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The Meaning of "Desires of the Flesh" in 1 John 2:16 and Its Relevance for the Theology of the World in 1 John

by Jonathan M. Cheek[1]

In a letter to his pupil Wormwood, Screwtape writes that "the Enemy's servants have been preaching about 'the World' as one of the great standard temptations for two thousand years. . . . But fortunately they have said very little about it for the last few decades."[2] This letter was published in 1942. Unfortunately, the situation has not changed much since then. A few leading evangelical leaders have bemoaned the lack of biblical teaching on the world in churches today.[3] David F. Wells, however, points out that "worldliness is so frequently being missed, or misjudged, in the evangelical church today: it takes theological sense, theological judgment to recognize it, and that is precisely what has disappeared from the church."[4] Robert H. Gundry agrees, asserting that "the sense of embattlement with the world is rapidly evaporating among many evangelicals"[5] and that evangelicalism has experienced a "blurring of the distinction between believers and the world."[6] Kevin DeYoung points out that "Christians used to talk about worldliness and fear its creeping influence," but if modern Christians express concern about worldliness, they are "bound to hear barely muffled laughter."[7] In summary, James K. A. Smith suggests that "our affirmation of creation slides into an affirmation of the world, which then slides toward an affirmation of 'the world' even in its distorted, misdirected configurations."[8]

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[1] Jonathan M. Cheek completed the PhD in Theological Studies from BJU Seminary in 2019. His dissertation was titled "Genesis 3:15 as the Root of a Biblical Theology of the Church and the World: The Commencement, Continuation, and Culmination of the Enmity Between the Seeds."

[2] C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 50.

[3] For example, see John MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes like the World*, 3rd ed. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 31; R. Kent Hughes, *Set Apart: Calling a Worldly Church to a Godly Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 10; C. J. Mahaney, "Is This Verse in Your Bible?" in *Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World,* ed. C. J. Mahaney (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 22; Russell Moore, *Onward: Engaging the Culture Without Losing the Gospel* (Nashville: B&H, 2015), 1–10; Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Sentinel, 2018), 12.

[4] David F. Wells, *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 37.

[5] Robert H. Gundry, *Jesus the Word According to John the Sectarian: A Paleofundamentalist Manifesto for Contemporary Evangelicalism, Especially Its Elites, in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 73.

[6] Ibid., 74.

[7] Kevin DeYoung, *The Hole in Our Holiness: Filling the Gap Between Gospel Passion and the Pursuit of Godliness* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 37.

[8] James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 190.

This failure to understand "worldliness" is primarily a theological rather than a sociological issue.[9] An accurate understanding of worldliness depends on a well-developed biblical theology of the world, but this is lacking in scholarly literature.[10] Biblical theology depends on accurate exegesis of scriptural texts. D. A. Carson argues that "it is impossible to have any sort of responsible biblical theology apart from careful, responsible exegesis. Moreover, responsible exegesis of entire texts . . . is the working material of biblical theology. . . . Inevitably, the exegesis largely controls the biblical theology."[11] It is, therefore, essential to gain an accurate understanding of the biblical text in order to understand biblical theology accurately.

Arguably, the key NT text describing the world is 1 John 2:15–17. This passage identifies three key elements that comprise "all that is in the world": "the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life."[12] The desires of the eyes and the pride of life are generally understood in a straightforward way; the first of these categories, though, "the desires of the flesh," has engendered significant discussion and is often misunderstood by interpreters. Interpreters present essentially three different senses of "flesh" for the use of σάρξ in 1 John 2:16: (1) fallen sinful nature, (2) man's human nature (in contrast to what is divine), and (3) the physical body. The latter sense receives almost no support in scholarly literature, and no commentaries have presented a well-developed argument establishing this sense. Several strong arguments, however, make this the most likely interpretation.

This article will examine the arguments for the different senses of "flesh" presented in the scholarly literature on 1 John 2:16 in order to determine the most likely meaning intended by the author. This paper will then show how the third sense of "flesh" fits appropriately with and helps to clarify the theology of the world presented in 1 John. A correct understanding of "the desires of the flesh" in 1 John 2:16 and how this interpretation fits with the concept of the world in 1 John will set the groundwork for a clearer understanding of the biblical concept of the world.

The Use of Σάρξ in the NT

Scholars have produced numerous in-depth studies of σάρξ.[13] Though the different senses of σάρξ overlap to some degree and are not mutually exclusive, it is important to understand that the NT

[9] Wells comments, "This sense of the term as it appears in the New Testament signifies not a sociological reality but a theological reality" (37).

[10] Randy Leedy comments, "What appears to remain lacking is a reasonably well-developed biblical theology of the world and worldliness." *Love Not the World: Winning the War Against Worldliness* (Greenville: BJU Press, 2012), 5. For an introduction to a biblical theology of the world, see Jonathan M. Cheek, "'The Nations' and the 'World': Progressive Development in Biblical Theology," *Gloria Deo Journal of Theology* 2 (2023): 1–43.

[11] "Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology," in *NDBT*, ed. T. D. Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 91.

[12]Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright ©2016 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

[13] Eduard Schweizer, Friedrich Baumgärtel, and Rudolf Meyer, "σάρξ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 7:98–151; Ceslas Spicq, "σάρξ," in *TLNT*, trans. James D. Ernest (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 3:231–41; and Moisés Silva, "σάρξ," in *NIDNTTE,* 2nd ed., ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 4:251–262.

authors are conveying different nuances of meaning in their use of σάρξ.[14] For purposes of this paper, it will be sufficient to summarize these previous findings on σάρξ in non-Johannine and Johannine biblical writings.

Non-Johannine Use of Σάρξ

Paul uses σάρξ much more frequently than any other NT writer. Ninety-one out of 147 total NT uses of σάρξ are in Paul's writings, and forty-four of those ninety-one uses are in Romans (26x) and Galatians (18x).[15] Paul uses σάρξ in several different senses. Ceslas Spicq notes that, in Paul's writings, "the 'flesh' is constantly mentioned, and with meanings so different that one could almost say that they vary from verse to verse."[16] Paul uses σάρξ in reference to the human body in a physical sense (1 Cor 15:39; 2 Cor 7:5). Paul also uses σάρξ to refer to mere humanness or a common humanity with other people (Rom 9:8; 11:14; 1 Cor 1:29; Eph 6:12; Col 2:1; Phlm 16). In other cases Paul uses σάρξ to distinguish between what is earthly/temporary compared to what is eternal (e.g., Rom 1:3–4; 9:3, 8; 2 Cor 10:3). In many such instances, "flesh" is a neutral reference without pejorative overtones. The other NT writers' use of σάρξ are consistent with Paul's use of σάρξ with these senses.

Most unique to Paul is his concept of "flesh" in reference to the sinful nature of man that is inclined toward evil: "In Pauline thought σάρξ is not merely a ref. to the body as the seat of desire but rather denotes the self as a whole in opp. to God"[17] (e.g., Rom 7:18, 25; Gal 5:13). Paul closely connects "flesh" with evil desires (Gal 5:17–19; Col 3:5; 1 Cor 10:6), in juxtaposition to life by the Spirit, which follows the will of God (Rom 8:4–5; Gal 5:22–23; 6:8). Though the physical body can be seen as one aspect of this sense of σάρξ, Paul's primary reference in these uses is not to σάρξ as the physical body. The sinful nature of man includes much more than merely his physical body. However, because Paul is unique among NT writers in using this sense, this paper will refer to it as "the Pauline sense."

The other non-Johannine NT writers use σάρξ in similar ways to Paul, but they do not use the unique Pauline sense that refers to the "sinful nature of man that is inclined toward evil."[18] "Flesh" may refer to human weakness (Matt 26:41; Mark 14:38), the human body (Luke 24:39; Acts 2:31; 1 Pet 3:18, 21; 4:1, 2, 6; Heb 2:14; 9:10, 13), or to humanity in general (Matt 16:17; 24:22; Mark 13:20; Luke 3:6; Acts 2:17; Heb 12:9; 1 Pet 1:24). Later NT writings, in particular, use σάρξ with pejorative overtones, but the sense is still different than Paul's unique sense. In such instances, σάρξ seems to refer to sensual, often sexual, sinful behavior. Peter speaks of those who "go after the flesh"

[14] The NT uses σάρξ 147 times, and BDAG lists the senses as follows: (1) "the material that covers the bones of a human or animal body," (2) "the physical body as functioning entity," (3) "one who is or becomes a physical being," (4) "human/ancestral connection, human/mortal nature, earthly descent," (5) "the outward side of life." Similarly, Louw & Nida list these possible senses: flesh, body, people, human, nation, human nature, physical nature, and life.

[15] John uses σάρξ twenty-three times. All other NT writers use σάρξ fewer than ten times each: Peter (9x), Hebrews (6x), Matthew (5x), Luke-Acts (5x), Mark (4x), Jude (3x), and James (1x).

[16] Spicq, 3:235.

[17] Silva, 4:258.

[18] First Peter 2:11 may be seen as an exception to this, though he uses the adjective σαρκικός instead of the noun. See discussion in Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, NAC (Nashville: B&H, 2003), 120–21; alternatively, J. Ramsey Michaels argues that σαρκικός in 2:11 is a reference to physical desires. *1 Peter*, WBC (Dallas: Word, 1988), 116.

in the "lust of defiling passion" (2 Pet 2:10) and of those who "entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error" (2 Pet 2:18).[19] Jude speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah, who "indulged in sexual immorality" and "pursued different flesh" (Jude 7), and of the Christian responsibility to save those whose garments are "stained by the flesh"[20] (Jude 23).

Johannine Use of σάρξ.

John uses the term σάρξ a total of twenty-three times. Table 1 lists each of these uses of σάρξ in the Johannine literature.

Table 1. John's Use of σάρξ

Reference	Text
John 1:13	Who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the **flesh** nor of the will of man, but of God.
John 1:14	The Word became **flesh** and dwelt among us.
John 3:6	That which is born of the flesh is **flesh**, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
John 6:51	The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my **flesh**.
John 6:52	How can this man give us his **flesh** to eat?
John 6:53	Unless you eat the **flesh** of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.
John 6:54	Whoever feeds on my **flesh** and drinks my blood has eternal life.
John 6:55	For my **flesh** is true food, and my blood is true drink.
John 6:56	Whoever feeds on my **flesh** and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.
John 6:63	It is the Spirit who gives life; the **flesh** is no help at all.
John 8:15	You judge according to the **flesh**; I judge no one.
John 17:2	You have given him authority over all **flesh** to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.
1 John 2:16	All that is in the world—the desires of the **flesh**, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life
1 John 4:2	Every Spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the **flesh** is from God.
2 John 7	Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the **flesh**.
Rev 17:16	They will make her desolate and naked and devour her **flesh** and burn her up with fire.

[19] Peter H. Davids argues that to "go after the flesh" in 2 Peter 2:10 refers to fulfilling desires that have "broken acceptable boundaries." *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 233. Likewise, the reference to "flesh" in 2:18 refers to "the physical drives" (245). Schreiner notes that both of these examples likely refer to sexual sin and not merely the Pauline concept of "sinful nature." (345, 358). See also Douglas J. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 107n17.

[20] Interpreters generally identify this as an allusion to Zechariah 3:4. Gene L. Green argues that the use of the word "tunic" (χιτῶνα) here refers to the "inner garment worn next to the flesh" and "would be the garment most likely to become soiled by the body." *Jude and 2 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 127–28. Davids refers to this use of "flesh" as indicative of "human drives that lack control and therefore physical and especially sexual sin" (105). Because of the reference to the garment worn closest to the physical body and the earlier references to "flesh" in terms of sexual behavior, this explanation seems more likely than Schreiner's suggestion that "flesh" here refers to "the Pauline view where it represents the principle of sin" (489) and Moo's suggestion that it refers to "the sinful impulse" (289).

Reference	Text
Rev 19:18	to eat the **flesh** of kings, the **flesh** of captains, the **flesh** of mighty men, the **flesh** of horses and their riders, and the **flesh** of all men.
Rev 19:21	All the birds were gorged with their **flesh**.

John's usage of σάρξ may be separated into three primary categories. First, John sometimes uses σάρξ to refer to the material substance of human bodies. This sometimes refers to the "flesh" on dead bodies (Rev 17:16; 19:18, 21). John 6:51–56 includes six uses of σάρξ referring to people eating Jesus' flesh, which refers to his living body (either pre-crucifixion or post-resurrection). Jesus is clearly speaking metaphorically, and the metaphor hinges on the idea of eating Jesus' physical body and drinking his physical blood—part of his physical body. Jesus really did give up his physical body for the life of the world (6:51). The sense here is certainly that of Jesus' physical body rather than an inclination to sin or temporal humanness.

Second, John distinctively uses σάρξ three times to refer to Jesus' incarnation in which he became σάρξ (John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 7). When the Word became σάρξ (John 1:14), he became a whole human being, a classification which includes "bones, blood, and soul—the whole human being."[21] In doing so, the Son is able to live "a fully human life in his human nature."[22] To say that the Word "became flesh" necessarily includes God the Son locating his human nature within a human body (John 1:14; cf. 1 John 1:1).[23] His assumption of a human body is part of what is necessary for him to "become σάρξ." These uses also refer clearly to the physical body rather than temporal humanity or the inclination to sin.

Third, John uses σάρξ in five other instances in a less concrete sense. In two of these uses, σάρξ is contrasting what is human and physical with what is spiritual. For example, in John 1:13, children of God are "born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."[24] Also, Jesus says in John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." But these uses of σάρξ also bring to mind the human body. Klink comments on John 3:6, "In John 'flesh' is merely the body and its limitations."[25] The primary purpose of σάρξ in these verses (1:13 and 3:6) is to contrast physical human birth with spiritual birth, but in these verses it is impossible to separate σάρξ from the functions of the human body in relation to birth. Three other uses are exceptions and do not refer to the human body (6:63; 8:15; 17:2). John 6:63 says that "it is the Spirit

[21] Edward W. Klink III, *John*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 106–7. Stephen J. Wellum points out that "to live a human life the Son needed more than a mere body or flesh; he also needed a human soul in order to will, act, and experience as a man." *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 297.

[22] Ibid., 333.

[23] Andreas J. Köstenberger notes that this is what distinguished Christ from the Greek gods who "could hardly have imagined immaterial Reason becoming a physical being." He was not merely an apparition but "literally was made flesh." *John*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 41.

[24] Klink notes on John 1:13, "For John the flesh is merely the body with all its needs and wants. The natural urges of the body are intended to be in sharp contrast to the source of the children of God, which is supernatural and entirely from the outside of a person" (106).

[25] Ibid., 199.

who gives life; the flesh is no help at all." The human efforts of man cannot help the person achieve life; only the working of the Spirit can produce life. In this instance, the human body may not specifically be in view; rather, this seems to refer to the fact that people in their human nature are unable to attain life without the Spirit. John 8:15 is primarily a reference to human limitations. "You judge according to the flesh (σάρξ); I judge no one." A final use in John 17:2 refers to the authority of Jesus "over all flesh to give eternal life." This occurrence of σάρξ seems to refer to all humanity. These final three uses do not seem to refer to the human body at all.

To summarize, in John's twenty-two other uses of σάρξ (excluding 1 John 2:16), nineteen of these uses necessarily have some reference to the human body, whether referring to the flesh of dead bodies, Jesus' flesh and blood, or Jesus' becoming flesh in the incarnation. In three other cases, John uses σάρξ with no reference to the human body (6:63; 8:15; 17:2). Two of these uses likely refer to "human nature" (6:63; 8:15), and the other refers to human beings in general (17:2).

The Desires of the Flesh in 1 John 2:16

Scholars present three possible views for the meaning of "desires of the flesh" in 1 John 2:16: (1) the Pauline concept of "flesh" as sinful inclination, (2) the "Jewish" sense of "flesh" as that which is human as opposed to divine, and (3) bodily physical desires. The first two views are the most frequently represented views in commentaries.

The Pauline Concept of "Flesh"[26]

A common view is that John is using σάρξ in a Pauline sense, referring to the desires of the flesh as the desires of innately sinful human nature.[27] The "desires of the flesh" in 1 John 2:16, therefore, represent the sinful desires that come from fallen human nature. In this case, Kruse notes that "this is a general category, and the second and third elements of those things which comprise the world are subcategories."[28] The strength of this argument is that it fits with other Pauline uses of "flesh" in close

[26] Identifying this as the "Pauline" sense does not imply that Paul never uses other senses of σάρξ; see above for examples of Paul's varied use of σάρξ. Paul was Jewish, and he does use the more Jewish sense of σάρξ at times, and he also refers to σάρξ in terms of bodily desires in other instances.

[27] For support for this view, see R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1966), 426; C. Haas, Marinus De Jonge, and J. L. Swellengrebel, *A Translator's Handbook on the Letters of John*, Helps for Translators (New York: UBS, 1972), 57; Rudolf K. Bultmann, *The Johannine Epistles*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973), 33–34; I. Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 144–45; Stephen S. Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, WBC (Dallas: Word, 1984), 83–84; John R. W. Stott, *The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary*, TNTC (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988), 103; D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistles of John: An Expositional Commentary* (Greenville, SC: BJU Press, 1991), 102; Daniel L. Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, NAC (Nashville: B&H, 2001), 110. Colin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 95; David Rensberger, *The Epistles of John* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 33; Rick Williamson, *1, 2, & 3 John*, NBBC (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 2010), 96; Bruce G. Schuchard, *1–3 John*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2012), 211; Gary Derickson, *1, 2, & 3 John*, EEC (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2012), 203–4.

[28] Kruse, 95. Similarly, though he acknowledges that the grammatical καί . . . καί construction seems to lead the reader away from this idea, Smalley argues that the second and third phrases "are to be regarded as further definitions of" the first phrase (83).

connection with "desires" and in a sense that seems to refer to fallen man's inclination toward sin (e.g., Gal 5:17; Eph 2:3).

Two considerations, however, challenge this interpretation of σάρξ in 1 John 2:16 and render the Pauline sense an inadequate explanation. First, this usage is entirely out of line with John's typical use of σάρξ. As noted above, John never uses σάρξ in this specified Pauline sense outside of 1 John 2:16, so it seems unlikely that he is using this sense in 2:16. Though Derickson acknowledges that this usage is "not characteristic of John,"[29] he still holds that John is using the Pauline sense: "In this instance John appears to be using 'flesh' in much the same sense as Paul when he is referring to the sin nature within the believer."[30] Raymond E. Brown, however, correctly warns, "One should not too quickly read the Johannine writings through Pauline spectacles, even when both writings use the same phrase. For John 'flesh' is not an evil or sinful principle."[31] Similarly, Karen H. Jobes says, "The term 'flesh' (σάρξ) is used in almost exclusively negative ways in the apostle Paul's writings, but that understanding should not automatically be brought into John's thought. . . . In John the concept of 'flesh' does not denote innate sinfulness as it does, for instance, in Paul."[32] This does not imply that John is unaware of Paul's concept of "flesh." It is quite possible that John's thought is informed by Paul's teaching on the flesh (e.g., Gal 5:16, Eph 2:3) and that he understands that the only reason any of the body's cravings are sinful is that they are driven by the fallen sinful nature (the Pauline sense of flesh).[33] No proponents of the Pauline view, however, have explained why John would here be breaking his own pattern of usage to match up with the Pauline usage that is entirely foreign to John's usage.

Second, 1 John 2:16 provides no compelling grammatical/syntactical reason to believe that "desires of the flesh" should be understood as the general category of which the two subsequent phrases are manifestations. The καί . . . καί correlative construction between each phrase gives the impression that this is a simple series of distinct characteristics rather than a sequence identifying a main category with

[29] Derickson, 203.

[30] Ibid., 203–4.

[31] *The Epistles of John*, YAB (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 309–10.

[32] Karen H. Jobes, *1, 2, & 3 John*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 112; see also Andrew David Naselli, "Do Not Love the World: Breaking the Evil Enchantment of Worldliness (A Sermon on 1 John 2:15–17)," *SBJT* 22.1 (2018): 25n12. Though John Calvin was aware that the phrase is commonly explained in the Pauline sense of "the whole corrupt nature of man," he "approve[s] of another meaning," and he picks up on John's difference from Paul on this point. Calvin argues that Paul's use of "flesh" in Romans 13:14 is the best explanation of John's use of σάρξ in 1 John 2:16. *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, trans. John Owen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 187.

[33] Perhaps Ephesians 2:3 presents a helpful example to connect the Pauline and Johannine concepts. Both Ephesians 2:3 and 1 John 2:16 are in contexts discussing the dangers of the "world" (Eph 2:2 speaks of τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου). Paul refers to unbelievers "among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh [ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν], carrying out the desires of the body [τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς] and the mind." It seems most likely that Paul's first reference to flesh in 2:3 speaks of flesh as man's fallen nature inclined toward sin (though this use can easily be understood to refer to the physical body); the second reference to flesh in 2:3 likely speaks of the desires of the physical body, since these desires are in distinction to the desires of the mind. Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene A. Nida comment on the second use of σάρξ in 2:3, "Here the two nouns 'flesh and thoughts' (also 4:18) clearly indicate 'bodies and minds,' 'physical and intellectual' (desires)." *A Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Ephesians*, Helps for Translators (New York: UBS, 1993), 42–43. If the second use of σάρξ refers to the human inclination to sin, it would seem odd to distinguish the desires "of the mind" from the "desires of the flesh." Instead, the desires of the mind would be one aspect of the desires of the fallen human nature.

subcategories. Also, other vice lists in the NT do not seem to have that kind of categorization structure. Jobes argues that 2:16 "follows the convention of using the number three for referring to evil in the ancient world. Philo, for instance, attributes all wars to 'the desire for money, or glory, or pleasure.' This argues against seeing subordination of the second two to the first."[34] Furthermore, "desires of the eyes" and "pride of life" would seem to be an odd choice of the only two subcategories under "desires of the flesh." These categories would be inadequate compared to Paul's description of "works of the flesh" (Gal 5:19–21). The Pauline view, therefore, seems inadequate for the use in 1 John 2:16.

The "Jewish" Sense of "Flesh"[35]

If John's use of σάρξ in 1 John 2:16 is to follow the same general pattern as John's typical use of σάρξ, this leaves us with two possible senses. The first possibility is that John is referring to the desires of the flesh as "that which is merely human as opposed to divine"[36] (or "merely human desires"). Many scholars identify this as the OT or Jewish sense of "flesh," based on the LXX use of σάρξ to translate the Hebrew בָּשָׂר.[37] They argue that in such examples in the OT, the LXX translates בָּשָׂר with σάρξ when speaking of man's weakness or transitory nature in contrast to God. Common examples include the following:

> "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years" (Gen 6:3).
> "He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and comes not again" (Ps 78:39).
> "All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field" (Isa 40:6).

The strength of this view is that it accurately reflects some instances of John's usage of σάρξ (John 6:63 and 8:15).

Several considerations, however, challenge this view. First, these examples use σάρξ to speak of man as "flesh," and they subsequently *describe* "flesh" (man) as weak and transitory. They do not, however, *define* flesh as weak and transitory. For example, Isaiah 40:6 is not using "flesh" in a sense

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[34] Jobes, 113.

[35] Identifying this as the "Jewish" sense is based on the proposal that the OT prominently uses "flesh" in this way. It is readily acknowledged that Paul was Jewish, but Paul employs distinctive senses of "flesh" that the OT does not use.

[36] Jobes, 112. For similar explanations of this view, see Edward Malatesta, *Interiority and Covenant: A Study of εἶναι ἐν and μένειν ἐν in the First Letter of Saint John,* Analecta Biblica (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 184; Brown, 309–10; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Johannine Epistles: Introduction and Commentary*, trans. Reginald and Ilse Fuller (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 121; Gary M. Burge, *Letters of John*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 115; George L. Parsenios, *First, Second, and Third John*, PCNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 82; and Robert W. Yarborough, *1–3 John*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008). Some scholars fail to distinguish sufficiently between the Pauline sense and the sense of "flesh" as what is merely human as opposed to what is divine. For example, Smalley correctly observes that σάρξ is "sometimes used neutrally in John, to denote humanity in physical terms." Therefore, "there is in John's view nothing inherently wrong with 'the flesh.'" Smalley then explains that the phrase "desire of the flesh" refers "to fallen human nature in general; to a disposition of hostility toward God" (84). Smalley hereby acknowledges that "flesh" in John's writings is neutral but that the "desires of the flesh" refer to the Pauline sense of desires of "fallen human nature in general." These two explanations, though, are mutually exclusive.

[37] The Hebrew term בָּשָׂר "flesh" is used 270 times in the Hebrew OT. The LXX uses σάρξ a total of 158 times.

meaning "weak" or "transitory." The meaning of "flesh" in Isaiah 40:6 is that of "all created beings." The idea of the transitoriness of "all flesh" comes only with the subsequent description of all flesh being "as grass." The term σάρξ in itself, though, does not convey the idea of transitoriness. For example, if Isaiah had said, "All flesh is sinful" or "All flesh needs salvation," in these cases "all flesh" would *mean* "all people" and "all flesh" carries no hint of "transitoriness" in itself. Based on OT examples such as these, however, some scholars argue that the "desire of the flesh is simply the desire for those things that pertain merely to this life."[38]

One point consistently overlooked in the commentaries on this passage is that though the OT may use בָּשָׂר (with σάρξ) in this sense of "transitoriness," this is certainly not the most commonly used sense of בָּשָׂר (and σάρξ) in the OT. In fact, this use of בָּשָׂר is quite rare (used for perhaps seven out of 270 uses of בָּשָׂר).[39] Therefore, to refer to this as the "OT and Jewish"[40] meaning of σάρξ is quite a stretch. When Burge claims that "the LXX never uses *sarx* with reference to sensuality but often uses it to refer to humanity in general, particularly as it stands in contrast to God," he does not list any references to support this idea.[41] The OT basis for Burge's statement is extremely limited. Though it is possible to argue that John is basing his use of "flesh" on the later development of "flesh" in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which seems similar to Paul's usage of "flesh" in some cases,[42] it is inaccurate to say that the sense of "flesh" as "the human as distinct from the divine"[43] is based on a prominent pattern of usage of σάρξ in the OT. The OT uses בָּשָׂר much more frequently to refer to the physical body.

Another challenge with this view is the general nature of a definition of σάρξ in reference to human nature or transitoriness. For example, Brown says that the desire of the flesh "is directed toward all that satisfies the needs and wants of human beings taken as such."[44] Malatesta states that σάρξ contrasts man "in his weakness and mortality with God who is all powerful and eternal."[45] Burge says that the

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[38] Jobes, 112.

[39] The BDB lexicon entry for בָּשָׂר lists numerous references for the basic meaning of "flesh" in a physical sense (sense 1–4). Sense #5 refers to "man over against God as frail or erring," and seven total references are listed for this sense (Gen 6:3; Pss 56:4; 78:39; Job 10:4; 2 Chr 32:8; Jer 17:5; Isa 31:3). Sense #6 refers to examples using כָּל־בָּשָׂר to refer to "all living beings/animals/mankind." Similarly, the list of senses of בָּשָׂר in the Logos Bible Software Word Study analysis includes the following senses for the 270 uses of בָּשָׂר: flesh/tissue (107x); meat (61x); body (51x); humankind (24x); living things (15x); a relative (7x); the male sexual organ (4x), a blood relative (1x). The Logos system classifies Pss 56:4, 78:39, Job 10:4, and Jer. 17:5 under "humankind," and it classifies Gen 6:3, 2 Chr 32:8, and Isa 31:3 under "flesh (tissue)." This supports the idea that "flesh" does not inherently carry the sense of "transitoriness."

[40] For example, Silva writes, "One can hardly doubt, however, that the OT writers give expression to the fleeting character of human life in a distinctive way," citing a few of the six references listed in BDB for this sense, including Isa 40:6–7, 2 Chr 32:8, Jer 17:5, and Ps 78:39 (4:253–54). Similarly, Smalley notes, "The writer of 1 John was probably indebted to a Jewish and biblical context for his understanding and use of the term σάρξ, 'flesh,' meaning (in some texts) the nature of man as a whole, in his distance from God" (83–84). Additionally, Marshall says, "John is here using 'flesh' in its Jewish and biblical sense of the nature of man as a whole as a worldly being separated from and opposed to God" (145).

[41] Burge, 115.

[42] See discussion in Brown, 308–310.

[43] Ibid., 310.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Malatesta, 184.

phrase refers to "humanity in general, particularly as it stands in contrast to God. In other words, John has in mind any desire, any sinful interest, that draws us away from God or at least makes continuing fellowship with him impossible."[46] Therefore, by using "desires of the flesh," John is referring to any sinful desire that draws us away from God. One concern with this explanation is similar to the concern with interpreting John's use of "flesh" in a Pauline sense. This view essentially makes "desires of the flesh" a general term that roughly serves as an overarching general category overlapping significantly with the desires of the eyes and the pride of life.

Consequently, the lack of specificity in the explanation makes it difficult to identify exactly what kinds of desires are in view. If John is referring simply to any sinful desire, what is the point of adding the desires of the eyes and the pride of life? None of the commentaries that present this view are able to bring clarity to this point. Because of the challenge presented by this general definition, some scholars define "flesh" in this general sense, but they apply it in a much more specific way. Jobes, for example, argues that for John, "flesh" refers to "that which is merely human as opposed to divine"[47] and concludes that "the desire of the flesh is simply the desire for those things that pertain merely to this life."[48] It is difficult, however, to understand precisely what are those desires "that pertain merely to this life." When Jobes seeks to identify those desires that are "merely human as opposed to divine," she specifies "the impulse of human behavior that arises for the natural, even God-given, physical needs," and she lists sins like "gluttony, alcoholism, and sexual immorality."[49] Similarly, Yarborough defines the phrase as "things originating in innate human nature regarded as unredeemed by God."[50] Yarborough, however, translates the phrase in a much more specific way: "what the body hankers for."[51] It seems that both Jobes and Yarborough explain "flesh" with one particular sense (the "Jewish" sense), but their application of the "desires of the flesh" represents a different sense: that of physical, bodily desires—not simply what is human as opposed to divine. These explanations give weight to the idea that the third view of σάρξ is what John has in mind.

"Flesh" as Bodily/Physical Desires

The final possible Johannine sense of "flesh" understands John as referring to σάρξ as the human body ("desires of the body" or "bodily/physical desires"). Support for this view in scholarly literature is virtually absent.[52] Some pastoral works and expositional commentaries support this sense, although

[46] Burge, 115.

[47] Jobes, 112.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Yarborough, 132.

[51] "My translation 'what the body hankers for' . . . is simply one more idiomatic rendering of the danger to which John seeks to call attention: things originating in innate human nature regarded as unredeemed by God. This interpretation relates 'body' more to the OT and Jewish frame of reference in which '"flesh" is the human as distinct from the divine'" (ibid.).

[52] Only one modern scholarly commentary presents this view but in an inconsistent way. Georg Strecker refers to σάρξ here as "the human body with its desires." *The Johannine Letters*, Hermeneia, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 59. In the corresponding footnote, however, Strecker states, "Here 'being flesh' means the human being

none of them present a substantive defense of the view.[53] Three primary categories support this view: lexical support, support from the immediate context, and possible support from the larger context of Scripture.

Lexical Support

This explanation fits best with much of the Johannine usage of σάρξ, which most often refers to—or at least implicitly relates to—a human body. The references to Christ taking on flesh necessarily include him taking on a physical human body (John 1:14; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 1:7). Six references to σάρξ in John 6:51–56 refer to the need to eat Jesus' flesh, which must also refer to his physical body (though in a figurative sense). Even in the references that support the idea that σάρξ is contrasting what is human and physical with what is spiritual, the use of σάρξ also brings to mind the role of the physical human body with human procreation (e.g., John 1:13; 3:6). Against this argument, Hiebert suggests that John could have said "lusts of the body," using σῶμα instead of σάρξ.[54] Presumably, John could have said ἡ ἐπιθυμία τοῦ σώματος. John, however, consistently uses σῶμα to refer to a dead body, a corpse (John 2:21; 19:31, 38, 40; 20:12).[55] Ultimately, if John wanted to refer to a person's physical bodily desires, either σάρξ or σῶμα would be viable options.[56] Using σάρξ to refer to bodily desires, however, fits more naturally with the established Johannine pattern of usage of both σάρξ and σῶμα.

The understanding of σάρξ as the physical body might be called the classical Greek sense, which "describes the most physical aspect of human corporality, i.e., what is involved in eating, drinking,

in its createdness and mortality and describes the realm of human existence" (59n23). Strecker, therefore, seems to be referring to the Jewish sense of "flesh" here in 2:16. Also, George E. Ladd appears to hold to this view, describing "lust of the flesh" as "the pursuit of the satisfaction of gross sensual pleasures." Ladd, however, provides no support for this interpretation. *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 660.

[53] See Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Life in Christ: Studies in 1 John* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 217; Leedy, 55; Naselli, 117, 125n12; and Joe Rigney, *Strangely Bright: Can You Love God and Enjoy This World?* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2020), 77. Additionally, Augustine holds to this sense of "flesh," identifying desires "such as food, and carnal cohabitation, and all other such like." "Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John," in *NPNF*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. H. Browne and Joseph H. Myers (New York: Christian Literature, 1888), 7:474.

[54] Hiebert, 102.

[55] John also uses σῶμα in Revelation 18:13, but it is not in the sense of a dead body. In this verse, σῶμα is used to refer to "bodies, even the souls of humans" in a list of products sold by the merchants of Babylon. The sense here is that of "persons."

[56] Both terms may speak of bodily desires elsewhere in the NT. In Romans 6:12, Paul refers to the desires of the σῶμα: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body [σῶμα], to make you obey its passions [ἐπιθυμία]." Paul may not be limiting "the passions of the body" to physical desires, however. In this context, he is speaking of "the body of sin" (Rom 6:6), and he is certainly not limiting the scope of the human sin problem in "your members" to physical sins of the body (Rom 6:13–14). Moo notes that in the context of Romans 6, Paul "uses the word *sōma* to refer to the whole person, with an emphasis on that person's interaction with the world. . . . It is that 'aspect' of the person which 'acts' in the world and which can be directed by something else: either by that person's new, 'higher nature' or by 'sin.'" *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 375–76. Other passages use σάρξ for what seem to be physical desires. Ephesians 2:3 seems to function this way because of the contrast between the desires of the mind and the desires of the flesh. Other possible examples of this include Romans 13:14 and 1 Peter 2:11.

and sex."[57] The Greek term originally referred to "the muscular part of the human or animal body" and then broadened into a reference to the body as a whole.[58] Greek thought understands man to consist of an incorruptible part, the ψυχή, "in antithesis to the corruptible σάρξ."[59] In this sense, the Greeks would use either σάρξ or σῶμα to refer to the perishable component of man.[60] Epicurus, in particular, identifies the σάρξ as "the seat of desire," and Epicureans "fed their souls with the pleasures of the body like pigs."[61] Subsequently, "σάρξ is increasingly regarded as the source of ἡδονή and esp. of uncontrolled sexuality and immoderate gluttony."[62] Silva discusses the Greek development of σάρξ with Epicurus:

> Epicurus, however, gave a new turn to this idea. Within the framework of his atomism (derived from Democritus), he viewed pleasure or desire (ἡδονή) as residing in the σάρξ (e.g., *Sent.* 4 [τὸ ἡδόμενον κατὰ σάρκα], 18 [ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἡ ἡδονή]). It is important to listen to the voice of the flesh or body when it says not to hunger or thirst. . . . Now the flesh regards pleasure as limitless, but the mind (διάνοια G1379) grasps the limits of the body and leads to a perfect life (*Sent.* 18, 20). These ideas were popularized and inevitably debased, being depicted, esp. by their opponents of the Platonic school, as favoring evil desire. According to them, the cravings and lusts of the body defile the soul, which has a share in the divine. Epicurus was obliged to defend himself against the charge that he approved intemperance. The anti-Epicurean polemic was widely spread in Hellenism and it penetrated deeply into Jewish thought.[63]

From these comments, it is important to note the focus on "flesh" in relation to bodily pleasures. As Silva notes, though, this Greek mentality does penetrate into Jewish thought before the time of the NT authors.[64] The LXX itself uses σάρξ frequently to refer to the physical flesh of human bodies (e.g., Gen 2:21; Job 2:5; Mic 3:2), though the OT typically does not use σάρξ to refer to bodily *desires*. The fact that the Greek (and subsequently Jewish) development of σάρξ focuses on the physical aspect of the human body and that in the Greek world σάρξ does appear with a strong relationship to bodily pleasures supports the idea that John is using this term to refer to physical bodily pleasures. Of course, the Pauline and "Jewish" sense can include "bodily pleasures." John's consistent usage of σάρξ, however, is demonstrably different from and more narrow than the Pauline and the "Jewish" sense.

[57] See discussion in Brown, 308.

[58] Schweizer, "σάρξ," 7:99–101.

[59] Ibid., 7:102.

[60] Ibid., 7:103.

[61] Ibid. Schweizer points out that Epicurus himself "preferred the lusts of the lower part of the body to the delights of the eyes and the ears" (7:105).

[62] Ibid., 7:105.

[63] Silva, 4:252.

[64] Similarly, Schweizer notes that Hellenistic Judaism "drank all this in eagerly" (7:105).

Support from the Immediate Context

Another strength of this sense is in the resulting relationship of "desires of the flesh" to the other two phrases describing "all that is in the world." The parallelism in John's threefold description of the world makes better sense if "lusts of the flesh" does not refer to the general human inclination toward evil or what is human as opposed to divine. John is using three genitive constructions; in each, the pre-genitive represents the sinful action (desire and pride) and the genitive in each represents a neutral aspect of humanity (flesh, eyes, and life). Table 2 displays the consistent connection of sinful behavior with neutral aspects of humanity in 1 John 2:16.

Table 2. Sinful Distortions of Neutral Aspects of Humanity

Sinful Behavior	Neutral Aspect of Humanity
Desires/lusts (ἐπιθυμία)	Flesh (σάρξ)
Desires/lusts (ἐπιθυμία)	Eyes
Pride	Life

John seems to be saying that the world consists of the perversion and use of neutral aspects of humanity (flesh, eyes, life) to tempt people to engage in sinful behavior (lust and pride). "Eyes" and "life" are not inherently sinful. People love the world when they use their eyes to fulfill sinful desires (e.g., coveting), or when they take pride in their possessions or status. In the same way, "flesh" (the physical body) is not inherently sinful. However, it is easily corruptible in this fallen world, and when people use their flesh to fulfill sinful desires, they are loving the world. This parallelism is lost if "flesh" is defined as the general human inclination toward sin.

Furthermore, John states that one of the problems with these three aspects of the world is that they are passing away (1 John 2:17). It is easy to understand how the desires of the eyes and the pride of life provide temporary and short-lived satisfaction. The desires of the body work the same way. These desires provide temporary pleasure and satisfaction, but they are merely temporary. Understanding these desires as physical bodily desires aligns all three descriptions more closely as elements that provide temporary satisfaction. If "flesh" is to be interpreted as "man's general inner inclination toward sin," the conceptual parallelism is much less clear.[65] Man's sinful nature stays with him until death. It is not something that passes away in the same sense that the other two elements do. It is best, therefore, to understand "desires of the flesh" in 1 John 2:16 as a reference to human bodily desires rather than "that which is merely human as opposed to divine."

John lists two other characteristics of "all that is in the world": "the desires of the eyes" and "pride of life." The interpretation of these elements is more straightforward. For "the desires of the eyes," the term ὀφθαλμῶν is a subjective genitive, and the eyes are performing the action of "desiring." Interpreters generally agree that the basic problem with "the desires of the eyes" is coveting what one

[65] It is not necessary to argue that John's three descriptions are entirely separate and distinct. It is possible that to some extent "the three phrases are simply broad and overlapping ways to describe 'all that is in the world.'" Naselli, 117. The three descriptions, however, are separate and parallel to an extent, and none of the three entirely encompass the others.

sees.[66] C. H. Dodd is probably correct in identifying "the desires of the eyes" as "the tendency to be captivated by the outward show of things without enquiring into their real values."[67] "The desires of the eyes" refers to a person's desire for things because of the attractive appearance of the object.

The third characteristic, "pride of life" (ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου), refers to boasting or arrogance based on what a person has, whether material possessions or high status. Some scholars limit "pride of life" to pride in material possessions (cf. Luke 15:12, 30; 1 John 3:17),[68] but "life" (βιός) can refer to more than just material possessions; it can refer to a person's status as well as nonmaterial assets (Luke 8:14; 1 Tim 2:2; 2 Tim 2:4).[69]

John points out that the problem with these aspects of the world is that they are passing away with the world (1 John 2:17). The satisfaction derived from the desires of the flesh and of the eyes and from pride of life is only temporary. Based on this line of reasoning, "desires of the flesh" is a parallel category to "desires of the eyes" and "pride of life," and people are loving the world when they are doing what feels good (in their body/flesh), chasing what looks good (to their eyes), and working to achieve what makes them look good (pride in possessions and status). This is not to say that Christians should reject pleasure, beauty, and possessions. And resisting the "desires of the body" is certainly not to be understood in a docetic sense. The key is to align such pleasures, along with the enjoyment of beauty and possessions, with the will of the Father rather than the will of the one who is ruling this present world. God created pleasure, beauty, and material goods for our enjoyment. John is here referring to the sinful misuse of the things of this world.

Support from the Larger Context of Scripture

Some scholars have noted a potential connection between the three elements that make up "all that is in the world" with the three phrases in the serpent's tempting of Eve: "The tree was good for food . . . a delight to the eyes, and . . . to be desired to make one wise" (Gen 3:6). John's threefold description of the world aligns quite well with Genesis 3—but only if "flesh" refers to bodily desires. In Johannine theology, it could be argued that the behaviors in 1 John 2:16 are "not of the Father" but are "from the world" because they follow the pattern that the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; cf. 1 John 5:19) has established for it—the pattern that the serpent demonstrates in Genesis 3. This pattern also appears in the devil's temptation of Jesus (Luke 4:1–13).[70] If this

[66] Brown notes that "in the OT to follow one's eyes toward where one is inclined is more often equivalent to resisting God's will (cf. Gen 3:6; 6:2; 3:2; Num 15:39; also Mark 9:47)" (310).

[67] C. H. Dodd, *The Johannine Epistles*, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), 41. See also Brown, 311; and Jobes, 113.

[68] Marshall, 145; Kruse, 95–96; Jobes, 113.

[69] For example, Akin refers to this as "boasting of what he [man] has and does" (110–11). Smalley argues that pride of life includes "attitudes and activities ('styles' of life) as well as material possessions and attractions" (85). See also, Stott, 104; Haas, de Jonge, and Swellengrebel, 57; Derickson, 204–5.

[70] The temptation account in Luke 4 is used for this discussion because the order of the temptations in Luke 4 matches up better with the sequence in Genesis 3:6 and 1 John 2:16 than Matthew's account does. In Matthew's account, the order of the second and third temptations is inverted.

connection is valid, then it also supports the understanding of σάρξ as the physical body. Table 3 displays three parallel elements of temptation from the serpent in these accounts.[71]

Table 3. Parallelism in Genesis 3:6, Luke 4:1–13, and 1 John 2:16

Genesis 3:6	Luke 4:1–13	1 John 2:16
The tree was good for food.	Command this stone to become bread.	The things the body desires
It was a delight to the eyes.	The devil . . . showed him all the kingdoms of the world.	The things the eyes desire
The tree was to be desired to make one wise.	If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here.	The pride in status and possessions

Several scholars, however, reject the idea of any such connection between 1 John 2:16 and the temptation accounts in Genesis 3 and Luke 4.[72] In many cases, though, these scholars are the same ones who hold to either the Pauline or "Jewish" senses of "flesh," in which case the parallelism does not line up well with Genesis 3 or Luke 4. It seems nearly impossible, however, to avoid seeing a strong relationship between Genesis 3:6 and 1 John 2:16, particularly when "desires of the flesh" are understood as bodily desires.[73] The relationship is so close that it would be strange to see this as anything but an intentional connection made by John.[74] The first two temptations in Luke also seem to be obvious connections to Genesis and 1 John; the connection with the third temptation in Luke 4 is somewhat less obvious but is not far off from Genesis 3:6 or 1 John 2:16. Jesus' throwing himself

[71] This table is generally based on the table in Naselli, 116–17. Naselli also notes that he is "not certain that the three phrases in 1 John 2:16 line up exactly with Genesis 3 and Luke 4 or that John had these parallels in mind. But the three phrases seem to line up at least roughly with Genesis 3 and Luke 4, so the parallel seems legit" (117). Blomberg also identifies these as "fascinating parallels." *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: B&H, 1997), 223; see also Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC (Nashville: B&H, 1992), 87. Grant R. Osborne also notes the parallels between the three accounts as "interesting." *Matthew*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 137. Others who acknowledge a possible connection include St. Augustine, "Expositions on the Book of Psalms," in *NPNF*, 8:31–32; Hiebert, 101; Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1967), 1:73; Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, OTL, trans. John H. Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 90; Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, NAC (Nashville: B&H, 1996), 238; Douglas Mangum, Miles Custis, and Wendy Widder, *Genesis 1–11*, LRC (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012).

[72] For example, see Alan England Brooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles*, ICC (New York: Scribner, 1912), 48; Marshall, 146; Stott, 104; Kruse, 96; and Derickson, 201–2. Brown is particularly critical of a connection of 2:16 with the temptation of Jesus (307).

[73] Failing to understand "desires of the flesh" as bodily desires seems to be one reason interpreters reject a connection between 1 John 2:16 and Jesus' temptation. For example, Walter L. Liefield refers to the Pauline understanding of 1 John 2:16 in his comments on the temptation of Jesus: "Bread, however, is necessary, not evil, and hardly an object of 'the cravings of sinful man' (1 John 2:16)." "Luke," in *EBC*, ed. Frank E. Gabelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:864.

[74] In spite of an "extremely limited" number of allusions to the OT in John's letters, John shows that Genesis 3 and 4 are clearly on his mind in the letter. The account of Cain is obvious (1 John 3:11–15). Additionally, Köstenberger argues for a strong connection of 1 John 3:8–10 to Genesis 3:15. See "The Cosmic Drama and the Seed of the Serpent," in *Seed of Promise: The Sufferings and Glory of the Messiah*, ed. Paul R. Williamson and Rita F. Cefalu (Wilmore, KY: Glossa House, 2020), 273–76; and Jonathan M. Cheek, "The Individual and Collective Offspring of the Woman: The Canonical Outworking of Genesis 3:15," *Themelios* 48, no. 1 (2023): 41–42.

from the temple and experiencing a miraculous rescue would have certainly made a spectacular show and would have given him much attention and acclamation from the people. This is not far off from a tree that is "desired to make one wise" or "the pride in status."

If these parallels are legitimate, they consistently demonstrate the areas in which Satan, the ruler of this world, works to influence humanity away from God and toward himself. At the very least, it seems clear that the serpent employs consistent patterns in tempting people. Those who follow the patterns in 2:16 make it clear that they are under the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19). It is certainly possible John is intending to make a literary connection with the first account of temptation by the ruler of this world in Genesis 3.[75] When describing the behaviors that characterize this world, John may indeed have in mind the time at which Satan began to influence humanity for evil through the serpent. For John, these are the characteristics of those who are of the world and who oppose Jesus and believers; thus, they are "of their father the devil" (John 8:44) or "of the evil one" (1 John 3:12). Indeed, the reference to Cain just a few verses later (1 John 3:12) suggests that John has in mind the serpent's work in the early chapters of Genesis.[76] Though these parallels with Genesis 3 and the Gospels do not prove that "desires of the flesh" refers to bodily desires, this understanding of "desires of the flesh" makes the connection between the passages much stronger.

The Theology of the World in 1 John

In his Gospel and letters, John establishes a strong polarity, or dualism, between believers and the world.[77] An accurate understanding of "desires of the flesh" supports a proper understanding of the polarity in the relationship between God, believers, Satan, and the world in 1 John. Because of this conflict between believers and the world, it is critical that believers must not love the world (2:15). The prominence of the "world" in 1 John is evident in his use of κόσμος twenty-three times in the letter, more than any other noun except θεός.[78] In general, scholars agree that John speaks of the world (κόσμος) in three different senses: (1) the created material world (John 17:5, 25), (2) humanity in general (John 1:29; 3:16–17), and (3) sinful humanity in opposition to God and his people (John 14:27; 17:9).[79] In 1 John, though, the third sense is the predominant sense in view. In 1 John 2:15,

[75] It is probably best to see Genesis 3 as the basis for John's three-fold description and probably for the temptation narratives as well. Luke 4 is not the basis for John's writing, but it supports the idea that temptation from the serpent follows similar patterns throughout time.

[76] Köstenberger notes that "the threefold reference . . . echoes the scenario at the fall" and cites the reference to Cain in 1 John 3:12 as further support for this. *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, BTNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 454.

[77] Köstenberger defines this type of dualism as "a way of looking at the world in terms of polar opposites." *Theology,* 277. For helpful studies of Johannine dualism/polarities see also Ladd, 259–72; 657–66; Judith Lieu, *The Theology of the Johannine Epistles*, NTT (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 80–87; Köstenberger, 282–92; Richard Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 119–29.

[78] The term κόσμος occurs 105 times combined in John's writings (compared to eighty-one non-Johannine uses in the NT), demonstrating the importance of κόσμος in John's theology.

[79] This article focuses less on the meaning of κόσμος than the meaning of σάρξ. The argument around κόσμος represents the implication from the prior argument about σάρξ, and thus not in the same detail.

in particular, "world" appears to be functioning as a metonymy for the patterns and characteristics of the third sense—sinful humanity in opposition to God and under the authority and influence of Satan (cf. James 4:4).[80] The Johannine worldview presents a "cosmic conflict between the world of light and the world of darkness" demonstrated primarily in the "struggle between God and his Messiah on the one hand and Satan on the other."[81] Ladd provides perhaps the most succinct summary of John's concept of the world: "Man at enmity with God."[82]

What is prominent in John's theology of the world, though, is the idea that even though the devil has been defeated and the darkness is passing away (1 John 2:8), the devil exercises significant influence and control over the world: "The whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19; cf. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Because many false prophets are in the world, believers must test the spirits (1 John 4:1). The spirit of antichrist is "in the world already" and does not confess that Jesus is from God (4:3). These people are "from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them" (4:6). The world knows the devil, antichrists, and false spirits, but the world does not know believers because it does not know Jesus (3:1). This rejection of believers by the world is on full display with the prototypical child of the devil, Cain, who is of the evil one and murders his righteous brother (3:11–12). Because of this, believers should not be surprised when the world hates them (3:13).

John consistently places believers in direct opposition to the world. In contrast to the spirit of antichrist which is in the world, believers are not from the world, and they do not listen to the world; rather, believers, the "little children," have overcome the world because Christ is greater than the world (1 John 4:4). By clinging to the truth about Jesus rather than the falsehood from the world, believers overcome the world (5:4–5). Believers, however, do not overcome the world through their own power; rather, they overcome the world through the Savior of the world (4:14) who came into the world (4:9) in order "to destroy the works of the devil" (3:8), who was ruling the world. This displays a multi-dimensional conflict between believers and the world, with Christ as the head of believers and Satan as the head of the world. The young men in whom the word of God abides have overcome the evil one (2:13–14). Because of this victory over the world and its ruler, the world and its darkness are passing away (2:8, 17), though they have not yet completely passed away. It is the last hour (2:18).

John illustrates this dualism as that between light and darkness, but this dualism is not absolute in the experience of believers in this age. The first main declaration in 1 John is that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). He proceeds to include contrasts between light and darkness (1:5–7; 2:8–10), life and death (3:14–16; 5:11–13; 5:16), true and false spirituality (4:1–3, 6, 13), truth and falsehood (1:6–8; 2:4–5, 8, 21, 27; 3:18–19; 4:6), love and hate (2:9–11; 3:14–15; 4:20), and belief and unbelief (5:10–12). This dualism, however, is not a static dualism for John; rather, "his theology is structured in the dualism of the past and the future—the already and the not yet."[83] Darkness is passing away (2:8), the world is passing away (2:17), and we have passed out of death into

[80] Contra Gundry, who argues that "world" here must refer to the unbelieving people of the world since John uses that sense in 1 John 2:2 (60–61).

[81] Köstenberger, *Theology*, 281.

[82] Ladd, 262. Ladd also describes the world as "the world of men seen in their rebellion and hostility to God" (660).

[83] Ibid., 661.

life (3:14). Darkness, however, still characterizes the world, and the world still lies in the power of the evil one (5:19). Whereas the one who loves God does not practice sin (3:8–9), sin is still a reality in the life of the believer because whoever says he is without sin is a liar (1:8), and the one who sins has an advocate with the Father (2:1–2). Therefore, this dualism is not an absolute dualism in the experience of believers. John "uses dualism to express a conviction of the election of the community of believers and to interpret their actual experience."[84] Therefore, it is a modified dualism: "There is a future dimension, the darkness is passing away, the Son of God appeared to annul the deeds of the devil, the evil one has been conquered."[85]

John's exhortation to believers not to love the world finds itself in the midst of this already/not yet overlap. The dualism is not absolute, and the world is not wholly evil. While there is a clear distinction between light and darkness, the world in which believers live is characterized by darkness. Similarly, while there is a clear distinction between God's kingdom and this world, the experience of believers includes a struggle with the world. This renders it difficult for believers to determine what aspects of this world are sinful and which ones are good. While the world is viewed as dangerous because it is in the power of the evil one, believers are still prone to love it. There are still good things in the world, though the devil's pattern is to take what is good in the world and to twist it and corrupt it for his own use. This is evident in the serpent's temptation of Eve to take God's good creation and turn it into an object of sin through her desires and pride (Gen 3:6). In his temptation of Jesus, the devil commands Jesus to do two things that are not inherently sinful—turning stones into bread and putting on a display of divine power (Luke 4:3–12). Satan works to pervert the true use of the goodness of creation in order to control people through their lusts and desire to misuse it. A person's affection for the world is problematic when it follows after the devil's pattern of perverting what is good. People who engage in a lifestyle of fulfilling such illegitimate lusts represent the darkness—the world that is ruled by the devil.

This demonstrates the significance of "flesh" being understood as desires of the body rather than the "human inclination to sin" in the theology of John's letter. If "flesh" refers to the human inclination to sin, then "flesh" is inherently evil, and loving the world is merely loving and indulging in one's inclination to sin. This ignores the modified dualism of John's letter, which understands that as the darkness is passing away, John's readers need to understand their responsibility in properly ordering their affections and loves in relation to their existence in the world—their bodies, eyes, and life. In 1 John 2:16, "all that is in the world" refers to some of the key areas which Satan, the ruler of the world, uses to tempt people. The desires of the body are designed by God to be good—to enjoy food, sex, exercise, and other bodily pleasures. However, God designed these pleasures to be enjoyed only according to his designed pattern. The ruler of this world wants believers to sin by using God's gift of bodily pleasures in ways that are contrary to the divine design. Similarly, God designed the eyes to be able to see and take in the beauty of God's good creation. But Satan tempts people to fulfill the desires of the eyes outside of God's designed pattern. And God gives people possessions and status as

[84] Lieu, 83.

[85] Ibid., 82.

a gift to be enjoyed and used according to his design. Satan tempts humans to use their possessions, status, and power contrary to God's intention. C. S. Lewis explains,

> Pleasure, money, power, and safety are all, as far as they go, good things. The badness consists in pursuing them by the wrong method, or in the wrong way, or too much. I do not mean, of course, that the people who do this are not desperately wicked. I do mean that wickedness, when you examine it, turns out to be the pursuit of some good in the wrong way. . . . The powers which enable evil to carry on are powers given it by goodness.[86]

The problem with worldliness is not merely the indulgence in the human inclination to sin; rather, worldliness is the misuse of God's good gifts of the body, eyes, and life, characterized by lust and pride in succumbing to Satan's temptations. The main point in 1 John 2:15–17 is that if a person loves the world by misusing the goodness of God's creation, he is demonstrating that "the love of the Father is not in him," and he is under the power of the evil one.

Conclusion

This article has argued for an accurate interpretation of 1 John 2:16 in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of the theology of the world in 1 John. First John 2:16 is a key verse on the world, and it identifies the "desires of the flesh" as a key aspect of being "of the world." Many scholarly works, however, present an inadequate understanding of the meaning of σάρξ in this verse. After examining the lexical data, particularly in light of John's pattern of usage with σάρξ along with several contextual factors, John is most likely referring to the desires of the physical body rather than the general human inclination to sin or the temporal nature of humans. This sense seems to fit best with the other two genitive constructions (desires of the eyes and pride of life in 2:16) as well as the temporary nature of these elements (2:17). The likely parallelism with the temptation accounts in Genesis 3 and Luke 4 also fits well with this idea.

This understanding of "desires of the flesh" also fits best with John's theology of the world. John's dualism presents a strong contrast between believers and the world. This, however, is a modified dualism that acknowledges that the darkness is passing away and that what is sinful about the world is not creation in itself but only that which is corrupted by the ruler of the world—the devil. It is therefore the inappropriate use of the desires of the body and of the eyes as well as the pride of life that supremely characterize the world in 1 John. This understanding of 1 John 2:16 provides a solid foundation for interpreting and applying a biblical theology of the world in 1 John and the rest of the NT.

[86] C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2001), 44–45.

Shattered by Betrayal: Using Psalm 35 to Help Survivors of Abuse Rebuild Trust

by Bruce Meyer[1]

Hope is essential for any person, but even more so for those who have experienced abuse—hope of restoration, hope of deliverance from confusion, guilt, shame, defilement, and such. The Scriptures are filled with hope, but an abuse survivor needs specific hope, "laser-guided" truth, that directly addresses the problems she faces, both the sin that came at her from the abuser and any sin that comes out of her heart in response to the abuse.[2]

One of the most common struggles for abuse survivors is broken trust with those who should be trustworthy, such as a parent, teacher, coach, sibling, and the like. The individual to whom the weak and helpless looks for care becomes a source of severe pain. In suffering abuse, whether physical, sexual, or verbal, it is the betrayal of trust that often makes the abuse so destructive in the life of the survivor, since her distrust wrongly spills over into other relationships. Tragically, the loss of trust often intrudes into the survivor's perception of God. It is such betrayal that complicates the survivor's ability to trust anyone, regardless of the person's trustworthiness.

Many in Scripture suffered betrayal and its effects. David himself was betrayed by some of his closest companions. The counselor who is dealing with survivors of abuse can find in David's life patterns that guide him through the growth process toward restoring trust, especially the trust in God that is so essential to the survivor.

Therefore, survivors of abuse will reestablish trust when they follow the biblical pattern of recognizing and expressing their thoughts and feelings of betrayal to God, trusting him for restoration. In that regard, the purpose of this article is threefold. It will show first how to openly express thoughts and feelings of betrayal to God and, second, how to use Psalm 35 as a counseling example for rebuilding trust.[3] Third, the article will demonstrate the Scripture's all-sufficient character in providing care for those who have suffered trauma.

Setting of the Psalm

This discussion of Psalm 35 begins with a brief orientation to its authorship, occasion, and genre. Establishing the authorship of the psalm is beyond the scope of this paper, but this writer accepts Davidic authorship based on the superscription, the parallel with struggles in David's life, similarities

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[2] Although abuse is not limited to females, this paper will refer to the survivor in the feminine gender.

[3] See the appendix for a fresh translation of Psalm 35.

with Psalm 34 (e.g., the Angel of Yahweh in v. 7), and the prevalence of Davidic psalms in Book I of the psalter.[4]

Attempts by scholars to identify a specific historical setting of the psalm have proven inconclusive. Even general assertions attempting to determine the circumstances and conditions behind the psalm are equally varied. Scholars provide two possible settings for the psalm. One view is that David wrote the passage while Saul was pursuing him, because of the parallels between the language here and Psalm 34.[5] A second view assigns the occasion to Absalom's rebellion.[6] Either occasion fits the details of the psalm adequately. Other suggestions for an occasion range from a broken treaty[7] to a personal illness[8] to a temple lawsuit.[9] Given the disparity of these views and the diversity of images and language, it is best for the exegete to avoid dogmatically assigning a specific situation to the psalm. One should also be aware that on occasion the psalmist may have been deliberately vague so that the psalm would fit many occasions for his audience.[10] Whatever the occasion, the betrayal the psalmist experienced fits the betrayal of trust an abuse survivor suffers.

Psalm 35 is one of fifty-nine laments in the psalter. Containing three lament sections, the psalm also includes imprecations toward the psalmist's attackers. One author, however, captures the magnitude of the complaints the psalmist made when he states, "Psalm 35 is a particularly aggressive and defensive complaint of the individual."[11]

Analysis of the Psalm

Because the psalmist weaves laments, petitions, and vows throughout the psalm, this article will approach the passage analytically rather than either a verse-by-verse approach or by strophe. An overview of the strophes, however, reveals that, although the psalmist's emotions are scattered throughout, he appears to address physical (vv. 1–10), personal (vv. 11–18), and verbal character attacks (vv. 19–28).[12] After the analysis, the psalm will be summarized synthetically to draw the three strophes together into a whole.

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[4] O. Palmer Robertson, *The Flow of the Psalms: Discovering Their Structure and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015), 61ff.

[5] Franz Delitzsch, *The Psalter,* in Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament,* trans. F. B. Elland (1871; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996) 5:266.

[6] H.C. Leupold, *Exposition of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1959), 284.

[7] Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, WBC (Waco: Word, 1983), 19:286–7.

[8] Craig C. Broyles, *The Conflict of Faith and Experience in the Psalms: A Form-Critical and Theological Study,* JSOTSupp 52 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1989), 194–95.

[9] W. Graham Scroggie, *Psalms* (London: Pickering, 1948), 1:194.

[10] W. H. Bellinger, *Reading and Studying the Book of Psalms* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1990), 45.

[11] Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 153.

[12] John Goldingay, *Psalms 1–41*, BCOTWP (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 490.

Recognize the Protector (Address)

When looking for restoration from abuse, the survivor must look to God, since spiritual restoration always begins with him. Abuse can profoundly distort God's image in victims (cognitive, emotional, volitional), since the abuse cuts to the core of who that person is and often results in distorted views of God and others. David, when attacked, turned to God for assistance and relief (vv. 1, 22, 23–24). David's repeated use of the imperative verb in verses 1–4 with the vocative *Yahweh* as the subject and the jussives ("let" or "may") throughout the psalm reflect his need for God. Even when the psalmist felt as though God had delayed in helping him ("how long will you look on" in v. 17), he brought his requests of deliverance to God. Additionally, David realized the sufficiency of God to meet his needs ("who is just like you?" in v. 10). Thus, the counselee must recognize her need to come to God for comfort, deliverance, and restoration. If the counselee has little or no relationship with God, then the counselor should methodically point her in that direction via the gospel. This dynamic further means that the biblical counselor must reject those methods for restoration that are not in keeping with God's, including psychological or integrationist paradigms.[13]

Since the counselee often feels abandoned by all, even by God, she needs reassurance concerning God's nature. David focused on the nature of God through the use of his name and titles.[14] *Yahweh* (God's personal name emphasizing his self-existence, faithfulness, and eternality) occurs eight times in the psalm. The titles *Adonai* (emphasizing God's position as "master") and *Elohim* (emphasizing God's supreme power) occur two times each. The psalmist's use of various names for God, often in compound with one another, indicate his understanding of God's nature and his need to remember his nature in biblical trust. The counselor will need to remind the survivor repeatedly of God's presence and care. His teaching must be biblical and thorough, based on passages that assure and explain God's care for the individual. He may have the individual memorize and meditate on key passages that will help remind the counselee of the nature and love of God, starting with helpful truths here in Psalm 35. The counselee may find these verses as she embarks on her own search for assurances of deliverance by God through the Book of Psalms.

It is one matter for the survivor to understand the nature and abilities of God but another to believe God *can* and *will* act in relation to her. The survivor, therefore, must personally relate to God's nature and abilities. She will not learn to trust again if she does not begin to view herself as the object

[13] Psychology's materialism largely ignores the spiritual side of man, whereas integrationism diminishes the sufficiency of the Scriptures while inflating the sufficiency of psychology. Trauma-informed counseling most apparently tilts in these directions. The popular book *The Body Keeps the Score* is one such example of the materialistic view of man. See Bessel Van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (New York: Penguin, 2014). Critiques of Van der Kolk's hypothesis come from both secular and biblical counselors. For secular counterpoints see George Bonanno, *The End of Trauma: How the New Science of Resilience Is Changing How We Think About PTSD* (New York: Basic, 2021) or Michael Scheeringa, *The Body Does Not Keep the Score: How Popular Beliefs About Trauma Are Wrong,* 2nd ed. (independently published, 2024). For a biblical-counseling perspective, see Francine Tan, "A Critical Evaluation of Bessel Van der Kolk's *The Body Keeps the Score,*" *The Journal of Biblical Soul Care* 7, no. 2 (2023), https:// acbcdigital resources.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/resources/JBSC/Fall+2023/JBSC+Fall+2023_Tan.pdf.

[14] For further discussion on the names and titles of God, see Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 47–51.

of God's concern and care. David uses the first-person personal pronoun repeatedly throughout the psalm when beseeching God to act for him (vv. 1–3, 22–24). David's use of God's personal name (*Yahweh*) shows that he viewed God in a personal way as one with whom he had a relationship. In addition, this psalm is an individual lament showing that David was anticipating God's help for him, not just for others—a common doubt in abuse cases. Through David's example, the counselor needs to remind the survivor often that God's care is available for her *personally*, demonstrating often how God is working in her to restore her. She especially needs these truths when loneliness and abandonment resurface or when discouragement overwhelms her.

Recount the Abuse (Lament)

Before the Abuse

It is the close relationship the survivor had with the abuser prior to the abuse that incites the feelings of betrayal. One does not feel betrayed by an enemy but rather by a friend. The psalmist first describes his relationship with the words "friend" and "brother" (v. 14). Both the disjunctive *waw*[15] and the emphatic pronoun[16] in verse 13 contrast the kindness he showed in this relationship with the misery his attackers showed him. Previously, his relationship with his attackers was a part of his everyday life, as the phrase "I went about (daily life)" demonstrates (v. 14). It is this betrayal that the counselor needs to address with the survivor to help her in restoration. Unlike her attacker, the Lord is loving and trustworthy. The counselor will need to establish that not all her relationships have been abusive. She will need to correct her fear of intimacy if she is ever to trust again. This truth should be a source of hope for the counselee, to realize that she can have healthy relationships based on her growing relationship with the Lord. This fact should also help in showing the counselee that she did not deserve abuse.

Betrayal is further inflamed by the love and sacrifice the survivor displays for the abuser. David depicts his love through sacrificial activities. In verse 13 he lists fasting and prayer on behalf of his attackers. He connects his fasting with "humbled my soul" and with "mourning attire," showing humility, sincerity, and love for his attackers. His intercessions on behalf of the abuser were persistent, as David explains in the words, "My prayer upon my bosom kept returning." Some commentators understand this phrase to mean that his head kept returning to his chest (as in "bowing") in prayer. Perhaps a better explanation is that the statement represents unanswered prayer rather than his "head" since the "prayer" functions as the subject of the clause.[17] The use of the frequentative imperfect adds emphasis to his sacrifice. Even when the prayer kept returning unanswered, David continued praying. In verse 14, David stresses mourning clothing, noting that he mourns as one mourns for a mother. Here, the counselor can show that genuine love and sacrifice were not what caused the abuse, nor were those acts of love improper. The problem rests in the abuser, not in the actions of the survivor.

[15] Bruce K. Waltke, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisebrauns, 1990), 129.

[16] Willem A. VanGemeren, "Psalms," in *EBC*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991) 5:290.

[17] Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1–72*, TOTC (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1973), 143.

Furthermore, the counselor can show the survivor that she can show healthy love again in her relationships through biblical restoration. As always, it is important to remind the counselee that such restoration is based upon the restoration found through Christ in salvation and daily sanctification.

Usual and customary acts of love were natural for the survivor before the abuse because the survivor trusted the abuser. Herein lies the destructive nature of the betrayal. In verse 15, David notes that "the attackers gathered together against me, and I did not know it." VanGemeren notes that this clause may indicate either that the psalmist did not know his attackers or that because of the attack, he did not *recognize* them as his former friends.[18] The latter is the better explanation since David is still speaking of the friends of verse 14. The fact that he neither expected the attack nor expected it to come from these individuals indicates his trust in them. His reaction would be a natural response considering he viewed them as brothers and friends. He further states throughout the psalm that they attack him deceptively and without reason (v. 19).

This principle provides one of the goals in the counseling setting. The abuse survivor has difficulty trusting because in the past such vulnerability proved to be disastrous. Here, the counselor can show the survivor that others have had their trust violated and restored; they provide a pattern for her restoration also. With God's help, her trust can be restored toward those who are trustworthy. Therefore, the counselor can show from this psalm the trust that David regained, having had that trust violated in the past. The problem is not her inability to trust but rather the false assumption that pain comes from trusting others. If the survivor will work toward dealing biblically with the pain of betrayal and abuse, the survivor can see the fear of trusting relationships diminish and trust restored, especially toward God.

The Abuse Itself[19]

The counselor now must turn the attention of the survivor toward the abuse itself, since the survivor often has unbiblical beliefs about the abuse. Recounting abuse for the sake of recounting accomplishes nothing, but recalling for assessing biblically is profitable, as the survivor learns to think truthfully about her experience.[20] The survivor must begin to recount the abuse, to face the damage done at the hands of the abuser as she calls for God to restore her while moving toward forgiveness (Matt 18:15–34).[21] David teaches several principles about his abuse that are noteworthy.

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[18] VanGemeren, 289.

[19] The Association of Certified Biblical Counselors defines abuse as "the pattern of sinful, selfish mistreatment of another made in God's image, whereby moral agency, freedom of conscience informed by God's Word, and God-given human dignity is violated by harmful acts (physical, sexual, verbal) or schemes to perpetuate oppression and unbiblical control." ACBC Whitepaper, "Framework and Key Guidelines for Handling Abuse Cases," https://abuse.biblicalcounseling.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Committed-to-Care-Framework-and-Guidelines-Download_Aug-30.pdf, accessed December 27, 2024.

[20] For more on this subject, see Steve Viars, *Putting Your Past in Its Place* (Eugene, OR: Harvest, 2011).

[21] In Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant, the king took an accounting of what his servants owed. Such an accounting is not vindictive (or rooted in bitterness), but rather important for offering forgiveness for those wrongs.

Reasons for the Abuse

The abuser will take advantage of the powerlessness of the survivor. Beginning in verse 10, David uses descriptive terms to demonstrate his weakness. He uses the word עָנִי, translated "unfortunate," twice in this verse. This word denotes that "socially he is defenseless and subject to oppression," a strange assessment given David's position as monarch.[22] David also employs the word אֶבְיוֹן "needy", which is used in Scripture of those who are unable to protect themselves within society either economically or socially.[23] He states that the attackers are stronger than he. In verse 15, David speaks of his "stumbling" (צָלַע). When the psalmist was weak, his attackers struck. The counselor should stress to the survivor that the perpetrator took advantage of her because she was available and vulnerable, not because she either encouraged or deserved the abuse.[24]

Because the survivor is weak, the abuser will selfishly take from her without regard for her welfare. Several verses describe such action by the attackers. In verse 10, David describes their attack as "robbing." The imagery here shows this one can least afford to be robbed ("needy"). The word גָּזֵל conveys a "tearing away by force" and includes the use of violence.[25]

In verse 12, the psalmist uses the word "evil" or "misery" (רָעָה) to indicate an experience that causes physical and emotional pain.[26] Here, David remarks that his friends repaid his good with evil, a high insult in Jewish culture (cf. Prov 17:13). Furthermore, the word "bereavement" (שְׁכוֹל) is so extreme that it is used for sorrow associated with the loss of a child in many contexts. Hamilton suggests the reading, "There is a desolation in my soul."[27]

David further shows the selfishness of the attackers in the difficult reading of verse 16, either "like godless mocking ones (after) a cake" or "mockers at a feast." Some scholars believe the word מָעוֹג should be translated "to encircle" as mockers.[28] The JPS version translates the clause "with impious, mocking grimace" but notes the Hebrew expression is difficult.[29] *HALOT* provides little assistance with the word but notes an Arabic cognate meaning "someone who mocks a cripple."[30] The imagery of "gnashing" fits either interpretation, since it is an expression of an angry attack against the victim (cf. Acts 7:54). Here, the counselor can remind the survivor that not only did she not deserve the abuse but also did nothing to *invite* the abuse. It was the selfish desires and hatred of the individual that drove the abuser to commit this act of aggression.

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[22] Leonard J. Coppes, "עָנִי," *TWOT,* ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce Waltke (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 2:682.

[23] Idem, "אָבָה," *TWOT*, 1:5.

[24] Common among abuse survivors is the belief that she either deserved or invited the abuse. She may base this belief on the accusations of the abuser or others.

[25] Elmer B. Smick, "גָּזַל," *TWOT*, 2:158.

[26] G. Herbert Livingston, "רָעַע," *TWOT*, 2:856.

[27] Victor P. Hamilton, "שָׁכַל," *TWOT*, 2:923.

[28] Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms 1*, AB (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1965), 1:209.

[29] *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985), in loc.

[30] Ludwig Koehler, et al., *HALOT,* trans. M. E. J. Richardson (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 2:610.

Lest one should say that the abuser did not intend to harm the survivor, the psalmist shows the abuser deliberately chooses to abuse the individual. Verse 4 describes his attackers as ones "plotting evil" against the psalmist. The word for plotting (חָשַׁב) means to invent or devise a plan against someone.[31] David describes the result of the enemies' scheming in verse 7 in the verbs "have set up secretly" and "have dug." These are actions of premeditation evidenced by the scheming involved, actions that parallel "grooming" in today's vernacular. David further confirms premeditation when he notes that his attackers were "planning" deceitful words against him in verse 20 (same word as v. 4); therefore, one cannot excuse the attacker for his actions. He is responsible because of the deliberate choice he made to attack, use, and injure the survivor.

Description of the Abuse

The abuse may take on different forms in the life of the survivor. David experienced both physical and verbal attacks. The physical attacks are evident beginning in verse 1. David uses the word "fighting" to describe the attacks against him. This word has a martial tone that paints the imagery of physical assault.[32] David continues the martial imagery in verses 2–3 with the addition of the "shields" and "spear." He adds that his attackers are "pursuing" him. This word (רָדַף) appears most often in the context of making war (Joshua) and persecuting an enemy (Psalms). The word has a predatory tone, as one would find in the context of war.[33]

The actions of the attackers indicate the emotional injury to the psalmist. He mentions in verse 12 that he feels "bereavement to [his] soul." The phrase explains the depth of emotional pain David feels, even to the remotest parts of his inner man. To be clear, however, the individual's emotions reflect his thoughts and beliefs.

David also addresses verbal abuse in several ways. In verse 11 the "ruthless witnesses" kept "asking things which [he does] not know." Craigie remarks that the "asking" has the tone of an interrogation, a demand, attempting to gain a confession from David of something that he had not done.[34] David speaks of the "mocking ones" in verse 16. In verse 20, the attackers are not "speaking peace," and they are "planning deceitful words." Verse 21 amplifies this thought when David recites how they "open wide their mouth against me" saying, "our eyes have seen it," reciting false accusations about the psalmist.

Knowing these forms, the survivor can examine and confront these kinds of abuse in her own life. She may uncover either unbiblical or incorrect thinking from actions she had not previously recognized as abuse. Therefore, the survivor will gain insight from viewing how David dealt with these abusive actions in turning to the Lord for vindication and restoration.

As the initial act of abuse progresses into habitual acts, the hopelessness becomes more acute. The abuse, however, continues even when the damage becomes apparent in the life of the survivor without

[31] Leon J. Wood, "חָשַׁב," *TWOT,* 1:330.

[32] VanGemeren, 287.

[33] William White, "רָדַף," *TWOT*, 2:834.

[34] Craigie, 287.

regard for her welfare. David uses several present participles to indicate the continual abuse, such as "striving" and "fighting" (v. 1), "pursuing" (v. 3), "seeking my soul" and "plotting" (v. 4), "robbing" (v. 10), "gnashing" (v. 16), and "hating" (v. 19). Waltke explains that the active participle expresses action that is continual, "prolonged," and unbroken (in contrast to the imperfect tense).[35]

David's attackers knew the damage, as he explains in verse 15. When they "tore" him apart, they continued without ceasing ("do not keep still"). Later the attackers rejoice in the destruction of the psalmist when they exclaim, "Aha our soul's desire . . . we have swallowed him up" (v. 25). The word בָּלַע "swallow" often conveys destruction throughout the OT.[36] The attackers' "soul's desire" points to the fact that they had achieved their goal in destroying the psalmist.[37]

Because of the duration of the abuse, the counselor will need to address the issue of time with the counselee. Since the survivor has suffered sustained acts of abuse, restoration may not happen quickly. The counselor and the survivor will need to display patience and seek persistent instruction from the Word. Here, the counselor will also find it helpful to remind the counselee that she has survived the acts of abuse, even though they were so destructive. Since she has survived the abuse, she can not only survive the recovery but can also grow spiritually through this time of testing (Jas 1:2–11). The psalm also indicates to the readers that God not only sees and condemns such treatment but also provides the needed care to restore such a person toward Christlike responses.

The Response to the Abuse

When the abuse is exposed, the abuser often either blames the survivor for the abuse or diminishes and/or denies the abuse. This blame-shifting was the point of the ruthless witnesses that David mentions (v. 11). The interrogation, to which David did not know how to respond, was intended to show either that David was at fault or to divert the attention away from the attack.[38] Such was the intention in verse 20 ("planning deceitful words"). The false accusers attempted to slander the psalmist with false accusations. Likewise, the survivor must realize that the shroud of secrecy that started with abuse will be difficult to remove. The perpetrator will attempt to blame and shame her into retracting her claims, perhaps even manipulating others whom she thought were allies.

Furthermore, the survivor needs to look for allies who will also encourage her through her restoration and growth (Rom 12:14–21). The psalmist, though initially feeling abandoned, even by God (v. 17), realizes by the end of the psalm that there are those who are supportive of his protection and recovery (v. 27). David describes these genuine allies as ones "who desire the well-being of his servant."[39]

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[35] Waltke, 613.

[36] Walter C. Kaiser, "בָּלַע," *TWOT,* 1:112.

[37] Leupold, 291.

[38] Delitzsch, 271.

[39] Ibid., 274.

After the Abuse

Reflections About Self

David includes laments about his own emotions from the betrayal in the psalm. From them, the survivor can relate not only to the nature of the abuse but also to how the abuse influences her thoughts and emotions. It is always important to remember that a person cannot change her emotions by herself, but by adjusting her theology, her emotions will eventually align with truth.[40] David addresses feelings of fear, sadness, anger, and betrayal throughout the psalm. Suffice it to say that David experiences the full range of these emotions in verses 4–6, 8, 12, 13–17, and 19–21. Here David recognizes truth about God that alleviates both his flawed thinking and his turbulent emotions.

One area of emotion David exhibits is utter hopelessness and entrapment. Survivors of abuse will suffer with the hopeless feeling of being trapped first by their attackers, then by the resulting circumstances and fears. David uses the images of hunting to define these feelings. In verse 7 he describes the traps set as a "net" (רֶשֶׁת) and a "pit" (שַׁחַת). Hunters used both devices for entrapping animals, but here the terms are metaphorical for trapping people covertly.[41] In verse 15 David mentions two times that the attackers "gathered together" against him. Between verses 15–17, he paints an image that is predatory in nature with the words "attackers," "tore" (v. 15), "gnashing with teeth" (v. 16), and "lions" (v. 17). From these words, one envisions the attackers surrounding the psalmist, entrapping him for their attack.

Just as the psalmist finds comfort and relief through the expression of his thoughts, desires, and emotions, the abuse survivor can openly share the same with the counselor and ultimately with the Lord. When she does, she and the counselor will be able to deal with faulty feelings and underlying beliefs in a biblical way, learning to trust the Lord's presence and care in her life again. She can find comfort through the Lord as she shares those feelings and thoughts with him. David's focus on God's nature and work is the antidote to the chronic fear, sadness, shame, anger, and betrayal that she may battle.

Reflections About God

Of all the emotions and thoughts the survivor faces, one of the most troubling will be the feeling that God has abandoned her to her suffering. Survivors will believe and feel as though God was either inattentive or inactive toward their needs. David shares these thoughts and emotions as well. He expresses them once in a lament (framed as a question) and twice in a petition. In verse 17, he asks *Adonai*, "How long will you look on?" The statement questions God's *seeming* indifference or passivity to the individual's suffering.[42] Here the psalmist is lamenting not only the level of suffering in the event but also the duration.[43] David uses two statements to express these laments in verse 22. He

[40] For more on sanctifying emotions, see Brian Borgman, *Feelings and Faith* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2009).

[41] *HALOT,* s.v. "רֶשֶׁת"and "שַׁחַת."

[42] J. W. Rogerson and J. W. McKay, *Psalms 1–50,* CBCNEB (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 164.

[43] Broyles, 100.

writes, "Do not keep silent" (חרשׁ), an expression that refers to a person who is not hearing and, therefore, is unresponsive.[44] Here, David's *perception* is that God is non-responsive to his suffering. Likewise, his perception about God being far from him moves him to request a change. While some may question the appropriateness of such a statement, the psalmist is open with God concerning his feelings and thoughts. In expressing what God already knows about the psalmist (cf. Ps 139:1–6), the psalmist can deal with his faulty beliefs and accompanying feelings God's way in humble dependence and submission to truth.

The survivor of abuse needs to be equally honest with her feelings of abandonment. As she confesses these feelings, the counselor can remind her of the truth about God and can help her realize the extent and nature of the Lord's involvement in both her protection and restoration.[45]

Request Deliverance (Petition)

Having recognized the injury and pain the survivor has experienced, she must advance in her growth process. Without biblical renewal, she will likely remain in a state of emotional trauma as a victim. The survivor does not need to be controlled by the pain of the abuse but rather seek biblical change in her responses to her suffering and in her trust toward God and others. When David experienced betrayal, he brought the pain to God rather than ignoring or denying it. Of the twenty-eight verses in this psalm, fifteen contain petitions for God to act on his behalf. In these fifteen verses, David uses the imperative eight times and the jussive twenty-one times. Each of these volitional forms requests God to act in a way that would change the circumstances.

More importantly, included in these requests is a desire for God to produce change in David himself. For instance, in verse 3, the psalmist solicits comfort and assurance from God. In verse 24 he desires God to examine him according to his righteousness. The juxtaposition of praise with lament at the end of each strophe indicates further that David did not desire to remain in a condition of anger and bitterness but instead desired to express praise to God. Nowhere is this more evident than in verse 9, where David uses the future imperfect in expressing his determination to praise God. Leupold observes that the psalmist states his goal unconditionally.[46] One should not miss the contrast when David states in verse 12 that his soul was "bereaved," while in verse 9, "my soul shall shout for joy," and in verse 10 "all my bones shall [rejoice]." David is looking for profound change to occur not just in his circumstances, but even more in *himself*. Furthermore, David does not rejoice in the downfall of his enemies but in the deliverance that uniquely belongs to Yahweh ("who is like you"). This clause serves as the focal point of the entire psalm, demonstrating the incomparable nature of the God who truly delivers.

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[44] *HALOT*, s.v. "חרשׁ."

[45] The author often cites Romans 8:32 to remind the counselee that if God provides the most sacrificial gift for one's greatest peril, he will certainly provide what she needs for the lesser concerns. Jesus' active intercessory work for believers confirms his constant involvement in their restoration and growth (Heb 4:15).

[46] Leupold, 287.

As David finds hope in God alone, so the counselor should be consistent in reminding the survivor of the hope that rests in God's deliverance and restoration. She should not be content to be dominated by pain, or as some suggest, to simply put it out of her mind. The Psalms demonstrate that believers deal with skewed emotions and beliefs with potent and accurate theology in their relationship with God. In other words, the goal in the counseling setting should move from pain to praise through genuine restoration. Such a notion will sound insurmountable initially, but when the restoration begins, the counselee will experience relief through restoration for the first time.

The survivor should ask God for direct intervention. The opening verses of the psalm express this truth using imperative verbs. In verse 3 David uses the word קרא "come against" to appeal for an intentional confrontation between God and his attackers.[47] Again in verse 17, the psalmist asks God to "rescue my soul from their ruin," using the imperative verb. Later in verse 23, he requests that God would "stir up" and "be active" for justice. Here David was asking God to become actively involved in his plight.[48]

The counselor needs to point the survivor to God as the means of restoration, comfort, and justice. When the survivor asks God for such intervention, she will be expressing verbally the desires she has and demonstrating the trust she needs to rebuild. The counselor may direct her to write out her prayers of intervention so that she may later remind herself of what she has asked God to do and how God has answered according to his will. She needs to search the Scriptures for other examples of those who asked God for help and how he responded. The life of David when fleeing Saul could serve as an example of David's reliance upon God's intervention.

When asking God to intervene, the survivor should leave thoughts of vengeance with God. It is here that the exegete is confronted with the difficulty of imprecations. One only needs to peruse the commentaries to find diverging views on how to handle imprecatory prayers. Though the scope of this paper cannot include a thorough discussion, several principles help resolve this problem.

First, while some may view these prayers as unspiritual, David is, on the contrary, very concerned about God's righteousness.[49] This fact is evident in this psalm when David asks God to "judge according to [God's] righteousness" (v. 24) and states that his "tongue shall proclaim [God's] righteousness" (v. 28).[50]

Second, the psalmist is expressing his desire for God to deal with the attacker rather than executing vengeance himself. Bellinger correctly notes, "These psalms are prayers addressed to God, not curses. . . . Thus they leave any decision in the matter to God."[51] Fee adds that the imprecatory psalms "guide or channel our anger *to and through God* verbally, rather than to or at anyone else, verbally or

[47] Leonard J. Coppes, "קָרָא," *TWOT*, 2:811.

[48] Paul R. Gilchrist, "יָקַץ," *TWOT*, 1:398.

[49] J. Carl Laney, "A Fresh Look at the Imprecatory Psalms," *BSac* 138 (January-March 1981): 41.

[50] The author acknowledges theocratic concerns with David that do not match those of a NT believer. The point remains, however, that believers today should take their desires for justice to God (and to appropriate civil authorities) rather than seeking personal vengeance. Remarkably, David had the authority to take such actions as king and yet at times chose not to.

[51] W. H. Bellinger, *Reading and Studying the Book of Psalms* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1990), 54.

physically."[52] David's life is a prime example of this principle at work. As often as David expressed anger concerning his domestic enemies, he consistently refused to take matters into his own hands.[53] Bringing his desires to God reveals his proclivity to leave the problem with God and wait upon him to act out of his righteousness.

Third, the NT, despite its teaching on loving one's enemies, also contains believers' statements concerning judgment. For instance, Paul, perhaps acting through apostolic authority, petitions the Lord to repay Alexander the coppersmith according to his deeds (2 Tim 4:14). The martyred saints request God's judgment upon their persecutors (Rev 6:9–10). Tribulation saints rejoice at the judgment of Babylon and the great harlot (Rev 19:1–3). There is no incompatibility between forgiveness and wanting God to display his righteous justice. Believers should not overlook sin, but justice must come from God and appropriate judicial authorities, rather than from individual believers.

In summary, Bellinger aptly explains the purpose of the imprecatory prayer this way: "The worshiper does not destroy the enemy, but in a liberating act of faith, places the matter with God."[54] Likewise, the purpose for such prayers in the life of the abused is to turn the matter over to God in an act of faith, freeing the soul of the survivor from bitterness and hatred. When asking God to intervene, the survivor should leave desires of vengeance with God (Rom 12:19).

The most obvious imprecations in this psalm are found in verses 4–6. The first two requests relate to the attitude of the abuser. The psalmist desires to see them "shamed" (בּוֹשׁ) and "humiliated" (כלם). These two synonyms are often juxtaposed to stress the guilt associated with wrongdoing.[55] A third term employed in this verse is the word סוג, which means "made to draw back." Wakely comments that in the Niphal stem the word is "often used of faithless conduct, of a treacherous desertion of one to whom a firm commitment had been made."[56] This word also involves shame but is used more often in contexts that are hostile.[57] Even David's desire to shame his attackers he left with God to impose.

The latter two requests deal more with protection of the survivor from the attacker. These two requests are parallel in their construction but contrasting in meaning. In both cases, David requests that the Angel of Yahweh become involved in this judgment. In verse 5, he asks that his attackers "become as chaff before the wind." The Angel's role, described in circumstantial clauses,[58] is to push them on, as if to prevent them from committing the offense again. The image here is one of removal and resulting protection.

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[52] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 182.

[53] Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 294–95.

[54] Bellinger, 54.

[55] John N. Oswalt, "בּוֹשׁ," *TWOT*, 1:98; idem, "כלם," ibid., 1:442–43.

[56] Robin Wakely, "סוג," *NIDOTTE,* ed. Willem VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 3:230.

[57] R. D. Patterson, "סוג," *TWOT*, 2:619.

[58] Delitzsch, 269.

On the other hand, verse 6 seems to be an image of helplessness or fear.[59] Here, the psalmist desires their way to be "dark" and "slippery" (חֲלַקְלַק), with the Angel of Yahweh pursuing them.[60] David wishes the attackers to feel the same helplessness he felt when attacked, as the Angel pursued them. David expresses in these verses some statements that seem rather harsh. He was, however, merely expressing emotions that God already knew he possessed. David reminds the reader that God knows all about the abuse (v. 22) and his resulting thoughts and emotions (v. 24).

These expressions lead to at least three reasons David gives for submitting these thoughts to God. First, God alone can meet the needs of the survivor (v. 10). Second, he alone knows the truth (v. 22). Third, he alone is righteous to judge correctly (v. 24). The psalmist, having realized that only God could deal righteously with his desires, describes those thoughts and emotions to God in hopeful expectation that God will respond.

As for the survivor, regardless of how shocking her thoughts may be, she needs to express them to God, not because God needs information but because the counselee needs to include God in her life. The depth of her grief requires open and frequent expression of her thoughts and emotions in a biblical way with a goal toward forgiveness of the perpetrator, should he repent, and biblical restoration for herself. The counselor can help by encouraging her that such desires are typical for survivors, even if unbiblical at times. As always, repentance and replacement are essential in her restoration (Eph 4:22–24). In encouraging such expression, she is rebuilding the trust she needs in God. She may find that keeping a journal of her thoughts and emotions will help her as well. As she adds to her journal, she will see the progress that she has made as she depends on God for restoration. Above all, she should not feel ashamed that she battles such responses. She should, however, view the thoughts as an indication of her deep spiritual needs that only the Scriptures and sanctification can address.

In expressing her thoughts and emotions to God, the survivor should desire appropriate response to the abuse. David, based upon God's law, invokes the principle of *lex talionis* in requesting justice from God. Contrary to popular opinion, the "eye for eye" principle was not a primitive vindictive statute, but a principle based upon equity. Motyer remarks,

> The basic principle of OT jurisprudence was absolute equity, enunciated in the striking and memorable form "an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth." This is often unthinkingly criticized as if it were a license for savagery, but reflection establishes that its intention was to secure as exact an equation as is humanly possible between crime and punishment.[61]

David uses this principle in his language. For instance, he asks God to "strive" with those who were striving with him and to "fight" with those who were fighting against him (v. 1). In verse 7 he describes the "pit" and "net" in which his attackers had attempted to capture him. David turns those

[59] Kidner, 143.

[60] The Angel of Yahweh appears only here and in 34:7 in the Psalms. The reference may connect events here with the Angel's protection during the Exodus.

[61] J. A. Motyer, "Civil Law and Justice in Bible Times," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 265–66.

devices upon his attackers in verse 8 in requesting that they be caught in their own mechanisms. In the same verse he requests that they fall into "ruin." The word שׁוֹאָה "ruin" suggests "an irrecoverable state of devastation and destruction" that is characteristic of God's judgment.[62] In fact, this word is the same as the modern Hebrew word used for the Holocaust.[63] One should not view such action as retaliation by the survivor but as just retribution by God for crimes committed by the aggressor.[64]

What kind of actions may be appropriate? David requests both physical and judicial action. The martial images (vv. 1–3) were discussed earlier, but these images do imply physical protection. The judicial images appear in the first and last strophes of the psalm. In verse 1, David uses the word ריב "strive." The AV translates this word as "plead," reflecting the legal sense of the word. *HALOT* concurs with this sense, stating that the word is a "legal term" meaning "to dispute, to plead the case of."[65] In verse 23 David requests that God become active "to [his] justice" and his "legal case." The latter term is the same word David uses for "strive" in verse 1. The former term, מִשְׁפָּט, is the common word for justice or judgment referring to standard functions of government in providing justice for the oppressed.[66] The synonymous parallelism in this verse helps the exegete understand further the sense of the word "strive."

The recent nature of the abuse will determine what is the appropriate action for one to take. Likewise, the actions depend upon who the survivor is. Certainly, if the survivor is a minor, counselors involved need to report to civil authorities to provide protection for the child and seek appropriate justice. For adult survivors of abuse, the actions may differ from those listed above. At the least, the abused needs to take appropriate biblical action. These actions include confrontation and forgiveness (Matt 18) of the abuser when possible and appropriate in a way that is safe for both the counselee and counselor. Furthermore, the counselor will need to remind the survivor that although God did not prevent the abuse, he certainly protected her through the abuse; she is a survivor.

Having called for God to act, the survivor herself should lay the blame where it belongs—with the abuser. This action involves exposure of the truth. David exemplifies this principle when he calls for God to shame the attackers (vv. 4, 26). Both verses use the same expressions to describe the psalmist's request. He uses two Hebrew words in verse 4, while in verse 26 David adds a third. The added word, חפר "disgraced," occurs fourteen times in parallel with בוּשׁ. Wood claims that the former word is an amplification of the latter and that the two words in concert carry the meaning of "disappointment because of unfulfilled expectations."[67] The word for "ashamed" (חפר), according to Seebass, is used to identify a relationship that is based upon falsehood. He states,

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[62] Rick Brannan, ed., *Lexham Research Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible*, Lexham Research Lexicons (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020), s.v. "שׁוֹאָה."

[63] Goldingay, 493.

[64] Leupold, 287.

[65] *HALOT*, 3:1224.

[66] Robert D. Culver, "שָׁפַט," *TWOT*, 2:948.

[67] Leon J. Wood, "חָפֵר," *TWOT*, 1:311.

> Such a desire, then, is motivated not primarily by revenge, but by the fact that the falsehood with which the worshiper's enemies deal with him, and thus negatively the truth of God, shall be manifest in his enemies. . . . In any case, it seems to me that the interpretation that the worshiper here is demanding revenge is wrong. What he is requesting is a clear revelation of his God.[68]

The psalmist, therefore, is seeking for the truth to be revealed about the attacker's relationship with both him and God. David further desires this shame upon his abusers because they "magnify" themselves against the psalmist. David explains this in verse 26. Because of the attack, David's enemies viewed themselves as proudly victorious.[69] The psalmist desires that the attackers view their actions with shame rather than with pride. He states this in another way earlier in verse 19: "Do not let them rejoice over me." In verse 27 he states this same concept positively toward his allies. What David desires is that the truth would be known and, because of the truth, that his attackers would feel shame rather than pride. He even states that they should "put on shame" like one would wear a garment (v. 26).

The survivor of abuse cannot allow individuals to make excuses for either the abuse or the abuser. The truth must be revealed to those involved. This action should eventually include confronting the abuser with the hurt he has caused in some form when appropriate. Revealing the truth may, as needed, include reporting to civil authorities and warning others so that they are not injured in the same way. The counselee must be careful that throughout this process her motives are not to injure the perpetrator but to protect others. Furthermore, revealing the truth will help in identifying her allies.

Having assessed the damage through the truth, the survivor needs to work at rebuilding trust in God. She should work at viewing God's protection and deliverance as sufficient for her needs. The psalmist uses two images in verse 2 to portray God's sufficient protection. He speaks of God taking hold of both the "small shield" and the "large shield." Warriors used the small shield to deflect blows of the sword and the large shield as a protection for the whole body. Delitzsch notes that the "figure is idealized to show absolute protection."[70]

In verse 3 David calls for God to take the spear and cut off the way of the attackers. The word "javelin" has caused some problems for interpreters. Some have taken this weapon as the Scythian (or Persian) battleaxe (סְגֹר), to maintain parallelism with the "spear." Since, however, the battleaxe was unknown in Hebrew usage, the variant reading of "cutting off the way" is preferred by some commentators.[71] Either way, the line stresses a realized protection that prompted the psalmist to request assurance in verse 3b. Of the word "salvation," Hartley writes, "One who experiences salvation does not need to be tormented by internal anxiety."[72] It was David's realization of God's ability to

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[68] Horst Seebass, "חפר," in *TDOT*, rev. ed., ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 2:59.

[69] Waltke, 440.

[70] Delitzsch, 268.

[71] See Leupold, 291; Delitzsch, 269; and Kidner, 142.

[72] John E. Hartley, "יָשַׁע," *TWOT*, 1:415.

protect that brought him comfort to deal with the aftermath of suffering. Wilson explains it well, saying,

> In response to the psalmist's cry, Yahweh runs through the fray, spear and shield in hand, to defend the psalmist's life. As he does so, Yahweh's ringing voice is heard above the din of battle, shouting "I am your salvation!" This encourages the beleaguered psalmist to hang on until deliverance arrives.[73]

Therefore, not only should the survivor view God's protection as sufficient, but she should also seek personal reassurance of God's protection. Between verses 3 and 10, David changes his wording from a request to an affirmation of who God is. Seeking the personal assurance in verse 3 produced a change in David's view of God's protection.

The counselor should encourage the survivor to enumerate her physical, emotional, and spiritual needs to God. As she catalogs her desires, bringing them to God, she will see how God is meeting them. Taking note of both God's answers and the way he answers will reinforce the principle of God's protection in her mind and move her to realize God's care for her.

Acknowledge Dependence (Confession of Trust)

The survivor has now arrived at the crux of the matter. She has been betrayed and therefore has likely lost trust in others and in God, a trust she needs to regain. Since the survivor has begun to request God's help, she can acknowledge her trust in God, even if her thoughts at times conflict. Such acknowledgement should include daily repentance of both thoughts and feelings that deviate from trust in God's nature, presence, and care.

David requests assurance of God's deliverance in verse 3, indicating his desire for such assurance. By verse 10, David makes a startling confession. He states, "You are one who is rescuing the unfortunate." What prompted the change in David? Among other things we have already observed, in asking God for deliverance David begins to rely upon God for what he needs. That reliance helps him to regain trust in God (cf. vv. 17 and 22). He uses the active participle to show that this action was one he viewed as durative.[74] The psalmist begins this confession with a statement followed by a question: "All my bones shall say, '*Yahweh,* who is just like you?'" The expression "bones" is synecdochical, a part used to express the whole. Kidner adds that this expression is emphatically declaring his personal trust in God.[75] The question is a "Hebraic way of confessing with deep conviction that there is no other than *Yahweh* who delivers."[76] David's feelings of abandonment are replaced with a confident trust that God is going to work on his behalf. Goldingay states it well:

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[73] Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1:579.

[74] Waltke, 613.

[75] Kidner, 143.

[76] VanGemeren, 288.

> In a sense the psalm thus expresses less-cool faith than many others. Yet it also articulates a particularly consistent expectation that one will be given reason for thanksgiving and testimony, and makes a commitment to offering it. In its own way, Ps. 35 insists on looking in the face two sets of facts, like Ps. 22. It looks in the face the fact of vicious attack and serious danger, and it looks in the face the fact that Yhwh is a powerful and delivering God and surely will act to put down attackers.[77]

Anticipate Deliverance (Vow of Praise)

The confession of trust coupled with the vow of praise establishes the overall theme of trust. The confession is the overt statement of trust, while the praise is the evidence that the individual is anticipating God's response. Therefore, the survivor should anticipate deliverance in her praise (cf. Lam 3:21–24).

David expresses his vow of praise at the end of each strophe. The first vow (vv. 9–10) begins with the disjunctive *waw* contrasting the pain of his "soul" in verses 3, 4, and 7 (translated "life") with the praise of his soul in verse 9.[78] The praise is the result of God's deliverance David requests in verse 8,[79] even before the deliverance has been accomplished.[80]

The counselor needs to assist the survivor, particularly in the early stages of recovery, in thanking the Lord for his care for her. She may not easily identify occasions that call for praise, even when they exist. The counselor may guide her in identifying areas in which to anticipate God's work of healing. Such activities will help instill hope in the survivor, realizing that God is going to restore her. As she progresses, the restoration she experiences should prompt a heart of praise and stimulate both the spiritual and emotional energy toward further spiritual progress and growth.

Not only should the survivor be involved in private praise, but she should also appropriately share her experience of deliverance with others. As painful as the abuse was, she now believes differently about God's grand purpose in her through that difficult trial. This action is especially evident in the psalmist's life in verse 18. David speaks of praising in the "great assembly" and among "a mighty group of people." David so anticipates God's deliverance that he looks forward to leading the congregation of God's people in praise for his deliverance. Leupold writes, "David was always a man who thought carefully as to how his own experience might be made profitable for his people."[81]

The survivor of abuse not only will help others in her testimony, but she will also benefit from the support of those individuals. David stresses this principle in verses 27–28. He begins his vow of praise with a petition concerning those who care for his well-being. He desires that they also would be able

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[77] John Goldingay, *Psalms, Volume 1: Psalms 1–41*, BCOTWP, ed. Tremper Longman III (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 504.

[78] Waltke, 129.

[79] VanGemeren, 287.

[80] Claus Westermann, *Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, trans. Keith R. Crim and Richard N. Soulen (Atlanta: John Knox, 1965), 79–80.

[81] Leupold, 289.

to rejoice in God's deliverance in his life. Having the support of such individuals causes David to issue his vow in verse 28. Having seen the support of others, David desires to praise God also. Therefore, the abused individual will benefit by talking about her suffering and restoration; she will identify those who support her. She will benefit others who have experienced abuse. Her action, however, is not about seeking sympathy or glorifying herself but about exalting the Lord and his deliverance.

From these principles, one should understand the importance of daily confessing trust and praising God. Not only will the survivor be relying upon God to meet her needs, but she will also be dealing openly with her need of trusting God and anticipating what he will accomplish in her life in renewing her mind and attitudes. The counselor will need to re-emphasize repeatedly that, even though God did not prevent the abuse, he was aware of the abuse, limited the abuse, did not approve of the abuse, and desires the restoration and growth of the abuse survivor. The counselor needs to articulate clearly a biblical theology of suffering (perhaps Romans 8 or 1 Peter) to the survivor so that she may gain an understanding of why God allows and even ordains individuals to suffer. As the survivor works through these issues, she should be able to see progress toward trusting God (and others) and anticipating God's work in praise.

Synthesis of the Psalm

There are three strophes in this psalm. The first and third strophes contain strong petitions (six statements each), laments (one and two statements respectively), and two vows of praise. The second strophe contains no petitions, strong lament (seven statements), and one vow of praise. From these facts, the counselor may glean some concluding principles that may apply in abuse situations.

The survivor's emotions will often move in cycles. This is most evident when one looks at the three cycles of lament through which David progresses. In each strophe, David issues a lament but ends in praise. Even in the middle strophe with the strongest of laments, David ends in praise. The survivor should be aware that because she has worked through the pain of her suffering, she may experience more bouts with sorrow and pain; but she can and should move back to trust and praise. With time and growth, these cycles will continue to diminish.

Survivors of abuse will experience emotions that vary in type and intensity. There is no set pattern to David's laments or petitions.[82] As one reads through the psalm, he will sense the greatest urgency concerning protection in the first strophe, while vindication becomes predominant in the second and third strophes. Therefore, the counselee should understand that her emotions will change from time to time; those changes do not indicate a regression but a normal progression towards restoration.

Furthermore, the survivor should understand that throughout her recovery, her prayers may include complaints about her pain, requests concerning her desires, and confession of trust coupled with praise, and yet be biblical prayers. David, both here and on other occasions, includes these elements in his prayers (see also Pss 69 and 109) and remains confident that God is hearing him. If David, a man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14; Acts 13:22), can pray as openly as described in this psalm, so can others who have suffered abuse.

[82] Westermann, 64.

Conclusion

The problem of the initial betrayal is only compounded by the continued distrust in relationships. If the survivor of abuse is ever to become a survivor who thrives, she must move beyond the abuse to a position of restored trust in God and others. As she submits to biblical principles, she can pick up the pieces and reassemble them into a life that brings glory to God and help to others. The counselee will become a survivor-thriver by recognizing the protector, recounting the abuse, requesting deliverance and comfort, acknowledging dependence upon God, and anticipating deliverance from him.

Appendix: Translation of Psalm 35

First Strophe

1 Of David
Strive, *Yahweh*, with those striving against me;
Fight with those who are fighting against me.
2 Take hold of [the] small shield and [the] large shield,
And rise up for my help!
3 And draw [the] spear and close up [the way]
to come against those who are pursing me.
Say to my soul, "I [am] your salvation."
4 Let them be ashamed and be humiliated
who are seeking my soul.
Let them be made to draw back and be ashamed
who are plotting evil against me.
5 Let them be as chaff before the wind,
with the Angel of *Yahweh* pushing [them on].
6 Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the Angel of *Yahweh* pursuing them.
7 Because without cause they have set up secretly for me a net,
[because] without cause they have dug a pit for my life.
8 Let ruin come upon him without knowing,
And let the net catch him which he set up secretly;
Into ruin let him fall into it.
9 So my soul shall shout for joy in *Yahweh;*
It shall rejoice in his deliverance.
10 All my bones shall say, "*Yahweh,* who is just like you?
"You are one who is rescuing the unfortunate from the one [who is] stronger than he,
"And the unfortunate and needy from the one who is robbing him."

Second Strophe

11 Ruthless witnesses rise up;
Things which I do not know they are asking.
12 They repay me misery instead of kindness,
[causing] bereavement [*or* desolation] to my soul.
13 But as for me, when they were taken ill, my clothing [was] sackcloth.
I humbled my soul with fasting and my prayer upon my bosom kept returning.
14 As a friend, as a brother to me,
I went about [daily life] as in mourning for a mother;

Dressing in mourning attire,
I bowed down.
15 But in my stumbling they rejoiced and were gathered together;
The attackers gathered together against me, and I did not know;
They tore [me] apart and do not keep still.
16 Like godless mocking ones surrounding [*or* after a cake],
They are ones gnashing upon me with their teeth.
17 *Adonai,* how long will you look on?
Rescue my soul from their ruin,
From lions my only [life].
18 I will praise you in the great assembly;
I will praise you among a mighty [group of] people.

Third Strophe

19 Do not let them rejoice over me,
who are my enemies deceptively,
[Nor] let those who are hating me without cause wink [in maliciousness] their eye.
20 Because they are never speaking peace,
And against those who live quietly in the land they are planning deceitful words.
21 Then they opened wide their mouth against me;
they said, "Aha, aha, with our eyes we have seen [it]!"
22 You have seen it, *Yahweh;*
Do not keep silent, *Adonai;*
Do not be far from me.
23 Stir up and be active to my justice,
My *Elohim* and my *Adonai,* to my legal case.
24 Judge me according to your righteousness,
Yahweh my *Elohim,* and do not let them rejoice over me.
25 Do not let them say in their heart, "Aha our soul!"
Do not let them say, "We have swallowed him up."
26 Let them be ashamed and disgraced all together
who rejoice in my hurt;
Let them put on shame and be humiliated,
the ones who exalt themselves against me.
27 Let them shout for joy and rejoice
who take pleasure in my righteousness;
Let them say continually, "Let *Yahweh* be magnified,
the one who desires the well-being of his servant."
28 And my tongue shall proclaim your righteousness,
All the day your praise.

Pentecostal Puritan? D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

by Mark Sidwell[1]

"People who are evangelical in their outlook," says D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "are agreed with one another about practically everything in connection with the doctrine of the person and the work of the Holy Spirit apart from this one matter,"[2] the "one matter" being the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Lloyd-Jones vividly highlighted the differences about that issue, causing both proponents and opponents of the Charismatic movement to label him at least a sympathizer to that movement. Others, including Lloyd-Jones himself, insisted that his was the traditional evangelical view, one submerged by a newer teaching that allegedly emasculates the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit.

Lloyd-Jones's views of the Holy Spirit have been the subject of a full-length study by Michael Eaton, a major feature of Tony Sargent's examination of Lloyd-Jones's preaching, a small but significant part of Iain Murray's biography of Lloyd-Jones, and the subject of several articles.[3] The present study focuses on his views of the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit primarily as he expressed

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[2] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 428; hereafter referred to as *Baptism.* The sermons in this volume were originally printed in two volumes: *Joy Unspeakable* (1984) and *Prove All Things* (1985), the latter published in America as *The Sovereign Spirit.* The Baker edition not only compiles all the sermons in one volume but also preserves the order in which they were originally preached. As Iain Murray notes, "The sermons in *Prove All Things* were originally preached between the sermons now published as chapters 7 and 8 of *Joy Unspeakable.* As these are more cautionary in their nature it is arguable that the posthumous re-arrangement and separation into two books has affected the original balance of his presentation." Iain H. Murray, *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939–1981* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1990), 486fn.

[3] Michael Eaton, *Baptism with the Spirit: The Teaching of Martyn Lloyd-Jones* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1989). Tony Sargent, *The Sacred Anointing: The Preaching of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1994). Murray, in *The Fight of Faith,* discusses Lloyd-Jones's view of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, his views on the Charismatic movement, and related topics on 380–88, 473–92, 655–71 passim, and 688–95. Examples of articles on this topic include Peter Masters, "Opening the Door to Charismatic Teaching" and "Why Did Dr. Lloyd-Jones Yield to Quasi-Pentecostal Ideas?" *Sword and Trowel,* Sept. 1988, 24–35; Herman C. Hanko, "Charismatic?" *The Standard Bearer,* 15 May 1986, 378–81, and "As to Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Pentecostalism," *The Standard Bearer,* 15 December 1987, 125–27. The last article consists mainly of lengthy quotations from an article by Roy Middleton in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine,* May 1987. Masters's articles, although sometimes sharp in tone, are probably the best critique of DMLJ's views from a Reformed and cessationist point of view. An overview of Lloyd-Jones's pneumatology is found in James Williams, "A Theology of Word and Spirit in the Teaching of Martyn Lloyd-Jones" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019), 76–113. Williams focuses on Lloyd-Jones's views of the baptism of the Spirit and provides a good summary of how his views shifted in the 1950s and 1960s.

them in a series of sermons preached at Westminster Chapel, London, in 1964–65, sermons that Lloyd-Jones called "my definitive teaching on the subject."[4] It will address four main questions: (1) What did he teach concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit? (2) What did he teach concerning the cessation of NT gifts? (3) What did he teach about speaking in tongues? (4) What was his relationship to the Charismatic movement? Obviously these questions are closely related and lie at the heart of the controversy about Lloyd-Jones's views.

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Lloyd-Jones says, "We are living, let us remind ourselves in an age hopelessly below the New Testament pattern—content with a neat little religion. We need the baptism with the Spirit."[5] But what, precisely, was this baptism that he believes is so urgently needed in the modern church? In a fashion that Lloyd-Jones himself might appreciate, it is best to begin with what this baptism is *not* in his thinking.

Baptism of the Spirit Not a "Regular" Work

Lloyd-Jones distinguishes between the Spirit's "regular work" and his "exceptional work." Baptism and revivals are examples of the Spirit's exceptional work,[6] and regeneration and sanctification are examples of his regular work. Therefore, baptism with the Spirit is not to be identified with regeneration. "It is possible for us to be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ without having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit," he asserts.[7] Indeed, this premise lies at the heart of much of his disagreement with segments of modern evangelicalism. He claims that to confuse the regular operation of the Spirit with the exceptional is dangerously close to quenching the Spirit.[8]

Lloyd-Jones stresses the absolute importance of regeneration by the Spirit—"you cannot be a Christian without having the Holy Spirit in you"—but says, "I am asserting at the same time that you can be a believer, that you can have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, and still not be baptized with the Holy Spirit."[9] He argues that regeneration is nonexperiential, that is, it is not an activity of which a Christian is necessarily aware by some experience.[10] Baptism of the Spirit, however, is to Lloyd-Jones something so unmistakably experienced that one cannot help noticing it. It is not subtle; "this is something essentially experimental, which involves a mystical experience, to use such a term."[11] He

[4] Quoted in Hanko, "As to Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Pentecostalism," 125. Eaton says that for the fullest examination of DMLJ's teaching on the Holy Spirit, one should study not only the 1964–65 series but also his five sermons on Ephesians 1:13b preached in 1955 and his fifteen sermons on Romans 8:15–16 preached in 1960–61 (142). Sargent describes the number of sermons Lloyd-Jones preached on the Holy Spirit as "astonishingly large" (*Sacred Anointing,* 72).

[5] *Baptism,* 89.

[6] Ibid.*,* 72.

[7] Ibid., 21.

[8] Ibid., 81.

[9] Ibid., 23.

[10] Ibid., 295.

[11] Ibid., 56, 58.

argues from the Corinthian situation, in which the effect of the spiritual gifts resulting from the Spirit's baptism was so dramatic and unsettling that Paul, in writing to that church, had to deal with decorum and restraint. This distinction between regeneration and baptism is important in understanding his interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:13, as will be seen later.

Likewise, the baptism of the Spirit is not to be identified with sanctification, for "you can be baptized with the Spirit and not show the fruit of the Spirit, for you can be baptized with the Spirit immediately at the point of conversion. . . . But that does not guarantee the fruits. Fruit means growth. That is development, that is sanctification."[12] He does allow that the baptism of the Spirit contributes to sanctification and even states that the presence of a desire for sanctification is a test of the genuineness of the baptism.[13]

The baptism of the Spirit is also not to be identified precisely with the filling of the Holy Spirit. Depending on the context, Lloyd-Jones believes being "filled with the Spirit" may refer to the baptism of the Spirit. He views Acts 2, where the disciples are described as being filled with the Spirit, as a description of the baptism of the Spirit. Central to his argument, however, is the identification of the filling of Ephesians 5:18 with sanctification, part of the Spirit's regular work. "I want to say that a man can be filled with the Spirit in terms of Ephesians 5:18, and still not be baptized with the Spirit."[14] He compares the Spirit's sanctifying work to a continuous drizzle and the baptism of the Spirit to a sudden downpour.[15]

Baptism of the Spirit and Its Synonyms

In Lloyd-Jones's theology the baptism of the Spirit is a special endowment of power and blessing by a special work of the Holy Spirit "associated primarily and specifically with witness and testimony and service."[16] The "primary purpose and function of the baptism with the Spirit is beyond any question to enable us to be witnesses to the Lord Jesus Christ and to his great salvation."[17] Such baptism may or may not be accompanied with spiritual gifts such as tongues, but it plays a role in providing the believer with assurance of salvation. This baptism is not necessarily a single event but can be enjoyed repeatedly by an individual or by the church as a whole. "The blessing can be repeated if you truly seek it. . . . Seek it, for it can be repeated many times."[18]

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[12] *Baptism,* 83; see also 288–90.

[13] Ibid., 298.

[14] Ibid., 71–73. Hanko incorrectly states that Lloyd-Jones regarded Ephesians 5:18 as teaching the baptism of the Spirit and then attempts to use that verse to refute him (Hanko, "Charismatic?" 380); in fact, as this section shows, DMLJ taught exactly the opposite.

[15] *Baptism,* 74. Eaton differentiates two kinds of filling in DMLJ's thought. Eaton calls these "continuous filling," referring to the constant sanctifying work, and "aoristic filling," referring to special baptisms (*Sacred Anointing,* 183–84).

[16] *Baptism,* 81.

[17] Ibid., 89.

[18] Ibid., 406.

Lloyd-Jones believes NT synonyms for "baptism of the Spirit" include "sealing with the Spirit" and "the earnest of the Spirit."[19] He also views baptism with the Spirit as a work of Jesus Christ, arguing that while the Holy Spirit does things for the Christian—convicting, regenerating, and so on—baptism with the Spirit is done by Christ himself.

Arguments from Scripture

An expositor as careful as Lloyd-Jones would not advance such a position without what he believed to be a solid scriptural basis. He notes that Christ conducted his ministry only after being baptized and empowered by the Spirit (see, e.g., Luke 4:14), arguing from John 6:25–27 that Christ was sealed at his baptism.[20] Much of his argument comes not from the Gospels, however, but from Acts and the Epistles, particularly Acts. Lloyd-Jones sees no problem with basing doctrine upon Acts. "You should never pit one section of Scripture against another," he says, referring to those who contend that the incidents recorded in Acts do not necessarily provide authoritative teaching for later believers.[21]

A key element in his argument was the evidence of believers who were regenerate but not immediately baptized with the Spirit, as in the case of the apostles, who were regenerated but not baptized with the Spirit until Pentecost (see John 15:3; John 20; Acts 1:4–8).[22] But recognizing that many interpreters would agree with his assessment because they conceive of Pentecost as a special outpouring inaugurating the church, he points out further examples. The Samaritans of Acts 8 were regenerate Christians not yet baptized. Saul of Tarsus in Acts 9 was converted, but Ananias came to him that he might be filled with the Holy Spirit. Likewise Cornelius in Acts 10, the Doctor contends, was regenerate before the Holy Spirit was poured out upon him. Lloyd-Jones stresses the incident with the disciples of John the Baptist in Acts 19, which he says "is an absolute proof that you can be a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and still not be baptized with the Holy Spirit; that incident proves it twice over. Twice over!"[23]

Obviously the Doctor disagrees with those who think Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came only because they were awaiting a one-time outpouring. He agrees that there was a kind of dispensational element in Pentecost but maintains that all Christians even

[19] "My dear friends, I am telling you that these things are the same: 'baptism with the Spirit,' 'sealing with the Spirit,' 'the earnest of the Spirit,' the assurance of the Spirit with our spirits that we are the children of God." *Baptism,* 316–17; see also 312.

[20] Ibid., 50, 146, 311. Sargent notes the criticism of Lloyd-Jones by Donald Macleod on this point, with Macleod arguing that the uniqueness of Christ limits the applicability of his unction from the Spirit as a pattern for believers (*Sacred Anointing,* 67–68).

[21] *Baptism,* 36. Sargent, who agrees with Lloyd-Jones on this point, summarizes the arguments against using the Book of Acts in this manner (*Sacred Anointing,* 71–72).

[22] *Baptism,* 26–27.

[23] These examples are found in *Baptism,* 28, 29, 31, 32, respectively. Iain Murray, although agreeing much in principle with Lloyd-Jones, thinks it is a mistake to use the three passages in Acts (8:17; 9:17; 19:6) as proof texts. He says that the Doctor stresses the fact that there was in these verses a definite separation between regeneration and baptism with the Spirit. However, these verses also link the baptism of the Spirit to the laying on of hands, an act which DMLJ denied was a prerequisite to the Spirit's baptism. This fact appears to undercut using these verses as completely normative (*Fight of Faith,* 488–89).

afterwards normally experienced a separation between conversion and baptism with the Spirit.[24] Since he denies that the church began on Pentecost, he sees no reason to view the baptism of the Spirit as a one-time inauguration.[25] Instead, he believes the church was founded in John 20 when Jesus breathed the Spirit on the disciples.[26] "Read again for yourselves the first two chapters of Acts and I just defy you to find any suggestion, any statement which says in any way that what was happening there was the formation or the constitution of the Christian church as a body and an organism."[27] The purpose of the "baptism with the Holy Spirit is one of power. It was never designed to constitute the church. Its object and purpose was to give power to the church that is already constituted."[28]

Here Lloyd-Jones resorts partially to a straw-man argument, going to great lengths to contrast his view of John 20 with the interpretation that Christ's breathing was just symbolic and not a real imparting of the Spirit.[29] By demonstrating that such an idea is untenable, he leaves by default his own view victorious on the field. However, it could be argued that while Christ's action in John 20 was a real imparting of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost marked a special outpouring of which the action in John 20 was only a foreshadowing.

Lloyd-Jones acknowledges the importance of the Book of Acts to his view of the baptism of the Spirit by noting that the teaching is less prominent in the Epistles. He believes that in the NT era most Christians were already baptized with the Spirit, so that the apostles could write their epistles based on that assumption. Nevertheless such an assumption cannot apply to the modern church because the signs of widespread Spirit baptism are not present.[30] In the Epistles, Lloyd-Jones must wrestle with major texts advanced by those who disagree with his interpretation, particularly 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Ephesians 5:18. His explanation of the Ephesians passage ("be filled with the Spirit") has been mentioned above, that there Paul refers to the sanctification of the believer and not to baptism of the Spirit as Luke does in Acts 2:4 ("filled with the Holy Ghost"; see also Acts 4:31).

First Corinthians 12:13 provides an even greater difficulty: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Paul's language seems to indicate a baptism that takes place at conversion for all believers—and with this interpretation the Doctor agrees. His position, however, is that the other references to baptism of the Spirit must not be interpreted through the filter of this verse, because a different baptism is being referred to. First Corinthians refers to regeneration. Lloyd-Jones distinguishes between baptism *by* the Spirit and baptism *with* the Spirit. Christians are baptized by the Spirit into one body in 1 Corinthians 12:13, but Christ baptizes believers with the Holy Spirit for

[24] *Baptism,* 388–89. Hanko incorrectly claims that Lloyd-Jones "ignores and denies" the special importance of Pentecost as an inauguration ("Charismatic?" 379), although the idea is admittedly not prominent in DMLJ.

[25] *Baptism,* 409–10.

[26] Ibid., 411–16, especially 416.

[27] Ibid., 413.

[28] Ibid., 420.

[29] Ibid., 412–15.

[30] Ibid., 341; see also 53.

power and witness in the Book of Acts.[31] The Holy Spirit is the main agent in the first case, and Christ is the main agent in the second. Michael Eaton, who agrees with Lloyd-Jones on this point, defends the concept that 1 Corinthians 12:13 must be interpreted separately from the verses in Acts, which he admits "may be linguistically untidy" but thinks is necessary from "contextual exegesis."[32]

In short, Martyn Lloyd-Jones does not believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a one-time blessing that came at Pentecost, nor does he think it occurs at regeneration. Instead, he views it as a constant and repeated blessing, one gone missing from the modern church. In fact, when presented with the argument that there seems to be in the modern church no such Spirit baptism as he describes, he replies that the NT church was baptized with the Spirit and that the modern church is not but that it should be.[33] He quotes Peter on Pentecost to argue his point: "This is what God's people are offered at all times in all places; there is no limit placed upon it at all."[34]

Baptism of the Spirit and Assurance

As mentioned previously, Lloyd-Jones equates the baptism of the Spirit with the sealing of the Spirit. This "sealing" can refer to ownership, to security (as in sealing a package), and to authentication. The first two ideas are present in the biblical concept of sealing, but the last predominates.[35] One of the major results of baptism with the Spirit, or sealing, is this authentication to the believer that he is a child of God. At one point in his series, the Doctor says that the reason he is dealing with this topic is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit gives "an unusual assurance of . . . salvation."[36]

Here Lloyd-Jones displays his view of a contested interpretation. Assurance of salvation was a major difference between the Reformers and the Roman Catholic Church.[37] Protestants agreed on the fact of assurance, but they differed about its nature. Lloyd-Jones himself notes that the early Reformers saw no difference between saving faith and assurance of faith but that later Protestants (as in the

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[31] *Baptism,* 23, 330–33. One should note that despite this distinction, DMLJ does occasionally use "by" when he would normally mean "with." See, e.g., ibid., 55, "I would define a revival as a large number, a group of people, being baptized by the Holy Spirit at the same time."

[32] Eaton, 243. O'Donnell describes the contrasting views of Lloyd-Jones and John R. W. Stott on the matter of baptism by and/or with the Spirit and focuses extensively on 1 Corinthians 12:13 as the key text on which to compare their views. Stott uses this verse as the interpretive key to understanding references in Acts, and DMLJ treats all the passages referring to baptism in the Spirit together and situates 1 Corinthians 12:13 within the context of all these references together. After analyzing the vocabulary and grammar of the verse, he concludes that Lloyd-Jones's view is at least viable. Matthew Brook O'Donnell, "Two Opposing Views on Baptism with/by the Holy Spirit and of 1 Corinthians 12.13: Can Grammatical Investigation Bring Clarity?" in *Baptism, the New Testament, and the Church: Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White,* ed. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 311–36.

[33] *Baptism,* 45.

[34] Ibid., 106.

[35] Ibid., 306–7.

[36] Ibid., 41.

[37] See William Cunningham's discussion of the Reformers' view of assurance in *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation* (1866; reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1967), 111–48.

Westminster Confession) made a distinction between them.[38] As for his own position, the Doctor argues that saving faith is different from assurance of faith.[39]

Lloyd-Jones reveals Puritan influence at this point, not because he was Puritan per se, but rather because he believed that some Puritans had advanced a scriptural teaching. Eaton notes that Calvin, like the other early Reformers, saw no distinction between regeneration and sealing and believed saving faith included assurance by its nature. He points out that Lloyd-Jones differs from Calvin, preferring to follow the pattern of Puritans typified by Richard Sibbes, who taught assurance through direct testimony of the Spirit.[40] Henry Lederle classes Lloyd-Jones with "The Reformed Sealers" who see the sealing of the Holy Spirit as a post-conversion experience. In this classification he also includes Thomas Goodwin, John Owen, Charles Hodge, and Charles Simeon.[41] Sargent says, "Though Lloyd-Jones's personal views may be considered as a refinement or development of the thought of his predecessors, in no way can it be proven that he was adrift from the beliefs of many of the Puritans or eighteenth-century men."[42]

The Doctor sees three kinds of assurance. "The first type of assurance is the assurance that we get by deduction from the Scriptures," that is, a Christian reasoning logically from the Bible's promises concerning salvation that God has saved him. The second is that found in 1 John, "that there are various tests which you can apply to yourselves," such as love for the brethren. The third kind, that resulting from sealing, is "an assurance that is given to us by the blessed Spirit himself." He quotes Romans 8:15–16 and says, "Now this is what I mean by this highest form of assurance, the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. It is direct, immediate. Not our deduction but his absolute certainty, the Spirit telling us that we are the children of God."[43] Such assurance both gives comfort to the believer and lends power and fervor to the witness for which the baptism is granted. Among "the marks, the signs and manifestations of baptism with the Spirit," Lloyd-Jones places "first and foremost . . . a sense of the glory of God, an unusual sense of the presence of God."[44] "Another pronounced characteristic that always accompanies it," he adds, "is an assurance of the love of God to us in Jesus Christ."[45] Assurance and resulting power in testimony are the effects of the Spirit's sealing.

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[38] *Baptism,* 42.

[39] Ibid., 41.

[40] Eaton, 53, 72–73.

[41] Henry I. Lederle, *Treasures Old and New: Interpretations of "Spirit-Baptism" in the Charismatic Renewal Movement* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 5–9; Lederle was the dissertation adviser to Michael Eaton, and he appears heavily dependent on Eaton on this point. DMLJ does in fact cite Charles Hodge on Ephesians 1:13 in support of the idea that sealing is something that follows saving faith (*Baptism,* 305).

[42] Sargent, 50.

[43] *Baptism,* 99–101, 103.

[44] Ibid., 93.

[45] Ibid., 97–98.

Baptism of the Spirit and Revival

In addition to linking assurance to the baptism of the Spirit, Lloyd-Jones also sees a connection between revival and the baptism of the Spirit. At times the correlation seems intimate: "The difference between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and a revival is simply one of the number of people affected. I would define a revival as a large number, a group of people, being baptized by the Holy Spirit at the same time."[46] At other times, Lloyd-Jones makes an absolute equivalence of Spirit baptism with revival. Eaton says that to Lloyd-Jones revivals and baptism of the Spirit are "virtually the same thing. Revival views the matter corporately; the 'baptism with the Spirit' is his term for the experience viewed more individually."[47] Baptism of the Spirit feeds revival, the baptism poured out on individuals resulting in such a powerful witness and testimony that revival follows.

The nature of revival is a major concern in Lloyd-Jones's theology and is worthy of a separate study.[48] The desire for revival is very keen in Lloyd-Jones. Revival was "God's way of keeping the church alive," a sort of succession of revival through the Montanists, the Donatists, the Waldensians, the Brethren of the Common Life, and onward[49]—but not into his own day. He blames this absence on a "seriously defective" doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the modern church. "This, it seems to me, has been the trouble especially during this present century, indeed almost for a hundred years."[50]

Understanding the centrality of revival to Lloyd-Jones's thought, and his close identification of revival with the baptism of the Spirit, explains his almost harsh attitude toward those who view that baptism of the Spirit as a one-time event at Pentecost. "If your doctrine of the Holy Spirit does not leave any room for revival, then you cannot expect this kind of thing. If you say the baptism with the Spirit was once and for all on Pentecost and all who are regenerated are just made partakers of that, there is no room left for this objective coming, this repetition, the falling of the Holy Spirit in power and authority upon a church."[51] The result, he claims, is a turn to man-centered evangelism. "You see it [the teaching of a one-time baptism at Pentecost] excludes . . . the whole doctrine concerning revivals; and that is why we have heard so little about revivals of religion in this present century. We have heard a great deal about campaigns, but very little about revival, and that is where this great departure has taken place from what had been the rule amongst evangelical people in the Christian church ever since the Protestant Reformation."[52] He charges that "when things are not going too well, the church does not exhort people to pray for revival, but decides to have an evangelistic campaign."[53]

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[46] *Baptism,* 55.

[47] Eaton, 197.

[48] For an introduction to DMLJ's views of revival, see the sermons he preached in 1959 on the hundredth anniversary of the '59 Revival, found in *Revival* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1987), and see several of the addresses he delivered to the Puritan and Westminster Conferences, found in *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987).

[49] *Baptism,* 436–37.

[50] Ibid., 125.

[51] Ibid., 440.

[52] Ibid., 441.

[53] Ibid., 431.

Arguments from Church History

Lloyd-Jones's linking of revival to the baptism of the Spirit leads to arguments from church history. Throughout his series of sermons on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he appeals for support to examples from history. He offers what is almost a philosophy of history to explain the connection of history to the teaching of Scripture.

> The church is the church of God, and essentially the same throughout the ages. There is an amazing continuity, and the principles taught in Scripture are worked out in the history of the church. And because we are in the flesh, we are helped by examples and illustrations, hence the great value of history. I know of nothing next to the reading of the Scriptures themselves that has been of greater value to me in my own personal life and ministry than constant reading of the history of the church. I thank God for it more than ever, for the way in which, by illustrating these things, it has saved me from pitfalls and has shown me the right way to assess these matters.[54]

One sermon in the series, "Test the Spirits,"[55] is an example of these principles in action, relying heavily on church history to discern the true from the false in the Spirit's work.

Tony Sargent counts twenty-six figures in church history whom Lloyd-Jones identifies in his series as having received the baptism of the Spirit,[56] including John Knox, Hugh Latimer, John Flavel, Blaise Pascal, John Wesley, Howell Harris, Jonathan Edwards, D. L. Moody, R. A. Torrey, A. B. Simpson, and even Charles Finney.[57] Their testimonies, he argues, refute the charge of novelty against his position. At the same time, he uses history to defend the belief that the baptism of the Spirit was not necessarily accompanied by the gifts. For instance, he believes that though Whitefield, the Wesleys, and Moody were men baptized with the Spirit, they did not work miracles.[58]

The Doctor also offers historical arguments to help explain why the spiritual gifts and the baptism of the Spirit have apparently vanished from church history at various periods. For example, the early apologists relied on spiritually deadening philosophy rather than the Word of God and the enlivening Spirit. In the fourth century the Constantinian settlement brought to the church smothering regulation and rigid institutionalism that quenched the Spirit.[59] He points to the tendency of Christians to stress academic learning from the 1850s as a reason for the loss of the power of the Spirit in more recent days, blaming respectable "Victorianism" for infecting the church. "Dignity! Formality!

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[54] *Baptism,* 187.

[55] Ibid., 179–96.

[56] Sargent, 306n8.

[57] Sargent notes that Lloyd-Jones repudiated Finney's mechanical view of revival but nonetheless believed that Finney's baptism with the Spirit was genuine (*Sacred Anointing,* 48).

[58] *Baptism,* 248. Hanko, a confessional Calvinist, sharply criticizes DMLJ for accepting Wesley and Moody despite their "blatant Arminianism." He also attempts to reply by asking, "Why was no baptism of the Spirit evident . . . among the Reformers of the 16th Century?" (Hanko, "Charismatic?" 379), ignoring the fact that Lloyd-Jones argues that there was such baptism at that time.

[59] *Baptism,* 176–77.

Learning! Culture!" he says created a situation in which "a man was judged in terms of his degrees and his diplomas, not his anointing with the Holy Spirit."[60]

The Cessation of Spiritual Gifts

Martyn Lloyd-Jones identifies the granting of spiritual gifts in the baptism of the Holy Spirit as one of the signs that often (but not always) accompanies that baptism. Therefore, he pointedly rejects cessationism, the teaching that certain sign gifts such as tongues, healing, and prophecy ceased at the close of the NT era with the completion of the canon and the passing of the apostles. He refutes what he, at least, views as the classic argument from 1 Corinthians 13:10 ("when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part is done away") and proceeds to answer the main arguments for the cessationist position. The Doctor concludes that "there is nothing in the Scripture itself which says that these things are to end."[61]

For example, he denies that these were sign gifts designed only to convince the Jews, because they were also performed among the Gentiles.[62] That these gifts were not mentioned elsewhere, as in the Pastoral Epistles, he calls an argument from silence.[63] He likewise maintains that it is no argument against the gift of healing that Timothy and Epaphroditus were not healed of illness, because sign gifts were not permanently or universally given; rather, they existed as God sovereignly determined.[64] Lloyd-Jones criticizes cessationism. To say that the gifts do not apply to post–NT believers is to "pick and choose" what one will believe, likening such a position to higher criticism.[65] To say that miraculous gifts were temporary "is simply to quench the Spirit."[66] Masters rightly protests that the Doctor's "most withering and intolerant passages [are] reserved for [what DMLJ considers] the most unreasonable of people—the cessationists," the argument for the cessationist position being "greatly overstated"[67] and distorted in these sermons.

Yet Sargent points out that despite his pointed rejection of cessationism, Lloyd-Jones was in effect not far from the cessationist position because his theoretical acceptance of continuing spiritual gifts did not necessarily translate into accepting the modern practice of them. Furthermore, as Sargent notes, "He *did* assert that *certain* aspects of the Acts record were foundational and would not be

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[60] *Baptism,* 130–31.

[61] Ibid., 155–60. That 1 Corinthians 13:10 is the crucial text for proving cessationism is disputed. The argument for the cessationist view is broader than a single passage. For full arguments favoring the cessationist position, see Nathan Gerrit Crockett, "This Is That? An Evaluation of Cessationism and Continuationism: Contrasting Biblical Tongues and Miracles with Contemporary Phenomena and Examining Foundational Hermeneutics" (PhD diss., Bob Jones University, 2013), and Alan N. Grover Jr., "Canon Theology as a Model for Cessationist Theology: A Biblical Case for Cessationism" (PhD diss., Bob Jones University, 2015).

[62] Ibid., 163–64. Masters replies to this argument by pointing out that performing "signs and wonders" among the Gentiles was indeed one means of convincing the Jews ("Opening the Door to Charismatic Teaching," 26).

[63] *Baptism,* 165.

[64] Ibid., 168–70.

[65] Ibid., 170.

[66] Ibid., 172.

[67] Masters, "Opening the Door to Charismatic Teaching," 24, 25.

repeated." The apostleship he calls the "obvious example."[68] He particularly notes the Doctor's belief that the office of the prophet, in the sense of advancing new revelation from God, ceased with the writing of the NT once this office was no longer necessary.[69]

In addition, Lloyd-Jones's strong belief in God's sovereign distribution of sign gifts results in his staking out a position somewhere between cessationism and modern Pentecostal and Charismatic beliefs. Because no one can do anything to secure the baptism of the Spirit and receive the gifts, God must bestow them.[70] The Doctor, for instance, calls the idea that the gifts are always available to be claimed by faith "unscriptural," saying that "we must never use the word 'claim.' It is incompatible with sovereignty."[71]

Lloyd-Jones bases this sovereign distribution on what he sees as clear scriptural precepts. Of tongues he says, "If—and it is indeed the teaching of 1 Corinthians 12 that this is the case—if the gift of speaking in tongues is something that is given by the Holy Spirit himself in his sovereignty and in his Lordship, if he is the giver, then he can give it whenever he likes, and he can withhold it whenever he likes."[72] Lloyd-Jones offers several examples to prove that the gifts are not at the discretion of the recipient. He notes, for example, that the demon-possessed girl in Acts 16 followed Paul for several days before he cast out the demon, implying that the apostle could not cast out the demon whenever he wished.[73] The confusion between baptism of the Spirit and the gifts arises, he contends, because the sovereign Spirit sometimes gives these gifts when he baptizes and sometimes he does not.[74] In fact, at one point he identifies his "main purpose in this whole series of sermons" by saying, "It seems to me that the teaching of the Scripture itself, plus the evidence of the history of the church, establishes the fact that the baptism with the Spirit is not always accompanied by particular gifts."[75]

The Gift of Tongues

Lloyd-Jones's view of the baptism of the Spirit would have proved less controversial had he not entertained the possibility of the gift of tongues. Earlier evangelical leaders such as D. L. Moody and R. A. Torrey taught a form of Spirit baptism that resembled the Doctor's without arousing much

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[68] Sargent, 75.

[69] Ibid., 87–95. Even in the 1964–65 series, DMLJ cautions Christians to "always be suspicious of—indeed, I would go further and say, be ready to condemn and to reject—anything that claims to be a fresh revelation of truth" (*Baptism,* 206). He offers predictions of the Second Coming (206–7) and the teaching of the Rapture (207–8) as examples of the dangers of following new revelations. The latter charge he bases on the allegation that the teaching of the "secret Rapture" originated in the vision of a follower of Edward Irving, a highly disputed point. For a brief discussion of the controversy over the origins of the doctrine of the pretribulational rapture, see Timothy Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875–1982,* enlarged ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 21–22.

[70] *Baptism,* 54–55.

[71] Ibid., 174, 175; cf. "We must start, then, with this great realization that it is his gift. We must not talk about 'claiming' or about 'taking.' He gives, we receive" (355).

[72] Ibid., 228.

[73] Ibid., 279–82.

[74] Ibid., 181.

[75] Ibid., 180.

controversy.[76] But the rise of Pentecostalism in the early 1900s and even more the Charismatic movement of the 1960s made the gift of tongues a symbol of larger movements.

One must first note that Lloyd-Jones is more open to the gift of tongues than most Reformed evangelicals had been up to his day. Referring to 1 Corinthians 14, for example, he says the practice of tongues "is not merely permissible" but is in fact "desirable."[77] He not only thinks tongues in Corinthians were an "ecstatic utterance" and not a known language but even goes so far as to say, "I am very ready to agree with those who say that he [a man who speaks in tongues] is probably speaking in the language of paradise, the language of the glory itself."[78]

Rather than condemning tongues-speaking outright, he is willing to consider their possible validity. "When a man comes to me and tells me of some great occasion in his life when, while praying, the Holy Spirit suddenly came upon him and he was lifted up out of himself and found himself speaking in a strange tongue, I am ready to believe him and to accept him, especially if he tells me either that it has never happened to him again or that it has only happened very infrequently. I will accept it as being an authentic experience."[79] He may have been referring in this sermon to an encounter he describes in a later message: "I know a man, a missionary for years in China, who tells me that on one occasion when alone in his room, he was baptized with the Holy Spirit and found himself speaking in tongues. He has never done so since. . . . I said, 'My dear friend, the fact that you tell me that it has only happened to you once makes me say that it was genuine and authentic. If you told me that you could do it whenever you liked I would be really troubled.'"[80]

Yet, as these last quotations indicate, his approval of speaking in tongues is by no means unqualified. He says that the practice of the spiritual gifts must be marked by control and understanding, and he strongly opposes the idea of letting oneself go mentally in order to open oneself to spiritual influence.[81] He calls it "so wrong and so dangerous . . . to try to induce or produce in ourselves the gifts of the Spirit,"[82] and he therefore criticizes relaxation and breathing exercises that supposedly bring about the baptism of the Spirit, denounces uttering nonsense sounds until one begins to speak in tongues, or clapping hands and singing choruses to initiate a spiritual experience.[83]

The Doctor also warns against the power of suggestion and hypnotism.[84] Citing the book *This Is That* about revivals in the Congo, he considers it significant that tongues-speaking occurred only in

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[76] Eaton says DMLJ agrees with Torrey that baptism is for witness and service but differs in seeing sealing as the "primary purpose" of this baptism (180–81). However, it is worth noting that both Moody and Torrey drew from the Keswick holiness tradition in their views of the Holy Spirit. Lloyd-Jones generally found the Keswick approach deficient and criticized it. See Murray, 73–74, 196, 235–37.

[77] *Baptism,* 166.

[78] Ibid., 161, 274, 277.

[79] Ibid., 261.

[80] Ibid., 282–83.

[81] Ibid., 197–213.

[82] Ibid., 260.

[83] Ibid., 260–63.

[84] Ibid., 225–26.

those areas of the Congo in which tongues had previously appeared or been discussed; where there was no prior exposure to tongues, no tongues appeared in connection with the revival.[85] He observes that "if the suggestion is made that all who have the baptism of the Spirit must speak in tongues and this is repeated and repeated, it is not surprising that people begin to speak in tongues. . . . I am concerned . . . we should never forget the power of suggestion."[86] Beyond this, Lloyd-Jones warns of dangerous sources of tongues speaking. Spiritism, psychology, and hysteria can produce tongues or even healings, he notes, and he records the example of a lay pastor he knew who was dealing with a girl who was "devil-possessed" but could speak in tongues.[87]

As Eaton observes, in contrast to most Reformed theologians and ministers, "Lloyd-Jones firmly believed in the possible continuation in the church of the gifts of the Spirit. He was, however, exceedingly cautious about accepting the validity of particular claims." After summarizing the Doctor's position, he concludes that for Lloyd-Jones the gifts "could be given with the baptism with the Spirit but were not indispensible [*sic*] to it. Other agencies, psychological and demonic, could produce phenomena and so phenomena in themselves were non-significant."[88]

The Charismatic Movement

The question of speaking in tongues leads to the larger and even more controversial question of Martyn Lloyd-Jones's relationship to the Charismatic movement. Both advocates and opponents identify Lloyd-Jones as a sympathizer. Herman Hanko, a staunch Calvinist traditionalist, claims that the series on the baptism of the Spirit "leaves no doubt about it that elements of the charismatic movement were indeed characteristic of his thought." He sees Lloyd-Jones's "fundamental concession to the charismatic movement" in his acceptance of "the very heart of the charismatic heresy," which is the "second baptism of the Spirit."[89] Michael Eaton, a Pentecostal, asserts, "Lloyd-Jones was sympathetic to Pentecostalism, as indeed he was sympathetic to any evangelical group which emphasized the need of the working of the Holy Spirit."[90]

Of course, a necessary part of answering this question is determining what it means to be "Charismatic." Sargent says Lloyd-Jones was "a charismatic preacher" in the sense of his stress on "the empowering of the Spirit both in the preparation and delivery of sermons" and in his idea of "unction" or "sacred anointing," that is, preaching under the blessing and power of the Holy Spirit.[91] But this is not what is commonly meant when Lloyd-Jones is called sympathetic to the Charismatic movement.

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[85] *Baptism,* 227.

[86] Ibid., 229. In a 1968 letter quoted by Murray, DMLJ told John A. Schep he believed that in 1963 people who had been genuinely baptized with the Spirit were influenced *afterwards* to begin speaking in tongues through the influence of David du Plessis when he visited Britain late that year (Murray, 479–80).

[87] *Baptism,* 192–93, 270.

[88] Eaton, 186–90.

[89] Hanko, "Charismatic?" 378, 379. He also sees evidence of such sympathies in the ministry of R. T. Kendall, one of the successors to Lloyd-Jones at Westminster Chapel and a proponent of Charismatic teaching.

[90] Eaton, 186.

[91] Sargent, 28, 31–32, 58–64.

Lloyd-Jones never favored movements that stressed any single aspect of Christian teaching, such as holiness, prophecy, or the spiritual gifts.[92] "You do not found a movement on gifts, because if you do you will find that you are saying very little about the Lord. And any teaching or preaching which does not keep the Lord central and vital and overruling everything is already wrong teaching. That kind of teaching always leads to trouble and eventually to disaster."[93]

Furthermore, the roots of his beliefs were far removed from the Charismatic ethos. As mentioned before, Lloyd-Jones owed more to Puritanism than to Pentecostalism as the source of his beliefs about the baptism and gifts of the Spirit. Michael Eaton, who has done the most thorough work on the sources of Lloyd-Jones's pneumatology, sees three major influences on his thought, all Puritans: Richard Sibbes (1577–1635), Thomas Goodwin (1600–1679), and John Owen (1616–1683).[94] Furthermore, the 1964–65 series of sermons do not fit into a Charismatic framework. Iain Murray argues that the sermons on Spirit baptism cannot be taken as an expression of the Charismatic movement because there was no Charismatic movement in Britain at the time; it was still basically an American phenomenon.[95] Sargent maintains that Lloyd-Jones cannot be accused of accepting or furthering the Charismatic movement, even though he likewise did not oppose it. Instead, he argues that Lloyd-Jones stood in a line of interpreters tracing back to the Puritans with views that did not derive from nor seek to serve Charismatics.[96]

As the previous section on tongues indicated, Lloyd-Jones rejects several tenets of both Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement. He says on one occasion, "It is possible for a man to be baptized with the Holy Spirit without ever speaking in tongues, and, indeed, without having some of these other gifts which the Apostle lists in this great passage that we are examining."[97] Again, he contends that "speaking in tongues is not the invariable accompaniment of the baptism of the Spirit. I put it like that because there is teaching which has been current for a number of years and still is today, which says that speaking in tongues is always the initial evidence of the baptism with the Spirit.

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[92] *Baptism,* 251.

[93] Ibid., 256.

[94] Eaton discusses Sibbes, Goodwin, and Owen on 60–75, 80–89, and 93–104, respectively. He also discusses the influence of Calvin (41–55) and Jonathan Edwards (107–19) on DMLJ's thought, but he considers them less influential in relation to Lloyd-Jones's views of the baptism and gifts of the Spirit. One should note that although Eaton credits the Puritans with influencing DMLJ's doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit, he considers Lloyd-Jones more independent in developing his view of the gifts, since the Puritans dealt little with that topic (118).

[95] Murray, 484. At the first stirrings of the Charismatic movement in Britain in 1963, two evangelical Anglican leaders, David Watson and Michael Harper, went to Lloyd-Jones and shared their experiences with him. Hearing their testimony and impressed with their account, he reportedly said, "Gentlemen, I believe that you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit," and he encouraged them (Murray, 477). Murray says that DMLJ was impressed with the first reports of the Charismatic movement in California but thought that "conversions were being wrongly interpreted as second experiences of the Spirit" (478). Murray says at this early stage the British Christians experiencing this baptism were not speaking in tongues (479).

[96] Sargent, 282.

[97] *Baptism,* 272–73.

It therefore goes on to say that unless you have spoken in tongues you have not been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Now that, I suggest, is entirely wrong."[98]

He is no more sympathetic to the idea of the laying on of hands: "This whole idea of giving the gift by the laying on of hands has been restored by the Pentecostal movement in this present century, but until then you do not find it. You find rather what seems to have been the norm in the New Testament itself—namely, that the Spirit has 'fallen upon' people in the various ways I have tried to describe to you."[99] Even when Lloyd-Jones allows for tongues, healings, and the like, the strictures he places on their practice—particularly the sovereign distribution by the Spirit—do not leave room for Pentecostal and Charismatic practices.

Lloyd-Jones's correspondence offers other examples of his dissent from Pentecostal and Charismatic teaching. In 1969 he was asked to offer an opinion on a dispute between John A. Schep, a founder of the Reformed Churches of Australia who had Pentecostal leanings, and non-Pentecostal Dutch professor Klaas Runia. He wrote to Schep, "I find myself in between both of you. I feel that you perhaps do not 'prove and try the spirits' sufficiently, and that you stress Tongues in the Pentecostal sense and as those who are guilty of the Corinthians error do, where as I feel that Prof. Runia is guilty of 'quenching the Spirit.'"[100] He wrote to Runia, "I certainly feel that Prof. Schep has crossed the line into a form of Pentecostalism. He shows this in his emphasis on Tongues and also in his urging people to seek this particular gift and, indeed, to claim it."[101]

Perhaps the best summary of Lloyd-Jones's position comes from a letter to a third party later that year: "I think it is quite without scriptural warrant to say that all these gifts ended with the apostles or the apostolic era. I believe there have been undoubted miracles since then. At the same time most of the claimed miracles by the Pentecostalists and others certainly do not belong to that category and can be explained psychologically or in other ways. I am also of the opinion that most, if not all, of the people claiming to speak in tongues at the present time are certainly under a psychological rather than a spiritual influence. But again I would not dare to say that 'tongues' are impossible at the present time."[102] Three years later an Australian wrote to Lloyd-Jones after hearing an evangelist say that Lloyd-Jones spoke in tongues privately but would not admit it. The Doctor replied, "I am very happy to answer your questions; and it is simply this, that I have never spoken in Tongues either in private or in public."[103]

On the other hand, one cannot deny that participants in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements supposed a kinship with Lloyd-Jones. William K. Kay traces what he sees as the Doctor's

[98] *Baptism,* 271.

[99] Ibid., 348–49.

[100] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones to John A. Schep, 28 February 1969, in Iain H. Murray, ed., *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: Letters 1919–1981* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994), 197.

[101] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones to Klaas Runia, 28 February 1969, in *Letters,* 198.

[102] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones to Gerald Golden, 18 September 1969, in *Letters,* 202.

[103] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones to John Knight, 17 May 1971, in *Letters,* 205.

influence on Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism in Britain.[104] Theologically, he notes DMLJ's change of mind concerning the sealing of the Spirit, how he shifted from his original position of connecting the sealing to regeneration and sanctification to his new emphasis on a post-conversion experience of baptism of the Spirit. Even Lloyd-Jones's call for separation from theological error (discussed below) actually aided the growth of independent-minded Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, Kay argues, and fostered cooperation between these churches and more traditional evangelical churches. He also notes Lloyd-Jones's friendship with and encouragement of individual Pentecostals.

Considering this evidence, one can conclude that Martyn Lloyd-Jones left openings for Charismatic teaching but cannot himself be classified as Charismatic. Peter Masters, who is very critical of Lloyd-Jones's view of the baptism of the Spirit, nonetheless notes, "It is clear . . . that Dr. Lloyd-Jones was by no means a 100% card-carrying charismatic."[105] Likewise the Charismatic Michael Eaton writes, "Lloyd-Jones cannot be interpreted simplistically as 'for' or 'against' the charismatic movement."[106]

An issue worth exploring concerning Lloyd-Jones's alleged Charismatic sympathies is how they mesh with the separatist stand he took in his later years. In the 1960s the Doctor caused a major disruption in British evangelicalism by urging evangelicals to leave their compromised denominations.[107] The Charismatic movement was not simply of Pentecostal teaching with larger boundaries, but a theologically inclusive movement that had strong tendencies toward doctrinal indifferentism because of its stress on "unity in the Spirit."[108]

Lloyd-Jones does not ignore this theological error. In 1971 he characterized the Charismatic movement as an influence that undercuts evangelical truth because it insisted on unity based on Charismatic experience.[109] Murray notes some of the Doctor's criticisms of the Charismatic movement, such as his opposition to Catholics, even cardinals, being accepted in Charismatic circles because they had had a "charismatic experience" while still holding to Catholic teachings that made doctrinal agreement impossible.[110] He also rejects the idea of prophesying as it related to receiving infallible revelation.[111] Such disagreements with the movement did not get wider notice because Lloyd-

[104] William K. Kay, "Martyn Lloyd-Jones's Influence on Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism in the UK," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 22 (2013): 275–294.

[105] Masters, "Opening the Door to Charismatic Teaching," 24.

[106] Eaton, 32–33.

[107] I deal with this controversy in detail in "A Call to Separation and Unity: D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and 'Evangelical Unity,'" *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 3 (1998): 35–62.

[108] See Sidwell, *Set Apart,* 125–35.

[109] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "What Is an Evangelical?" in *Knowing the Times: Addresses Delivered on Various Occasions 1942–1977* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1989), 312–14.

[110] Murray, *Fight of Faith,* 661, 662–63.

[111] "To begin with, always be suspicious of—indeed I would go further and say, be ready to condemn and reject—anything that claims to be a fresh revelation of truth." *Baptism,* 206.

Jones's policy was to win others through persuasion rather than polemics, and he refused to criticize the movement as much as others did.[112]

In short, whatever sympathies to Pentecostal and Charismatic teaching one may perceive in Lloyd-Jones's teachings, he in no sense endorsed the movement wholesale. At most one can allow only Peter Masters's legitimate warning that Lloyd-Jones's teachings on the baptism of the Holy Spirit "have persuaded many admirers of Dr. Lloyd-Jones to take a much more open view of charismatic teaching, with resultant damage."[113]

Evaluation

Such was Martyn Lloyd-Jones's influence that few would deny that his teaching had an impact on large segments of evangelical Christianity. Michael Eaton not only approves of Lloyd-Jones's teaching but also sees an original contribution in his thought. Eaton suggests that the Doctor formulated a doctrine of Spirit baptism that avoids the problem of splitting Christians into spiritual "haves" and "have-nots," a charge often made against systems that divide believers between those who have a special measure of the Holy Spirit and those who lack it. Eaton explains, "The baptism of the Spirit is conceived as sealing what is already present objectively. The Christian who is 'assured' of salvation is not more Christian, or more forgiven, or more justified, or more regenerated. He is not necessarily more sanctified either before or after such an experience. . . . It is not objectively a 'second work of grace.' It is a 'release of the Spirit.'"[114]

Some have questioned why Lloyd-Jones emphasized this teaching in the first place. Peter Masters, a former associate, suggests somewhat harshly that the motive was frustration. "I feel that it arose from a sense of great disappointment because of the apparent lack of success of the work of so many reformed churches." Masters argues that Lloyd-Jones did not see "his own philosophy of Christian service as a possible cause," namely, "a wrong definition of the primacy of preaching—a definition which set no value upon the service and instrumentality of 'ordinary' Christian people." Masters concludes that the Doctor "had come to feel that people were stressing doctrine and not experiencing enough of the Spirit. But if the reformed folk with whom he was familiar had been trained and encouraged to engage in practical Christian service, this tendency would never have come about."[115]

Admittedly, some of the Doctor's defenders lend support to the idea that his teaching of the baptism of the Spirit was something of a revision forced upon him by circumstances. Christopher Catherwood, Lloyd-Jones's grandson, says that his grandfather aroused interest in Reformed theology and expository preaching after World War II, before which time he found Christians "rather flabby, and afraid of both doctrine and intellect." By the 1950s, however, he thought that "many reformed

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[112] Murray, 688–89.

[113] Masters, "Opening the Door to Charismatic Teaching," 28–29.

[114] Eaton, 240. Eaton does disagree with DMLJ on some points, as when the Doctor suggests that one might wait a long time for this baptism (Eaton, 246–47). Eaton also thinks DMLJ may have given a wrong impression by always using illustrations that stress the "intensity" of this baptism; Eaton thinks this baptism can be "gentle" at times (247).

[115] Masters, "Why Did Dr. Lloyd-Jones Yield to Quasi-Pentecostal Ideas?" 32, 34, 35.

people had become dry and arid" and "lacked the fire and sense of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit."[116] J. I. Packer likewise thinks that Lloyd-Jones, having spent his early career challenging anti-intellectual evangelicals to think and to think theologically, found himself in the 1960s teaching two different groups: on the one hand, very rational, orthodox Christians with little fervor, "Calvinistic pietists . . . who lacked assurance and joy," and on the other hand, "experience-oriented Christians" who were "going overboard on charismatic concerns." The series of sermons addressed both.[117]

Sargent, however, rejects the idea of Masters that Lloyd-Jones's preaching on the baptism of the Spirit was conceived in desperation. He points out that his teaching predates the 1960s and contends that circumstances did not give rise to the teaching but merely caused the Doctor to accentuate it.[118] Sargent's view is apparently borne out by Lloyd-Jones's own words. He says in one place, "I am doing this for one reason only. To me the most urgent question of the hour, is the need of this power for witness, the need of this power in our lives. The early church turned the world upside-down as the result of this baptism, and without it we shall avail nothing. So it is important for the church as a whole and for the individual Christian."[119]

Even apart from his views on the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit, some of Lloyd-Jones's reasoning can be faulted. For instance, his discussion of revivals is somewhat circular. Because he closely identifies revival with the baptism of the Spirit, then those who identify the baptism of the Spirit with Pentecost and the believer's conversion cannot look for revival. "Such a teaching rarely, if ever at all, speaks about revival," Lloyd-Jones contends. "It is not interested in revival and, of course, cannot be."[120] But this argument is valid only if one accepts the identification of revivals with Spirit baptism. An interesting comparison can be found in the views of American minister A. J. Gordon (1836–95). His views of the Holy Spirit's presence, baptism, and gifts are remarkably similar to those of Lloyd-Jones. Gordon stressed the need for a Spirit-empowered ministry, held to a post-conversion baptism of the Spirit for power, and allowed great latitude for the existence of spiritual gifts. Gordon was also a strong proponent of the need for revival. But he believed, in contrast to Lloyd-Jones, that Pentecost was a one-time blessing of the Spirit for the inauguration of the Church and he saw no difficulty in reconciling such a view with a desire for revival.[121]

One must also question Lloyd-Jones's reliance on arguments from history. He certainly does not place history on a par with Scripture, and he can appeal to the example of theologians such as Charles Hodge who use historical theology as subsidiary proof. But history is not an authoritative source. The

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[116] Christopher Catherwood, "Introduction" to *Joy Unspeakable: Power and Renewal in the Holy Spirit,* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1984), 12. He also mentions that DMLJ's early booklet "Christ Our Sanctification" teaches that sealing took place at conversion but that he later changed his view by reading the Puritans (12–13).

[117] J. I. Packer, "Foreword" to *The Sovereign Spirit: Discerning His Gifts,* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1985), 9. Packer agrees on the whole with DMLJ's position, although he does not hold that baptism of the Spirit is primarily the granting of assurance (10).

[118] Sargent, 74.

[119] *Baptism,* 337.

[120] Ibid., 430.

[121] See C. Allyn Russell, "Adoniram Judson Gordon: Nineteenth-Century Fundamentalist," *American Baptist Quarterly* 4 (1985): 61–89.

Scriptures are directly inspired by God and carry the promise of illumination by the Holy Spirit in their study. Even so, humans can misinterpret the Bible. How much more difficult it is to rely on the witness of history, a study researched, written, and interpreted by errant humans. Unlike the Bible, history has no promise of the divine superintendence of an omniscient God to guide interpretation. History is a painfully elastic resource. It may be a guide; it cannot be an authority.

Yet, in conclusion, one should also note the virtues of Lloyd-Jones's presentation. His stress on the centrality of Christ in all discussions of spiritual gifts and Spirit baptism is both a rebuke to Pentecostal/Charismatic teaching and a challenge to those who reject such teaching. "It is not the gifts that are central to the New Testament," the Doctor says; "it is the Lord."[122] He says elsewhere that the Holy Spirit "gives experiences, he gives power, he has gifts that he can give. But the point I am making is that we should not seek primarily what he gives. What should we be seeking? We should always be seeking the Lord Jesus Christ himself, to know him, and know his love and to be witnesses for him and to minister to his glory."[123]

Whatever else he does, Lloyd-Jones challenges complacency in his preaching on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Sargent observes correctly that "one does not have wholeheartedly to embrace his pneumatology to benefit from DML-J's corrective about unction as the supreme necessity for preaching powerfully."[124] The same may be said of other aspects of his teaching. Sargent cites the "often quoted" words of Lloyd-Jones concerning the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's life: "Got it all? Well, if you have 'got it all,' I simply ask in the Name of God, why are you as you are? If you have 'got it all' why are you so unlike the Apostles, why are you so unlike the New Testament Christians?"[125] Those who are correct in their pneumatology but lack spiritual power and fervor might well ponder that question. They might likewise weigh this challenge: "We have become so formal, with everything so set, so organized, all in the control of man—and have forgotten this other evidence, the power and the glory of the Spirit and the sanctity and the holiness. I am convinced that the greatest need of the church is to realize again the activity of the Holy Spirit."[126]

Finally, what of the question asked in the title of this study? Is D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones a "Pentecostal Puritan"? Actually even the second label, which is more apt, is not exactly accurate. The Puritans profoundly influenced Lloyd-Jones, and he gladly promoted their writings. But he was a twentieth-century man facing twentieth-century problems. While he might borrow from the Puritans, might engage profitably with their thought, he did not adopt them as an authority in religion.

As for his being a Pentecostal, despite advancing some teachings amenable to Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement, Lloyd-Jones was not an advocate of either system, nor was he influenced by them. Iain Murray says that in 1979 Lloyd-Jones, on hearing of an article calling him a "theoretical Pentecostal," said, "I was against Pentecostalism and still am. My doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit

[122] *Baptism,* 250.

[123] Ibid., 360.

[124] Sargent, 283.

[125] Ibid., 255.

[126] *Baptism,* 361.

is that it gives full assurance. I have never been satisfied with any speaking in tongues that I have heard. . . . It is very unfair to put the label Pentecostal on me."[127]

[127] Murray, *Fight of Faith,* 695.

Biblical Foundations for Responding to Hebrew Roots Sabbatarianism

by Joel Tetreau[1]

In recent years, a movement has been growing in various places within North America as well as around the globe.[2] Quietly yet persistently, there has been a steady increase in the number of individuals who meet around its specific view of biblical belief and experience. The name of this unorganized and decentralized religious philosophy is called the Hebrew Roots Movement (HRM). Often meeting on Friday nights, an expansive network of "Shabbat" fellowship groups has developed. Because there are few published materials on this movement and because the HRM is vast and varied, it is a challenge to explain its beliefs and priorities accurately. A few of the common characteristics include (1) Sabbath worship; (2) a love for and emphasis on OT culture and customs; (3) a renewed appreciation for Passover and other Jewish feasts, and celebrations; (4) some return to Mosaic practices such as a restricted diet based on OT teaching or tradition; (5) a preference for Hebrew language and culture over English and Greek; and (6) a general sense of distrust for the traditional church. The HRM contains everything from evangelicals who continue to be faithful in their evangelical churches and who are simply adding a Friday night Shabbat group to their weekly routine to non-evangelicals who have rejected Jesus, biblical authority, and a view of salvation that is consistent with grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone. In many cases, individuals in the HRM have essentially converted to strains of Judaism. Because the variety of beliefs is so vast, it seems helpful to examine the HRM by analyzing what is common to most or all of the groups. If there is an element that brings the HRM together, it is a shared commitment to Sabbatarianism.

Historically, Christians have gravitated to three views regarding the Sabbath.[3] *Sabbatarianism* is the view that Christians must continue to worship on and honor the Sabbath, just as it is found in the OT text. *Semi-Sabbatarianism* views Sunday as something of a Christian Sabbath. In this mediating position, many (if not all) of the laws concerning the Sabbath are carried over to the first day of the

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[2] See Kent and Jodi Smith, *Not Under the Law: Paul and the Truth* (n.p.: Rock Foundation Ranch, 2015). Other HRM advocates include Tim Hegg, *Ten Persistent Questions* (Tacoma, WA: TorahResource, 2009); idem, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Tacoma, WA: TorahResource, 2007); J. K. McKee, *The New Testament Validates Torah* (McKinney, TX: Messianic Apologetics, 2012); idem, *Torah in the Balance, Volume 1: The Validity of the Torah and Its Practical Life Application* (Richardson TX: TNN, 2003). Compare Patrick McGuire, "Rebuttal to 'Dangers of the Hebrew Roots Movement written by Tim Chaffey on March 17, 2018'" (March 26, 2018), http://beityeshua.com/about-us/html, 5.

[3] See Myron Houghton, *Law & Grace* (Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist, 2011), 169–72. Compare Christopher John Donato, ed., *Perspectives on the Sabbath: Four Views,* Perspectives Series (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011), which includes discussion of Martin Luther's distinctive view.

week. *Non-Sabbatarianism* in the main suggests that the NT believer and the NT church are not under the OT obligation to "keep the Sabbath." Thus, the Lord's Day, while rightly dedicated to corporate worship, does not function as a Sabbath for the NT believer.

This article surveys key biblical passages related to the Sabbath as a foundation for evaluating HRM Sabbatarianism. One must ultimately place these texts within their biblical-theological context. Biblical theology is largely dependent on understanding the progressive nature of revelation. As John Murray writes,

> It must be understood that in speaking of progressive revelation, and of "Biblical Theology" as based upon the revelation, the standpoint . . . is to be regarded as the disclosure to man on the part of God of his mind and will; and progressive revelation means that revelation has a history of increasing and accumulating disclosure until it reaches its finale in the manifestation of the Son of God and the inscripturation embodied in the completed New Testament cannon.[4]

In this regard, the overall response to the HRM is simply that while revelation and covenant truth increased from Adam to Noah, and Noah to Abraham, and Abraham to Moses, the giving of revelation did not stop with Moses. It continued from Moses to David, from David to the kings and prophets of the divided nation, and then to a whole new age as God's people transitioned from the era of Israel to the age of the church after a pause of some 400 years. The HRM as a whole would have us throw the epistemological anchor out the back of the boat with Moses. The problem is that God did not do that.

The literature on the Sabbath frequently mentions two prominent OT passages—Genesis 2:2–3 and Exodus 20:8–11. Additionally, it is difficult to treat the question of the OT Sabbath and the NT church without addressing to some degree the question of OT law and NT living. Primary texts on this topic include Matthew 5, the whole of Galatians, and Colossians 2. On more than one occasion Scripture teaches that if one violates one aspect of the law, all of it is broken (e.g., Jas 2:10). What is also evident from Scripture is that there is an ongoing "law of Christ" that is not directly attached to the law of Moses.[5] One example of this is found in 1 Corinthians 7:19: "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts."[6] Gordon Fee explains the shock and awe this would cause a Jewish believer because "not only did circumcision count, it counted for everything."[7] One cannot imagine Moses saying anything like that because Moses would *not* say

[4] John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1957), 8.

[5] See further, Paul Hartog, "The 'Law of Christ' in Pauline Theology and New Testament Ethics," *DBSJ* 26 (2021): 81–101.

[6] Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from THE HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1984 by International Bible Society, www.ibs.org. All rights reserved worldwide. Circumcision was a sign of the Abrahamic Covenant as well as a requirement of the Mosaic law (Lev 12:3). Joshua instructed all males to be circumcised because "all the people that came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness during the journey from Egypt had not" (Josh 5:5). Eric A. White, "Comparing and Contrasting the Sinaitic and New Covenants in the Old Testament" (ThM thesis, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 23. More broadly, see Brian S. Rosner, *Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God,* NSBT (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013).

[7] Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 313.

anything like that. Yet Paul is saying that what matters is keeping a law of God that is higher than circumcision, which was itself one of the most important parts of the Mosaic law. The biblical-theological trajectory moves toward such a perspective of the OT law in the NT age.

Genesis 2:2–3

> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

The OT concept of "Sabbath" is connected to the etymology of the verb שׁבת, which means "to cease" or "to pause," as illustrated in Genesis 2:2.[8] Dressler says that referring to God's resting on the seventh day as a "creation ordinance" is "not particularly helpful."[9] Dressler continues, noting that this verse is the terminus to the section beginning in Genesis 1:1.[10] As opposed to a creation mandate, it is more likely that the Sabbath is a Moses mandate. Schreiner notes, "What is clear is that the command to rest on Sabbath was first given to Israel under the Mosaic Covenant (Exod 20:8–11; 31:12–17; Lev 23:3; Deut 5:12–15)."[11]

The original Sabbath has more to do with the finished work of God's creation than his setting up an institutional day of rest. When one reads about God resting on the seventh day, however, it has everything to do with God and nothing to do with man. To state the exegetically obvious, man did nothing; God did everything. Technically, God did everything by doing nothing. Sailhamer notes, "The reader is left with a somber and repetitive reminder of only one fact: God did not work on the seventh day. While little else is recounted, it is repeated three times that God did not work. The author surely intends by this to put the emphasis on God's 'rest.'"[12] That will become significantly different under Moses. Israel will do much, by way of not doing much, while keeping the Sabbath.

Various views of the Sabbath as well as the Lord's Day tie a principle of rest to the idea that God "sanctifies" the last day of the week as something of a creation ordinance. While this writer does not see this as a universal law per se, Genesis 2 does seem to suggest a significant principle of God for those who bear his image. The wisdom of rest seems consistent with Mark 2 (discussed below): "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (v. 27).

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[8] W. Stott, "Sabbath, Lord's Day," *NIDNTT*, ed. Colin Brown (Exeter, Devon, UK: Paternoster, 1978) 3:405.

[9] Harold H. P. Dressler, "The Sabbath in the Old Testament," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation,* ed. D. A. Carson (1982; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999), 28.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Thomas R. Schreiner, "Good-bye and Hello: The Sabbath Command for New Covenant Believers," in *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course Between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies,* ed. Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), 162.

[12] John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *EBC*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 2:38–39.

Exodus 20:8–11

> Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

The technical name for the Sabbath as a holy celebration first appears in Exodus 6:22–30.[13] The children of Israel had been exposed to a ten-day week while in Egyptian captivity.[14] God explains that Sabbath for them would include an emphasis on "rest" (no doubt reflective of a faith dependency on Yahweh) as well as a "sabbatical celebration."[15] The Sabbath regulation is then captured in the fourth commandment within the Decalogue of Exodus 20.

Yet Exodus 20 does not exhaust the significance of the Sabbath. For example, Deuteronomy 5:15 makes the Sabbath a memorial of the exodus. [16] More broadly, the Pentateuch portrays an organic connection between a whole system of Sabbaths—not only the weekly Sabbath—and Israel's calendar that includes various feasts and celebrations.[17] Kurtz explains that the feasts were "expressed formally" by the number seven and "materially by their being separated from the labours, toils, and cares of everyday life for the sanctification and consecration of the whole man to purposes of religion and worship of God."[18] Kurtz goes on to demonstrate how the feasts were expressed in a threefold expression of the number seven and the concept of Sabbath rest:

> The first was by the transference of rest (*mutatis mutandis*) from every seventh day to every seventh year, or the so-called *sabbatical year*, and from that still further to the *jubilee year*, which occurred every *seven times seven years*. . . . In the *Sabbath of days* it was man and beast that were to rest after six periods of labour, and keep sabbath during the seventh. In the *Sabbath of years* it was the field that rested; for what a period of day and night is to man and beast, that a whole year with its summer and winter in the field. In the *Sabbath of weeks of years* it was the altered condition of property, that had been occasioned by the commercial activity of the past jubilee period, which once more returned from a state of fluctuation to one of rest, *i.e.*, from the strange holder to its original possessor.[19]

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[13] Dressler, "The Sabbath in the Old Testament," 24.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] See Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "Exodus," in *EBC,* 2:424.

[17] See J. H. Kurtz, *Offerings, Sacrifices and Worship in the Old Testament,* trans. James Martin (1863; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998): 341–48.

[18] Ibid., 342.

[19] Ibid., 342–43.

Kurtz shows how the Sabbath system was especially connected to Passover (which he calls Easter), Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths).[20] It also is manifested in the presence of seven annual feasts. The manifestation of the commitment to the Sabbath included not only the above-mentioned rest from work for man and beast but also a doubling of the two daily burnt offerings (Num 28:9–10).[21] It becomes impossible to separate the weekly Sabbath from this larger Levitical system of law and feasts. All of these laws stand or fall together.

As it relates to corporate worship under the law of Moses, the Sabbath had a clear development throughout the OT. The main theological focus was sacrifice for the expiation of sin connected to the making of atonement.[22] In the wilderness, wandering Jews worshipped in the Tabernacle.[23] Eventually, once Israel regained the ark of the covenant, under the preparation of David and the construction of Solomon, Israel had the Temple. As a result of God's people being taken to places far removed from the Temple and Jerusalem, the synagogue system developed. In time the synagogue would exist as a parallel institution to that of the Temple after the exile.[24] All of this was foundational to the development of later Judaism after Jerusalem's fall in AD 70.

Leviticus 23 highlights the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated on the first day of the week after Sabbath (vv. 33–36). The Book of Zechariah ends with the Messianic festival of Tabernacles anticipating the gathering of all nations into Jerusalem to worship God (Zech 14).[25] This sounds far more like a multiethnic millennial gathering than merely the corporate worship regulation of a single nation. Concerning the application to the church, Kaiser argues:

> The Christian church is required to observe the morality of *time* by setting aside one day in seven to the LORD, but it has chosen to change the *ceremonialization* of that day from the seventh to the first (cf. the early church's use of "the Lord's Day," i.e., a day belonging to the Lord [Rev 1:10] or "On the first day of every week" [1 Cor 16:2]). The sanctity of the first day in honor of God's new deliverance, which the Lord Jesus accomplished in his death and finally in his resurrection, was already signaled in the symbolism of the feasts in Leviticus 23–"the day after the Sabbath" (v. 15); "on the first day hold a sacred assembly" (v. 7); "the first day is a sacred assembly … on the eighth" (vv. 35–36). Indeed, these were the very feasts [which] pointed forward to the very same event Christians now celebrate on Sunday!"[26]

[20] Kurtz, *Offerings, Sacrifices and Worship in the Old Testament,* 355–81.

[21] Ibid., 353–54.

[22] William D. Barrick, "The Mosaic Covenant," *TMSJ* 10 (1999): 232.

[23] For a description of the construction, organization, and development of the Tabernacle, see Kurtz, *Offerings, Sacrifices and Worship in the Old Testament,* 39–51.

[24] Justo L. Gonzalez, *A Brief History of Sunday: From the New Testament to the New Creation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 6.

[25] Charles L. Feinberg, *The Minor Prophets* (Chicago: Moody, 1948), 343–44.

[26] Kaiser, "Exodus," in *EBC,* 2:424.

Exodus 31:12–17

> The Lord commanded Moses to tell the people of Israel, "Keep the Sabbath, my day of rest, because it is a sign between you and me for all time to come, to show that I, the Lord, have made you my own people. You must keep the day of rest, because it is sacred. Whoever does not keep it, but works on that day, is to be put to death. You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is a solemn day of rest dedicated to me. Whoever does any work on that day is to be put to death. The people of Israel are to keep this day as a sign of the covenant. It is a permanent sign between the people of Israel and me, because I, the Lord, made heaven and earth in six days, and on the seventh day I stopped working and rested.

As one considers the instruction given to Israel concerning the Sabbath in Exodus 31, he finds perhaps the clearest indication that the Sabbath was uniquely connected to the Old Covenant. Both Kurtz and Sailhamer mark the section including Exodus 31 as beginning in Exodus 24 with the instruction on the building of the Tabernacle.[27] The section starts with Moses and company going up the mountain. It ends when they come off the mountain. Sailhamer sees theological parallelism between the Creation account in Genesis 1–2 and the building of the Tabernacle in Exodus 25–30.[28] He especially sees a tie between the Tabernacle and the Garden of Eden.[29] At the end of both the Genesis and Exodus accounts, God speaks to the Sabbath.[30] Sailhamer ties this together when he suggests,

> The analogy between God's work of Creation and Israel's construction of the tabernacle is made explicit by the reference to the Sabbath at the close of the narratives. We are reminded that God did his work in six days and rested on the seventh day; now Israel is to do likewise. Though it is clear that this pattern is taken up for all future generations (v.16), in this specific context within the Pentateuch the focus is on the building of the tabernacle. Just as God made the world, so Israel is to make the tabernacle. Like God's work, it is to be a holy work, and is to be carried out by observing the holy times. . . . As such, the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness is a paradigm

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[27] See Kurtz, *Offerings, Sacrifices and Worship in the OT*, 39–40; John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 298–309.

[28] Ibid., 298–99.

[29] Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative,* 299. Also see Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden Story," in "*I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11*, ed. Richard S. Hess and David T. Tsumura, (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–405; G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, NSBT (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2004), 60–66; T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 123–26; For a constructive critique of the cosmic-temple imagery idea, see Daniel I. Block, "Eden: A Temple? A Reassessment of the Biblical Evidence," in *From Creation to the New Creation: Biblical Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and Benjamin L. Gladd, 3–29 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013). Some of the parallels between Creation/Eden and the Tabernacle/Temple include entrance from the east, guardian cherubim, Yahweh "walking about" in its midst, the tree of life (cf. the menorah), God's representatives, "serving" and "keeping" (Gen 2:15; Num 3:7), and the outflow of life-giving water.

[30] Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative,* 299.

> of all of Israel's work. By setting apart the Sabbath as a sign, the whole of their work was marked as a holy task.[31]

Even if one does not see the same amount of intertextual connection as Sailhamer does in Exodus 31 in relationship to Genesis 1–2, there is no doubt that a unique tie is found between the Sabbath for God's people Israel and the corporate worship practice of the Tabernacle and eventual Temple. A question for those who would insist on a contemporary carry-over of the Sabbath is the real absence of the rest of the section. Where is the Tabernacle? Where are the offerings for the Tabernacle, the ark, the table, the lampstand, the burnt sacrifice, the courtyard, the Levites and their holy garments?

Matthew 5:17–20

> Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

This passage is one of the most highlighted in discussions that deal with the relationship between the Christian and the Mosaic law.[32] That Jesus designated the OT to include the authority of "The Law and the Prophets" was important for a variety of reasons. Lenski and Nolland maintain that a real issue was the presence of Samaritans (and others) who accepted only the five books of Moses as authoritative.[33] Jesus was being accused of not being loyal to the OT in large part because he did not support the legalistic expansions of the OT that were common amongst the religious leaders of his day.[34] Lenski and France both assert that Jesus was accused of being something of a minimalist (like the Samaritans) as it relates to the OT.[35] Lenski goes on to show that to make the focus of Jesus the Mosaic law as opposed to the whole of the OT Scriptures is to miss the clear point of the passage.[36]

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[31] Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative,* 309.

[32] D. A. Carson highlights three debates within this single text that impact one's view of what the passage means and how it is applied. See "Matthew," in *EBC*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:141. See also Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2014), 56–57; John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 215–26; Grant Osborne, *Matthew*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 179–85; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 177–90.

[33] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1943), 205; Nolland, *Matthew*, 218.

[34] Lenski, *Matthew*, 218; France, *Matthew*, 182.

[35] Lenski, *Matthew*, 218; France, *Matthew*, 182.

[36] Lenski, *Matthew*, 208–9.

A key part of the discussion is found in the latter part of verse 17, where Jesus notes that he did not come to "abolish but fulfill." Carson says that an example of the idea to "fulfill" is found in Genesis 15:6. Here the OT text remains partially "empty" until Abraham and his actions "fulfill" it.[37] It would do injustice to the text to break out the Mosaic law or parts of the Mosaic law. This means that if one believes this text is requiring the continued practice of all the Mosaic law's teaching on the Sabbath, he will also be required to obey all the Mosaic law in the same way in its civil and ceremonial actions. In other words, one must be willing to stone his rebellious teenager. If one is unwilling to stone his rebellious teenager, he does not believe the law of Moses continues exactly as it was. Lenski explains well the essence of verse 19 as being that all of God's instructions are part of God's Word and therefore important: "Some requirements are supreme and essential; others, secondary; and still others least."[38] Keener notes the ultimate target Jesus is pursing is character, not regulation.[39]

At the time of Jesus' ministry, despite all of the stipulations on the Mosaic law down to the smallest detail, it was still a legitimate ordinance. This observation is not surprising when one considers that Jesus was "born under the law" (Gal 4:4). Furthermore, if he was to satisfy the holy demands of a righteous God, Jesus would need to fulfill every aspect of the Mosaic law.[40] What was not legitimate was the extra man-added stipulations laid on the law by groups such as the Pharisees.[41] This passage says nothing concerning whether or when the Mosaic law would be abrogated.[42] As other passages indicate, the Mosaic code as a single system would indeed be abrogated based on the fact that Jesus fulfilled it.[43] This passage then is simply showing that Jesus did not come to throw out the OT but to obey every command and fulfill every promise.[44]

In the words of Schreiner, "The notion that Matthew emphasizes only the continuity in his view of the law should be rejected."[45] Matthew states simply that at this point Jesus had not come to abrogate the OT. Instead of abrogating or doing away with the OT, he fulfilled the OT. In many ways, the OT as a reflection of the Old Covenant would be abrogated. A clear indication that some of the moral components of the Mosaic law are similar to moral components of the New Covenant is the six illustrations that follow in Matthew 5.[46] The point of the passage is very much a prohibition of antinomianism.

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[37] Carson, "Matthew," in *EBC,* 8:143.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 57.

[40] David L. Turner, *Matthew*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 163.

[41] France, *Matthew*, 180–81.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Nolland, *Matthew*, 218–19.

[44] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 57.

[45] Thomas R. Schreiner, *40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law*, 40 Questions Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 161.

[46] Tasker shows that these six illustrations are not to be taken in complete antithesis between Jesus and Moses, or even Jesus and those who expanded Moses. These are merely showing that the standard of righteousness is even beyond Moses and those who would add to Moses. R. V. G. Tasker, *Matthew*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 64–66.

Jesus is saying that the Law and the Prophets (in other words, God's Word as found in the OT) will always be God's Word down to the smallest pen stroke.[47] He also is explaining that none of that, including the smallest instructions, must not be brushed aside. This instruction is limited to the immediate dispensation and cannot mean the age of the church because of the legion of passages that teach otherwise.[48] To make the other passages concerning the law's abrogation fit this passage that admittedly has a complex interpretation is to do injustice to a foundational teaching of hermeneutics, namely, we interpret the unclear passages in light of the challenging ones. Those who insist on interpreting clear passages in the light of unclear passages easily end up violating biblical orthodoxy.[49]

Mark 2:23–28

> One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

This episode from the life of Jesus is instructive on how Jesus viewed and believers should view the Sabbath.[50] Jesus and his disciples are traveling on the Sabbath, and as they do so, they pluck the heads of grain and eat their gleanings on the way to their destination. Moore places this event sometime after Jesus' second Passover celebration during his Galilean ministry.[51] The Pharisees accuse Jesus and his disciples of harvesting on the Sabbath. Stein explains that the rub was with Jesus and his disciples "rubbing away the chaff to eat the kernels" consisting of work or harvest on the Sabbath.[52] In his response, Jesus explains a higher standard of righteousness than the Sabbath.[53] This is Jesus himself ("Son of man"), who fulfills the Sabbath and is, in fact, "Lord of the Sabbath" (v. 28).[54] Jesus, first of all, demonstrates the Kingdom of God and its version of the law is higher than the twisted interpretation of the Pharisees. Moore explains:

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[47] Tasker, *Matthew,* 67.

[48] Turner, *Matthew*, 167.

[49] Walter C. Kaiser Jr. and Moisés Silva, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 193–98.

[50] Some textual critics believe this passage was somewhat redacted as an apologetic for the early church practice of Sabbath. Robert H. Stein, *Mark,* BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 143.

[51] Mark E. Moore, *The Chronological Life of Christ, Volume 1: From Glory to Galilee* (Joplin, MO: College, 1996), 150.

[52] Stein, *Mark*, 145.

[53] Mark L. Strauss, *Mark*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 144–46.

[54] Ibid.

> Eating out of someone else's grain field was permissible according to OT law (Deut. 23:25). Furthermore, nothing in the OT Sabbath commands would prohibit such an innocent act. The Pharisees' complaint against Jesus' disciples was based on the Oral Law, not written law. According to these traditions the disciples were guilty on a number of counts. By plucking the grain they were guilty of reaping; by rubbing the grain they were guilty of threshing (cf. Exod. 34:21, m. Shabb. 7.2).[55]

Jesus then demonstrates that the "ideal ethic" law is even higher than the actual law of Moses.[56] He does this by explaining that indeed David violated the letter of Moses as recorded in 1 Samuel 21:1–6.[57] Jesus' treatment of David and his treatment of the Pharisees demonstrates that not only is the twisted and legalistic pharisaical version of the law not his standard, but even Moses is not the ultimate standard.[58] Jesus is the new standard. He perfectly fulfills Moses in Sabbath law but takes the Sabbath and becomes "Lord of the Sabbath." Jesus demonstrates how the "ideal ethic" law is much more important and eternal than Moses by healing the man with the withered hand (Mark 3:1–5). The violation of the Sabbath as the leaders of his day viewed Sabbath was the last straw. Mark 3:6 and following note that the Pharisees begin to plot with the Herodians how they might destroy him.

Acts 15

The Bible student who knows passages directly connected to the Sabbath might be surprised that the text of Scripture outlining the Jerusalem Council would be listed. The significance of the Jerusalem Council is not only what the final findings were for the early church leadership of Antioch and Jerusalem, but what they were not.[59] Significantly, both circumcision and Sabbath-keeping are left out of the continued obligations for these early church saints.[60] As the apostles, elders, and leaders of the early church deliberate, their verdict for the church now comprising both Jew and Gentile is powerful. No circumcision. No Sabbath, even though Sabbath is mentioned in connection with the practice of preaching Moses in every synagogue in Acts 15:21. The absence of Sabbath as an ongoing imperative for these Gentile believers is stark.[61]

Several realities arise from the text as it relates to the Jerusalem Council and its decision on the role of the Mosaic law for an NT congregation that was a known mixture of Jew and Gentile. The

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[55] Moore also notes the clear comparison between Jesus and David. David, king of Israel, provided for his servants, and King Jesus in the line of David also provides for that which is greater than the Temple. *Chronological Life of Christ, Volume 1,* 150.

[56] Cf. different views on the nature of law in reference to Mark 2 and the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew A. Postiff, "An Investigation of the Transitional Nature of the Sermon on the Mount," Fellowship Bible Church (December 12, 2002), https://www.fbcaa.org/BibleStudies/doctrinal/ 322SystematicTheologyISermonOnMount.pdf, 6–9.

[57] Walter W. Wessel, "Mark," in *EBC,* 8:638.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 365–67.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Gentiles wanting to know more about Torah would have been able to learn more about the Sabbath at the synagogue. F. F. Bruce, *Acts*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 312.

Mosaic law was discussed as a single unit largely represented by circumcision. A violation of one law was the same as violating all the law. Metzger notes:

> There is a clear understanding that to violate one law is to violate the whole law, which is what James later said in James 2:10, referencing Leviticus 19:18, which was the law that Yeshua referenced in Matthew 22:39 and Paul referenced in Galatians 5:14. Notice as well that James asks why would we want to put a yoke (the Moses law) on the necks of these Gentile believers when even our fathers were not able to bear it?[62]

As one reads the back and forth at the Jerusalem Council, it is easy to see in the text and around the text the reality that many Jewish believers, especially those who had spent time as Pharisees, had a certain understanding of what salvation meant. No doubt, many of these Jewish believers could explain that there was no hope of salvation without the work of the Messiah. They still had a view of a life of faith that began with circumcision, however.[63] James Boice says it well: "If it was necessary for the Gentiles to keep the law of Moses to be saved, then faith is not enough."[64]

It may well be that the believers who had a Pharisaic background looked at Gentiles coming to faith as if they were coming to a Jewish OT faith. Gentiles who wanted to partake of the covenant community essentially had to act at least part Jewish. But now God wants to call some from every kindred, tribe, and country. The Jerusalem Council then concludes that Gentiles coming to faith in Christ will look nothing like the "proselyte model" of Gentile conversion that was clearly tied to the Mosaic law in the OT.[65] In the end, those who wanted to demand more conformity to the Mosaic law were told to back off and not "trouble" these Gentile believers. It would be good for modern Hebrew Roots people to consider seriously this instruction. Hebrew Roots followers who degrade evangelicals who do not follow Jewish diet laws, who do not practice Passover, and who do not gather on Friday night are not inferior in their faith or commitment to Christ.

Romans 14:5–6

> One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

Romans is an immensely challenging epistle, especially in the realm of theology. Romans 14 is not the only important passage that deals with the questions of the church and Israel, and the law and the gospel. A significant passage that the writer almost included was Romans 9–11. Concerning these

[62] John B. Metzger, *The Law, Then and Now: What About Grace?* (Larkspur, CO: Grace Acres, 2019), 95.

[63] James Montgomery Boice, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 262.

[64] Ibid.

[65] William J. Larkin, "Acts" in *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, ed. Philip Comfort (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2006), 12:518–19.

chapters, Schreiner rightly introduces both the complexity and implication of the passage to the salvation of both Jew and Gentile.[66] In a pivotal passage that takes the reader through some of the same theological ground, the Apostle Paul notes in Romans 14:5–6, "One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. He who regards one day as special does so to the Lord." This then answers the accusation by Hebrew Roots Sabbatarians that those worshipping on Sunday are violating the Sabbath as an ongoing creation ordinance.[67] If indeed the Sabbath was an ongoing creation ordinance, it would continue to be uniquely sacred.[68] Here the text is clear that one day is not more sacred in the NT economy than the other.[69] Paul could not say what he says if God's view were the same as those holding to HRM Sabbatarianism.

Knox Chamblin clarifies the issue when he identifies the one who "considers one day more sacred than another" as a Jewish Christian who "observes special days (including the sabbath) as prescribed in the Mosaic Law."[70] This individual is different from the Gentile believer who "considers every day alike."[71] In a powerful comparison, Paul explains to Jewish Christians that while the Sabbath was set apart under the law of Moses, every day is set apart under the law of Christ.[72] Murray (who leans Sabbatarian) demonstrates that the text upholds the reality that "these ritual observances were abrogated with the passing away of the ceremonial institution."[73] Chamblin goes on to identify the Jewish Christian whose conscience demands a kind of OT ritual worship as "weak."[74]

The result here is that Christians may choose to participate in some aspect of a ritual that was under the law of Moses, but they must not demand or press other believers to the same ethic.[75] This is an important corollary to the doctrine of Christian liberty as explained in Romans 14:1–23 and 1 Corinthians 10:23–33.[76] Metzger notes, "The biblical basis for this freedom to keep the law is evident in the actions of Paul. . . . His vow in Acts 18:18 is based on the Law of Moses as set out in Numbers 6:2, 5, 9, and 18. His desire to be in Jerusalem for Pentecost in Acts 20:16 is based on Deuteronomy

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[66] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 2nd ed., BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 460–65.

[67] Hegg represents the HRM position on the Sabbath being a universal and binding creation ordinance. See Tim Hegg, *Ten Persistent Questions*, 37–54.

[68] Frank Thielman, *Romans*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 632–33.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Knox Chamblin, "The Law of Moses and the Law of Christ," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments,* ed. John S. Feinberg (Wheaton: Crossway, 1988), 196.

[71] John Murray does a masterful job of demonstrating that the category of different "days" is linked to the category of different "foods." John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 177–78. Even though Murray may prefer a form of Sabbatarianism, he does not mandate it as universal and binding.

[72] Theilman, *Romans*, 632.

[73] See arguments against continued Sabbath imperative for the new economy in Murray, *Romans*, 178.

[74] Chamblin, "The Law of Moses and the Law of Christ," 196.

[75] Metzger, *The Law Then and Now*, 259.

[76] Ibid. Cf. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 475–91. Fee shows the clear scope of the 1 Corinthians 10 passage and how Christian liberty is connected to a right view of "everything is permissible" while at the same time being aware of how liberty must never undermine that which is "beneficial."

16:16."[77] This does not mean that the law of Moses becomes a norm. A clear example is the eating of meat among the Corinthian believers. Fee notes that "Paul's 'rule' for everyday life in Corinth was simple, 'eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience.'"[78]

1 Corinthians 5:7–8

> Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast – as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

While this passage does not deal squarely with the Sabbath, it does take in the whole Sabbath system as it relates to Passover. HRM believers will suggest that Paul defends the idea of a universal church practice of Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:7. The problem is that Paul uses Passover as a metaphor.[79] The context of the passage deals with the presence of sin (fornication) that should be purged out (like leaven was for Passover). There is nothing here that connects this directly to the day of Passover celebrated as seen in the OT (Exod 12:6–19; Josh 5:10; Ezek 45:21). The attachment is symbolic.[80] Keener explains:

> Paul argues that the Corinthians should remain unleavened, just as bread does during the Passover season. . . . Paul writes some time before Pentecost (16:8), fifty days after Passover, so Passover could well be fresh on his mind. Jewish people understood the Passover lamb as a sacrifice in this period. . . . Paul believes that the Messiah has come, and that the Messiah was himself the new paschal lamb.[81]

Morris notes, "The Christian does not observe the feast according to the standards of the old life he has left. . . . By contrast the Christian's perpetual festival is kept with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Paul is not referring to Passover as a ceremonial festival that he expects the Corinthians to follow. The point of the metaphor is that Christ himself is our Passover."[82] Lowery notes that if there was a meal at all that is connected to this passage it would be the NT cup and bread of communion.[83] Fee notes the other aspect of the metaphor is a general call to holiness.[84] Lenski

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[77] Metzger, *The Law Then and Now*, 259.

[78] Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 480–81.

[79] Note the treatment of the nature of this Passover metaphor by Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians,* TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 89–90.

[80] W. Harold Mare, "1 Corinthians" in *EBC*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 10:218.

[81] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 470.

[82] Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians,* 89.

[83] David K. Lowery, "1 Corinthians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament,* ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 1983), 514. Also see Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 218–20.

[84] Ibid., 220. Also see Marion L. Soards, *1 Corinthians*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 114–15.

demonstrates how the use of the independent subjunctive connected with other grammatical elements points to the figurative use of "let us keep the feast."[85] In other words, the grammar of the text does not naturally point to Christians keeping a literal Passover feast in perpetuity.[86]

Galatians 3:23–25

> Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

James Boice calls Galatians the "Magna Carta of Christian liberty."[87] Paul will challenge the Galatian believers to help spiritual siblings carry a burden (no doubt in large connection with an entangled sin from the verse before) and so fulfill the law of Christ. Why not the law of Moses? It will be evident that the Apostle Paul is concerned that the Galatian believers were placing their faith in the law of Moses for the sake of sanctification (Gal 3:3).[88] There is no power in the law of Moses to make even God's children holy. If there was one passage to answer the HRM view that NT saints while not being justified by the law of Moses are sanctified by the law of Moses, they need not search any further than this epistle to the Galatians.[89] The HRM defendants turn this passage upside down trying to explain away the clear application to the Mosaic law in general and the regulations of Sabbath in particular.[90] Moo explains that Paul was concerned for a kind of Christian faith that begins rightly with Christ alone but shifts to a completion by way of the law of Moses.[91] What is needed is the Holy Spirit of God giving life through a different kind of law: the law of Christ.

There is a clear tie between what Luke captures in Acts 15 and what Paul writes in the epistle to the Galatians. The initial reception and conversion to Christianity in Galatia largely by those who had come out of paganism was remarkable. Paul was clearly troubled when he learned that many Galatian believers were swinging into Judaism. Boice notes:

> Conservative Jewish teachers who were legalizers had arrived from Jerusalem claiming to be from James, the Lord's brother, and had begun to teach that Paul was wrong in his doctrine. They contended that Gentiles had to come under the law of Moses to be saved. It was not enough for them to have Christ; they must have Moses too. To grace must be added circumcision.[92]

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[85] R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 222–23.

[86] Ibid.

[87] James Montgomery Boice, "Galatians" in *EBC,* ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 10:409.

[88] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 528–29.

[89] Ibid.

[90] J. K. McKee, *The New Testament Validates Torah*, 705.

[91] Douglas Moo, *Galatians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 184.

[92] Boice, "Galatians," in *EBC,* 10:410.

In Galatians, Paul answers essentially three attacks from those who are demanding a return to Mosaic law. First, Paul gives answers to his authority as an apostle.[93] Second, Paul explains that the gospel apart from the law of Moses is indeed the right gospel.[94] Third, Paul explains that the gospel, apart from the law of Moses, leads to a certain moral ethic, namely the law of Christ.[95] The church is not antinomian. Instead of depending on the law of Moses for holiness via externalism, in this Church age the Holy Spirit produces internal fruit of righteousness (Gal 5:22–23). This kind of internal integrity of the heart was true of both OT and NT saints.

The key passage that explains the temporary role of the Mosaic law is found in Galatians 3:23–25. Explaining this passage, Moo says that the law was a benevolent custodian, and now under grace, we are no longer under the guardianship of Moses.[96] Campbell adds that in this text Paul uses two images in describing the law of Moses.[97] First, Paul likens the law to a prison. Second, he uses the "child-custodian relationship" to explain the relationship the law had to the OT believer. Campbell suggests that the NASB rendering of "tutor" is a helpful one in that it captures well the word *paidagōgos*. He notes that this word "is difficult to render into English since there is no exact parallel to this position in modern English." Another suggested translation is "a strict governess." Campbell adds, "The pedagogue here was not a 'schoolmaster' (KJV) but a slave to whom a son was committed from age six or seven to puberty."

This single passage in Galatians 3:23–25 is part of a larger argument that Paul is making as to why the Mosaic law is not binding on Galatian believers in the same way it was on those under the Old Covenant.[98] Campbell sums this up by saying, "It is better then to understand that the Law did not lead us to Christ but that it was a disciplinarian until Christ came. Thus the reign of Law has ended for faith in Christ has delivered believers from the protective custody of the prison and the harsh discipline of the pedagogue."[99]

The implication then to the HRM is that the Sabbath was a specific part of the "guardian system" that, according to Paul, is no longer in place. Clear proof that the Sabbath requirements were a part of that which is now over is captured in the fact that some Sabbath violations resulted in a death penalty. This then is clearly connected to the law of Moses, which "held captive under the law, imprisoned" (v. 23). In the New Covenant, no one gets stoned for missing church services. Also, in the New Covenant, a "guardian" is not needed in the form of the HRM, neither is it needed in the form of the law of Moses. The Church has Christ. He is sufficient.

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[93] Boice, "Galatians," in *EBC,* 10:411.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Moo, *Galatians*, 240–44.

[97] Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 599–600.

[98] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 532.

[99] Campbell, "Galatians," 600.

Colossians 2:14–17

> Having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

The believer in Jesus has been rescued through Christ's cross-work from two debts. The first is the spiritual guilt that was charged to our spiritual account because of both the imputation of Adam's sin and our own transgressions.[100] The second liability was a direct assault from the enemy (and his kingdom) against our soul.[101] The Cross dispatched the two of them equally. Wright explains, "God not only 'canceled' this 'written code,' he *took it away*, (by) *nailing it to the cross*."[102] Vaughan notes that the interpretation of verse 15 is a disputed one.[103] The writer believes that the "powers and authorities" dispatched at the Cross are a reference to Satan and his demonic host. This view fits well with Paul's epistle to the Ephesians when he explains, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph 6:12).[104]

It is unfathomable that the next verses (Col 2:16–17) would appear in the Scriptures if it were God's will for his NT church to meet together on Sabbath. Paul clearly explains that no portion of the church can judge any other portion of the church in relationship to Moses' regulations on diet, festivals, or Sabbath. Paul explains these were merely functioning as a "shadow." Schreiner notes, "The word for 'shadow' (*skia*) that Paul uses to describe the Sabbath is the same term the author of Hebrews used to describe Old Testament sacrifices. . . . The argument is remarkably similar to what we see in Colossians: both contrast elements of the law as a shadow with the 'substance' (*soma*, Col 2:17) or the 'form' (*eikona*, Heb 10:1) found in Christ."[105]

Some within the HRM argue that "Sabbath" in Colossians 2:16 is not a reference to the weekly Sabbath gatherings but to the wider Sabbath calendar. Hegg understands that Sabbath here refers to the extra demands made by the false teachers being addressed in Colossians.[106] McKee claims that to apply this passage as has been understood by the majority of expositors is to take the passage out of context.[107] He goes on to argue that the judging is actually happening by those who insist that they

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[100] James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 166.

[101] David W. Pao, *Colossians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 170–74.

[102] N. T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 113.

[103] Curtis Vaughan, "Colossians," in *EBC,* ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 11:202.

[104] James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 229–35.

[105] Schreiner, *40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law*, 212.

[106] Hegg, *Ten Persistent Questions,* 64.

[107] McKee, *The New Testament Validates Torah,* 459.

are not under obligation to OT food, Sabbath, and feast laws.[108] But to cite Schreiner again, "The most prominent day in the Jewish calendar was the weekly Sabbath. . . . Perhaps sabbatical years are included here, but the weekly Sabbath should not be excluded, for it would naturally come to the mind of both Jewish and Gentile readers."[109]

Furthermore, Lincoln demonstrates this passage is communicating that a significant "transition has taken place from an old economy to the new."[110] He continues, "That Paul without any qualification can relegate Sabbaths to shadows certainly indicates that he does not see them as binding and makes it extremely unlikely that he could have seen the Christian first day as a continuation of the Sabbath." Concerning Colossians 2:16–17, Strickland points out:

> Paul discusses the controversy in the church surrounding Sabbath observance several times and never prescribes obedience to the Sabbath command or even to Sunday as the recipient of the Sabbath shift (Rom. 14:5; Gal. 4:10–11; Col. 2:16–17). Not only is it not repeated, but the church does not observe the seventh day of the week. Very early in history the church worshiped on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2). It is argued that the permanent obligation of Sabbath observance stems from the fact that conformance was prescribed at the creation. Specifically, the Sabbath was instituted by the example of God himself and is one of the creation ordinances prescribed for people. Appeal to an "ordinance" is based on Genesis 2:2–3. Yet these verses do not prescribe or command adherence to the Sabbath for rest. Thus the principle of weekly Sabbath rest cannot be based on the so-called creation ordinance. Further, the institution of the Sabbath rest comes with the travel to the promised land (Ex. 16:23) and the Sinai legislation (Ex. 20:11).[111]

Verses 16–17 are tied to verses 14–15 by "therefore." Vaughan explains, "In light of what Christ did, the Colossians were to let no one 'judge' their standing before God based on their observance or nonobservance of the regulations of the Mosaic law."[112] Vaughan continues, "In such matters the principle of Christian liberty comes into play (cf. Gal 5:1)."[113] To safeguard using liberty in a way that is careless to others with hard backgrounds or an extra sensitive conscience, "Paul insists that under some circumstances Christian freedom should be voluntarily limited by one's respect for the tender conscience of a weaker brother (cf. Rom 14:11ff.; 1 Cor 8:1ff.)."[114]

Once again, the HRM levels judgments on individuals and congregations that do not agree with its view of diet, festivals, and Sabbath. When local churches are privileged to receive into the

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[108] McKee, *The New Testament Validates Torah,* 459–60.

[109] Schreiner, *40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law,* 212.

[110] A. T. Lincoln, "From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical and Theological Perspective," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day,* 367.

[111] Wayne G. Strickland, "Response to Willem A. VanBemeren," in *Five Views of Law and Gospel*, Counterpoints: Bible & Theology, ed. Wayne G. Strickland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 81. Strickland is representing a common dispensationalist view of the law and the gospel, and VanGemeren a common Reformed view.

[112] Vaughan, "Colossians," in *EBC,* 11:203.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

membership Christian believers who come from a Jewish background, the teaching of Colossians and Romans should result in patience as these dear converts work through the Hebrew traditions they grew up with. It is as equally a violation of Christian liberty to demand an immediate abandonment of participating in Passover as it is to expect that NT Christians in an instant give up a Christmas or Easter Sunday celebration.

Hebrews 7

Various passages in Hebrews relate to the Sabbath issue. For one, Hebrews 4:1–11 urges believers to enter God's rest. As VanDrunen says, "Hebrews 2 and 4 portray human beings as created not to work indefinitely in this world but to image God by working and then joining him in his kingly rest."[115] Yet Hebrews 4 presents the believer's rest not as a weekly Sabbath but as a permanent rest in Christ.[116]

Additionally, in Hebrews 7:11–12 the writer puts an explanation to the reality that the Levitical code and priesthood were temporary: "If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also." Keener explains, "The new and superior priesthood clearly promised in Scripture makes the old priesthood obsolete."[117] To make the point one step clearer, Hebrews 7:18 declares, "The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect)." So, this new priesthood (of Melchizedek) is connected to a new law (the law of Christ) that sets aside the old priesthood (Aaron) and the old law (Moses).

The point here is that when one does not have Aaron and his priesthood (and we do not have Aaron or his priesthood—we have Jesus as the Priest-King), then he does not have Moses. Without Moses, there is no Sabbath. The Sabbath was connected to God's covenant with Israel (Exod 31:16–17; Ezek 20:12; Neh 9:14) through the law of Moses and the priesthood of Aaron. Dressler notes, "As a sign of the covenant the Sabbath can only be meant for Israel, with whom the covenant was made. It has a 'perpetual' function, i.e., for the duration of the covenant and derives its importance and significance from the covenant itself."[118]

Schreiner explains, "The Sabbath was given to Israel as a covenant sign. . . . The sign of the Noahic covenant is the rainbow (Gen. 9:8–17) and the sign of the Abrahamic covenant is circumcision (Gen. 17)."[119] Upon retrospect, one notes in Exodus 34:27–28 that the Mosaic Covenant was made with Israel in the Sinai. This section is immediately followed up with the specific instruction of the Sabbath for Israel and only Israel. As this is the second giving of the Decalogue, it is instructive that the details

[115] David VanDrunen, *Divine Covenants and Moral Order: A Biblical Theology of Natural Law* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 74.

[116] Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews,* NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 161.

[117] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 650.

[118] Dresler, "The Sabbath in the Old Testament," 30.

[119] Schreiner, *40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law*, 209.

are even more "heavily balanced towards proper worship practices."[120] The eternal and universal covenant is not expanded to include the church until the New Covenant.[121]

Conclusion

In case after case, the Hebrew Roots view of the Sabbath has to explain away the straightforward implications of the key passages noted above. The Sabbath was embedded directly in the law of Moses. The law of Moses was connected to the priesthood of Aaron. NT saints are not connected to the Levitical high priesthood but rather to Jesus, whose priesthood is of the Melchizedekian order. The Sabbath, circumcision, and the rest of the law were merely a shadow that would be fulfilled in Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath. The NT saint, because he has been released from the law of Moses as a "tutor," has been released from the Sabbath regulations.[122] In the words of VanGemeren, "The Mosaic administration, therefore, was never intended to be an end to itself. It prepared people for the coming of Jesus Christ. 'If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me' (John 5:46)."[123] Instead of following the Old Covenant Sabbath laws, New Covenant Christians can rest and worship based on conscience.[124]

[120] John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000), 118.

[121] Compton argues for a similar view outside of progressive covenantalism. See Bruce Compton, "Dispensationalism, the Church and the New Covenant." *DBSJ* 8 (2003): 3–48.

[122] Stephen Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 107–9, 198–218.

[123] Willem A. VanGemeren, "The Non-Theonomic Reformed View," in *Five Views of Law and Gospel*, 27.

[124] Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament,* 118.

McGraw, Ryan M. *What Is Covenant Theology? Tracing God's Promises Through the Son, the Seed, and the Sacraments.* Wheaton: Crossway, 2024. 129pp. + 14pp. (back matter).

McGraw's volume on Covenant Theology (CT) is an "accessible guide" presenting the basics of CT and seeking to demonstrate the blessings that flow from it. In the introduction McGraw summarizes his personal journey toward CT out of his upbringing in a dispensational church, and he describes the blessings of CT in his life. He asserts that CT emphasizes the unity of Scripture and the glory of the triune God; that CT is "the vehicle through which God reveals himself and his saving message" (5); and that CT "helps us learn to live the Christian life" (7). Rather than answering every question about CT, McGraw's goal is "to show you why this teaching is a God-given blessing to believers" (8). This book devotes three chapters to the unity of Scripture, one to the Trinity, and one to the Christian life, and it concludes with a chapter of questions and answers about CT.

Chapter 1 shows how CT "helps us see the breathtaking unity of Scripture, making all the parts begin to fall into place over time" (11). McGraw defines covenants as "agreements or contracts that bind two or more parties together by promises, conditions, or sanctions" (12). He opts for this more general definition because it encompasses all the uses of "covenant" in the Bible. The covenant of redemption was made within the Trinity in eternity, and the covenant of works was made between God and Adam in Eden. McGraw acknowledges that "God did not use the word *covenant* in Genesis 2 or 3," but he points out specific *covenant* terminology in the chapters and asks, "What more details could we need to find a covenant here?" (18–19). McGraw believes that "without the covenant of works, we cannot adequately understand the covenant of grace in Christ, which we need so desperately" (21). McGraw looks to Luke 22:20 and Romans 5:12–21 to connect the covenant of works and covenant of grace. When discussing the covenant of grace, McGraw cites Genesis 3:15 as "the most basic and most blessed verse on covenant theology in the Bible" (23). McGraw argues that Christ crushed the serpent on the cross, and the serpent's ongoing activity is limited because he is bound "that he might not deceive the nations any longer" (Rev 20:3) (25–26).

In chapter 2, McGraw shows how "the son, the seed, and the sacraments" serve as "guideposts" pointing out the stages of the covenant of grace in the Bible. The unity of the covenant of grace is developed through six stages: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Christ. To show this continuity, McGraw refers to OT believers as the *church*: "The godly line of the church continued with Shem" (33). McGraw grounds the baptism of households (including infants) in the Abrahamic Covenant's use of circumcision. While it may seem difficult to understand how the Mosaic Covenant fits as a stage in the covenant of grace, McGraw insists that the central promises of this covenant "greatly expanded the blessings of the covenant of grace" (37). McGraw asserts that "the law refers to the Mosaic covenant as the legal administration of the covenant of grace," citing 2 Corinthians 3:7–18 (48). It is difficult, though, to see how "the ministry of death" (3:7) that placed a veil over hearts (3:14–15) is referring to "the covenant of grace." For Paul, the Mosaic Covenant is one of punishment, bondage, and death (2 Cor 3:7; Gal 4:1–31). McGraw points out, though, that the Mosaic Covenant explicitly teaches about circumcised hearts, but the Abrahamic Covenant does not. Also, the Mosaic Covenant demonstrates the penalty of sin, and the threats of the law "bless us by driving us to Christ"

(40). The chapter concludes with an overview of the Davidic Covenant and the introduction of the New Covenant in Christ.

Chapter 3 describes how CT highlights the storyline of the Bible. In contrast to those who see an absolute distinction between Old and New Covenants, McGraw argues that the contrast between these covenants "is relative in some respects, and absolute in others" (54). God's people in the Old Covenant could experience forgiveness of sins and the impact of God's word on their hearts (Ps 119:10–11). The New Covenant, therefore, "is not substantially different from the old." Rather, there is "a stark contrast between the efficacy and power of the new covenant and the old" (54). Therefore, the division in our Bibles between the OT and NT primarily demonstrates a division "between the covenant of grace in its old and new covenant administrations" (56). Finally, CT's emphasis on the unity of God's plan in the Bible "helps us grasp the Bible's central message" and "produces spiritual joy by helping us understand the parts of Scripture" (58–59).

In chapter 4, McGraw argues that God is the subject of the gospel (not we), and the gospel is focused on our relationship with the persons of the Trinity. This chapter provides McGraw's lengthiest discussion of baptism. Baptism is the sign of the New Covenant in Christ, and "baptized people belong to the triune God" (66). The remainder of chapter 4 does well in emphasizing the role of the Trinity in the covenants and the stages through which the covenants are developed. Our prayers, the church, and the sacraments are all rooted in the Trinity.

Chapter 5 seeks to demonstrate how CT affects the Christian life. McGraw argues that "keeping covenant theology in view all the time serves to reset our lives by keeping God in his place and us in ours" (81). The first point here is that in CT "the church has priority over the individual" (82). Baptism and the Lord's Supper are more about the work of Christ in the church rather than the individual profession of faith and commitment to God. Furthermore, through the covenant of grace, God "promises to bring his influences into the hearts of family members in a way that no parent or spouse can do or try to do" (86). A husband's love for his wife should reflect the covenant faithfulness that Christ shows to his church. God's covenant should also motivate Christians to raise godly children. For McGraw, baptism of children is critical for this: "God puts children in the church through baptism because they are in the covenant of grace through promises" (88). These children still need to be born again and exercise faith in Christ "to take ownership of the covenant with God as their Father" (88). Through baptism, "the covenant of grace brings promises that God will ordinarily circumcise their hearts, putting his word and Spirit in them" (88). In addition to baptism, parents should obey God's instructions on raising children to be faithful Christians, disciplining them according to biblical principles, and leading them in family worship. Finally, CT influences the way the individual Christian lives.

The final chapter provides questions and answers about CT, such as the distinction between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, the work of the Holy Spirit in the OT, the relationship of covenant and testament, the reality of grace in the covenant of works, the relationship of the covenant of works to the Mosaic Covenant, and the role of baptism and the Lord's Supper as covenant signs.

McGraw's book is well written and makes several positive contributions. First, McGraw emphasizes the storyline of Scripture, showing how the biblical covenants (Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Christ) serve as the framework for the stages of the development of God's redemptive plan. Second, McGraw correctly understands the foundational nature of Genesis 3:15 as a fountain from which the redemptive story of Scripture flows. Third, McGraw's focus on the role of the Trinity in the development of the redemptive plan and the redemptive covenants is welcome and admirable. Finally, McGraw's emphasis on how theology affects one's life in church, marriage, and family is a helpful and critical reminder for Christians today.

Three key elements of McGraw's book are problematic and present obstacles to accepting his argument. First, the primary problem with this book is that McGraw overstates the exclusivity of CT in providing certain spiritual blessings. The book is structured around the idea that CT (1) demonstrates the unity of Scripture, (2) highlights the glory of the Triune God, and (3) teaches us to live the Christian life. Implicitly, a rejection of CT prevents a person from receiving these blessings to the same extent. One noteworthy question McGraw addresses in chapter 6 is whether a person can still hold to the gospel without CT. McGraw says, "yes, though not as clearly as they could with covenant theology" (97). He explains that without CT, one cannot explain the reasons for the parallels Paul makes between Adam and Christ in Romans 5. His explanation is unconvincing to me. Many who do not adhere to CT would rejoice and agree with much of the content of the book, though they would not follow the system of CT that McGraw presents. The primary differences are (1) defining the covenant of works and grace as covenants, (2) the distinction between Israel and the church, and (3) infant baptism. CT does not have a monopoly on love and reverence for the Trinity, seeing the unity and big picture of Scripture, or prioritizing the church over the individual.

A second major concern from the outset is McGraw's strawman description of dispensationalism. McGraw gives the impression that there is only one form of dispensationalism, "which taught that God had different plans for Jews and for the church, resulting in a disjointed reading of the Old and New Testaments" (2, cf. 100). He later states, "The main feature of all forms of dispensationalism is that proponents view Israel and the church as two peoples of God with two distinct destinies" (103n3). These statements generally represent the traditional view of dispensationalism but not the progressive-dispensational view, which is well-attested in modern scholarship. Also, McGraw asserts that implicit in dispensationalism is a rejection of the Ten Commandments and an espousal of antinomianism (2). Dispensationalists may be a lot of things, but they are not characteristically antinomian.

Third, in almost every chapter, McGraw, who has pastored several Presbyterian churches, mentions household/infant baptism as a key element of CT (36–37, 53, 63, 66–70, 88, 112, 119). I find two primary problems with McGraw's discussion of baptism. (1) His defense of paedobaptism is based partially on an unsubstantiated generalization from church history: "most Christians in history have historically baptized households (including infants)" (36–37). (2) McGraw's explanation of the role of baptism is confusing. In one statement, he says baptized children "are members of the covenant" who "become church members through baptism" (119). In another, he says that "people belong to the covenant before they belong to the church" (112). McGraw's extended discussion of baptism (66–

69) contains numerous statements that seem difficult to reconcile. Some statements seem to indicate that baptized people are regenerate, while in others, baptism happens prior to regeneration.

McGraw writes clearly and engages relatively well with a less academic audience. He provides a helpful overview of CT and enables readers to understand CT at a basic level. Those who espouse or have an affinity toward CT will indeed find it to be an "accessible guide." Such readers should understand, however, that CT is not the only path to the spiritual blessing and insights McGraw discusses. Such readers should also search the Scriptures to determine the meaning and significance (and subjects!) of baptism, and they should critically evaluate the merits of structuring a system on covenants not explicitly identified in the Bible. For those who are undecided or do not hold to CT, this work will help in understanding CT better, but the presentation of CT will be unconvincing.

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Garrett, Duane A. *Job*. Evangelical Exegetical Commentary. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2024. 582pp. + 18pp. (front matter) + 54pp. (back matter).

Duane Garrett is a professor of OT interpretation and biblical theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has published numerous OT commentaries (on Exodus, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Hosea, Joel, Amos), Hebrew grammars, and *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, and Theological Approaches.*

After the introduction, Garrett's commentary on Job covers each pericope in the following categories: textual notes, annotated translation, verse-by-verse commentary, biblical theology, and application. Under textual notes Garrett provides representative translations from the LXX, Vulgate, and Targum. He intends to illustrate the great liberties these versions took with the text and thus to undermine selective use of these texts for the purpose of emending difficult portions of the Hebrew text.

Garrett thinks that a Solomonic era dating is most plausible for Job. He does not think that a literary priority can be established between Job 12:24 and Psalm 107:40. He disputes many of the intertextual connections proposed by Dell, Kynes, and Seow. Garrett does think, however, that Job alludes to Psalm 8. He also argues for the integrity of the book, noting, "Reshuffling the book is a tacit admission that one does not understand Job as is and that some part of it must be jettisoned to save the scholar's interpretation" (18).

Garrett provides two outlines of Job (1–2). The first outline summarizes the basic content of the book:

I. Prologue: Job's Affliction (1–2)
II. The Three Cycles of Debate (3–27)
  A. First Cycle (3–14)
  B. Second Cycle (15–21)
  C. Third Cycle (22–27)
III. The Inaccessibility of Wisdom (28)
IV. The Three Major Speeches (29–42:6)
  A. Job's Speech (29–31)
  B. Elihu's Speech (32–37)
  C. God's Speech (38:1–42:6)
V. Epilogue: Job's Vindication (42:7–17)

Garrett's second outline is chiastic:

A: Job's Affliction (1–2)
  B: Job Curses the Day of His Birth (3)
    C: The Three Cycles of Debate (4–27)
      D: The Inaccessibility of Wisdom (28)
    C': The Three Major Speeches (29:1–42:6)
  B': Job Intercedes for the Three Friends (42:7–9)
A': Job's Prosperity (42:10–17)

The most notable interpretive decision reflected in the second outline is the centrality of Job 28 and the identification of this chapter as the words of the narrator rather than as part of one of Job's speeches.

Garrett resists constructing a biblical theology of Job, noting that the theology of Job "is not a series of themes to be extracted from various segments of the speeches" but is found in "the outcome of the debate" and thus in the message of the book in its entirety (31). This, however, leads to the question of how to interpret Job. Garrett briefly surveys interpretations from the medieval to the modern period. He finds medieval Jewish commentators distracted by issues and assumptions foreign to Job, and he cautions contemporary interpreters from appealing to their specific interpretations without understanding their larger claims and context. He also rejects critical approaches that, whether due to source criticism or postmodernism, cannot find a single meaning to the book. Evangelicals also come in for critique. Francis Andersen's conclusion that "the causes of suffering are more complex than the doctrine of retribution and that a full answer requires an eschatological dimension, which Job lacks" (Garrett's summary) is rejected as denying any resolution to the book since it was written before the necessary eschatology was revealed (39). Garrett also rejects the approach of John Walton and Tremper Longman since it presents a negative reading of Job even in chapters 1 and 2 and (despite their intent) casts doubt on the justice and wisdom of God.

Garrett argues that Job is an examination of the following questions: "Does God govern justly? If so, why do the wicked often escape punishment while the righteous suffer miserably?" (41). The question of whether Job will curse God is not the issue of the book; Garrett says that is settled at the end of chapter 2. Foundational to his understanding of Job is the statement that Job was blameless and the reality that he suffered because of his righteousness and not because of any sin. This raises the question: Is God just for allowing righteous Job to suffer? Both Job and his friends fail to provide a satisfactory answer to this question because they hold to a retribution theology. The friends conclude from this that Job must have sinned; Job maintains his innocence and raises the possibility that God was unjust toward him. Garrett concludes that the three friends argue themselves into a dead end. Job makes some "increasingly insightful and profound observations on the human condition and on how divine deliverance might work" (42), but he does not find a solution to his problem.

Garrett believes that chapter 28 was introduced by the author to teach that wisdom is beyond human apprehension. Garrett maintains that Job 28 does not fit with what Job says elsewhere. If Job spoke this chapter, he would not need to be corrected by God later in the book. Rather, the author positions this poetic commentary right after Job has wrestled with the paradox that God is good for punishing the wicked and yet has treated innocent Job as the worst of the wicked. Job 28 is an answer to Job that proclaims "the limitations of human wisdom" (356).

Garrett has a negative view of Elihu. Elihu represents the readers who know they should reject the viewpoint of the three friends but who are inclined to neglect the statement of the prologue regarding Job's righteousness and find some wrong in him. "Elihu is a warning to us that we are not as wise as we think" (45).

Then God speaks. He dismisses Job's case against him, condemns the three friends' arguments against Job, and establishes to Job that he knows more about running the world than Job does. God's

speech concludes with Behemoth and Leviathan. Behemoth represents human government, which is to maintain justice and order but which does so imperfectly. Garrett claims, "Behemoth is the *symbolic embodiment of retribution*" (541). Leviathan "represents the cosmological and supernatural evil in which the world is engulfed," that is, he represents Satan (46; cf. 74). Only God can deal with these beasts; they are beyond human control. In the end Job confesses not that he had sinned but that he had been wrong to charge God with wronging him. The book does not reveal "how evil will be overcome," but it does reveal that "God manages the world in such a way that its chaotic forces are kept in balance and humanity, along with all other living things endures" (46). But as to how evil is defeated, the original reader was to fear God and trust God. The Christian reader knows that this problem is addressed in Christ, crucified, risen, and coming to subdue all enemies.

A commentary with detailed notes on the Hebrew text from an evangelical perspective is a welcome addition to the commentary literature on Job. Inevitably, there will be differences of opinion on key exegetical decisions. For instance, Garrett's understanding of Elihu is not entirely persuasive. How is the reader to know that Elihu is a stand-in for himself? Further, the reader has been provided with more information than Elihu, which makes it unlikely that Elihu can stand in for the reader. Garrett finds confirmation of his reading by proposing that the "this" of Job 38:2 refers to Elihu, not Job ("Who is this who makes sound thinking obscure with arguments that lack knowledge," Garrett's translation, 496). Verse 1, however, specifies that Yhwh was answering Job when he said these words.

Similarly, given the headings in Job 27:1 and Job 29:1, it seems more likely that Job 28 is a speech from Job. It is important to observe, however, that Garrett does not reject all insight on Job's part. For instance, when Job asserts in 16:19 that he has an "advocate on high," Garrett argues that Job's "advocate is fully sentient and speaks with God as one colleague to another (v. 21)" (236). He understands that the advocate is God himself. This raises a question: "How is God to serve as a mediator between himself and a man?" Garrett says that the Book of Job does not address this question; however, Christian theology would identify this witness with the Son. Garrett also hastens to add that even when Job has these flashes of insight, he is not correct in all of his conceptions. For instance, the Son will not rebuke the Father for unjustly punishing Job (236).

Chapter 19 contains another theological high point for Job. Garrett finds the assertion, "But I know that my redeemer lives!" to be an affirmation that Job's redeemer is a living person (and not a personification). He understands verses 26–27 to speak of Job's burial and resurrection, and he argues for the translation "from my flesh I will behold God," against Seow and others who propose the translation "without my flesh." He also argues against Crenshaw, Clines, Walton, and Longman, who identify the redeemer as someone other than God. He agrees with Hartley's argument that the redeemer is God.

Garrett has produced a valuable commentary on a difficult book. Most of the detailed commentaries on Job have come from the critical scholars, so Garrett's detailed work from an evangelical perspective is welcome.

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Webb, Barry G. *Job*. Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2023. 469pp. + 20pp. (front matter) + 28pp. (back matter).

Barry Webb is an OT scholar, now retired from Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia. He is the author of the commentary on Judges in the New International Commentary on the Old Testament, the author of the Isaiah and Zechariah volumes in The Bible Speaks Today series, and the author of *Five Festal Garments: Christian Reflections on the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther* in the NSBT series.

Webb understands Job to be a historical figure, largely because Ezekiel 14:14, 20 and James 5:10–11, 17–18 treat him as such. While noting strong connections to the patriarchal era in terminology and setting, and while rejecting critical arguments for a late date, Webb suggests that Job is post-Solomonic and possibly postexilic because it interacts with Proverbs and quotes from Psalm 107 (a postexilic psalm).

Webb outlines the book as a broken chiasm (22):

A Prologue (1:1–5)
  B Two exchanges between God and Satan (1:6–2:10)
    (The arrival of the friends) (2:11–13)
    C Job's opening lament (Chapter 3)
      D Three rounds of speeches between Job and his friends (Chapters 4–27)
        (Author's interlude) (Chapter 28)
    C' Job's closing statement (Chapters 29–31)
      (Elihu's four speeches) (Chapters 32–37)
  B' Two exchanges between God and Job (38:1–42:6)
A' Epilogue (42:7–17)

Webb finds thematic significance to this structure: "The way the Elihu's speeches break the dominant chiastic structure reflects the tension in the book as a whole between order and disorder, and the way he has no place to belong mirrors the futility of his attempt to recover the breakdown that has occurred in the preceding three cycles" (23). That said, the overall order of the book points to the order that will prevail in the book because of God.

The central theme of Job is not "the issue of innocent suffering" (27). Webb also denies that Job was written to counter the theology of Proverbs. He takes the book's central question to be: "What is the essence of wisdom for human beings?" (26). The book's answer to that question is: "to fear God and to turn away from evil, not to know all the answers" (26). That said, Webb does believe that the purpose of the book (which he distinguishes from its theme) is "to comfort those who . . . find themselves experiencing suffering for which there is no simple explanation" (77).

As is standard in the Evangelical Biblical Theology series, Webb includes a lengthy treatment of biblical-theological themes in Job. He begins with a substantial treatment of wisdom from Genesis to Revelation before turning to ten other themes in the Book of Job. In the commentary proper each pericope is usually dealt with under the following headings: *Scripture* (which provides the text in the CSB), *Relation to surrounding context, Structure,* and *Exegesis.* This last section includes comments on

sections of verses that are usually big-picture explanations of the meaning of the verses, including theological significance. Webb engages with the Hebrew text as well when doing so is significant for the meaning of the passage. For instance, he argues that הַשָּׂטָן refers to Satan. He notes that the article is sometimes present with proper names and serves to indicate that the person is characterized by their name. At the end of each exegesis section is a subsection labeled "Bridge." In this section Webb brings out the theological significance of the passage and makes personal application. For instance, in the bridge section for 1:6–12 Webb contends that God remains sovereign over all but that other actors in creation still bear responsibility for all that they do. He argues that God's sovereignty should be a comfort to the suffering believer. He also claims that the undeserved sufferings of a man with "perfect integrity" prefigure the sufferings of Christ.

Webb sees a devolution in the friends' speeches. He finds Eliphaz's speech in chapters 4–5 to be "impressive in many ways," noting that Hebrews quotes it (Heb 12:5–6), and yet he observes that Eliphaz misapplies the wisdom he knows to Job and is overly credulous in receiving what he takes to be special revelation. Eliphaz's second speech against Job is harsh and excessive. It contains no comfort, as his pervious speech did. Eliphaz's speech in the third part of the debate continues his emphasis on the consequences that the wicked can expect. He then exhorts Job to repent so that he can stop suffering. Webb concludes that Eliphaz's poor theology makes him a poor comforter to Job.

While Webb defends Job against the charge that he cursed God in chapter 3, he does not find Job's responses to be always correct. For instance, in chapter 21, Job replied to Zophar by denying the principle of retribution and by speaking of the prosperity of the wicked. Job did not deny that the wicked ever suffer, but Webb holds that he grossly overcompensated for his friend's teaching. Webb proposes that Job lost his temper and was speaking rashly. This, he acknowledges, is at odds with the tradition of the patience of Job, which Webb says originated in a moralizing tendency in the LXX translation of Job and was carried on by the KJV translation of James 5:11. Webb suggests that a better translation of James 5:11 is "endurance" (CSB) or "steadfastness" (ESV).

Webb interprets Job canonically, distinguishing what Job could know at his stage of redemptive history and what Christians today know. In 16:19 Job speaks of a witness in heaven. Webb argues that Job does not identify this witness with either God or Christ because "he *doesn't know* who his heavenly advocate is" (225). Christians today, however, know that this advocate is Christ. Similarly, Webb argues against the idea that Job conceives of the redeemer referred to in Job 19:26–27 as God. Rather, he identifies the redeemer with the unidentified witness of Job's previous speech. Webb affirms that the passage teaches the resurrection of Job, but he does not think it says anything about the resurrection of the redeemer. In the context of a wider biblical theology, Webb does identify the redeemer as Jesus.

Webb acknowledges that Elihu is young and sometimes brash (like Joseph in Genesis 37), but he also sees positive elements in Elihu's speeches. "He was right not to speculate about [the reason Job was suffering] and focus instead on how Job was *responding* to his pain. He was also right to be less bound by a theology of retribution than Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar had been" (327–73). Elihu gets some important things right in his speeches, but he has some misunderstandings as well. Nevertheless, Webb finds Elihu to progress from harshness to greater compassion and concern for Job. His concluding speech also prepares the way for the theophany that follows.

The speeches of God establish for Job how little he knows of the world that God rules. This silenced Job, but it did not lead him to repentance. The second divine speech features Behemoth and Leviathan. Webb suggests Behemoth could refer to "the megafauna that once roamed the earth in the distant past" or to the hippopotamus, but in the end, he concludes the Behemoth is a "symbol of all that is most beastly and beyond human control" (439–40). Webb recognizes in the name and description of Leviathan connections to a mythological beast. He does not, however, wish to acknowledge the existence of mythological beasts or to disconnect these creatures entirely from the natural world. Thus, Levithan too he takes as symbolic of "all that is most extreme in the animal world" (448).

God's second speech leads Job to recognize that he had erred in his speech about God and to repent for these errors in speech. Webb emphasizes that Job did not repent for any sin that may have triggered his suffering. God vindicated Job before his friends, and he commissioned Job to intercede for them. Webb sees Job's intercession as anticipating the intercession of Christ.

The difficulties in interpreting Job run along different lines. There are difficulties in translating the Hebrew text. A commentary like Garrett's (see previous review) gives detailed attention to the Hebrew text. Webb's does not. Webb does an excellent job handling significant translation difficulties in brief, non-technical language. His commentary is focused on a different problem in the interpretation of Job, however. It is sometimes difficult to get one's bearings in a large and theologically complicated book. Before wading into the details found in multi-volume commentaries such as those by Clines or Seow, or even a commentary such as Garrett's, it is often helpful to consult commentaries that, while based on deeper research, provide a big picture view. The best commentaries that I have found for this purpose are Layton Talbert's *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job* and Christopher Ash's commentary on Job in the Preaching the Word series. Webb's commentary may now be added to this list.

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Schnittjer, Gary Edward, and Matthew S. Harmon. *How to Study the Bible's Use of the Bible: Seven Hermeneutical Choices for the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2024. 260pp. + 32pp. (front matter).

Following Gary Schnittjer's seminal work on the use of the OT in the OT (*Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide,* 2021) and Matthew Harmon's study on Paul's use of Isaiah in Galatians (*She Must and Shall Go Free: Paul's Isaianic Gospel in Galatians*, 2010), these two scholars have teamed up to produce an upper-level seminary textbook on biblical intertextuality. Although this text avoids overly technical language, its concepts, implications, and processes require careful thought. Thankfully, Schnittjer and Harmon provide ample examples and case studies so that the student of Scripture can see how the book's thesis plays out.

How to Study the Bible's Use of the Bible is divided into seven chapters, each of which contains thought-provoking study questions on the chapter's key concepts. In each chapter the authors propose that a choice must be made in respect to an issue that scholars divide over in this discipline.

First, are "donor" texts "sequestered" from or "connected" to their "receptor" text? Schnittjer and Harmon argue that too often Bible scholars fail to examine how the OT uses the OT as the first step of exegesis. In many cases in which the NT author cites the OT, the donor text has a prior exemplar; similarly, there may be another NT passage where the donor text is referenced. Accordingly, all of these references need to be considered in their context and then as a whole.

Furthermore, Schnittjer and Harmon encourage students to give priority to interpreting the Jewish Scriptures "on their own terms rather than overlaying them with categories of Second Temple sectarian and rabbinic exegesis" (5) Only in this way can one say that he is approaching the use of the Bible in the Bible in a *connected* way. Schnittjer and Harmon also suggest that Messiah's use of the OT sets the pattern for a connected approach to Scripture. These features are expanded in the succeeding chapters.

The second chapter presents what is the continental divide when it comes to biblical intertextuality. Did the author of the receptor text observe the context of the donor text? To answer this question, Schnittjer and Harmon say "yes," but they qualify that one can expect an "advancement of revelation" in the receptor passage. They aver that this should not be regarded as adjusting the meaning or the context. Whether they succeed in respecting the context can be determined only by a careful look at the examples that they present.

After dismissing the non-contextual work of Michael Fishbane, Schnittjer and Harmon take Walter Kaiser to task, arguing that his approach is non-contextual since he frequently derives a "proposition or principle from the OT text" that provides a link to the NT text. They conclude, "This creates meaning outside of the author's intent" because it confuses meaning with significance (35). The first example from Kaiser that they consider is Paul's use of Deuteronomy 25:4 in 1 Corinthians 9:9–12 (36, citing Kaiser, "Single Meaning," 81–87). Kaiser draws a principle between *not muzzling the ox while it treads out the grain* and *paying the minister for his labor in ministry*. In contrast, Schnittjer and Harmon believe that Paul presents an *advancement* to the previous revelation. Similarly, Schnittjer and Harmon accuse Michael Vlach and Abner Chou of even more radical approaches to intertextuality (35–36n40), two scholars known for their contextual approaches.

In the third chapter Schnittjer and Harmon opine that skill in identifying allusions involves both art and science. "Echoes" and "thematic parallels" in Scripture are acknowledged but are not exegetically significant since they are "unconscious devices" of the author (61). Schnittjer and Harmon spend the remainder of the chapter presenting guidelines for identifying valid allusions.

Fourth, Schnittjer and Harmon discuss "horizontal" and "vertical" contexts of donor and receptor texts. Horizontal context refers to the verses, paragraphs, and larger elements of the discourse that surround either the donor or the receptor texts. According to the authors, the vertical context extends across time to consider how the context of the donor passage interacts with the receptor text. Several helpful context diagrams are displayed in this chapter (especially 1 Kgs 11:1–4, p. 87). The reader will note, however, that it is possible for a content diagram to be so complex that it is difficult to read (2 Sam 7:11–15 on p. 95).

Fifth, Schnittjer and Harmon argue that one can gain a basic understanding of a text by sticking to canonical writings, but if one includes extrabiblical materials (Second Temple writings), one can gain a fuller understanding of the biblical text (105). The question is one of priority—always Scripture over other writings. A particular difficulty that the authors acknowledge is uncertainty of the date of a writing, especially rabbinic documents (109). Even if a non-canonical writing precedes a NT author's writing, however, one cannot be certain that the NT writer was aware of it (109).

Sixth, Schnittjer and Harmon make a case for both "backward-looking" and "forward-looking" typology. They argue that although both are valid categories of interpretation, "the degree to which the human author was aware that a person, event, institution, or pattern was pointing forward to someone or something greater can be debated" (139). They continue, "The larger redemptive-historical and canonical contexts indicate this in some fashion" (139). Although in other places in their book Schnittjer and Harmon downplay a canonical approach to interpretation, it would appear that they practice it to some degree. One further note on this chapter: Schnittjer and Harmon warn against attributing as much authority to *non-explicit types* as compared to *explicitly identified types* (157). Regarding this word of caution, one wonders how the reader can attribute lesser authority when exegeting God's holy Word.

Seventh, Schnittjer and Harmon embrace both "historical exegesis" (meaning at a point in time) with "prosopological exegesis" ("analogical use of earlier speeches in the Bible," 159). I believe that this chapter will be the least familiar to most readers. The authors acknowledge that this area of study has been misused and misunderstood (159). Because there are so many qualifying statements in this chapter, I suspect that this one was the most difficult to write. In short, prosopological exegesis refers to instances in which the biblical author reads "an earlier speech in light of a new character" (160, citing Madison Pierce [no written source given]). We may surmise, then, that OT Scriptures such as Psalm 45:6–7, Psalm 2:7, and Psalm 16:10 are not messianic by Schnittjer and Harmon's view. Rather, they maintain that these texts have an analogical relationship with the receptor texts in the NT.

There is much to be gained from this volume for the advanced student of hermeneutics or even the scholar who seeks further refinement in how the Bible uses the Bible. The book is well-positioned to act as a seminary textbook for upper-level master of divinity students or doctoral students. I believe that the reader will appreciate the emphasis on giving more attention to how the OT uses the OT. He

may find issue with "forward-looking" typology, as it would seem that these references are better explained as simple prophecies. Prosopological exegesis as described by the authors adjusts the meaning of the donor text in the receptor text. Perhaps I need to spend more time examining Schnittjer and Harmon's examples, but in the ones that I considered more carefully, I felt no need of "reframing" because the text in both Testaments was clearly messianic (Isa 45:6–7; Heb 1:8–9; Ps 2:7; Isa 42:1; Mark 1:11). Other examples lack sufficient evidence to designate them as quotations or allusions (2 Sam 7:14, Ps 2:6–7; Gen 12:1; Ps 72:17). Nonetheless, on the whole I consider this book a serious contribution to biblical intertextual studies.

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Gordon, T. David. *Choose Better: Five Biblical Models for Making Ethical Decisions*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2024. 123pp. + 17pp. (front matter).

As a teacher of several Christian ethics classes, I have been waiting for this book. Many ethics books make their own valuable contributions regarding the history of ethics, secular and Christian ethical theories, major figures in the field of ethics, metaethics (a high-level philosophical treatment of the nature of ethics), and applications to current ethical questions without decisively addressing the titular issue—how can the Christian make better ethical choices given a commitment to biblically shaped morality? Intuitively, Christian ethicists sense that, taken alone, divine command theory is inadequate to address comprehensively both the breadth and specificity of ethical decisions for every human era and culture. But supplanting divine command theory with one or more secular ethical approaches (e.g., virtue ethics, utilitarianism, Kantian deontology, emotivism, egoism, subjectivism, or relativism) exposes the ethicist to an adoption of an alternative ethical system that is not only narrower than divine command but also logically self-defeating. Gordon shows the reader a better way.

Choose Better does not follow the traditional "Five Models" approach in defending one model over against the others. Instead, it presents five complementary ways that Christians have used Scripture to come to moral conclusions. In so doing, Gordon provides a robust case for the Bible's sufficiency to address ethical decision making.

Even the preface is not wasted. In it, the author shows why humans ask ethical questions, why he asked the questions that led to the book, and what the foundational questions are behind each of the five models. Chapter 1 introduces the five models (imitation, law, wisdom, communion, warfare)—providing core definitions, key strengths, essential weaknesses, and mechanisms for teaching each model. Chapters 2 through 6 expand the description and function of each model one at a time.

Chapter 2 recognizes that humans are like God in the ways described in Scripture; therefore, the ethicist may ask, "Of the available (moral) options, does one provide greater opportunity than the others to cultivate the image of God?" (11). The more time believers spend with their Father through his Word, the more like him they will become (15). Sometimes they will consciously adopt his attitudes and truth. Other times they will imbibe these unconsciously through exposure. Like little children, "had we remained innocent . . . imitation would have been sufficient for most of our lives" (16). While defending the truth that "God alone can redeem" (20), Gordon reminds believers that they are "to imitate God by making, sustaining, or redeeming" in a creaturely way. His exhibit of this trait is the way that humans sometimes act at great risk to themselves to save the lives of other people (21). The questions that Gordon recommends the reader apply to utilize each model are "gold." For instance, in a poignant list, he observes how the reader should apply the imitation model by evaluating God's own character (22):

1. What is the trait (e.g., love, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, benevolence, faithfulness, truthfulness, mercy, patience, kindness, wrath, jealousy)?
2. What Scriptures teach that God has this trait?
3. Why is this trait praiseworthy?
4. Why is it important to us, as creatures, that God has this trait?

5. Why is it important to us, as *fallen* creatures, that God has this trait?
6. What can we do, with the aid of God's Spirit, to cultivate this trait in ourselves?
7. What attitudes, affections, or behaviors prohibit the cultivation of this trait?

Finally in this chapter, Gordon insists that unlike the ancient philosophers, Christians do not believe that these traits exist abstractly apart from God. They are good because they inhere in God's person.

Chapter 3 addresses the law model, which "played a dominant . . . role in the church's discussion of ethics" (33). The law is advantageous because "it promotes appropriate creaturely humility" (33); "it provides profoundly rich and specific directives for many human questions" (34); and it "is especially necessary for us in our fallen condition, because our affections and desires have been perverted" (34). In a few brief pages, Gordon defends the purpose and necessity of the law, its value, and its functions. He entertains real challenges to the law (such as the obvious inapplicability of some of its provisions to other times, places, or peoples) and provides seven hermeneutical principles by which the reader can discern the direct or indirect applicability of the law (40–42). Throughout, he admits that the law can accomplish only so much. Christians should not treat it as a standalone ethical manual but should incorporate the testimony of the rest of Scripture with the law to form an integrated model of moral discernment.

Chapter 4 turns to the wisdom model, which addresses the consequences of an action not through secular consequentialism but a biblically informed sense. Gordon notes: "The wisdom model arises from the Bible's own teaching regarding our created ability to discover the latent capacities and potentials of the created order" (54). It is not the arbitrary standard of, say, the greatest good for the greatest number, but the nature of how things work in the created order that guides this model. Helpfully, Gordon observes that there are paradoxes in wisdom (56–57). In *some* instances (those not directed clearly by biblical command or principle), not all Christians will make identical moral decisions even when approaching the same application to current culture. Gordon lists many questions of life that require wisdom: "whether to marry or remain single," "whom to marry, and how to decide," "whether to take a new job," "whether to go to college," and so on (58). Central to his argument is the point that "these questions are unavoidable, and none of them can be answered by reference to biblical law" (58). That is, the believer who wants to make the best moral decision cannot always appeal to the Pentateuch as his sole basis for decision making. Because wisdom is available in Scripture, Gordon rejects private mysticism by which believers have come to appeal to an inner sense of right and wrong (60). God's Word provides sufficient wisdom to define human choices as morally superior or inferior without the need for private insight. Concluding the chapter with the challenges that are unique to the wisdom model and interpretive cautions, Gordon demonstrates a well-roundedness of his own learning. He defends the depth of culture in times past that is under attack from the transience of a technological age (68). And he attends to the fact that proverbs are proverbs, not promises (71).

Chapter 5 addresses the communion model. Of the five models this feels, perhaps, the most mystical. The communion model concerns itself with how the decision will affect a person's communion with God. Anything that impedes communion (even if it happens to be a viable decision for *someone else* to make) is not good (77). Gordon admits the subjectivity inherent in the model (98), but he does not apologize for the fact that the contours of human experience are sufficiently different

that what draws one person closer to God may thrust another farther from him. This reality stems from our personhood. Gordon also does not justify this model as an unbridled subjectivity that permits any conduct whatsoever that a person *feels* draws him closer to God. The model must submit to the explicit commands and principles of Scripture as a priority.

Chapter 6 concludes the book with a discussion of the warfare model: "Will this decision likely serve the forces of good or the forces of evil?" (101). The warfare model is more keenly aware than the others that the world is hostile to God and that human choices really matter in that battle. Gordon uses the long-standing war between the seed of the woman and the serpent from Genesis 3:14–15 to Revelation 20 as warrant for this model. Some decisions, he would argue, may be theoretically fine morally but end up providing aid and comfort to the enemy. His arguments in favor of watchfulness (107), equipment and preparation (108), strategy (108–9), and knowledge of the enemy (109) provide strong warrant for a vigilant Christian orthodoxy that refuses to compromise with the overt structures of the world. Gordon engages the "plausibility structures" of the world, the dangerous diversions caused by social-reform movements, and the distraction caused by hobby agendas as examples of the strategies that Satan employs to turn the church away from its mission and expend its energies futilely in issues that do not matter in terms of the kingdom (112–13).

Rarely does the reader come across a book of this brevity written with high lucidity and serious biblical-ethical value.

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Vellacott, Maurice E. *The Earliest View of New Testament Tongues: Understood as Non-Supernatural, Learned Earthly Languages*. Eugene, OR: Resource, 2024. 356pp. + 12pp. (front matter).

The controversy between Charismatics and non-Charismatics is well into its second century, and the literature, while extensive, has settled into a few standard arguments on each side, with neither side appearing inclined to budge. This book could be characterized as a bomb thrown into the middle of the settling waters, with the potential of shaking things up considerably.

There are essentially two positions on tongues. The Charismatics insist that they were ecstatic speech, while their opponents typically settle on the view that they were ordinary human languages but unlearned: the speakers had never studied the languages they were speaking. Vellacott adds a third view: they were ordinary human languages that the speakers knew as a matter of course, and there was nothing miraculous about them.

Further, as his title indicates, he views this interpretation as the earliest one in the Christian church; he cites Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis (AD 310?–404), who wrote of church members promoting themselves by using languages (Hebrew, the "sacred language," or a dialect of Greek not common in the region) that their hearers would have difficulty understanding. This would interfere with edification and cause divisions in the church.

Of course, this raises all kinds of questions. Why were the hearers at Pentecost astonished at what they heard? Weren't they hearing local, tribal languages that the disciples were unlikely to know? Wasn't the use of tongues at Pentecost miraculous?

Vellacott is Canadian, a former member of the Canadian Parliament, and well educated in biblical studies—holding the MDiv from Canadian Theological Seminary, a DMin from Trinity International University, a PhD from North-West University in South Africa, other doctoral work at Dallas Theological Seminary, and coursework through Jerusalem University College. This book is derived from his PhD dissertation.

Vellacott approaches his argument as follows:

- Chapter 1: Summary of research in the field (as is typical of a dissertation)
- Chapter 2: Linguistic analysis of γλῶσσα
- Chapter 3: Cultural analysis of the first-century church and influences on it
- Chapter 4: Historical analysis of the hermeneutical positions on "tongues"
- Chapter 5: Exegetical analysis of the NT use of γλῶσσα (Acts 2; 10; 19; 1 Cor 14)
- Chapter 6: Historical analysis of English translations

The linguistic analysis in chapter 2 examines all uses of the word γλῶσσα in both the LXX (including the apocrypha) and the NT, with ample reference to Greek grammars old and new, and concludes that there is no hint of ecstatic speech or of any speech incomprehensible to either the hearer or the speaker.

Chapter 3 delves into the cultural influences on the Corinthian church—Roman, Jewish, Aramaic, Greek, and Roman, as well as the Delphic Oracle and the fact of pervasive lack of literacy. These factors provide light that adds considerable credibility to Vellacott's thesis. He concludes that 1 Corinthians 14 reflects "a controversy around the use of the Hebrew Older Testament Scripture and

classic Greek dialects in the assembly and the need to interpret into the dominant Greek dialect, so others could be edified" (107). In particular, the bias toward Hebrew in non-Hellenized Judaism and the influence of Atticism among the Hellenized provided considerable fuel for the fire of controversy in the church.

Chapter 4 surveys the use of the words *language* and *tongue* throughout church history, from the Apostolic Fathers all the way to Third Wave Charismatism. Vellacott sees significance in the lack of any reference to tongues during the post-apostolic age until Irenaeus in AD 160—and his statement is ambiguous. Irenaeus's distance from both Corinth and Jerusalem—he was bishop of Lyons in modern France—made him an unreliable commentator in any case. It is also noteworthy that Epiphanius, Ambrosiaster, and Severian, contemporaries, held the same position on tongues, though they were widely separated geographically (160). The view that *tongues* reflects known language, or significant elements of it, continues through Cyril of Alexandria and perhaps Thomas, then Luther and Calvin. Nowhere before the late 1800s is there any significant discussion of tongues as ecstatic speech. Vellacott holds that the idea of ecstatic speech was introduced primarily by Neander and then followed more broadly (235).

Chapter 5, a verse-by-verse exegesis of the NT passages focusing on the word γλῶσσα, is by far the longest chapter in the book. It includes a discussion of the linguistic concept of higher and lower languages (180)—that is, languages that are considered more appropriate for formal occasions (higher) or for everyday conversation (lower). In non-Hellenized Judaism, Hebrew was of course the higher language, the "sacred language," the language in which the law was given. The Scripture readings in the Temple or the synagogue would be in Hebrew. In the eastern Roman Empire, Aramaic would be spoken in common affairs all the way to Elam; in Corinth, a cosmopolitan double port with extensive commercial traffic, Greek would be commonplace. Nearly everyone could speak one or more dialects of Greek; many could speak Aramaic or Syriac, especially in the East, and those with a Jewish background would at least be able to understand Hebrew. With the friction between Hellenized and non-Hellenized Jews (Acts 6), and later between Jewish and Gentile Christians (Acts 15), there would be ample opportunity for disputes over languages; congregants would want to hear teaching in the language or dialect with which they were most familiar. In a mixed congregation, disagreements would arise.

Vellacott observes that more recent English translations "have insistently used 'tongues' in 1 Corinthians, but without hesitation used the term 'languages' elsewhere in the New Testament. . . . Modern Bible translators have almost set the mystical term 'tongues' in concrete, with commentators 'describing' an esoteric phenomenon at Corinth, despite no . . . clear substantiation of it in the Greek biblical text of Acts or Corinthians" (299).

The book does have its weaknesses. It is repetitious, probably because the author seeks to be thorough at each stage. He exhibits some stylistic oddities—"Christ believers" for "Christians," "Christ assembly" for "church," and "Older" and "Newer" Testaments. Oddly, about the only place he uses the term *New Testament* is in the book's title. He seems slightly unfamiliar with recent Greek scholarship; he discusses the significance of the imperfect tense without any reference to aspect (183),

and he speaks of participles as having contemporaneous or subsequent action based entirely on tense (196). I would also suggest that he misapplies Isaiah 28:10–13 (286).

The book is deeply researched and documented, and the author's conclusions are well-founded and defensible throughout. It is worth the reading and the purchase price. Vellacott has done his homework, and he has contributed significantly to the literature.

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Decorvet, Jean D., Tim Grass, and Kenneth J. Stewart, eds. *The Genevan Réveil in International Perspective*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2023. 544pp. + 22pp. (front matter).

English-speaking Christians are generally not as familiar with the *Réveil* as with revivals such as Britain's Evangelical Awakening or the Great Awakening in North America. Yet it was a profoundly influential awakening in the nineteenth century. It began in French-speaking Geneva shortly after the close of the Napoleonic wars. (The word *réveil* is French for "revival" or "awakening"—and for "alarm clock" too.) One can see its widespread impact in the lives of people as diverse as Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper and South African missionary and devotional writer Andrew Murray.

This anthology is a first-rate, fairly comprehensive study of the *Réveil* in English. In many ways the best English-language survey up until now has been the relevant sections of James Good's *History of the Swiss Reformed Church Since the Reformation* published in 1913.[1] This work is a needed update. Because it is a collection of essays by different authors, it lacks a cohesive narrative, but the combined results of these articles provide a detailed overview of the revival. Sometimes the authors overlap or repeat what has been said elsewhere in the book, but that reflects the nature of the format. It is the foremost book to which I would point an English-speaking student to learn about this topic.

The collection traces the awakening from its beginnings in Geneva to the rest of Switzerland, then to German lands, the Low Countries, and even Italy. It also presents studies of the revival's acceptance in and effect on North America in the US and Canada (mostly Quebec). The anthology provides biographical sketches of major leaders such as Adolphe and Frédéric Monod, brothers who provided leadership to the revival in France; Félix Neff, missionary to the Waldensians; Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné, the prolific church historian; and Louis Gaussen, a theologian noted for his apologetic for the inerrancy of the Bible. Although there is no biographical study of Robert Haldane, the Scottish preacher who helped initiate the revival, Deryck Lovegrove provides a fine article on his influence in Geneva. Likewise, there is no biographical sketch on César Malan, one of the earliest converts to the revivalists' cause in Geneva, but Yannick Imbert provides a good article on Malan's apologetic method.

Several of the articles discuss the widespread impact of the awakening on the culture at large. One reads how Henry Dunant, a leading figure in the founding of the International Red Cross, sat under the teaching Merle d'Aubigné. Although Dunant later abandoned allegiance to the Christian faith, other founders and leaders of humanitarian organizations reflected the impact of the *Réveil* on their lives. The revival promoted the growth of the idea of the separation of church and state, notably in Switzerland. The revivalists' concern was not simply having freedom for themselves to worship but also the deleterious religious effects of state churches. They demonstrated this evangelical concern in articulating how they feared the Lord's Supper would be celebrated by unbelievers in state churches.

In fact, one significant observation I took away from this work is how the leaders of the *Réveil,* particularly in the earlier phases, connected correct doctrine with spiritual life. One common criticism

[1] One should mention, however, several notable monographs such as Kenneth Stewart's *Restoring the Reformation: British Evangelicalism and the Francophone Réveil 1816-1849* (2006) and John Roney's *The Inside of History: Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné and Romantic Historiography* (1996), along with biographical studies of leading figures, such as James Osen's on Adolphe Monod, *Prophet and Peacemaker: The Life of Adolphe Monod* (1984).

of revivalism is its overemphasis on subjective experience over objective truth. Such is not true of the leaders of the *Réveil.* Jean Decorvet, for example, notes, "For Louis Gaussen, orthodox dogmatics and militant revitalization of the life of faith were intrinsically linked," and this view is typical of the revivalists. The participants of the awakening ignited a controversy by sponsoring the republication of the Second Helvetic Confession as representing their doctrinal convictions. This confession, written in the 1560s, represented the consensus of the Reformed Christians on the continent in the Reformation era. But for the rationalists who had come to dominate the Genevan church by 1800, such an affirmation of orthodoxy was divisive. It occurred to me that this tendency explains the comments of J. H. Merle d'Aubigné in his qualified approval of his beloved teacher, church historian August Neander. Merle deeply appreciated Neander's emphasis on the interior life of the Christian but regretted that Neander did not join a solid doctrinal orthodoxy to that emphasis.

The tone of the book is generally sympathetic, although the authors do not hesitate to offer critiques of some activities of the leaders of the awakening. The scholarship is broad, drawing from an array of authors both European and American, many of whom have previously written in depth on the revival. As one looks over this excellent volume, one can hope that some historian will be inspired to draw these essays together in a single, comprehensive narrative history of the *Réveil.*

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Köstenberger, Andreas J., and Gregory Goswell. *Biblical Theology: A Canonical, Thematic, & Ethical Approach*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2023. 763pp. + 31pp. (front matter) + 217pp. (back matter).

This hefty contribution to the constantly burgeoning field of biblical theology (BT) divides into four sections. Part 1 (chapter 1) provides an introductory discussion of the nature and practice of BT, a consideration of the impact of canonical order for BT, and a brief explanation of the "ethical approach" dimension of the work. Part 2 (chapters 2–5) launches into a book-by-book BT of the OT by corpus (Law, Prophets, Writings). Part 3 (chapters 6–12) begins with preliminary discussions of NT book order (chapter 6) and the relationship between the Testaments (chapter 7), before shifting to investigate the individual NT books by corpus (Gospels, Acts, Pauline Letters, General Letters, Apocalypse). Though not labeled as such, chapter 13 is, in effect, part 4—a bird's eye overview of major OT and NT themes, major ethical issues in the OT and NT, and a concluding summary of the overarching biblical storyline. The overall space allotment to the books of the OT (240 pp.) and the books of the NT (280 pp.) is comparable, which means that the individual book treatments are considerably longer for the NT books (ten pages per book on average) than for OT books (six pages per book on average).

The opening chapter on the nature of BT is foundational. The authors emphasize utilizing Scripture as the basis for both the content and methodology of BT; this includes tracing inner-biblical connections, intertextuality, and thematic threads as they develop along a metanarrative trajectory (3). The authors echo the question of whether Johann Gabler can justly be called the father of BT, given the rationalistic principles undergirding his theological distinctions (4). They define BT in somewhat minimalist terms as "seeking to discern the theological contributions of the biblical writers themselves" and presenting "these contributions in a coherent format," discerning the "distinctive emphases" in each book, "arranging these in the form of major and minor themes, and relating them to one another" in a way that "reflects the thought world of the biblical writers" (8). Their proposed methodology is threefold, focusing on "the historical, literary, and theological dimensions of Scripture" (24–25). The authors evaluate four complementary organizational approaches to BT: (1) book by book; (2) identifying central themes running throughout a Testament or all of Scripture; (3) the attempt to find a single theological *mitte* or center of a Testament or all of Scripture (a dead end, in the opinion of the authors); and (4) plotting the trajectory of the Bible's overarching metanarrative or storyline, which the authors recommend as a "final step" to the first two approaches (27–32).[1] The introductory chapter includes a helpfully practical section (32–43) on guidelines for how to approach a biblical-theological study of the Bible, including a textual case study (Pastoral Letters) and a topical case study (Holy Spirit). The authors' high view of Scripture is summarized in twelve affirmations (43–46).

The book-by-book arrangement facilitates targeted research and follows a predictable order: a concise introduction to the book, an identification and brief discussion of the book's themes, an analysis of the book's ethics, and finally an explanation of the book's place in and contribution to the Bible's storyline. At the conclusion of the consideration of each corpus, the authors helpfully rehearse

[1] The authors describe the fourth (metanarrative) approach as "perhaps the most recent attempt in biblical theology"; it is, however, perhaps older than some may think. Prior to more recent academic contributions, such an approach was pioneered by "church theologians" such as J. Sidlow Baxter and W. Graham Scroggie.

the themes, ethics, and storyline contributions of each corpus *as a whole*. The space limitations for a review of a book of this size and scope permit the reviewer only to dip in here and there; so I will focus particularly on points of personal interest.

Job. The summary themes of Job are well stated (nature of suffering, mysterious ways of God, true piety), and the assertion that the book's focus is not "the problem of suffering" is on target; at the same time, while it's true to say that "there is no mystery to Job's suffering" on our part as readers, it was certainly a mystery to Job, and that's an important perspective to maintain throughout the book. A nearly universal misreading of 42:7 is perpetuated with a resulting misapplication for how we are to view all that Job said (287), but the explanation of genuine piety ("to do what is right with no expectation of reward, for God is under no obligation") and of Job's suffering as showing "the proper basis of relationship to God" are spot on. The depiction of Job, Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs as "canonical conversation partners" is a helpful description applied to other canonical groupings of books as well.

Proverbs. The major themes of Proverbs include "the fear of God and the character of true wisdom." The former may initially strike the reader as somewhat surprising as a major theme, since it occurs only sixteen times in the book; but a valuable principle stated elsewhere in the book applies here: in some cases, "we are not to count texts so much as *weigh* them" (702). The common idea that Job and Ecclesiastes are "seeking to correct or counter Proverbs" or "battling a rigid retribution doctrine propounded by Proverbs" often arises from a "misreading" of Proverbs (292). Rather, the three function as complementary conversation partners within the Wisdom genre.

Ruth. Remarkably, the *kinsman-redeemer* theme is overlooked entirely (though the Hebrew term occurs twenty-three times in this tiny narrative!). Nevertheless, the larger treatment is sound and insightful. The central character of the narrative is Naomi (not Ruth); the writer does not criticize the family's departure from Judah amid the famine (so "interpreters would be wise to show the same restraint"); and the loyalty displayed by the three main characters mirrors God's loyalty and functions as the means through which God shows his loyalty, "implying that they are divine agents" (297–98).

Esther. I had not noticed before that the narrative is bookended with "two successive banquets" (1:3–9 and 9:17–18), though, oddly, Esther's two successive banquets in between (in chapters 5 and 7) are overlooked in that pattern (311). The themes of Esther are identified as "the threat to the existence of the Jews, and the indestructability of God's people" (311). More specific literary themes that dominate the story, such as the *reversal* motif or the pivotal role of *wrath*, go unnoticed. Instead, much of the treatment of the book's theology is overly non-theistic. To be sure, the non-mention of God is a deliberate strategy by the author, in part to underscore the role and responsibility of humans as divine agents (313–14). But the summary of Esther's theology goes too far in divesting the narrative of any intentionality with respect to divine activity: "God's ordering of events may be *assumed* but it is not the lesson illustrated in any event in the book," "the narrator is not interested in *demonstrating* to his audience God's control of history," and the story "is not a subtle communication of the message that God is at work behind the scenes" (312–13).

John. This is, of course, one of Köstenberger's areas of expertise. The principal theme of John's Gospel is its marked emphasis on Jesus' deity, though "his emphasis on Jesus' *signs* in support of his identity is a close second" (462–63). Beyond these major thematic emphases, Köstenberger elaborates

on the role of John's polarities, his emphasis on "creation and new creation," the Father-Son relationship, "Jesus' fulfillment of festal symbolism," "the cosmic trial motif," and several others (465–69). Following the BT of John is a helpful comparison and contrast between John and the Synoptics and a discussion of the nature of their literary and theological relationship (481–86).

James. James particularly "echoes OT concerns"—including, law, wisdom, and the prophets—and, arguably more than any other NT letter, "the teaching of Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount" (629). The alleged conflict between Pauline and Jacobean soteriology largely evaporates when one remembers their different time and circumstances of writing and their distinctive concerns and emphases (630, 635).

2 Peter. Despite the fact that "modern scholarship has been virtually unanimous in its rejection of Petrine authorship . . . . there continue to be good reasons for affirming Petrine authorship" (642). "The growth of believers in Christian *virtues*" is a key theme, particularly as the antidote to the pervasiveness and persuasiveness of false teachers, and motivated by an eschatological focus on Christ's coming and judgment (643–44). In addition, "the importance of apostolic *eyewitness testimony*" is underscored throughout the letter, particularly in contrast to the lies of false teachers (644–45).

In a work of this magnitude, studied readers will always find things with which to disagree. On the one hand, the BT of Genesis virtually ignores the theme of the creation of the earth, which is not only the beginning of the Bible's theology but a theme that keeps surfacing especially through the first eleven chapters; on the other hand, a footnote proposes the curious argument that although the Westminster Confession of Faith specifies that the creation occurred "in the space of six days" it does not require any "particular interpretation of the days" and can accommodate "a carefully framed theistic evolutionary view" (113). In the discussion of the Books of Kings, the argument that "the land focus of God's covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 is finally fulfilled through the victories of David" (182) overlooks two unfulfilled details repeated constantly throughout God's reaffirmations of the covenant: the land inheritance is promised not merely to Abraham's seed but explicitly to Abraham himself (e.g., Gen 13:5, 17; 15:7; 17:8), and it is an eternal inheritance (e.g., Gen 13:15; 17:8). The notion that "Solomon's wise decision about the contending claims of the two harlots" actually "depends on a psychological trick" (184) undercuts the text's assertion that his adjudication clearly evidenced his God-given wisdom (1 Kgs 3:28).

Regarding John's Gospel, I remain somewhat mystified by the identification of the Temple-clearing as one of John's seven signs. Granted, a biblical sign *need* not be miraculous (cf. Isa 20:3), but the other six signs in John clearly are miraculous. Additionally, John 2:18ff. signals that the passage itself identifies as the sign not the Temple-clearing but Jesus' somewhat veiled reference to his third-day resurrection—a point that, curiously enough, Köstenberger's ensuing arguments seem to corroborate. For example, one of the "criteria for *John's selection of certain acts of Jesus as signs* . . . involves a numerical component" such as "the contrast between forty-six years since the temple was renovated and the short three days in which Jesus promises to rebuild the temple (i.e., his body; 2:20)" (465, emphasis added). Yet the Temple-clearing had no numerical component, only the resurrection prediction itself, which was Jesus' response for the Jews' demand for a sign to justify his authority for clearing the Temple.

In spite of such inevitable disagreements, however, *Biblical Theology* is not only the most recent major contribution to the field of whole-Bible theology, but an invaluable one. Chapter 13 ("Conclusion") wraps up the work of the preceding 600 pages by underscoring the counterpoint of unity and diversity, an overview and brief discussion of the major themes to have emerged in a BT of both the OT (Creation, Covenant, Kingship, Messiah, Sanctuary, Spirit, Israel and the nations, Prophecy, Kindness of God, Love of God) and the NT[2] (Love, Christ/Messiah, King & Kingdom, New Covenant/Exodus/Creation, Cross, Spirit, Gospel, Church,[3] Remembrance, Mission, Last Days). The biblical metanarrative is identified in "six acts": creation, fall, story of Israel, story of Jesus Christ, story of the church, and finally "the renewal of creation and the restoration of God's rule over creation" (732).

In a recent doctoral class on Advanced Biblical Theology, my students were assigned to read *Biblical Theology* along with Hamilton's *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment* and Vlach's *He Shall Reign Forever*.[4] Regular student discussions—such as this review—ranged over a number of pros and cons. But all of them acknowledged the value and insights in this volume. In the words of one student, "Reading this tome introduced me to so many new sources of scholarship. In the end, it really created a much larger hunger in me to read more and pursue many of these new leads." That's a pretty good recommendation for any book.

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[2] Unlike the OT themes, the NT themes are actually listed as "Themes in the New Testament and the Entire Bible," which explains why some are included that one would not necessarily think of as a distinctly NT theme.

[3] An improvement on this NT theme from a whole-Bible perspective would have been to recognize and identify the parallel between the OT theme of Israel and the nations alongside the NT theme of the church *and the world*—both themes emerging from the matrix of Genesis 3:15.

[4] Vlach's whole-Bible BT was overlooked by Köstenberger and Goswell. One cannot, of course, include everything on such a topic; but as a recent, major, relevant, on-topic volume, its omission was unfortunate.

Madueme, Hans. *Defending Sin: A Response to the Challenges of Evolution and the Natural Sciences.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2024. 368pp.

Hans Madueme is a former Nigerian medical doctor who now holds a PhD from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and teaches theological studies at Covenant College. In *Defending Sin: A Response to the Challenges of Evolution and the Natural Sciences* he has written a stalwart defense of "dogmatic creationism," a young-earth view. Madueme's argument is rich, well-polished, and dogmatic in the good sense.

Madueme writes, he says, "as a theologian and trained physician with the highest respect for the natural sciences." In Madueme's view, science is a fundamentally good practice, one that arises from the creation mandate and, in its modern form, was born among Christians and from Christian presuppositions. But Madueme's argument appeals to Scripture over science—when the two conflict: "My thesis is that the classical notion of sin reflected in Scripture, the ecumenical creeds, and the Protestant confessions remains enduringly true, even in our post-Darwinian context, and offers the most compelling and theologically coherent account of the human predicament" (5).

Madueme advances a hermeneutical model of what he calls "biblical realism," an approach that has "five commitments": "(1) supernaturalism, (2) inerrancy, (3) scientific fallibilism, (4) doctrinal confidence, and (5) eclecticism" (6). The first three of these are probably self-explanatory. The fourth means only that "central doctrinal beliefs receive their epistemic warrant from Scripture and should therefore not be revised (or abandoned) in the face of conflicting scientific theories" (45), while the fifth means "that no single method should regulate how Christians ought to engage with scientific theories, but that we should instead evaluate such theories on a case-by-case basis" (45).

Throughout his book, Madueme works with notable patience through the effect these commitments ought to have on our view of origins.

Part 1: Authority

The first part of Madueme's book relates biblical authority to the authority of the natural sciences; it is an exploration in applied Christian epistemology. Here Madueme lays out some of the history of the conflict—both apparent and real—between Christianity and modern Western science, making insightful comments about the way this conflict has played out. While he grants that science has Christianity among its roots, he observes that "ancient Greeks and medieval Muslims were also instrumental in the emergence of science" (39), and that some elements of the "conflict between scientific understanding and the knowledge of faith" (40) cannot be wished away. Madueme points out that Christians "are all wrestling with how to be biblical—and what that would even mean—in a world saturated with scientific perspectives" (44).

Madueme makes a "dogmatic proposal," urging readers to be willing to stand with Scripture when it conflicts with other apparent authorities. Madueme is, on the one hand, epistemologically sophisticated: he notes that if the Bible is supernatural—an aspect of commitment (1) above—then Christians must not ultimately be "methodological naturalists." Nor is anyone truly consistent in their

naturalistic materialism, Madueme says: "Science is already religiously laden; for example, the lawfulness and intelligibility of nature are assumptions that turn on theological commitments" (47).

One cannot make a simple bifurcation, a la Gould's Non-Overlapping Magisteria (NOMA), in which "science [is] on the physical side of the ledger and Scripture on the supernatural side" (47). Scripture simply does not allow for such a perspective.

For empirical science, Madueme knows that "God's presence is usually not physically detectable in the laboratory since the world generally operates according to God-sustained secondary causes" (51). Therefore, he says, a kind of pragmatic methodological naturalism is to be expected—just not a "totalizing" one. Christian scientists do not pray for Spirit illumination to the exclusion of turning on the Bunsen burner.

But in the historical sciences, we have a different situation, Madueme argues. "The canonical witness reveals that God in times past acted miraculously in creation. If we limit historical science to natural explanations, we will miss much of the truth" (51).

Madueme does not take long to get dogmatic in that good sense: if truth and faithfulness are attributes of God, and if Scripture is divine, then whatever Scripture says is true and carries divine authority. "God cannot lie (Num 23:19; Heb 6:18), and therefore scientific theories will always be epistemically inferior to the canonical words of God; the text absorbs the world, rather than the world the text" (56). Science is a system run by fallible and finite humans; it cannot see all the works of God in the natural world—especially if it has put blinders on. And our Bibles lead us to expect that the works of God will not always be apparent while they are going on. Esther could not see why she had been given for a such a time as that, Madueme points out; Job could not see the conversations going on in heaven about him; and "real-time human judgments about the passion [of Christ] and what God was really doing in and through those events" were rather mistaken (60).

This bold and soul-stirring talk set up an expectation for me as a reader, namely that Madueme would work somehow to solve the conflict between science and Christian faith. But he did not. He doubled down on dogma (61):

> Even setting aside the miraculous, our best scientific and historical narratives still rule out large segments of the biblical story that are not obviously miraculous (e.g., creation's original goodness, Adam and Eve as sole progenitors of the human race, and the Canaanite conquest). And yet orthodox Christians continue to affirm those parts of Scripture despite the countervailing scientific witness and often without having any plausible alternative theory. Surely there are alternative scientific models that naturalistic science has never dreamed of or imagined. In the face of science-theology conflicts, biblical realists are therefore warranted in believing that one or more unconceived theories exist that do explain the data and are compatible with Scripture, even if they presently have no idea what those theories are.

This is a profound insight: plenty of scriptural truths are exiled by materialism. Why should we expect the Bible's claims about origins to be exempt?

This is especially true, Madueme argues, for truths that are "(1) clearly attested in Scripture, (2) central to the integrity of Scripture's redemptive-historical story, and (3) widely supported by the

catholic tradition especially as it is expressed in the creeds, the major ecumenical councils, and later Protestant confessions" (61). This "clarity-centrality-catholicity yardstick" (61) properly makes a young earth and a historical Adam and Eve dogma.

Part 2: Protology

This theme continues in part 2, on "first things," where Madueme argues that "the universality of Noah's flood is not hermeneutically ambiguous or uncertain. The issue is not hermeneutics but that inerrancy is fundamentally a dogmatic rather than an evidential concept. Science cannot compete epistemically with a special revelation from God" (121).

Madueme questions whether our partial and unclear grasp of ANE worldviews can really be used to overturn traditional interpretations of early Genesis—or of the apostles' clear preference for a clear historical Adam and Eve and "historically referential genealogies" in early Genesis (121). Viewing the clear statements of Scripture in Genesis 1–11 as "accommodations" to human limitation, a common interpretive strategy, "creates a canon within a canon and leaves Scripture oscillating haphazardly between 'accommodated' and 'non-accommodated' language" (146). Madueme is kind and clear but very direct in his criticism of common evangelical evasions of Scripture's clear statements: "The term 'literalism' is the shibboleth you reserve for interpretations more literal than your own" (149).

He also shows that "dogmatic creationism" is necessary for a view of the creation as good and death as bad. It is necessary also to a view of the human race as unified, monogenetic—which, in turn, is necessary to the biblical doctrines of fall and redemption. What "race" did Christ incarnate into? Biblically speaking: the only one there is.

You are reading the *Journal of Biblical Theology & Worldview*. Without a "literal" approach to Genesis 1–11, where do we get the good creation, cosmic fall, and full redemption that is the backbone of a biblical theology and a biblical worldview? Without a dogmatic creationism, the biblical story does not hang together. Isaiah 11 and 65, Romans 8, and Revelation 22 point to the future by pointing to the prelapsarian, vegetarian past (though Madueme is careful to acknowledge that he is for exegetical reasons "less dogmatic about the narrow claim of original vegetarianism" [176]).

Part 3: Hamartiology

Why is Madueme so insistent on a reading of Scripture that, as he frankly admits, "does not measure up to modern science" (190)? Because, he says, "doctrines are not atomistic entities like marbles in a jar that we can rearrange without consequence." No, "doctrines are more like threads in a tapestry: pulling on the fall unravels other doctrines and disrupts the biblical story's inner coherence" (205).

This comment is emblematic of the kind of very careful, biblically learned and theologically astute comments that fill Madueme's book:

> Original righteousness is not merely an exegetical comment on isolated verses but rather a doctrinal synthesis making explicit what is only implicit across a range of biblical texts. The redemptive-historical arc of Scripture assumes that righteousness—or at least moral innocence—prevailed at

> the beginning. In Genesis 1, God made everything "good" (Gn 1:10, 12, 18, 21, and 25), indeed "very good" (v. 31), an original creation free from sin (210).

Letting (human) death be part of the original creation means "God sav[es] us from a problem he himself instigated" (211); it means death is not the punishment that Scripture everywhere treats it as (221–22); it means that Jesus' redemption and even the healings during his earthly ministry weren't really meant to defeat death (223). A Christian, a biblical, worldview needs "a fall in history": "Evil is something foreign and contingent that has defaced God's good creation. This . . . is the genius of the Judeo-Christian tradition that evades the Scylla of monism and the Charybdis of dualism" (234).

Conclusion

I have no substantive criticisms of this excellent book; Hans Madueme has written the volume I have long wanted. He is dogmatic in that best sense without being triumphalist. He is gracious and learned: his footnotes show a great depth of engagement with alternative viewpoints. He is not "anti-science." He says, "All things being equal, I gladly go along with the consensus unless it conflicts with a central tenet of Scripture" (61). He is also willing and eager to cooperate with other Christians as appropriate despite disagreements over what he (and I) regard as very important elements of Christian faith: "Some academic or ecumenical settings will invite a minimalist, big-tent approach, while other ecclesial contexts will demand narrower confessional boundaries" (197).

I applaud Madueme, and I want to end this review by speaking with some frankness that is perhaps uncharacteristic for a review in an academic journal. I have repeatedly encountered conservative, evangelical, biblical scholars who hold a young-earth perspective but find many popular-level defenses of that viewpoint to be embarrassing both in substance and in style. I feel the same. YEC is a minority viewpoint among well-trained evangelical Christians, and strident triumphalism does not become us. Some acknowledgment of why old earth views are appealing is needed alongside our dogma.

I think of Paul's statement: "Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand" (Rom 14:4, ESV). Paul applies this to the observation of dietary laws and holy days; I will *not* say that Paul would be equally laissez faire about views on creationism. I think Madueme is right that (1) a historical Adam made by special creation and (2) death only after the fall are clear and central teachings of Scripture. But it is simply empirically not true that old-earth perspectives necessarily lead people into liberalism, and I wish to borrow just a few of Paul's words to describe old-earth creationists: "The Lord is able to make them stand." Some of the figures named among Madueme's acknowledgments, particularly (in my direct personal experience) Bill Barrick, have shown graciousness toward those Bible-believing Christians who adopt old-earth views—while still being willing to draw dogmatic lines.

I think Madueme shows the way forward in the origins debate: gracious, clear, hard academic work that humbly defers at all times to the authority of Scripture.

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