments*, 3rd ed. [Downers Grove: IVP, 2010]) or prospective. The classic statement of the latter is found in Leonhard Goppelt (*Typos*, 17–18), who posits three essential components of typology: (1) typology is inextricably rooted in history; (2) types are God-ordained; (3) typology involves a heightening or intensification (*Steigerung*). Yet this is likely a case of "both/and": types are prospectively "God-ordained" but are retrospectively illumined by the Spirit.

⁴¹Thus, the significance of the exodus event is deliverance. When Isaiah or NT writers spoke of a new exodus, the significance is also deliverance, either from exile or from the bondage of sin. Ribbens also notes the importance of the "correspondence both between the fact and the significance of the type and antitype" ("Typology of Types," 87).

⁴²See Dana M. Harris, "The Eternal Inheritance in Hebrews: The Appropriation of the Old Testament Inheritance Theme by the Author of Hebrews" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2009).

⁴³Others have observed the distinction between the author's use of the historical texts and the Psalter. Guthrie ("Hebrews' Use," 274) notes that the Pentateuch "offers him material for reflection on redemptive history (12 quotations and 10 allusions) and the Psalms provide for his Christological material (17 quotations and 16 allusions)." Cf. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 149.

Two clear examples include the use of Psalm 95 to discuss the failure of the wilderness generation to enter the land (recalling the events of Exodus 17 and Numbers 14, 20) and the use of Psalm 8 to reflect upon God's original intentions for humanity (recalling Genesis 1–2).⁴⁴ In this way, the author of Hebrews establishes a typological connection from *within* the OT that points beyond itself toward its fulfillment in Christ. Thus, he begins by appropriating a later theological reflection (Point B), which points back to an earlier historical event (Point A), which in turn points forward beyond itself (and beyond Point B) to some aspect of fulfillment in Christ (Point C)—hence a “typological trajectory.”⁴⁵

This can be illustrated briefly with the use of Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3–4. Entering the land is clearly understood as a type of entering the promised rest in Heb 3:7–4:13. The connection between the land and rest is firmly established in the OT. Yet by appropriating Psalm 95—a later reflection on the wilderness generation's failure to enter the land—the author draws out implications about the nature of God's rest and entering that rest that would not have been possible had he relied only on the pentateuchal narratives. From Psalm 95, the author shows that the promised rest was not ultimately fulfilled either by entry into the land by Joshua or its eventual occupation under David. Moreover, by connecting the expression “my rest” in Psalm 95 with God's creation rest in Gen 2:2, the author can develop a typological trajectory concerning the promised rest (*katapausis*) that began at creation and extends forward to the eschaton.

4. *Prosopological exegesis.* The phenomenon and prevalence of divine speech in Hebrews is often noted.⁴⁶ Indeed, eleven of the thirteen chapters in Hebrews include examples of divine speech.⁴⁷ Moreover, the fact that the Father and the Son speak to each other in Hebrews has often been

⁴⁴It is widely agreed that the use of Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3–4 is typological. The type is entry into the land of Canaan, and the antitype is entry into God's rest. Essential also to the author's use of Psalm 95 is his recognition of the “analogous situation” between the wilderness generation and his own. David de Silva, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, SBLDS 152 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1995), 147, observes, “Key to the success of a proof from historical precedent is establishing that precedent as an analogous situation. The author must be certain that the addressees will be able to see their situation mirrored in that of the wilderness generation before its fateful choice.”

⁴⁵For a fuller discussion of these and other typological trajectories, see Dana M. Harris, “Typological Trajectories in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” in *Interpreting the Old Testament Theologically: Essays in Honor of Willem A. VanGemeren*, ed. Andrew T. Abernethy (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 280–92.

⁴⁶See for example, Lee, *Today When You Hear His Voice*, especially chapters 3 and 4. See also Schenck, “God Has Spoken,” 321–36.

⁴⁷Excluded are Hebrews 9 and 11.

observed. Markus Barth has commented that it is as if readers of Hebrews are “listen[ing] in on a dialogue between God and Son.”⁴⁸ Karen Jobes adds that the audience is meant to overhear this conversation.⁴⁹ This prevalence on divine discourse in Hebrews has received increasing attention recently, especially in conjunction with an early Christian exegetical technique called “prosopological exegesis.” According to Matthew W. Bates, prosopological exegesis “explains a text by suggesting that the author of the text [e.g., the NT] identified various persons or characters (*prosopa*) as speakers or addressees in a pre-text [e.g., the OT], even though it is not clear from the pre-text itself that such persons are in view.”⁵⁰

Madison Pierce applies prosopological exegesis to Hebrews. She shows in Hebrews the “Father and the Son speak primarily to each other. The Spirit speaks to the community.”⁵¹ Pierce also notes that, in Hebrews, as God speaks to the Son through an OT citation, this speech *both* applies the text to the Son and explains who the Son is to the audience.⁵² She helpfully notes the following patterns in Hebrews: “In the first section, the Father speaks (1.5–13); then the Son (2.12–13); then the Spirit (3.7–4.11). The speeches conclude with a significant exhortation on the powerful word of God and the high priest Jesus (4.11–16). In the second section, the cycle of the Father (5.5–6; 7.17, 21; 8.7–12), Son (10.5–7), and Spirit (10.16–17) speaking repeats.”⁵³ Regarding the Father speaking to the Son in Hebrews 1, Pierce notes, “With the prosopological reading strategy, the author implicitly challenges previous interpretive traditions that addressed these texts to any earlier Davidic monarch; these are texts about the Son.”⁵⁴ Regarding the Son’s response, she notes, “While the Father’s speech shows

⁴⁸ Markus Barth, “The Old Testament in Hebrews, An Essay in Biblical Hermeneutics,” in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Otto A. Piper*, eds. William Klassen and Graydon F. Snyder (New York: Harper, 1962), 62. Cf. Lee, *Today When You Hear His Voice*, 144–45; he also notes the prevalence of present tense verb forms used in this regard.

⁴⁹ Jobes, “Putting Words in His Mouth,” 41.

⁵⁰ Matthew W. Bates, *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation: The Center of Paul’s Method of Scriptural Interpretation* (Waco: Baylor University Press), 183.

⁵¹ Madison N. Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations of Scripture*, SNTSMS, 178 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2. She helpfully distinguishes between the “intra-divine discourse” between the Father and the Son, and “extra-divine discourse,” wherein the Spirit addresses the community (3). A similar observation is made by Martin Emmrich, *Pneumatological Concepts in the Epistle to the Hebrews: Amtscharisma, Prophet, and Guide of the Eschatological Exodus* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2003), 33.

⁵² Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, 5.

⁵³ Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, 2.

⁵⁴ Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, 23.

how Jesus is unlike any other person, Jesus' speech in 2.12–13 reminds the readers of his remarkable connection with humanity."⁵⁵

Based on Pierce's work, I have explored divine speech more fully in connection with the Spirit in Hebrews. There are two passages in which the Spirit speaks to the audience (as noted by Pierce): Psalm 95 in Hebrews 3 and Jeremiah 31 in Hebrews 10. These passages are particularly interesting because, the text is at one time presented as God speaking and another time presented as the Spirit speaking. When the text is directly applied to the audience, the speaker is presented as the Spirit. Significantly, these re-citations often involve significant alterations to the Scripture citations—alterations that amplify the significance of the contemporary application.

5. *Chain quotations and exempla.* Two additional exegetical techniques employed by the author to appropriate the OT can be mentioned briefly.⁵⁶ Chain quotations (*haraz*, "to string," or *catena*) are a series of OT quotations linked by the use of the same word or expression; for example, the use of *huios* ("son") in the citations from Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14 in Heb 1:5. The chain of quotations is also linked by the use of various introductory formulas. Again, Heb 1:5–13 offers a good example of this technique, where three pairs of OT citations are "strung" together and capped off with the citation of Ps 110:1, the OT verse most cited or alluded to in the NT. As Guthrie notes, "The effect of the *haraz* is to impress the unqualified superiority of the Son upon the hearers in order to set up the a fortiori exhortation of 2.1–4."⁵⁷

An exemplum, or exemplar list, is a rhetorical device that presents a long list of individuals worthy of emulation.⁵⁸ Examples are found in both

⁵⁵Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, 24. It is worth noting that divine discourse can also be mediated through prophets and angels; see Schenck, "God Has Spoken," 322. Note also that the reference to Psalm 95 in Heb 4:7 is presented as the Spirit speaking through David (*en David legōn*); cf. Moses speaking about priestly genealogy in 7:14 (*ouden Mōysēs elalēsen*); Moses speaking about the covenant in 9:20 (*legōn*), and Moses speaking about his fear at Sinai in 12:21 (*Mōysēs eipen*). The citation of Psalm 8 in Heb 2:6–8 is ambiguously introduced as "someone has said somewhere." The speaker, although David in the OT, is unclear in Hebrews.

⁵⁶For more techniques, see Guthrie, "Hebrews' Use," 279–83; Gert J. Steyn, "An Overview of the Extent and Diversity of Methods Utilised by the Author of Hebrews When Using the Old Testament," *Neot* 42 (2008): 327–52. See also Bryan R. Dyer, "The Epistle to the Hebrews in Recent Research: Studies on the Author's Identity, His Use of the Old Testament, and Theology" *JGRChJ* 9 (2013): 104–31.

⁵⁷Guthrie, "Hebrews' Use," 280. An excellent discussion of this technique as it appears in Heb 1:5–13 is Bateman, *Early Jewish Hermeneutics*. See also Steyn, "An Overview," 331–33.

⁵⁸See esp. Michael R. Cosby, *The Rhetorical Composition and Function of Hebrews 11 in the Light of Example Lists in Antiquity* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1988); Pamela Eisenbaum, *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in Literary Context*, SBLDS 156 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997).

Jewish (e.g., 4 Macc 16:16–23; Sir 44–50) and early Christian literature (1 Clem. 17:1–19:3). The example in Hebrews 11 is especially striking. Beginning with Abraham, discussion of each exemplar becomes increasingly compressed, such that the final grouping (Heb 11:32–38) gives the impression that the list could continue almost indefinitely. The effect is strong encouragement for perseverance.

IV. THE FUNCTION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN HEBREWS

Guthrie rightly notes that “the uses to which Hebrews has put the Old Testament are the book’s bone and marrow.”⁵⁹ The focus here will be on the way that OT citations shape the structure of Hebrews and thus contribute to its overall argument. There are numerous attempts to determine structure of Hebrews, although there is little consensus and much debate. There are three main approaches: thematic outlines, structural outlines based on text linguistics,⁶⁰ or outlines that consider the OT citations in Hebrews. For the last approach, scholars have focused on the initial cluster of OT citations (Hebrews 1), Psalm 8 (Hebrews 2), Psalm 95 (Hebrews 3–4), Ps 110:4 (Hebrews 5–7; various), Jeremiah 31 (Hebrews 8–10), Habakkuk 2 (Hebrews 10–12), Proverbs 3 (Hebrews 12), and the reference to Mount Sinai in Exodus 19–20 (Hebrews 12–13).

The work of George B. Caird served as the foundation for a series of attempts to consider the structure of Hebrews based on its OT citations. Caird noted that the author believed the OT remained “a valid revelation of God” and regarded the entire OT as a prophetic work in which God spoke to his people and “directed their attention to the eschatological future.”⁶¹ Yet, also realizing the “confessed inadequacy of the old order,” the author structured his argument around four OT passages (Psalms 8, 95, 110, and Jeremiah 31), each of which “declares the ineffectiveness and symbolic or provisional nature of the OT religious institutions.”⁶²

Following Caird, Richard N. Longenecker added the catena of OT citations in Hebrews 1 as a fifth OT “passage” around which Hebrews is

⁵⁹Guthrie, “Hebrews’ Use,” 272.

⁶⁰The foundational works for this approach are Albert Vanhoye, *La structure littéraire de l’Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1976), and George H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*, NovTSup 73 (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

⁶¹Caird, “Exegetical Method,” 46. See also R. E. Clements, “The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews,” *SJT* 28 (1985): 36–45, and the helpful discussion in Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 41–59.

⁶²Caird, “Exegetical Method,” 46–47. Simon J. Kistemaker (*Psalm Citations*, 12) claims that Hebrews is structured around Pss 8:4–6, 95:7–11, 110:4, 40:6–8.

structured.⁶³ R. T. France noted that attempts to determine the structure of Hebrews from its OT citations often corresponded with efforts to structure Hebrews thematically (e.g., Jesus's superiority to the angels, etc.).⁶⁴ J. Walters observed that, in Hebrews, six "paranetic [*sic*] passages group themselves fairly uniformly in proximity to the six primary scriptural quotations" (Psalms 8, 95, 110, Jeremiah 31, Habakkuk 2, and Proverbs 3).⁶⁵ Most recently, Gert J. Steyn has noted two sets of seven pairs of OT citations in Hebrews, with each pair supporting (perhaps as two witnesses) a key theme presented by the author.⁶⁶ Finally, Jonathan Griffiths, drawing upon the work of Lawrence Wills, identifies eleven cycles that each begin with an exemplum (an OT text), followed by an explanation and application, and concluding with an exhortation.⁶⁷ Thus, although the various treatments of this topic vary, it seems evident that the author deliberately structured his argument through his use and arrangement of key OT citations.

V. CONCLUSION

The use of the OT in the Epistle to the Hebrews is extensive and rich, as this brief survey demonstrates. Clearly, an understanding of the OT is essential for any study of Hebrews.

In addition to understanding how the OT is used in Hebrews, several macro-level contributions come from this understanding. First, understanding how the OT is interpreted in Hebrews is fruitful as a lesson in biblical theology. As Caird notes, that "Hebrews is one of the earliest and most successful attempts to define the relation between the Old and New Testament," and "a large part of the value of the book is to be found in the method of exegesis."⁶⁸ Thus, Hebrews teaches us how to interpret the OT as well as how to understand the ongoing relationship between the two testaments. Hebrews helps us see the continuity of God's speaking

⁶³Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis*, 156. Leschert (*Hermeneutical Foundations*, 16) agrees that Hebrews is structured around these five "core citations."

⁶⁴R. T. France, "The Writer of Hebrews as a Biblical Expositor," *TynBul* 47 (1996): 258. To the five passages already mentioned, France added Hab 2:3–4 (Heb 10:37–38) and Prov 3:11–12 (Heb 12:5–6).

⁶⁵John R. Walters, "The Rhetorical Arrangement of Hebrews," *AsTJ* 50–51 (1995–1996): 66.

⁶⁶Steyn, "An Overview," 329–31.

⁶⁷Jonathan I. Griffiths, *Hebrews and Divine Speech*, LNTS 507 (London: T&T Clark, 2014). Griffiths draws upon Lawrence Wills, "The Form of the Sermon in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity," *HTR* 77 (1984), 277–99.

⁶⁸Caird, "Exegetical Method," 45.

throughout all of Scripture and simultaneously helps highlight the uniqueness of Jesus and his fully efficacious sacrifice.

Second, Hebrews helps us know how to preach the OT. Indeed, Guthrie rightly notes that “Hebrews, from beginning to end, *preaches* the OT.”⁶⁹ With the author of Hebrews as guide, the anticipatory nature of the Levitical priesthood and the elaborate arrangements in the tabernacle become object lessons that reveal the unchanging purposes of God to be with his people—purposes that are now fully revealed and made possible in the Son. Perhaps no other NT writing offers such insights into how to interpret and preach the OT.

Finally, as I have written elsewhere,

Behind the author’s appropriation of the OT lies an entire worldview that enables him to understand God’s redemptive actions as *both* occurring within history on earth *and* transcending history by pointing to a reality that is heavenly and eternal. The pivot of this worldview is God’s final Word, Jesus Christ, whose blood effected the new covenant confirming the eternal inheritance and who is now seated in heaven at God’s right hand.⁷⁰

Amen!



⁶⁹Guthrie, “Hebrews,” 923; italics original.

⁷⁰Harris, “Eternal Inheritance,” 6.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN JAMES, 1 PETER, 2 PETER, AND JUDE

Mark E. Taylor*

The use of the OT in James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude largely revolves around the concern of each letter for godly behavior. James develops the theme of righteousness around key OT texts (Deut 6:4–5; Lev 19:18; Prov 3:34) and four named exemplars: Abraham, Rahab, Job, and Elijah. First Peter emphasizes Christian identity as the basis of righteous conduct, stated succinctly in the first OT citation of the letter: “Be holy because I am holy” (1 Pet 1:16; Lev 19:2).¹ Righteous suffering, exemplified in the suffering of Christ, is also a significant theme drawing support from the OT (1 Pet 2:21–25; 3:18–4:5; 4:12–19). Second Peter and Jude warn of false teachers, who distort the grace of God (Jude 4) and malign the way of truth (2 Pet 2:2). Both letters utilize OT events and persons as examples of the certain condemnation of the ungodly and deliverance of the righteous (Jude 5–6, 11; 2 Pet 2:4–10).

I. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT IN JAMES

From beginning to end, James calls for wholehearted commitment to God. The double-minded person (Jas 1:5–8), who only hears the word of God without obeying it, is self-deceived (Jas 1:16, 22, 26), but the one who endures trials when tested and perseveres in God’s perfect law is the object of his favor (Jas 1:12, 25; 5:11).² Exhortations to obey the word/law, along with warnings of judgment, occur at key points in the letter’s

¹All quotations are from the Christian Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.

²The idea of God’s favor is conveyed by the Greek adjective *makarios* (1:12, 25), translated “blessed,” and the verb *makarizō*, “to count as blessed” (5:11). The concept is steeped in OT usage, appearing twenty-five times in the Psalms LXX alone: Pss 1:1; 2:12; 31:1–2; 32:12; 33:9; 39:5; 40:2; 64:5; 83:5–6, 13; 88:16; 93:12; 105:3; 111:1; 118:1–2; 126:5–127:2; 136:8–9; 143:15; 145:5. Cf. also Matt 5:1–13.

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structure (Jas 1:22–25; 2:8–13; 4:11–12), establishing righteous words and righteous deeds as an overarching theme.³

James forges a tight connection between wisdom and righteousness. James 3:13–18, the letter's structural center,⁴ reveals a grounding in Jewish concepts of wisdom, emphasizing the practical obedience of a life marked by the possession of wisdom as a gift of God (Jas 1:5, 17). Chief among the virtues of wisdom is humility (Jas 3:13, 17), which occupies a significant place in the letter's instruction (Jas 1:9–11, 21; 4:6–10). Envy and selfish ambition, on the other hand, lie at the heart of worldly wisdom, which yields "disorder and every evil practice" (Jas 3:16; 4:1–5). Human anger cannot bring about the righteousness of God (Jas 1:20), but the peace-loving character of the wisdom from above (Jas 3:17) has the opposite effect as "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who cultivate peace" (Jas 3:18).

1. *The Old Testament and the structure of James.* Three OT texts play a prominent role in the structure of James, Deut 6:4–5 by way of allusion and Lev 19:18 and Prov 3:34 by citation.

a. *Leviticus 19:18.* James cites Lev 19:18, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Jas 2:8), in support of his argument that anyone showing favoritism is a transgressor of the law (Jas 2:9). Stumbling at one point of the law, he reasons, renders the offender "guilty of breaking it all" (Jas 2:10–11). The entire argument against partiality (Jas 2:1–13), which also references the law against adultery and murder (Exod 20:13–14), must be read in light of the teaching of Jesus, who focused his teaching upon the law's moral requirements and the love command (Matt 5:21, 27, 43; 19:18–19). James's attitude toward the law reflects Jesus's interpretation of the law. The law of loving one's neighbor is royal (Jas 2:8) because it is the law of the kingdom (Jas 2:5).⁵

As Luke Johnson has shown, the use of Leviticus 19 in James extends beyond the citation of Lev 19:18.⁶ One finds, for example, a prohibition

³Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie, "The Structure of James," *CBQ* 68 (2006): 694–97. See also Luke L. Cheung, *The Genre, Composition, and Hermeneutics of James* (London: Paternoster, 2003), 83–85, 272–73.

⁴Taylor and Guthrie, "Structure of James," 692–94, 697–98.

⁵So Richard Bauckham, "James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude," in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honor of Barnabas Lindars*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 309. So also Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 111–12.

⁶Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James," in *Brother of Jesus, Friend of God: Studies in the Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 123–35.

against partiality in Lev 19:15: “Do not be partial to the poor or give preference to the rich; judge your neighbor fairly” (cf. Jas 2:1, 9). An allusion to Lev 19:13 in consolidation with Isa 5:9 appears in Jas 5:4 concerning the unjust practice of withholding wages rightfully earned. Further, the formal prohibition of Lev 19:16, “Do not go about spreading slander among your people; do not jeopardize your neighbor’s life,” is strikingly similar to the prohibition of slander in Jas 4:11, an allusion strengthened by James’s shift to “neighbor” in Jas 4:12. James 5:9 holds a possible allusion to Lev 19:18a, “Do not take revenge or bear a grudge against members of your community,” and in the case of Jas 5:12 there is both thematic and verbal allusion to Lev 19:12, “Do not swear falsely by my name.” Johnson proposed a final allusion to Lev 19:17b in Jas 5:20 in the positive command to reclaim one who has wandered from the truth. He concluded, “The evidence therefore, strongly suggests that James made conscious and sustained use of Lev 19:12–18 in his letter.”⁷

b. *Deuteronomy* 6:4–5. James does not quote Deut 6:4–5, but there are clear allusions throughout the letter to the central Jewish confession, “The LORD our God, the LORD is one” (Deut 6:4), followed by the command, “Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Deut 6:5). The structural location of these allusions, in association with Lev 19:18, suggests that the double love command in the teaching of Jesus (Matt 22:36–40) functions as an interpretive framework of the letter.⁸

Clear allusions to Deut 6:4 occur in two places, Jas 2:19 and Jas 4:12. In the first occurrence James commends those who “believe that God is one,” but then adds, “Even the demons believe - and they shudder!” James sarcastically rebukes mere confession void of works (Jas 2:20). In light of the author’s expanded use of Leviticus 19 one can assume that the allusion to Deut 6:4 would bring to mind the broader context, which supplies the other half of the love command as appropriated by Jesus (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37). Significantly, Jas 2:19 is parallel to the citation of Lev 19:18 in Jas

⁷Johnson, “The Use of Leviticus 19,” 132. Collectively, Johnson observes the following connections between James and Leviticus 19 arranged according to the order of Leviticus: Lev 19:12 (Jas 5:12), Lev 19:13 (Jas 5:4), Lev 19:15 (Jas 2:1, 9), Lev 19:16 (Jas 4:11), and Lev 19:17b (Jas 5:20). The use of Leviticus in James is to be read in light of the teaching of Jesus. Cf. Jas 4:11 (Matt 7:1), Jas 5:12 (Matt 5:33–37), Jas 5:20 (Matt 18:15). Bauckham, “James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude,” 309; Johnson, “The Use of Leviticus 19,” 134.

⁸See Mark E. Taylor, *A Text-Linguistic Investigation in the Discourse Structure of James*, LNTS (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 111–13, 121. On the double-love command as a hermeneutical key in James see also Richard Bauckham, *James: Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage* (London: Routledge, 1999), 145; Cheung, *The Genre, Composition, and Hermeneutics of James*, 104–21.

2:8, both followed by the phrase “you are doing well.”⁹

The second allusion to Deuteronomy 6 occurs at Jas 4:12: “There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save and destroy.” The introduction of the word “neighbor” in Jas 4:12b recalls the previous use of the same term in Jas 2:8. James 4:11–12 and 2:8–13 both are concerned with obedience to the law. Thus, both allusions to Deut 6:4 in the letter (Jas 2:19, 4:11–12) are associated with the author’s use of Lev 19:18. Love for God is mentioned also in Jas 1:12 and 2:5 in the phrase, “Which he promised to those who love him.” The second occurrence of the phrase stands in close proximity to the citation of Lev 19:18 (Jas 2:5, 8).

c. *Proverbs 3:34*. Proverbs 3:34 plays an important role in the letter structurally and thematically in conjunction with Deuteronomy 6 and Leviticus 19. Following the pericope on wisdom from above (Jas 3:13–18), James launches a stern rebuke of factionalism born of corrupt desires (Jas 4:1–5). Those with divided loyalties, the double-minded (Jas 1:8; 4:8), are friends of the world and enemies of God (Jas 4:4). In order to warn and instruct his readers James cites Proverbs 3:34 followed by an exposition of the text in reverse order: God gives grace to the humble (Jas 4:7–10) and he resists the proud (Jas 4:11–5:6).¹⁰

The call to repentance in Jas 4:7–10 reflects OT language and imagery.¹¹ Specific manifestations of pride include judgmental speech against one’s neighbor (Jas 4:11–12), arrogant boasting about the unknown future (Jas 4:13–17), and luxurious living at the expense of the poor (Jas 5:1–6). All three passages echo OT themes. The influence of Lev 19:18 and Deut 6:4 upon Jas 4:11–12 has already been noted. The warning and instruction of Jas 4:13–17 takes up a recurrent OT observation regarding the transient nature of human existence,¹² and the condemnation of the rich for their unrighteous actions in Jas 5:1–6 opens with a call for judgment upon the ungodly in language reminiscent of the OT prophets.¹³

⁹The CSB translates the second occurrence of the phrase in 2:19 as “Good!” The parallel in Greek is the same, the only difference being plural “you” in 2:8 versus singular “you” in 2:19.

¹⁰James 4:6–5:6 is framed by an *inclusio* built around the rare term *antitassō*, translated “resist,” occurring in Jas 4:6 and 5:6. See Alonso Schökel, “James 5.2 [sic] and 4.6,” *Biblica* 54 (1973): 73–76. The use of “therefore” in 4:7 also shows that James is expanding upon Prov 3:34. God’s opposition to the proud is a common OT theme (Pss 18:27; 34:18; Isa 61:1; Zeph 3:11–12).

¹¹Psalm 24:3–4a, for example, calls for “clean hands and a pure heart” for those who appear before the Lord. Mourning and weeping in light of God’s judgment reflects the voice of the prophets (Isa 15:2; Jer 4:13; Hos 10:5).

¹²See Prov 27:1, Job 7:7, 9, 16, Ps 39:5–6, Hos 13:3 (cf. Luke 12:16–20).

¹³All twenty-one occurrences of the Greek *ololyzō* translated “wail” in James 5:1 appear in the prophets: Hos 7:14; Amos 8:3; Zech 11:2; Isa 10:10; 13:6; 14:31; 15:2–3; 16:7; 23:1, 6, 14; 24:11;

2. *Old Testament examples of righteousness.* The four named exemplars of righteousness in James epitomize whole-hearted devotion to God.¹⁴ Abraham's faith was made complete when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar (Jas 2:21), and he was called a "friend of God" (Jas 2:24; cf. Jas 4:4). Rahab, likewise, demonstrated her faith and devotion to God by receiving the spies and sending them out by another way (Jas 2:26). Job, presented in the biblical record as a man of "perfect integrity" who feared God and shunned evil (Job 1:8), endured when tested (Jas 5:11). The mention of Elijah's powerful prayer for drought and rain (Jas 5:16b–18) frames the OT narrative (1 Kings 17–18) that records the confrontation with the prophets of Baal and his famous words to Israel: "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him. But if Baal, follow him" (1 Kgs 18:21).¹⁵

a. *Abraham and Rahab.* James contends that genuine faith always produces works of righteousness, and he offers two examples, Abraham and Rahab. His claim "that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone" (Jas 2:24) is not at odds with the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith alone (Rom 3:28) when interpreted properly in context. James clearly has in mind works of mercy and compassion as the outcome of genuine faith (Jas 2:14–17), which are taken into account at the final judgment (Jas 2:13).¹⁶ The Greek verb "to justify," which belongs to the same word group as the noun "righteousness,"¹⁷ likely carries either a declarative or demonstrative sense, that is, declared to be "just" or shown to be "just" based upon one's actions.¹⁸ For the purposes of this study, there is not a great deal of difference between the two views since both meanings

52:5; 65:14; Jer 2:23; 31:20, 31; Ezek 21:17.

¹⁴For a recent full-length study on the named exemplars in James see Robert J. Foster, *The Significance of Exemplars for the Interpretation of the Letter of James*, WUNT 376 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014). Foster argues that each exemplar, though tested to the limit, remained fully devoted to God.

¹⁵On the intertextual use of 1 Kings 17–18 in James see Mariam Kovalishyn, "The Prayer of Elijah in James 5: An Example of Intertextuality," *JBL* 137 (2018): 1027–45. Kovalishyn, 1027, argues that "the example of Elijah in Jas 5:17–18 ties the conclusion to the single-minded worship of God in faithfulness (cf. 1:27) as the central theme of the epistle."

¹⁶There is an especially strong connection between James and the teaching of Jesus on this point (cf. Matt 25:31–46).

¹⁷*Dikaioō*, "to justify," and *dikaïosynē*, "righteousness."

¹⁸See Dan G. McCartney, *James*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 162–63. McCartney helpfully lays out five possible meanings of the verb "to justify" in biblical literature, noting the declarative and demonstrative senses as the most probable choices. For a full discussion of these issues see Ronald Y. K. Fung, "'Justification' in the Epistle of James," in *Right with God: Justification in the Bible and in the World*, ed. D. A. Carson (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1992), 146–62.

convey the idea that Abraham's offer of Isaac upon the altar (Jas 2:21; Gen 22:1–18) and Rahab's reception of the messengers (Jas 2:25; Josh 2:1–11; cf. Josh 6:22–25) were righteous deeds that proceeded from genuine faith.

The example of Abraham also picks up on the "perfection" theme in James in the claim that by works Abraham's faith was "made complete" and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness" (Gen 15:6). James intends to show how Abraham's faith (Genesis 15) reached its intended outcome in the offering of Isaac upon the altar (Genesis 22), which was the "full effect" of endurance (Jas 1:2–4).¹⁹

b. *Job*. James 5:11 records the only appearance of Job in the NT. He is mentioned in association with the prophets (Jas 5:10) as an example of endurance,²⁰ which follows a powerful denunciation of the rich (Jas 5:1–6), who oppress the righteous.²¹ Even though the cries of the oppressed have "reached the ears of the Lord of Armies" (Jas 5:4), justice lies in the future when the Lord returns (Jas 5:7–8). For this reason, Job is a choice example of faithful endurance in light of "the outcome that the Lord brought about" (Jas 5:11b). In the biblical account, Job maintained his integrity throughout his ordeal of intense suffering (Job 2:3; 27:5; 31:6) and "did not sin or blame God for anything" (Job 1:22; 2:10b). In the end, God vindicated his servant Job over his three friends (Job 42:7–9).

The mention of Job's endurance and the final outcome implies that James's readers knew the whole story.²² That the example of Job plays an important role in the larger literary context of James is evident in the careful wording of Jas 5:11, which reiterates key themes of the letter, such as the "blessed" person (Jas 1:12, 25), "endurance" (Jas 1:2–4, 1:12), and

¹⁹The words translated "made complete" (Jas 2:22b; *teleioō*) and "full effect" (Jas 1:4a; *teleios*) belong to the same word group in Greek. Words with the Greek root *tel-* occur in Jas 1:4, 15, 17, 25; 2:8, 22; 3:2; 5:11. The offering of Isaac upon the altar was known in Jewish tradition as the *Akedah*, which means "binding," and was regarded as the ultimate test of Abraham's faithfulness. See 1 Macc 2:52: "Was not Abraham found faithful when tested, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness?"

²⁰Job is mentioned among the prophets in Ezek 14:14–20 alongside Noah and Daniel. See also Sir 49:9.

²¹James 5:2, "Your clothes are moth-eaten," may allude to Job 13:28.

²²Some think James relied upon later Jewish traditions about Job's patience, such as that found in the *Testament of Job*, rather than from the canonical account. See Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 187. Others counter that Job's fortitude in suffering is warranted from the biblical record. See Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 228–29; Kurt A. Richardson, "Job as Exemplar in the Epistle of James," in *Hearing the Old Testament the New*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 219–26; Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 420.

the final “outcome” of suffering (Jas 1:2–4). The story of Job is as much about God’s mercy and compassion to Job in the end (Job 42:7–17) as it is about Job’s endurance.²³

c. *Elijah*. Prayer is a dominant theme in the letter’s concluding exhortations, and Elijah typifies the powerful effect of the prayer of a righteous person (Jas 5:16b). The OT context of the prayer for drought and rain mentioned by James (Jas 5:17–18) is Elijah’s prophetic role in the judgment and restoration of Israel to covenant faithfulness recorded in 1 Kings 17–18. There are other examples of power that could have served James’s purpose, such as raising from the dead the son of the widow from Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:17–24) or Elijah’s spectacular encounter with the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs 18:15–40). The mention of drought and rain, however, brings to mind the overarching theme of God’s judgment against idolatry and the restoration of his people to righteousness. Elijah, the capstone exemplar of the letter, suits perfectly James’s stern warnings against double-mindedness, appeals to single-minded devotion to God, and his concluding call to restore those who have wandered from the truth (Jas 5:19–20; 1 Kgs 18:39).²⁴

II. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT IN 1 PETER

First Peter has much in common with James. Both letters begin in similar ways, writing to a dispersed audience in the context of persecution with an emphasis upon joy in trials in light of the final outcome of Christian suffering (Jas 1:1–4, 12; 1 Pet 1:1, 6–9). Both letters emphasize the role of the word of God in spiritual birth (Jas 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23), and both draw from some of the same sections or texts of the OT in support of their argument.²⁵ There are, of course, significant differences between the two letters. Peter, for example, gives considerable attention to “the

²³Other features of the story of Job resonate with themes in James. Commenting on Job 29:1–17, Richardson observes, “Themes such as ‘friendship of God,’ care for the poor and the widow, and zeal for righteousness make Job an example of James’s perfect man, who appears in the context of controlled speech in 3:2.” Richardson, “Job as Exemplar,” 228.

²⁴So Kovalishyn, “The Prayer of Elijah in James 5,” 1045: “Elijah enacts a prophetic denunciation of a wandering people, cares for a starving widow, raises a child from the dead, challenges the double-minded people of Israel and their king to purify their hearts and hands, and exemplifies the prayer of active faith in accordance with the will of God. Rather than a single reason for this exemplar, invoking Elijah also calls to mind a rich array of intertextual parallels.”

²⁵On the common use of Leviticus 19 in both letters see the recent study by Darian Lockett, “The Use of Leviticus 19 in James and 1 Peter: A Neglected Parallel,” *CBQ* 82 (2020): 456–72. Both letters quote Prov 3:34 (Jas 4:6; 1 Pet 5:5). Isaiah 40:6–8, quoted in 1 Pet 1:24–25, partially informs Jas 1:9–11, which likely alludes also to Jer 9:23–24.

sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow” foretold by the prophets (1 Pet 1:10–12).²⁶ James is silent on the death of Jesus and refers to his resurrection and ascension only by implication.²⁷

The opening salutation forecasts the strong connection between Christian identity, righteous conduct, and the use of the OT in the letter. Peter identifies his readers as “chosen by God to be obedient and to be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:1–2). The OT frequently refers to Israel as God’s chosen people,²⁸ which Peter now applies to the church.²⁹ The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus likely alludes to Exod 24:3–8 where Moses sprinkled those who pledged their obedience to the covenant with the blood of sacrifice.³⁰ Believers, likewise, commit themselves to obedience to God under the new covenant sealed by the death of Jesus.³¹ Christian identity and Christian conduct are regularly paired together in the letter,³² but in terms of the letter’s structure and argument, broadly speaking, Christian identity is the controlling theme of 1 Pet 1:3–2:10, while Christian conduct is taken up more specifically in 1 Pet 2:11–5:11.

1. *Christian identity (1 Pet 1:3–2:10)*. The first major unit of the letter opens and closes with references to God’s mercy (1 Pet 1:3, 2:10), by which the readers have become the “people of God” (1 Pet 2:9–10). The salvation (1 Pet 1:3–9) foretold by the prophets (1 Pet 1:10–11), now announced through the preaching of the gospel (1 Pet 1:3–12), is the basis of this new identity spelled out more precisely in 1 Pet 2:9a.³³ Believers are “a chosen

²⁶First Peter 1:10–12 provides justification for a Christological reading of the OT (cf. Luke 24:27, 44–48) and also announces “suffering and glory” as a major emphasis of the letter. With one exception (1 Pet 5:9), the noun “suffering” (Gk., *pathēma*) in 1 Peter refers to the suffering of Christ (see 1 Pet 1:11; 4:13; 5:1). The verb “to suffer” (Gk., *paschō*) occurs in 1 Pet 2:19–21, 23; 3:14, 17–18; 4:1, 15, 19; 5:10. Concerning “glory” see 1 Pet 1:7, 11, 21, 24; 4:11, 13–14; 5:1, 4, 10.

²⁷The language of “glory” in Jas 2:1, possibly an allusion Jesus’s glorious appearing in final judgment (Matt 25:31–46), implies resurrection and exaltation (cf. Jas 5:7–9). James presents a high Christology but in keeping with the nature and purpose of his letter. See William R. Baker, “Christology in the Epistle of James,” *EQ* 74 (2002): 47–57. Peter focuses more explicitly on the person and work of Christ. On the death of Jesus, see 1 Pet 1:2, 11, 18–19; 2:21–25; 3:18; 4:2. On the resurrection, see 1 Pet 1:3, 11; 3:18, 21. Death, resurrection, and exaltation are all mentioned in 1 Pet 3:18–22.

²⁸Deut 4:37; 7:6–8; 14:2; Ps 106:5; Isa 14:1; 41:8; 43:20; 45:4; 51:2; 65:9, 15, 23.

²⁹Peter applies the word “chosen” (Gk., *eklektos*) to both believers (1:1, 2:9) and Christ (2:4, 6).

³⁰So Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 72.

³¹D. A. Carson, “1 Peter,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 1017. Obedience is mentioned in conjunction with the death of Jesus also in 1 Pet 1:13–19, 2:21–25, and 4:1–2.

³²1 Pet 1:15–16; 2:1–10; 3:16. The “in Christ” formula occurs outside of Paul only in 1 Pet 5:10, 14.

³³The word “salvation” (Gk., *sōtēria*) appears four times in the letter’s first major section, indicating the prominence of this theme (1 Pet 1:5, 9–10; 2:2).

race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.”

a. *Call to holiness (1 Pet 1:3–21)*. Peter’s exhortations to righteous conduct are predicated upon the present reality of the new birth (1 Pet 1:3, 22–23) and the hope of the grace yet to come at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 1:13). Peter especially emphasizes the future aspect of salvation in his opening praise to God (1 Pet 1:4, 5, 7, 9). The first citation of the OT appears in 1:16, “Be holy because I am holy,” a quotation of Lev 19:2. Godly conduct is rooted in the character of God and the redemptive work of Christ (1 Pet 1:18–21; 2:24; cf. 1:2).³⁴

b. *New birth through the living and enduring word of God (1 Pet 1:22–25)*. The exhortation to love one another constantly from a pure heart is grounded in the believer’s experience of the new birth (1 Pet 1:22–23; cf. 1:3). Whereas 1 Pet 1:3 focuses more upon the result of new birth, 1 Pet 1:23 specifies its means.³⁵ The believer’s hope is living and his inheritance imperishable (1 Pet 1:3–4) because the new birth has been brought about “through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Pet 1:23b). Peter finds support for the enduring nature of the word in Isa 40:6–8, equating God’s promises to the Israelites in Babylonian captivity with “the gospel that was proclaimed to you” (1 Pet 1:24–25).³⁶

c. *Growing up into salvation (1 Pet 2:1–10)*. The theme of putting away sinful behavior in response to salvation carries forward in 1 Pet 2:1–10 as the theme of Christian identity comes into sharper focus.³⁷ The metaphor of newborn infants longing for “the pure milk of the word” (1 Pet 2:2) refers to the believer’s experience of the Lord himself as the motivation to press on in holiness since the image is linked to Ps 34:8: “If you have tasted that the Lord is good.”³⁸ Peter likely has the entire Psalm in mind since he quotes from it again in 1 Pet 3:10–12. Psalm 34 may, in fact, still be in play in the shift of metaphor from “milk” to “stone” since the Greek version of Ps 34:5 reflects the language of 1 Pet 2:4–6. In coming to Christ, a living stone, believers are themselves living stones in the construction of a spiritual house, a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices

³⁴Peter frequently refers to a person’s conduct with the Greek noun *anastrophē* (1 Pet 1:15, 18; 2:12; 3:1–2, 16; 2 Pet 2:7; 3:11) or verb *anastrephō* (1 Pet 1:17; 2 Pet 2:18).

³⁵The verb *anagennaō*, “to cause to be born again,” appears only in 1 Peter in the NT.

³⁶Peter likely has the whole of Isaiah 40 in mind. See E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St Peter*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 152; Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), 142; Jobes, *1 Peter*, 129.

³⁷Peter repeatedly calls his readers to make a clean break from the past (1 Pet 1:14; 2:1, 11; 4:2, 15).

³⁸Carson, “1 Peter,” 1022–23. In Greek the word for “good” (*chrēstos*) is very close to the word for “Christ” (*Christos*) and may be an intentional play on words.

to God through Christ.³⁹

First Peter 2:6–8 cites all three OT “stone” passages in the following order: Isa 28:16, Ps 118:22, and Isa 8:14–15.⁴⁰ The combination of the latter two establish Jesus as the rejected cornerstone, a point of stumbling (judgment) for the unbeliever. This identification was a common Christian tradition (Rom 9:32–33; Eph 2:20–22) derived from the teaching of Jesus (Matt 21:42–44; Mark 12:10–11; Luke 20:17–18).⁴¹

The language of 1 Pet 2:9–10 draws from passages such as Exod 19:6, Isa 43:20–21, and Hos 2:25. Scholars disagree on how much is quotation and how much is allusion. What is clear is that Peter gives his readers a distinct identity in line with the identity of the people of God under the old covenant, an identity which is now “bound up tightly with God’s mercy to them in Christ Jesus and with their response in obedient faith and holiness.”⁴²

2. *Christian conduct (1 Pet 2:11–5:11).* The concern for Christian conduct previously raised (1 Pet 1:13–18, 22, and 2:1) becomes the dominant theme of the remainder of the letter (1 Pet 2:11–5:11). The opening exhortation in 1 Pet 2:11–12 sets the agenda for what follows as Peter urges his readers to refrain from sinful desires and to conduct themselves “honorably among the Gentiles.”⁴³ The goal of righteous conduct in the immediate context is that God might be glorified by unbelievers (1 Pet 2:12).⁴⁴ First Peter 2:13–3:12 spells out in detail the agenda for honorable conduct within the structures of ancient society. Righteous behavior is all encompassing and observable, from the believer’s submission to the governing authorities (1 Pet 2:13–17) to relationships within the ancient household, including responsibilities of slaves to masters (1 Pet 2:18–25), wives to husbands (1 Pet 3:1–6), husbands to wives (1 Pet 3:7), and mutual responsibilities of

³⁹So Jobes, *1 Peter*, 145. In Greek, *proserchomai*, “to come,” and *kataischynō*, “to shame,” appear in Ps 33:6 LXX.

⁴⁰See also the reference to Ps 118:22 in Peter’s speech in Acts 4:11–12.

⁴¹Jobes, *1 Peter*, 147.

⁴²Carson, “1 Peter,” 1032.

⁴³In addition to the use of the term “conduct” (*anastrophē*) to describe the believer’s way of life, Peter also frequently describes the believer’s behavior as “doing what is good” (1 Pet 2:15, 20; 3:6, 17), expressed by the Greek verb *agathopoieō*. Peter also routinely uses the adjective “good” (Gk., *agathos*, 1 Pet 2:18; 3:10–11, 13, 16, 21). Perhaps it is the appearance of the adjective twice in the quotation of Psalm 34 (1 Pet 3:10–12) that attracts Peter to the word.

⁴⁴The “day God visits” will be a day of grace for believers and judgment for unbelievers. Jobes, *1 Peter*, 152, notes both nuances of the term “visitation” in the LXX (see Gen 50:24–25; Exod 3:16; Isa 23:17; Jer 6:15). For the view that Peter is suggesting the conversion of the unbeliever rather than judgment, see Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, NAC, eds. E. Ray Clendenen and David S. Dockery (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 124.

all to one another (1 Pet 3:8–9).

Peter's teaching regarding the submission of household slaves to their masters, even to the cruel (1 Pet 2:18b), raises the difficult issue of suffering unjustly and the remarkable claim that doing what is good while enduring injustice "brings favor with God" (1 Pet 2:20b). The reason for Peter's instruction is the example of Christ (1 Pet 2:21–25) based upon a Christological reading of Isaiah 53. This brief digression anticipates further reflections on the theme of unjust suffering accompanied with summary exhortations from 3:13 to the end of letter.⁴⁵ Throughout Peter makes sustained use of the OT.

a. *Unjust suffering and the example of Christ (1 Pet 2:21–25)*. Peter's use of Isaiah 53 emphasizes both the exemplary and redemptive nature of Christ's undeserved suffering in relation to the theme of righteousness. Although without sin (1 Pet 2:12), Christ "bore our sins" so that "we might live to righteousness" (1 Pet 2:24). Karen Jobes helpfully depicts Peter's interaction with Isaiah 53 by putting quotations in **bold** and allusions in *italics* as follows: "**who did not commit sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth** (Isa 53:9); **himself bore our sins** (Isa 53:4a); **by whose wounds you are healed** (Isa 53:5d); **for you were like wandering sheep** (Isa 53:6a); *did not retaliate, did not make threats* (Isa 53:7c–d), *trusted* (Isa 53:6c, 12), *the one who judges justly* (Isa 53:8a)."⁴⁶ Scholars recognize, however, that 1 Peter 2:21–25 involves more than the use of Isaiah 53. Davids observes that "the writer flows unconsciously from citation of Isaiah into description of the crucifixion, for he is using formulas long established in the church; in fact, the use of this passage to interpret the passion probably goes back to Jesus himself (Mark 10:45; 14:24; Luke 22:37)."⁴⁷ The concluding phrase, "but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls," does not come from Isaiah 53. Peter could have in mind passages such as Isa 40:10–11, Psalm 23, or Ezek 34:11–13.

b. *Summary exhortation and Psalm 34 (1 Pet 3:8–12)*. In a summary

⁴⁵Structurally, the argument unfolds in a pattern of reflection upon suffering unjustly followed by summary exhortations: 1 Pet 2:21–25 (unjust suffering); 1 Pet 3:8–12 (summary exhortation); 1 Pet 3:13–4:6 (unjust suffering); 1 Pet 4:7–11 (summary exhortation); 1 Pet 4:12–19 (unjust suffering); 1 Pet 5:1–10 (final exhortations).

⁴⁶Jobes, *1 Peter*, 194.

⁴⁷Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of 1 Peter*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 110. Paul Achtemeier similarly argues that Peter uses the language of Isaiah 53 but the order follows the events of the passion, with 1 Pet 2:22 and 2:23 alluding to the trial and 1 Pet 2:24 to the crucifixion. See Paul J. Achtemeier, "Suffering Servant and Suffering Christ in 1 Peter," in *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck*, eds. A. J. Malherbe and W. A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 180.

exhortation to all believers which highlights love, compassion, and humility over against a retaliatory spirit (cf. 1 Pet 2:23), Peter draws again from Psalm 34 (cf. 1 Pet 2:3–6) in what is the longest quotation from the OT in the letter (1 Pet 3:10–12). The portion of the Psalm quoted supports Peter’s ethical teaching to pursue righteousness and to turn away from evil. The author’s prior reflection on Isaiah 53 may have brought this Psalm to mind in the admonition to keep one’s tongue from speaking deceit (1 Pet 3:10) as did Christ (1 Pet 2:22).⁴⁸

c. *Further reflections on unjust suffering (1 Pet 3:13–4:6)*. The assurance that the Lord’s eyes are upon righteous and his face against those who do evil (1 Pet 3:12) serves as a springboard to further teaching on the question of unjust suffering raised in 1 Pet 2:21–25. No ultimate harm can come to the one devoted to good (1 Pet 3:13), but even if unjust suffering does occur, the believer is “blessed” (1 Pet 3:14).⁴⁹ It is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil (1 Pet 3:17).

For a second time Peter reflects upon Christ as the example of unjust suffering and the benefits of his redemptive death for others (1 Pet 3:18–4:6). Christ “suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous that he might bring you to God” (1 Pet 3:18).⁵⁰ The formerly unrighteous but now redeemed should take up the same attitude toward sin, devoting the rest of their time in the flesh for the will of God (1 Pet 4:1–2). The dubious reference to Christ’s proclamation to the spirits in prison during the days of Noah (1 Pet 3:18–22), a passage well-known for its interpretive difficulties,⁵¹ does not obscure the overall thrust of the passage, which is the believer’s pursuit of righteousness in light of the gospel (1 Pet 4:6; cf. 1 Pet 1:12, 25). First Peter 3:18–22 highlights not only Jesus’s death, but also his vindication through resurrection and exaltation (cf. 1 Pet 1:11).

d. *Summary exhortation (1 Pet 4:7–11)*. In light of Christ’s sweeping victory in his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God (1 Pet 3:22) and the certainty of final judgment (1 Pet 4:5), Peter reminds his readers that the “end of all things is near” (1 Pet 4:7). Future realities motivate present behavior. The importance of maintaining constant love for one another (1 Pet 4:8a), which is essential to the integrity and strength of the community, especially during times of suffering, is underscored by

⁴⁸The Greek *dolos* appears in both Isa 53:9 and Ps 33:14 LXX. See also 1 Pet 2:1.

⁴⁹Also 1 Pet 4:14. Cf. Jas 1:12, 25.

⁵⁰Perhaps reflecting again on Isaiah 53 (see comments on 2:24).

⁵¹See the major commentaries for the interpretive options.

way of Prov 10:12: “Love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Pet 4:8b).⁵² Love manifests itself through service to others to the glory of God (1 Pet 4:9–11).

e. *Still further reflections on unjust suffering* (1 Pet 4:12–19). What has been implied throughout the letter is addressed more directly in 1 Pet 4:12–19, namely, suffering unjustly is to be expected in a society hostile to the gospel.⁵³ Sharing in the “sufferings of Christ” (1 Pet 4:13) entails ridicule for bearing the name of Christ (1 Pet 4:14, 16). Rejoicing in present sufferings because of Christ anticipates even greater joy when his glory is revealed (1 Pet 4:13).⁵⁴ By society’s standards the righteous are outcasts, but from the divine perspective they are blessed because the “Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you” (1 Pet 4:14), a possible allusion to Isa 11:2.⁵⁵

Peter’s claim that judgment begins with God’s household (1 Pet 4:17) reflects the OT tradition that God’s judgment begins with his own people,⁵⁶ leading to the probing question of what will become of those who do not obey the gospel (1 Pet 4:17). Peter’s comparison of the present judgment of the righteous through suffering to the far greater eschatological suffering of the unrighteous (1 Pet 4:18) is drawn from Prov 11:31.⁵⁷ Peter’s approach serves to encourage his readers by placing their present suffering into proper perspective and to motivate them to evangelism in order that they might thwart the fate of the ungodly (cf. 1 Pet 3:1–2). In keeping with the example of Christ, those who suffer unjustly should also “entrust themselves to a faithful Creator while doing good (1 Pet 4:19;

⁵²See also Jas 5:20. For the third time in the letter Peter exhorts his readers to love one another (cf. 1 Pet 1:22; 3:8). In context, Davids, *1 Peter*, 158, suggests that “Peter cites a proverb in general use to point out that love will forgive or overlook the faults of others in the church and thus is a most valuable virtue in a community that needs to preserve its solidarity in the face of persecution.”

⁵³cf. Matt 5:11–12, 10:34, Mark 13:9–13, and John 15:18–20.

⁵⁴Jas 1:2–4 follows a similar line of reasoning. See also Rom 8:17; Heb 10:32–39, 11:26, 13:12–14.

⁵⁵Isaiah 11:2 is the only place in the LXX where the terms “spirit,” “God,” and “rest” are used together. See Steve Moyise, *The Later New Testament Writings and Scripture: The Old Testament in Acts, Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles and Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 52. The Greek of 1 Pet 4:14b could be translated, “The glory and the Spirit of God rests upon you,” referring not only to the gift of God’s presence but also to the future glory promised in 1 Pet 3:13. Schreiner, *1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude*, 222, offers a possible explanation: “Peter’s point was that they were blessed because they possessed even now the glory that would be theirs at the end time and also that the eschatological gift of the Spirit even now rested upon them.” Regarding the presence of the Spirit see Matt 10:19–20 and Stephen’s experience at his martyrdom in Acts 7:55.

⁵⁶So Jobes, *1 Peter*, 290. See Ezek 9:5–6; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:1–6; and Jer 25:29. Jobes suggests that the image of “God’s household” picks up on the image of believers as living stones in a spiritual house in 1 Pet 2:4–5.

⁵⁷For a similar method of argumentation, from the lesser to the greater, see Luke 23:31 and Heb 10:28–31.

cf. 1 Pet 2:23).⁵⁸

f. *Final exhortations* (1 Pet 5:1–11). Just as the letter began with reference to the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow as foretold by the prophets (1 Pet 1:10–12), so also the letter concludes on the same theme in a series of final exhortations. As one who shares in the sufferings and glory of Christ, Peter exhorts fellow elders to shepherd God’s flock in a righteous manner (1 Pet 5:1–3) and those who are younger to submit to the elders (1 Pet 5:4). All should clothe themselves with humility (1 Pet 5:5) because “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” This final OT citation, Prov 3:34,⁵⁹ reflects the polarities between doing what is evil versus doing what is good, a prominent theme in the letter. The proverb also highlights the theme of grace that appeared alongside suffering and glory in the letter’s opening (1 Pet 1:11–13). All three appear together in the final benediction. “The God of all **grace**, who called you to his eternal **glory** in Christ will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have **suffered** a little while. To him be dominion forever. Amen” (1 Pet 5:10).

III. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT IN JUDE AND 2 PETER

The overlap in content between Jude and 2 Peter suggests that one borrowed from the other or both relied upon a common source.⁶⁰ Both letters warn of the invasion of false teachers into the church, who have abandoned the path of righteousness (2 Pet 2:21; Jude 4), and both remind their readers that the prophets and apostles predicted the arrival of scoffers in the last days, who live according to their own ungodly desires (2 Pet 3:3; Jude 18). It is no surprise that Peter and Jude counter the threat of ungodly false teachers with an emphasis upon righteous conduct. Both letters, in fact, are framed by this theme.

Second Peter opens and closes with the recurring exhortation to “make every effort” in the pursuit of godliness (2 Pet 1:5–9, 3:14).⁶¹ The first exhortation follows the author’s affirmation of the reader’s faith as “through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 1:1). The second

⁵⁸This is the only place in the NT where God is referred to by the title “Creator.”

⁵⁹Cf. Jas 4:6.

⁶⁰D. A. Carson, “Jude,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 1047, comments that most scholars think 2 Peter depends upon Jude.

⁶¹Gk. *spoudē* (2 Pet 1:5), *spoudazō* (2 Pet 3:14).

exhortation follows God's promise of a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells" (2 Pet 3:13). Jude, likewise, writes to those called, loved by God, and kept for Jesus Christ (Jude 1). They possess salvation in common (Jude 2) and should build themselves up in the faith in response to the threat of false teachers (Jude 20). The concluding doxology praises God who is able to protect his own from stumbling and to make them stand in his presence without blemish and with great joy (Jude 24).

1. *The use of the Old Testament in Jude.* Richard Bauckham describes the structure of Jude 4–19 as a "detailed exegetical argument, designed to show that the false teachers who are active in Jude's churches have been foretold in prophecy, which condemns their libertine behavior and predicts their judgment at the parousia."⁶² The author's strategy corresponds to methods of Jewish exegesis current in his day where ancient texts followed by commentary show the relevance of the texts to the reader's situation.⁶³

In keeping with his purpose to declare judgment upon the false teachers, Jude refers to previous judgments in groups of three.⁶⁴ The first triplet refers to God's judgment upon the exodus generation, rebellious angels, and Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 5–7). The application to the false teachers that follows introduces a secondary illustration, taken from the apocryphal account of a dispute between Michael the archangel and the devil over the body of Moses (Jude 8–10). The second series of three recounts judgments upon Cain, Balaam, and Korah (Jude 11). Jude concludes his argument with two prophecies, one from the book of 1 Enoch (Jude 14) and one from the apostles (Jude 18), followed by an application to the false teachers (Jude 18).

a. *Three previous judgments (Jude 5–7).*⁶⁵ The first example of judgment recalls the story of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt recorded in Exodus 6–14. Jude reminds his readers that judgment subsequently fell upon those who were delivered who did not believe.⁶⁶ Numerous OT texts

⁶²Bauckham, "James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude," 303.

⁶³See also E. Earle Ellis, "Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Jude," in *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 221–36; Gene L. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 61.

⁶⁴Green, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 64, rightly points out, "Jude's purpose is not simply to denounce but to exhort." Each example is an eschatological type which prefigures the heretics who had infiltrated the church. On typology in Jude see J. D. Charles, "'Those' and 'These': The Use of the Old Testament in the Epistle of Jude," *JSNT* 38 (1990): 109–24.

⁶⁵These three examples were often grouped together in Jewish literature. See Sir 16:7–10; 3 Macc 2:4–7; T. Naph. 3:4–5. A similar grouping appears in 2 Pet 2:4–9.

⁶⁶See also similar warnings drawn from the exodus in 1 Cor 10:1–13 and Heb 3:7–13. The manuscript evidence supports the CSB reading of Jude 5 that "Jesus" delivered a people out of Egypt.

refer to God's judgment upon the exodus generation.⁶⁷ The same verbs "to destroy" and "to believe" used in Jude 5 appear in Num 14:11–12 LXX.

Second, both Jude and Peter mention God's judgment on rebellious angels kept in eternal chains for the day of judgment (Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4). Most scholars assume the reference is to a popular Jewish interpretation of Gen 6:1–4, which associated the angels who sinned with the enigmatic reference to the "sons of God" (Gen 6:4).⁶⁸ The nature of the angel's sin is not spelled out in detail, only that they abandoned their proper dwelling. Jude links the debauchery of the angels with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah in the next verse.

Third, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities,⁶⁹ recorded in Gen 19:19–24, became paradigmatic for wickedness and judgment in the rest of the OT, which carried over in Jewish tradition and the NT.⁷⁰ Jude and Peter both see the account as an example of eternal judgment coming to the ungodly. The fire that rained down from heaven (Gen 19:24) and reduced the cities to ashes (2 Pet 2:6) is indicative of the "punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

b. *Application and supporting illustration: Michael's dispute with the devil (Jude 8–10).* The phrase, "In the same way," introduces Jude's direct application of the prior judgments to the false teachers, who are committing similar sins (Jude 8–10). Jude briefly interrupts his description of the heretics with a secondary and supporting illustration,⁷¹ Michael the archangel's dispute with the devil over the body of Moses. This is an expansion of the story of the death and burial of Moses recorded in Deut 34:1–12 found in later Jewish traditions.⁷² Instead of presuming to have

Other readings include "God," or "Lord." Some think "Lord" is the correct reading but refers to Jesus: so Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 48 and Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 49. For a different conclusion, see Douglas J. Moo, *2 Peter and Jude*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 239–40.

⁶⁷Exod 32; Num 14; 16:31–35, 47–49; 21:56; 25:1–5; 26:64–65; Ps 78:21–31; 106:25–26.

⁶⁸The most detailed account of this tradition is found in 1 Enoch 6–19 (see esp. 1 En. 6:1–2; 12:4–6; 15:3), which held that angels left their heavenly domain, entered the domain of human beings and had sexual relations with women.

⁶⁹The surrounding cities are mentioned earlier in the Genesis account: Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar (Gen 14:2, 8). Zoar was spared because of the angel's promise to Lot (Gen 19:19–21).

⁷⁰In the OT see Isa 1:9–10; Jer 23:14, 49:18 50:40; Ezek 16:46–56, 38:22; Lam 4:6; Amos 4:11; Zeph 2:9. In Jewish literature see Sir 16:8–10; 3 Macc 2:5; 4 Ezra 2:8, 7:106; 2 En. 10:4; T. Levi 14:6; T. Naph. 3:4; Jub. 16:5–6, 9; 20:5; 22:22; 36:10. In the NT see Matt 10:14–15; Luke 17:29; Rev 11:8.

⁷¹Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, 44–45, notes, "This introduction of a secondary quotation in the course of exegesis can be found occasionally in the Qumran pesharim."

⁷²See Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, 47–60, for a sifting of the traditions which reflect the story.

authority over the devil, Michael appealed to the higher authority of the Lord and said, “The Lord rebuke you,” likely an allusion to Zech 3:2. The false teachers, on the other hand, blaspheme what they do not understand and behave like irrational animals (Jude 10).

c. *Three historical persons.* In only one verse, following a pronouncement of woe,⁷³ Jude briefly mentions three notorious individual sinners from the OT who exemplify the destructive behavior of the heretics (Jude 11). First, the story of Cain is found in Gen 4:1–25. Cain murdered his brother Abel because God accepted Abel’s sacrifice but rejected the sacrifice of Cain. He is mentioned in the NT in Heb 11:4 in contrast to his brother Abel, and he is characterized as being from the evil one in 1 John 3:11–12. Jewish tradition expanded considerably upon the life of Cain. Gene Green notes two themes in the tradition that seem particularly germane to Jude’s purpose. Cain was viewed not only as the representative sinner who laid down the pattern for human sin, but also as one who led others to sin.⁷⁴

Second, both Jude and Peter offer Balaam as a type of the false teachers. Peter refers to the “way of Balaam” (2 Pet 2:15), while Jude charges that the false teachers have “plunged into Balaam’s error for profit” (Jude 11), suggesting monetary gain as a motive for their activities. Numbers 22–24 records Balaam’s story. The OT portrayal of Balaam is mixed. On the one hand, Balak, the king of Moab hired Balaam to curse Israel, which Balaam eventually refused to do (Num 22:8–21). But the fact that Balaam was hired in the first place (Num 22:7) gave him a negative reputation.⁷⁵ The OT narrative also portrays Balaam as the one who enticed Israel into sexual sin in the incident at Baal Peor (Num 25:1–3; 31:16).⁷⁶

Jude’s third example is found in Num 16:1–35. Korah, along with two hundred and fifty prominent Israelite men, rebelled against the leadership of Moses.⁷⁷ God’s judgment came when the ground opened up and swallowed all of those implicated in the rebellion (Num 16:28–35).

⁷³Jude follows the pattern of woe oracles in the OT that included a reference to judgment and the reason: Isa 3:9, 11; 5:1–30; 45:9–10; Jer 4:13, 31; 10:19; 22:13–17; 23:1–4; Amos 6:1–3; Hab 2:6–20.

⁷⁴Green, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 90. As an example Green cites Josephus (*Ant.* 1.2.1 §61): “he incited to luxury and pillage all whom he met, and became their instructor in wicked practices.”

⁷⁵Balaam is mentioned in later OT texts, most of which stress divine intervention so that he was unable to curse Israel. See Num 31:8, 16; Deut 23:4–5; Josh 13:22; 24:9–10; Neh 13:2; Mic 6:5.

⁷⁶Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, 81, notes that “by highlighting certain aspects of the biblical account (especially Num. 31:16) Jewish tradition remembers Balaam primarily as a man of greed, who for the sake of reward led Israel into debauchery and idolatry.”

⁷⁷The story is recalled again in Num 26:9–11; 27:3; Ps 106:16–18. Jude repeatedly mentions the false teachers’ rebellion against authority: Jude 4, 8, and 12.

Commentators often note that Jude may cite Korah's rebellion out of canonical order "because of the sudden and spectacular judgment that he and his followers experienced."⁷⁸

d. *Two prophecies: Enoch and the apostles.* Finally, Jude refers to two prophecies, an ancient prophecy of Enoch (Jude 14) and a contemporary prophecy of the apostles of Jesus (Jude 17). As with the previous examples of judgment, both prophecies apply to the false teachers (Jude 14a, 19). The biblical record mentions Enoch only in genealogical lists (Gen 5:18, 21–24; 1 Chr 1:3; Luke 3:37) and as an example of faith in Heb 11:5, which refers to the additional comment found in Gen 5:24: "Enoch walked with God; then he was not there because God took him." The prophecy of Enoch mentioned by Jude is a near quote of 1 En. 1:9.⁷⁹ The reasons for judgment are spelled out in Jude 15. The prophecy emphatically spotlights the depravity of the false teachers in the three-fold repetition of the word "ungodly."

In addition to the prophecy of Enoch, Jude reminds his readers of the prediction of the apostles regarding false teachers (Jude 17–19). By the time Jude was written the teaching of the apostles was well established (Jude 5). The prophecy refers to the heretics as scoffers (cf. 2 Pet 3:2–3) motivated by ungodly desires.⁸⁰ The application of the prophecy to the opponents in Jude's churches suggests the fulfillment of the end-time prophecy among Jude's readers.⁸¹

2. *The use of the Old Testament in 2 Peter.*

a. *Noah and Lot.* Second Peter 2:4–10, like Jude 6–8, refers to the angels who sinned and God's judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah, but adds the examples of Noah and Lot. Bauckham suggests, "If the apostate angels, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Flood are types of eschatological judgment, then Noah and Lot must be models of righteousness of the last times."⁸²

The OT never refers to Noah as a preacher of righteousness. Genesis 6:9, however, describes him as a just man, and his deliverance from the

⁷⁸Moo, *2 Peter and Jude*, 258. Bauckham, *2 Peter, Jude*, 83, observes that in Jewish reflection Korah "became the classic example of the antinomian heretic."

⁷⁹Regarding Jude's reference to a prophecy found in a noncanonical text, Carson, "1 Peter," 1078, comments, "Jude saw this text as preserving genuine prophecy; it does not necessarily imply that he thought all of 1 Enoch was prophetic." Schreiner, *1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude*, 470, points out that a prophecy may derive from God and not be part of canonical Scripture, citing examples from John 11:51, Luke 1:67, and 1 Cor 11:4–5.

⁸⁰Cf. Matt 7:15; 24:11; Mark 13:22; Acts 20:29–30; 1 Tim 4:1–3; 2 Tim 3:1–5.

⁸¹In the NT the last days includes the entire time from Jesus's resurrection onward. See Acts 2:17–19; Heb 1:2; 2 Tim 3:1; Jas 5:3; 1 John 2:18.

⁸²Bauckham, "James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude," 314.

flood implies it.⁸³ Lot's righteousness, likewise, is not directly mentioned in Genesis, but it is implied in Abraham's intercession to God that he would not destroy the righteous along with the wicked (Gen 18:23). Peter drives home the point by mentioning Lot's righteousness three times (2 Pet 2:7–8). After an extended series of "if" clauses beginning in 2 Pet 2:4, Peter makes his main point in 2 Pet 2:9: "the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment."⁸⁴

b. *Proverbial application to the false teachers.* Following a thoroughgoing description of the false teachers' depravity (2 Pet 2:10–20), Peter concludes that it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to know it and then turn away (2 Pet 2:21). Two proverbs, combined into one, aptly describe those who once knew the way of righteousness but returned to an immoral pattern of life: "A dog returns to its own vomit, and a washed sow returns to wallowing in the mud."⁸⁵ Only the first proverb is a scriptural citation, taken from Prov 26:11.⁸⁶

IV. CONCLUSION: GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO HIS PROMISES

The theme of God's faithfulness to his promises in 2 Peter 3 provides a fitting conclusion to this study of righteousness and the use of the OT in James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude. Peter reminds his readers that scoffers will come in the last days (cf. Jude 17–18) mocking the Lord's promised return because of supposed delay, claiming that "all things continue as they have been since the beginning of creation" (2 Pet 3:1–4). The scoffers, however, deliberately overlook the fact that everything happens by the power of God's word as evidenced by creation (Genesis 1–2)⁸⁷ and the flood (Genesis 6–9), which brought about judgment and destruction. By this same word, the present heavens and earth are destined "for the day of judgment and the destruction of the ungodly" (2 Pet 3:7).

Peter further reminds his readers not to "overlook"⁸⁸ God's perspective

⁸³Bauckham, "James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude," 314–15, notes that Noah was known in Jewish tradition as a preacher of repentance.

⁸⁴Cf. 1 Cor 10:13; Rev 3:10.

⁸⁵Compare with the opening description of the conversion of the readers, who have escaped the corruption in the world (2 Pet 1:3–4).

⁸⁶The source of the "sow" proverb is unknown. Both proverbs underscore the return to what is unclean.

⁸⁷Cf. Ps 33:6, 148:5.

⁸⁸The same word used in 2 Pet 3:5 (Gk., *lanthanō*) of the false teachers who "overlook" the power of God's word.

on time: “With the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like one day” (2 Pet 3:8). Peter’s advice on how one should think about time draws upon Ps 90:4. The OT context reflects upon creation in the light of God’s eternity and human transience: “Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity, you are God. You return mankind to the dust, saying, ‘Return, descendants of Adam’” (Ps 90:2–3). Peter attributes delay to God’s mercy (2 Pet 3:9).

Finally, since this present world will be dissolved, Peter exhorts his readers to “holy conduct and godliness” in light of the Isaianic promise of “new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness dwells” (2 Pet 3:13; Isa 65:17; 66:22).⁸⁹ In the meantime believers must wait and “make every effort to be found without spot or blemish in his sight” (2 Pet 3:14).⁹⁰ God’s promise of a new home for righteousness stands in stark contrast to the vain promises of the false teachers, who are slaves of corruption (2 Pet 2:19). As Davids comments, “Investing in this age is investing in something without a future. The future is the Day of God, and what stretches beyond that Day.”⁹¹



⁸⁹Cf. Isa 9:7; Rom 8:18–25; Rev 21:1

⁹⁰“Waiting” is mentioned three times (2 Pet 3:12, 13, 14). Peter’s advice is the same as Jas 5:7: “Be patient until the coming of the Lord.”

⁹¹Davids, *2 Peter and Jude*, 291.

THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE APOCALYPSE

Gregory K. Beale*

Until the early 1980s the use of the OT in the Apocalypse of John received less attention than the use of the OT elsewhere in the NT—merely two books¹ and six significant articles.² Important discussion of the subject could be found in commentaries and other books, especially Swete,³ Charles,⁴ Vos,⁵ Caird,⁶ Van der Waal,⁷ Ford,⁸ Beasley-Murray,⁹

¹Adolf Schlatter, *Das Alte Testament in der johanneischen Apokalypse* (Gütersloh, Germany: C. Bertelsmann, 1912); Ferrell Jenkins, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976).

²Albert Vanhoye, "L'utilisation du Livre d'Ezéchiel dans l'Apocalypse," *Biblica* 43, no. 3 (1962): 436–76; Angelo Lancellotti, "L'Antico Testamento nell'Apocalisse," *RivB* 14, no. 4 (1966): 369–84; L. Paul Trudinger, "Some Observations concerning the Text of the Old Testament in Revelation," *JTS* 17, no. 1 (1966); Attilio Gangemi, "L'utilizzazione del deutero-Isaia nell'Apocalisse di Giovanni," *Euntes Docete* 27 (1974): 109–44; Benito Marconcini, "L'utilizzazione del T.M. nelle citazione isaiane dell' Apocalisse," *RivB* 24 (1976): 113–36; Michael Douglas Goulder, "Apocalypse as an Annual Cycle of Prophecies," *NTS* 27, no. 3 (1981): 342–67; cf. also J. Cambier, "Les images de l'Ancien Testament dans l'Apocalypse de saint Jean," *NRTb* 77 (1955): 113–22; and Eduard Lohse, "Die alttestamentliche Sprache des Sehers Johannes," *ZNW* 52, no. 1–2 (1961): 122–26, which are of more limited value.

³H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1911), passim, but esp. cxl–clvi.

⁴R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1920), passim, but esp. 1:lxv–lxxxii.

⁵Louis A. Vos, *The Synoptic Traditions in the Apocalypse* (Kampen, Netherlands: J. H. Kok, 1965), 16–53.

⁶G. B. Caird, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine*, *BNTC* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1966).

⁷C. van der Waal, *Openbaring van Jezus Christus: Inleiding en vertaling* (Groningen: de Vuurbaak, 1971), 174–241.

⁸Desmond Ford, *Crisis: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Desmond Ford Pubns, 1982), 243–306.

⁹George R. Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, *NCBC* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981).

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and, to a lesser degree, Delling,¹⁰ Comblin,¹¹ Farrer,¹² and Holtz.¹³ Since the early 1980s, however, six significant books have been written on the topic: Beale's *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (1984; based on a 1980 Cambridge dissertation), J. M. Vogelgesang's "Interpretation of Ezekiel in Revelation" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1985), J. Paulien's *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets* (1988),¹⁴ Ruiz's (1989), Fekkes's (1994), and Moyise's (1995). Since the same period, a number of articles on the same subject have appeared.¹⁵ Since 2000, there have been a spate of books and articles on Revelation's use of the OT.

I. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

1. There is general acknowledgment that the Apocalypse contains more OT references than any other NT book, although past attempts to tally the total number have varied¹⁶ because of the different criteria employed to determine the validity of an OT reference and the inclusion by some authors of "echoes" and parallels of a very general nature.¹⁷ The range of

¹⁰Gerhard Delling, "Zum Gottesdienstlichen Stil der Johannes-Apokalypse" *NovT* 3, no. 1–2 (1959): 107–37.

¹¹José Comblin, *Le Christ dans l'Apocalypse*, Bibliothèque de théologie; Serie 3: Théologie Biblique V. 6 (Paris: Desclee, 1965).

¹²Austin Farrer, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964).

¹³Traugott Holtz, *Die Christologie der Apokalypse des Johannes*, TUGAL 85 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1962).

¹⁴For a summary and evaluation of Paulien see G. K. Beale, review of *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets*, by Jon Paulien, *JBL* 111, no. 2 (1992): 358–61.

¹⁵Reference to and evaluation of these six books, as well as the articles, can be found to varying degrees throughout the commentary and in the discussion that follows here, as well as in Gregory K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1998), Chapter 1. Likewise, see also the discussion of recent literature in F. J. Murphy, "The Book of Revelation," *CBR* 2 (1994): 200–201. Among recent articles see G. K. Beale, "The Use of the Old Testament in Revelation" in *It Is Written*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 318–36; A. S. Boe, "Bruken av det Gamle Testament i Johannes'Åpenbaring," *TTKi* 63 (1992): 253–69; Thomas E. McComiskey, "Alteration of OT Imagery in the Book of Revelation," *JETS* 36, no. 3 (1993): 307–16. The present section is a minor revision of my "Use of the Old Testament in Revelation."

¹⁶UBS3, 901–11 = 394; NA26, 739–74 = 635; G. D. Kilpatrick, ed., (London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1958), 734–87 = 493; Eugen Hühn, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1900), 269ff. = 455; Wilhelm Dittmar, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1899), 263–79 = 195; Swete, xcl = 278; Charles, lxxv–lxxxii = 226; van der Waal, 174–241 = 1000 (approximately). For statistics from other commentators see Jan Fekkes III, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 62. See Jon Paulien, "Elusive Allusions: The Problematic Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," 33 (1988): 37–53., for an example of the varying lists of allusions in a particular segment of Revelation (8:7–9:21 and 11:15–18). One reason for the varying statistics is that some of these lists include parallels together with allusions and citations.

¹⁷Cf. the survey and evaluation in Vos, *Synoptic Traditions*, 17–19; and Vanhoye, "Utilisation du

OT usage includes the Pentateuch, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Job, and the Major and the Minor Prophets. Roughly more than half the references are from the Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and in proportion to its length Daniel yields the most.¹⁸

The evaluation of Daniel as very influential is supported by focused study.¹⁹ Among the allusions to Daniel, the greatest number are from Daniel 7. In terms of actual number of allusions, Isaiah is first, followed by Ezekiel, Daniel, and Psalms, though statistics differ.²⁰ There is more agreement that Ezekiel exerts greater influence in Revelation than Daniel. The OT in general plays such a major role that a proper understanding of its use is necessary for an adequate view of the Apocalypse as a whole.

The text form of OT references in Revelation needs in-depth discussion since there are no formal quotations and most are allusions, a phenomenon often making identification of such references more difficult. The complex relationship of the Hebrew text to early Greek versions, the history of which is largely unknown to us, makes it difficult to know whether John depends on the Hebrew or the Greek.²¹ Unfortunately, however, the scope of the present discussion precludes thorough analysis of this important subject.²² The majority of commentators have not followed Swete's assessment that John depended mainly on the LXX²³ and have apparently followed Charles's conclusion that John was influenced more by the Hebrew rather than the Greek OT,²⁴ a conclusion based mainly on the observation that John's allusions depart from the wording of the LXX.²⁵

Livre d'Ezéchiel," 438–40.

¹⁸So Swete, *Apocalypse*, cliii, where numerical statistics are also given for many of the OT books used.

¹⁹Cf. G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984).

²⁰E.g., Swete lists forty-six from Isaiah, while the more trenchant analysis of Fekkes, *Isaiah in Revelation*, 280–81, finds fifty "certain and probable" allusions to Isaiah. Swete also lists thirty-one from Daniel, twenty-nine from Ezekiel, and twenty-seven from the Psalms.

²¹So J. M. Vogelgesang, "The Interpretation of Ezekiel in the Book of Revelation" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1985), 19–22.

²²But see further Trudinger, "Observations concerning the Text of the Old Testament"; Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 154–259; 306–13; G. K. Beale, "The Origin of the Title 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords' in Revelation 17:4," *NTS* 31, no. 4 (1985): 618–20; G. K. Beale, "A Reconsideration of the Text of Daniel in the Apocalypse," *Biblica* 67, no. 4 (1986): 539–43.

²³Swete, *Apocalypse*, clv–clvi.

²⁴Charles, *Revelation*, 1:lxvii–lxviii, as well as lxxviii–lxxxii; C. G. Ozanne, "The Language of the Apocalypse," *TynBul* 16 (1965): 3–9; Trudinger, "Observations concerning the Text of the Old Testament"; Steven Thompson, *Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1–2, 102–8.

²⁵Charles, *Revelation*, 1:lxvi.

But the wording also departs from the Hebrew at significant points.²⁶ The likelihood is that John draws from both Semitic and Greek biblical sources and often modifies both.²⁷ Charles himself acknowledged that although John's pattern was to translate the Hebrew text and not to quote from the Greek version, nevertheless "he was often influenced in his renderings by the LXX and another Greek version," namely proto-Theodotion.²⁸

The following criteria can be used to identify OT allusions in Revelation:

1. *Clear allusion*: the wording is almost identical to the OT source, shares some common core meaning, and could not likely have come from anywhere else.
2. *Probable allusion*: though the wording is not as close, it still contains an idea or wording that is uniquely traceable to the OT text or exhibits a structure of ideas uniquely traceable to the OT passage.
3. *Possible allusion*: the language is only generally similar to the purported source, echoing either its wording or concepts.

Furthermore, a reasonable explanation of authorial motive should be given if a proposed OT allusion is to be accepted as clear or probable. For example, John appears to allude to the OT to show how prophecy has been and is being fulfilled in Christ's coming, Pentecost, and the creation of the church.²⁹ These criteria for allusions are also applicable in recognizing the presence of allusions to sources other than the OT, whether Jewish³⁰ or Greco-Roman. One must be circumspect in the search for dependence

²⁶See further Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 17.

²⁷So Moyise, *Old Testament in Revelation*, 17, though this is a conclusion reached already by the mid-nineteenth-century commentator Moses Stuart, *A Commentary on the Apocalypse* (Andover: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell, 1845), 1:231–32; and by T. C. Laughlin, *The Solecisms of the Apocalypse* (Princeton: C. S. Robinson & Co., 1902), 21; cf. likewise W. F. Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1929), 2:480; for LXX influence cf. also Beale, "Kings of Kings and Lord of Lords' in Rev. 17:14"; Beale, "Text of Daniel in the Apocalypse."

²⁸Charles, *Revelation*, 1:lxvii.

²⁹Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 308. See also Paulien, "Elusive Allusions," for additional discussion of criteria and validity of allusions.

³⁰See, e.g., Harold M. Parker, "The Scriptures of the Author of the Revelation of John," *Iliiff Review* 37, no. 1 (1980): 35–51, who contends that John was saturated with noncanonical apocalyptic Jewish tradition, though direct dependence on this material is small in comparison with direct OT references. For further evaluation see Frederick D. Mazzaferri, *The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-Critical Perspective* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989), 47–49; in fact, Parker's references to this material fall into the category of broad conceptual parallels and not verbal literary dependence.

on such other literary sources and resist the temptation to find parallels where there are none.³¹

2. *Contextual and noncontextual use.* It is important to ask whether or not John uses OT texts in harmony with their broader contextual meanings. There is unanimous consensus that John uses the OT with a high degree of liberty and creativity. As a result, many conclude that he handles numerous OT passages without consideration of their original contextual meanings, even assigning quite contradictory meanings. The reasons for this conclusion are numerous but cannot be elaborated here because of space considerations.

However, we may viably speak of changes of application, but need not conclude that this means a *disregard* for OT context. The passages we discuss below are test cases and our conclusions in regard to them are applicable to other OT references: it is probable that John is making *intentional allusions* and demonstrates varying degrees of respect for the OT contexts.³² The full exposition of the text of Revelation in my commentary includes numerous other case studies in which it is concluded that varying degrees of contextual usage of OT passages have occurred.

Admittedly, it is sometimes difficult to know whether there has been conscious or unconscious activity. Noncontextual use of the OT can be expected to occur where there is unconscious allusion. No doubt the apocalypticist's mind was so saturated with OT language from the tradition he had learned that when he described his vision he sometimes spontaneously used this language without much forethought.

To clarify what is meant by "context" is important. What is usually meant is *literary* context: how a passage functions in the logical flow of a book's argument. But there is also *historical* context. For example, the historical context of Hos 11:1 is the exodus and not the argument of the book of Hosea. In addition, there is also the *thematic* OT context: a NT writer might focus first on a general OT theme (e.g., judgment or restoration) and then appeal to a number of specific passages from different OT books that pertain to that theme.³³ An author might reflect on only

³¹In this respect, note the warnings of Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81, no. 1 (1962): 1–13; and Terence L. Donaldson, "Parallels: Use, Misuse and Limitations," *EvQ* 55 (1983): 193–210.

³²An assessment corroborated by Fekkes, *Isaiah in Revelation*, e.g., 70–103 and generally by Jon Paulien, *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets: Literary Allusions and Interpretations of Revelation 8:7–12* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1988).

³³For development of the thematic OT context see Fekkes, *Isaiah in Revelation*, 70–103.

one of these three contexts, or on all three, or entirely disregard them. In the light of the passages discussed above, John appears to display varying degrees of awareness of literary context and thematic context and perhaps historical context, although appeal to literary and thematic contexts is predominant. Interest in thematic context is really an explanation for why particular literary contexts are focused on. Those texts with a low degree of correspondence with the OT literary context can be referred to as semicontextual since they seem to fall between the opposite poles of what we ordinarily call “contextual” and “noncontextual” usages.³⁴ The categories of use to be considered below should further clarify and illustrate these initial conclusions.

II. VARIOUS USES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE APOCALYPSE³⁵

1. *Old Testament segments as literary prototypes.* Sometimes John takes over OT contexts or sequences as models after which to pattern his creative compositions.³⁶ Such modeling can be apparent from a thematic structure that is traceable to only one OT context or from a cluster of clear allusions to the same OT context. Sometimes both are observable, thus enhancing the clarity of the OT prototype. It has been argued in some depth that broad patterns from Daniel (esp. chs. 2 and 7) have been followed in Revelation 1, 4–5, 13, and 17, chs. 1 and 4–5 especially exhibiting both allusive clusters and structural outlines from segments of Daniel.³⁷ Incidentally, this would show further design in these chapters and point

³⁴See McComiskey, “Alteration of OT” for an attempt to perceive degrees of OT contextual awareness based on the determinative intention of John in the light of his own contextual usage in Revelation, though McComiskey deemphasizes the role of the OT too much.

³⁵In addition to the following uses, see further subcategories of usage in Fekkes, *Isaiah in Revelation*, 70–103. For amplification of examples of uses of the OT in this section, see Beale, *John’s Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (ch. 2).

³⁶Cf. Elisabeth S. Fiorenza, “Apokalypsis and Propheteia: The Book of Revelation in the Context of Early Christian Prophecy,” in *L’Apocalypse johannique et l’apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament* (Gembloux, Belgium: Editions J Duculot University Press, 1980), 108.

³⁷Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 154–305, 313–20. See Jean-Pierre Ruiz, *Ezekiel in the Apocalypse: The Transformation of Prophetic Language in Revelation 16,17 – 19,10* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 1989), 123–28, who is unconvinced by this evidence, esp. the notion that Daniel 7 rather than Ezekiel is the model for Revelation 4–5. But his evaluation does not take into sufficient account the inductive evidence of specific verbal allusions to Daniel throughout Revelation 4–5 (see Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 185–222), the broad outline of Daniel 7 in comparison with that of Ezekiel 1 or Isaiah 6 (cf. Beale, 181–228), or the qualifications made about Daniel 7 as a model (Beale, 224–27). For fuller response to skepticism about my proposal here, see Beale, *John’s Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (ch. 2, Excursus: “Rejoinder to Critical Evaluations of the Use of Segments of Daniel as Midrashic Prototypes for Various Chapters in Revelation”).

further away from an unconscious use of the OT. The same use of Daniel as a midrashic model is also observable in Jewish apocalyptic works, indicating that this kind of use of the OT was not uncommon (e.g., 1QM 1; 1 En. 69:26–71:17; 90:9–19; 4 Ezra 11–13; 2 Baruch 36–40).³⁸ The suggestion is also made that this influence of Daniel may even extend to the structure of the whole Apocalypse, since allusions to Dan 2:28–29 punctuate the book at major divisional transitions (1:1; 1:19; 4:1; 22:6). Furthermore, the five apocalyptic visions in Daniel (chs. 2, 7, 8, 9, 10–12) cover the same time of the eschatological future, which may be the prototypical structure followed by Revelation in some of its purported synchronously parallel sections.³⁹

In a somewhat similar vein, Goulder has argued that broad portions of Ezekiel have been the dominant influence on at least eleven major sections of the Apocalypse (Rev 4; 5; 6:1–8; 6:12–7:1; 7:2–8; 8:1–5; 14:6–12; 17:1–6; 18:9–24; 20:7–10; 21:22).⁴⁰ Goulder observes that these uses of Ezekiel are a dominant influence on the structure of Revelation since they are placed to a marked extent in the same order as they are found in Ezekiel.⁴¹ However, Goulder proposes that a liturgical rather than a literary explanation accounts better for the parallel order of Ezekiel and Revelation. He attempts to demonstrate this by speculating that the Apocalypse is generally aligned with the Jewish calendar, especially its festivals and holy days, and that this liturgical-calendrical pattern is even more formative on the structure of Revelation than Ezekiel.⁴² Although he does not follow Goulder's liturgical theory, S. Moyise has also concluded that Ezekiel has provided more of the model for Revelation than Daniel.⁴³ Virtually identical to Goulder's view, though also not positing a liturgical background, is that of J. M. Vogelgesang, who has gone so far as to conclude that John used Ezekiel as the model for the book's overall structure, so that it is "the key to understanding the message of the book altogether."⁴⁴ Others have also recognized Ezekiel's broad influence, especially in Revelation 20–22, where the order of events appears to have

³⁸Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament*, 67–153.

³⁹Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 271–85; G. K. Beale, "The Influence of Daniel upon the Structure and Theology of John's Apocalypse," *JETS* 27, no. 4 (1984): 413–23.

⁴⁰Cf. Goulder, "Apocalypse as Annual Cycle of Prophecies," 343–49.

⁴¹Goulder, "Apocalypse as Annual Cycle of Prophecies," 353–54.

⁴²Goulder, "Apocalypse as Annual Cycle of Prophecies," 349–64.

⁴³Moyise, *Old Testament in Revelation*, 74–83; similarly, Mazzaferri, *Genre of Revelation*, 365.

⁴⁴Vogelgesang, "Interpretation of Ezekiel in Revelation," 394, as well as 16, 66–71.

been taken from Ezekiel 37–48.⁴⁵ Many commentators see Ezekiel as the paradigm either for Revelation 4⁴⁶ or 4:1–5:1 (e.g., Caird, Sweet). And other liturgical paradigms for the book have been proposed, from either early Jewish or Christian liturgical traditions.⁴⁷

There is a consensus that the plagues of the “trumpets” in Rev 8:6–12 and those of the bowls in 16:1–9 follow the paradigm of the Exodus plagues and trials (Exod 7–14), though they are creatively reworked and applied (e.g., Beasley-Murray, Caird, Sweet). Already this Exodus model had been used in Amos 8–9 and creatively applied in Wisdom 11–19, the latter perhaps influencing John’s application.⁴⁸ J. S. Casey has argued for a significant influence of an Exodus typology in the trumpets and bowls, as well as in other segments of Revelation.⁴⁹ Draper proposes that the eschatological scheme in Zechariah 14 “provides the basis for a midrashic development in Revelation 7,”⁵⁰ while Sweet more tentatively suggests the same thing for Revelation 20–22.⁵¹

All of the above proposed OT models have woven within them allusions from other parts of the same OT book and from elsewhere in the OT corpus, and many of these are based on common themes, pictures, catch phrases, and the like. Often these other references serve as interpretative expansions of an OT prototype. On the reasonable assumption that these models were followed intentionally, two primary uses of them can be discerned. First, the OT patterns appear to be used as forms through which future (sometimes imminent) eschatological fulfillment is understood

⁴⁵E. C. Selwyn, “Dialogues on the Christian Prophets,” *Expositor* 6, no. 5 (1902): 332–34; Alfred Wikenhauser, “Das Problem des tausendjährigen Reiches in der Johannes-Apokalypse,” *ZKT* 57, no. 2 (1933): 13–25; Karl G. Kuhn, “Gog-Magog,” in *TWNT* (Stuttgart, 1933); J. Lust, “The Order of the Final Events in Revelation and in Ezekiel,” in *L’Apocalypse johannique et l’Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament*, ed. J. Lambrecht, BETL 53 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1980): 179–83.

⁴⁶As does Goulder, “Interpretation of Ezekiel in Revelation,” 43–51.

⁴⁷Cf. David R. Carnegie, “Hymns in Revelation” (PhD diss., London School of Theology, 1978); Samuel Lächli, “Eine Gottesdienststruktur in der Johannesoffenbarung,” *ThZ* 16 (1960): 359–78; see also Carnegie’s evaluation in “Worthy Is the Lamb: the Hymns in Revelation,” in *Christ the Lord: Studies in Christology Presented to Donald Guthrie*, ed. H. H. Rowden (Downers Grove, IVP, 1982), 245; Pierre Prigent, *Apocalypse et Liturgie*, CahT 52 (Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1964) (see Beale’s evaluation in *Use of Daniel*, 184).

⁴⁸Sweet, *Revelation*, 161–62.

⁴⁹Jay Smith Casey, “Exodus Typology in the Book of Revelation” (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981). For a convenient summary of Casey’s dissertation see Mazzaferrri, *Genre of Revelation*, 367–73.

⁵⁰J. A. Draper, “The Heavenly Feast of Tabernacles: Revelation 7.1–17,” *JSNT* 6 (1983): 133–47.

⁵¹J. P. M. Sweet, *Maintaining the Testimony of Jesus: the Suffering of Christians in the Revelation of John* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 112.

and predicted (cf. chs. 13 and 17).⁵² Second, the prototypes are utilized as lenses through which past and present eschatological fulfillment is understood (cf. chs. 1 and 4–5). It is not always clear whether these OT prototypes are the means or the object of interpretation, and perhaps there is an oscillation between the two: The OT interprets the NT, and the NT interprets the OT.

2. *Thematic uses.* In addition to alluding to specific OT texts, the author of Revelation develops important OT *themes*. Many of these themes are delineated throughout the major commentaries. J. Fekkes has shown that, among other themes, John develops extensively such OT themes as end-time judgment and salvation, each of which has thematic sub-categories.⁵³ Some special studies of note are Ford's tracing of Daniel's "abomination of desolation" theme,⁵⁴ Longman's study of the OT divine warrior concept,⁵⁵ Bauckham's articles on the OT earthquake idea⁵⁶ and John's reinterpretation of the OT "holy war" theme,⁵⁷ recent articles on the employment of the ancient Near Eastern/OT covenant form in Revelation 2–3 and throughout the book,⁵⁸ and the OT concept of the "day of the Lord."⁵⁹ Of particular note is C. H. Giblin's further development of the "holy war" theme, in which he makes a case that this OT notion "in all its essential [eightfold] institutional features structures the entire course of events" in Revelation 4–22⁶⁰ and is formative for the overall thought of chs. 1–3 as well.⁶¹

Carnegie has offered a most interesting study on the function of hymns in the OT and their reuse in Revelation. He shows that the various songs

⁵²Also see the same employment of the Daniel models in 1QM 1; 1 Enoch 46–47; 69:26–71:17; 90; 4 Ezra 11–13; 2 Baruch 36:1–42:2.

⁵³Fekkes, *Isaiah in Revelation*, 70–103.

⁵⁴Desmond Ford, *Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology* (Washington: University Press of America, 1979), 243–314.

⁵⁵Tremper Longman III, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament use of an Old Testament Motif," *WTJ* 44 (1982): 291–302.

⁵⁶Richard Bauckham, "The Eschatological Earthquake in the Apocalypse of John," *NovT*, vol. 19 (1977).

⁵⁷Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 210–37.

⁵⁸William H. Shea, "The Covenantal Form of the Letters to the Seven Churches," *AUSS*, vol. 21, no. 1 (1983): 71–84; Kenneth A. Strand, "A Further Note on the Covenantal Form in the Book of Revelation," *AUSS*, vol. 21, no. 3 (1983): 251–64.

⁵⁹Donald A. Gray, "The Day of the Lord and its Culmination in the Book of Revelation related to the Theology of Hope" (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 1974).

⁶⁰Charles H. Giblin, *The Book of Revelation: The Open Book of Prophecy* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 29, as well as 25–34, 224–31.

⁶¹Giblin, *Revelation*, 25–36, 224–31.

in Isaiah 40–55 come at the ends of subsections and round them off, not only by offering a concluding thanksgiving, but also by giving an interpretative summary of the theme of the whole previous section (cf. Isa 48:20ff.; 52:9, etc.). The series of hymns in Revelation are seen to have the same function under the inspiration of the Isaianic songs (Rev 4:11; 5:13ff.; 7:9–12; 11:15–18; 19:1–8).⁶²

3. *Analogical uses.* Analogy can be considered the most general description of OT usage in the Apocalypse, since the very act of referring to an OT text is to place it in some comparative relationship to something in the NT. But we are concerned here with specific well-known persons, places, and events. The pictures undergo creative changes (expansions, condensations, supplemental imagery, etc.) and are, of course, applied to different historical situations.⁶³ Nevertheless, a key idea in the OT context is usually carried over as the main characteristic or principle to be applied in the NT situation.⁶⁴ Therefore, even though John handles these OT figures with creative freedom, they almost always broadly retain an essential OT association and convey principles of continuity between the OT and NT.⁶⁵

For example, the image of the deceiving “serpent of old” in Rev 12:9 (cf. 20:2) evokes an episode of primitive religious history, which maintains the same meaning for the final, eschatological phase of theological history.⁶⁶ The author’s theological basis for maintaining such continuities lies in his conviction that OT and NT history is but the working out of God’s unified design of salvation and deals throughout with the unchanging principles of faith in God, God’s faithfulness in fulfilling his salvific promises, the antitheocratic forces attempting to thwart such promises, and the victory of God’s kingdom over that of Satan.⁶⁷

The following is a sampling of these analogies with a brief description of the primary point of continuity:

⁶²Carnegie, “Worthy Is the Lamb,” 250–52.

⁶³For a superb example of such alteration see Vos’s discussion of the Exodus plague imagery in Rev 8:6–12; 16:2–13 in *Synoptic Traditions*, 45–47.

⁶⁴Vos, *Synoptic Traditions*, 47–48.

⁶⁵So Cambier, “Images de l’Ancien Testament,” 116–20; cf. Gangemi, “Utilizzazioine del deuterio-Isaia nell’Apocalisse,” 322–39.

⁶⁶So Cambier, “Images de l’Ancien Testament,” 118–19.

⁶⁷Cambier, “Images de l’Ancien Testament,” 119–20.

Judgment

- theophanies introducing judgment (Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1, Daniel 7/Revelation 4–5)
- books of judgment (Ezekiel 2, Daniel 7, Daniel 12/Rev 5:1–5 and Ezekiel 2/Revelation 10)
- the lion from Judah exercising judgment (Gen 49:9/Rev 5:5)
- “the Lord of lords and King of kings” exercising judgment (Dan 4:37 [LXX]/Rev 17:14; 19:16)
- horsemen as divine agents of judgment (Zechariah 1 and 6/Rev 6:1–8)
- Exodus plagues inflicting judgment (Exod 7:14–12:57/Rev 8:6–12; 16:1–14)
- locusts as agents of judgment (Joel 1–2/Rev 9:7–10),
- prophets giving testimony through judgment (Exod 7:17; 1 Kgs 17:1/Rev 11:6)
- “Babylon” judged by God in “one hour” (Dan 4:17a [LXX]/Rev 18:10, 17, 19)

Tribulation and persecution of God’s people

- ten days of tribulation (Dan 1:12/Rev 2:10)
- three-and-a-half years of tribulation (Dan 7:25; 12:7/Rev 11:2; 12:14; 13:5)
- Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem as infamous places where persecution occurs (Rev 11:8)
- persecuting rulers symbolized as beasts (Daniel 7/Revelation 11–13, 17)
- “Babylon the Great” (Dan 4:30, etc./Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2)

Seductive, idolatrous teaching

- Balaam (Numbers 25; 31:16/Rev 2:14)
- Jezebel (1 Kgs 16:31; 2 Kgs 9:22/Rev 2:20–23)

Divine protection

- the tree of life (Gen 2:9/Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19)
- the “sealed” Israelites (Ezekiel 9/Rev 7:2–8)
- the wings of the eagle (Exod 19:4; Deut 32:11/Rev 12:14)

Victorious battle of God's people over the enemy

- Armageddon (Zech 12:11/Rev 16:16 [19:19]; cf. Gog and Magog in Ezek 38–39:16/Rev 20:8)

Apostasy

- the harlot (Ezek 16:15, etc./Revelation 17)

Divine Spirit as the power for God's people

- (Zech 4:1–6/Rev 1:12–20; 11:4)

Some analogies are repeated and creatively developed in different ways, though usually to some degree within the parameters of their OT contexts.

4. *Universalization.* Vanhoye has apparently been the only author to discuss this as a formal category of OT usage. The apocalypticist has a tendency to apply to the world what the OT applied only to Israel or to other entities.⁶⁸ There are several examples of this phenomenon. The title that Yahweh gave Israel in Exod 19:6 (“kingdom of priests”) is applied in Rev 1:6 and 5:10 to the church, which is composed of kingly priests “from every tribe, people, and nation” (Rev 5:9). Indeed, this very phrase of universality in Rev 5:9 is most likely taken from Dan 7:14, where it refers to the nations of the world subjugated to Israel’s rule, which is now extended to the rule by all these very nations (cf. Rev 5:10).⁶⁹ In Rev 1:7, “and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him,” refers to peoples throughout the earth, although in Zech 12:10 it is limited to the Israelite tribes. The same widening application of Zech 12:10 is also seen in John 19:31–37, where the action of a Roman soldier is viewed as a beginning fulfillment of this prophecy.⁷⁰

Another classic example of this tendency is the extension of the Exodus plague imagery from the land of Egypt to the whole “earth” in Rev 8:6–12 and 16:1–14. For example, in 8:9 a third of the sea, including fish and ships, is affected, instead of merely a river and its fish; in 16:10 rather than the sun being darkened, the kingdom of the satanic beast becomes darkened. The “ten days of tribulation” experienced by Daniel and his friends (Dan 1:12) and the three-and-a-half years of Israel’s tribulation

⁶⁸Cf. Vanhoye with reference to Ezekiel, “Utilisation du Livre d’Ezéchiel,” 446–67.

⁶⁹Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 214–29.

⁷⁰So J. R. Michaels, “The Centurion’s Confession and the Spear Thrust,” *CBQ* 29, no. 1 (1967): 102–29; Sweet, *Maintaining the Testimony of Jesus*, 112.

(Dan 7:25; 12:7) are both extended to the tribulation of the church — the eschatological, true Israel — throughout the world. Part of this tribulation is instigated by the latter-day “Babylon the Great” (Dan 4:30), who persecutes not merely ethnic Israelite believers, but also saints throughout the earth (Rev 17:5–8; 18:24), and harmfully affects “nations,” “kings of the earth,” and the world’s economy (18:1–23). Therefore, when “Babylon the Great” falls, rather than the effect being provincial, “the cities of the nations” also fall (16:19). Likewise, the former persecutors of God’s people in the OT (Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem) are now defined as “peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations” (Rev 11:8–10).

The Apocalypse concludes with references from the predicted end-time temple reserved for Israel, although now its cultic benefits are extended to the Gentiles (cf. Ezek 37:27; 44:9; and 48:35 in Rev 21:3). In Rev 22:2 the “leaves of healing” foretold in Ezek 47:12 as an aid to the Israelites become “leaves... for the healing of the *nations*.”

Sometimes the rationale for universalization is found already in the OT contexts (cf. Ezek 14:12–21 in Rev 6:8), although the inspiration can also arise from the combination of a narrower OT reference to Israel with a similar OT text that is, however, universal. For example, the Israelite-oriented book of judgment from Ezek 2:9–10 is given cosmic dimensions in Rev 5:1 and 10:8–11 because it has been attracted to other OT judgment book allusions that have wider cosmic applications (cf. Dan 7:10; 12:4, 9 in Rev 5:1–5 and Dan 12:4–9 in Rev 10:1–6). Nevertheless, the primary reason for the extended applications is the NT’s and John’s assumption concerning the cosmic dimensions of Christ’s lordship and death (cf. Rev 1:5; 5:9–10; for other examples of universalization see 1:12–13, 20 [lampstands]; 2:17 [manna]; 7:9, 15 [Ezek 37:26]; 17:1ff. [harlot]; 18:9 [Ezek 26:16ff.; 27:29–35]; 19:7 [the bride]; 3:12 and 21:2 [Jerusalem]).

It is tempting to conclude that John does not handle the OT according to its original contextual meaning when he universalizes. Vanhoye’s evaluation, however, is plausible. He says that while the universalization is motivated by the Christian spirit to explain redemptive fulfillment, it is not contrary to the OT sense. Although the author certainly makes different applications and executes developments beyond those of his OT predecessors, he stays within the same interpretative framework and is conscious of being profoundly faithful to the overall parameters of their message.⁷¹ This is a viable analysis since all of these universalizations can

⁷¹Vanhoye, “Utilisation du Livre d’Ezéchiel,” 467.

be considered subcategories of the analogical use of the OT, with regard to which we have proposed that, although John creatively reworks the OT and changes its application, his pictures retain significant points of correspondence with the OT context and express salvation-historical principles of continuity. All the examples of universalization that we have cited appear to be harmonious developments of these principles, as is the case with the OT texts pertaining to ethnic Israel's redemption and applied in Revelation to the world's redemption on the basis of defining the true people of God according to their faith in Christ and their corporate representation in Christ, the one who sums up true Israel in himself. Thus, the church comes to be viewed as the true Israel.

5. *Possible indirect fulfillment uses.* Although Revelation contains no formal OT quotations (with introductory formulas) used as prooftexts to indicate prophetic fulfillment, it is still probable that some OT texts are *informally* referred to in order to designate present or future fulfillment of OT verbal prophecy. The determination of whether a text refers to future or present fulfillment often depends on one's overall view of the book (e.g., preterist, historicist, idealist, futurist).

Of special note is the introduction to the book, which alludes to Dan 2:28–29, 45: *deixai... ha dei genesthai* (“to show... what must take place”), followed directly by *en tachei* (“quickly”), with Dan 2:28 (LXX), *edēlose... ha dei genesthai ep' eschatōn tōn hēmerōn* (“he showed... what must take place in the latter days,” Rev 1:1). John's “quickly” is substituted for Daniel's “in the latter days” so that what Daniel expected to occur in the distant future, the defeat of cosmic evil and ushering in of the kingdom, John expects to begin in his own generation, and perhaps it has already been inaugurated. Such imminence and even *incipient inauguration*, is corroborated by the phrase *ho gar kairos engus* (“for the time is near”) in 1:3, which elsewhere includes *both* the “already” and “not yet” element (so Mark 1:15; Matt 26:45; Lam 4:18; cf. Matt 3:2 with 4:17).⁷²

Daniel 12:4, 9 is used likewise in 22:10: whereas Daniel is commanded to “conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time” (12:4), John is given the consummatory command not to “seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.” This use of Daniel in Rev 22:10 intensifies that of 1:1–3 since it is directly linked to a verbatim repetition of 1:1 in 22:6.

The reference to the Son of Man (1:13–14) probably indicates John's

⁷²Cf. Beale, “Influence of Daniel,” 415–20.

belief that Jesus had begun to fulfill the Dan 7:13 prophecy of the Son of Man's exaltation, although the similar reference in 1:7 may also refer to a further phase of the same prophecy that still awaits realization. The same kind of "already and not yet" idea is found in 2:26–27, where Jesus says that he has started to fulfill the Ps 2:7 prediction and that his followers will also take part in the fulfillment at a future time (probably at death).

If the argument that Revelation 1 and 4–5 are both modeled on Daniel 7 can be sustained,⁷³ then John's intention may be to indicate that Jesus's death, resurrection, and gathered church is the inaugurated fulfillment of Daniel. There is also evidence of expectations of exclusive future fulfillment, of which the clearest examples are Ps 2:1/Rev 11:18; Ps 2:8/Rev 12:5 and 19:15; Isa 25:8/Rev 21:4; Isa 65:17 and 66:22/Rev 21:1; Ezek 47:1, 12/Rev 22:1–2.

All these passages concern fulfillments of OT texts that are clearly direct verbal prophecies. There may also be texts appearing in OT historical narratives that John understands as *indirect typological prophecies*. Many of the passages listed in our discussion above of analogical uses are potential candidates for this category. That is, are they all merely analogies? We have already found that the essence of the analogies is a basic *correspondence* of meaning between OT prophecy or *historical* narrative and something in the NT. Some of these OT historical elements have also undergone an escalation, even a universalization, under John's hand. Perhaps there was a prophetic rationale in escalating these historical texts. At any rate, such uses are worth further inquiry in this regard, especially against the background of John's and the NT's awareness that the "latter days" had been inaugurated, that the church was the latter-day Israel, and that the whole OT pointed toward this climax of salvation history.⁷⁴ The precedent of overt typological-prophetic uses in Matthew and Hebrews and elsewhere in the NT should leave open the same possibility in Revelation.

6. *Inverted uses*. Some allusions to the OT are on the surface distinctly contradictory to their OT contextual meanings. Further study again, however, reveals the imprecise nature of such categories. The clearest example of this is Rev 3:9, which refers to Isaianic prophecies that the Gentiles will

⁷³Cf. Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 154–228.

⁷⁴For inaugurated eschatological language cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 2:17; 1 Cor 10:11; 2 Cor 6:2; Gal 4:4; 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1; Heb 1:2; 9:26; Jas 5:3; 1 Pet 1:20; 1 John 2:18; Jude 18; Rev 1:1; 1:19; 4:1; 22:6, 10; cf. Beale, "Influence of Daniel," 415–20. On the "already and not yet" nature of NT eschatology, see G. K. Beale, "Eschatology," *DLNT* 330–45; G. K. Beale, "The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology," *Doon Theological Journal* 10, no. 2 (2013).

come and bow down before Israel and recognize Israel as God's chosen people (Isa 45:14; 49:23; 60:14). This Jewish hope has been turned upside down. Now it is Jewish persecutors of Christians whom God will make to submit to the church. This reversal of Isaiah's language is probably a conscious attempt to express the irony that the submission that unbelieving ethnic Jews hoped to receive from Gentiles, they themselves will be forced to render to the church.⁷⁵ John concludes that ethnic Jews have become like unbelieving Gentiles because of their rejection of Christ and persecution of Christians. In fact, this ironic element is intensified at the end of v. 9 through John's reference to the predominantly Gentile church as being in the position of true Israel. This he accomplishes with a reverse application of Isa 43:4, which originally spoke of God's love and honor for Israel above the nations. Vos is therefore inconsistent in recognizing an irony in the first part of v. 9 but concluding with respect to the Isa 43:4 citation that "the context of the alleged quotation has been totally disregarded."⁷⁶ John shows, rather, a consistent ironic understanding of some of the major themes in Isaiah 40–66. And while such a view arises out of a contextual awareness of the OT, the NT use is so diametrically opposite that it is best to categorize this as an inverted or ironic use.

The terminology of cosmic universality from Dan 7:14 in Rev 5:9 also reveals an intended inversion. Whereas in Daniel the phrase refers to the nations subjugated to Israel's rule, now these very nations rule together with the Messiah.

A sampling of other such uses is noteworthy. Daniel 7:21 refers to an oppressive "horn" that "was waging war with the saints and overpowering them." This is applied in reverse fashion in Rev 12:7–8 to describe the overthrow of Satan by Michael and his angels. Such reverse application probably does not reflect unconscious activity or an atomistic exegesis but polemical irony expressed by portraying the theocratic forces' defeat of the cosmic enemy through the same imagery that was used in Daniel 7 to describe how this enemy began to defeat God's forces. This may be a figurative expression of a *lex talionis* irony: God will subdue the enemy by the same method that the enemy has used to try to subdue God. That this language is intentionally drawn in reverse manner from Dan 7:21 is evident not only from the verbal likeness (cf. Theod.) but also from the

⁷⁵So Vos, *Synoptic Traditions*, 25; Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 118.

⁷⁶Vos, *Synoptic Traditions*, 26.

allusion to Dan 2:35 (Rev 12:8b) that immediately follows *and* from the same Dan 7:21 reversal in Rev 17:14, where the Danielic “Lord of lords and King of kings” (= Dan 4:37 [LXX]) is the one who carries out the polemical overthrow.

The same kind of retributive ironies can be observed elsewhere in the Apocalypse: Dan 8:10 in Rev 12:4, 9, 10; Dan 7:7ff. in Rev 5:6–7 (so also 1 En. 90:9–13, 16; T.Jos. 19:6–8; 4 Ezra 13:1ff.; cf. *Midr. Rab. Gen.* 99.2);⁷⁷ Dan 7:14 in Rev 13:7–8; Exod 8:10 and 15:11, etc., in Rev 13:4; Exod 3:14 (esp. *Midr. Rab. Exod.* 3:14) in Rev 17:8 (cf. 1:4, 8; 4:8; 11:17; 16:5; cf. also Ezra 9:14b in 1QM 1.6b and Dan 11:40, 44–5 in 1QM 1.4). The point of these kinds of ironic uses is to mock the enemy’s proud attempt to overcome God and his people and to underscore the fitting justice of the punishment.

There may be other examples of this reversal phenomenon, but the ones discussed should alert us to caution in making facile statements about noncontextual, atomistic, or straightforward contextual use, since the apocalyptic style is not always susceptible to such categories. Furthermore, every OT reference we have mentioned can be categorized as at least *broadly* contextual. Vanhoye has noted that John always employs OT references with a view to having them contribute to the unified argument of his work and that every page “witnesses to a penetrating intelligence of the ancient prophecies and of a perfect familiarity with their mode of expression.”⁷⁸ Gangemi observes that John does not choose OT allusions at random but in accord with the main themes of the Apocalypse: divine transcendence, redemption, Yahweh’s servant, Babylon’s judgment, and the new creation of the heavenly Jerusalem.⁷⁹ And it is clear that John drew these unifying themes of his work from the OT and is, indeed, continuing the development of fundamental lines of OT salvation history.⁸⁰

7. *Stylistic use of Old Testament language.* This use represents the most general category so far discussed. It has long been recognized that the Apocalypse contains a multitude of grammatical solecisms. Charles claimed it contained more grammatical irregularities than any other Greek document of the ancient world. He accounted for this with his famous dictum

⁷⁷Cf. G. K. Beale, “The Problem of the Man from the Sea in IV Ezra 13 and Its Relation to the Messianic Concept in John’s Apocalypse,” *NovT* 25 (1983): 182–88.

⁷⁸Vanhoye, “Utilisation du Livre d’Ezéchiel,” 462–64.

⁷⁹Gangemi, “Deutero-Isaia nell’Apocalisse,” 322–38.

⁸⁰Cambier, “Images de l’Ancien Testament,” 118–21; Gangemi, “Deutero-Isaia nell’Apocalisse,” 332–39.

that “while [John] writes in Greek, he thinks in Hebrew, and the thought has naturally affected the vehicle of expression,” a judgment that has met with subsequent agreement, especially recently.⁸¹

But was this intentional on John’s part or an unconscious by-product of his Semitic mind? It seems that his grammatical “howlers” are deliberate attempts to express Semitisms and Septuagintalisms in his Greek, the closest analogy being that of the Greek translations, especially that of Aquila.⁸² The fact that most of the time the author does keep the rules further points to the solecisms being intentional.

Why did John write this way? His purpose was deliberately to create a “biblical” effect in the hearer and thus to demonstrate the solidarity of his work with that of the divinely inspired OT Scriptures.⁸³ A polemical purpose may also have been at work. John may have been expressing the idea that OT truth via the church as the new Israel was uncompromisingly penetrating the Gentile world and would continue to do so until the parousia.⁸⁴

III. CONCLUSION

Perhaps one reason for the high degree of OT influence in the Apocalypse is that the author could think of no better way to describe some of his visions than with language used by the OT prophets to describe similar visions. Our examination of the use of the OT in the Apocalypse, particularly of its categories of usage, favors Fransen’s evaluation: “The familiarity with the Old Testament, with the spirit which lives in the Old Testament, is a most essential condition for a fruitful reading of the Apocalypse.”⁸⁵

This conclusion runs counter to the conclusion of many scholars. However, the analysis throughout my commentary on Revelation provides further evidence pointing in the direction of a consistent contextual use of the OT.

Therefore, the conclusion of this brief overview is that the place of the

⁸¹ Charles, *Revelation*, 1:cxliv. Cf. Sweet, *Revelation*, 16–17; Adela Y. Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: the Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 47; and above all Thompson, *Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax*; though Porter is a dissenting voice, arguing that what some have called Semitisms fall “within the range of possible registers of Greek usage in the 1st century” (S. E. Porter, “*The Language of the Apocalypse in Recent Discussion*,” *NTS* 35 [1989]: 582–603).

⁸² Sweet, *Revelation*, 16; see esp. Thompson, *Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax*, 108.

⁸³ Sweet, *Revelation*, 16.

⁸⁴ Cf. somewhat similarly Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis*, 47; Thompson, *Apocalypse and Semitic Syntax*, 108.

⁸⁵ I. Fransen, “Cahier de Bible. Jesus, le Témoin Fidèle,” *BVC* 16 (1956–57): 67; likewise Sweet, *Maintaining the Testimony of Jesus*, 111.

OT in the formation of thought in the Apocalypse is that of both a servant and a guide: for John the Christ-event is the key to understanding the OT, and yet reflection on the OT context leads the way to further comprehension of this event and provides the redemptive-historical background against which the apocalyptic visions are better understood; the New Testament interprets the Old and the Old interprets the New.⁸⁶



⁸⁶Ruiz, *Ezekiel in the Apocalypse*, 120–21, holds, unconvincingly in my view, the one-sided view that the OT was not an object of interpretation by John but only the means of his own creative interpretation. For further discussion of the OT as an object and means of interpretation and the problems associated with this, see Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (ch. 2), "Excursus: Rejoinder to Evaluations of Daniel as Midrashic."

BOOK REVIEWS

***Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness.* By Michael Heiser. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020, xviii+320pp., \$19.99.**

After his *Unseen Realm* and *Angels*, Heiser continues his study of supernatural beings. His recent book, *Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness*, is built upon his earlier research and explores the subject of demons. Although the subtitle seems to create an impression that this book will provide an overall survey of what the Bible teaches about demons, it actually focuses on the history of these supernatural beings, especially what Heiser calls the three divine rebellions.

The structure of this book is clear and straightforward. There are four sections. The first section discusses the Hebrew terms that the Old Testament uses to describe evil spiritual beings and the Greek translations of these beings in the Septuagint. Although the term for “demons” is missing in the Old Testament, there are a variety of words relevant to these kind of beings. Heiser helpfully categorizes these terms into several groups: those associated with the realm of the dead and its inhabitants, those that denote entities with geographical dominion, and preternatural creatures associated with idolatry and unholy ground. In chapter two, Heiser provides charts for readers to clearly see the Greek translations of those terms in the Septuagint.

Section two is the main body of this book, where Heiser proposes the idea of three divine rebellions: The initial rebellion of an individual figure; the second rebellion described in Genesis 6:1-4; and the third rebellion after the episode of the Tower of Babel. While examining the initial rebellion, Heiser goes beyond Genesis 3 to address Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:1-19. He believes these passages provide more information about Genesis 3 (p. 66). The second rebellion is recorded in Genesis 6:1-4. “The sons of God” took daughters of man as their wives and their descendants were those mighty men. There are various views on who were “the sons of

God.” Heiser argues against the Sethite view and the view of polygamous royal marriages but favors the supernatural view that takes “the sons of God” here as supernatural beings. These heavenly beings crossed “the boundary” to mingle with humans and produced an illegitimate species. Heiser believes that this rebellion was the origin of demons. After the descendants of these supernatural beings and daughters of man died, their disembodied spirits became what we call demons or evil spirits. The third rebellion is related to the Tower of Babel, which causes not only the scattering of humanity, but also the allotment of the nations to members of Yahweh’s heavenly council as Deut 32:8-9 describes. Heiser highlights Psalm 82 and interprets this psalm as portraying the corruption of the gods of the nations. After the incident of the Tower of Babel, Yahweh assigned the nations to these heavenly beings. However, instead of ruling with justice, they became corrupt and even turned humanity to idolatry.

In section three, Heiser continues to apply to the New Testament the framework that he draws from his discussion of the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism. He examines the names and titles of the devil, as well as his dominion and destiny, then demons and their destiny. In chapter eleven, Heiser addresses the destiny of the ruling powers, namely, the gods who were allotted to nations at Babel. Through the work of Christ, those powers were delegitimized and Israel and nations are reclaimed. Paul’s language and description indicate this idea. “[W]hen Paul uses terms of geographical dominion in conversation with gentiles, he is not referring to the demons of the Gospels. He is referring to the corrupt gods allotted to the nations as part of God’s punishment of humanity as Babel” (p. 223).

The last section tries to correct some misconceptions based on what has been said earlier in the book. Some questions are well-answered. For example, while answering the question “Can a Christian be demon possessed?” Heiser traces the reasoning behind this idea of ownership. The English phrase “demon possession,” which was used to translate the Greek word *daimonizomai* creates, the wrong impression of ownership. “The best alternative seems to be simply to transliterate *daimonizomai* as ‘demonize’” (p. 255).

This book is commendable in several ways. First, with a post-Enlightenment Western context, Heiser acknowledges the ontological existence of supernatural beings such as demons and angels and is willing to devote his time and expertise in Old Testament studies to this realm. While interpreting certain difficult passages such as Gen 6:1-4 and Deut 32:8,

he highlights this supernatural perspective, which is often missing in contemporary Christianity. The same perspective is applied to relevant New Testament passages such as Jesus' temptation, transfiguration, resurrection, and the Great Commission. This approach provides a fresh view for the reader seeking to understand these familiar passages. Second, Heiser starts his discussion from the vocabulary in the Scripture. His exploration of the variety of terms that refer to these supernatural beings in the Old Testament is helpful. Third, Heiser advocates reading the biblical text as a product of its contemporary context(s), especially considering the polytheistic background. Modern interpreters tend to neglect or minimize this aspect. Heiser draws our attention to this important reality.

However, the reader may raise some questions. Heiser seems to rely heavily on Second Temple Judaism in "constructing" the history of demons or rebellious spiritual beings (for example, the story of the watchers). Although he is careful not to present the information from Second Temple Judaism as contradictory to Scripture, Second Temple Judaism seems to provide details to fill in the blank where the Scripture does not speak (at least it does not provide such detail). One cannot help asking, "Without those details from Second Temple Judaism, could the history of demons be understood as Heiser has presented here?" "Should we use extra-biblical documents to illuminate the obscure and difficult biblical passages?" or "Should we stop where the Scripture does not supply further information?" While learning fresh ideas from Heiser, one may need to examine the sources and the approach that lead to the conclusions.

Another question that may be raised is: After the reader has been informed about the discussions of the history of demons, what is next? How does this knowledge help a Christian to make daily decisions apart from knowing that evangelism and missions are supposed to reclaim the nations from the dark powers? What does the Bible surely say about demons? How do we relate this knowledge to Christian life and practice?

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***Paul and the Language of Faith.* By Nijay K. Gupta. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, 225pp., \$34.99.**

In this volume, Nijay K. Gupta reexamines the meaning of “faith” (*pistis*) in the Pauline corpus. Gupta’s study is motivated by what he refers to as “three problematic trends in the way Christians (and others) use faith language in religious ways” (p. 2). He identifies these three trends as follows: (1) “faith as opinion,” that is believing irrespective of reason; (2) “faith as doctrine,” that is faith statements such as those found in creeds and confessions; and (3) “faith as passive,” that is faith as a “passive act” (pp. 4-5). In contrast to these trends, Gupta argues that “faith” (*pistis*) in Paul has two distinct and related meanings, namely “belief and faithfulness” (p. 9). He places these related meanings into three categories: (1) “believing faith” (*pistis* as belief); (2) “obeying faith” (*pistis* as faithfulness); and (3) “trusting faith” (*pistis* as trust) (pp. 9-13). This proposed taxonomy stems from Gupta’s close reading of relevant texts in which he examines the meaning of faith (*pistis*) by considering the semantic range of the term in relation to ancient non-Jewish and Jewish literature and in relation to Paul’s contextual usages of the term.

Chapter one not only explains the aforementioned concern and thesis of the work, but also summarizes the Old Testament foundation for Paul’s understanding of faith (*pistis*), discusses the deficiency of rendering *pistis* as “faith” in contexts that call for “faithfulness”; and defines the scope of the study by limiting considerations of the so-called *pistis Christou* (faith of Christ) debate and by situating the study within the divine and human agency debate. With respect to the latter, Gupta takes the position that Paul’s faith language “may overlap significantly with the Jewish concept of covenant” which means Paul saw faith as an “active mode of receptivity” rather than a passive experience (pp. 16-17). He rounds out the chapter by outlining his method which favors contextual word usage over static definitions and values the impact of Paul’s cultural heritage on his use of language.

Chapters two to four help to situate the study within three fields of inquiry, namely the history of interpretation, Paul’s linguistic milieu, and uses of *pistis* in the NT Gospels. Gupta briefly reviews how interpreters have understood Paul’s faith language in the Patristic era, the Medieval era, the Reformation, and within modern scholarship. Among his notable conclusions here, Gupta suggests that some apostolic fathers (Clement and

Ignatius) are “comfortable treating *pistis* as a kind of virtue (not a work)” and that Luther’s understanding of faith language has a “participationistic dimension” often missed by Pauline interpreters (pp. 37-38). With respect to Paul’s linguistic milieu, Gupta makes brief forays into pagan Hellenistic literature and Hellenistic Jewish literature. What he discovers from these corpuses is that *pistis* is not “primarily religious language” and that, contrary to popular opinion, Jews used *pistis* to “talk about their religious commitments and obligations” (p. 56). In this way, though Paul may use *pistis* in distinctive ways, it “did not emerge *ex nihilo*.” Based especially on the link between *pistis* and Jewish covenantal commitment in Paul’s cultural heritage, Gupta urges readers to rethink how the use of *pistis* in the Pauline corpus is likewise linked to a new covenant “via the Christ-relation.” Gupta’s examination of *pistis* within the Jesus tradition yields the conclusion that the term has a “breath of meanings” in the NT Gospels such as “seeking, believing, trusting, and obeying” (p. 75). While Gupta acknowledges several differences between Paul’s faith language and that of the Gospels, he warns against underestimating their similarities which include several points of overlap such as an “emphasis on believing in and trusting in God,” “faith as a distinctive quality of followers of Jesus,” and “the divine origin of saving wisdom and faith” (p. 76).

In chapters five through nine, Gupta’s analysis of Paul’s faith language begins in earnest as he evaluates Paul’s contextual uses of *pistis* in the following order: 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. Against the backdrop of Plutarch’s use of *pistis* as a reference to “loyalty,” Gupta argues that most contextual uses of the term in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians call for a translation of “loyalty” or “faithfulness” rather than a mere “kind of mental commitment to certain beliefs” (p. 94). His analysis of the Corinthian correspondence suggests that in both letters *pistis* is Paul’s epistemological alternative to a “sarkic perspective” which only values what it sees. Paul offers an alternative, namely “believing faith” which has been “trained to *look* for the right things” (p. 133). With respect to the examination of *pistis* in Galatians, Gupta coins the phrase “covenantal *pistism*” which he posits as a corrective to defining faith in the letter as “a kind of passive reliance on Christ” (p. 143). Based in part on the prior work of James Dunn, Gupta defines “covenantal *pistism*” in Galatians as “the core relational dynamic of the covenant, the nature of a covenantal bond that expects fidelity and mutuality with trust as its core” (p. 143). Finally, Gupta’s examination of

pistis in Romans detects a “comprehensive use” of the term that warrants the label “trusting faith” (p. 169). In this way, Gupta renders *pistis* in Paul’s Hab 2:4 citation as “the righteous will live by *trust*.”

In chapters ten to eleven, Gupta brings his exegetical findings to bear on the *pistis Christou* (‘Faith of Christ’) debate and then offers an overarching synthesis. With respect to the former, Gupta acknowledges that his study made him more sympathetic to a “third view” which moves beyond the impasse of the subjective and objective genitive views. Gupta argues “The Christ-relation is by the grace of God and initiated by Christ, but believers participate in it *by faith*” (p. 174). Consequently, he suggests rendering *pistis Christou* as “Christ-relation(ship)” (p. 175). In his synthesis and conclusion, Gupta expands upon his three-tiered taxonomy of *pistis* (obeying, believing, and trusting faith) and considers how his study informs issues such as the relationship of faith and works and the relationship between divine and human agency. He ultimately describes *pistis* as a “tensive symbol” in Paul that moves “along a spectrum of meaning such that one can use a number of words to translate it depending on the context” (p. 180).

Gupta’s study is accessible, well-informed, and engaged with current Pauline scholarship. While Gupta intentionally limits his study to uses of *pistis*, it might have been helpful to consider how the many uses of *pisteuo* and other terms from the same semantic domain inform our overall understanding of Paul’s faith language. Additionally, a more robust examination of how OT faith language shapes Paul’s understanding would be helpful. Some key uses of *pistis* often associated with how Paul understands faith are underrepresented or not addressed altogether (e.g., Rom 10:17; 14:23; Eph 2:8–9). In any case, Gupta’s study is an important contribution to ongoing and recent publications on the topic such as *The Faith of St. Paul: The Transformative Gift of Divine Power* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2019) by Roy Harrisville III and Kevin McFadden’s *Faith in the Son of God: The Place of Christ-Oriented Faith within Pauline Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2021).

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***In God's Image: An Anthropology of the Spirit.* By Michael Welker. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021, xii+155pp., \$21.00.**

Michael Welker, senior professor at the University of Heidelberg in Germany and executive director of the Research Center for International and Interdisciplinary Theology, has developed his 2019/2020 Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh, which were originated “to promote, advance, teach and diffuse the study of natural theology” (p. 1). Though concentrating on anthropology, Welker unfolds through his six lectures the comprehensive aspect of the human spirit and the divine Spirit, as a basis for natural theology, in which “humanity can realistically be ennobled by calls to justice, freedom, truth, and peace and thereby transformed into a joyful and loving ‘image of God’” (pp. ix-x).

In the first lecture, Welker articulates the focus for the overall theme of all lectures: “Whether and, if so, how human beings in their natural, social, and cultural existence can be understood as the image of God (*imago Dei*)” (p. 3). Drawing upon a few appropriate but disconsolate instances in various situations from different angles of human existence, Welker describes the tension and breadth of human life through which one cannot escape encountering deep agony as well as mental disability and disaster throughout history (pp. 6-9).

Based on the human reality, which has demonstrated self-endangerment and destructive inclinations in history, Welker engages the relationship between the divine Spirit and the human spirit, seeing them not as bipolar relations, but as multimodal powers, which helps to bring more focus on a realistic natural theology. Human beings in the social, cultural, and religious domain are surrounded by complex circumstances involving the human spirit and the divine Spirit that are too rich and complex to be conceived by a bipolar or triadic completion of thought (pp. 29-35). He understands the multimodal spirit to be functional “not only in human minds but also in a multitude of historical and cultural environments” (p. 43). In order to capture the clear contour of the divine and human multimodal spirits working within justice, freedom, truth, as well as efforts toward peace, Welker explores each concept throughout the rest of his lectures, which ultimately confronts the human agony, deep depression, and mental challenges present within the human experience.

Welker initially explores the shape of the image of God in justice. The United Nations Human Rights Convention of 1948 declared, “All human

beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood” (p. 45). Human beings have struggled to realize freedom and equality of all people by means of natural law; they have done so by appealing to a combination of law and mercy, justice and institutionalized protection of the weak. In fact, however, “all life lives at the cost of other life.” Natural law which has ignored this fact has failed in keeping an ethos of equality to protect the weak (p. 55). The perspective of a multimodal spirit of justice, “nourished by various impulses from family ethos, by a broad spectrum of feelings of empathy, and by religious perspectives that direct our attention across multiple generations and toward the grand destiny of human beings,” provides power for peace and enhances the human beings as the image of God (p. 66). In other words, ultimately, people with a multimodal spirit of justice, called and shaped in the image of God, become capable of managing themselves in the secular world with its inequality and injustice (pp. 129-30).

In the same manner, the multimodal spirit of freedom, truth, and peace works inextricably in connection with the multimodal spirit of justice. In the circumstances of the personal and social manifestations of suppression and the lack of freedom, those who espouse a multimodal spirit of freedom manifest the image of God and gain strength to fight for liberation, understood morally, legally, and politically (pp. 75-87). Similarly, with a multimodal spirit of truth, people “struggle to bring truth to bear critically and self-critically on the many levels of the search for truth” (p. 130). Finally, these contexts and circumstances of the multimodal spirit come to focus on the peace of the spirit, which brings about warm and loving friendships, creating opportunities for benevolence rather than a spirit of hostility, hatred, and warmongering. This indivisible interaction of the multimodal spirit in all circumstances and situations of social, cultural, and political realms helps to generate the possibility of living and acting commensurate with the image of God.

Welker asks what it means to be persons created in the image of God in our multifaceted pluralistic societies. Beyond the typical approach of natural theology, which focuses on the existence and attributes of God without referring to any divine revelation, Welker is to be commended for developing a concept of the multimodal spirit in natural theology that draws attention to the anthropological function of the spirit in the complicated world where simple bipolar relations are insufficient to explain

the complexities so prevalent in our society. This insightful study, which connects natural theology to a more complete understanding of the image of God, leads readers to think more deeply about living faithfully in this world while growing in godliness.

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The Beauty of Preaching: God's Glory in Christian Proclamation.
By Michael Pasquarello III. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, xxx-iv+254pp., \$26.99.

Michael Pasquarello is an experienced preacher, academician, and author who occupies the Methodist Chair of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School. He believes, “*The Beauty of Preaching* is an invitation to ‘see’ afresh the heart of the church’s vocation of preaching: to know, love, and enjoy God in all we think, say, do, desire, and suffer” (p. 24). He brings to light “the ‘ugliness’ of preaching that exchanges the love of God for the love of ourselves, the praise of God’s glory for the glory of praise” (p. 22). The preaching of preachers that incessantly attempts to be relevant “quickly become[s] preaching that has lost its capacity to speak of God’s truth, beauty, and goodness” (p. 10). To this end, Pasquarello directs the preacher to behold the beauty of Christ in the gospel we proclaim and to “show that theological and aesthetic considerations in preaching are inseparable” (p. xviii).

One observes *Saving Beauty* (ch. 1) in the beautiful feet of the gospel messenger, “The beauty is in the nature and purpose of the messengers’ words, the joy of proclaiming a message that delights our heart and stirs our desire” (p. 33). The chapter concludes with a thought-provoking section on the poor widow who gave out of her poverty (Mk 12:41-44). *Seeing Beauty* (ch. 2) is a reflection on the unnamed woman of Mark 14:1-9 considering the “beautiful thing” of anointing Jesus and, like her, discerning how to preach beautifully as an act of devotion to God. The next two chapters cover Augustine’s salvation (*A Converting Beauty*) and him as a preacher (*A Spoken Beauty*). His conversion was from a love for

the praise of people to a love for the praise of God (xxvii). For Augustine, as a preacher, “The eyes of his heart were enlightened to see Beauty in the Word made flesh” (p. 96) and his “new desire, then, was to allow the Word to do its work” (p. 97).

A Simple Beauty (ch. 5) highlights the preaching of John Wesley, for the beauty of Wesley’s preaching is “not found in its eloquent, elaborate, or entertaining oratory, but rather in the breadth of its reach *ad populum*” (p. 140). Wesley’s homiletical aesthetic is, “Proclaiming the gospel . . . a work of great beauty that makes known the glory of its true subject and object; the God of infinite love” (p. 159). Finally, *A Strange Beauty* (chapter 6) examines the preaching of Martin Luther. For Luther, “The proclamation of the gospel sparkles with the beauty of Jesus Christ” (p. 164) and “this “strange beauty” is perceived in the deformity of Christ, through whom God absorbs the ugliness of sin and shares his beauty with sinners” (p. 168).

The significant positive of this work is that it consistently points our preaching to the beautiful proclamation of the redeeming work of God in Christ. A few concerns: (1) this work is dense and sometimes labor intensive (copious footnotes, block quotes), (2) while he states, “I’ve written this book for preachers and students of preaching from both mainline and evangelical churches” (p. 19), its trajectory is more mainline (liturgical language, egalitarian view, slightly ecumenical), and (3) at times Pasquarello makes hay out of straw, i.e. “The unnamed woman’s act is a sign of the transformation affected in preaching when the Spirit ‘breaks open’ what is concealed to make known the glory of Jesus in human words” (p. 75). Despite these concerns, this book will still prove helpful for those concerned with God’s glory/beauty in preaching.

Sermon preparation and delivery are not the aims of this book, like Augustine, Pasquarello “offers us a vision of the wisdom of preaching that serves the church on pilgrimage toward its final completion in knowing, praising, and loving God” (p. 135). While limited in audience, it will challenge students of preaching on a graduate or doctoral level. After one accomplishes some heavy-lifting from Pasquarello, they may want to peruse John Piper’s *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Crossway, 2018) or A. T. Robertson’s classic *The Glory of the Ministry: Paul’s Exultation in Preaching* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998 reprint [1911]). The beauty of preaching to which Pasquarello calls us to is not

in the messenger, but in the message, so may our preaching be like Zion, “*The perfection of beauty, [where] God appears in radiance*” (Ps 50:2).

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***In Stone and Story: Early Christianity in the Roman World.* By Bruce W. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, xi+292pp., \$34.99.**

Bruce W. Longenecker serves as professor of religion and occupies the W. W. Melton Chair at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Longenecker has written numerous articles and monographs on the relationship between Pompeii and the New Testament, including: “Pompeian Artifacts and Jesus-Devotion: The Contours of the Issue in the Early Twenty-First Century” (2019), *Early Christianity in Pompeian Light: People, Texts, Situations* (2016), *The Crosses of Pompeii: Jesus-Devotion in a Vesuvian Town* (2016), and “The Empress, the Goddess, and the Earthquake: Atmospheric Conditions Permitting Public Displays of Jesus-Devotion in Pompeii” (2016).

In his writing, Longenecker examines selected archeological artifacts (e.g., graffiti, inscriptions, statues, temples, paintings, tombs) preserved by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE to discover what they reveal about the ancient Roman world, especially urban settings. Classical texts are referenced occasionally, but only when they shed light on archeological remains. Afterward, he relates these artifacts to selected New Testament texts to glean new insights into the rise of the Christian faith in its historical settings. Longenecker is particularly interested in identifying the diverse ways Christianity gained a foothold, as well as the fresh ideas it introduced. While the calamity caused by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius affected multiple towns, Longenecker focuses mostly on the artifacts found at Pompeii and (to a lesser extent) Herculaneum, two coastal towns located approximately one hundred fifty miles south of Rome.

Those unfamiliar with the significance of the resources located at Pompeii and Herculaneum examined by Longenecker may question the legitimacy and uniqueness of his project. Nevertheless, when one

recognizes that Pompeii and Herculaneum were covered and preserved by huge amounts of volcanic pumice and pyroclastic ash for centuries (up to twenty feet), they come to realize that both locations provide a treasure trove of materials from the ancient world. To be sure, Pompeii and Herculaneum supply a window to the first century like no other towns from ancient times due to the carefully preserved materials, which archeologists have largely uncovered in the past several hundred years.

The author's purpose is neither to provide a complete introduction of ancient Roman artifacts nor a thorough discussion of early Christianity within the Roman world. Rather, he examines selected points of contact between the themes expressed in the artifacts with those found in New Testament texts. An additional motivation for writing *In Stone and Story* is a desire to provide a type of "interpretive bridge" for twenty-first century readers (p. 7). More specifically, Longenecker aims for his work to serve as a guide to help modern readers understand not only the first-century world of the Romans, but also the uniqueness of the Christian writings that appeared within it.

Longenecker arranges *In Stone and Story* into four major sections. In Part One, "Protocols of Engagement" (chs. 1-3), he covers various preliminary matters. The ancient Romans' pursuit of status served as "the most important social phenomenon of the ancient world" (p. 14). Indeed, this feature functions as the "glue" that holds together many of the case studies examined in the book (p. 13). Furthermore, Longenecker discusses the similarities and differences between ancient cities, his work's predilection for Paul's writings due to their urban Roman contexts, and the basics regarding the archeological artifacts found in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

In the remaining portions of the book (parts 2-4), which comprises the bulk of his study, Longenecker surveys some of the Roman world's most prominent features (as illustrated in the Vesuvian artifacts), which he places under the broad headings of "Popular Devotion," "Social Prominence," and "Household Effectiveness." He discusses beliefs and practices tied to everyday life such as sacrificing to the deities, the promotion of the *Pax Romana* narrative, devotion to the Greco-Roman deities and mystery deities, life and death, and slavery. The reader gains a sense of how the Romans thought as well as what they valued. Longenecker identifies similarities and differences between the Roman and Christian perspectives, reaching the following conclusion: "[W]e have at times heard apostolic voices of the early Jesus-movement articulating perspectives that highlight the innovative

creativity of their theological worldview. Embedded in their discourse were certain ideological commitments that ran against the grain of perspectives and practices commonly entrenched within the Greco-Roman world. At much of the same time, however, we have also seen how some forms of early Christian discourse and practice were aligned in general conformity with the first-century contexts.” (p. 250)

The author intended to write an introductory work for a popular as opposed to scholarly audience, and several features support this aim. Longenecker presents many beautiful and relatively clear images of the artifacts discussed, as well as photos of structures and diverse materials from (mostly) modern Pompeii. He also directs readers to remarkable internet resources, such as the website, “Pompeii in Pictures” (pp. 28-30), that allows them to examine ancient artifacts discussed in the writing. Other features of interest to a non-scholarly readership include the Appendix (pp. 255-63), which shares forty-eight “things to consider,” that is, additional early Christian passages not discussed in chapters 4-19 that provide opportunities for further reflection on various topics (e.g., sacrifice and sin, peace and security), and a helpful Glossary of terms used in the book (pp. 265-67). Finally, the “Further Reading” section shares many valuable works for scholarly and non-scholarly readers alike (pp. 268-82).

Some may question several of his conclusions, such as the suggestion that Paul highlighted women in public leadership roles while later Christians altered his presentation (pp. 223-25). Nevertheless, by and large Longenecker provides a perceptive, masterful overview of the Vesuvian artifacts and their corresponding themes in relation to the New Testament writings.

Anyone who wishes to understand Roman and Christian thinking on key beliefs and practices will greatly benefit by reading *In Stone and Story*. Pastors will better understand ancient Roman values, longings, fears, and ethics, while professors in universities who teach Bible survey classes will come to appreciate the social, religious, economic, and political world within which Christianity emerged. This is an excellent teaching resource. Strongly recommended.

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***The Gospel as Manuscript: An Early History of the Jesus Tradition as Material Artifact.* By Chris Keith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020, 296pp., \$74.00.**

In this volume, Chris Keith seeks to push back on the notion that illiteracy and the predominance of orality in the ancient world meant that texts and manuscripts were relatively unimportant. Rather, even in the midst of this social situation, texts and their physical manuscripts played a highly significant role in the transmission of the Jesus tradition. Noting that many scholarly approaches have “assigned a subsidiary role to the written word in the transmission of the Jesus tradition,” Keith aims to provide a “fuller portrait of textuality” that reckons with the functional and social dynamics of manuscripts in the earliest Christian communities (pp. 5-6).

Keith’s work provides a compendium of several currents in New Testament research. Central to these is the “material turn” in the study of early Christianity. He highlights the nature of the “textualization of the tradition” and the implications of this transition from a spoken to written medium. One of Keith’s contributions to this well-established field of general inquiry is his specific focus on the writing and reception history of the Jesus tradition in the earliest churches.

Two primary conceptual resources Keith employs are the “theory of ancient reading cultures” developed by William A. Johnson and the notion of “cultural texts as cultural memory” developed by Jan Assmann (p. 13). Alongside these starting points, Keith articulates the prominence of manuscripts in various social contexts (manuscripts as required elements of the reading culture) and also the strategic function they had in influencing the reception of the Jesus tradition (manuscripts as socially significant cultural texts).

The development of the “gospel” to the “Gospels” in the years that followed Jesus’s resurrection is a historical reality that requires careful consideration. Throughout his study, Keith explores the profound implications that this decision to commit the story and teachings of Jesus to writing had on the reception history of the gospel. In this regard, Keith draws out the implications of something contemporary readers take for granted: the textuality of the gospel story in written form.

After explaining the parameters of his study, Keith first establishes the significance of Mark’s narrative as the initial textualization of the Jesus tradition (ch. 3). In this social context, the composition of the Gospel of

Mark represents a radically influential moment. As a written text, Mark actualizes an “extended situation” that enables “a limitless number of reception contexts, giving new life to the tradition beyond the confines of orality” (p. 96; on the concept of an “extended situation,” see pp. 26-32; 85-96). Keith also emphasizes the way that Mark’s Gospel portrays itself with a strong “textual self-consciousness” (p. 98). After Mark’s narrative is written, the textualization of the Jesus tradition develops in earnest.

Keith next traces the proliferation of written texts about Jesus that followed Mark’s narrative. Subsequent works about Jesus’s life and teaching positioned themselves in relation to Mark’s Gospel and also sought to draw attention to the textual nature of their work. Keith focuses on what he calls the “competitive textualization” that occurs in texts that draw directly upon Mark’s narrative but also modify the tradition in ways that require explanation (pp. 103-105). He discusses the ways Matthew, Luke, John, and the *Gospel of Thomas* position their literary work in direct relation to other written texts (chs. 4-5).

In the last part of his book, Keith examines two of the social factors that enabled the earliest churches to function as a textual community. The public reading of the Jesus tradition is a practice that is well-established in the fourth century but begins in the first century (ch. 6). In turn, this public reading included a central role for manuscripts of biblical texts and played a key role in the self-perceived identity of the early Christian community (ch. 7).

A clear pattern throughout this study is Keith’s move away from explaining the origin of an ancient practice to demonstrating its resulting history of reception. There is an initial focus on the *origin* of the textualized tradition, but also a clear move to analyze the *effect* of that textualized tradition for writers and readers who were aware of its presence. For Keith, this focus on Mark’s “impact instead of his intentions” allows one to explore “not *why* [Mark] moved the Jesus tradition into the written medium but *what difference it made*” (pp. 12-13; cf. 73-99). This shift from motivated intention to effective history means that Keith’s overarching claims are minimal and tied to historical evidence that is more straightforward than hypothetical reconstructions (e.g., his tentative rejection of a “Q” source, pp. 75-77).

The historical and hermeneutical significance of texts, textuality, and the use of the written medium among the earliest churches are of perennial concern for the study of the New Testament. Some readers will likely

disagree with elements of Keith's historical-critical approach to the reception of the Jesus tradition in early Christianity (e.g., around issues of authorship and the nature of conflict entailed in some cases of "competitive textualization"). However, because of the carefulness of Keith's historical analysis, the modesty of his central claims, and the comprehensive scope of his scholarly engagement, this work should not be neglected.

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***Already Sanctified: A Theology of the Christian Life in Light of God's Completed Work.* By Don J. Payne. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, 192pp., \$22.99.**

In *Already Sanctified: A Theology of the Christian Life in Light of God's Completed Work*, Don Payne, associate professor of theology and Christian formation at Denver Seminary, seeks to rescue the doctrine of sanctification. He makes the argument that positional sanctification as it has been termed within theological discussions, bears much more weight on the Christian life than previous discussions have allowed. The impetus for this book arises from years of both pastoral ministry and teaching within a seminary context. Specifically, Payne argues that "the present and future aspects [of sanctification] can be properly understood only in light of what has already been accomplished" (p. 7). This short text teases out this idea in biblical and practical perspective and serves as a helpful corrective, even if there might be some areas left unresolved in the debate.

Chapters one and two provide a brief history of the Reformation conversation on sanctification as it arose in contrast to late Medieval Roman Catholicism. Here Payne specifically looks at the two prominent reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, drawing conclusions from their thought on sanctification and justification as they relate to one another. Chapter two traces the line of thought a little further into later traditions such as Wesleyanism and the later Keswick movement, two movements highly influential within Evangelicalism. Payne could have said more on the history of sanctification within the Protestant Reformation. The pietistic

tradition within Lutheranism that arose soon after the Reformation is important here, and the other reformed inheritors of Calvin's thought within Europe and the British Isles are also important to consider. I believe it would have been helpful to give readers additional coordinates to locate this discussion more historically, especially as it relates to Evangelicalism. Relying on authoritative sources such as Richard Lovelace might have been useful to elaborate this more for the sake of providing further context and background to the issue at hand. I question his conclusion that Westminster and its language of further sanctified, really and personally should be considered a "sliding scale." What the Westminster divines and other Calvinistic teachers would have called this would-be holiness, piety, or experiential theology. What was considered positional sanctification would have been subsumed into a facet of election and regeneration (from the *ordo salutis*) which was no less important a discussion even if they moved onto the experience of that in holy living. Payne asserts the confusion that results from "a psychologically subtle interface between trusting God and just the right manner and engaging the right type of disciplines" (p. 37). This is a helpful observation and sets up the rest of Payne's argument and work through the text he presents.

In chapter three, Payne begins to map the sanctification trail from the Old Testament understanding of consecration. According to Payne, the Old Testament rendering of holiness relates to "God's presence and purposes for the definitive orientation" (p. 55). Absent from this discussion is the idea of holiness and consecration in the book of Psalms. The material from the Psalms provides a wealth of data on how one walks in the way of the Lord and demonstrates a life that is set apart and consecrated to God. Admittedly, dealing with the Psalms is an enormous task for a survey chapter such as this, but in the opinion of this reviewer it is a major oversight. Additionally, the life of David as one who is positionally set apart for God's task and who demonstrates one after God's own heart would have been a helpful example to demonstrate and interact with Payne's thesis.

Chapter four moves to a New Testament overview of sanctification. Here Payne emphasizes the confusion, according to him, on how the imperatives given in the New Testament are often over emphasized to the neglect of the "accomplished aspect of sanctification" (p. 58). The consistent New Testament witness is that believers are sanctified as a primary identity marker. Paul to the Corinthians bases his pastoral injunctions on the reality that his hearers are washed, sanctified, and justified "in

the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11; pp. 62–3). This includes therefore an “active presence and agency in their lives” (p. 63). Accomplished sanctification, however, is not contrary to personal growth and effort. Rather, as Payne argues, it is “framed by God’s covenant promises and faithfulness is brought about by the Holy Spirit” (p. 70).

In a few places Payne makes assertions that go unsubstantiated. For instance, he claims that Romans 12:1–2 “routinely appears to support the notion of progressive sanctification” within both academic and popular treatments of sanctification (p. 91). This may be true, yet no verification is given apart from a couple of references to Richard Longenecker’s commentary on Romans. He also categorizes the Reformed tradition of sanctification in a way that seems misleading. Quoting J. I. Packer, Payne asserts that there is an “existential conundrum” in desiring holiness and one’s awareness of their lack of holiness (p. 97). While this “reach exceeding grasp” may on the surface seem problematic, the intention is to affirm the positive which is one’s union with Christ and holiness based on that union. Additionally, the recognition of the Creator/creature distinction is one that leads to holy fear and holy living based on love. From my understanding, Packer’s intention is to demonstrate how Christians live out of their new identity “and the naturalness of godliness when one is a new creation in Christ.”¹ He also claims that John Owen’s view of sanctification, interpreted through his work *Mortification of Sin*, is too often interpreted negatively. This may be true, but no further reflection or citations are provided to support this claim. Payne has done a lot of work within Packer’s theology, and Owen’s influence upon Packer, so I would give him the benefit of the doubt in knowing more of the nuances contained within Packer’s thought and its influence on Reformed understandings of sanctification. It would have still been useful to expound on this idea in order to further verify his claims and demonstrate their veracity to his readers.

In part three, Payne teases out how accomplished sanctification and transformation go hand in hand. Transformation is inherent within sanctification but, according to Payne, transformation comes through various responses within the Christian life and community. In these final chapters, there is nothing immensely new or challenging in the understanding of spiritual growth. In fact, those who would affirm the notion of progressive

¹J. I. Packer, *Seeing God in the Dark: Unraveling the Mysteries of Holy Living* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 237.

sanctification would find much to agree with here. Payne reiterates the primacy of God's word, highlights the role of suffering, upholds the centrality of worship and community, and focuses on gratitude as vital to growth. Payne concludes that formation and growth should not be codified because we "will inevitably miss something and frustrate the process for those with whom the Spirit interacts in the Spirit's hidden manner" (p. 152).

Payne concludes with an urgent pastoral tone: "traditions that overly associate sanctification with transformation can either tacitly burden believers more than help them flourish or foster spiritual apathy and presumption" (p. 156). Payne's point is well taken, specifically that the idea of accomplished sanctification and the Christian's status as holy is overshadowed by the call to grow in holiness. I think readers should carefully listen to Payne on this point. However, I do not believe a stronger focus on accomplished sanctification erases the temptation for spiritual narcissism and moralism within the Christian life as Payne argues. Reformed views of sanctification still assert the role of accomplished sanctification as the mode of being for a Christian, though perhaps it is not practically stated as strongly as it should be. What Payne does well to remind readers is that while our theology of sanctification boxes may all be checked, the practical and pastoral implications need to be vigorously maintained while caring for those who are seeking to live a faithful Christian life in a fallen world mired by sin. A theology of sanctification is only good in so far as it elucidates the profundity of our union with Christ and his abiding presence by the Spirit in our daily lives. While I believe Payne could have provided much more historical and biblical discussion on this point, and provided verification of his assertions in key areas, this is still a text worth considering for students of theology. For those teaching on the doctrine of sanctification or Christian formation, pastors considering the practical impact of this doctrine, or interested readers seeking more insight on accomplished sanctification, Payne can be a helpful conversation partner.

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***The Trinity: An Introduction.* By Scott R. Swain. Wheaton: Crossway, 2020, 155pp., \$15.99.**

Published as one of the short studies in systematic theology, *The Trinity: An Introduction* is designed to serve theologians, pastors, and laypersons in “seeking to review the main contours of Trinitarian teaching” in the Bible (p. 20). Scott R. Swain, president and professor of systematic theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, meets the needs of all the readers by drawing “the basic ‘grammar’ of Scripture’s Trinitarian discourse,” which leads ultimately to the goal of learning how to praise, worship, and rejoice in the triune God (pp. 19-22).

Swain asserts that the readers must learn to read fluently the Bible’s primary Trinitarian discourse (p. 27). In relation to the basic pattern of the Bible’s Trinitarian discourse, Swain examines three patterns in the baptismal formula in Matthew 28:19: (1) affirming the existence of the one God; (2) identifying the three persons with the one God; and (3) distinguishing the three persons from each other (pp. 28-34).

In connection with the basic grammar of scriptural Trinitarianism, Swain considers three types of texts: (1) inner Trinitarian conversation texts, which means that “only the persons of the Trinity can make known the persons of the Trinity” (Matthew 3:16-17 and Mark 1:10-11); (2) cosmic framework texts which “set the entire cosmos, as well as the entirety of God’s work within the cosmos, in relation to the Trinity” (Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Matthew 3:16-17); and (3) redemptive mission texts, which are related to the “sending or mission of the Son (and the Spirit) to fulfill God’s redemptive purpose” (Mark 12:1-12 and Galatians 4:4-7) (pp. 38-50). From these observations, Swain proposes three important conclusions, which serve as the subjects for the rest of the chapters in the book.

The first conclusion is clarified by the statement in Deuteronomy 6:4: “The Lord is one” (p. 53). Swain explicates one God in his “unity of singularity” and his “unity of simplicity” (p. 53). This concept of “God alone” and “not composed of parts” in his being and attributes, Swain claims, is the oneness of God affirmed by the Bible’s basic Trinitarian grammar (p. 54). Thus, divine simplicity makes all of the one God’s external works indivisible (p. 59).

The second conclusion comes with the distinction of the three persons of the triune God in chapters four through six: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The characteristic of each person of the triune God shows the uniqueness

of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while maintaining undivided cooperation by the unique relationship of the three persons.

The fatherhood of God is primary, unique, and transcendent, which means God's fatherhood is the pattern and unique model for every creaturely fatherhood in heaven and earth, not vice versa, and also transcends all creaturely limitations (pp. 70-71). Similar to the fatherhood of God, the sonship of the Son is primary, unique, and transcendent as well; namely (1) all other sons come into existence "fashioned after the Son's divine filial likeness"; (2) in relation to the Father, he is the only begotten Son; and (3) the Son's begetting is beyond the manner of creaturely begetting (pp. 78-79).

The distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus Christ as the Father's beloved Son; moreover, it is the Holy Spirit who draws God's people to confess Jesus is Lord (p. 91). Unique to the Holy Spirit is his procession from the Father and the Son (pp. 97-98). Swain, by naming God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whose identity is derived from the relational origin within the triune God, shows how each person of the triune God is distinctive in the works of one God.

The third and final conclusion of the basic grammar of biblical Trinitarianism comes with the external operations of God, not like his internal operations in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Swain affirms "what is true of God's being is true of God's action as well," which means God's divine simplicity operates in a threefold order within undivided and inseparable works of God (pp. 108-9). Such an external act of the three persons is manifest in both appropriations and missions (pp. 110-19).

The last chapter of the book deals with the ultimate end of the triune God's work, which is internal and external. Scripture pictures the triune God as a builder who creates and sustains a home for union and communion with his redeemed children. Swain, however, asserts "the triune God himself, and the triune God alone, is the ultimate and final end of his sacred house-building project, of the marriage of Christ and his bride, and of the union and communion between the triune God and his people" (pp. 123-24). Finally, pursuing God alone in his works benefits God's beloved children (p. 127).

Swain seeks to unravel the mystery of the doctrine of the Trinity based on the "grammar" of Trinitarian discourse, which is exposed by Trinitarian textual patterns. The manner of unfolding the biblical Trinitarianism in context focuses ultimately on God alone and his glory while not

disregarding some critical contemporary issues. This short, but substantive volume, will serve to lead theologians, pastors, and laypersons to the true worship of God the Trinity. I am pleased to recommend this excellent book.

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***Sin and its Remedy in Paul.* Edited by Nijay K. Gupta and John K. Goodrich. Eugene: Cascade, 2020, xv+178pp., \$25.00.**

If you pick up a modern book on Paul, you will often see the author refer to the term “Sin/sins.” This language has become commonplace in the field, and it refers to the interplay between *Sin as cosmic power* and *individual sins of disobedience*. But, we must ask, do both of these ideas exist in Paul’s writings? If so, what is the relationship between the two? *Sin and its Remedy in Paul* seeks to answer these questions.

This book is the inaugural volume in the *Contours of Pauline Theology* series, edited by Nijay K. Gupta (professor of New Testament, Northern Seminary) and John K. Goodrich (professor of Bible at Moody Bible Institute). It brings together a diverse lineup of Pauline scholars and aims to explore “key texts and crucial topics pertaining to Paul’s theology and their explication in modern scholarship” (i). Six of the chapters are derived from papers that were presented at the Institute for Biblical Research in 2017 and 2018, and four additional chapters were subsequently added to round out the study.

In chapter one, Gupta provides an overview of sin (*hamartia* and its cognates) in Greco-Roman and Jewish Literature. He employs a responsible, descriptive methodology in his analysis, and his findings are illuminating. His survey of Greco-Roman usage of the sin word-group is broad, from Aristotle to Arrian, and he concludes that the *hamartia* word-group is not primarily religious language, but rather refers to any kind of error or mistake. When it comes to Jewish literature, rather than tackling the gargantuan project of a fresh analysis of Hebrew and Greek words for sin, Gupta builds on the work of Joseph Lam and Mark Boda in his analysis. While Gupta’s study does include a wide survey of the relevant texts,

conspicuously absent from the mix is any interaction with the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly the *Community Rule*. Nevertheless, the chapter still provides illuminating results, and it serves its purpose as an introduction to the rest of the book.

The next three chapters are all devoted to Paul's letter to the Romans. The three authors (Martinus C. de Boer, Bruce W. Longenecker, and A. Andrew Das), though not in total agreement, generally trend away from an Augustinian sense of original sin and argue for the priority of Sin as a cosmic power over against a focus on individual sins of disobedience. Das's chapter on Rom 5:12–21 felt uncharacteristically weak. Though his survey of various models for "relating sin as a power to human activity" was helpful, he did not provide a strong conclusion or model of his own. Additionally, some of his references need updating, most notably his interaction with Thomas Schreiner's first edition of his Romans commentary, from which Schreiner has since changed his view on Romans 5. On the other hand, Longenecker's chapter on sin and the sovereignty of God is itself worth the price of the book. It was refreshing to read his argument for the priority of "Sin" without the exclusion of the reference to "sins," since so many other Pauline scholars argue from a mutually exclusive perspective. Whether or not you agree with all of his points, it represents seasoned scholarship and contains insightful analogies that will be helpful for teaching and preaching as well as contributing to the scholarly conversation.

The rest of the book covers 1 Corinthians (Alexandra R. Brown), 2 Corinthians (Dominika Kurek-Chomycz), Galatians (David A. deSilva), Colossians and Ephesians (John K. Goodrich), 1–2 Thessalonians (Andy Johnson), and 1 Timothy (George M. Wieland). DeSilva's chapter on the human problem and divine solution in Galatians was especially insightful. He has a firm grasp on the contours of Galatians, and the discussion of the "elemental spirits" (*stoicheion*) in Gal 4:3, 9 brings clarity to a particularly difficult section of Galatians. Wieland provides a fascinating study of sin as "misalignment of the household of God" in 1 Timothy. He detects an echo to Num 15:22–31 in Paul's reference to sinning in "ignorance" (1 Tim 1:13); nevertheless, he rightly concludes that ignorance does not mean innocence. On the downside, while Wieland celebrates the value of treating the so-called "pastoral epistles" individually (148), with the exception of a few footnotes (e.g., 150, n. 11) the book neglects coverage of sin in 2 Timothy and Titus, making the project feel incomplete.

Overall, the book succeeds in its purpose to provide an accessible yet rich treatment of hamartiology in the Pauline letters. This book would work well as a textbook for a Pauline theology class or perhaps even a systematic theology class. Pastors and lay leaders would also benefit from having this book as a resource on the shelf.

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***The Gospels (Photo Companion to the Bible).* By Todd Bolen. 4-volume collection. DVD. Updated. BiblePlaces.com, 2020, \$299.**

The educational value of an accurate, high quality Bible picture for a sermon or Bible lesson is immense. No matter how well one describes a Tyrian shekel, the Pontius Pilate inscription, the Mt. of Olives, or Gordon's Calvary—showing a picture is far better. Viewing a picture avoids the inevitable inaccuracies that often occur when listeners try to picture the object or place in their minds.

For over a decade, BiblePlaces.com has offered collections of biblical pictures online and for purchase on DVDs. Todd Bolen founded BiblePlaces.com and is professor of biblical studies at The Master's University, Santa Clarita, California. In this new collection, *The Gospels (Photo Companion to the Bible)*, are pictures from Bolen as well as A. D. Riddle (graduate student, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) and Steven D. Anderson (PhD, Dallas Theological Seminary)—both longtime contributors to BiblePlaces.com.

The format of this product makes illustrating the Gospels easy for the pastor and Bible teacher. Over 10,000 photographs are arranged by Bible chapter and verse. Each Gospel chapter includes a slide show with 40-230 photographs. Many verses have multiple pictures, but not every verse has a picture since multiple verses may refer to the same place or item. For instance, Matthew 1 has 48 slides: 1:1 (10), 1:6 (1), 1:11 (4), 1:16 (2), 1:18 (13), 1:19 (3), 1:20 (1), 1:22-23 (2), 1:24 (3), and 1:25 (9). Parallel verses in the other Gospels contain a good balance of new pictures along with some repetition of the same pictures.

1. *Benefits of this collection.* The collection is convenient and saves time from searching the Internet or other sources for appropriate, current pictures for an upcoming sermon or lesson. All pictures are in a PowerPoint slide show, so they are easy to cut and paste into your own slide show. Updates are also included via the website. The most recent one was June 6, 2020. The purchaser of this product has free lifetime updates.

This collection is a useful teaching tool. One may be unsure about what to depict for a certain Gospel verse, but this resource often has several suggestions. The many aerial slides give a helpful perspective with labels for important sites and routes, such as slide 3 in Matthew 2 that labels the Church of the Nativity and Rachel's tomb in Bethlehem, as well as the nearby Herodium. Slide 19 in Luke 2 is a satellite image of the Levant that depicts the two possible routes taken by Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The use of professional black and white photographs from the American Colony from the 1900-1930s gives two fascinating perspectives: how much Israel has changed in the last 100 years (especially in the appearance of sites like Gordon's Calvary), as well as how much it has *not* changed in the last 2,000 years (the Bedouin lifestyle, Samaritan lifestyle, etc.). Most slides have beneficial descriptions in the notes section.

The collection includes hard-to-find pictures. It can be challenging to locate a picture of a 1st-century AD Roman axe head or some chopped-down Judean tree stumps to illustrate Matthew 3:10. This resource has both (Matt. 3, slides 58-59). In addition, there are pictures of sites or scenes no longer available today, such as the reconstruction of a first-century AD boat on the shore at En Gev (John 6, slide 48), and the many wonderful American Colony photographs.

Accuracy is assured. Even if one might find a needed picture on the Internet, it may be misidentified or have an erroneous description. It can also be challenging to verify Internet pictures.

2. *Suggestions for improvement.* Here are some ways to make this helpful product even better. First, offer pictures in widescreen format (16:9 ratio) when possible—the aspect ratio of modern monitors. Second, provide more picture options. For instance, there are some great aerial and grotto photographs of the Church of the Nativity, but there are no pictures of the beautiful altar inside the church (Luke 2, slides 28-53; Matt. 2, slides 3-17). Third, provide cross references. For instance, on each picture of the Sea of Galilee boat, it would help to know there are additional pictures (slide 3 in Matthew 9, slide 143 in Mark 6, and slide 49 in John 6). However, there

is a good variety of pictures, and the present format serves the intentions of the producers of this fine product.

3. *Recommendation.* *The Gospels* (Photo Companion to the Bible) is a useful tool for pastors and Bible teachers who want to add interesting and unique pictures to their sermons and lessons. It is convenient, creative, well documented, and accurate. For the busy pastor or teacher who needs accurate, quality pictures to illustrate specific verses of the Gospels, this is a valuable resource.

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***Preaching to People in Pain: How Suffering Can Shape Your Sermons and Connect with Your Congregation.* By Matthew D. Kim. Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2021, 223pp., \$24.99.**

This book is well-timed. It was published right as the world is recovering from a pandemic and churches are filled with people dealing with suffering in many forms. Kim encourages preachers with a timely challenge to faithfully expound the Scriptures dealing with pain and also assists preachers with helpful thoughts related on how to do so. The author reminds us that preachers preach both on pain and in pain.

The book is organized in two parts. The first part deals with identifying the pain that preachers and congregations face, and the second part outlines 6 types of pain people commonly face and how to address them from Scripture. With each type of pain, Kim includes a message on how to address that particular type of pain. Each sermon is outlined with 3 principles from the text. Finally, each chapter concludes with helpful questions to guide discussions on pain and suffering and summarize the content of the chapter.

In part one, Kim details the types of pain the people face. The book primarily addresses six types of pain (p. 24; although page 37 includes a subsequent, though similar list containing seven types of pain). Kim calls for transparency from preachers (p. 6 and pp. 12-15) and models that throughout by identifying both his own struggles with physical pain (pp.

101-2) as well as those of his family (p. 106), and also with the intense grief over the murder of his brother (pp. 45-46 and pp. 128-129).

Kim calls on preachers to take an “inventory of pain suffering” in their congregation (pp. 24-25). He recommends creating a spreadsheet delineating the types of pain from which parishioners suffer that will allow preachers to pray for, care through, and preach toward the kinds of suffering that are impacting the congregations they serve.

Kim recommends nine preparatory questions to guide preachers through preaching on pain. These questions are introduced in chapter three and form the bases for each chapter in part two. The author encourages preachers to use these principles as a template “to preach more intentionally on pain and suffering” (p. 36). The nine questions are:

1. Which passage will I preach on?
2. What type of pain/suffering is revealed in the text?
3. How does the Bible character or biblical author deal with the pain?
4. How does this pain in the text deal with our listeners pain?
5. What does this pain say about God and his allowance of pain?
6. How does God/Jesus/the Holy Spirit help us in our suffering?
7. How can our preaching show care and empathy?
8. How can we share this pain in Christian community?
9. How will God use our suffering to transform us and bring Himself glory?

In part two, Kim addresses each of the six types of pain individually. The sermons included in each chapter outline the principles he addresses and model the principles taught therein. The sermons chosen are from both testaments and cover multiple genres.

The research for the book is thorough, but not disproportionate. In addition, preachers will find a number of good illustrations interspersed throughout (although the one on pages 121-122 would be both strengthened and more accurate by being updated).

The principles taught in this work are faithful to Scripture, modeled by the author, and helpful for preachers. The book contains many helpful suggestions for pastors and preachers alike. The issue addressed in the work

is one that all preachers will face and more should attend. This is a work that preachers will find valuable for their library.

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BOOK NOTES

I am grateful for the opportunity to note several important new publications worthy of consideration. We begin with *Living God's Word: Discovering Our Place in God's Story of Scripture*, second edition, by Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021). In this wonderful book, Duvall and Hays, who have recently been appointed as senior professors of biblical studies at Southwestern Seminary, have marvelously set forth the overarching story of Scripture as a hermeneutical guide and framework for developing a Christian world and life view. The engaging style and well-designed approach of *Living God's Word* make this an ideal introduction to the meaning of Scripture. Moreover, readers will be able to see and understand how their lives fit into what God has done and is doing in the world.

Gregg Allison, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary, has written *40 Questions about Roman Catholicism* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021). In this volume, Allison serves as a trustworthy guide in tracing the development of Roman Catholic thought and practice through the centuries. Offering careful responses to forty important questions, while drawing on the insights of both Protestant theologians and Roman Catholic thinkers, readers are introduced to the foundational beliefs and practices of Roman Catholics, especially since Vatican II. Particularly helpful for readers are the sections that provide insightful comparisons and contrasts between Protestant and Roman Catholic understandings of key doctrines. Though written from the perspective of an evangelical Protestant, Allison, drawing upon his exemplary skills as both church historian and theologian, has given us an excellent introduction to Roman Catholicism. This thoughtful, convictional, accessible, and irenic book will be valuable for both Protestant and Roman Catholic readers.

O. S. Hawkins has given us a gift with his work *In the Name of God: Revisiting the Colliding Lives, Legends, and Legacies of J. Frank Norris and George W. Truett* (Nashville: B&H, 2021). In this carefully researched,

thoughtfully framed, and beautifully written work, Hawkins has revised and updated his PhD dissertation, written at Southwestern Seminary, for a more general audience. Giving us a fresh and illuminating look at two shaping figures in Baptist life and American Christianity during the first half of the twentieth century, Hawkins introduces new observations and connections that will provide eye-opening insights into the legendary lives of Truett and Norris, both of whom were instrumental in shaping the early years of Southwestern Seminary. Truett, the ubiquitous leader and stately orator, and Norris, the fiery fundamentalist and Texas tornado, overlapped in so many contexts, yet understood their callings and purposes ever so differently. The first half of the book reads like a page-turning novel; the second half offers an interpretive guide to the diverse and distinctive contributions of these two Texas Baptists, while pointing to the longer-term implications of their approaches to life and ministry. Even if historians should quibble over some of the interpretive explanations offered, this book will be fascinating reading for all interested in twentieth-century religious movements and American culture, serving as essential reading for anyone interested in the various trajectories that Baptist life has taken in recent decades.

Carl F. H. Henry on the Holy Spirit, by Jesse M. Payne (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), fills in a gap in Henry studies. Payne's work on the role of the Holy Spirit in the theology of Carl F. H. Henry provides a fresh and convincing correctio to the perception that Henry's theology was one-sided, lacking a developed pneumatology. Instead, Payne's careful and thoughtful research enables us to see that the Holy Spirit played an essential role in Henry's theological construction. Guiding readers through Henry's treatment of the doctrine of revelation, the church, and Christian ethics, Payne helps us to see that Henry's thought was thoroughly dependent upon and inconceivable apart from the Holy Spirit. Helping all of us to see our need for the Word of God and the Wind of God, Payne's volume fills an important role in our interpretation and understanding of this evangelical giant. *The Method of Christian Theology: A Basic Introduction for Disciple-Makers*, by Rhyne R. Putman (Nashville: B&H, 2021) is, simply stated, a splendid book. Putman, one of the truly outstanding young evangelical theologians of our day, has given us a masterful introduction to the task of doing theology for the church. Blending head and heart, this engaging and illuminating volume provides guidance, clarity, and insight for pastors, students, and all who are interested in the work of Christian theology.

This excellent work should be essential reading for the ministerial students and seminarians across the country.

Surprising insights regarding educational philosophy are found in *The Seminary as Textual Community: Exploring John Sailhamer's Vision for Theological Education*, edited by Jason Lee and Ched Spellman (Fontes Press, 2021). Sailhamer was a brilliant Old Testament scholar who faithfully served both Baptist and evangelical institutions during his lifetime. In this new volume, edited by Lee and Spellman, readers are introduced to Sailhamer's full-orbed vision for a scripturally grounded understanding of theological education. In a day when seminaries and divinity schools are pulled in multiple directions from both churches and culture, from social issues and pragmatic concerns, this thoughtfully developed volume points readers toward a model for renewal for theological education by connecting teaching, learning, and practice to the biblical text in a fresh, winsome, and coherent manner. *The Seminary as Textural Community* will serve as an important resource for administrators, board members and faculty, as well as pastors and denominational leaders. *The Law, The Prophets, and The Writings: Studies in Evangelical Old Testament Hermeneutics in Honor of Duane A. Garrett*, edited by Andrew King, William Osborne, and Josh Philpot (Nashville: B&H, 2021) is a wonderful tribute to the ministry and writings of Duane Garrett, who is one of the finest biblical scholars of our generation. It is only fitting that he and his work should be honored in such a wonderful way by his students, friends, peers, and colleagues. Almost every chapter begins with an apt tribute, recognizing Garrett as an encouraging mentor, caring colleague, exemplary scholar, and faithful churchman, as well as a godly and humble person. The editors are to be commended for bringing together such an impressive group of contributors to address a wide array of Old Testament interpretive themes, issues, and challenges. *The Law, the Prophets, and the Writings* will serve not only as a most appropriate way to honor Professor Garrett, but as a splendid biblical, theological, and hermeneutical resource for scholars, students, and pastors for years to come.

Those involved in leadership at any level will want to be aware of *The Multi-Dimensional Leader: Responding Wisely to Challenges on Every Side*, by Trevin Wax (The Gospel Coalition, 2021). Calling for Christian leaders in churches, organizations, institutions, and other settings to avoid the shortcomings of a single-perspective approach to leadership, Wax, in a thoughtful manner informed by Scripture and compelling biographical

examples, convincingly shows the importance for leaders to understand people, contexts, issues, and decision making from a multi-dimensional perspective. Though intended only as a brief overview, this insightful and applicable volume skillfully addresses the complexity of leadership in theory and in practice. Let us pray that the Lord will use this significant resource to raise up a new generation of faithful multi-dimensional leaders who will selflessly, compassionately, and courageously serve church and society in the days ahead.

Liberty for All: Defending Everyone's Religious Freedom in a Pluralistic Age, by Andrew Walker (Nashville: B&H, 2021) is must reading for our day. In this much welcomed and timely resource, Walker has brilliantly articulated a thorough-going treatment of religious liberty for our secular and pluralistic context. Shaped by a robust theological and ethical framework, *Liberty for All* offers eschatological, anthropological, and missiological perspectives to enable Christians to navigate deep personal and religious differences while encouraging civility and commonality in our participation in the public square. Seeking to retrieve a tradition for the common good, while offering his own understanding of Baptist distinctives related to this important subject, Walker thoughtfully and winsomely makes a convincing case for religious liberty for everyone. The Foreword from Robert P. George is icing on the cake. *Liberty for All* is one of the most important books on this subject in recent years.

A new Wipf & Stock publication, *The Practical Art of Spiritual Conversations: Learning the Whens of Evangelism and the Hows of Discipleship*, by Jim Schultz and David Rogers, will be of interest to many readers of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology*. Schultz and Rogers have taken what they have learned from their years of service as spiritual advisors in healthcare settings to help Christ followers initiate important gospel conversations with unbelievers. They also offer assistance to help guide encounters with other believers in such a way as to help them take a deeper step in their walk with God. Encouraging readers to listen well and to sensitively seek opportunities for potential life-changing spiritual conversations, this wonderfully helpful and insightful book offers practical and thoughtful instruction for men and women at various stages of Christian maturity. *Stewardship for the Care of Souls*, by Nathan Meador and Heath Curtis (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021) is a wonderful book that will help pastors, church leaders, and individuals think wisely and biblically, rather than merely pragmatically, about the importance of stewardship in all aspects of our

life, including, but not limited to finances. Meador and Curtis bring years of pastoral ministry experience to this project, weaving together theological commitments, biblical understanding, wisdom from their years of service, and insightful counsel for teaching and addressing these vitally important issues in the life of a congregation. This brief volume is another excellent contribution to the outstanding Lexham Ministry Series.

Be Who You Are: Insights on Holiness from Paul's Letter to the Colossians, by Josh Moody (Christian Focus, 2021). Moody, in this theologically grounded and thoughtfully applicable exposition of Colossians 3 and 4, invites Christ followers in a fresh and renewing manner to a life of holiness and Christlikeness. As we have come to expect from Moody's previous works, he serves as a wise guide not only to help us understand the meaning of the biblical message, but to understand its significance for Christian living personally, in Christian community, in the home, in the workplace, and in the culture. Three insightful appendices further enable readers to understand what it means to be *Be Who You Are* in Christ, seeking to live a life of holy faithfulness and faithful holiness. I was both helped and blessed by reading this little volume and I believe others will be as well. John D. Basie has assembled a gifted collection of authors with connections to the Impact 360 Institute in *Know, Be, Live: A 360 Approach to Discipleship in a Post-Christian Era* (Brentwood: Forefront, 2021) to address the pressing cultural issues and challenges which both influence and characterize this post-Christian era. With a focus on serious Christian thinking, whole life discipleship, spiritual formation, cultural engagement, and readiness for ministry, the timely and thoughtful essays in this volume will serve as a remarkable resource for readers. *Know, Be, Live* is a passionate, significant, and timely call to Christian faithfulness in all aspects of life.

Logic and the Way of Jesus: Thinking Critically and Christianly, by Travis Dickinson (Nashville: B&H, 2021) is an incisive, thoughtful, and carefully designed look at what it means to think Christianly about all aspects of life. In this outstanding book, Dickinson brilliantly and insightfully connects intellectual curiosity, an understanding of logic, critical thinking, the place of faith and reason, and the importance of developing a Christian worldview. In doing so, he winsomely and persuasively invites Christ followers to think and live in a renewed and holistic way in order to change lives, strengthen churches, enhance Christian entities, advance the gospel, and bring glory to the one, true, and living God. *Unleashing Peace: Experiencing*

God's Shalom in Your Pursuit of Happiness, by Jeremiah J. Johnston (Grand Rapids: Bethany, 2021) offers a timely and readable response to the issues of anxiety, depression, and emotional pain by offering insights into God's gracious gift of shalom. Johnston offers biblical and theological guidance to help us grasp the breadth and depth of God's peace, doing so in an accessible, encouraging, and helpful manner for readers struggling with the very real challenges of our day.

Other recent works worthy of note include *Surviving Religion 101: Letters to a Christian Student on Keeping the Faith in College*, by Michael J. Kruger (Wheaton: Crossway, 2021); *Let the Legends Preach: Sermons by Living Legends at the E.K. Bailey Preaching Conference*, edited by Jared E. Alcantara (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2021); *Contemplating God with the Great Tradition: Recovering Trinitarian Classical Theism*, by Craig A. Carter with Foreword by Carl R. Trueman (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021); and *A Companion to the Theology of John Webster*, edited by Michael Allen and David Nelson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021).

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