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UNDESERVED MERCY

Blessings Not Just for the Ones Who Kneel

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"The more you know the less you feel
Some pray for others steal
Blessings are not just for the ones who kneel . . . luckily."[1]

In his outstanding book *What's So Amazing about Grace?*, Philip Yancey describes his spiritual pilgrimage and his resultant struggle to understand and accept grace. He writes: "Grace makes its appearance in so many forms that I have trouble defining it. I am ready, though, to attempt something like a definition of grace in relation to God. *Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more*—no amount of spiritual calisthenics and renunciations, no amount of knowledge gained from seminaries and divinity schools, no amount of crusading on behalf of righteous causes. *And grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less*—no amount of racism or pride or pornography or adultery or even murder. Grace means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love."[2] Later, Yancey concludes: "Grace is Christianity's best gift to the world, a spiritual nova in our midst exerting a force stronger than vengeance, stronger than racism, stronger than hate. Sadly, to a world desperate for this grace the church sometimes presents one more form of ungrace. Too often we more resemble the grim

1. U2, "City of Blinding Lights," the fifth song on *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb* (Island, 2004); lyrics accessed at http://www.u2boy.nl/u2/u2_lyrics.php?id=a11t05_u2_city_of_blinding_lights_lyrics, 20 September 2005.
2. Philip Yancey, *What's So Amazing About Grace?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 62.

folks who gather to eat boiled bread than those who have just partaken of Babette's feast."[3]

Although it is possible to quibble over Yancey's definition of grace, his emphasis on unmerited favor seems accurate and his claim that grace is Christianity's best gift to the world seems beyond controversy.[4] As evangelicals, we affirm that salvation is by grace through faith; that the blessings of God to sinful creatures are always unmerited. Yet many of us who have spent significant time in the evangelical community wonder whether we have experienced much grace. Often, the church is little more gracious in its treatment of others than those outside the community of faith, and sometimes even less so.[5] Many of us can identify with Yancey's testimony: "As I look back on my own pilgrimage, marked by wanderings, detours, and dead ends, I see now that what pulled me along was my search for grace. I rejected the church for a time because I found so little grace there. I returned because I found grace nowhere else."[6] I wonder, however, if there are not more than a few who have rejected the church largely because they have found what looks and feels like grace outside of her, even if this has been counterfeit rather than genuine grace.[7]

Few contemporary theologians have been more intoxicated by the transformative power of grace than Bono, the lead singer of the phenomenally successful Irish rock band U2.[8] It would be hard to find a more concise definition of grace than in the final lyrics of the song "City of Blinding Lights," "The more you know the less you feel/Some pray for others steal/Blessings are not just for the ones who

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3. Ibid., 27–28. The Academy Award winning film *Babette's Feast* is an excellent visual portrayal of grace. It is worthy of repeated viewings in order to grasp the profundity and impact of the story. This film won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 1988 (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0092603/awards, accessed 8 August 2006).

4. One might criticize Yancey, for example, for his emphasis on love alone in his definition of grace. Grace is not disconnected from other divine attributes, including justice and wrath. On the other hand, it does seem right to connect grace and love, so I do not think such criticism is necessary.

5. This admission is not intended to "bash the church." It is rather an honest confession based upon personal experience and a pattern of anecdotal evidence collected over the years. In the interest of full disclosure, it is likely that those who have interacted with me in the context of the church would have a similar testimony. That is, although grace is central to our theological position, few of us are very gracious in our treatment of one another.

6. Yancey, *What's So Amazing About Grace?*, 15.

7. See a comparison of the church and the neighborhood bar as dispensers of grace in Charles R. Swindoll, *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life* (Portland: Multnomah, 1983), 254–55.

8. According to Steve Stockman, *Walk On: The Spiritual Journey of U2* (Lake Mary, FL: Relevant, 2001), 173, Yancey's book has been influential in Bono's own theological pilgrimage. In fact, he has given copies of the book to others to read, including Noel Gallagher of Oasis. For the most explicit expression of his Christian faith, particularly his view of grace, see Michka Assayas, *Bono: In Conversation with Michka Assayas* (New York: Riverhead, 2005).

kneel . . . luckily."[9] In short, Bono says, God often extends his blessings, by grace, to those who remain in rebellion against him. Luckily.

Although a paper on grace in U2's lyrics would not be inappropriate, this paper has a different focus. It is devoted to an examination of a sermon by Jonathan Edwards in the mid–eighteenth century.[10] In this sermon, entitled "Undeserved Mercy," Edwards explains that, when God withholds judgment from sinners, even (or perhaps particularly) Christians who sin, it is due to nothing other than God's "undeserved and wonderful mercy." In short, God sometimes extends grace even to those who deserve his judgment, even to those who refuse to kneel, to submit to him. Although separated by several centuries and significant cultural and theological differences, Jonathan Edwards and Bono are united in their appreciation for the amazing grace of God.[11]

"Undeserved Mercy"

Historical Setting

On 13 March 1737, the front gallery of the Northampton church collapsed during the pastor's sermon. Miraculously, no one was seriously injured in the accident. Here is Edwards's description of the incident, from a letter to Benjamin Colman, dated 19 March 1737:

> We in this town were, the last Lord's Day (March 13th), the spectators, and many of us the subjects, of one of the most amazing instances of divine preservation, that perhaps was ever known in the land. Our meeting house is old and decayed, so that we have been for some time building a new one, which is yet unfinished. . . . In the midst of the public exercise in the forenoon, soon after the beginning of the sermon, the whole gallery—full of people, with all the seats and timbers, suddenly and without warning—sunk, and fell down, with the most amazing noise, upon the heads of those that sat under, to the astonishment of the congregation. The house was filled with dolorous shrieking and crying; and nothing was expected than to find many people dead, or dashed to pieces.

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9. U2, "City of Blinding Lights," *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb*; lyrics accessed at http://www.u2boy.nl/u2/u2_lyrics.php?id=a11t05_u2_city_of_blinding_lights_lyrics, 20 September 2005. On the "Vertigo" tour, this song began the concert and was followed by "Vertigo," which includes the pivotal lyric, "Your love is teaching me how to kneel," an apparent reference to God's love.
10. For such discussion, see my "'She Travels Outside of Karma' and 'The Terms of Prayer,' Bono and Jonathan Edwards on the Nature of Grace," paper read at the annual meeting of the Southwest Region of the Evangelical Theological Society, Dallas, Texas, March 2003, and "Blessings Not Just for the Ones Who Kneel," paper read at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Philadelphia, PA, November 2005.
11. On Edwards and grace, see my "Jonathan Edwards's Theology of Prayer," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 160 (2003): 434–56; "'God Never Begrutches His People Anything They Desire': Jonathan Edwards and the Generosity of God," *Reformation and Revival Quarterly* 12 (2003): 71–91, and "Sinners in the Hands of a Gracious God," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163 (2006): 259–75.

> The gallery, in falling, seemed to break and sink first in the middle; so that those that were upon it were thrown together in heaps before the front door. But the whole was so sudden, that many of those who fell knew nothing what it was, at the time, that had befallen them. Others in the congregation thought it had been an amazing clap of thunder. The gallery seemed to be broken all to pieces before it got down; so that some who fell with it, as well as those that were under, were buried in the ruins; and were found pressed under the heavy loads of timber, and could do nothing to help themselves.
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> But so mysteriously and wonderfully did it come to pass, that every life was preserved: and though many were greatly bruised, and their flesh torn, there is not, as I can understand, one bone broken, or as much as put out of joint, among them all. Some, who were thought to be almost dead at first, are greatly recovered; and but one young woman seems yet to remain in dangerous circumstances, by an inward hurt in her breast: but of late there appears more hope of her recovery.
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> None can give an account, or conceive, by what means people's lives and limbs should be thus preserved, when so great a multitude were thus eminently exposed. It looked as though it was impossible but that great numbers must instantly be crushed to death or dashed in pieces. It seems unreasonable to ascribe it to any thing else but the care of providence, in disposing the motions of every piece of timber, and the precise place of safety where every one should sit and fall, when none were in any capacity to care for their own preservation. The preservation seems to be most wonderful with respect to the women and children in the middle alley, under the gallery, where it came down first and with greatest force, and where there was nothing to break the force of the falling weight.
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> Such an event may be a sufficient argument of a divine providence over the lives of men. We thought ourselves called on to set apart a day to be spent in the solemn worship of God, to humble ourselves under such a rebuke of God upon us, in the time of public service in his house, by so dangerous and surprising an accident; and to praise his name for so wonderful, and as it were miraculous, a preservation. The last Wednesday was kept by us to that end; and a mercy, in which the hand of God is so remarkably evident, may be well worthy to affect the hearts of all who hear it.[12]

As Edwards mentions, on Wednesday, 16 March, three days after the accident, the congregation met for a day of prayer.[13] In the context of this miraculous preservation of life, the pastor instructed his Northampton congregation on the nature of grace and their responsibility to the God who had treated them in such a surprisingly merciful manner.[14]

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12. Jonathan Edwards, "Letter to the Reverend Benjamin Colman," in Jonathan Edwards, *Letters and Personal Writings*, ed. George S. Claghorn, vol. 16 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 65–66.

Text of the Sermon

The text for this sermon is taken from Ezek. 20:21–22: "Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my Sabbaths: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish mine anger against them in the wilderness. Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth."[15]

Edwards begins this sermon according to his standard style, setting this biblical text within its context in the book of Ezekiel. He observes that in the early part of this chapter, "The elders of Israel came to the prophet Ezekiel to inquire of the Lord, as though they had a desire to know what the will of God was."[16] But God recognized their hypocrisy, saw that their interest in his will was feigned, a pretense. "Though they set before the Prophet, as if it was to hear God's word and to know his will, yet they did but dissemble in it; for they took no care to do what they did know, and what they had often heard already. And therefore God gave 'em an awful rebuke, as they set before Ezekiel. He told them he would not be inquired of by 'em, and bids the Prophet to judge them, and make them to know of their unworthiness to be allowed to come before God, to inquire of him or hear his word."[17]

In the message delivered by the prophet Ezekiel, God reminds the people of his work of redemption and revelation on their behalf and how they had consistently "grieved and provoked him by their evil ways."[18] This people were not ignorant of the God they treated so contemptuously. Rather, they had been the recipients of incredible blessings and thus their culpability for their sin was even greater.

From this brief summary of the text of Ezekiel 20, Edwards makes several observations. First, although God rebukes the people for their sins, "a particular sin is mentioned, viz. that they polluted God's Sabbaths."[19] Throughout the sermon, Edwards calls attention to this sin against the Sabbath. In his view, that the accident in Northampton occurred on the Sabbath was no mere coincidence.[20]

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13. It was not uncommon at the time for the city fathers to call for a day of prayer when such events occurred. In addition to prayer, this was an opportunity for the town's pastor, the spiritual leader of the community, to speak prophetically to the town.
14. In doing so, Edwards is functioning as the pastor of his town. It is his responsibility to interpret these events for the community/church. Whether he would have similarly interpreted events in other communities as a warning from God is unclear. He did, however, believe it appropriate to speak for God to his congregation.
15. Authorized Version.
16. Jonathan Edwards, "Undeserved Mercy," in Jonathan Edwards, *Sermons and Discourses, 1734–1738*, ed. M. X. Lesser, vol. 19 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 631.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., 632.
19. Ibid.

Second, Edwards calls attention to the conjunction that introduces the text: "Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against me."[21] God seems to be incensed particularly because Israel's rebellion followed his gracious care, protection, and deliverance of this people. His relationship with them makes their rebellion even more offensive.

Third, God is not simply angry with his people, but his fury and his hand are described as already stretched out against them. Edwards observes, "The fury of God signifies a great and dreadful degree of wrath."[22]

Fourth, Edwards calls attention to the mercy of God when he explains, "We may observe what wonderful mercy was mixed with, or rather took place of, this manifestation of God's displeasure. He withdrew his hand, and spared, and delivered 'em. He did not destroy them, as he appeared to be about to do, but wrought for them for their preservation and deliverance. While God appeared in awful displeasure, just ready in a most awful manner to destroy 'em, mercy stepped in. Mercy drew back that hand of judgment that God's anger had stretched out, and so spared his people."[23] This type of merciful act of God, Edwards notes, is seen often in this chapter of Ezekiel.

Fifth, God's mercy toward this people, Edwards explains, is not due to any worth in them but "to glorify his own free and sovereign grace." He continues, "It could not be for anything else; for God had before declared how far they were from being worthy."[24] Thus, God's mercy was unmerited; it was due only to his grace. It seems important to note here that Edwards emphasizes not simply that God's work was designed to bring him glory, but that it was to glorify his free and sovereign grace.

Sixth, in the text of Ezekiel, God addresses the Israelites as children. From this, Edwards draws two implications. God's anger was heightened because these were his children; "it was much more aggravated than if slaves had rebelled."[25] Further, God's mercy was kindled because these were children; "his pity and affection towards 'em (to speak of God after the manner of men), wrought the bowels of a father; and he drew back his hand again, and did not do as he seemed to do: as a tender father, when about in anger to chastise a child, will in the midst of it sometimes feel the bowels of tenderness and pity working towards his child that may make him stay his hand."[26] The point seems clear: God's anger toward them was particularly aroused because these were his children, those upon whom he had showered much grace previously. But, perhaps more importantly, his mercy was also particularly aroused because these were his children.

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20. Edwards interprets this event as part of a pattern of such events that occurred on the Sabbath, following a hermeneutic widely practiced in his day.
21. Edwards, "Undeserved Mercy," 632.
22. Ibid., 633.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.

The Doctrine of the Sermon

From this text, and following this brief exposition of the context of the scripture and its historical context in the story of the nation of Israel, Edwards develops the doctrine: "When God's professing people behave themselves unanswerably to great things that God has done for 'em, God sometimes appears ready in [an] awful manner to destroy them, and yet in undeserved and wonderful mercy withdraws his hand and spares them."[27] In short, when God deals mercifully with his people, when he withholds the judgment or punishment they deserve, it is due to nothing but his mercy, and that mercy is totally undeserved. The only explanation for God's merciful treatment of his erring people is his grace.

Consideration of the Doctrine

In support of this doctrine, Edwards provides a series of propositions. These propositions defend, clarify, explain, and illustrate the doctrine.

In the first proposition, Edwards explains that "God sometimes does great things for a professing people."[28] These blessings are of both a material and spiritual nature. In Edwards's view, the spiritual blessings are greater than the temporal or material ones. These are "the greatest things that ever God does for any people, and the greatest things that can be done for a people; more than all temporal mercies, more than if he made the rocks to pour out to 'em rivers of oil, or showered down a plentiful shower of silver and gold and pearls upon them. That deliverance that is granted in the carrying on of such a work from the bondage of sin, and Satan, and from eternal death, is more than all temporal deliverance. That deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt was a type of this."[29] Thus, although the deliverance of God's people from slavery in the Exodus was a great demonstration of God's mercy, it is more significant as a type of the spiritual deliverance of sinners from bondage to sin and Satan.

In the second proposition Edwards argues that God's blessing should produce an appropriate and corresponding behavioral response in his people. Sadly, however,

> Sometimes the behavior of a people so blessed, is in many respects very unanswerable to the great things God has done for 'em. Their love and obedience don't only fail of being in proportion to the greatness of the mercies they have received; for such mercies are so great that nothing in us can be proportionable to them; nor is this

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26. Ibid., 634. It should be noted that Edwards's language here is not nuanced as it would likely be in our day, when we are, appropriately, concerned about the evils of child abuse. It is beyond the scope of this paper to address the acceptability of the use of physical force in child–rearing. But it does seem appropriate to call attention to the historical and cultural distance between the eighteenth century and today. Were Edwards preaching today his language likely would be a bit different.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.

> expected, at least not of fallen creatures. But what is found in them, in their carriage and behavior, is not answerable or suitable in any wise as to the quality of it, as well as not proportionable in degree. They don't behave themselves, as might justly be expected of God and man. There is not such a behavior as manifests a suitable sense of the great things God has done for 'em; but on the contrary, a great insensibleness. There is a manifestation of much of the unthankful spirit: their carriage in many respects tends to the dishonor of God, that has done such great things for 'em in the eye of other people that behold 'em, and in whose sight God has put honor upon them, by what he has done for 'em.[30]

This leads to the third proposition: "When it is thus, this is very displeasing to God."[31] When God is gracious towards people, when their circumstances are such that they receive God's unmerited favor, when he pours out blessings which are undeserved, those recipients of such grace should respond appropriately. When they do not, God is very displeased. In fact, their behavior is "more displeasing to God than the like behavior in another people that han't received such mercy."[32]

God's displeasure at being treated so disrespectfully, Edwards says, often results in his threatening action toward those rebellious people. "God therefore sometimes manifests his displeasure toward such a people by appearing ready to destroy them."[33] Edwards notes that the greatness of God's displeasure is manifested in two ways: first,

> in the dreadfulness of the calamity that he seems to be going to bring upon [them]. He seems to be about to cut them off, or at least many of them: to cut 'em off from the enjoyment of means of grace, as worthy to enjoyment no longer: to cut 'em down out of his vineyard, as cumberers of his ground: to cut 'em off from his house, as being not worthy to be in his house any longer, to cut 'em off out of the land of the living, as unworthy to live upon the earth: to take away at once all those great privileges that he has bestowed on 'em in this world.[34]

Edwards concludes: "The greatness of God's displeasure appears in the severity of the blow that he seems to be about to strike, and in the dreadfulness of the rod that he lifts up, and seems to be going to strike with."[35]

But, more than that, the greatness of God's displeasure is seen "in his appearing as if he were about to do this suddenly and immediately."[36] When God's people, who have been recipients of his grace and

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30. Ibid., 635.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid. In support of this claim, Edwards cites Pss. 78:40, 95:9–10, and Isa. 63:9–11.
33. Ibid., 636. Note that this is a threatened judgment not an actual one.
34. Ibid. Edwards continues, "So it was with the children of Israel in this test. He said he would pour out his fury upon them, to accomplish his anger against them in the wilderness. He said he would consume them, as [the] thirteenth verse of the context."
35. Ibid.

mercy, treat him with disdain and act rebelliously, God's wrath is incited and the degree of his anger is seen in the severity of the promised judgment and the suddenness of its appearance.

Yet, even though his wrath has been righteously kindled and his disobedient and rebellious children deserve his judgment, God sometimes withholds from them this threatened punishment. Sometimes, even though they have not appreciated the grace he has given them and thus deserve his anger and judgment, God instead extends even more grace. Edwards describes this in his fifth proposition.

> God notwithstanding as it were withdraws his hand, and spares and delivers them. Though he be greatly displeased, and though he manifests his displeasure, as though he were just going awfully to accomplish his anger, and even actually stretches out his hand; yet he draws it back again, and don't strike that stroke that he seemed about to strike. He mercifully spares the lives of his people. Thus God often doth in such a case, as it has been mentioned. God does as it were repent of the evil that he was about to do. His pity and mercy prevails, and takes place of his wrath and displeasure. This is one character ascribed to God, that he is a God that repenteth of the evil.[37]

Of course, Edwards points out, it is "not that God really changes his mind, or properly repents. But there is such a manifestation of mercy in God's works, as there is [in] men of tender affections when about terribly to punish, but in the midst of it are overcome by bowels of pity. God manifests himself to men after the manner of men. And it livelily sets forth the mercy of God to his people, to compare it to that tender love that makes a father's heart relent, when he has lifted up his hand severely to strike a child."[38] The word pictures he paints are worthy of quotation in full.

> God does sometimes as it were actually come forth in a whirlwind of wrath, as if to destroy a professing people. He actually raises the storm; but in the midst of it, while it is blowing, he mercifully abates the roughness of it, and stays it from those fatal effects that God seemed to be about to bring by it. . . . God does as it were turn aside his own sword that is lifted over the heads of his people. As it comes down, Mercy turns it aside; so that it does as it were go beside them, and they are saved. Justice's displeasure throws a dart that is leveled at the heart; but Mercy interposes as a shield between, and causes it to glance aside, and the precious life is preserved.[39]

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36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., 637. In support of this claim, Edwards cites Joel 2:13, Exod. 32:14, 2 Sam. 24:16, Luke 13:7–8.
38. Ibid. It is almost as if Edwards anticipates open theism and responds to it centuries before it appears.
39. Ibid., 638.

That God withholds judgment and destruction from his people is due to nothing other than God's mercy. Edwards puts it this way:

> When God doth thus withdraw his hand and spare his people, 'tis the effect of his undeserved and wonderful mercy. 'Tis because he is full of compassion, that he thus turns aside his anger. . . . It can't be anything else, as the circumstances of its bestowment do make especially manifest. It can't be because of their worthiness; for 'tis their unworthiness that is the thing that God is provoked by, thus to appear ready to destroy them. It can't be because they ben't so unworthy as others; for 'tis the exceeding aggravation of their unworthiness, in that 'tis in his children, and those that he has done such great things for, that is the thing that especially displeases and grieves him. It can't be because God don't take notice how unworthy they be, and is not much offended at it; because he is then, at that very moment, taking notice of their unworthiness, and manifesting his great displeasure, even so that at that time he appears ready to accomplish his anger against them.[40]

Thus, Edwards concludes, "There is nothing left whence it should be that God should withdraw his hand, but only sovereign and infinite mercy."[41]

In support of this claim, Edwards provides two arguments based upon the exercise of divine grace. First, he explains that God's mercy is exceeding great. Second, the exercise of God's mercy is not for their sake but for Christ's. As an illustration of God's great mercy, Edwards compares God to a human father. "As a loving father is very loth to come to correct his child with severity, and so sometimes, when he is going about it, repents in the midst of it, his bowels yearn over his child. And though he lifted up his hand, as with an intention to strike a severe blow, yet his affections do as it were hold it back, or so abates the force of the blow, that the child is but lightly hurt. This seems intimated in the text, in God's covenant people being called his children."[42]

Second, in support of the claim that God's mercy is exercised for Christ's sake, Edwards explains that Christ "is that name of the Lord that is a strong tower, where God's people are safe. Even at the time when God seems to be about to pour out his wrath, this tower shelters 'em from his wrath. So that though it may in some sense be said that mercy overcomes justice, and rejoices against judgment; yet in Christ Jesus justice rather willingly yields to mercy. Justice withdraws its hands, and goes away satisfied, without the blood of God's offending people; because 'tis satisfied in the blood of their surety."[43]

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40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., 639. Edwards quotes the following as biblical support for this claim: Ps. 106:45; Deut. 5:29; Ps. 81:13–14; Isa. 48:18; Luke 19:41–44; and James 2:13.

43. Ibid., 639–40. Psalm 85:10 is quoted in support of this claim, "Mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Edwards explains how this inter–Trinitarian relationship functions. "So that indeed into this is this wonderful dealing of God towards his people to be resolved, that when he seems to be about to cut them off, he yet stays his hand. It is because Christ interposes, as Moses, the type of Christ, did of old."[44] He uses two metaphors to explain this relationship between the Father and the Son. First, he compares the deliverance brought by Christ to a shield: "Christ is the shield that comes between the breasts of God's people and the sword of God's wrath, that turns it aside, that it don't give their hearts the justice levelled [sic] at them."[45]Second, Edwards compares Christ's work of deliverance to a strong hand that restrains the judgment of God: "When God lifts up his hand to strike a professing people, Christ many a time as it were steps in, and holds back the hand of justice; so that there is no blow, or if there be, 'tis but a light one; so that they are corrected in measure, and are not delivered over unto death."[46]

Finally, Edwards emphasizes the substitutionary nature of Christ's work of deliverance: "When God stretches forth his hand to cut them off, then oftentimes Christ as it were at that instant presents his blood to God's view; and that is always prevalent. God's wrath does as it were upon this at once fall, and he withdraws his hand. He beholds the face of his anointed, and turns away his hand from beholding their transgressions."[47]

Application or Improvement

Having completed the exposition of the doctrine, Edwards now "proceed[s] to apply the doctrine that has been considered to this town, with relation to that extraordinary providential event that we have lately been the spectators of, the last sabbath."[48] In this sermon, divided into two preaching units, the application is approximately 40 percent longer than the exposition of the text and doctrine. Although this ratio is not unusual in an Edwards's sermon, the amount of time and space devoted to application here clearly indicates how important the pastor considered the congregation's appropriate response to God's grace in their midst to be.[49]

The beginning of the application entails a reminder of God's "surprising and wonderful" mercy. "When we consider the evident and remarkable hand of God in the disposal of the accident, we have reason to stand astonished still, and to wonder all the days of our lives. And

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44. Ibid., 640. Psalm 106:23 is quoted in support of this claim, "Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them."
45. Ibid..
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid. This statement concludes the first part of the sermon. The second part is an extended application.
48. Ibid.
49. Edwards's sermons were often heavily focused on application. He was interested not only in communicating information, albeit important doctrinal content, but in changing hearts and lives.

indeed the more we consider, the more shall we see cause to stand and wonder. What is said in the text of God's people Israel, and his dealings with them, seems very applicable to the present case; and we have been remarkably the subjects of what is expressed in the doctrine."[50]

Over several paragraphs, Edwards rehearses God's material and spiritual blessing of the people of Northampton, including the "remarkable a pouring out [of] his Spirit" in the recent revivals.[51] Edwards, then, introduces the improvement which follows. "So that we have two things to consider and improve in this providence, viz. the rebuke and manifestation of divine displeasure in it, and the wonderful and surprising mercy of our preservation. And therefore I would consider and improve 'em, first, distinctly and, secondly, jointly; and that, first, to all of us in general and, second, particularly to those that have been the more immediate subjects of this providence."[52]

First, Edwards asks his audience to "consider and improve the awful rebuke of God upon us and manifestation of his displeasure in this providence. Threatenings are a manifestation of divine displeasure as well as executions."[53] According to Edwards, the accident was a threat of divine judgment which they should take very seriously. That God would send such a warning of his anger toward this congregation should lead to a time of personal and communal introspection. Since God has threatened this congregation with judgment, Edwards encourages them to consider "wherein we have carried ourselves unsuitably to the great things God has done for us."[54] An enumerated list follows. First, "let us consider in the general how greatly we are backslidden; what a great alteration is there for the worse, from what there was here the year before last; how dull {we are now}; in how great a degree we have forsaken God and Christ {from what we were}."[55] Second, "Let this rebuke of God upon us lead us to reflect on that worldly spirit that has of late prevailed upon us. Have we not shamefully departed from God and Christ, that our hearts seemed to be so engaged after, and gone after, the world?"[56] Third, "Has there not been manifest, from time to time, too much of a heat of spirit, and a disposition to contention, in our public affairs?"[57] Fourth, "Let it be inquired what frame did this surprising providence {of God} find us in. Was there not consideration of this spirit of strife, spirits of many greatly edged, {many} reflectings {on one another}; yes, something of ridiculing in a paper set up. Who the person was that did it, I know not. I hope he is not ashamed of it."[58] Fifth, "Let it be inquired how we have improved our

50. Edwards, "Undeserved Mercy," 640–41.
51. Ibid., 642.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., 642–43.
54. Ibid., 643.
55. Ibid., 644.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., 648.
58. Ibid.

sabbaths. From time to time God has given us surprising and amazing rebuke on a sabbath; {the death of} Mr. Hawley {by his own hand}; and a little while ago one {failed attempt by another}; and now in the midst of public exercise {the falling of the gallery}. Certainly we are called upon to inquire how we keep sabbaths. Don't God see something amongst us on sabbath days that is very unbecoming?"[59] Sixth, "Let it {be} particularly inquired how we have of late attended on God's public worship. This we are abundantly called to by such a rebuke in the time of worship."[60]

Such a strong warning of God's anger toward his people must be taken seriously, according to Edwards. Since God's providence is comprehensive, this incident was no accident. Rather, it was a providential warning from an angry God. Since God is just, there must be a cause of God's wrath, and repentance is the only legitimate response, lest God's anger be increased.[61]

This first specific application is then directed specifically to two groups of hearers. To the unconverted—"those of you that are in a natural condition"—Edwards says that they should recognize the deliverance as a gift of divine grace.

> It is a wonder that you that fell then, when you dropped with the gallery that fell, that you did not drop into hell. 'Tis a wonder that you stopped before you got to hell. And if you were under [it], 'tis a greater wonder that you was not struck into hell by that blow. A wonder of divine preservation it was, that it was not so. This providence, one would think, should be sufficient to wake you up. If you are asleep still, 'tis to be feared you never will wake, till you wake in hell. How awful would that have been, to have been taken directly out of the house of God, and from hearing a sermon, and sent in a moment to hell.[62]

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59. Ibid., 649.

60. Ibid.

61. This apparent ability to interpret God's activity in history makes me nervous. Throughout history, many Christian leaders have done this, some better than others. In our day, there are numerous examples of evangelical Christian leaders who have interpreted current events as divine judgment on America, whether the flooding of the Mississippi River, terrorist attacks such as on 11 September 2001, and hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. In my view, extreme caution should be exercised here. I do not think it wise for Christian leaders today to follow Edwards's example, unless such proclamations are properly and abundantly nuanced as mere possibilities. Better to avoid presuming to speak for God than to embarrass the Christian community, and likely God, by silly claims that God is really angry with New York City and New Orleans for some reason, and apparently not as angry with Las Vegas, Chicago, Fort Worth and Dallas. Edwards's historical context was significantly different than our context. His audience expected him to speak for God in this way and perhaps understood a nuance which we do not hear. Another major difference was the "privacy" he enjoyed. His words were not broadcast around the world as such claims to speak for God are in ours.

62. Edwards, "Undeserved Mercy," 650. The similarity of this language to that in "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is striking. On grace as the theme of this sermon, see my "Sinners in the Hands of a Gracious God," in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163 (2006): 259–75.

To those who "hope yourself to be converted," Edwards warns, "consider your ways. Han't you backslidden, shamefully carried yourself unsuitably {and} proudly in a senseless, careless, negligent frame; {carried yourself in a} carnal frame, minding vanity; thoughts taken up about trifles {of the world}; lost your first love {of God}; swallowed up with other things? If God was doubtless greatly displeased and offended. No wonder he lifted up his hand thus against you."[63] Particularly offensive in the eyes of God, or at least in the eyes of the pastor, has been their practice in the meetinghouse. Edwards concludes, "Particularly inquire in what manner you have lately attended to the public worship. How have you heard sermons, {your} eyes wander, {your} thoughts in the ends of the earth? How was it with you then at that time?"[64]

The second specific application focuses on the mercy of God. "Let us improve the great mercy of God to us in so wonderful a preservation, to praise and thankfulness of so many that were so exposed by this accident. There are other things that pertain to this providence that are remarkable, but this is the most remarkable thing belonging to it by far, the wonderful preservation."[65] In this extended section, Edwards calls for the praise and worship of God for his merciful character. It is a marvelous example of doctrinal preaching, of the use of rich theological themes to lead a congregation in a practical, worshipful response to their God. Here is a representative section:

> What wonderful mercy is here! What an affecting, endearing tenderness of God towards [us], a lothness as it were to hurt us, or to see us hurt. How gracious was the watchful, omniscient eye of God, even when his hand was lifted up. How [he] has dealt with us, though so unworthy, as a parcel of little dear children. He took care that no life should be lost. Mercy stepped in at that time, and had its effects in all parts of the falling gallery, and the space under it. God took care of them that fell as it were to ease 'em down, lest they should fall too hard. And he took care of all that were beneath, to turn the heavy timbers aside in all those places where they came with peculiar force, that they might no dash them in pieces. He was tender, and took care, lest they should have too hard a blow.
>
> How sottish indeed shall we be, if we ben't affected with thankfulness at such a mercy. And you in particular, that have been the immediate subjects of such a remarkable and almost miraculous preservation, what cause have you of praise. Is there one heart among you all that is not affected with such an instance of the kindness and mercy of God to you? If there be, 'tis to be feared God will set a mark upon that person. Do you consider who it is has preserved [you]; or are you so stupid, as to attribute all that to blind chance? If you han't a heart of flint, yea, of adamant, cer-

63. Ibid., 650–51.
64. Ibid., 651.
65. Ibid.

> tainly such mercy, such tenderness will melt it. O, take heed that you give God the glory he expects.[66]

Finally, Edwards connects "the rebuke and mercy" of God and concludes the sermon with an exhortation to "hearken to and obey the call of God in it."[67] This act of God's deliverance issues

> a loud call. It is to us to reform all our evil ways, and to walk more becoming the great things God has done for us. The manifestation of God's displeasure in bringing such an accident, and his marvelous mercy in preserving us in [it], do both aloud call to this. There scarcely could have been a providence so circumstanced, as to contain greater incitements to this; much greater than if we had had judgment without mercy. For now God has manifested his awful displeasure at our sins, to deter us from them; and yet in such a way, as yet to spare and show great mercy to us. He has awfully warned us, and endearingly drawn us, both at the same time. It also contains greater incitements to this than if there had been only mercy, without such an awful manifestation {of his displeasure}. For now God has at the same time that he has shown us such great mercy, awfully put us in mind of our own unworthiness of any mercy; our unworthiness to be in his house; {our unworthiness} to come to the throne of grace; {our unworthiness} to be on the earth. If we still continue to walk as unsuitably as we have done, we shall show ourselves as both exceeding daring and monstrously base and ungrateful at the same time.[68]

Edwards reminds his audience again that greater privilege brings greater responsibility.

> If we think to escape divine judgments as much as other people, with living no better than other people, we are much mistaken. No such thing is to be expected. We are a city set on a hill, and the honor of religion, and the honor of God, doth greatly depend on our behaviour. But if we won't take care of God's honor, God will take care himself by executing vengeance on us, that his name may not be polluted amongst those in whose sight he brought them forth.
>
> Our obligations were exceeding great before by reason of the great things God has done for us, but now 'tis greater; for God has done another great thing for us. And if we go on to behave unsuitably, our provocation will be far greater than ever, and God won't always deliver [us]; but we must expect that the next time, when God's hand is lifted up, that it will come down upon us with its full might.[69]

Edwards then returns to the call to treat the Sabbath appropriately.

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66. Ibid., 651–52.
67. Ibid., 652.
68. Ibid., 652–53.
69. Ibid., 654.

> Here is a loud call to us better to improve our sabbaths and sermons, and to prepare for death. God but a little while ago, by suddenly taking away one by death between meetings, that was here well in the forenoon in the house of God hearing his word, put in mind how uncertain we are, when we are at meeting, whether ever we shall be allowed to set foot {in another}; when we are hearing a sermon, whether ever {we shall} hear another. But now he has shown that we are hearing a sermon that is begun, how uncertain that we shall live to hear that sermon out; {how} but that we shall [be] sent immediately out of God's house into eternity.[70]

The sermon concludes with an evangelistic invitation: "If you have never given yourself to God, now do it. If you have, do it now renewedly, and with greater ardor of soul than ever; otherwise you surely won't behave answerable to what God has done for you, and will show yourself ungrateful. And if you now won't give yourself to God, how can you expect that for the time to come he shall [take] care of you as his; but leave you to yourself, to preserve your own life, and preserve yourself from destroying calamities, as well as you can."[71]

Conclusion

In Edwards's theology, God's providence is revelatory. That the gallery fell was not an accident but an act of God, an act which needed to be interpreted. His interpretation is clear: God is angry. This incident is a wake up call for the congregation. A time of introspection and self–evaluation is called for. God's anger is just; the people deserve his wrath.

But God has been merciful to them. For this unmerited favor, God deserves praise. If the congregation does not respond appropriately, Edwards has no doubt that God's anger will only increase. And the next time he threatens judgment, he likely will not be as merciful. The next time, grace might not intervene; the people would then get what they deserve.

Could there be any dispute that Bono's testimony is that of all of us? "I'd be in big trouble if Karma was going to finally be my judge. I'd be in deep [dung]. It doesn't excuse my mistakes, but I'm holding out for grace. I'm holding out that Jesus took my sins unto the Cross, because I know who I am, and I hope I don't have to depend on my own religiosity. . . . The point of the death of Christ is that Christ took on the sins of the world, so that what we put out did not come back to us, and that our sinful nature does not reap the obvious death."[72] Were we to reap what we sow, were we to get what we deserve, were God to treat us according to justice we would all be in big trouble. What we deserve from God is eternal punishment.

God is just and he would be perfectly justified to enforce the penalty and consequences of our sin upon us. We live at all times under the

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70. Ibid.

71. Ibid., 655.

72. Bono, quoted in Assayas, *Bono*, 204.

penalty of death. It appears that at times he allows us to see how he has treated us graciously, in order to remind us of the contrast between what we deserve and what he grants us by grace. Edwards's evaluation of the miraculous deliverance of the Northampton congregation seems accurate. Could there be any other explanation for those events than that God had been gracious to them? And there could be nothing in the people that earned such treatment for they had earned judgment. Instead, there could be no explanation other than the unmerited mercy of a gracious God. Further, Edwards's applications seem appropriate. The only legitimate response to such deliverance is worship and obedience. Or, as Bono puts it, "The point of the death of Christ is that Christ took the sins of the world, so that what we put out did not come back to us, and that our sinful nature does not reap the obvious death. That's the point. It should keep us humbled. . . . It's not our own good works that get us through the gates of Heaven."[73] How could those who have been recipients of divine grace ever be proud or arrogant? Could there be anything more contradictory than an arrogant Christian, a proud evangelical?

May the words of this eighteenth–century pastor and of a twenty–first–century musician remind all of us of the incredible gift of God's grace which we have received and continue to enjoy only because of his undeserved mercy. May God grant that we who receive that transformative grace might be ever renewed more and more into faithful and obedient servants of him. And may God deign to use us as agents of such grace in the midst of a corrupt and perverse generation. After all, grace really is a "thought that changed the world."[74] And it continues to do so.

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73. Ibid.

74. U2, "Grace," the last song on *All that You Can't Leave Behind* (Interscope, 2000); lyrics accessed at http://www.u2boy.nl/u2/u2_lyrics.php?id=a10t11_u2_grace_lyrics, 30 August 2005.

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LAST WERE THE MAHICANS

Jonathan Edwards, Stockbridge, and Native Americans

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Nearly a quarter of a millennium after his death, Jonathan Edwards is still probably the best known theologian in American history. In popular memory he is a fire and brimstone preacher who spoke of a God eager to fling unsuspecting sinners into the pits of Hell, due to the most famous of his works, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." As numerous writers have explored Edwards's theology and his place in American history, they have offered other perspectives on the man, but they have for the most part downplayed the last years of his life—outside, of course, famous writings like *Original Sin* and *The Freedom of the Will*, composed after leaving Northampton. Although Perry Miller sparked renewed interest in Puritan studies several decades ago, including in figures like Edwards, very few scholars have addressed Edwards's time as a missionary to the Native American settlement in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.[1] When scholars *have* referred to it, they have typically judged it as the place of Edwards's exile, the only option he had after being dismissed from his Northampton congregation, where he preached recycled sermons and holed up in his study so he could write all day. For example, Norman Pettit's analysis of Edwards's time at Stockbridge goes as follows: "Now, with no hope of gaining a popular pulpit—when no settled town close at hand dared to invite him"—the Indians received from

1. Most contemporary Native Americans and scholars of eighteenth-century American history use the terms "Native American" and "Indian" interchangeably; this essay follows their lead.

Edwards "old sermons composed at Northampton and spoken in a foreign tongue."[2] Clyde A. Holbrook expresses a similar sentiment, that after Northampton Edwards had "little hope of winning an influential pulpit, and therefore had to be content to serve the little church of Stockbridge and act as missionary to the Indians gathered nearby."[3] In contrast, George S. Claghorn summarizes and dismisses the "received wisdom concerning Edwards's Stockbridge years,"[4] as does Rachel Wheeler. As she puts it, "To Edwards scholars interested in tracing the intricacies of his thought, his involvement in local affairs [at Stockbridge] is reckoned as background noise that thankfully did not disturb his intellectual labors."[5] This presents a grossly inaccurate picture of Edwards's experience with and attitudes toward Native Americans in general and his Stockbridge congregation in particular. Modern scholarship thus seems to show less regard for the Mahicans than Edwards himself did.[6] The historical discussion provided in the following pages demonstrates that, while Edwards maintained a firm belief in the superiority of English culture over that of his Stockbridge congregation, his doctrine of the equality of humankind extended to the Native Americans, making him much more progressive than many of his contemporaries with respect to race relations.

Historical Background

While one of the stated purposes for colonizing New England was to evangelize the Native Americans, after a century of settlement the English had done little toward accomplishing that goal. Numerous factors were at play, but one of the primary ones concerns the attitude of many Puritans toward the original inhabitants of the New World. They had expected the natives simply to see the superiority of the English way of life and then to convert as a result of the envy arising from this observa-

2. Norman Pettit, editor's introduction to *The Life of David Brainerd*, by Jonathan Edwards, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 7 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 16–17.

3. Clyde A. Holbrook, editor's introduction to *Original Sin*, by Jonathan Edwards, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 20.

4. George S. Claghorn, editor's introduction to *Letters and Personal Writings*, by Jonathan Edwards, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 16 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998): 17–18.

5. Rachel Wheeler, "Living Upon Hope: Mahicans and Missionaries, 1730–1760" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1998), 136–37.

6. The settlement at Stockbridge during Edwards's tenure as pastor comprised a people who referred to themselves as the "Muhheconnuk" ("people of the flowing waters"), which the English had Anglicized into "Mohican," the name by which James Fenimore Cooper has immortalized them. However, the Dutch had a spelling ("Mahican") much closer phonetically to the native's own pronunciation. This essay will follow contemporary scholarship in using this spelling. In Edwards's time, these people were also known as the "River Indians," the Housatonics and—as they are known even to this day—the "Stockbridge Indians." See Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), xi–xv.

tion.[7] When the natives did not do this, Puritans scorned them, viewing them as less intrinsically valuable than the English.[8] That the Indians had not seen what seemed obvious to the Puritans—that European clothing, architecture, and economics were superior and much to be desired—was something the Puritans could not understand.[9] Joseph Mede was not alone in concluding that the Devil had a special grip on Native Americans. Satan had led them to this isolated land in order to keep them in darkness, and since they now refused to see the light the Puritans had brought them, it was clear that the Puritans would "make no Christians there."[10]

The spiritual leaders of the native peoples, the "pawwaws," were dampening what efforts missionaries did make. Thus, it would be no sin simply to kill them off.[11] Some New England colonists were inclined to kill all the natives, not merely their leaders. Samuel Hopkins's writings on the subject are telling, as he first objected to this plan on the basis that it was not practical, and then, almost as an aside, said it probably would not be very much in keeping with the teachings of Christianity. In any case, he thought, the natives might make good allies in war against the French.[12] Indians were less than human, and thus the Puritans felt that, "to make them Christians, they must first be made Men."[13] Cotton Mather supported evangelism among Native Americans, yet called them "Animals" and "Idiots."[14] Some Puritans

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7. John B. Carpenter, "The New England Puritans: The Grandparents of Modern Protestant Missions," *Missiology* 30 (October 2002): 519–20.
8. Henry Warner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict*, Chicago History of American Religion, ed. Martin E. Marty (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 114–15.
9. James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 131–33.
10. Joseph Mede, "Mr. Mede's Answer to Twisse," cited in David S. Lovejoy, "Satanizing the American Indian," *New England Quarterly* 67 (1994): 608.
11. Lovejoy, "Satanizing the American Indian," 612–13.
12. Samuel Hopkins writes, "Some, I am sensible, will say, let us not be at any Cost and Pains to gain the friendship of such a perfidious Crew, but let us destroy them all. Quickly said indeed, but not so soon nor so easily effected. Those persons who are for destroying them would doubtless soon do it, were they first bound and delivered up to them. But one Question here is, how shall we get them into our Power? And another is, whether it would be so human, generous and Christian-like, to take away their Lives, were that in our Power, as it would be to cultivate Friendship with them, and to seek their best Good? If we should be so sanguine as to endeavor to destroy them, it would doubtless prove a vain Attempt. . . ." He then goes on to explain that the natives serve as a necessary ally against the French. See his *Historical Memoirs Relating to the Housatunnuk Indians, or An Account of the Methods Used, and Pains Taken, for the Propagation of the Gospel among that Heathenish Tribe, and the Success Thereof, under the Ministry of the Late Reverend Mr. John Sargeant, Together with the Character of the Eminently Worthy Missionary; and an Address to the People of this Country, Representing the Very Great Importance of Attaching the Indians to Their Interest, Not Only by Treating Them Justly and Kindly, but by Using Proper Endeavors to Settle Christianity among Them* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1753), 165.
13. Charles Inglis, quoted in Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 131.

questioned whether they themselves were even of the same "spiritual species" as the people indigenous to the land they colonized,[15] and some missionaries thought Native Americans would *never* be a part of God's millennial kingdom.[16] As David S. Lovejoy has written, conversion did not change this, since Christian Indians "were repeatedly reminded of their place at the bottom of the heap in God's world."[17]

Such attitudes affected Puritan dealings with Native Americans, dealings which later became a barrier to English efforts to convert them to Christianity. This is made clear by their opinion on who had a right to America itself. God, the Puritans thought, would want them to seize the land from the natives; there was no need either to pay for it or to ask permission to take it. Indians did not make use of the land in the same way as the English; if then the natives were displaced, so be it.[18] The Puritans owed them nothing. On the contrary, any debt was entirely the natives'. The Puritans, after all, had offered them Christianity, so their land was now free for the taking. Native Americans did not share this logic.[19]

In the midst of all this, Solomon Stoddard, Edwards's grandfather, must have seemed radical in the extreme. In 1723, he published a discourse in which he claimed God was angry with New England for not doing more to convert the Indians. Christ had commanded that Christians spread the gospel to save people from Hell. "We should pity *Beasts* in misery," he wrote, but the natives were not beasts. They were people. "Brutish," perhaps, but "they are of Mankind, and so objects of Compassion." He reminded the people of Massachusetts of their own charter, which had evangelism as a stated goal. The natives had not converted as expected, but the Puritans had not tried very hard to convert them. The English, he claimed, had been every bit as depraved as the Native Americans before Christians brought their religion to England. It was shameful that missionaries went all the way to India but the Puritans would not evangelize their own neighbors, and what was worse, that the Catholics were having success in making converts. Stoddard even claimed that Puritans might learn something from Christian Indians.[20] According to Gerald McDermott, Stoddard advocated a multiracial congregation, and hoped someday that Northampton's church would have a blend of native and white communicants.[21]

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14. Cotton Mather, quoted in Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 133.
15. Carpenter, "The New England Puritans," 521.
16. Gerald R. McDermott, "Jonathan Edwards and American Indians: The Devil Sucks Their Blood," *The New England Quarterly* 72 (1999): 548.
17. Lovejoy, "Satanizing the American Indian," 617.
18. Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 137.
19. R. Pierce Beaver, "American Missionary Motivation before the Revolution," *Church History* 31 (1962): 217; and idem, editor's introduction to *Pioneers in Mission: The Early Missionary Ordination Sermons, Charges, and Instructions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 18.
20. Solomon Stoddard, *Question Whether God is Not Angry with the Country for Doing So Little Towards the Conversion of the Indians?* (Boston: B. Green, 1723).
21. McDermott, "Jonathan Edwards and American Indians," 543.

Edwards and the Inherent Equality of Mankind

Edwards's opinions on Native American missions were much like his grandfather's. He showed concern for Native Americans' spiritual state from early in his career. His Northampton congregation had supported mission work among Indians from its founding, and had done so heavily under Stoddard's and Edwards's leadership. In addition, Edwards had served as the representative cleric on the board of trustees for the boarding school for Indian children at Stockbridge from 1743 to 1747, one of the causes to which the Northampton church gave.[22]

In addition to material support, Edwards's preaching and writings before he moved to Stockbridge show an interest in Native American missions. In *A Faithful Narrative* defending the Great Awakening, Edwards wrote of evidences of a Christian spirit of love unlike any he had seen previously. One of these evidences was that the revival had sparked an interest in the salvation of others, including "any Indian in the woods."[23] In a sermon preached to the Northampton church in 1738, Edwards spoke out against the English people's indifference toward Native Americans. God might have blessed them with a temporary peace from war with one another, but "we have dealt very unfaithfully with God in our behavior towards" the Native Americans, he said. Evangelism was a stated intention of the English in settling New England, but this was "very little done, in comparison of what ought to have been. . . . God might justly have punished us long ago for this. . . . We have been growing worse and worse, and have greatly abused" God's mercies.[24] The sermon series, originally preached in the 1730s, which became his *History of the Work of Redemption* included assertions that Christians should expect Native Americans to be included in God's salvation plan.[25]

Edwards's most famous work on missions to Indians is *The Life of David Brainerd.* Although Edwards's main goal in publishing the diary of this missionary to the Delaware was not the furtherance of Native American missions, his admiration for Brainerd reveals something about his attitude toward the natives. Both Brainerd and Edwards believed that, since Native Americans were members of the human family, the gospel must reach them, so that all nations could be united in Christ.[26]

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22. Claghorn, editor's introduction to *Letters and Personal Writings*, by Edwards, 17–18; and Stephen J. Nichols, "Last of the Mohican Missionaries: Jonathan Edwards at Stockbridge," in *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards: American Religion and the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. D. G. Hart, Sean Michael Lucas, and Stephen J. Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 49. See also Edwards's letter to Eleazar Wheelock, Northampton, July 13, 1744, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 146.
23. Jonathan Edwards, *The Great Awakening*, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 4, ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 104.
24. Jonathan Edwards, "Indicting God," in *Sermons and Discourses 1734–1738*, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 19, ed. M. X. Lesser (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 763–64.
25. Jonathan Edwards, *A History of the Work of Redemption*, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 9, ed. John F. Wilson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 434–35.

Keely E. McCarthy argues that, in editing Brainerd's diary, Edwards attempted to excise passages that made Indians appear less than human in order to emphasize the universal depravity of human beings. The natives were people, every bit as human as Brainerd or any other Puritan, and thus in need of the gospel neither more nor less than anyone else.[27] In addition, as McDermott has observed, Brainerd was not the only example of a converted soul in *The Life*. A long entry describes an Indian woman who seems to have gone through the kind of conversion process which was "a textbook example of Edwardsean spirituality." In this way, Edwards at least implicitly told his world that Native Americans could be converted, if only someone would tell them how.[28]

Edwards also wanted to be personally involved in missions to Native Americans, as his decision to take the position as pastor for the Stockbridge congregation shows. Edwards had other job offers after his Northampton congregation dismissed him. Scholars who acknowledge that Edwards had other options primarily discuss his refusal of a position in Scotland because it presented too much of a difficulty in moving such a large family as the Edwardses across the Atlantic,[29] but that was not his only choice. Two large churches in New England had offered him their pastorates, and there was a request from a faction in the Northampton church for Edwards to start another church in the town, which presumably was large enough to have supported two congregations.[30] Edwards, however, had other ideas. He did not merely agree to become the pastor for the Stockbridge Indians, but appears, as Claghorn puts it, to have been "jockeying for the post."[31] Edwards wrote to Thomas Foxcroft in November of 1749, as the situation in Northampton was beginning to look grim. The letter stated that he hoped that the Commissioners would select a man "of sound principles, and a pious character" to take the place of John Sergeant, the missionary to the Stockbridge Indians, who had died not long before. This would be best for the mission's school, which was just beginning to gain students. If

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26. Pettit, editor's introduction to *The Life of David Brainerd*, by Edwards, 1–2.

27. Keely E. McCarthy, "'Reducing Them to Civilitie': Religious Conversions and Cultural Transformations in Protestant Missionary Narratives, 1690–1790" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 2000), 127–28. See also Nichols, "Last of the Mohican Missionaries," 50.

28. Gerald R. McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 197. See also David Brainerd, in *The Life of David Brainerd*, 369–72.

29. See Jonathan Edwards, letter to John Erskine, Northampton, July 5, 1750, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 347–59.

30. Jonathan Edwards, letter to Thomas Foxcroft, Northampton, April 10, 1751, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 368–69; see also Charles L. Chaney, *The Birth of Missions in America* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1976), 89–90; Gerald R. McDermott, "Missions and Native Americans," in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 263; Nichols, "Last of the Mohican Missionaries," 49; and Wheeler, "Living Upon Hope," 145.

31. Claghorn in *Letters and Personal Writings*, by Edwards, 296.

the school did well, they should expect more natives to come to the settlement, and "the good effects would be very extensive." Edwards closed his letter by stating, "I hope, Sir, you will accept these hints with candor and ever remember with Christian charity and compassion before God, Your respectful son and obliged servant, Jonathan Edwards."[32]

After beginning his work in Stockbridge in 1751, Edwards continued to preach and write about the equality of natives and whites before God. As a means of contradicting the attitudes prevalent in his day, the first sermon he preached to the Stockbridge Indians after officially becoming their minister was on Acts 11:12–13, the story of Cornelius, the Gentile whose receiving the Holy Spirit made Jewish believers rethink the limits of God's salvation plan. In it, Edwards noted that someone had brought the gospel to the English, so he was able to bring it to America.[33] Other sermons expressed similar themes. Edwards assured his congregation that "God stands ready to forgive every sinner," including persons of any age or race.[34] The "beasts" were those who refused God's call. "All men all over the world are wholly inclined to sin and wickedness. There are many nations in the world that have different languages and a great many different customs, but all are alike in this respect: all are inclined to sin," Edwards said.[35] Christ's kingdom transcends national boundaries. Considering his time and culture, Edwards made a particularly radical statement when preaching to his Stockbridge congregation: "we are no better than you in no Respect."[36] "'Tis to be found with you as 'tis among the English and others who are called Christians," he said. "There are many more bad than good."[37] He explained that the English and the Indians were the

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32. Jonathan Edwards, letter to Thomas Foxcroft, Northampton, November 21, 1749, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 302.

33. Jonathan Edwards, "The Things that Belong to True Religion," in *Sermons and Discourses 1743–1758*, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 25, ed. Wilson H. Kimnach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 571; see also McDermott, "Jonathan Edwards and American Indians," 547; and idem, "Missions and Native Americans," 263.

34. Jonathan Edwards, "God Stands Ready to Forgive Every Sinner upon His Heartily Confessing and Forsaking His Sin," in *The Blessing of God: Previously Unpublished Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Michael D. McMullen (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 124.

35. Jonathan Edwards, "All Mankind of All Nations, White and Black, Young and Old, Is Going in One or the Other of These Paths, Either in the Way That Leads to Life or the Way That Leads to Destruction," in *The Blessing of God*, 228.

36. Jonathan Edwards, sermon on 2 Peter 1:19, cited in McDermott, "Jonathan Edwards and the American Indians," 552; see also Rachel Wheeler, "'Friends to Your Souls': Jonathan Edwards' Indian Pastorate and the Doctrine of Original Sin," *Church History* 72 (2003): 737.

37. Jonathan Edwards, "So None Ought to Come into the Christian Church but Good Men," in *The Blessing of God*, 235. Kimnach transcribed this line differently, but the general meaning is still the same: "'tis feared that 'tis with you as 'tis amongst the English and others that are called Christians. There are many more bad than good." Jonathan Edwards, "Heaven's Dragnet," in *Sermons and Discourses 1743–1758*, 579.

same, that at some point in the past the English, like the Indians, had been without the light of Christ, but that "Christ has died that all who believed, of whatever nation, should be saved and that he who believed not should be damned."[38] Moreover, in his sermons Edwards often expressed disappointment in his fellow Englishmen, who had not given enough attention to sharing the gospel with the natives.[39]

Rachel Wheeler believes one should approach *Original Sin*, first published in 1758, in light of Edwards's Stockbridge sermons. While many have assumed Edwards wrote *Original Sin* merely as a polemic against Arminian and Deist denials of humanity's total depravity, Wheeler argues that it was also a "treatise on the bond of equality that joins all humankind,"[40] and an "oddly egalitarian text."[41] *Original Sin* emphasizes the equal need all humans have for God's grace. Indeed, Edwards does point to the Native Americans over and over again in *Original Sin* as evidence that people are incapable of virtue on their own, though usually in a list with other groups as well, including Europeans.[42] Edwards did not embrace a harsh God anxious to throw sinners into Hell at every turn, who had sent the Native Americans away from the light of the gospel because he had already rejected them, but rather one who provided opportunities to people from all nations to be saved.[43]

Edwards's behavior also demonstrates a belief that the Native Americans were intrinsically equal to the English. When the Edwardses

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38. Jonathan Edwards, "What Is Meant by Believing in Christ?" in *The Blessing of God*, 238. See also Edwards's "Sermon II," in *Selections from the Unpublished Writings of Jonathan Edwards of America*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (Ligonier, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 1992), 194; George M. Marsden, "Jonathan Edwards, the Missionary," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 81 (2003): 12; and Rachel Wheeler's analysis of Edwards's Stockbridge sermons in "Living Upon Hope," 188–91 and "Friends to Your Souls," 745–47.

39. Marsden, "Jonathan Edwards, the Missionary," 12; and Wheeler, "Friends to Your Souls," 746. See also Edwards's criticism of those who are unfaithful stewards of the fact that they have the Bible in their "mother tongue" in "That Hearing and Keeping the Word of God Renders a Person More Blessed Than Any Other Privilege That Ever God Bestowed on Any of the Children of Men," in *The Glory and Honor of God: Volume 2 of the Previously Unpublished Sermons of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Michael D. McMullen (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2004), 190–207.

40. Wheeler, "Living Upon Hope," 164.

41. Wheeler, "Friends to Your Souls," 765.

42. For example: "How comes it to pass, that the free will of mankind has been determined to evil, in like manner before the flood, and after the flood; under the law, and under the gospel; among both Jews and Gentiles, under the Old Testament; and since that, among Christians, Jews, Mohametans; among Papists and Protestants; . . . among the Negroes and Hottentots in Africa, the Tartars in Asia, and Indians in America, towards both the poles, and on every side of the globe; in greatest cities, and obscurest villages; in palaces, and in huts, wigwams and cells under ground? Is it enough, to reply, it happens so, that men everywhere, and at all times choose thus to determine their own wills, and so to make themselves sinful, as soon as ever they are capable of it . . . and universally to choose never to come up half way to their duty?" in Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin*, 194; see also pp. 160, 183, and 185; and Wheeler, "Friends to Your Souls," 763.

43. Wheeler, "Friends to Your Souls," 759. See also McCarthy, "Reducing them to Civilitie," 105–106.

moved to Stockbridge, they lived among the Indians, as no other white settlers in that town had ever done.[44] His children played with native children.[45] Jonathan Edwards Jr. spent so much time with the Mahicans that his fluency in their language exceeded his fluency in English. Edwards encouraged his son to develop proficiency in Native American languages, hoping the boy would eventually become a missionary to them like his father.[46] In accepting the natives as "familiar and ordinary," Cynthia Moore writes, Edwards was attempting to achieve "the erosion of their demonization."[47]

In addition, Edwards fought against European exploitation of Native Americans throughout his time in Stockbridge. His letter to Joseph Paice in February 1751/2 ended up in the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[48] Edwards complained that English traders consistently cheated the Native Americans, and that money donated to aid in mission work actually ended up fueling the battle between Anglicans and dissenters in England.[49] This had caused the Iroquois to distrust the English and to fear that, if they sent their children to English schools, the white men would enslave them.[50] Closer to home, Edwards fought against the exploitation of his own congregation by his constant antagonists throughout his Stockbridge years, the Williams family. In letters to public officials, he detailed the Williams clan's misappropriation of funds donated for the education of Native American children for their own gain, in addition to the past unethical land deals in the Williams'

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44. See Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 107; and George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 394. Compare this to the living arrangements of seventeenth century Puritan ministers and missionaries to Native Americans as described in Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions*, 116.
45. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 94.
46. The younger Edwards writes, "The Indians being the nearest neighbors, I constantly associated with them; their boys were my daily school–mates and play–fellows. Out of my father's house, I seldom heard any language spoken, beside the Indian. . . . It became more familiar to me than my mother tongue. I knew the names of some things in Indian, which I did not know in English; even all my thoughts ran in Indian. . . ." He also explains how his father's plans were thwarted when, after sending him to learn another native language, war broke out and he had to return after only six months. See Jonathan Edwards Jr., *Observations on the Language of the Muhhekaneew Indians* (New Haven: Josiah Meigs, 1788), reprinted as *Observations on the Mahican Language*, American Language Reprints, ed. Claudio R. Salvucci, vol. 25 (Bristol, PA: Evolution, 2002), 9–10.
47. Cynthia Marie Moore, "'Rent and Ragged Relations': Puritans, Indians, and the Management of Congregations in New England, 1647–1776" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York, Stony Brook, 1999), 99.
48. Claghorn, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, by Edwards, 435.
49. Jonathan Edwards, letter to Joseph Paice, Stockbridge, February 24, 1751/2, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 435–36.
50. Marsden, "Jonathan Edwards, the Missionary," 13. This appears to have been a common fear among New England's Indian population during Edwards's time. See William R. Hutchinson, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 31.

favor, all of which had contributed to the Stockbridge Indians' suspicion of whites. He hoped the officials would remedy the situation.[51]

Edwards and the Superiority of English Culture

Ephraim Williams Jr. had criticism for Edwards as well. Williams had attempted to block Edwards's appointment as missionary to the Stockbridge Indians by writing to Jonathan Ashley in 1751 that Edwards was too old to learn the language of his congregation, and furthermore that he was "a very great bigot, for he would not admit any person into heaven but those that agreed fully to his sentiments. . . ."[52] At least part of this has merit. Edwards never did learn Mahican. He explained this as being "a waste of time."[53] While Edwards possessed the ability to learn languages—he used Greek, Hebrew, and Latin throughout his life—he did not want to devote any extensive amount of time to learning the Stockbridge dialect. In a letter to Sir William Pepperrell, he asserted that it was better for the Stockbridge Indians to learn to speak English: "Indian languages are extremely barbarous and barren, and very ill-fitted for communicating things moral and divine, or even things speculative and abstract. In short, they are wholly unfit for a people possessed of civilization and refinement."[54] Edwards did communicate in broken Mahican after some time in Stockbridge,[55] but never actively attempted to learn it. He always preached in English, using an interpreter, and always believed that English was superior to Mahican.

Perhaps Edwards believed the language could not communicate things divine or abstract because of the influence of his predecessor, Sergeant, and Brainerd. Sergeant had spent five years studying Mahican, and had managed to preach in it, but as Samuel Hopkins reported in *Historical Memoirs*, "When Mr. Sergeant had, by a vast Deal of Labour, made himself Master of this *strange Language*, he found it to be a dry, barren, and imperfect Dialect, and by no Means sufficient to convey to his Hearers the Knowledge of divine things. . . ."[56] Brainerd had studied a similar dialect,[57] referring to it as "very defective," due in part to the way the Delaware expressed family relationships. The language did not permit one to express an absolute, such as "*the*

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51. Jonathan Edwards, letter to Andrew Oliver, Stockbridge, February 18, 1751/2 and letter to Thomas Hubbard, Stockbridge, August 29, 1752, both in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 422–34, 528–33.

52. Ephraim Williams Jr., letter to Jonathan Ashley, Stockbridge, May 2, 1751, cited in Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 92–93.

53. Jonathan Edwards, letter to William Pepperrell, Stockbridge, January 30, 1753, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 562.

54. Jonathan Edwards, letter to William Pepperrell, Stockbridge, November 28, 1751, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 413. One ironic bit of trivia in light of this statement is the nineteenth century translation of Edwards's most famous sermon into Choctaw, a Native American dialect in the Muskogee language family. See *Hatak Yoshuba Uhleha Hut Chihowa Anukhobela Ya Innak Foyuka* ("Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God") (Park Hill, Cherokee Nation: Mission, 1845).

55. Gerald R. McDermott, *One Holy and Happy Society: The Public Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 164.

Father," but rather, a word like "father" had to be tied to a son or a daughter. "Hence they cannot be baptized in their own language in the name of *the* Father, and *the* Son, &c.; but they may be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and *his* Father, &c."[58] This was also true of the dialect spoken in Stockbridge. Interestingly, Edwards's son did not agree with the assessment that one could not express abstract or divine concepts in Mahican.[59] Edwards, however, does not appear to have ever explored the possibility of a Mahican translation of the Bible, though in more than one sermon he did tell his congregation that they needed to read it and must therefore learn English.[60]

For Edwards, English was more than merely a language. It had the power to "civilize" the "savages"—that is, to make the Indians live like Englishmen. This was his main goal in encouraging its use. While Edwards never precisely explained why "their being brought to the English language would open their minds and bring 'em to acquaintance and conversation with the English, and would tend above all things to bring that civility which is to be found among the English,"[61] he probably agreed with most Puritans, who expected Christian Indians to live, dress, and work exactly like themselves. That had been Sergeant's motivation for building a school in Stockbridge, "for to *civilize* will be the readiest way to *Christianize* them."[62] Puritans viewed the Mahican way of life, wherein the men hunted and fished while the women did agricultural work, as evidence of emasculate laziness on the part of the men, and as unfair to the women, who never had the opportunity to gain a proper grasp of "the arts of 'housewifery.'" Furthermore, Mahicans raised their children much differently than Puri-

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56. Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 155. The words "strange Language" are italicized in the original. See also Jonathan Edwards, letter to William Pepperrell, Stockbridge, January 30, 1753, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 562, where Edwards cites Sergeant's low opinion of the language as a reason for not learning it.
57. Brainerd studied Delaware, to which Mahican was closely related, both being Algonquinan languages. See Salvucci's preface to Edwards, *Observations on the Mahican Language*, 1.
58. David Brainerd, Second Appendix to "Mr. Brainerd's Journal," reprinted in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 2:421.
59. "It has been said also, that savages never abstract, and have no abstract terms, which . . . is another mistake. . . . I doubt not but that there is in this language the full proportion of abstract, to concrete terms, which is commonly to be found in other languages." Edwards, *Observations on the Mahican Language*, 23–24.
60. Jonathan Edwards, "The Things that Belong to True Religion," in *Sermons and Discourses 1743–1758*, 574; and idem, "Sermon II," in *Selections from the Unpublished Writings of Jonathan Edwards*, 195.
61. Edwards cited in McCarthy, "Reducing them to Civilitie," 3. This echoes Cotton Mather's claim: "The best thing we can do for our Indians is to Anglicize them in all agreeable Instances; and in that of Language, as well as others. They can scarce retain their Language, without a Tincture of other Salvage [sic] Inclinations, which do but ill suit, either with the Honor, or with the design of Christianity," as quoted in Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions*, 98.
62. Lion G. Miles, "The Red Man Dispossessed: The Williams Family and the Alienation of Indian Land in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1736–1818," *New England Quarterly* 67 (1994): 48.

tans did, and while they were well-behaved for the most part, they did not demonstrate what Puritans believed to be the proper deference to their parents.[63]

Edwards proposed several measures to change the Indians' way of life. The Mahicans should be encouraged to give their children to English families for a few years, so they could learn the ways and language of the English. This would be "absolutely necessary, at least at first," though there would be need of some sort of incentive for the parents; then they might enter boarding school with a few English children interspersed among them.[64] The Edwards family participated in this plan, taking Indian children into their own home.[65] In addition, the natives should learn to sing, because this "would in several respects have a powerful influence, in promoting the great end in view, of leading them to renounce the coarseness, and filth and degradation, of savage life, for cleanliness, refinement and good morals."[66]

Conclusion

When Edwards left Stockbridge to become president of Princeton College in 1758, he did so against his own wishes. His congregation had encouraged him to call a council of ministers to decide how to respond to Princeton's offer, and Edwards was not at all happy with the council's decision. Hopkins wrote that Edwards, a man not given to emotional outbursts, began to cry when he heard their advice. George M. Marsden has cynically noted that Edwards never objected to moving to Princeton on the basis of wanting to stay among the Stockbridge Indians,[67] but perhaps Edwards felt that was merely to be understood. Edwards preached a sad farewell to those he had come to call "my people" on January 15, 1758,[68] assuring them that "whether we shall ever see each other in this world is uncertain but remember that we must meet again at the last day."[69]

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63. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 96–97; and Lovejoy, "Satanizing the American Indian," 614–15. See also Stoddard, *Question Whether God is Not Angry*, 11. Carpenter argues that this insistence on Puritan ways was actually an affirmation of the belief in Native American humanity and equality—they were just treating them the way they would have wanted to be treated had they been in their place—in "New England Puritans," 521–24.

64. Edwards, letter to Thomas Hubbard, Stockbridge, August 31, 1751, and letter to William Pepperrell, Stockbridge, November 28, 1751, both in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 404, 413.

65. Edwards, letter to Thomas Prince, Stockbridge, May 10, 1754, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 638. See also Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 390, and "Jonathan Edwards, the Missionary," 14.

66. Edwards, letter to William Pepperrell, Stockbridge, November 28, 1751, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, 411.

67. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 431.

68. McDermott, "Jonathan Edwards and American Indians," 553.

69. Jonathan Edwards, "God's People Should Remember Them That Have Been Their Ministers," in *Sermons and Discourses 1743–1758*, 714. See also Wheeler, "Living Upon Hope," 211.

Edwards may not have been able to look beyond his culture for what it meant to live the Christian life, and therefore he may not have been able to see virtue in any cultural expressions other than English ones, but he articulated a theology that affirmed the value of all people before God, and thus the humanity and inherent equality of the English colonists' Native American neighbors. In so doing, he brought the egalitarian side of Calvinism to light. If everyone is the same, Christian ethics demand that everyone be treated equally, out of respect for each person's humanity. Edwards did not take the Stockbridge pastorate because it was the only place he could go, and leaving did not bring him to tears merely because it would mean he spent less time in his study. Very few of Edwards's contemporaries shared his affection for Native Americans, but his work left a lasting impression on generations of missionaries.[70] It is time for modern scholarship to acknowledge this aspect of Jonathan Edwards's life and thought.

70. Ronald E. Davies, "Jonathan Edwards: Theologian of the Missionary Awakening," Evangelical Missionary Alliance Occasional Paper no. 3 in *Evangel* 17 (1999) and Hutchinson, *Errand to the World*, 40–41.

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THE "ORTHODOX CORRUPTION" OF MARK 1:1

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New Testament textual criticism is the discipline concerned with the transmission of the New Testament text and the attempt to reconstruct the original text.[1] After the original New Testament documents were penned, they were passed from one group of believers to another. Along the way, believers made copies because the documents were important for the life of the church. The process of copying was painstaking, as each document was copied by hand, one letter at a time. During this process of copying, scribes occasionally made mistakes and introduced errors into the manuscript tradition.

Since the original documents no longer exist, one who wishes to know how the original text read must reconstruct it by comparing the manuscripts which have survived, deciding which of the variant readings is most likely original. This has been the traditional goal of New Testament textual criticism, although some now argue that this goal is unreachable. It is more important, they suggest, to understand the function of the manuscripts in the life of the church through the ages.[2] Critics are right to identify the importance of the manuscripts in the life of the church, but the task of reconstruction remains important even for those who study the New Testament only as a literary document. How much more so for those who believe that God communicated an inspired and inerrant word through the original documents!

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1. Cf. Stanley E. Porter, "Textual Criticism," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 1210.
2. Cf. Reuben Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines Against Codex Vaticanus. Romans* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 2001), xxvi–xxvii.

Bart Ehrman is an influential New Testament scholar who has written extensively in textual criticism. Now coauthor with Bruce Metzger of *The Text of the New Testament*, one of the standard academic introductions to textual criticism, Ehrman is most widely recognized for his recent book *Misquoting Jesus*, which is designed as a popular introduction to textual criticism.[3] His more extensive individual work on the transmission of the New Testament text is *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture.*[4] In both *Misquoting Jesus* and *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, Ehrman argues that scribes sometimes intentionally changed the sacred texts that they were copying.

As one may infer from the latter book's title, Ehrman identifies these changes as corruptions. Although he claims to use the term in a neutral sense comparable to emendation, he has been rightly criticized for the title's polemical tone.[5] The implication of the title is that the New Testament itself is corrupt and therefore an unreliable guide for faith and life. In fact, the end result of Ehrman's study of the New Testament text was a departure from evangelical faith, the details of which he recounts in *Misquoting Jesus.*[6] Whereas he has been rightly criticized for the polemical tone of *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, he has been rightly praised for the interdisciplinary nature of the work, since he demonstrates how New Testament textual criticism impacts the study of church history and historical theology.[7]

Moreover, the implications of Ehrman's study reach far beyond these areas, particularly given the recent publication of *Misquoting Jesus.* There is a fair chance that someone in the average congregation has heard the claim that scribes intentionally changed the New Testament text. There is a better than average chance that students on college campuses will run across Ehrman's claims. Thus, given Ehrman's work, the pastor, Sunday school teacher, student minister, and evangelist, not to mention the apologist and theologian, may soon face questions regarding the authenticity and legitimacy of the New Testament text.

In what follows, I provide a sample of the way in which one may evaluate a textual variant. The primary text under consideration is Mark 1:1, but a brief moment will be spent dealing with Ehrman's discussion of Luke 3:22 since it has implications for Mark 1:1. In the

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3. Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Bart D. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005).

4. Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effects of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

5. Cf. Gerald Bray, review of *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effects of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*, by Bart D. Ehrman, *Churchman* 108:1 (1994): 85.

6. Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*, 1–15.

7. Moises Silva, review of *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effects of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*, by Bart D. Ehrman, *Westminster Theological Journal* 57 (Spring 1995): 262.

evaluation of the text, I will give particular attention to Ehrman's claim that the variant represents an orthodox corruption of scripture.

One further note may prove helpful before moving ahead. After reflecting time and time again upon Ehrman's discussion of Luke 3:22 and Mark 1:1, as well as his work as a whole, I suspect that his description of the polemical climate of the first few centuries provides a clue to his own methodology. Ehrman adopts Bauer's argument that "orthodoxy" as such did not exist during the second and third centuries. Instead, there were a variety of competing views, only one of which eventually emerged as "orthodoxy" as a result of social and historical forces. It was only when this party won the day that its beliefs were said to represent the church at large.[8]

The polemical context, Ehrman argues, affected the way in which Christians handled the text. "Mistakes" were often intentional alterations used to make texts "more orthodox on the one hand and less susceptible to heretical construal on the other."[9] Christians forged documents in the names of their opponents and even attacked the character of their opponents. While they often accused their opponents of doing these things, it was most often the Christians who did not play fair.[10]

I suspect that the goal of Ehrman's discussion is not to provide a detailed examination of all of the evidence, but to win, to persuade, and to influence. In attempting to do so, he at times exaggerates, mischaracterizes, and omits evidence.[11] In addition, by frequent repetition, he makes his arguments appear stronger than they really are. In a way, Ehrman comes across as a politician. We may expect politicians to repeat themselves, to exaggerate, to mischaracterize and omit evidence, but we do not expect scholars to do so.[12]

LUKE 3:22

Simply put, Ehrman's thesis is that "scribes occasionally altered the words of their sacred texts to make them more patently orthodox and to prevent their misuse by Christians who espoused aberrant views."[13] The alterations, which he labels "corruptions," were not primarily intended to change the beliefs of opponents but to bolster the claims of the orthodox party. Ehrman consistently claims that the changes were made in order to communicate more clearly what the texts were already known to mean.

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8. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 7. Cf. Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, trans. Robert Kraft (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971).
9. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 25.
10. Ibid., 15–25.
11. Daniel Wallace has identified Ehrman's omission of evidence in *Misquoting Jesus*. Daniel B. Wallace, "The Gospel According to Bart: A Review Article of *Misquoting Jesus* by Bart Ehrman," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49 (June 2006), 329.
12. This is not meant to denigrate Ehrman's scholarship. In fact, my respect for his scholarship leads me to believe that he knows exactly what he is doing when he omits evidence or attempts to give it a particular slant.
13. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, xi.

By examining these corruptions, Ehrman believes that one can discern something of the hermeneutical intentions of the scribes and the resulting function of the new texts, since scribes were in essence interpreting texts as they copied them.[14] Quite often, Ehrman argues, a scribe corrupted the text which contemporary critics commonly accept as original. That is, the "orthodox corruption" stands only as a variant and is clearly not the original text. In some instances, however, Ehrman argues that a corrupted text is the one commonly accepted as original, and that the original text is actually one with possible heretical implications.

Such is the case in his discussion of the baptism of Jesus as recorded in Luke 3:22. The issue concerns the language of the divine speech. According to Luke, did the Father declare, "You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased," or, in a citation of Ps. 2:7, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Ehrman not only argues that the text with possible adoptionistic implications is original, but also interprets the text in an adoptionistic—or, to transform one of his terms, a proto–adoptionistic manner—claiming that Jesus became the Son of God at his baptism. After presenting the evidence for his preferred text, Ehrman writes:

> Together, these texts presuppose that at the baptism God actually did something to Jesus. This something is sometimes described as an act of anointing, sometimes as an election. In either case, the action of God is taken to signify his 'making' Jesus the Christ. These texts, therefore, show that Luke did not conceive of the baptism as the point at which Jesus was simply 'declared' or 'identified' or 'affirmed' to be the Son of God. *The baptism was the point at which Jesus was anointed as the Christ, chosen to be the Son of God.*[15]

Ehrman's conclusion regarding Luke 3:22 points to the interpretive lens that he will apply to his discussion of other texts which he identifies as corrupt.

Ehrman's preferred text has, however, an inferior date in the Greek manuscript tradition. While it is true that manuscript evidence must be weighed rather than counted, Ehrman's preferred reading appears in only one Greek manuscript, whereas the other reading has support in a number of Greek manuscripts and appears in every text type. In fact, Ehrman himself notes that his preferred reading virtually disap-

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14. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 29–31. Cf. Ehrman, "The Text as Window: Manuscripts and the Social History of Early Christianity," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 361–79. In a previous essay, which contained the argument of *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* in an incipient form, Ehrman likened scribal habits to the recreation of texts which takes place in reader–response criticism. Ehrman, "The Text of Mark in the Hands of the Orthodox," in *Biblical Hermeneutics in Historical Perspective*, ed. Mark S. Burrows and Paul Rorem (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 22.

15. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 67, emphasis added.

pears from sight. Whereas he uses this as evidence for an orthodox corruption, it seems highly unlikely that an original reading would be almost completely wiped out from the Greek manuscript tradition. In order for this to happen, it would have required not just one scribe to have made a change for theological reasons, but an entire series of scribes to have uniformly and intentionally eradicated evidence of the original reading. This represents much more of a conspiracy than either Ehrman himself argues for or logic warrants.

A full discussion of the Luke text must wait for another day, but Ehrman's conclusions regarding Luke 3:22 set the tone for his discussion of Mark 1:1.[16] Although the implications are not as obvious as those in his discussion of Luke 3:22, Ehrman gives cause for concern through his assumptions regarding the adoption of Jesus.

MARK 1:1

In the fourth edition of the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament*, Mark 1:1 reads: Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ] – "(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, [Son of God]." The editors placed υἱοῦ θεοῦ (Son of God) in brackets because of the significant difficulty in ascertaining whether or not it was original.[17] In addition to this reading, which I will identify as "the text," the editors include four variant readings. As evidenced from the chart below, two readings include υἱοῦ θεοῦ, the reading listed in the text and variant 1, which adds the article before θεοῦ. Variant 2 replaces θεοῦ with κυρίου. Variant 3, Ehrman's preferred reading, omits υἱοῦ θεοῦ so that the verse ends at Χριστοῦ. Variant 4 combines the omission of υἱοῦ θεοῦ in 28* and some readings from Irenaeus with the further omission of Ἰησοῦ in a reading from Epiphanius. In the discussion which follows, variant 2 can be safely dismissed because of its exceedingly minimal and late attestation. Since the question at hand is really whether the original text of

16. In *Misquoting Jesus*, Ehrman appears to back away from his former interpretation, stating that "Luke probably did not intend to be interpreted adoptionistically." Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*, 160.

17. Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger, *The Greek New Testament*, 4th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1994), 6–36 (identified as UBS4). The UBS4 committee includes letter evaluations of readings to express the degree of certainty regarding the originality of a text. This text has a "C" rating, indicating that the "Committee had difficulty in deciding which variant to place in the text." Aland et al., *Greek New Testament*, 3.

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ]

"(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, [Son of God]"

MARK 1:1

Text and Variant Readings	Alexandrian Witnesses	Caesarean Witnesses	Western Witnesses	Byzantine Witnesses	Unclassified Witnesses
Text Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ "(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God"	B (4^{th}) L (8^{th})		D (5^{th}) W (4^{th}-5^{th})		ℵ^{1} 2427 (14^{th})
1 Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ "(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of (the) God"	Δ (9^{th}) 33 (9^{th}-10^{th}) 579 (13^{th}) 892 (9^{th}-10^{th}) cop$^{sa\ mss}$ (3^{rd}) cop^{bo} (7^{th}-8^{th})	565 (9^{th}-10^{th}) 1424 (9^{th}-10^{th}) f^{1} (12^{th}-14^{th}) f^{13} (11^{th}-15^{th})	it^{a} (4th) it^{aur} (7^{th}) it^{b} (5th) it^{c} (12^{th}-13th) it^{d} (5th) it^{f} (6th) it^{ff2} (5th) it^{l} (7th) it^{q} (6th) it^{r1} (7th)	A (5^{th}) 1006 (11^{th}) 1010 (12^{th}) 1292 (13^{th}) 1505 (ca 1084) *Byz* [E F G H Σ] *Lect* eth (4^{th}-7^{th}) slav (9^{th}) syr^{p} (5^{th}-6^{th})	180 (12^{th}) 205 (15^{th}) 597 (13^{th}) 700 (11^{th}-12^{th}) 1071 (12^{th}) 1243 (11^{th}) 1342 (13/14^{th}) geo^{2} syr^{h} (7^{th}) vg (4^{th}) Irenaeus$^{lat\ 2/3}$ (2^{nd}) Ambrose (4^{th}) Chromatius (5^{th}) Jerome$^{3/6}$ (5^{th}) Augustine (5^{th}) Faustus-Milevis (4^{th})
2 Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ κυρίου "(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of the Lord"	1241 (12^{th}-13^{th})				
3 Χριστοῦ only Omit υἱοῦ θεοῦ "(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ"	ℵ* (4^{th}) cop$^{sa\ ms}$ (4^{th})	Θ (9^{th}) syr^{pal} (6^{th}) Arm (5^{th})			28^{c} geo^{1} Origen$^{gr\ lat}$ (3^{rd}) Asterius (4^{th}) Serapion (4^{th}) Cyril-Jer (4^{th}) Severian (5^{th}) Hesychius (5^{th}) Victorinus-Pettau (4^{th}) Jerome$^{3/6}$ (5^{th})
4 Omit Χριστοῦ (Omit "Christ") "(The) Beginning of the gospel of Jesus"		28* (11^{th})			Irenaeus$^{gr\ lat\ 1/3}$ (2^{nd}) Epiphanius (omit also Ἰησοῦ) (5^{th})

Mark 1:1 included υἱοῦ θεοῦ, the reading in the text and variant 1 may be grouped together while variants 3 and 4 may be grouped together.[18]

In evaluating Mark 1:1, I seek to determine the reading most likely to be original, thereby attempting to discern if the inclusion of "Son of God" represents an anti-adoptionistic corruption of scripture. While there are a variety of methodological approaches to textual criticism, I adopt an approach (known as "reasoned eclecticism") which attempts to balance both external and internal evidence.[19] External evidence includes the date, geographical distribution, and genealogical relationship of the readings. The evaluation of internal evidence includes the examination of transcriptional probabilities, intrinsic probabilities, the length of readings, the similarity of readings to parallel texts, the difficulty of readings, and the reading which best explains the origin of other readings.

As for the date of a reading, the earlier the reading is found, the more likely it is to be original. A reading with wide geographical distribution should be preferred over one without such diversity. Genealogical relationship refers to the broad families associated with particular manuscripts. Texts which demonstrate similar tendencies are grouped together in a family or text type. A reading found only in one text type should not be regarded as highly as a reading found in multiple text types. Furthermore, according to most approaches, readings of the Alexandrian type are the most highly preferred, whereas readings of the Byzantine type are the most highly questionable.

In evaluating transcriptional probabilities, one considers scribal habits and practices to determine what may have occurred in the transmission of the text. In evaluating intrinsic probabilities, one examines how a reading fits within the thought and argument of a passage or book. As for length, the shorter reading is preferred because scribes would more likely add to a text than take part of it away. A reading different from a parallel should be preferred because of the tendency among scribes to harmonize passages. The more difficult reading should be preferred because scribes would more likely change a difficult text than make a simple text difficult. Finally, a reading should be preferred if it best explains the origin of other readings. By applying each of these principles, I attempt to base the textual decision upon the composite picture which the totality of the evidence presents.

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18. The classification of manuscript evidence noted in the table derives from Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 36–92; Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, 2d ed., trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 96–138; and UBS4. The support for each reading is grouped according to textual family. In each column, the manuscript designation appears followed by the estimated date of the manuscript. To illustrate, the first reading has support from manuscript B, a fourth-century manuscript of the Alexandrian text type.

19. Porter, 1213.

I also examine the following claims which Ehrman makes regarding the omission of "Son of God" in a portion of the manuscript tradition:

1. "In terms of antiquity and character, this [the manuscripts which omit υἱοῦ θεοῦ] is not a confluence of witnesses to be trifled with."[20]
2. "Two of the three best Alexandrian witnesses of Mark support this text [which omits υἱοῦ θεοῦ]."[21]
3. "This slate of witnesses [i.e., manuscripts which omit υἱοῦ θεοῦ] is diverse both in terms of textual consanguinity and geography."[22]
4. The omission of υἱοῦ θεοῦ occurs in "such a wide spread of the tradition" that it cannot be accidental.[23]
5. "Since the omission [of υἱοῦ θεοῦ] occurs at the beginning of a book, it is unlikely to be accidental."[24]
6. "Mark does not state explicitly what he means by calling Jesus the 'Son of God,' nor does he indicate when this status was conferred upon him."[25]
7. "The shorter text appears in relatively early, unrelated, and widespread witnesses."[26]

Among these seven statements, we find Ehrman repeating himself in different ways several times. By doing so, his argument appears stronger than it really is. More importantly, it is not enough for a reading simply to be relatively diverse, widespread, or early. Instead, we seek to find the reading that is the most diverse, the most widespread, and the earliest. In addition, we must choose the reading that best answers the questions raised by examining the internal evidence. Finally, as we consider the claim that the text represents an anti–adoptionistic corruption, we must ask whether Ehrman has truly built a case that this is so or has instead simply raised the possibility.

External Evidence

Date

None of the readings has support from the early papyri. The readings show up in Greek manuscripts beginning in the fourth century, with the short reading (variant 3) enjoying the support of the first hand of ℵ (the first corrector of ℵ changed the reading to υἱοῦ θεοῦ, but it is not possible to know the time of the correction). Apart from ℵ, which is of

20. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 72.
21. Ibid., 72–73.
22. Ibid., 73.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.

course significant, the short reading occurs only in two other Greek manuscripts, the corrector of 28 and also Θ, which dates from the ninth century. The inclusion of υἱοῦ θεοῦ finds support in B, a fourth–century manuscript, W, a fourth– or fifth–century manuscript, as well as the Greek manuscripts A and D, both from the fifth century.

The versional evidence in large part supports the inclusion of υἱοῦ θεοῦ. The Coptic (Sahidic dialect, fourth century) exhibits a divided tradition, with one manuscript supporting the omission and the rest supporting the inclusion of υἱοῦ θεοῦ. The Palestinian Syriac (sixth century) and the Armenian (fifth century) versions also omit υἱοῦ θεοῦ, whereas the inclusion finds support in the Latin tradition, beginning in the fourth century, the Ethiopic tradition from the fourth to seventh centuries, and the Syriac Peshitta from the fifth to sixth centuries. The evidence from the Fathers is divided. As early as the second century, Irenaeus notes both readings. Both readings then find further support in the fourth and fifth centuries. Based upon the evidence, the date of the readings cannot by itself decide the issue.

Geographical Distribution

Variant 1 exhibits the most diverse geographical distribution with support from Egypt, Italy, Palestine, North Africa, as well as areas near modern Ethiopia, the Baltics, and Georgia. Variant 3 has the next best geographical distribution with attestation in Egypt, Italy, and Palestine. The text, variant 2, and variant 4 exhibit localized readings. Given the manner in which we are approaching the variants—namely, those which include "Son of God" compared to those which do not—the inclusion enjoys better geographical distribution.[27] So, while Ehrman is correct that his preferred reading is widespread, it is not the most widespread.

Genealogical Relationship

The inclusion of υἱοῦ θεοῦ finds support in all four text types, with a significant number of manuscripts of the Alexandrian tradition. Although Ehrman claims that the witnesses for the omission are diverse "both in terms of textual consanguinity and geography," the evidence simply does not line up with the claim.[28] The omission has support only in the Alexandrian and Caesarean traditions, along with several unclassified witnesses. And, while the text–critical principle that manuscripts should be weighed rather than counted holds true, the reading does appear in a very limited number of Greek manuscripts. Ehrman notes this limited number, but suggests that the manuscripts without the reading are noteworthy and include two of the three best Alexandrian witnesses for Mark.[29] This suggestion is puzzling, since the only Alexandrian Greek manuscript which includes the reading is ℵ.[30] If he intends to identify the Coptic Sahidic, then this suggestion carries little weight since one manuscript supports the omission whereas the remainder of

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27. Alexander Globe, "The Caesarean Omission of the Phrase 'Son of God' in Mark 1:1," *Harvard Theological Review* 75 (April 1982): 215–16.
28. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 73.
29. Ibid., 72–74.

the tradition supports υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ. Given the evidence, the inclusion of υἱοῦ θεοῦ has better support.[31]

Internal Evidence

Transcriptional Probabilities

Three possibilities exist regarding the transcription of Mark 1:1. The most popular position suggests that the original text contained υἱοῦ θεοῦ and that a scribe accidentally omitted the title due to homoioteleuton (similar ending).[32] When this type of error occurs, a scribe's eye skips from one word to another because of the similar endings. An error of this sort is particularly probable in Mark 1:1 due to the long series of genitives and the almost certain use of nomina sacra, common abbreviations for divine names. Using nomina sacra, the phrase Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ would become ΙΥΧΥΥΥΘΥ. Each pair of letters would normally include a horizontal stroke above them to indicate the abbreviation. It is easy to see how, after recording ΙΥΧΥ, a scribe's eye could have accidentally skipped from the final upsilon in ΧΥ to the final upsilon in ΘΥ, continuing on with the next words after failing to record ΥΥΘΥ.[33]

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30. Ehrman identifies manuscript 1555 as support for his reading, but neither UBS4 nor NA27 include the manuscript in the apparatus. However, he himself identifies this as a Western witness, so it cannot solve the dilemma.

31. Globe, "The Caesarean Omission," 218. Likewise, Marcus affirms that the inclusion has support not only from a larger number of manuscripts but also from very good manuscripts. Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, The Anchor Bible, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 27 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 141. Head admits that the inclusion of the title has broader geographic distribution but points out that the reading is limited almost entirely to the Latin Fathers. He expresses concern that some approaches do not give proper weight to the absence of the reading in the Greek Fathers. Peter M. Head, "A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1: 'The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,'" *New Testament Studies* 37 (October 1991): 623-26. Cranfield points out in turn that the omission by a patristic writer is not significant if the writer was not addressing the particular point in question. He further notes that Irenaeus and Epiphanius even omit "Jesus Christ" here. C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, Cambridge Greek Testament, ed. C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 39.

32. James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 25-26; James A. Brooks, *Mark*, The New American Commentary, ed. David S. Dockery, vol. 23 (Nashville: Broadman, 1991), 39; David E. Garland, *Mark*, The NIV Application Commentary, ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 23; Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 38; C. H. Turner, "A Textual Commentary on Mark 1," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 28 (January 1927): 150; William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, New International Commentary on the New Testament, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 41.

33. Head suggests that the use of nomina sacra was intended to draw attention to the highlighted terms, not simply to serve as abbreviations. As such, he dismisses the likelihood of an error occurring by homoioteleuton. Head, "A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1," 628. However, in reviewing ancient manuscripts, one finds that the nomina sacra could be missed as easily as any other words, particularly in a series such as this.

The lines of text below include Mark 1:1 along with the beginning of verse 2. Manuscripts were written in continuous script. That is, there were no spaces between the words and normally no divisions between verses (although some manuscripts at times include various forms of punctuation). The first line below includes the text without any markings. The second line underlines the name and titles attributed to Jesus. The third line underlines the phrase that does not appear in some manuscripts, perhaps as a result of an accidental omission. The final line includes the reading that would have resulted from the omission.

1. ΑΡΧΗΤΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥΙΥΧΥΥΥΘΥΚΑΘΩΣΓΕΓΡΑΠΤΑΙ

2. ΑΡΧΗΤΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥ<u>ΙΥΧΥΥΥΘΥ</u>ΚΑΘΩΣΓΕΓΡΑΠΤΑΙ

3. ΑΡΧΗΤΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥΙΥΧΥ<u>ΥΥΘΥ</u>ΚΑΘΩΣΓΕΓΡΑΠΤΑΙ

4. ΑΡΧΗΤΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥΙΥΧΥΚΑΘΩΣΓΕΓΡΑΠΤΑΙ

By examining each line of text, one can see the ease with which a scribe may have accidentally skipped from the final upsilon in ΧΥ to the final upsilon in ΘΥ.

Noting recent studies which claim that scribes were more careful at the beginning of a book, Ehrman claims that an accidental error is unlikely so early in the gospel.[34] He writes, "It seems at least antecedently probable that a scribe would begin his work on Mark's gospel only after having made a clean break, say, with Matthew, and that he would plunge into his work with renewed strength and vigor."[35] He supports the position by adding that ℵ and Θ, two of the earliest to attest the omission (fourth and ninth centuries), are elaborately decorated at the end of Matthew, indicating that the scribes did not simply rush from Mathew into Mark.[36] Such evidence should not be pushed too far, however, since the practices of the fourth or ninth centuries do not suggest what the practices were in prior centuries. Nonetheless, the evidence regarding accuracy at the beginning of a book does carry weight and should not be dismissed. Still, one must recognize that "renewed strength and vigor" does not eliminate the possibility of a mistake in a series of words particularly well suited to lead to scribal error.[37]

Ehrman also claims that, since the manuscripts which omit the title are early, unrelated, and widespread, one accidental error could not have led to the omission. Instead, it must have been the same error repeated in a wide range of traditions. "Several of the witnesses belong

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34. Cf. Head, "A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1," 629.

35. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 73.

36. Ibid., 73-74.

37. Globe suggests that a similar error occurred in codex 28 with the omission of Χριστοῦ after Ἰησοῦ, an error later corrected in the manuscript. Globe, 216-17.

to different textual families," he writes, "so that the textual variants they have in common cannot be attributed simply to a corrupt exemplar that they all used. The precise agreement of otherwise unrelated MSS therefore indicates the antiquity of a variant reading."[38] Moreover, he suggests, the fact that the later Byzantine manuscripts did not make the same error even though the Byzantine tradition was not noted for being particularly careful makes the argument more unlikely.[39] Of course, this is the type of mistake that could have been made repeatedly, but Ehrman overstates the evidence to suggest that the omission survives in early manuscripts. None of the few Greek manuscripts which support the reading can be identified as early (i.e., second or third century). While the Fathers do provide an early testimony, their readings did not influence the Greek manuscript tradition until the fourth century. So, even if the reading did have limited early circulation, more than sufficient time passed for it to have made its way to diverse areas. Even further, the assertion that the manuscripts with the omission are unrelated requires attention. Indeed, the reading has support from only two Alexandrian and three Caesarean witnesses.

The second possibility suggests that the original text did not contain υἱοῦ θεου, the verse having been altered to include the honorific title. Similarly, Ehrman's proposal—the third possibility—suggests that the addition occured for theological reasons. He claims that the addition may have served to forestall an adoptionistic interpretation of the passage, a position fleshed out below.

Shorter Reading

Variant 4 clearly comprises the shortest reading. Given its extremely poor external attestation, however, this reading clearly cannot be original. Ehrman's preference, which omits "Son of God," is the next shortest reading and has sufficient external support to be considered possible. This gives the reading some credibility because scribes would indeed be more likely to add to a reading than shorten it.[40] Ehrman proposes that the text without υἱοῦ θεοῦ was original and that a scribe concerned that the Gospel did not mention the virgin birth or pre-existence of Christ added the title so that it would not appear that Jesus was adopted as the Son of God at his baptism.

Yet there is nothing in Mark 1:11 to suggest an adoptionist position. In his discussion of Luke 3:22, Ehrman goes to great length to support "Today I have begotten you" over "In you I am well-pleased" in order to argue for an adoptionist interpretation. Now, according to Ehrman, even the latter treatment of this passage implies that this reading supports adoption. However, even if Ehrman's preferred reading in Luke

38. Ehrman, "The Text of Mark in the Hands of the Orthodox," 27 n. 17.

39. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 73.

40. I agree with Ehrman that, if the changes in the manuscript tradition *were* intentional, the omission would then stand a much greater chance of being original. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 74. Cranfield agrees that scribes were more likely to add the phrase, yet he still finds good reasons for its originality. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 39.

3:22 were original, given the evidence of Luke–Acts and the remainder of the New Testament, the verse could in no way be interpreted in an adoptionist manner. More specifically, the baptism in Mark to an even greater extent prohibits an adoptionist understanding.

Intrinsic Probabilities

The exact same evidence has been used to take the discussion of intrinsic probabilities in two directions. As seen below, commentators agree that the title "Son of God" plays a significant role in Mark but interpret the evidence in different ways. On one hand, some argue that the importance of the title provides sufficient reason for a scribe to add "Son of God" to a text that otherwise did not include it.[41] On the other hand, some expect the introduction to the Gospel to include the title precisely because it is so significant.

Ehrman of course argues that since the title fits within Mark's Christology so well, it is a likely addition.[42] Cole and Marcus both find it easier to see the title as having been added later than as having been omitted by so many of the Fathers.[43] Head argues against the necessity of expecting the phrase in 1:1 simply because it is important to the Gospel. Indeed, he argues, the title is also important to Matthew but does not appear in its opening verse.[44] However, while the title may be important to Matthew, it does not enjoy the same prominence in Matthew that it does in Mark. In fact, the presence of "Jesus Christ the Son of David, Son of Abraham" in Matt. 1:1 provides an appropriate beginning to a Gospel which reveals that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. Similarly, John 1:1 indicates not only the intimate presence of Jesus with the Father but also the deity of the Son, both tremendously important themes for John. More significant is Head's recognition that similar additions appear several other times in the Gospels, including Mark 8:29 and 14:61.[45] Notably, Mark 8:29 contains Peter's confession of Jesus in a shorter form than the other Gospels.[46] Slomp argues that, since Mark is "Peter's Gospel" and Peter's confession in 8:29 does not include "Son of God," the title should not appear in Mark's first verse.[47] How-

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41. Croy takes a different tack, proposing that the beginning of the Gospel was defective and that it circulated early without any form of Mark 1:1. Subsequently, scribes added a note to indicate where the Gospel begins. N. Clayton Croy, "Where the Gospel Text Begins: A Non-Theological Interpretation of Mark 1:1," *Novum Testamentum* 43 (April 2001): 119.
42. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 74.
43. R. A. Cole, *The Gospel According to St. Mark: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 56; Marcus, 141.
44. Head, "A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1," 627.
45. Ibid.
46. None of the Gospels provide readings parallel to the Marcan introduction. One comes closest to finding parallels through the use of the title in Mark (cf. 3:11, 5:7, and 15:39). The addition to Mark 8:29, a harmonization with Peter's confession in the other Gospels, points to the scribal tendency to harmonize and conflate, evidence one may use to argue against the inclusion of "Son of God" in Mark 1:1.
47. Jan Slomp, "Are the Words 'Son of God' in Mark 1.1 Original?" *The Bible Translator* 28 (January 1977): 147.

ever, the Gospel reaches its zenith not with Peter's confession but rather with that of the centurion.

Taking the opposite position, Brooks affirms that "Son of God" is perhaps the most important title in Mark, one which appears at crucial points in the story.[48] As such, one should expect it to appear in Mark 1:1. Likewise, Lane points out that the title provides the general plan for the work, and Cranfield argues for its inclusion since the title plays such an important role in the Gospel.[49] Edwards agrees, noting the importance in terms of the overall purpose as well as Marcan Christology. For Edwards, the title serves as a brief confession of faith which unfolds throughout the Gospel.[50] Mann argues for its originality not only because of the term itself but also because of other uses of "Son" in Mark (1:11; 9:7; 14:61).[51] Globe bases its originality upon Marcan style and claims that the introduction also exhibits parallels to other superscriptions, following an Old Testament pattern in order to demonstrate that the Gospel is on par with the Old Testament. Despite its sparse use, the title is indeed pivotal.[52] Both Stonehouse and Perrin add that, if the title were not original, it should have been: "If these words are a gloss, they represent the action of a scribe who enjoyed a measure of real insight into the distinctiveness of Mark's portrayal of Christ."[53]

More Difficult Reading

None of the variants contains a reading which could be appropriately labeled difficult, unless one agrees that the presence of "Son of God" in the first verse of the Gospel would violate the messianic secret. Slomp, for example, proposes that following Jesus' reserve, Mark reveals Jesus' Sonship gradually and wants the reader to come to realize that Jesus is the Son of God in a manner similar to the centurion.[54] But while there is an element of secrecy in Mark, it is a secret not for the reader but for those whom Jesus encountered during his ministry. The reader is aware of the secret and knows who Jesus is from the beginning.[55] Even if the text did not originally contain the title, the Gospel *affirms* Jesus as Son just ten verses later. In addition, Mark identifies John's ministry as pre-

48. Brooks, *Mark*, 39.

49. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 41; Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 39.

50. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 25-26.

51. C. S. Mann, *Mark*, The Anchor Bible, ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, vol. 27 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1986), 194.

52. Globe, "The Caesarean Omission," 217-18. Globe points to similar beginnings in Prov. 1:1, Eccles. 1:1, Song of Sol. 1:1, Isa. 1:1, Hos. 1:1-2, Amos 1:1, Joel 1:1, Nah. 1:1, Zeph. 1:1, and Mal. 1:1.

53. N. B. Stonehouse, *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ* (London: Tyndale, 1944), 12; Norman Perrin, *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 115.

54. Slomp, "Are the Words 'Son of God' in Mark 1.1 Original?" 148. Cf. Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: S.C.M., 1963), 278, 94.

55. Brooks, *Mark* 39.

paring the way for the Lord (Mark 1:4). Accordingly, the title does nothing to reveal a secret which would otherwise be kept.

As Slomp suggests, Mark does indeed develop what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God, but the development does not require the reader to realize that Jesus is Son of God only at the end of the Gospel. Instead, the reader recognizes Jesus as the Son of God from the beginning and comes to realize more fully what this entails as the Gospel progresses. In contrast, Ehrman declares, "Mark does not state explicitly what he means by calling Jesus the 'Son of God,' nor does he indicate when this status was conferred upon him."[56] To the contrary, the entire Gospel was written to communicate what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God. The climactic confession of the centurion does not indicate for the first time that Jesus is the Son but brings to mind all that has implicitly and explicitly affirmed Jesus as Son of God.[57] Furthermore, that the Gospel gives no indication of the time of conferral indicates that *there was in fact no conferral.*

CONCLUSION

Reviewing his statements, we have found not only that Ehrman frequently repeats himself but also that he overestimates or exaggerates the evidence. Ehrman claims the following:

1. "In terms of antiquity and character, this [omission of υἱοῦ θεοῦ] is not a confluence of witnesses to be trifled with."[58]
2. "Two of the three best Alexandrian witnesses of Mark support this text [which omits υἱοῦ θεοῦ]."[59]
3. "This slate of witnesses [i.e., the manuscripts which omit υἱοῦ θεοῦ] is diverse both in terms of textual consanguinity and geography."[60]
4. The omission of υἱοῦ θεοῦ occurs in "such a wide spread of the tradition" that it cannot be accidental.[61]

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56. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 74. This comment explains why his description of the Son of God in his New Testament introduction lacks substance. He uses appropriate categories but does not flesh them out sufficiently and fails to answer the question, "What does it mean for Mark to say that Jesus is the Son of God?" Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 60-75.
57. Ehrman goes so far as to say that it is not clear whether the centurion means that Jesus is the Son of the only true God or that Jesus is a divine man, one of the sons of the gods. Given what transpires in the Gospel, it is impossible that a writer would give climactic place to a statement which meant only that Jesus is one of the sons of the gods. What else in Mark would suggest that there is more than one God? Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 110 n. 140.
58. Ibid., 72.
59. Ibid., 72-73.
60. Ibid., 73.
61. Ibid.

5. "Since the omission [of υἱοῦ θεοῦ] occurs at the beginning of a book, it is unlikely to be accidental."[62]

6. "Mark does not state explicitly what he means by calling Jesus the 'Son of God,' nor does he indicate when this status was conferred upon him."[63]

7. "The shorter text appears in relatively early, unrelated, and widespread witnesses."[64]

With reference to (1), the character of Ehrman's preferred reading is not as certain as he suggests. Instead, the inclusion of "Son of God" enjoys superior support. As for the date of the readings, the evidence is divided. We have found (2) simply to be untrue because the only Alexandrian Greek manuscript to support the reading is ℵ. (3) is partially true inasmuch as the reading is diverse geographically. However, the inclusion of "Son of God" is more diverse geographically. As for textual consanguinity, Ehrman's reading is actually quite limited.

I disagree with (4) because the reading is not so widespread that one error could not have influenced all of the relevant manuscripts. However, even if those manuscripts were completely unrelated, the error would be precisely the kind which could have been repeated. I agree with (5) that errors are less likely to occur at the beginning of a book. Nevertheless, this does not mean that an error could not have occurred. As for (6), I suggest that the Gospel as a whole does exceptionally well at indicating what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God. Additionally, that the Gospel gives no indication of the time of conferral indicates that *there was in fact no conferral.* That he expects otherwise speaks volumes about Ehrman's presuppositions. Finally, (7) conflates several other points which have already been addressed. Again, it is not simply a matter of finding a reading that is diverse or relatively early but of finding one that is the *most* diverse and the *earliest.*

All in all, I give preference to the readings which include "Son of God." Yet one cannot claim that the evidence overwhelmingly supports the originality of the title. However, even if the title were not original, a scribe could certainly have added it to emphasize the themes of the Gospel, not as a means to oppose adoptionism. Whereas Ehrman has argued that Adoptionists often used Mark's Gospel, nothing in Mark's baptismal account suggests that Jesus became the Son of God. Instead, the account *affirms* Jesus as God's Son. Ehrman has identified one possible solution to this textual problem but has not proven his case. In fact, it may be impossible to prove. Dealing then with probability, I find other solutions more likely. In sum, even if his preferred text were original, Ehrman's thesis is both improvable and improbable, although not impossible.

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62. Ibid., 73.
63. Ibid., 74.
64. Ibid.

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FAITH AND CONDUCT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT[1]

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In this paper I will not discuss the *Tun–Ergehen–Zusammenhang* on which much has been written.[2] Instead I will try to show that the individual's behavior corresponds to his belief in Yahweh. The same topic is also discussed in the New Testament in the Epistle of James. Therefore this essay also wants to be read as background information for this New Testament letter.

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1. This paper is based on a lecture in Old Testament Theology I delivered in the summer of 2003. I will not investigate the different Hebrew words for faith or belief in the Old Testament, since that would take us well beyond the bounds of the present essay. In addition, the different dictionaries give different meanings for the principal Hebrew word אמן and also for the usage of the *hiphil*. See E. Pfeiffer, "Glaube im AT," *ZAW* 71 (1959): 151ff.; J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), 161–205; Jepsen, *TDOT* I:298–309; H. Wildberger, "Glauben im Alten Testament," *ZTK* 65 (1968): 129–59 and "fest, sicher," *ThWAT* I:178–210; G. Wallis, "Alttestamentliche Voraussetzungen einer biblischen Theologie geprüft am Glaubensbegriff," *TLZ* 113 (1988): 1–13; Jepsen, *ThWAT* I:332, states: "Es dürfte kaum möglich sein, die ganze Fülle at.licher Gotteserfahrung aus einer Exegese des האמין zu entwickeln." ("It is hardly possible to develop the fullness of experience of God in the Old Teastment merely through an exegesis of האמין.")
2. Of fundamental importance is K. Koch, "Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament." *ZThK* 52 (1955): 1–42. For an overview see K. Koch, ed., *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung in Religion und Recht des A.T.* (Darmstadt, 1972), and H. D. Preuß, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1, trans. Leo G. Perdue (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 184–94. See also B. Janowski,"Die Tat kehrt zum Täter zurück: Offene Fragen im Umkreis des 'Tun–Ergehen–Zusammenhangs.'" *ZThK* 91 (1994): 247–71.

Introduction

Over the years I have learned that Christians do not always correlate faith and behavior as the Bible does. Therefore I have undertaken this study in order to show that the entire Old Testament teaches that behavior cannot be separated from faith and faith cannot be separated from behavior.

Christians often seem to think that, during Old Testament times, individuals could have a relationship with Yahweh only through the cult. On the other hand, many others think that God designed the sacrifice during Old Testament times as a minor observance to be kept, since God wanted not sacrifice but obedience. Therefore, if a person wanted to live a righteous life, he could do so only outside of the sacrificial system. However, in the Old Testament, obedience and a personal relationship with Yahweh cannot be separated from the cult. Indeed, the cult is vital for the faith of ancient Israel, vital for Yahweh, and vital for the message of the prophets who demanded it. This is the case because Yahweh revealed himself through the demands of the sacrifice.

Revelation of Yahweh and Conduct

In order for humanity to believe in Yahweh, he had to reveal himself to the human race in a way that would be understood. Revelation was necessary because God existed prior to everything and independently of everything and everyone. Therefore, on the Bible's first pages, Yahweh revealed himself as a God with an ethical will. The God of the Old Testament is a God of morality and morals.[3] For this reason, he gave Israel commandments and prohibitions (Gen. 2:16–17). A mere formal fulfillment of his cultic instructions was not enough. Such externalized obedience was not in accordance with the revelation of his character, although many Israelites believed it was (Isa. 1:10–17; Jer. 7; Amos 4:4–5; 5:21–24; Mic. 6:6–8). In order to be blessed by Him, unconditional confidence and wholehearted obedience was necessary, even with regard to the cultic instructions and regulations. God showed that he was the ruler over his people. He wanted to be the free choice of the people. Their choice of him was demonstrated by their dedication to him and recognition of all he revealed to them. He made demands not only with regard to himself, but also with regard to the neighbors of the individual Israelite and to the nation of Israel. Therefore, faith in Yahweh was from the beginning a practical faith corresponding to Yahweh's rules of life and resulting in religious and ethical decisions that would reflect his character.

The Decalogue in its entirety portrays rules of conduct with regard to God and fellow countrymen. As early as the introduction to the Sinai event and again in the introduction to the Decalogue, Yahweh makes it very clear that faith and behavior are closely connected and interrelated (Exod. 19:5; 20:2–3). Faith in God without godly behavior in daily life is for the Old Testament an empty delusion. Faith consists

3. G. Fohrer, *Theologische Grundstrukturen des Alten Testaments* (Berlin, 1972), 164.

in neither a mere recognition or affirmation of religious teaching nor feelings of sympathy or concern for religious and moral values. Faith is rather unconditional trust in God that involves awe, dedication and love (Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2; Josh. 22:5; 2 Kings 23:3,25) as well as submission to his will and the continuous practical exercise of what all those terms include. A life under God's rule and in fellowship with him aims at the realization of qualities in human beings and in their environment as an essential part of their faith. In the Old Testament, correct behavior is not a second step long after one has trusted Yahweh. Action and behavior according to God's rules cannot be separated from faith in Yahweh. Faith and behavior are not parallel concepts that never cross each other's path; rather, they constantly intersect. Therefore, they should never be studied in isolation. Faith is behavior, and right behavior is only possible for the believer.[4]

Faith and Conduct in the Presence of a Living God

That Yahweh, the God of Israel, is a living God can be seen in the fact that he continuously reveals his will to his people at all times and in all circumstances. Even in his rest, God remains active (Ps. 121:4). He is not a God who dies at a certain season and comes alive again at another season. He is not subject to the highs and lows of life cycles; otherwise the prophets would not have spoken out vehemently against this kind of ideology. His power, might and authority never diminish (Gen. 21:33; Exod. 15:18; Deut. 33:27; Isa. 40:28; Jer. 10:10; Pss. 29:10; 90:2; 102:13,27–28); they are always fresh, new and active, even when they are not recognized by humanity as such. Since God is ever–living, his power, might, and authority are not subject to change. Whatever one's shortcomings, to live with such a God in harmonious fellowship requires one to be devoted totally to him. What counts is the alignment of one's entire life to his will.

In order to attain Yahweh's blessing, unconditional trust and total obedience to his revealed will is necessary. Since Yahweh revealed himself in the cultic laws and since those laws were part of his covenant with the people, to obey them was a mark of an obedient and trusting Israelite. In all areas of the people's life, God commanded conformity to his rules. He desired humans to lead lives that acknowledge him as the only true God, lives dedicated wholly to him. God commanded this acknowledgement and dedication not only with regard to himself but also with regard to all Israelites, to both the community as a whole and its individual members. Therefore, in the Old Testament, faith means not only dedication to Yahweh but also dedication to his people and his world; and it cannot be separated from correct thinking and correct behavior. The entire Decalogue portrays this kind of trust and dedication, even in the way it is arranged. Already in the prelude to the Sinai–event and again in the prelude to the Decalogue, God makes clear that belief and behavior are interrelated and interlocked. Faith in Yahweh is empty mania if it does not lead to behavior and action

4. Ibid., 165.

in daily life in accordance with the revealed divine will. True faith is not merely acceptance of and agreement with religious doctrine and its teaching. It is not a certain kind of religious feeling or experience; nor is it a regular performance of cultic acts. Rather, faith is trusting Yahweh, his person, his character. This trust is characterized by reverence, dedication and love (Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2; Jos. 22:5; 2 Kings 23:3,25) as well as submission to his revealed will in the constant practical exercise of that which trust and acknowledgement involve. People are expected to live their daily lives according to his rule and in fellowship with him. In the Old Testament, right behavior is not a second step long after the first step of belief has been taken. Action according to God's rule of life and behavior cannot be separated from faith and trust. Belief acts; and the right kind of action is possible only for the believer.[5] So to act, according to the Old Testament, is "to walk with God" (Gen. 5:22,24; 6:9; 48:15; Micah 6:8) or "to walk in his presence" (Gen. 17:1; 24:40; 1 Kings 8:25; 2 Kings 20:3; Ps. 116:9).

Yahweh's revelation cannot be separated from his personality. The revelation of his will reveals him himself. Hence, the Torah is never a lifeless construct with an immanent authority. It cannot be properly understood as a mere piece of literature. It cannot be properly understood apart from the divine lawgiver. The approach often advocated by Old Testament scholars of isolating the different laws from God as its original source and then discovering insurmountable contradictions is mistaken, because it fails to recognize that Yahweh in his sovereign freedom revealed his will as he saw fit.[6]

Faith and Conduct in Primeval History

The unity of faith and behavior is nowhere so obvious as in the primeval history and the patriarchal narratives.

The primeval history shows clearly that human beings paid no attention to their God–given identity because they emancipated themselves from God. They did not believe God and behaved accordingly (Gen. 2:16–17; 3:1–5). So they could not live the lives that God had ordained for them. They wanted to plan and shape their own future and control their own lives (Gen.4:1ff). They thought they were independent, not knowing that they were driven by their moods and feelings (Gen. 4:5,23–24). The human race wanted to be autonomous and took its fate into its own hands (Gen. 6:1–8). No longer was God and his revealed will the yardstick of life, but the will of the individual (Gen. 6:5; 8:21). They released themselves from the relationship with God. But only through belief and trust in God could they decide not to pursue their own vision of the future life but to follow the divine plan. In reality, only God can assure a secure future and thereby fulfill any future plan. Human beings, with their limited power and might, are not capable of doing that, although they often think otherwise. If humans believe

5. Ibid.

6. B. S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 677.

God, they receive a life in compliance with God's nature and become a blessing to the entire world; if they do not believe God, they alienate themselves from their creator, from a secure future, and from their real selves.

The lives of two personalities in the primeval history and in the patriarchal narratives illustrate this. Noah believed God when he started in a seemingly absurd manner but on divine orders to build a gigantic, ship–box deep in a landlocked region. Abraham believed, obediently leaving his home, family, relationships, and business connections and setting out to an unknown country. His trust in the impeccable leadership of God Almighty was tried by God himself when he commanded the patriarch to sacrifice his only son and the heir God had given him. Both Noah and Abraham became a blessing for mankind: Noah in that Yahweh makes a covenant with him and all of nature promising never again to destroy the surface of the earth through a massive flood; Abraham in that he had faith in God Almighty and therefore became a model of faith for the people of God in the Old and New Testaments. The presence of God was for both individuals a deep reality that determined their belief and actions.

Faith and Conduct in the Patriarchal Narratives

Since Abraham is seen in Scripture as the father of faith,[7] it seems appropriate to give special attention to his life. His kind of faith stands in sharp contrast to that of primeval people and humanity in general. Primeval humans were presumptuous, haughty, and overbearing (e.g., Lamech, Gen. 4:23ff). They shaped their lives after their own principles. They wanted to take their fate into their own hands. Abraham stands in contrast to them. He did not decree his own future because he trusted God, who called him, and put his future into Yahweh's hand. He recognized that he could not secure his future, that only God Almighty could do so. Abraham believed Yahweh and acted accordingly; he opted not for a life of his own planning but for one divinely planned. If one compares him with primeval humanity, one finds not just two epochs, but two kinds of behavior. In Genesis 1–11, humanity is almost exclusively portrayed as being separated from Yahweh. Because they no longer have any connection to God, humans have alienated themselves from their original state, estranging themselves from the image of God. Only by believing Yahweh, which entails behaving accordingly, do they recover their God given image.

Faith in Yahweh and everything for which he stands must always be tested; frequently, Yahweh's plan and efficacy receives no place in the thinking and affairs of humanity. Abraham was no exception. He was not always an unwavering believer, but he had a permanent relationship with Yahweh. His faith was neither a timeless religious quality nor a religious habit. His belief was not the bare affirmation that God exists; it was rather a life lived before and in the presence of God (Gen. 17:1; 24:40). Faith means living with human doubts and contradictions,

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7. Rom. 4:11–12.

even with a sense of resignation, because the momentary reality does not always seem to agree with Yahweh's character and promises.

Genesis 15 makes it evident that faith is the only appropriate behavior, the only right manner of existence corresponding to the divine request. God's promise (Gen. 15:2ff) was at first questioned rather than believed. Nevertheless, Abraham ventured out on God's promise (15:5–6) not because he believed a mere promise in and of itself, but rather because he believed and trusted Yahweh.[8] That involves more than believing a word or sentence that Yahweh has uttered. For Abraham, this promise was not to be separated from the person of Yahweh. His belief was an act of trust, not a generally devout feeling. Faith in Yahweh is dependence on him, on the God who confronts humans with his word despite all their doubts.

The impressive reference to uncountable stars in the sky was no support to belief; rather, it intensified the challenge of trust. Faith must be content with what God says. Abraham received no sign of the veracity of the promise. The theophany in 15:8ff. can be viewed as a sort of confirmation of the promise Abraham received *after* he had believed God.[9] Faith must be content with what God says. Faith need not prove itself by bringing about the impossible. The believer is not expected to perform miracles, but rather to take Yahweh seriously and fear him for whom nothing is impossible, the only one who can secure the future of the human race (Gen. 17:1ff.).

He is expected to get involved with this God, devote his life and all situations—including the most personal ones—to him. The story of Isaac's sacrifice (Gen. 22) makes this point emphatically. It is not primarily the sacrifice of Isaac that is in focus here, but the sacrifice of a future already assured by Yahweh. God expects Abraham to return to him everything he had already given the patriarch in order that Abraham may receive it anew. Abraham had to learn that even the continued existence of an already realized promise depends on Yahweh. Abraham had set out to trust God and follow his orders. In Genesis 12:1–3, these orders are coupled with promises. In Genesis 22, they are not. If therefore God's commandment were obeyed, there would no longer be for Abraham an assured future. Hence, Yahweh's dependability was at stake. This event is not primarily about a promise Yahweh had given, but about Yahweh's credibility, dependability, and faithfulness—or, more simply, about his character. When the New Testament reflects on this event, claiming that God makes the dead to live again (Rom. 4:17; Heb. 11:19), the authors of the New Testament speak not of something desirable but unrealizable; rather, they speak of a genuine ability of God. Abraham thus trusted God's ability. He

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8. It is to be observed, that the Hebrew text reads, "to believe someone," instead of, "to believe a message" (and therefore accept it as true). Cf. R. W. L. Moberly, *NIDOTTE* I:427–33; H. Wildberger, *ThWAT*, I:188ff.

9. The same principle can be observed in Joshua 6. For, of course, Joshua and the people received a confirmation of their faith in Yahweh *only after* they performed the, humanly speaking, pointless actions of walking silently around the city and blowing the shofar.

believed Yahweh, not simply a promise. Therefore, the angel says after the indirect sacrifice (22:12): "Now I know that you fear God." The focus here is on acknowledging God as God. Significantly, the promise has not been revoked, though its realization has been called into question. That does not mean that the promise is being spiritualized; rather, it means that Yahweh, as guarantor of the promise's realization demands trust in himself.[10] Faith is not the inclination arising in a moment of crisis; it is a manner of life.

Abraham demonstrated through his willingness to sacrifice Isaac that faith and behavior should not be separated. Restriction of belief only to the inner life of man, according to which one might conform one's conduct to other principles and standards, is incompatible with faith in Yahweh. A faith that distinguishes between belief and behavior is either artificial or dead.[11]

The Abraham story shows that faith originates not in a conviction that God exists and a resulting deeper familiarity with his nature but in a personal encounter with the living God. One can only live in community with him if one devotes one's entire life to him.

Cult and Dedication

Not only the Decalogue belongs to the covenant from Sinai but also the many cultic rules. The Israelite cult was unthinkable without sacrifices. Even before the Sinai–event, the giving of sacrifices belonged to the most basic components of human life.[12] Sacrifice as the expression of a relationship with God already appears in the fourth chapter of Genesis as something quite obvious. It is also Noah's first action when he disembarks from the ark (Gen. 8:20). So it is not surprising that each Israelite had to offer sacrifices—even if only small ones—when he appeared before God (Exod. 23:15; 34:20; Deut. 16:16). The cult was the only possible answer of the people to the noble presence of Yahweh in their midst.

All sacrifices had to be perfect—i.e., only the best was accepted for sacrifice.[13] Animals without infirmities had been used for breeding from antiquity in order to secure a healthy livestock, so this may have been seen as a way of securing humanity's continued existence. But Yahweh demanded that the best animal be given to him, a true sacrifice for the people. Through this command, Yahweh makes clear that he secures the existence of his people. Faulty sacrifices were therefore an insult to Yahweh, an abomination to him, because they didn't correspond to his character (Mal. 1:8,13–14; Lev. 22:18–24; Deut. 15:21; 17:1).

It is fundamental for the Old Testament that obedience and sacrifice always belonged together.[14] Sacrifice without obedience was for Yahweh a scandal. He abhorred it. The sacrificial ritual's having a magical effect (*ex opere operato*) was rejected by God's spokesmen, the prophets,

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10. H. J. Hermission and E. Lohse, *Faith*, trans. Douglas Stott (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), 36.
11. Fohrer, *Grundstrukturen*, 165.
12. R. Rendtorff, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, vol. 2: *Thematische Entfaltung* (Neukirchen, 2001), 104.
13. Voluntary sacrifices were allowed to have minor infirmities (Lev. 22:23).

as was the pagan principle of *quid pro quo*.[15] The sacrificer could not see the personal effects of the cultic action: he had to believe without seeing. He had to believe that reconciliation and communion with Yahweh were achieved through the offering. By putting the victim on the altar, he also acknowledged the sacred character of Yahweh (Lev. 21:6). From the people, who sacrificed as a mere cultic duty, obedience and conduct conforming to the character of Yahweh were demanded (1 Sam. 15:22; Jer. 7:21; Hosea 6:6; Mic. 6:6–8). The sacrifice maintained its significance only through obedience and appropriate conduct (Ps. 51:18–19).

The connection between sacrifice and conduct are to be seen in the offering of a תָּמִים sacrifice. Whenever an Israelite brought such an offering, he demonstrated that he was acting in conformity with the will of God (Lev. 21:6). Similarly, he demonstrated subjection to God's will if he lived a life visibly in harmony with God's commands. Leviticus 19:2 and 20:26 introduce pericopes that expound the manifold aspects of a godly life.[16]

But Israel often deviated from such life, especially when they thought that a purely external performance of the cultic ritual or a rigid outward obedience to the law was sufficient to express the godly life that God demanded. These attitudes, as well as the human aspiration for protection before and from God, become visible in humanity's religious tragedy, which runs through both Testaments. The focus in both Testaments is on life before and in the presence of God. But humanity reduced it to a formal keeping of religious rituals. Thus, they lived visibly in accordance with the ordinances of Yahweh, but in reality they could, without guilty consciences, live as they wanted, according to their own rules and regulations. This kind of attitude showed that they did not really trust Yahweh and did not understand what Yahweh's goal was in his relationship with them. Sacrifice instead of obedience is as false an alternative as obedience instead of sacrifice. The prophets did not call the people back to the cult or to a renewed belief in Yahweh's promises, but to Yahweh himself (Jer. 3:12,14,22; 4:1; Ezek. 33:11; Hosea 12:6; Jo. 2:12).[17] Whoever believed Yahweh participated with the right attitude in the cult. He knew that Yahweh had demanded the sacrifices, and that they are therefore an outward expression of personal faith and obedience. Hence, even the cult of ancient Israel reveals the inseparable unity of faith in Yahweh and the corresponding behavior.[18]

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14. J. S. Feinberg, "Salvation in the Old Testament," in *Tradition and Testament: Essays in Honour of Charles Lee Feinberg*, ed. J. S. Feinberg and P. D. Feinberg (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 39–77.
15. R. Wakely, "אביר," *NIDOTTE*, ed. W. A.VanGemeren (Carlisle, 1996), I:235; W. J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: Its Expression in the Books of the Old Testament* (Leicester, 1989), 116.
16. See Rendtorff, *Theologie* II:119–21.
17. See also Feinberg, "Salvation," 56.
18. In this connection it should be pointed out that Christ's sacrificial death on the cross is the visible sign of his obedience to God (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:7–8; Rom. 5:19).

The cult prescribed by God makes it clear that belief and behavior of its participants should form a unity. Visiting sanctuaries and participating in cultic ritual do not show that one seeks God. Only a life demonstrating the inseparable unity of faith and conduct reveals that one wants to live in the presence of a holy God (Amos 5:21–24). Only in the context of such a God–fearing life does visiting the sanctuaries and participating in the cult make sense, since this believer will bring sacrifice with a right attitude and worship in a manner worthy of a holy God (Isa. 6; Ps. 51:21; Eccles. 4:17–5:6).

If faith and behavior form such a strong unity and are fundamental to the Israelite cult, it is to be expected that this unity could also be observed in other parts of the Old Testament. Not surprisingly, then, the inseparability of faith and conduct is also apparent in Old Testament law.

Faith and Conduct in Old Testament Law

The emphasis on the unity between faith and behavior is also manifested in the Decalogue, in the form of apodictically formulated sentences.[19] These apodictically formulated sentences in the Decalogue are not laws according to which one could pronounce sentences on certain offences. They are not devised as legal statute but recommend to the individual a certain conduct.[20] Therefore, one does not read of any legal sanctions for an offence already committed. Hence, strictly speaking, the apodictically formulated sentences could not be used in a court proceeding.[21] They were rather intended to influence the individual so that he shapes his life in accordance with the divine will. Therefore, the Decalogue does not contain law in today's sense of the word. Law in our sense of the word can be found in the book of the covenant (Exod. 21–24) formulated in the casuistic sentences.[22] A comparison of the Decalogue with the book of the covenant makes it apparent that the Decalogue was never viewed as law. The latter contains rules of behavior for the daily life of the ancient Israelite. It contains the basic stipulations for the covenant people of ancient Israel.[23]

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19. Liedke, *Gestalt und Bezeichnung alttestamentlicher Rechtssätze* (Neukirchen, 1971), 138, note 3; G. Fohrer, "Das sogenannte apodiktisch formulierte Recht und der Dekalog," *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Geschichte (1949–1966)* (Berlin, 1969), 148.
20. The apodictically and casuistically formulated sentences are part of the covenant stipulations. Therefore it is not surprising that obedience to the voice of God is the same as obedience to the covenant stipulations (Deut. 27:26; 28:15).
21. This is supported by the usage of such sentences in decrees and edicts. For examples, see Liedke, *Rechtssätze,* 120–25. An extensive compilation of "apodictic law" can be found in W. Schottroff, *Der israelitische Fluchspruch* (Neukirchen, 1969), 95–112 and M. Weinfeld, *ThWAT* I:801–804.
22. See Fohrer, *Grundstrukturen*, 166. Regarding the casuistic and apodictic formulated sentences, see G. Liedke, *Rechtssätze* (Neukirchen, 1971). A complete comparison of all the laws in the Pentateuch appears in G. Lasserre, *Synopse Des Lois Du Pentateuque* VT Suppl. 59 (Leiden, 1994).
23. Fohrer, *Grundstrukturen*, 166.

Furthermore, it should be observed that the legal material in the Pentateuch is frequently interspersed with narratives. These stories are illustrations to show how these commandments should function and how they should shape the life of the individual. Therefore, no distinction was made between cultic and ethical imperatives, but both imperatives were intended to mould the life of the community. Israel was expected to mirror God's holiness and show his character to others (Lev. 19:1ff). The specific laws that follow these verses are derived from this directive (Lev. 19:3ff). Finally, the frequent summaries that sum up the law with regard to the love of God (Deut. 6:5) and to one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18) serve the same function. They were intended to prevent the law from being followed only in its letter and not also in its spirit.[24] Yahweh, however, has revealed himself not only through the cult–ordinances and covenant stipulations but also again and again through miracles. Therefore, the question arises, in what way do the reported miracles contribute to the theme of faith and conduct?

Miracles and Faith[25]

In its history, Israel experienced miracles of God from the beginning. The ten plagues meant suffering for the Egyptians, but for Israel they meant deliverance by Yahweh. These and all other deeds of God were designed to lead Israel to an understanding of Yahweh. Divine revelation via miracles comes before the perception of Yahweh. It is unimportant whether one witnesses the miracle oneself or gains knowledge of it from others.

The miracles during the Exodus should have led the people to knowledge of Yahweh's character. (This explains the many statements about the knowledge of Yahweh within the miracles reports [Exod. 7:17; 8:6,19; 9:14,29; 11:7].) The passage through the sea of reeds, the annihilation of the Egyptian army, and the provision of his people with food and water suffice to show the diversity of his miracles. When Jethro, a Midianite priest, heard about the mighty deeds of Yahweh, he acknowledged that Yahweh is greater than all other gods (Exod. 18:11). Moreover, he also tolerates no deities besides himself in the life of his people (Exod. 20:2,5). He demands absolute allegiance, undivided obedience.

It thus becomes clear that Israel's existence as a people was itself a miracle of God (Deut. 7:7f). But something else also becomes clear: man can deny the fact and purpose of miracles (Num. 14:11). Such denial comes despite the fact that signs and miracles seen and experience by Israel were done in his favor and served as Yahweh's credentials as God (Exod. 34:10; Ezek. 20:1–31). Through the miracles Yahweh revealed his ability and willingness to lead his people out of bondage to Egypt, the world power of that day. Furthermore, he was able and willing to look after his people, to protect and keep them safe, and to fulfill his promises. Yahweh's historical acts demonstrated his unique-

24. Childs, *Biblical Theology,* 680–81.

25. See also F. E. Wilms, *Wunder im Alten Testament* (Regensburg, 1979).

ness (Deut. 4:39; 7:7–15; 11:2; 29:4f.). The recognition of Yahweh as God based on his miraculous deeds motivates the Israelites' obedience (Deut. 5:15; 15:15; 24:17,22). Non–observance or misapprehension of the intent of the miracles amounts to rejecting God.[26] Yahweh's actions, particularly at the beginning of ancient Israel's history, were past events, but they were nonetheless of the utmost importance for the present (Exod. 17:14; Deut. 5:31; Jer. 36:2–3; Ps. 22:5–6,20–22; 78:5ff; 106). What happened yesterday still has its effect today because the very existence of God's people arises from his past actions. Israel had become God's proprietary–people and was therefore devoted to him (Exod. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2). Not only the event of the Exodus and their wanderings in the wilderness, but also the acquisition of land and other events were to lead to an appropriate knowledge of Yahweh (Josh. 3:10; 4:24) and to bring about corresponding behavior by both the nation and the individual. Further, Israel was obliged to obey Yahweh in the future (Deut. 5:3; 9:4–6; 11:29,32). However, the recognition of Yahweh as the only true God could not be coerced by miraculous signs. One who wants neither to believe nor to trust God will refuse to recognize these signs as Yahweh's actions. Israel's history is marked by this indifference, which amounts to faithlessness and disobedience. For many in Israel, Yahweh was a mere stopgap, a fill–in (Jer. 2:27b). In everyday life, the people paid him no attention. He had no place in their plans and considerations (Jer. 18:15).

Whoever forgets God's deeds in the past cannot adequately serve him (Hosea 5:4)—hence, the oft–repeated invitation to remember and consider the nation's history with Yahweh (Exod. 13:3; Isa. 46:8–9; Mal. 3:22; Ps. 105:5; 1 Chron. 16:12,15). However, Israel's history was one of disobedience to God (e.g., Ezek. 20:8) because they had forgotten his deeds in the past on their behalf (Pss. 78:10–11,17–19,32,41–42,57; 106:7,13,21). Israel replaced her God, who had legitimized himself through signs and miracles and whose fidelity and reliability Israel had experienced throughout its history, with other gods (Deut. 32:15–18).

The signs and miracles of Yahweh in the Old Testament should have been sufficient for Israel to recognize her God's divinity and care for them. So also they should have concluded that, given Yahweh's mighty acts and deeds on their behalf, their faith and trust in him must show itself in corresponding belief and conduct. No group within ancient Israel tried harder to make that clear to the nation than the prophets.

Faith and Conduct in the Prophets

The inner and outer expressions of the unity of faith and conduct ground all prophetic preaching. In all their preaching, the prophets addressed the conflict or rupture between faith and behavior. Even the early prophets censured this fatal rupture (1 Kings 18:21; cf. Josh.

26. B. S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (London, 1985), 45, states: "The disclosure of who God is emerges from his activity. To know his deeds is to understand who he is. There is no hiatus between his acts and his being."

24:15; 1 Sam. 15:22). The prophet's main critique was aimed at those who claimed to believe but whose conduct indicated otherwise. This critique arose from the observation that human action and behavior are at variance with belief in Yahweh (Jer. 7:21–23; Ezek. 5:5ff; Mic. 6:6–8). Faith must affect all areas of life, even the political realm. This seems nowhere more obvious than in the Judean king Ahaz's preparations for the Syro–Ephraimitic war. When Isaiah confronts his king at the beginning of the war in order to stop him from making further preparations for it and looking to the Assyrians for help, he admonishes him: "If you do not believe you will not remain" (Isa. 7:9).[27] Thus, faith becomes a question of conduct. The Judean king should behave differently than other kings. Instead of preparing Jerusalem for an attack and siege by the enemy forces and trembling like a leaf in view of the superior strength of his foe, he should trust Yahweh. Instead of asking the Assyrians for help, and thus becoming their vassal and losing the freedom that Yahweh was ready to defend, he should undertake nothing.[28]

The prophetic word in Isaiah 7 addressed to King Ahaz at the time of the siege of Jerusalem by troops from Syria and Israel begins and ends with a warning (vv. 4,9).[29] The two warnings are related. Between them there is a verdict regarding the enemies besieging Jerusalem (vv. 5–9a). This verdict does not depend on the king's faith in Yahweh. However, the continuance of his kingdom *does* depend on his belief and action. So what should a believing king do? The answer seems absurd: He should be calm and not fear the superior power of the enemy, believing that only clouds of smoke will remain of his enemies. Belief requires fearlessness, though not reckless bravado.[30]

The continuance of the Davidic dynasty, and therefore the prolonging of the king's own house, rested in Yahweh's promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16).[31] If the king were to believe God's promise, he and his dynasty would remain. Since it is not God's character to leave his promises unfulfilled (Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29), the promise of 2 Samuel 7 is timeless. For, of course, Yahweh stands behind it. So the invitation to remain quiet and wait for the intervention of the Lord is well–founded. The king should let Yahweh act, for Yahweh's action will save the Davidic dynasty.

The passivity demanded of the king cannot be equated with sweet indolence. It is for him politically questionable and a most difficult demand to accept. Indeed, the king refuses to yield. But the prophet

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27. A similar expression is found in Isaiah 30:15.

28. Fohrer, *Grundstrukturen*, 169–70.

29. For the Hebrew syntax of Isaiah 7:3–9, see M. Sæbø, "Formgeschichtliche Erwägungen zu Jes. 7:3–9," *StTh* 14 (1960), 54–69; O. H. Steck, "Rettung und Verstokkung: Exegetische Bemerkungen zu Jesaja 7, 3–9," *EvTh* 33 (1973), 77–90; and A. J. Bjørndalen, "Zu Einordnung und Funktion von Jes 7,5f," *ZAW* 95 (1983), 260–63.

30. Hermission, *Faith*, 79.

31. See E. Würthwein, "Jesaja 7, 1–9," *Theologie als Glaubenswagnis*, Festschrift für K. Heim, ed. Evangelische Theologische Fakultät Tübingen (Hamburg, 1954), 47–63.

gives him a second chance. Ahaz should demand of Yahweh a sign that Jerusalem will not be taken and his dynasty will continue. However, the king rejects this second chance with devout and pious words (7:11–12). In the end, he decides against Yahweh. The choice between belief and unbelief was a public decision because it became visible to everyone via the king's politics. His choice to opt against Yahweh meant that the king was not prepared to base the continuance of the Davidic dynasty on Yahweh's promise rather than his own diplomatic and military skills.[32] No earthly king controls the history of this world. Ahaz was asked to act in accordance with this fact; instead, he opted for political and military means, seeking to mobilize human strength and wit.[33]

In a similar manner the prophets called again and again for harmony between faith and conduct. They did not call the people to return to old circumstances but to align all areas of life to the power of the holy God (Isa. 6). It was not enough to intensify the cultic ritual superstitiously or to increase the number of sacrifices out of an allegedly hypersensitive conscience (Mic. 6:1–8).[34] Increased cultic ritual cannot forestall the judgment of the Lord; only a life lived in harmony with Yahweh's character can do so (Isa. 1:10–17; Jer. 7; Amos 4:4–5; 5:21–24; Mic. 6:6–8). Isaiah demanded that Ahaz trust Yahweh despite a seemingly hopeless situation. Wisdom literature and the psalms also demand such trust.

Faith and Conduct in Wisdom Literature and the Psalms

God's existence is generally not questioned in either the wisdom–literature or the psalms. Rather, it is a sign of faith even in the time of trouble and misery to believe in and to trust God.[35] Only fools say there is no God (Pss. 14:1; 53:2). They are actually the *Seins–Dummen*,[36] because they do not understand the basis of all existence. The praying person is different. He does not doubt the existence of God even in his greatest need. In the lament psalms, the psalmist expresses his need to a God whom he perceived to be distant but from whom he expected concrete help. The believer does not ascertain, but he asks: Why? How long? Should it last forever? Why do you leave me in the lurch? The complaints in the psalms are goal–oriented complaints. They are not directed toward a higher being in general, nor are they meant for one's own encouragement. Rather, they are directed to the God of Israel.[37]

These kinds of complaints are only possible with an attitude of trust. This trust is reflected in the language of the praying person. The most frequent expression is: "I trust in you" or something similar (Pss. 13:6;

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32. Ibid, 60.

33. See also Exod. 14:14; Zech. 4:6.

34. See the analysis of this passage by E. C. Lucas, "Sacrifice in the Prophets," *Sacrifice in the Bible*, ed. R. T. Beckwith and M. J. Selman (Carlisle, 1995), 65.

35. Hermission, *Faith*, 46–47.

36. Ibid. It is difficult to translate this idiom into English. Maybe it would be best to render it as "existentially inept."

37. Ibid., 46.

25:2; 26:1; 28:7; 31:14; 52:8; 55:23; 56:3–4,11; 62:2; 91:2; etc.). The psalmist also speaks of Yahweh as his place of refuge and as his part (Pss. 16:5; 62:8; 71:7; 73:26; 91:2,9; 94:22; 119:57; 142:6). God is near in the most severe trouble. However, some Psalms express a feeling of abandonment by God. When people suffer severely, they often feel forsaken by God. This subjective experience can aggravate into utmost fear and panic. Although the psalmist expresses this subjective feeling of horror, he does not stop there. The mood of utmost helplessness changes to expressions of faith and trust. Yahweh is able to deliver and his help is always available. That is the psalmist's confession.

This transformation from a feeling of abandonment, fear, and helplessness to a renewed trust in the abilities of Yahweh is not to be confused with the mistaken belief or misguided trust that the prophets so vehemently denounced (Amos 5:5,18–20; Jer. 7:3f; 23:10f; Mic. 3:11ff). An expression of trust not accompanied by corresponding conduct proves the expression a lie (Jer. 7:10f.). Such trust may seem genuine even to the one expressing it, but a discrepancy nonetheless exists between profession and reality.[38] Faith and trust without obedience is a lie. A confession not apparent in the way one lives one's life is a delusion (Jer. 6:13–14; Hosea 12:1).[39] Such trust is a groundless self-deception. This does not mean that the believer will never doubt. But the psalms show that doubt is never the final response to the difficulties in life. Their confession that Yahweh will eventually help—that he will ultimately deliver—rests on the secure ground of Yahweh himself. Since genuine faith manifests itself in action and conduct, they also know that faith and trust in Yahweh is not a purely private matter.

The Earthy Faith of the Old Testament

The focus of Old Testament faith is almost exclusively restricted to this life. Only in the later books of the Old Testament is a certain hope in the hereafter evident, but this life ends in death. When one passes away, one's life with God also passes away (Isa. 38:18; Ps. 115:17). The human self is insolubly tied to this life.[40] In the grave, one can neither thank God nor praise him (Ps. 88:11–13); nor does one remember his deeds. Nevertheless, the fear of death and the grave seems to motivate devout living on earth (Pss. 39, especially vv. 5–7; 90:12; Eccles. 9:10; 11:1–6; 12:13). The reign of God will be established on this earth and the land of Israel, with its capital Jerusalem, will play a central role in it (Isa. 2:2–3; 60–62; Mic. 4:1–3; Ps.48).

God wants to win the living for himself. They should serve him, recognizing and proclaiming his reign (Deut. 8:5–6; Isa. 43:10). For the ancient Israelite, faith in Yahweh and life on this earth belong

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38. 1 Samuel 15:23 indicates that disobedience is idolatry.

39. The three Hebrew words שָׁקַר, כזב, and כחשׁ which are translated "lie" are also being used in a metaphorical sense to designate false religious and ethical actions. See M. A. Klopfenstein, "*Sqr*," in *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (1997), 1399–1405. See also his *Die Lüge nach dem Alten Testament* (Zurich, 1964), 78, 147, 154, 158, 192, 230, 269.

40. Fohrer, *Grundstrukturen*, 174.

inseparably together. Therefore, faith and trust in Yahweh should determine the life of people on earth. Life as God's gift should be received gratefully from his hands. Only thus is it truly livable.

Man achieves his intended purpose only by unconditionally accepting God's revealed will and rule. Only then does life on earth reflect its full value. Nevertheless, life on earth is not glorified. The Israelite knew about the illness, evil and death that could come into his life suddenly and unexpectedly through no fault of his. Yet he neither considered life base nor looked pessimistically on it; he knew that it was given to him not for its own sake but rather to manifest God's reign. For this reason, he neither thought little of it nor considered it unimportant. Instead, he opened eyes and heart for everything this life had to offer.[41] Contempt of this world and escapism were therefore unknown to him. Even Kohelet, who views much of life as vain and striving after wind, seeks to understand what his role in life on earth and wants to enjoy it as long as it is granted to him (Eccles. 3:22; 5:17f; 9:8–10).

However, the enjoyment of life is often undermined by pain and suffering (Job 30:27–31; Eccles. 5:16; Pss. 38:4–9; 88:4–10). The cold can rob one of sleep at night; the summer's scorching heat can dry up the body or make people pant like animals without water. Woman bears children only through intense pain; with sorrow and tears, she lays her children in the grave (Jer. 31:15; Gen. 37:35). The husband's work frequently fails to support his family. His field brings forth thistles and thorns; drought and locusts destroy his eagerly awaited harvest (Deut. 28:38; 1 Kings 8:37; 2 Chron. 7:13; Joel 1:4); carnivores ravage his herd. Rich and mighty men suppress the poor, widows and orphans (Deut. 10:18; Isa. 1:23; Ezek. 22:6–7). Corrupt judges pronounce unjust sentences and keep from the suppressed what belongs to them. If an enemy invades the country and besieges a city, cannibalism may result (2 Kings 6:28–29; Lam. 4:10). If an enemy conquers one's city, a harrowing and painful death is a real possibility (2 Kings 8:12; 15:16); if the conqueror shows mercy, one becomes a slave without rights.[42]

Even in such a life, however, one can meet God and experience his help.[43] If man experiences such things, he may doubt the power or willingness of God Almighty to come to his rescue. In retrospect, though, he may recognize that God is sublime and mysterious. From a human perspective, he acts in surprising and sometimes troubling ways. Things dreadful and terrible as well as good and pleasant come from his hand and are intended to encourage belief in the divine promises (Isa. 45:7; Job 1:22; 2:10; Ps. 119:65,67; Eccles. 7:14). Only the belief that God has not left this world, which he himself created, to fend for itself, but holds and sustains it enables one to endure suffering and pain (Ps. 8:4–7).

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41. Ibid. 175.

42. I. J. Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," *JNES* 32 (1973), 70–98. K. R. Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Peabody, 2002), 236–37.

43. For an illustration, see Lamentations.

Although ancient Israel's faith concerns the here and now, it is not concerned with this world only. The Israelite knew of a future in which Yahweh has the final word. Nevertheless, the apocalyptist did not take refuge in a splendid future in order to escape the present. Rather, he sought to give solace in a time of suffering and trouble, to encourage the people to trust in almighty Yahweh (Dan. 3:6). Hence, the believer can endure distress from the godless and wicked with serenity. His suffering will not last long. The end of his oppression is never out of view. The power and reign of godless, earthly rulers are restricted by God's omnipotence (Dan. 4:14; 5:26ff). God's own reign is established already in the present; it is not only for the future, after the time of wrath (Dan. 2:21; 3:33; 4:31ff., 6:27). Thus, the apocalyptist's present action is determined by his belief in God's intervention in world–history. Faith can move mountains in the present because they will be made low in the future (Isa. 40:4; 49:11).

Conclusion

Life on this earth presents a great challenge for the faith of any human being. One must face this challenge if one is to have a chance at succeeding in life; one cannot escape it by taking refuge in one's inner self or edifying oneself and thereby withdrawing from this world. To withdraw from life on earth and its challenges by preparing oneself for the new heaven and new earth does not signify unconditional trust in God. Neither does one signify faith in almighty God by disconnecting oneself from the God given responsibilities of this earth (Gen. 1:26–27; 2:15), seeking self–edification in the contemplation of so–called spiritual things. Everyone comes under the obligation imposed to trust Yahweh and in trusting him to withstand the manifold adversities of life on earth. This obligation should be taken seriously and carried out responsibly.

Israel was asked to lead an existence that was neither driven by her own goals nor empowered by her own will. She was asked to lead a life molded by God's will. For such was the only existence not doomed to failure. Israel failed, because she, like the people of the primeval history (Gen. 3:23–24; 6:13), lived apart from Yahweh despite her religiosity. Israel should have exemplified a new existence because of Yahweh and her relationship with him. She should have demonstrated to a world incapable of living spiritually, what it meant to be God's very own people (Deut. 4:6ff.).

Humans are not permitted to withdraw into the religious realm and to restrict God's reign to temples, priesthood and cultic rituals.[44] Man should use all his strength and wealth to acknowledge and realize the divine claim upon all areas of his life (e.g., Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 13:3; 26:16; 30:6.10; Josh. 22:5; 1 Sam. 7:3). His creator, the giver of all gifts, obliges him to dedicate his life to Yahweh in willing obedience. Only thus will he receive a new existence, the meaning and goal of which is Yahweh himself (Exod. 19:5–6). Only this mode of existence

44. Fohrer, *Grundstrukturen*, 181.

promises success rather than failure. Only in this way can one experience God's continual presence, even in the darkest hours of the earthly life. Faith in Yahweh is not just *an* ingredient in one's recipe for making decisions. Nor is it simply one detail of life among others. Rather, it is the only true foundation of life, the only sure basis for decision–making. Such faith can never be a private matter.

The people of God belong not only to God but also, because they live on this earth, to the communities of which they are citizens. However, the question of what belief in God means to public policy cannot be answered here. Even so, the forceful reminder of the Old and New Testaments to consider this carefully and to refrain from rash political decisions must not be ignored. At the same time, we should realize that things and events can be truly seen—seen for what they really are—by faith alone. (2 Kings 6:17). Belief in oneself, in one's own power and strength, is also unbelief, blinding one to reality. In Isaiah 7, the focus is on the defense–conditions of the city, on her fortifications and their state of repair, not on Yahweh who had everything in hand. The incidental and superficial received priority. Faith gives one over to Yahweh, leading him to abandon trust in material defenses, in his own strength, and in his political allies (Isa. 30:8–17; Zech. 4:6). Faith which does not thus become visible in behavior and action is not at all faith in Yahweh.[45]

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45. I want to thank my colleagues J. White and M. Buechsel for improving the readability of my English. My former student H. Wenzel, now studying at Wheaton, has helped me find the English edition of some of the books cited.

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Book Reviews

1 Chronicles. **Hermeneia. By Ralph W. Klein. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006. 561 pages. Hardcover, $55.00.**

The past generation witnessed a renaissance of scholarly inquiry into the distinctive historical and theological emphases of the book of Chronicles. Ralph Klein participated in this movement for over twenty-five years, producing a volume which reflects the distinctive aims of the Hermeneia Old Testament series well.

R. Klein agrees with the majority of recent scholarship on Chronicles, attributing virtually the entire book to the Chronicler, unlike the majority of interpretations throughout the past two centuries which tend to fragment the book by assigning portions of the book to various sources. He asserts that the usual reasons for relegating passages in Chronicles to a secondary status are frequently circular and unpersuasive (11). Likewise, the author does not accept any of the extreme suggestions for dating the book, some of which fall as late as 160 B.C. He finds no substantive evidence for dating 1 Chronicles to the post-exilic epoch, suggesting that the book hailed from the hand of the Chronicler during the first half of the fourth century B.C.

The commentator faces the perennial questions about the historical value of 1 Chronicles squarely, thoroughly surveying critical thought beginning with de Wette at the beginning of the eighteenth century to the present. Generally, R. Klein shows notable deference to the reliability of the biblical text, particularly when compared to the past two centuries of critical analyses. When questions concerning the accuracy of the text arise, *1 Chronicles*, frequently offers a variety of explanations to validate the book of Chronicles. At times the commentator claims that the Chronicler rearranged the material he received in order to impress upon his readers a particular theological point (compare 1 Chronicles 9 with Neh. 11:1-19; p. 25). As a respected textual critic, R. Klein catalogs additional places where he attributes differences to divergent Hebrew text types for Samuel–Kings compared to that for Chronicles (32-37). Despite it's sensitivity to text critical concerns,

1 Chronicles consistently refrains from emending the Hebrew text (for example, 222, 250).

When assessing the synoptic issues, R. Klein contends that the Chronicler expects his readers to recall the full account of Samuel–Kings, particularly in those passages where he omits significant details included in the earlier biblical accounts. In those places where 1 Chronicles offers information found nowhere else in the Old Testament, the commentator typically eschews denigrating the value of the Chronicler's work. Frequently, R. Klein argues that the Chronicler had access to a host of historical sources which did not survive the ages (for example, 1 Chron. 2:3—4:23; p. 88). At times the commentary simply outlines genealogies which differ from one another without any attempt at harmonization (see the treatment of the parallel accounts in Gen. 46:10; Exod. 6:15; Num. 26:12-14; and 1 Chron. 4:24; p. 146). Accordingly, *1 Chronicles* presents a helpful overview of the theological emphases of the book (44-48). The author approvingly cites Steven McKenzie's assessment that Chronicles comprises "a theological rewriting of Bible history for instructional purposes" (19). On other issues, R. Klein reaches more negative conclusions.

While the author demonstrates greater confidence in the veracity of 1 Chronicles than most scholars, unfortunately he identifies numerous passages which he rejects as unhistorical or otherwise unreliable. For instance, he concludes that the time frame allowed in the book cannot be accurate at places within 1 Chronicles (see 13:13-14). Moreover, he disavows any historical accuracy to 1 Chron. 27:16-24 whatsoever.

1 Chronicles analyzes the genealogies in the biblical book by drawing a distinction between "segmented" and "linear" genealogies. According to R. Klein's understanding, "segmented genealogies" merely express the individual's social status and duties through the metaphor of kinship ties (21). Similarly, he claims that "linear genealogies" present persons or groups from previous eras simply to buttress claims to power or property (21). For example, R. Klein contends that Chronicles presents social inferiors as "children," while superiors appear in the genealogies as "parents" (21). As such, R. Klein contends that these segmented genealogies do not accurately portray familial relationships as claimed by the book of Chronicles. The conclusion that the Chronicler's genealogies convey little more than a person's social status mars the benefits of the commentary's genealogical analyses.

Such pessimistic assertions contrast with the commentator's typical efforts to accept and to explain the received text of 1 Chronicles. Recognizing these concerns about the commentator's handling of several important issues, anyone studying 1 Chronicles carefully should work through R. Klein's study. The volume often yields great assistance.

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The Story of Baptists in the United States. **By Pamela R. Durso and Keith E. Durso. Brentwood: Baptist History and Heritage Society, 2006. 224 pages. Hardcover, $29.95.**

Deftly drawing upon the often overlooked resources available in our Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives in Nashville, Pamela and Keith Durso have provided a self-described "brief narrative introduction" to the history of Baptists in the United States (9). Rather than following the traditional approach of examining institutions, the Dursos set out to "focus on the people who formed those institutions and organizations," and herein lies one of the attractive features of the book (9). Teeming with unique photos and illustrations, *The Story of Baptists in the United States* looks and reads more like a cherished coffee table book than your dusty stored-in-the-closet college textbook. Both the approach and the book's design have produced a volume that should draw the time and attention of many. The idea of a more readable volume is a welcome relief to those of us who desire to see more people in the pews aware and reading the rich history of our Baptist past.

Within the covers and amid the pictures lie some very helpful and original chapters as well. Starting with a brief look at Baptist beginnings in England, the Dursos focus on John Smyth and the General Baptists to set their chronology on its path. Crossing over to Rhode Island and Roger Williams, the Dursos tell the story of Baptist advance from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. It is chapters such as the fifth chapter on Baptists' westward movement that stand apart as the Dursos comment on the rarely mentioned, yet critical and fascinating, history of Baptists in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Texas. The Dursos have succeeded in providing a concise history designed for an undergraduate course or even a church's Sunday school class.

However, even with all these merits, there are a few items that regrettably make this volume one that cannot receive wide recommendation. First, while the majority of the chapters do provide as engaging an introduction as there is in the field of Baptist history, the reader subtly encounters a regular treatment of the state of women with respect to their roles in the churches, especially as it concerns ordination and preaching. This is not to say that this aspect of Baptist history should not be addressed. It should. However, like any issue that does not legitimately reside within the main of a history, it should be discussed with proper perspective related to its actual affect on the course of events. The Dursos, albeit not overbearingly, seem to bring this issue to the surface more times than is historically necessary.

For example, the Dursos consider the discussion in the 1960s over the "proper role of women in church and society" a "second controversy" that followed the first controversy that surrounded the suspension of Ralph Elliott's Genesis commentary (183). Further, they call the ordination of Addie Davis an event that "rocked the convention," and give two full pages to its description (183-85). However, the Elliott controversy, which led to the revision of the Convention's statement of faith, receives only one page. Furthermore, the Broadman Bible Commentary

controversy of 1969-70, an event that in conjunction with the Elliott crisis did more to raise the ire of the people in the pews, receives no mention.

Second, in the eleventh chapter the Dursos address what they term "theological controversy" in the twentieth century. However, when focusing on the inerrancy controversy of the 1980s and 1990s, the Dursos provide little description of the theological issues that drove the controversy and instead seek to remind the readers of how this event "split the convention, divided thousands of local Baptist churches, damaged hundreds of careers, and wounded numerous relationships" (185). To their credit, they do recognize that among conservatives and moderates there is not agreement "about the sources or outcomes of the conflict," but the Dursos fail to interact with the documented theological problems such as those presented in Noel Hollyfied's 1976 thesis at Southern Seminary, to name just one (191). Hollyfield's analysis distinctly revealed the negative effects of his seminary's teaching on a student's commitment to orthodox Christianity.

The Story of Baptists in the United States is a book that should not go unnoticed. Indeed, pastors and professors alike should read it and appreciate its contribution to Baptist history. However, for the reasons noted above, pastors and professors should look for another book for use in the churches or the classroom. This one seems best suited for their coffee tables.

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Celebrating Romans: Template for Pauline Theology. **Edited by Sheila E. McGinn. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 276 pages. Hardcover, $36.00.**

This *Festschrift* volume honors Robert Jewett and his lifelong interest in Romans. Four former students of Jewett and one colleague solicited and compiled fourteen essays under five different approaches—theological, rhetorical, social-historical, feminist, and an approach titled "a dialogue with contemporary life."

From a theological approach, James D. G. Dunn addresses the issue of "covenant theology" in Rom. 9:4 and 11:27 and argues that Paul does not take over the categories of Israel's covenant and apply them to Christians. Rather, Paul affirms Israel's covenant in a manner that Israel could recognize. Jeffrey B. Gibson looks at the theological significance of Paul's use of the dying formula (X died/gave himself for Y) in secular works and non-Pauline New Testament letters to find that Paul was engaged in a profound polemic against the prevailing values of his day concerning public salvation—Christ did not seek glory, nor advocate war, and instead of dying for his own, he died for his enemies. Graydon F. Snyder discusses sixteen theological motifs that derived from the reading and study of Romans.

From a rhetorical approach, William S. Campbell points out the strong links between chapter 8 and chapters 9-11 concerning Jewish and Christian identity finding that the groups of Jewish and Gentile believers were distinguished by their differing lifestyles and that there was no inclusive term used to describe all believers. James Hester investigates the rhetorical aspect of Paul's *persona* proposing that Paul creates an audience to convince the Romans that he and they shared common values. Wilhelm Wuellner applies the theory of argumentation and the theory of intentionality to Romans.

From a social-historical approach, Peter Lampe pieces together different sources to show that one of the ways Christianity came to the Roman synagogues in the 40s of the first century was through Roman households—through their Jewish *servi* and *liberti* and their descendents. Carolyn Osiek looks at the lifestyle of the second-century Christian community in Rome and suggests that Roman Christians had a degree of cultural and ethnic diversity unparalleled in other Christian networks throughout the empire.

From a feminist hermeneutic, Sheila E. McGinn offers the reading of ἀδελφοι as inclusive ("brothers" and "sisters") suggesting the possible interpretation that women and men are to take on the priestly role by offering themselves entirely to God (12:1). Elsa Tamez interprets justification in Romans 1-8 as Paul proclaiming a new humanity. Pamela Thimmes reviews the literature on Paul's use of marriage and adultery in Rom. 7:1-4 and explores how women in the Roman community might have understood Paul's meaning.

In a creative conversation with Paul's letter and contemporary life, Keith Burton compares similarities of audience and themes of Romans with the 1991 film "Regarding Henry," and L. D. Hurst extends a dialogue between Romans and two American films, George Steven's "Shane" (1952) and Clint Eastwood's "Pale Rider" (1984). Reta Halteman Finger offers helpful classroom aids and simulation exercises to facilitate an understanding of Roman house church dynamics.

These essays, with their diverse approaches, challenge both student and scholar. The authors raise interesting interpretive questions and advance current interpretive trends.

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Cómo se formó la Biblia. **Por Ediberto López. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005. 183 páginas. Rústica, $15.00.**

El Dr. López es un ministro metodista graduado de Drew University con un doctorado en Nuevo Testamento, además de ser profesor en el Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico. Este último libro suyo es parte de la serie "Conozca su Biblia" cuyo editor general es el Dr. Justo L. González. La obra propone recontarnos la historia de la formación del Canon bíblico. Es animador que teólogos latinoamericanos estén traba-

jando seriamente éste y otros temas de relevancia para la fe del pueblo de Dios.

De acuerdo con el autor, el libro va dirigido a una audiencia más popular que académica. Se trata entonces de una introducción. Son diecinueve relativamente cortos capítulos que relatan fluidamente el entendimiento que López tiene sobre la formación del Canon bíblico. Todos los capítulos son de fácil lectura, amenos y con ejemplos literarios e históricos interesantes. Los primeros cuatro capítulos son más teológicos que históricos. En ellos, el autor presenta su entendimiento global de la naturaleza de la Biblia y de su función dentro del pueblo de Dios. El libro se cierra con una brevísima bibliografía y un glosario básico.

En general, el libro deja una sensación agradable por su estilo sencillo y al mismo tiempo específico. También es cierto que en general, el autor parece alinearse más con aquellos estudiosos no conservadores. Ejemplo de esto es su tendencia a fechar bastante tardíamente algunos escritos nuevotestamentarios, su total aceptación de la no autoría de algunas cartas paulinas, y su apego, aparentemente irrestricto, a las teorías documentarias del Antiguo Testamento.

El libro provee valiosas perspectivas y percepciones útiles para aquellos que no han entrado en contacto con las posiciones arriba mencionadas. Un ejemplo de esto sería la necesidad de estudiar el Canon, poniendo un ojo en el escrito mismo, y otro en la situación sociológica de la iglesia a la que iba dirigido y que favoreció la inclusión de ese escrito en el Canon.

Por otro lado, el libro trabaja con una tensión. Por un lado identifica a la Biblia llanamente como "palabra" y no como "Palabra" de Dios (5). Sólo cuando la Biblia es leída "con sabiduría y fe se convierte en palabra viva de Dios" (10). Por el otro lado, ¡el libro termina con un himno dedicado a la Biblia! De muchos es sabido que esta posición académicamente defendida por teólogos neoortodoxos, no es compartida por la gran mayoría de evangélicos latinoamericanos para quienes la Escritura es el mismo aliento de Dios ("teospneustos," 2 Tim. 3:16). Esto es, aun cuando se reconozcan sus complicados matices interpretativos. Aun Karl Barth mismo, siguiendo la analogía cristológica, describiría más sofisticadamente la relación entre la humanidad y la divinidad de la Escritura.

También me gustaría señalar que el libro no provee información básica sobre algunos de los puntos con los cuales muchos evangélicos tendrían claras diferencias. Por ejemplo, simplemente se da por sentado—sin dar mayores explicaciones—que el Canon incluye cartas de Pablo que supuestamente no son de él, sino de sus discípulos. Quizá para la academia este no sea un problema, pero para el pueblo de hoy en general, este es un factor que restaría credibilidad al Canon bíblico. Más argumentación histórica—teológica es necesaria si el libro quiere convencer a la audiencia a la cual se dirige.

Debo decir algo también de la manera un tanto desequilibrada en la que el libro presenta la historia de algunos libros del Canon. Aun proveyendo interesantes hipótesis históricas, el libro no logra balancearlas con una mayor consideración de la providencia divina en el proceso

de canonización. Un ejemplo es la afirmación de que fue una lectura "ideológica" y "manipuladora" de Apocalipsis, por parte de creyentes que defendían al imperio romano de sus enemigos, ¡la que le permitió a este libro entrar en el Canon cristiano (145)! ¿Cómo se puede apreciar, respetar y obedecer a un Canon cuya integración, aunque sea en parte, se debe a motivos tan equivocados? Por supuesto, el movimiento del Espíritu de Dios en la formación del Canon pudo permitir motivos humanos equivocados. Pero, antes de decir esto no sólo debemos estar completamente seguros de que así sucedió, sino que además debemos enfatizar el papel de la providencia divina al hacerlo. Esto es, si queremos "aclarar" y no opacar "a nuestros lectores y lectoras el hermoso camino por el que los eventos salvadores de Dios llegaron a formar nuestros textos bíblicos" (8).

Sorprendentemente, dentro de la bibliografía en español no se incluyen los dos clásicos estudios del ilustre y también metodista Gonzalo Báez Camargo, *Breve Historia del Canon Bíblico, y Breve Historia del Texto Bíblico*. ¡Obras por demás extraordinarias!

El libro del Dr. López habrá logrado un propósito loable si genuinamente motiva al pueblo hispanohablante a exclamar junto con Francisco Penzotti:

¡Libro Santo! Mi estancia ilumina,
Nunca, nunca te apartes de mí;
Contemplando tu bella doctrina
No hay males ni penas aquí (175).

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***The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture*. By Richard B. Hays. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. 233 pages. Softcover, $20.00.**

Both the church and the academy will benefit from the approach to interpretation advocated in this book. Richard B. Hays is well known for stimulating vigorous discussion of two topics. One of these was catalyzed by his remarkably influential dissertation, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, and the other by his book *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. The collection of essays now grouped under the title *The Conversion of the Imagination*, as the subtitle indicates, carries forward the thesis of *Echoes of Scripture*.

In the opening paragraph of the introduction Hays articulates the three theses: "(1) the interpretation of Israel's Scripture was central to the apostle Paul's thought; (2) we can learn from Paul's example how to read Scripture faithfully; (3) if we follow his example, the church's imagination will be converted to see both Scripture and the world in a radically new way" (viii). The first and third of these flow from the second, from which controversy erupts.

Those who follow Hays and pursue what he articulates in the introduction, "Learning from Paul How to Read Israel's Scripture," will find their reading of the Old Testament revolutionized. Against the view that Paul uses proof texts from the Old Testament without regard to the original contexts of the statements he quotes, Hays argues that Paul has read the Old Testament carefully, sees it typologically prefiguring Christ and the church, and, perhaps most significantly, resurrection lenses focus his eyes on the text of the Old Testament. According to Hays, in his reading of the Old Testament, Paul has undergone a "conversion of the imagination."

Hays has refined his earlier discussion of helpful criteria for discerning the presence of Old Testament "echoes" in New Testament texts, and this appears in chapter 2. He also sets forth a persuasive case for the view that "Christ Prays the Psalms" (the title of the sixth chapter). This interpretation develops the implications of Rom. 15:3, where Paul—without comment—"attributes the words of the Psalm directly *to* Christ" (102–103). Hays shows that the same technique is used elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g., John 2:17; 19:28; Mark 15:24; Heb. 2:10–12; 10:5–7), and explains that "the earliest church read the psalms as the Messiah's prayer book . . . because they read all the promises of an eternal kingdom for David and his seed typologically" (110). Further, "'David in these psalms becomes a symbol for the whole people and—at the same time—a pre-figuration of the future Anointed One" (111).

A number of prominent scholars responded to *Echoes of Scripture* in a special session on the book at the SBL Annual Meeting in 1990, and Hays's response on that occasion is valuably included as chapter 9. The gathered implications of these essays are brought together in chapter 10, "A Hermeneutic of Trust." In this profoundly encouraging chapter Hays argues that "Our minds must be transformed by grace, and that happens nowhere more powerfully than through reading Scripture receptively and trustingly with the aid of the Holy Spirit" (198).

There are aspects of the volume that I do not appreciate so much, such as the lingering endorsement of E. P. Sanders's now widely questioned conclusions expressed in his *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. And I would not put it the way Hays does when he writes, "Cases may arise in which we must acknowledge internal tensions within Scripture that require us to choose guidance from one biblical witness and reject another. Because the witness of Scripture itself is neither simple nor univocal, the hermeneutics of trust is necessarily a matter of faithful struggle to hear and discern" (198). No examples are given, so it is difficult to know what Hays has in mind, but perhaps a word other than "reject" with reference to scripture could have been chosen.

The author's style is elegant throughout, and often his language is pleasantly decked with overtones of great literature. Hays has not only soaked his mind in the canon of scripture, the text is sprinkled with illustrations from the canon of the western literary tradition (see the

discussion of the allusions to Augustine's *Confessions* in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, 32–33).

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***Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview.* By Albert M. Wolters. Postscript coauthored by Michael W. Goheen. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. xii + 143 pages. Softcover, $12.00.**

When Albert Wolters first released his book *Creation Regained* in 1985, the topic of "worldview" had hardly been introduced to the Christian community. Since that time, both the academy and the church have begun to discover the importance of worldview formation. While more than twenty years have passed since its original publication, *Creation Regained* (now in its second edition) remains an indispensable resource for anyone interested in the makings of a biblical worldview.

In *Creation Regained*, Wolters introduces the concept of a biblical worldview using the tripartite framework of creation, fall, and redemption. He devotes the first chapter to an introductory discussion of worldview, covers the three worldview pillars (creation, fall, redemption) in the second, third, and fourth chapters, respectively, and concludes the book with a final chapter on how a biblical worldview might be applied on societal and personal levels. In this second edition, Wolters (with Michael Goheen) includes a 25-page postscript entitled "Worldview between Story and Mission." This section has been added in order to illustrate how the book's reformational worldview does in fact coincide with "the narrative character of Scripture" and "the importance of mission" (120).

Wolters succeeds in providing a succinct, yet thoroughly helpful explanation of the role of worldview in Christian thought and practice. His explanation of a biblical worldview in terms of creation, fall, and redemption offers a simple paradigm by which Christians can understand the entirety of God's word and work in the world. In fact, it is the succinctness and simplicity of Wolters's project that makes it so valuable to the broader Christian community. For, while Wolters originally intended the book as "an introduction to the philosophy of D. H. T. Vollenhoven and H. Dooyeweerd" (119), *Creation Regained* can be used as a tool in a variety of contexts. First, in the academy this book could serve as an excellent resource in an introduction to philosophy, theology, or hermeneutics. With the second edition's brief connection between worldview and missions, it would even be an appropriate tool for a course in missiology. Second, Wolters's book could be used in a local church context as a guide for small group discussions or as a study in youth or college groups. Third, it may also have a place in the home as a didactic tool for parents with their teenage children.

Regardless of the context in which the book is employed, Wolters's concise exposition of a biblical worldview, his unrelenting attack on the compartmentalization of sacred and secular realms, and his vision of the rule of Christ over the totality of life need to be heard by the church today. I strongly recommend this book.

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Doctrina Bíblica. Enseñanzas Esenciales de la Fe Cristiana. **By Wayne Grudem. Traducido por Miguel A. Mesías. Miami, Florida: Editorial Vida, 2005. 523 páginas. Pasta dura, $19.99.**

Grudem es profesor de teología sistemática en el Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. El presente libro, como se explica en su prefacio es un resumen de su mucho más extensa *Teología Sistemática*, publicada en inglés por Zondervan. Grudem es un evangélico que sostiene la inerrancia de la Escritura, la complementariedad entre sexos, la presencia de todos los dones del Espíritu en la iglesia de hoy, y un tipo de premilenarismo postribulacional.

Debe darse la bienvenida al idioma español a otra útil herramienta para entender el pensamiento evangélico de este conocido autor. La obra consta de siete secciones que corresponden a las divisiones de la teología sistemática que Grudem considera fundamentales: la Palabra de Dios, Dios, Hombre, Cristo, Redención, Iglesia, y Futuro. Nótese la diferencia con las diez categorías tradicionales que separan también la doctrina del Espíritu, de los Ángeles, y del Pecado.

Dentro de las características que posee la obra está su propósito de alcanzar en primer lugar a una audiencia más popular y no principalmente a la academia. Un loable propósito pero que nos lanza a buscar otras obras del autor en donde pudiera dar razones más profundas de algunas de las decisiones tomadas en *Doctrina Bíblica*. Dentro de su naturaleza práctica la obra provee preguntas de repaso y de aplicación personal al final de cada capítulo, así como la selección de un pasaje bíblico para memorizar pertinente al tema. En su *Teología Sistemática*, Grudem también había incluido al final de cada capítulo un himno alusivo a la discusión teológica. Uno no puede más que alabar este deseo de presentar a la teología como sierva y ayuda en la misión, ministerio y adoración de la Iglesia. Finalmente, vale la pena mencionar positivamente el glosario, los índices temáticos, de autores, y de pasajes bíblicos. Aun a sabiendas de su utilidad, con frecuencia estas ayudas están ausentes en otras obras traducidas.

Siempre nos hace falta en libros cómo el de Grudem un capítulo, un prefacio, o una sección en donde se enfoquen y se relacionen las aportaciones del autor con la particular cultura a la que se traduce la obra. Entendemos que el hacer teológico estadounidense enfoca ciertos temas que son importantes para su contexto, pero en ocasiones son poco relevantes para otros contextos y viceversa. Por ejemplo, nada encontrará el lector en este libro sobre la existencia, naturaleza, y consecuencia del

pecado social. ¿No será esto consecuencia de que dentro de la larga lista de autores consultados por Grudem *ninguno* proviene de Latinoamérica? Quizá sería bueno añadir a lo que Grudem discute sobre la necesidad de estudiar teología sistemática con la ayuda de otros (25), que esta ayuda debe buscarse también desde aquellos contextos geográficos diferentes al del autor.

La teología sistemática frecuentemente ha sido acusada de citar la Escritura superficialmente y fuera de contexto ("Proof texts"). También se ha dicho que la teología no debería dar la impresión de que la Escritura es un libro de recetas aisladas. Aunque creo que estas acusaciones no se aplican directamente al libro de Grudem, si es posible ver cómo alguien pudiera ocuparlas contra él. El tratamiento que ofrece de su método teológico en el prefacio y primer capítulo es bastante superficial, en especial en lo que se refiere a cómo debe interpretarse la Escritura. Da la impresión a veces de que lo único que necesitamos es hacer una lista de pasajes que hablen de determinados temas y sacar conclusiones con base en ellos (18, 25-27). Nada sabe el lector hasta este punto—y no hay pista clara de que más adelante lo sabrá en el libro—de que otros factores interpretativos generales se hacen fundamentales en la interpretación del texto. Por ejemplo, la naturaleza histórica y progresiva de la narración bíblica debe enfatizarse desde el primer momento. Es fundamental para el lector más sencillo darse cuenta de que las doctrinas se elaboran sobre el entendimiento de una revelación progresiva. Tampoco debe pasarse por alto, la necesidad de comenzar a hacer teología sistemática a partir de nuestro Señor Jesucristo. Esto puede significar varias cosas. En algunos casos significaría que ciertas porciones de la Escritura han quedado sin efecto, por ejemplo la ley mosaica y sus leyes dietéticas (Marcos 7:1-23). Puede significar también que para entender *cristianamente* la Escritura necesitamos la nueva luz que sólo el Jesús del Nuevo Testamento puede ofrecer. Seguramente habrá textos que analizados en su contexto todavía necesitan ser iluminados por el dato nuevotestamentario sobre Jesús. No podemos descuidar este fundamental dato cuando hacemos teología sistemática desde una perspectiva *cristiana*.

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Genesis 11:27—50:26: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture. **The New American Commentary. By Kenneth A. Mathews. Broadman and Holman, 2005. 960 pages. Hardcover, $32.99.**

This comprehensive effort is the second part of the author's work on the book of Genesis. Despite the magnitude of the task and the excellence of the works which have preceded his, Mathews has produced an invaluable resource for anyone looking for a scholarly, conservative, thorough, and exegetical approach to the first book of the Bible.

The outline of the book is simple; organized along the תּוֹלְדוֹת units of Genesis. The sections highlight the history and significant events in the

lives and families of Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, and Jacob. This includes an honest assessment of both the strengths and weaknesses of the biblical characters.

The work demonstrates an excellent and thorough discussion of the language of the text throughout. Mathews carefully illustrates the intricacies and nuances of the Hebrew, such as the meanings and interpretations of words, word plays, and structure, as well as the themes, motifs, and critical issues that derive from them. Moreover, he frequently includes excurses that are helpful and timely to the discussion. The author presents a comprehensive analysis of the scholarship and critical issues related to the study of Genesis. He underscores the value of archeology and highlights its importance to the understanding and validation of the text.

Most major sections of the commentary begin with a section entitled "Composition." Here Mathews discusses the compositional questions and identifies the primary views, traditions, theories, and literary issues pertinent to that pericope. Next, the author addresses the questions with clear and compelling analysis. He deftly debunks the theories and assumptions against a unified composition of the text. For example, Mathews includes a detailed discussion of the Documentary Hypothesis and addresses each issue before presenting his own cogent justification for "an author responsible for the whole" (87).

One of the strongest assets of this work is Mathews's consistent and convincing representation of the maximalist view of the witness of the Hebrew text. He clearly maintains that historicity is vital to the interpretational truth of scripture, contending that "it is indefensible theologically that the faith of the Fathers is viable even if the Fathers were only a literary construct" (26).

Though clearly a scholarly work, this book is not without practical application for the church and Christians today. Additionally, the frequent footnotes and selected bibliography provide ample resources for those craving additional study.

In the end, Mathews passionately and persuasively argues for what many have considered the untenable positions of the inerrancy of the text, unity of authorship, and historicity of the characters and narratives. Students, teachers, pastors, and anyone interested in the study of scripture should add this book to their libraries and benefit from its instruction.

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God's Greater Glory: The Exalted God of Scripture and the Christian Faith. **By Bruce A. Ware. Wheaton: Crossway, 2004. 241 pages. Softcover, $17.99.**

Is God's control of the events of this world exhaustive and meticulous? Is God's control of good and evil symmetrical, or is God's control of evil

somehow different from God's control of good? If God *does* control all events in this world exhaustively and meticulously, then are humans responsible for their actions? These are just some of the questions that Bruce Ware poses at the outset of *God's Greater Glory.*

While these questions might cause the reader to think that *God's Greater Glory* is simply a work on Providence, in reality, Bruce Ware is concerned with presenting a complete picture of God's relation to and involvement with the world. Interacting with traditions ranging from classical theism to Open Theism and Process Theology, Ware sets out to chart a course that he hopes will be more faithful to the scriptures than these other alternatives. For example, Ware rejects or redefines certain elements of classical theism, such as God's timelessness and impassibility (chapter 5), which he believes fail to reflect accurately the loving and responsive God portrayed in scripture. Process theology and Open Theism are found to be both biblically and theologically inadequate explanations of God's relationship to the world.

Ware's position, which he characterizes as being within the "broad Reformed tradition" (63), shares many features with other Reformed works on this same subject. For example, he argues that humans have compatibilist freedom as opposed to libertarian freedom. He also argues that God exercises exhaustive and meticulous control over all events in creation, including the actions of God's moral creatures.

It is when Ware departs from the Reformed tradition that we find the unique elements of his position. Readers will see this most clearly in Ware's adoption of a "compatibilist middle knowledge" position (113–15). God knows not only what his creatures *will* do in any situation but God also knows what we *would* do were our natures or situations different. With this knowledge God can bring about various influences in our lives such that we necessarily choose to act in the way that God intends. Ware's middle knowledge position differs significantly from the traditional Molinist position in that Ware insists that the libertarian freedom on which Molinist middle knowledge is based proves to be untenable (112). However, the question whether Ware's "compatibilist" middle knowledge is truly *middle* knowledge is perhaps an issue yet to be fully resolved. Ware is aware of the question and offers a response to a recent charge that his position is not truly a *middle* knowledge position at all (115, n. 10).

God's Greater Glory is a useful addition to the discussion of God's overall relation to the world as well as the narrower issue of God's providential governance of creation. The penetrating questions with which the book begins and the seriousness with which Ware treats them are reason enough to own this work. That being said, this reviewer must ask whether Ware has departed too quickly from certain commitments characteristic of classical theism. Are the objections to classical theism that are raised by Open Theists and Process Theologians truly objections to the classical tradition or are they objections to a caricature of that tradition? Ever since Adolf Von Harnack made the charge that much of the classical Christian tradition was little more than Greek metaphysics imposed upon the simple message of Jesus, classical theism has been the

object of suspicion. This reviewer fears that that suspicion may be operative in Ware's treatment of certain doctrines. To be fair, Ware clearly states that his first priority is to be biblical. However, his attitude towards classical theism seems to be based upon the assumption that those within the classical tradition were not equally interested in being biblical.

God's Greater Glory is not an unbiased treatment of what has always been a controversial set of issues. However, one would have to look far and wide to find an unbiased book on this subject. As long as the reader is aware of the perspective from which Ware is arguing, *God's Greater Glory* will prove to be a useful addition to his or her library.

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Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity. **2 volumes. By Charles Kannengiesser. Leiden: Brill, 2004. Vol. 1: xxxiv + 1-669. Vol. 2: xii + 670-1496. Hardcover, $339.00.**

Charles Kannengiesser, Professor in the Department of Theological Studies at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, and renown scholar of early Christian thought, has in his senior years bequeathed to the growing numbers gravitating to patristics a monumental work as creative in conception as it is timely for a large niche of current interest. The author's chosen term "handbook" suggests some modesty. In fact, Johannes Quasten's four volume *Patrology* (1950-1977) is the comparison that comes to mind, though the present work is not an updating of that more comprehensive and general reference work. The *Handbook* spanned a decade in preparation. Its purpose is to provide "easy access" to patristic treatment of scripture, the central documents of the early Christian church (11-12).

Kannengiesser's creative conception merits brief comments for navigation by the prospective buyer, or more likely borrower, of these volumes. Following the usual introductory materials, the layout is in two unequal parts, "General Considerations" in four chapters of history of scholarship and Jewish and Greco-Roman background (23-373) and "Historical Survey" with ten chapters of Christian writers and writings extending to the eighth century (375-1473). Interspersed through the chapters are sixteen "Special Contributions," constituting a third of the entire work, by other scholars. The ingenuity in the architecture of the work is indicated by entries on surprising topics, "Rabbinic Literature," and complementary ones, "Patristic Exegesis of the Books of the Bible." The latter is of particular interest. It serves as a chapter in itself, Chapter IV, and was co-authored by two distinguished patristics scholars, Catholic professor, Cistercian Father David L. Balás, and Baptist professor, D. Jeffrey Bingham.

Kannengiesser quietly shows keen insight into current needs and interests in choosing the niche of patristic exegesis. His career has spanned a period in which attention to patristics has increased signifi-

cantly. Since the Second World War popularity has grown in several directions and for several reasons. While our author has had his finger on the pulse of these developments, he has specialized in patristic hermeneutics and use of scripture. Many university settings have witnessed enriched research in interdisciplinary social-scientific and literary-critical areas while Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and Protestants have continued interest in the theological areas in part due to the research of major scholars like Kannengiesser. The present work constitutes a major boost for this set of interests, whether for introduction to or for research in them. In particular, some interpreters of scripture have become in recent decades less wedded to a grammatical-historical approach built on the historical-critical method, concepts arising from rigid antitheses imagined between Alexandrian and Antiochian schools of interpretation, and have expanded their horizons to ancient rhetoric and theological exegesis integrated with spirituality from the Fathers.

In every creative endeavor one finds limitations. As might be expected in such a reference piece, bibliography is interspersed at the end of sections with a general bibliography concluding each chapter. It is becoming dated, extending only to 1995. There is no index of ancient and modern names, though the work concludes with an "index of names for the Introduction and Part A," a half page of major names discussed by Kannengiesser in the Introduction and Chapters 1-3. As substitute for a fuller index of primary sources, the author includes an "alphabetical list of principal authors & anonymous works discussed" in Volume 1 (xi-xiv). Attending the benefit of a variety of special contributors are the inevitable shifts in style.

Professor Kannengiesser and his contributors merit our warmest appreciation for their work. The *Handbook* will prove to be not only the consummate elucidation of the state of research on patristic use of scripture at the end of the twentieth century but as well the indispensable starting point for all subsequent research in the area for the twenty-first century.

The work is appropriately commended to "the ordinary reader," by which the author means specialist and non-specialist (11). A daunting list price notwithstanding, Amazon at the time of writing this review is offering the book for half of the list price, an attractive offer for ready access to what will be the standard reference work on Christianity's foundational approaches to interpreting its scripture. Every student of the Bible will benefit from dipping into this handbook and can do so easily. Indeed he or she should avail himself or herself of such an avenue back to these roots in the faith.

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Hearing the Sermon: Relationship/Content/Feeling. **By Ronald J. Allen. St. Louis: Chalice, 2004. 152 pages. Softcover, $19.99.**

Since the days of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the art of public speaking has most often been reviewed, discussed and evaluated by those who were doing the speaking rather than those who were doing the listening. In 1999, a team of homileticians from Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, received funding from Lilly Endowment, to conduct a study solely based on information they received by interviewing people who listened to sermons. The study team asked 263 lay people from twenty-eight different congregations, consisting of African Americans, non-Hispanic Europeans and other ethnically mixed individuals to be their teachers. They asked this question, "Teach us how you listen to sermons so that we can help ministers become effective preachers." From their interviews, *Hearing the Sermon: Relationship/Content/Feeling*, by Ronald J. Allen was written as one volume of a four volume series. Allen was also instrumental in the completion of the other three volumes, *Listening to Listeners: Homiletical Case Studies*; *Believing in Preaching: What Listeners Hear in Sermons*; and *Make the Word Come Alive: Lessons from Laity.* This resource was developed as a tool specifically to help preachers understand the factors that influence how people listen to sermons with the intent that they might become more effective in their preaching.

Based on the responses of the listeners, the survey team discovered that each person listens to the message by his or her pastor in one of three ways. There are those that listen based on the content of the message they expect to hear. Others listen based on the relationship that they have with their pastor. Still others respond to the preaching of their pastor based on whether it moves them. Thus, *Hearing the Sermon* from the hearer's perspective is not based on the ability of the speaker but on the relationship that the listener has to the pastor, or on the content that is heard in the message or on how it makes the hearer feel.

Chapter one explains the process by which the team developed their thesis. Of the 263 people surveyed, it was determined that most listeners fall into one category over the other two based on their responses to the interview process. It was also discovered that even though listeners fall into one setting over another, all three settings interact with one another within any given individual. In chapters two through five, the author details his study of each setting indicating what are the characteristics of listening in each setting along with how the settings interact with one another. Equipped with this information, the pastor can answer the question, "What can the preacher do to appeal to the listener on each setting?" (17) The final chapter reflects on how individuals hear the same sermon but based on their setting of ethos, logos, or pathos respond differently.

The strength of this work lies in the fact that the author acknowledges that preaching can and will affect the way people respond. The act of preaching is God's plan for revealing His redemption to mankind. Allen has attempted to aid the preacher in connecting to those who sit

under his tutelage by the means of the weekly preaching event with the insights of how different people hear the sermon. The fallacy of the text lies in the emphasis that the research team has placed on the importance of man's ability rather than God's. For example, the sermon passage used in the text illustrates the point well. It is an allegorical method of preaching that focuses on the social gospel as a means for repentance. The author explains how one should approach preaching the text with regard to those who listen from one of the settings; logos, ethos, or pathos. Although it will be helpful to understand how people hear the sermon, the main purpose of the preacher is to "Preach the Word" from an expositional approach and trust the results to the work of the Holy Spirit. With a proper view of preaching, this text will be helpful to the pastor who desires to communicate the truth of scripture to his congregation.

J. Denny Autrey
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History of the English Calvinistic Baptists from 1771-1892: From John Gill to C. H. Spurgeon. **By Robert W. Oliver. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2006. 410 pages. Hardcover, $26.00.**

Robert Oliver, pastor of the Old Baptist Church in Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, England, recounts the interesting story of English Calvinistic Baptists from the late eighteenth into the nineteenth century. His thorough narrative not only adds to the research on prominent Baptists like John Gill and Andrew Fuller but also introduces individuals typically overlooked in Baptist histories like John Stevens and Benjamin Beddome.

Dividing his work into three sections, Oliver begins his analysis by outlining eighteenth-century developments. Oliver argues that much of the identity of Particular Baptists during the period in question was framed by the confessional stances put forward in the *1689 Confession.* When introducing John Gill, Oliver notes the modifications Gill introduces to the confession that led to the excesses of hyper-Calvinism, something a few Particular Baptist congregations would embrace to their own demise.

But hyper-Calvinism was only one of the three challenges that Oliver identifies for his readers. The debate over open or closed communion from 1772-1781 is masterfully explained by Oliver as he seeks to give more of the context (political, social and denominational) that would lead to even greater debate in the nineteenth century. Oliver also recounts the antinomian controversy with great detail. His narrative and thorough footnotes help the modern reader identify the subtle theological distinctions that were at the heart of this theological debate.

In the second section, Oliver highlights the strong disagreements between key leaders of the Particular Baptists. He delves into often overlooked primary sources to flesh out the nature of the debates. He examines how Andrew Fuller's works arguing for the sufficiency of the

Gospel were challenged by other Baptists like Abraham Booth who took on Fuller's conception of the scope of the atonement, the *ordo salutis*, and the nature of imputation. By the time the reader reaches the third section of Oliver's book, the contexts for the nineteenth-century open communion controversy, the Strict Baptist Magazines and the return of evangelical Calvinism in the ministry of Charles Haddon Spurgeon are well understood.

Oliver's work is built upon his 1986 doctoral dissertation that outlined the development of the English Strict and Particular Baptists from 1770-1850. The footnotes, bibliography and content have all been reworked effectively to demonstrate recent research into the field, but some of the final chapters outside of the chronological scope of the original dissertation do not seem to argue the thesis as well as prior material. In addition, some readers may find the layout confusing at times due to the back and forth interplay between contextual history and biography.

Despite these few weaknesses, Oliver's much needed book helps to thicken the narrative concerning the nature of Calvinism in English Baptist life. Due to the in-depth mining of obscure primary sources, one of the major strengths of this book is the subtleties and nuances in the theology of Particular Baptists that Oliver is able to bring to light. Pointing to the evangelical nature of most Calvinistic Baptists, Oliver's appraisal of the antinomian and hyper-Calvinism controversies will provide greater clarity in the further debate over these issues. It should also give most Baptists reason to pause before utilizing these terms in reference to historical figures without considering the full corpus of their writings.

Oliver's well researched book should be considered mandatory reading for those interested in Baptist history and heritage. As Baptists in the twenty-first century continue to debate how to relate "Baptist" with "Calvinist," Oliver's careful theological and historical analysis should bring further understanding to the deep well of Baptist heritage.

John M. Yeats
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Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament. **By Peter Enns. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005. 200 pages. Softcover, $17.99.**

As indicated in the title, *Inspiration and Incarnation* attempts to deal with interpretive issues that commonly arise in Old Testament study. How can scripture be unique given the many parallels with ancient Near Eastern literature? Is there theological diversity among Old Testament writers? Furthermore, what hermeneutical principles flow from the seemingly unusual manner in which New Testament writers interpret the Old Testament? Peter Enns (Ph.D., Harvard University) boldly addresses these unsettling questions by using the Incarnation as a paradigm for interpretation.

Enns advocates what he calls an "incarnational analogy." Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate, is both fully God and fully man. An Incarnational model of scripture recognizes that God's written Word has both human and divine elements. Whereas evangelicals are comfortable with the latter assertion, they are often unnerved by (or deny outright) the former. The Incarnation paradigm allows for a more honest assessment of problems in the Old Testament and accommodates a positive position by which evangelicals can address interpretive issues while maintaining their theological distinctives. For instance, Paul was guided by the Spirit in his interpretation of the Old Testament but he was also employing common Second Temple hermeneutics.

Enns masterfully balances Old Testament history and exegesis with evangelical theological commitments. The problem of Old Testament studies is that evangelicals have taken a primarily defensive position against the onslaught of historical and literary criticism. Thus, the ultimate goal of this book is to construct a positive interpretive paradigm by which evangelicals can address Old Testament issues in a manner that maintains critical theological commitments as well as academic integrity.

Incarnation and Inspiration offers a critique of common assumptions regarding inspiration. First, inspiration need not imply that the Bible is always unique. In fact, the Bible parallels other ancient sources regarding the flood, legal codes, and literary forms. Liberals and conservatives make the same mistake of seeing these similarities as counting against the inspiration of scripture. The incarnation analogy implies that biblical writers were both culturally situated and moved by the Spirit. Any interpretative method which does not affirm and accommodate both is in error. Second, inspiration doesn't require scripture to speak with one voice on all matters. Enns appeals primarily to differences in the Wisdom literature to argue that the humanity of scripture naturally results in a level of diversity.

Inspiration and Incarnation is an exceptionally organized and accessible book. Chapters are divided to address critical issues in the Old Testament. Each chapter states the particular problem, gives a selection of Bible passages or ancient Near Eastern case-studies which illustrate the point, followed by Enns's proposed solution. Readers who are new to the field are aided by an extensive glossary. Each time a technical word or term is used, it is printed in bold to indicate an entry in the glossary.

While the incarnation analogy is helpful, the book fails to develop this critical comparison. Most notably, Enns spends precious little time clarifying what is meant by the divine aspect of scripture. The conservative reader might find Enns's treatment of the Genesis flood as myth unsettling, as well as his tacit assumption of multiple-meaning. However these cautions are far outweighed by the profound contribution this book makes to biblical studies.

Adam P. Groza
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Jesus and Archaeology. **Edited by James H. Charlesworth. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, xxv + 740 pages. Softcover, $50.00.**

Recent searches for the historical Jesus attempt to set Jesus free from centuries of theological overlay. Ironically, the attempt to set Jesus within his first-century context has tended to recast Jesus in the image of the particular theology of various New Testament scholars of the twenty-first century. While biblical archaeology has emphasized research into Old Testament sites, there has been a quiet trend of research into sites associated with the New Testament period. While archaeology of the second temple period has focused on the Hellenistic and Roman political structure, several scholars are now addressing currents in New Testament studies with the results of archaeological investigation. Unfortunately, these trends have not impacted the wider attempt to place Jesus in his historical context. The publication of *Jesus and Archaeology* solves this problem. This book is an excellent example of the coalescing of archaeological and textual data to address issues of the historical Jesus.

This book is a collection of papers presented at a conference held to celebrate the new millennium. It contains contributions by thirty-one Christian and Jewish scholars in the fields of historic Jesus studies and archaeology of the second temple period. Most of the scholars are either archaeologists or historians. Each contributor excels at presenting their data in the context of the life and times of ancient Palestine during the early Roman period (e.g., during the life of Jesus). All the articles purposefully integrate material culture and text. Several of the contributors purposefully address the context of Jesus' teachings within his cultural and sociological environment.

The book is divided into two major parts: the first part is entitled "Studies in Archaeology." It contains twenty-four essays dealing with the archaeological data. Several essays are site reports (e.g., Sepphoris, Cana, Bethsaida, Mount Tabor, Beth Alpha, Mount Zion, Ramat Hanadiv, En Gedi, and Qumran) or regional reports (e.g., "Between Jerusalem and the Galilee: Samaria in the Time of Jesus"). In addition to site reports. various architectural elements and epigraphic and textual data are discussed. Some essays deal with historical figures (e.g., "Excavating Caiaphas, Pilate, and Simon of Cyrene: Assessing the Literary and Archaeological Evidence"). The second part is entitled "Archaeology and Theology" and contains six articles addressing the historicity of the Gospel of John, early Christology, and the resurrection. An introductory essay on "What is Biblical Archaeology" by A. Biran and a synthetic overview by the editor, "Jesus Research and Archaeology: A New Perspective," provide useful frameworks for the importance of the research for New Testament studies. In addition, Charlesworth provides a conclusion that places Biblical Archaeology of the New Testament within a broader research agenda.

While the book is not a synthetic work, it is still valuable for classroom use as a complementary text for the backgrounds to the life and times of Jesus or Gospel studies. It is well written with the non-special-

ist in mind, providing a selected bibliography, glossary, and index of scripture and other ancient texts. This book is a required reference for every student and scholar of the New Testament. It will provide many new insights into the historical, cultural, and political context of the world of Jesus.

Steven M. Ortiz
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***John.* By Andreas J. Köstenberger. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. 700 pages. Hardcover, $44.99.**

Andreas Köstenberger, professor of New Testament and director of Ph.D. and Th.M. studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, has written a number of significant works on the Gospel of John of various lengths. He therefore brings much previous reflection to the task of writing a significant commentary on John.

Köstenberger presents his commentary as one that examines John with respect to history, theology, and literary art (xi-xii). He finds much evidence in John in favor of its historical reliability and brings this out. Readers, especially conservative readers, will appreciate this attempt to hold together history and theology, while paying attention to helpful literary observations that have come to light and are coming to light through recent focus on the literary dimension of John. At the end of the day, it is Köstenberger's attention to historical background and historical reliability that stands out. He defends the reliability of John at a time when this is not popular in the broader academy of biblical scholarship. Sometimes he does this by providing evidence that John could be correct in his knowledge about a place like Bethesda (177-78). Another way he does this is by providing evidence that John and the Synoptic Gospels agree about the day on which Jesus was crucified (537, 551). Helpful footnotes direct one to places where one could do further research on these points. The indexes are also quite thorough and helpful for locating information relevant to many topics of interest.

Given the multiple commentaries that are available, this commentary will be a valuable addition for those who care about historical reliability issues in John. It is also a welcome addition in the Evangelical tradition in that it makes reference to recent scholarship through a consistent use of substantive footnotes. It is more up-to-date in this respect than reliable Evangelical commentaries like those of D. A. Carson and Leon Morris. The judicious use of footnotes also means that this commentary is quite accessible for a variety of readers. Pastors and teachers will especially benefit from Köstenberger's distillation in one place of much useful information that one can bring to bear on the interpretation and proclamation of the Gospel of John.

Paul M. Hoskins
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Jonathan Edwards at 300: Essays on the Tercentenary of His Birth. **Edited by Harry S. Stout, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Caleb J. D. Maskell. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005. 175 pages. Softcover, $29.95.**

This book is a compilation of papers which were originally presented at the Library of Congress conference celebrating the tercentenary of the birth of Jonathan Edwards in October, 2003. Of the half a dozen conferences that sprung up around the county that year in observance of the tercentenary, this one was the most prestigious and scholarly, consisting of major names in the field of American Religious History (Mark Noll, George Marsden), senior specialists in the field of Edwards's research (Sang Hyun Lee, Stephen J. Stein), and scholars who have made substantial contributions to the Edwards's research in the last decade (Douglas A. Sweeney, Ava Chamberlain, Gerald R. McDermott, and Rachel Wheeler). The book represents a fine survey of the cutting-edge research going on in Edwards's studies at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The volume consists of thirteen essays categorized under various thematic headings such as the "Theology of History," "Scripture," "Society," and "Race." An interesting group of essays in the latter two headings reveal Edwards's response to the various social and racial issues of the day, issues such as a sexual scandal in Northampton, the relationship between whites and Native Americans in Stockbridge, and the growing problem of slavery in the colonies. Ava Chamberlain's article "Jonathan Edwards and the Politics of Sex in Eighteenth-Century Northampton" documents a scandalous case of fornication in Edwards's congregation in the 1740s and his handling of the case by means of church discipline. The study paints a fascinating portrait of how Edwards in particular and New England society in general handled moral lapses in the church, and reveals Edwards's conservative and authoritarian stance in handling the situation, a stance that contributed to his later dismissal from his Northampton church. Rachel Wheeler's essay, "Lessons from Stockbridge: Jonathan Edwards and the Stockbridge Indians," tests the limits of what we can really know about Edwards's influence on the Stockbridge Indians and their influence on him based upon the historical sources. She makes an interesting case that his mission to the Stockbridge Indians in the final years of his life influenced the degree to which he emphasized the equality of human depravity (and hence the equality of all people) in his work on *Original Sin*. John Saillant in his essay "African American Engagements with Edwards in the Era of the Slave Trade" chronicles the fascinating popularity of Edwardsean Calvinism among American blacks and abolitionist writers in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century America. Together, these essays reveal an Edwards thoroughly enmeshed in the life of eighteenth-century New England, rather than the more well-known Edwards of Calvinistic speculation and revivalist piety.

The section that has the most potential for fruitful scholarship I believe is found in the three essays under the category of "Scripture."

Douglas Sweeney's study, "'Longing for More and More of It'? The Strange Career of Jonathan Edwards's Exegetical Exertions," calls scholars to remember that Edwards was a man of the Bible first and foremost, and that if we want to understand his theology we need to understand his handling of scripture, his hermeneutics, and where Edwards is located in the history of biblical interpretation. Robert Brown's work "The Sacred and the Profane Connected: Edwards, the Bible, and Intellectual Culture," highlights Edwards's response to the newer trajectories in eighteenth-century intellectual culture, including his lengthy defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, as well as his defense of the doctrine of the hell based (interestingly) on Newtonian physics and cosmology. Stephen Stein, who has studied Edwards's interpretation of scripture for over thirty years, presents a darker portrait of Edwards, showing how he interpreted passages of scripture which involved violence. His essay, "Jonathan Edwards and the Cultures of Biblical Violence," reveals an Edwards that is not necessarily complimentary to "morally sensitive individuals" (63). In his notebooks we find Edwards justifying Esther's request to hang all of Haman's ten sons (Esth. 9:13) because God had previously declared that he was against the Amalekites "from generation to generation" (Exod. 17:16). We also see Edwards justifying Herod's decree to destroy the young children of Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16) because they refused "to entertain [Mary] in their houses when her travail came upon her" (Edwards's quote). While we might not sanction such exegetical conclusions, an analysis of them in the context of Edwards's theodicy might reveal an Edwards that is not so harsh.

The world of Edwards's scholarship is ever expanding. One who wishes to read a work that summarizes the state of current research on Edwards need only to look at this excellent volume.

Robert W. Caldwell III
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Marriage as Covenant. **By John K. Tarwater. Lanham: University Press of America, 2006. 136 pages. Softcover, $26.95.**

There is no disputing the fact that marriage is in the midst of crisis. Christian and non-Christian alike are affected by its decline. John Tarwater attempts to build up the institution of marriage by showing it to be a binding and God ordained covenant. His perspective displays a high view of marriage and scripture. Tarwater begins by seeking the guidelines for covenant in scripture and then looks to it to examine whether marriage should be considered a covenant. Various models for marriage are examined with final emphasis given to Gordon Hugenberger's Biblical-Concept Approach which is scholastically sound, based on scripture, and effective in dealing with modern hermeneutic concerns.

In a clear and systematic way, Tarwater identifies the essential elements of covenant and relates them specifically to marriage. Key verses throughout the Old and New Testaments are studied, and compared

with related verses and concepts in order to delineate real meaning and application. This is the strength of the work, showing the continuity of scripture and the compatibility of regulations described therein. The author is thorough in his examination of the creation account and the establishment of marriage as a covenant in these initial verses. He sees the issues surrounding his topic clearly and applies them to the various issues of the day, such as homosexuality, divorce, and gender roles. While basing his conclusions on scripture, he is eager to address modern concerns the crisis of marriage is causing in the American church and U.S. civil law.

Tarwater binds himself to scripture and literally applies his conclusions. The high divorce rate shows that marriage as covenant is not the perspective of a large portion of the population. The book is a clear teaching tool defining covenant and showing how and why marriage should be viewed in this way. He explains that if marriage is proven to be a covenant, modeled after God's definition in scripture and His relationship with His people, divorce is not an option. In order to prove this position, he addresses the various scriptures in the Old and New Testaments which seem to make allowance for divorce and explains his view of why these verses are often misunderstood and should not be applied in this manner.

While Tarwater is thorough, understands the issues, and makes clear application, he fails to answer some key questions raised by his conclusions. For example, he contends that covenants are accompanied by a sign, which in the case of marriage would be sexual consummation. Believing that the sign of the marriage covenant is sexual consummation, and there is no exception for divorce, the question of sexual promiscuity begs to be answered. Can the promiscuous person have covenants with many partners? Tarwater rightly explains that marriage is not simply a civil affirmation, but a covenant before God with responsibility and consequences. Marriage is a covenant ordained by God, but how does the free will of man fit into this picture? When a marriage covenant is established through sexual union that does not fit biblical guidelines of equally yoked believers, how is the issue of covenant to be understood? While Tarwater takes great care to answer many questions of interest, he leaves others unanswered, notably on remarriage, divorce when unbelieving spouses choose to leave, unwed mothers, abusive relationships, and consequences for the breaking of the covenant.

Instead, Tarwater takes time to discuss the order of marriage as described through gender issues of role assignment and equality in marriage. He understands and explains some of the debate between egalitarians and complementarians and draws the correct conclusion that this evangelical debate is tied to the creation account and covenant marriage. While there is a strong link and real interest in the topic, he might have dealt more thoroughly with the further implications of marriage and divorce before moving on to these issues.

Ashley D. Smith
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Old Testament Turning Points: The Narratives That Shaped A Nation. **By Victor H. Matthews. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005. 204 pages. Softcover, $18.99.**

This present work attempts to track the key turning points in the history of Israel and the recurrent themes that grow from them. Victor Matthews highlights eight key points in the history of Israel that help to form the foundation for their story. Understanding that this is not precisely a book on Old Testament themes, but rather an examination of moments in time that changed the course of a nation somewhat helps to explain the noteworthy absence of the impact of prophecy on the nation. However, since the title suggests that the book examines narratives that shaped a nation, the inclusion of the concept of redemption (messianic hope) would strengthen the work.

On a positive note, Matthews does a good job with the historical background of the narratives. Also, within each chapter, Matthews highlights a number of motifs that grow out of the main narrative being addressed. These motifs, Matthews suggests, are the means by which the story is imparted. Matthews does a good job of providing supplementary material to substantiate the chapters. Charts are frequent and generally helpful for the reader. Additionally, Matthews works hard to portray Israel in its cultural and geographical context, which is admirable. At times however, the connections to the Ancient Near East seem stretched. The works cited section, while extensive, fails to interact with some of the more noteworthy authors within the field. Instead, by far the most often cited author in the notes is Matthews himself. He cites his own works more than twenty times in the book.

Matthews tends to minimize the role of God's providence in the text and history of Israel. For example, the author does not interpret the serpent in Genesis 3 as Satan, but simply "another of the animals that populate the garden," who simply gives Eve the opportunity to investigate her own "intellectual curiosity." Similarly, he views the response of Adam and Eve to the question raised by the serpent not as sin, but simply a "rite of passage from childhood to adulthood." Thus, he concludes that the response of the man and woman has actually prepared them for "life outside Eden, where clothing is a mark of status, gender, and economic conditions." Moreover, the author concludes that Eden was an improper and "unsuitable place" for Adam and Eve and had they "never been expelled from Eden, then the effort that is the basis for most human achievement as well as good and bad actions, would not exist." In other words, their sin was beneficial to both them and mankind. Finally, Matthews is subtly critical of the God-ordained roles of Adam and Eve. He claims that "peace and contentment can be found in . . . a personal effort to rise above the need for dominance over others, either politically, economically, or sexually." In a similar manner, Matthews minimizes the role of divine sovereignty in his explanations of the transitions of authority from Saul to David and David to Solomon, the role of the Ark of the Covenant, and the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah in favor of more anthropocentric explanations.

Matthews's moderate view on the authorship of the books appears in nearly every chapter, arguing for multiple authorship of the Pentateuch, Kings, and Chronicles and questioning the traditional view of authorship on other passages. More egregiously, at times, the author even questions the accuracy of the text. He accuses the authors of the text of being inaccurate (63, 76, 84, 105), agenda-driven (84), biased (111), and not reporting the events accurately (139).

Overall, the book is at times both interesting and frustrating to read. As far as tracking the events that changed the course of history for God's people, Matthews does an adequate job. However, what's missing is the acknowledgement of the sovereign, guiding hand of God throughout Israel's history. That one truth assures readers today that God's people were not just stumbling throughout the Middle East looking for a home, but in fact were supernaturally led by a loving God who is guiding them to an ultimate hope in Christ.

Deron J. Biles
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The Original Story: God, Israel, and the World. **By John Barton and Julia Bowden. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 334 pages. Softcover, $20.00.**

"All features considered, *The Original Story* is one of the best guidebooks to the Hebrew Bible now available." That is the quote offered by the publishers of this survey Old Testament. Unfortunately, that praise is hyperbolic.

The book is written for beginning students and does have some helpful components. Sidebars, pictures, and illustrations are abundant and the glossary is helpful for anyone new to the study of the Old Testament.

However, at times, the authors seem to struggle with the attempt to write to an elementary audience about complex topics. The book is marked by simple vocabulary and colloquialisms (with words like "dogged," "fuzzy," "gloomy," "tussled," "scrappy," and "peters out"), reading like it was written by someone with more training in education than in theology. The authors do not interact with many noted Old Testament scholars, especially those who hold differing views. Often they approach difficulties with a bias that leaves little room for belief in the absolute truth of the text, and in fact, they seem to discount the possibility. Sadly, this reference gives impressionable students license to make sweeping theological assumptions without proof and without considering evidence to the contrary.

By far, the most common ingredients in the text are the statements questioning the accuracy of the Bible. The authors question the authorship of the Pentateuch (40, 44, 60, 82), Job (74), Psalms (33), Proverbs (32), and Isaiah (44, 192-96) in general; and Genesis 1-11 (122), Adam and Eve (121-22), the stories of Noah (61, 121-22), Abraham (61), Moses

and the ten commandments (86), David and Goliath (121-22), Jonah (119), and Daniel (121-22) in particular. In fact, the further you read in the text the more you discover how little of the Bible the authors actually believe. They question creation in favor of science (49-50), claim that an attempt to date the ten commandments to the time of Moses is "a deliberate attempt to gain status for them" (86), express their opinion that it is "highly doubtful" that David and Solomon ever reigned over an empire (133), advocate that the people of Israel did not go into exile (145), question the truthfulness of the decree of Cyrus (157), equate prophetic visions to "hallucinations," (195), and compare believing that God actually spoke to the serpent to believing in Santa Claus (121).

Ironically, one of the most cogent criticisms of this work is raised by the authors themselves. They acknowledge that one of the most difficult questions to answer for a minimalist is the question of the degree of accuracy of the text (121-22). Who determines which parts of scripture are true and which are not? In the end, the question remains unanswered for them. Their final conclusion to the question of the formation of scripture is "we can never be certain we got it right" (300).

In the end, the publishers did get one point right. This book is "very readable." Unfortunately, anyone interested in a survey of the Old Testament that affirms the supernatural origin and inerrant nature of scripture won't like what he or she read.

Deron J. Biles
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Pastoral Care and Counseling with Latino/as. **By R. Esteban Montilla and Ferney Medina. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006. 146 pages. Softcover, $ 16.00.**

As the Latino/a population in the U.S. grows faster than the projected estimates, the need for effective ways to minister to people of Latino/Hispanic heritage becomes increasingly urgent. Therefore, *Pastoral Care and Counseling with Latino/as* is a timely and relevant book. Montilla and Medina use the terms Latino/a and Hispanic interchangeably throughout the book. However, they have preferred the use of Latino/a as evidenced by the title of the book. The authors are well qualified to write this book due to their educational, professional, and ministerial training, which includes pastoral experience, board certification in chaplaincy, and pastoral counseling. Additionally, their Latino/a heritage gives them a unique experiential vantage point to address the issues presented in the book.

Montilla and Medina strongly and correctly emphasize that "the Latino/a population is a polyculture combining a heterogeneous and multicolored group of people" (6) that include a variety of ethnicities and backgrounds. They provide an overview of the Latino/a culture and emphasize the collectivistic aspect of this group of people and the importance of community and family relationships. They further recog-

nize that as a diverse group, Latino/a people have diverse expressions of spirituality including Roman Catholicism, evangelicalism, and religious syncretism. Therefore, they contend that when attempting to minister to such a diverse population, counselors need to have "humility" and to be "culturally sensitive" (18).

The book discusses characteristics of pastoral counselors and presents "a biblical model of pastoral care and counseling" based on an understanding of Isador Baumgartner's pastoral counseling model from Jesus' encounter with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. The authors encourage readers to minister to Latino/as from an ecological perspective, thus considering life in the context of the community. Additionally, they deal with the issue of suffering by using both biblical examples (i.e., Job) and case studies.

Chapter 8, "A Latino/a View of Human Sexuality" and chapter 9, "Caring for the Family," are very practical and insightful, particularly to those not familiar with the unique family dynamics of the Latino/a culture. The authors did an excellent job in describing the idiosyncrasies and elements of the culture. These chapters will assist readers not only to better understand interactions among Latino/a couples and families but also to better relate to them as counselors.

Montilla and Medina boldly address the issue of race relations in America and how Latino/as are affected negatively as a minority group. Some of the authors' theological interpretations at times may resemble liberation theology. For instance, they state "our faith is about restoring those who have been historically marginalized" (58) and propose the use of education as "a liberating act" (75). Nevertheless, readers will gain a deeper perspective that comes from within the Latino/a community. Moreover, they describe Latino/as as "outcast and marginalized" (49). They use the parable of the good Samaritan to draw some similarities between the Samaritan and Latino/as. They contend that the Samaritan was "himself a marginalized person who had experienced the pain of discrimination and racism. He understood what it meant to be oppressed and exploited" (69). Therefore, in chapter 10, as they provide "pastoral strategies for issues of discrimination and racism," the authors contend that Latino/as could benefit from the use of "a healthy cultural paranoia" (127), which is "a state of alertness" (127) as they live and interact with the dominant cultural group in America.

Overall, this book will prove to be a valuable resource for those involved in providing care and counseling to Latino/as. Readers will acquire a broader understanding of the Latino/a culture and practical considerations when working with them. Due to the brevity of the book, 146 pages, and the number of topics addressed by the authors, some issues were only addressed superficially; nonetheless, readers can look at the book's extensive bibliography (133-45) for further reading and research.

Elias Moitinho
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Picturing Christian Witness. **By Stanley Skreslet. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006. 261 pages. Softcover, $24.99.**

In *Picturing Christian Witness*, Stanley Skreslet seeks to renew a New Testament theology of Christian mission through the use of visual images. To accomplish this, his work examines the mission practice of Jesus' followers in the New Testament and illustrates these practices with appropriate visual images. The five images he selects are announcing good news, sharing Christ with friends, crossing social barriers, shepherding sheep, and cooperating in planting and building. He includes thirty-one figures to illustrate his work (xiii-xv).

Skreslet has selected *personal* images of mission over *corporate* images because he perceives an imbalance in previous studies in favor of the corporate images. Additionally, the choice of personal images offers several advantages that may aid followers of Christ in their attempts to share their faith. By focusing on personal and individual images, he can depict ordinary Christians, growing Christians, and imperfect Christians, each of whom seek to fulfill Christ's mission. Almost all Christians involved in mission perceive themselves in one of these three categories, and Skreslet anticipates helping them.

Skreslet aims to offer a theology of mission capable of moving Christians into the twenty-first century. He believes that new, fresh images may help him accomplish this worthy goal. To achieve this end, he attempts to apply the New Testament more directly to the visual depiction of Christian mission. He argues that past images of Christian mission depicted so-called Western superiority (227). For this reason, the Christian world, especially in ecumenical circles, needs new images that set aside the images of the past in favor of images that will chart a course for the future. His study of the New Testament leads him to conclude that no single image dominated the New Testament, but that early Christians used a variety of images to depict mission. Consequently, interpreters should not ascribe this diversity to postmodernism. In the end, Skreslet defines Christian mission as action, and specifically, the actions of "announcing Good News, sharing Christ with friends, interpreting, shepherding, and planting/building" (236).

Several items commend Skreslet's work. To begin with, the figures Skreslet includes in his work accomplish his purpose. The reviewer is unremarkably ordinary in his appreciation for art, and Skreslet's figures instructed his uninitiated mind and uninitiated heart (see especially figures 6, 9, 16, 17, 18, 21). Readers/viewers who are as uninitiated with art as the reviewer will appreciate Skreslet's interpretation of the figures he uses. His use of figures to advance mission theology and practice reminds readers/viewers of the power of images in the teaching of mission. The reviewer will consider expanding his use of images in the classroom.

Readers will find some trouble with Skreslet's naiveté and assumptions. He assumes that images from previous eras, even some biblical images, communicate values at odds with the gospel (19). Among these, he numbers warfare images. While most Christians would consider

images of the crusades as out of bounds for Christian use, the warfare image is entirely appropriate. Christ has little problem with it for He has promised to return on a white stallion to defeat evil. Warfare unbiblically conceived always deserves Christian condemnation, but warfare conceived of biblically deserves support from both the theological and artistic communities. If Skreslet dismisses images that offend non-Christians, he will eventually find himself dismissing his own images, for each of his images visualize the insufficiency of non-Christians religions. His images also visualize the need non-Christians have for the church to proclaim the good news, their need for Christian friends to share Christ with them, their need of shepherding into the fold, their need to become a part of Christ's new building, and their need for the Lord to harvest them in his new crop of eternal life. There is no end to the concessions the world will demand of Christian images once Christians back away from legitimate biblical images.

Despite this, Skreslet has offered a unique work that should enhance the reflection upon and practice of Christian mission. If readers/viewers take his work seriously, and if they can grow in their appreciation of visual arts, they will help Skreslet achieve the purpose behind his commendable work.

David Mills
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Preaching With Power. **By Michael Duduitt. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006. 256 pages. Softcover, $16.99.**

Among today's homileticians, Michael Duduitt is no stranger. He is the founding publisher and the editor of "Preaching Magazine." Those familiar with the magazine, will recognize the interviews by Duduitt, published in the magazine during this past decade, interviews which he credits as being among "the most important and popular features." This compilation contains interviews of twenty preachers whom he calls "dynamic outstanding communicators with great influences of preaching."

The introduction includes a summary of the book. Built around twenty interviewees, the book dedicates each chapter to one of these evangelical pastors known to be "classic expositors, creative innovators, and key figures" such as, John MacArthur, Haddon Robinson, Adrian Rogers, David Jeremiah, Rick Warren, T. D. Jakes, Jerry Falwell, John Maxwell, Brian McLaren, Ed Young Jr. and Andy Stanley, just to name a few. Every chapter starts with a short introduction about the person interviewed, then proceeds with standard questions built around his philosophy of preaching, moving toward discussing how these preachers prepare and plan their sermons, discovering who influenced them and their preaching and then concluding with what they would say to each of us regarding preaching. In the first chapter, Duduitt attempts to define Expository Preaching in an interview with Brian Chappel. The rest of the nineteen interviews are arranged around a specific theme or topic he believes best suits the preacher and his preaching context.

As a firm believer that one of the best ways of learning is to examine and watch the ones that have gone before us and accomplished it themselves, I strongly recommend this book.

Ilie Soritau
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Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Ethical Decision Making in Matthew 5-7. **By Charles H. Talbert, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. 181 pages. Softcover, $17.95.**

This text is a scholarly study of the Sermon on the Mount which interprets Jesus' primary intention in His presentation to develop the character of His disciples and prepare them for making moral decisions, based on that character. Part 1 is a brief treatment of such critical issues as Matthew's relation to Judaism, authorship, the structure of the sermon, and the function of character development and decision making. He also attends to the issue of the supposed legalism of this Gospel. Of great interest to the author is that of examining the possible understanding and reactions of the hearers and later followers of Jesus' "sermon." He projects what those "auditors" could have understood by showing what contemporary philosophers (Greek, Roman, Jewish, Egyptian, etc.), or other writers of that general epoch had expressed of similar concepts. Also, since most of the auditors were Jewish or had knowledge of Jewish traditions, Talbert frequently reviews the Old Testament background for many of the Lord's sayings in the Sermon.

The primary technique of the book is the exploration of chapters 5 to 7 of Matthew's Gospel, applying a formula for dealing with each section. That formula consists of (1) utilizing exegetical study of the text, (2) making reflections from contemporary writers and thinkers to project the possible understanding of the "auditors" of the Sermon, (3) application of Jesus' teachings as they pointed to the character development of His disciples and would-be followers, and (4) how those teachings prepared the disciples to live a life of righteousness (in contrast to that of the Jewish leaders—Matt. 5:20-48). Perhaps the genius of this work is that the author consistently interpreted Jesus' intention in the Sermon to be the exposure of His disciples to the necessary ingredients of godly character and to prepare them for being moral agents conscious of God's original intention in much of the moral law of the Old Testament. However, a weakness in the author's presentation is that at times the formula, which he so consistently utilized, seems a bit forced, but not to the degree that it detracts from the growing conviction in the reader that this is a plausible key for understanding the whole Sermon on the Mount.

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The Reformation Study Bible. **Edited by R. C. Sproul. Lake Mary, FL: Ligonier Ministries, 2005. xvii + 1948 pages. Hardcover, $39.99; Leather bound, $69.99.**

Through its textual and theological apparatuses, *The Reformation Study Bible* (RSB) seeks to present a reformed or Calvinistic version of the study Bible. Under the general editorship of R. C. Sproul, Presbyterian author and long time chairman of Ligonier Ministries, the RSB features the *English Standard Version* (ESV) translation of the Bible (2001). The RSB apparatuses contain many features common to study Bibles: thousands of exegetical notes, a cross-referencing system (from the ESV), introductions and outlines to each biblical book, several dozen black and white maps in the text, and a seventy-two page concordance. The unique features of the RSB include the ninety-six theological mini-essays which appear throughout the text addressing issues such as the image of God, the Trinity, and the church's mission in the world. These essays are packed with theology from a reformed point of view. Also noteworthy are the "Interpretive Difficulties" sections found in many of the book-introductions which address some of the more thorny issues of evangelical biblical scholarship: the documentary hypothesis and Genesis, the date of the Exodus, the unity of Isaiah, the chronology of the events presented in the synoptic gospels, and the various approaches to interpreting Revelation.

The theology found in the notes of the RSB is decidedly reformed, a feature of which any Baptist who picks up the work should be aware. A perusal of the more than fifty editors and contributors to the notes reveals only two Baptist theologians that I am aware of (Roger Nicole and Wayne Grudem), though admittedly there may be more. Most Baptists will welcome the conservative theological vision found in the RSB's notes on the doctrines of God, justification, and scripture. Other notes however will not elicit the applause of many Baptists. For instance, the reformed teaching of limited atonement, an age-old point of contention between high Calvinistic Baptists and other Baptists, is clearly affirmed in the RSB's notes. The "world" that God so loved (John 3:16) and whose sins are propitiated by Christ (1 John 2:2) is not everyone indiscriminately but the world of the elect. God desires not "all people [indiscriminately] to be saved" (1 Tim. 2:4) but "all types of people" to be saved (1752). We read in the notes that, "When 'the world' is said to be loved and redeemed (John 3:16, 17; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 John 2:2), that 'world' is the great number of God's elect scattered worldwide, in every nation" (858). While this is evidence of "high" Calvinism among the editorship, the following should be pointed out: double predestination is not affirmed in the notes (i.e., reprobation is merely God "not choosing" the non-elect; 1630), Christians are called to preach the gospel to the world (ibid.), and Christian worship should not be restricted only to the non-instrumental singing of the Psalms (1734). These positions indicate that the editors are aiming at representing the reformed evangelical mainstream, not its parochial fringe.

Other markers of reformed theology–such as the affirmation of a covenant of works, the three-fold purposes of the Law, and an amillennial eschatology (found in the introduction to the book of Revelation)–would disturb the sensibilities of any Baptist who has imbibed a dispensational vision of salvation history. Similarly, Baptists concerned about pure Baptist ecclesiology will not be pleased with the affirmation (1623) that all three modes of baptism (immersion, dipping, and sprinkling) are consistent with scripture. However, the essay on "infant baptism" (37) does interestingly engage the Baptist position on believers baptism in a relatively non-polemical way, evidence that the editors are aware of the potential market the RSB might have among reformed Baptists.

There are no neutral study Bibles. Each of them has a certain audience in mind and a certain theological orientation it seeks to promote. This one is no exception. The RSB unabashedly seeks to promote a reformed reading of Holy Writ, and at times does not deal adequately with other alternative readings. At the same time, it is an excellent resource for Christians from the reformed corridors of evangelicalism who want to know the Bible better and to be introduced to the deeper levels of theology. As one who has affinities for the broader outlines of a Baptist reformed theology, I would recommend this study Bible to Christians who want an introductory theological grounding in the scriptures. For those, however, who have some maturity in their knowledge of scripture–long-time Bible students, M.Div. students, ministers, Bible educators in colleges and seminaries–the best Bibles I would recommend are still the ones that just come with the naked biblical text!

Robert W. Caldwell III
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Religion, Politics, and the Christian Right: Post 9/11 Powers and American Empire. **By Mark Lewis Taylor. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005. 192 pages. Softcover, $16.00.**

In *Religion, Politics, and the Christian Right*, Mark Lewis Taylor argues that the Christian right has leveraged post 9/11 nationalism to promote imperialistic and authoritarian policies that are more Manichean than Christian (24). The Christian Right is defined consistently throughout the book as a subset of the broader conservative and neo-conservative segments of the Republican Party. This religious subset has seized upon terrorist events to promote a political romanticism: A myth that America is a unique nation with a cause that transcends her boarders.

The events of 9/11 united two fundamentally divergent segments of the broadly conservative political landscape: Neo-conservatives and religious conservatives. While divergent in religious conviction both are united in their adherence to American exceptionalism which, following 9/11, resulted in two socio-political phenomena—belonging and expectation.

The Christian Right promotes an ideology and political agenda wherein Americans are a special nation whose calling is unique. This

calling, to conquer evil, and to spread democracy and freedom, contributes to American unilateral foreign policy. In addition to a sense of belonging, exceptionalism promotes a social expectation of economic optimism and material gain. Thus, exceptionalism blends a concoction of nationalism and consumerism resulting in unilateralism and corporate greed, both promoted by the ideology of the Christian Right.

American romantics take the myth of exceptionalism from cold war political rhetoric. Neo-conservatives are committed to interventionist foreign policy yet without the communist threat of the cold war they lack an effective message to leverage public opinion. However, following the events of 9/11, the religious right was able to wed neo-conservative ideas with the sacred language of evangelical theology: Divine favor and purpose, good versus evil, faith and patriotism, prayer, etc. In addition to sacred language, sacred symbols were utilized for a rally-around-the-flagpole effect. The cross and the flag became inseparable symbols of political and military power. Consequently, two cultures collided, resulting in a religious culture of war, torture, power, and domination.

Taylor's recommendation is two-fold. First, the myth of romanticism must be deconstructed. Second, a new myth of radical liberalism must be created, in which the values of power, purchase, and domination are exchanged for the counter-imperial values of liberation, reconciliation, and peace.

Taylor's assessment is simultaneously attractive and disappointing. It is a worthy project to separate the Christian faith from unrighteous political appropriation. The Christian community should think critically about its role in poverty, war, and consumerism. Evangelical Christians in particular must come to terms with the implications of the Gospel in regard to social justice.

At his best Taylor comes across in the vein of John Howard Yoder, seeing the Christian community as that which defies empire. The power of the Gospel, on this view, does not easily coincide with militarism and injustice. At other times he argues like Gustavo Gutierrez, appearing to reduce the atonement to a moral example and (by way of a naturalistic historical interpretation) negating the ongoing sovereignty of God over the affairs of humankind. Most troubling is that Taylor sees the Gospel as a message to appropriate rather than proclaim (158). Furthermore, his hermeneutic of suspicion comes across, at times, as conspiracy.

Despite its noble aim, this book is disappointing. For all his talk of myth construction, Taylor offers little as to what would ground his myth or make it more beneficial than that of the political romantics. Without a correspondence theory of truth, he is left with two rival theories and no readily available manner of adjudication.

While Taylor has a legitimate critique of the Christian Right, he doesn't connect his socio-political interpretation with scripture, or indeed to reference the scripture in any substantial way. This fact will undoubtedly undermine the value of the book for some pastors and sem-

inary students. Despite its shortcomings, this book is a thorough (if ultimately failed) critique of religion and politics that is worth reading.

Adam P. Groza
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Social-Science Commentary on the Letters of Paul. **By Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006. 419 pages. Softcover, $27.00.**

In this commentary, Malina and Pilch have undertaken the noble task of establishing the first-century Mediterranean socio-historical context of seven Pauline letters they have identified as "authentic" (1-3). According to the authors, Paul functions as a "change agent" who redefines the boundaries of Judaism in terms of the social norms of the Jesus-group, or the ἐκκλησία (20-21). As a result, Paul then serves as a messenger to Israelites who live in the Diaspora "among the nations" rather than as an apostle to the nations themselves (17-20). Paul's Jesus-groups operate within the Mediterranean patron-client system, whereby God functions as their benevolent benefactor, and group cohesion is maintained by cultivating an "honor-shame" mentality based upon communal mores and ethics.

Malina and Pilch have rightly focused on determining the socio-historical setting of the Pauline letters since they do indeed function as occasional documents which address specific groups with specific needs. To their credit, the authors have clearly stated their methodology and their presuppositions in the introduction and have abided by these principles throughout the rest of the work (28-29). In the "reading scenarios" at the end of the commentary, they also clearly define and categorize their terminology, thereby providing a helpful discussion for exegetes or students unfamiliar with social-scientific jargon (331-409).

Despite this clear organizational structure and concise writing, the book's methodology does exhibit some fundamental flaws. For instance, the redefinition of the term ἔθνή as a designation for Israelites residing among non-Israelites proves problematic. First of all, the discussion of ἔθνή lacks proper research to show that it has the range to refer to Israelites rather than non-Israelites/Gentiles in the context of Hebraic or even early Christian literature. More importantly, the primary sources cited never discuss ἔθνή specifically and incorporate only Greek and Latin synonyms into the discussion along with other works by ancient historians that broadly comment upon the process of Hellenization (17-20). Second, Malina and Pilch themselves even use the term arbitrarily to mean both Israelite and non-Israelite depending upon the nature of their argument (197-98, 265). Above all, in this commentary the authors have succeeded only in proving that ethnocentrism existed in the ancient Mediterranean world and not the fact that ἔθνή refers to Israelites in the Diaspora.

Another fundamental problem in their methodology arises when they attempt to classify all the occasional aspects of a particular letter into

rigid sociological categories which leave little room for distinctiveness or diversity. To Malina and Pilch, all Israelites seem to fit into two broad categories: those who practice Judean customs and those who do not (198). This categorization appears to oversimplify both the similarity and the diversity present within Jewish groups such as evidenced among the Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and other sects. Moreover, the authors' classification of Israelites into Judeans or Hellenists also appears to resurrect the debate concerning Palestinian versus Hellenistic Judaism which has long been laid to rest by Martin Hengel. Nevertheless, Malina and Pilch have reopened this debate primarily because it serves their purpose of redefining ἔθνη, not because any new or more convincing cultural evidence has surfaced.

Overall, the approach taken by this commentary reflects the new trend within scholarship to pay closer attention to the sociological and psychological background of biblical documents. In this work the reader does encounter some of the problems associated with the social-scientific approach, such as the use of modern social and psychological categories to explain first-century life and the apparent need to minimize the distinctions within various first-century cultural groups. Moreover, the problems associated with this methodology become most evident in this commentary when the authors attempt to redefine ἔθνη without much historical or linguistic warrant and then allow their new definition to guide their exegesis. Despite these methodological problems, one should read still read this commentary to gain a broader perspective of life in the ancient Mediterranean world and to keep abreast of current scholarly discussion in the New Testament field.

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Three Views on Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism. **Edited by James Stamoolis. Counterpoints. Edited by Stanley N. Gundry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004. 294 pages. Softcover, $17.99.**

The topic of this book is Eastern Orthodoxy and evangelicalism. The question explored—"Are Eastern Orthodoxy and evangelicalism compatible?"—is answered from several points of view. Each chapter consists of an essay addressing the question, an evaluation of that essay by the other four contributors, and a conclusion by the original author.

Bradley Nassif writes chapter 1 from an Orthodox perspective. He has an appreciation for evangelicalism and answers the question, "Yes." In other words, he makes a case for compatibility. He clarifies that one's answer depends on one's perspective. To answer the question from an evangelical perspective suggests maybe the two groups are compatible, but to answer from the Orthodox perspective leads to a "carefully qualified no" (83). Ultimately, Nassif's yes seems to mean maybe, maybe even no. Such ambiguity is a major weakness of the book not only in this chapter but throughout. With the exception of Nassif, who identifies four key aspects of evangelical identity, the contributors fail to

define well one of the two key terms in the book—evangelicalism—nor do they seem to use the term as Nassif describes it. In the end, one is left wondering not only whether evangelicalism and Orthodoxy are compatible, but what exactly an evangelical is.

Michael Horton writes chapter 2 from an evangelical perspective and answers the question, "No." By contrast, Vladimir Berzonsky answers the question, "No," from an Orthodox viewpoint in chapter 3. Here the confusion of what it means to be an evangelical continues. On the one hand, Berzonsky seems to think that all evangelicals practice credobaptism rather than paedobaptism. On the other hand, Horton suggests that Baptists and the many other evangelicals who see infant baptism as a corruption of the Gospel according to the scriptures are outside "that general camp called 'evangelical'" (188). In fact, a careful reading of Horton's essay and responses would suggest that he would rather talk about magisterial Protestantism than evangelicalism. At least, these two contributors agree that no means no.

George Hancock-Stefan writes chapter 4 from an evangelical background and answers the question, "Maybe." Although his appeal to personal experience somewhat softens his argument, he boldly identifies key points at which the Orthodox and many evangelicals disagree. He also moves beyond theological issues to socio-political and cultural issues that divide the two groups.

If Nassif's essay is the most conciliatory of the five, Hancock-Stefan's essay is probably the most intense as it describes difficult issues that separate the two groups. Indeed, it clarifies what may be the key issue: different concepts of salvation in relation to "baptism and its significance and the time when it is applied" (213). This issue separates evangelicals and the Orthodox as much as it separates various evangelical groups. Nevertheless, after identifying such difficult questions, Hancock-Stefan's "maybe" seems really to mean no unless the Orthodox are willing to become evangelicals.

Finally, Edward Rommen writes chapter 5 from an Orthodox viewpoint also answering the question, "Maybe." Much like the previous contributor, his maybe is really not a maybe. He kindly reminds evangelicals that they hold doctrines and practices that the Orthodox church (read "the true church") "has formally rejected as unorthodox" (250). Again the reader is left with the impression that "maybe" means no.

As J. I. Packer contends in the book's foreword, there is a long way to go in the evangelical/Orthodox conversation. This book may help as it introduces evangelicals to Orthodoxy, but I am not so sure that it introduces the Orthodox to evangelicals. Perhaps Zondervan should publish a Counterpoints book clarifying what it means to be an evangelical.

John A. Nixon
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Wisdom and Eloquence: A Christian Paradigm for Classical Learning. **By Robert Littlejohn and Charles T. Evans. Wheaton: Crossway, 2006. 224 pages. Softcover, $14.99.**

Evangelicalism needs to be re-formed around the great truths of the Christian faith and this book calls us to begin the process by raising generations of young people able to rise above captivity to American culture. Evans and Littlejohn argue that the goal of education is twofold: wisdom and eloquence. They are correct that we need wise people who love what is beautiful and true and who are able lead others to truth and beauty by communicating winsomely. The authors advocate beginning with the end in view: deciding on what we want high school graduates to look like and working back from there. The book is aimed at those who serve in the context of Christian schools, but the theoretical information is also helpful for home-schoolers.

The first chapter explores the purpose of education. The purpose of a liberal arts education is to increase one's capacity to know God and relish his gifts of truth, goodness, and beauty. This benefits humanity as the wise lead many to righteousness. The path to producing "men with chests" is the classic, Christian liberal arts tradition, which has been overthrown by the progressive theories of the likes of John Dewey.

Chapter two is an overview of the liberal arts. These break down into two categories: language and mathematics. Under the umbrella of language falls grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. Under mathematics come arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. The three language arts have come to be known as the *trivium*, while the four mathematical arts are referred to as the *quadrivium*. Dorothy Sayers contributed to a resurgence of interest in classical education in an address titled "The Lost Tools of Learning." The authors of *Wisdom and Eloquence* respectfully dispute the way that Sayers assigned developmental periods to the language arts. Sayers suggested that grammar coincides roughly with ages nine to eleven, dialectic (or logic) with ages twelve to fourteen, and training in rhetoric culminates at age 18. Littlejohn and Evans contend that grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric provide the curriculum to be studied at age appropriate levels throughout one's developmental years, denying any historic precedent for what Sayers suggested.

The third chapter briefly deals with the place of worldview in the liberal arts. Chapter four addresses the community of faith and learning. Here the authors point out that the purpose of a school is to educate: a school is not a church, so it should not serve communion; nor is a school an evangelistic outreach center, a place to re-create a youth group culture, or to generate revenue. The school's purpose is to assist the church by fulfilling its intended function: educating. Chapter five presents what goes into the liberal arts curriculum, concluding with a helpful chart of the whole. Chapter six takes a closer look at the *trivium*, chapter seven at the *quadrivium*. A chapter on rhetoric provides an example of a fuller treatment of one third of the *trivium*, and chapters on teachers and learning round out the volume. Three appendices address parents, the public square, and community.

Littlejohn and Evans are wise educators who recognize that teaching is not something that exists for its own sake, but something that is done in the service of learning. Similarly, learning is not an end in itself, but something that should lead to *Wisdom and Eloquence*, which in themselves serve to glorify God. This perspective lends great wisdom to this book on education, wisdom exemplified in such statements as, "great readers are made by great books, and a steady diet of books that do not both challenge and stimulate the reader weakens both the student's ability and desire to read."

Littlejohn and Evans are on the mark when they write, "the literary foundation of our civilization is formed by the Bible and the five major epics of Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Milton." If we evangelicals wish to educate our children so that they resist the drift toward a trinket culture, *Wisdom and Eloquence* provides us with exactly what is proclaimed in its subtitle: *A Christian Paradigm for Classical Learning.*

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Women's Ministry in the Local Church. **By J. Ligon Duncan and Susan Hunt. Wheaton: Crossway, 2006. 175 pages. Softcover, $14.99.**

At first glance, one might expect *Women's Ministry in the Local Church* to be another how-to book for the women's ministry leader. However, after reading only the first page, it is apparent that instead of dealing with the specifics of a women's ministry, Duncan and Hunt set out to present a "practical theology of women's ministry in the local church" (1). The authors seek to present more of the biblical foundation and theological framework of a women's ministry than the nuts and bolts of carrying out this focused ministry area. Duncan and Hunt are clear from the beginning that the book refers heavily to and builds upon *The Danvers Statement* and *Biblical Foundation of Womanhood* materials.

With its overview of key biblical passages related to biblical womanhood, one of the strengths of this publication is the authors' ability to emphasize the complementarian role of a women's ministry as it functions within the context of the local church. There have been few writings that have painted as clear a picture that a biblical women's ministry operates under the authority of the church and its leadership. Hunt, especially, is keen to point out the prevalent disconnect between the biblical teaching of womanhood and the practical implementation of a women's ministry in the local church context. It is apparent that the authors love the local church and want it to accomplish its mission and to do nothing short of bringing glory to God.

Ironically, one of the weaknesses of this book comes in the area of creating a functional model. Offering "tasks" and "tools" for a women's ministry, the authors repeatedly refer to the *Biblical Foundation of Womanhood* materials. A reader who is not familiar with these materials would find it difficult to implement many of the suggestions made. Additionally, because the authors' are associated with the Presbyterian

Church (Duncan as senior pastor and Hunt as former Director of Women's Ministries), "tasks" and "tools" are couched within a Presbyterian polity. There are many ideas the reader can glean from these sections, but she must be careful to translate those ideas to the governing context of her local church.

The initial chapters of the book present the authors' thesis ending with a sermon that Duncan preached at a women's leadership conference. It is this sermon that enumerates the main reasons a women's ministry is vital to the local church. The remainder of the book is spent unpacking the points presented in the sermon. This format may at first be found confusing and disjointed but will soon become clear as the reader moves through the text.

Duncan and Hunt's volume is a good initial resource for pastors and women's ministry leaders in the local church. As it presents a quick overview of biblical womanhood, its greatest asset is the emphasis on the role a women's ministry should play within the local church. This can be immensely beneficial for a fledgling women's ministry or can help a pastor redirect a women's ministry that has wandered from the ideal.

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