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Reflections on Hebrews

Editorial: Christ is Better!

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Years ago, Francis Schaeffer characterized the difference between a living and dead orthodoxy and liberalism in the following way. A living orthodoxy is reflected by people who are truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit, who gladly embrace the doctrinal truths of the gospel, and who find their central identity in Christ and his people. From this center in Christ, a lifestyle results that aims to please God in their daily lives and which impacts the culture for Christ. A dead orthodoxy, on the other hand, is characterized by people who affirm the truths of the gospel, but their central identity is more in terms of its moral and social entailments. Their first concern is not to glory in the triune God, but instead to transform the culture as a witness for Christ. What the apostle John criticized the Ephesian church for is true of them: they are sound in doctrine and life but they have lost their first love (Rev 2:1-7). From a dead orthodoxy, a liberalism soon follows. Liberalism either denies the truth of Christian theology or more often, re-interprets it through some extratextual grid foreign to Scripture. For liberalism, all that remains of historic Christianity is its social entailments—a "social gospel"—that desires to transform society by political revolution and not by the truth and power of the gospel.

If we apply Schaeffer's analysis to our current state of evangelicalism, I am worried that "dead orthodoxy" describes much of it. Most evangelicals affirm the historic confessions and doctrinal commitments of the church. Yet, if we probe deeper, and analyze, for example, our social media by such questions as: What consumes our attention? What is the primary focus of our lives and churches? I am afraid that what consumes us most is not sound theology centered in Christ but polemics about the cultural implications of the gospel. We are more passionate about debates over social justice than discussions over Christology, election, penal substitution, etc. It is not that these kinds of debates are not important: they are. But it reveals a shift in our focus, and a concern for the entailments of the gospel rather than the gospel itself. What we need more than anything else is a re-kindling of our passion for Christ, and to be re-captured by the truth of what our triune God in sovereign grace has done to redeem us from our sin.

Given our current context, the book of Hebrews is as an important remedy to our problem. Our situation is uncannily parallel to the recipients of this letter. Hebrews was probably written in the mid 60's to Jewish Christians whose world was falling apart. The church not only faced increased external persecution, but also she experienced a more serious, internal compromise regarding her commitment to Christ. The church was not progressing in their sanctification due to not growing in their knowledge of Christ (Heb 5:11-14). Given their precarious situation, the author writes to encourage them to stand firm in Christ and also to warn them of the serious danger of drifting from Christ (Heb 2:1-4). In encouraging them, the author does not minimize their situation or offer them theological pablum. Instead, he encourages them to persevere by giving them a good dose of theology centered in Christ. By faithfully expounding text after text from the OT, the author presents Christ in all of his beauty, majesty, and splendor. The author knows that what this church needs more than anything else is the proclamation of Christ and the truth of the gospel. Why? Because it is only by knowing, meditating, and gazing on the glory of Christ and thinking through all that he has done for us that they will be awakened from their slumber and strengthened by the Spirit to endure external hardships and to avoid internal compromise. Not surprisingly, the great theme of the book is: Christ is better!

Nowhere is this more evident in the opening verses (1:1-3), which in many ways, serve as the thesis for the entire book. Unlike typical NT letters, the

author dispenses with the usual greetings and lays out his thesis statement in a single, complex sentence, built around the main assertion—"God … has spoken." As the author looks across the panorama of redemptive history he speaks both of the "continuity" and "discontinuity" of God's work centered in the Son. As he does so, the author teaches us about Christ's glorious identity, which is then developed in the letter. In fact, these opening verses give us some of the most majestic Christology of the entire Bible. In a nutshell, they capture what the book is about: Jesus, the divine Son made flesh, is greater and superior to anyone else, and thus trust him alone and press on in confidence. Indeed, all that has come before him in God's unfolding plan has pointed forward to him. As such, if we understand God's promises given in the OT correctly, they will drive us forward to Christ Jesus who alone brings to fulfillment all that the triune God has planned and purposed.

In this issue of *SBJT*, it is our privilege to reflect on various themes and truths from the book of Hebrews. Given the theological breadth and depth of this letter, we can only scratch the surface. But before we do, let me set the table by offering a brief reflection on these opening verses in two steps that reminds and orients us to the main truth of the book: Christ is better!

> [1] In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, [2] but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. [3] The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (NIV).

First, by three contrasts, the author asserts that God has spoken definitively in the Son. The first contrast focuses on the eras of God's speaking: "in the past" vs. "in these last days" (vv. 1-2). The author divides redemptive history into two successive ages and views the Son as the one who inaugurates the "last days," i.e., God's sovereign rule and reign. Here is a clear identification of the Son with Yahweh and thus deity.

The second contrast stresses the superiority of God speaking in the Son. "In the past," God spoke "at many times and in various ways," but now, in the Son, God's speech is complete. This is not to say that the OT prophetic revelation was inferior. Rather, it was incomplete and anticipatory, which

is reinforced by the third contrast: "through the prophets" vs. "in Son" (vv. 1-2). The author presents Jesus as more than a prophet. This does not downplay the authority of the OT prophets. Rather, it stresses that in Christ the previous revelation has been made complete. The Son is greater because he is the one about whom the prophets spoke. Even more, the Son is the one in whom all of God's revelation and redemptive purposes culminate.

Second, the author identifies the Son as *God* incarnate to substantiate his claims that God speaking in the Son is far greater than anything that has preceded him (vv. 2b-3). How? He gives us five identity statements, weaving together the Son's deity and humanity, thus presenting us with the only Lord and Savior, who deserves all of our worship, love, and obedience.

First, the Son is "appointed heir of all things" (v. 2b). This appointment is due to the work of the *incarnate* Son who is *now* installed at God's right hand as the messianic king, David's greater Son (see Ps 2; cf. Rom 1:3-4; Phil 2:9-11). Yet, although Jesus' appointment is directly tied to his incarnation and saving work as a man, the author is clear: we must not think of the Son as merely another David (1:5; 5:5) because he is also *God the Son* from eternity.

Second, the Son is the agent of creation (v. 2b): "through whom he made the universe." The text also speaks of the roles of the Father and Son in creation; it is *through* the Son that the world is made. God's creation work is a triune work. But the Son is God.

Third, the Son's full deity is further underscored in v. 3a: "He is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being." Both statements teach the Son's deity.

Fourth, the Son, in v. 3b, is the Lord of providence: "sustaining all things by his powerful word." The verb stresses that the entire created order comes to exist, is sustained, and is carried to its appointed end by the Son. Attributing these cosmic functions to the Son describes his deity in unambiguous terms, identifying the incarnate one as *God the Son*.

Fifth, after stressing the *deity* of the Son, the author returns to his work as the *incarnate* one. The Son is now presented as the only Savior of humans, presupposing that he has taken on our humanity and accomplished a work for us as our great high priest—a work that no human (or angel) could achieve. In this way, the Son is presented as the all-sufficient Savior (v. 3).

As already noted, these verses are some of the most glorious Christology of the entire Bible. Yet it is crucial not to forget why the author begins

his letter with these verses. Given the situation of this church, what they most needed was to rekindle their first love. They needed to be reminded of Christ's glory in order to renew their confidence in him. Today, given our situation, we also need this same reminder. As this issue of *SBJT* reflects on this wonderful letter, may it renew our love for Christ and his centrality in our lives and the church. Apart from doing so, we will inevitably drift away and be captivated by matters that are secondary to our love and devotion to Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Trinity in Hebrews[1]

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Introduction

The Trinity has rightly returned to the center of discussion in theology in recent days, and my purpose in this essay is to examine what the epistle of Hebrews contributes to our understanding of the Trinity. I will begin with a brief discussion of scholarship relative to the Trinity in the epistle and then turn to exegetical and theological reflection on major texts pertaining to the Trinity. The essay will conclude with a brief foray on Hebrews and the Trinity in the patristic period, and I will conclude by considering the relevance of our study for our own day.

Setting the Landscape

For some biblical scholars a study of the Trinity in Hebrews is like studying the life of fish on land. Perhaps such a statement is hyperbolical, but most scholars in the historical-critical tradition look askance at any notion of the

Trinity in Hebrews.[2] Harold Attridge doubtless represents many scholars in saying that "Trinitarian speculation" is lacking in Hebrews, and he particularly emphasizes that the references to the Spirit are not clear enough to support a Trinitarian reading.[3] James Moffat thinks "it is irrelevant to drag in the dogma of the trinity."[4] In one sense, such sentiments are understandable and correct since the author of Hebrews never addresses the subject of the Trinity directly, and Attridge rightly claims that we don't have Trinitarian speculation. Virtually all would agree that the theological reflection on the Trinity present in the church fathers is quite different from what we find in Hebrews. The author of the letter does not resort to philosophy to explicate, for instance, how there can be one God when both the Father and the Son are identified as God.

Many historical-critical scholars might worry that in examining the Trinity in Hebrews we are imposing on the letter later theological reflection so that we stray from the letter itself and begin to read the letter through the lenses of later church history. Lincoln Hurst, for instance, sees no reference to Jesus' divinity in Hebrews 1, arguing that "the entire chapter has too often been read in the light of Chalcedon and Nicea."[5] There is a sense in which I second such concerns. We certainly don't have the later doctrine of the Trinity as it was formulated in the fourth century. The sophisticated and careful definition of terms explicating how the Father, Son, and Spirit relate to one another isn't present in Hebrews, nor does the letter specifically target errors such as modalism, nor does it delineate what it means for Jesus to subsist as one person in two natures. In one sense, then, we can say that the doctrine of the Trinity isn't formulated in Hebrews. The author doesn't work out the implications of his teaching by using the language of "person" and "nature," nor is there any statement about the three and the one.

The letter to the Hebrews, then, doesn't work out and unpack the doctrine of the Trinity, but we need to be careful at this juncture, for some in reading the NT might think that the doctrine of the Trinity as it was articulated by the church is alien to what we find in Hebrews, as if the later theological reflection doesn't accord with what the author has written. Let me say parenthetically that in discussing the matter of the Trinity, it is necessary to include the entirety of the canonical witness, for the church worked out its understanding from the whole of the canon, not from isolated books. Still, it is legitimate to seek to ascertain what role Hebrews played in the

formation of Trinitarian doctrine. What I will seek to defend here is that Hebrews provides resources which played a role in the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. What the letter says about the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are some of the raw materials from which the doctrine of the Trinity was constructed. To put it another way, the classical doctrine of the Trinity represents a faithful reception of what we find in Hebrews. We are not imposing the teaching about the Trinity onto Hebrews. Instead the historic formulations on the Trinity faithfully reflect the meaning of the text of Hebrews, drawing out the implications of what the author teaches about the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Hebrews represents one of the fountains from which theologians of succeeding generations drew.

Most scholars, as noted above, who write about Hebrews don't comment on the Trinity. On the other hand, those who write on the topic tend to support the historic doctrine of the church. Recent studies include the excellent essay by Barry Joslin,[6] along with the essays by Nathan Holsteen,[7] and José Rondón.[8] Jonathan Griffiths in an intriguing essay focuses on the Trinity as he reflects on God speaking and saving, in both revelation and redemption.[9] Richard Bauckham in an impressive study emphasizes that Jesus shares the unique identity of God, claiming that as Son, Lord, and high priest that he shares divine identity.[10] Similarly, Kavin Rowe argues that Jesus as the Son is distinguished from angels and is constitutive of the meaning of God.[11] John Webster explicates the Trinitarian implications of the relationship between the Father and the Son with his usual profundity.[12] Amy Peeler engages in a careful study of the Father and the Son in the letter, arguing that they share the same attributes and that there is no basis for eternal submission of the Son to the Father.[13]

Other studies impinge upon the doctrine of the Trinity even if they don't examine it directly. Martin Emmrich has attempted to find OT antecedents to the references to the Spirit in Hebrews, and his study stands out since the Spirit tends to be ignored in discussions about God in Hebrews.[14] Indeed, the paucity and nature of references to the Spirit leads some to question the Spirit's divinity in the letter. On the other hand, George Caird and L. D. Hurst question whether chapter one speaks of the deity of the Son.[15] Of course, it doesn't follow that they deny the deity of the Son in the remainder of the NT, but they both argue that the Son's deity is not in chapter one. Webster rightly observes that Caird fails to see that true humanity and preexistence

do not contradict one another.[16] Most scholars, however, see the deity of the Son as playing a central role, especially in the first chapter. Murray Harris's study of Hebrews 1:8–9 represents a careful defense of the notion that Jesus is identified as God in these verses.[17] Hurst says that Jesus inherited the title God as one who represents his people.[18] The text however identifies Jesus as God, and doesn't limit this to representation. Attridge notes that Hebrews fits with making propositional claims about God more than most NT books, emphasizing the truth that God speaks to his people.[19] Amy Peeler's study on God the Father points out the importance of the Father-Son relation in Hebrews,[20] which has important implications for one's understanding of the Trinity. Others have rightly pointed to the Son of God Christology in the letter.[21]

The Revelation of the Father, Son, and Spirit

At this juncture, I turn to the letter itself to discern what the author teaches about the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. The author of Hebrews advances his argument by emphasizing the Son's superiority: to the law mediated by angels (1:1–2:18); to Moses who led the people out of Egypt as God's faithful servant (3:1–4:13); and to the Aaronic priesthood since he is a Melchizedekian priest (4:14–10:18). History unfolds with redemptive historical significance, so that in the Son "God has provided something better for us" (11:40), which includes a "better hope" (7:19), a "better covenant" (7:22; 8:6), "better promises" (8:6), "better sacrifices" (9:23), "a better and enduring possession" (10:34), which is "a better place," "a heavenly one" (11:16). Indeed, Jesus' blood as the "mediator of a new covenant" says "better things than the blood of Abel" (12:24).

The recipients of the letter should not return to the OT cultus because in doing so they would be turning back the clock in salvation history. The new covenant is superior because it fulfills what was promised in the old covenant. The old covenant and the OT Scriptures are not jettisoned; they are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The author doesn't suggest that the OT Scriptures are inferior; God spoke through them in many different ways, but now God has spoken definitively and finally in his Son (1:1–2). When we consider the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in Hebrews, the redemptive historical character of the letter must not be neglected, for otherwise we

may wander from the pragmatic purpose of the letter. The theology of the letter undergirds and supports the admonition to endure until the end. The superiority of the new covenant and the excellency of the Son undergird the warnings that permeate the letter where the readers are exhorted not to fall away (2:1–4; 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:8; 10:26–31; 12:25–29). We will consider below, then, the revelation of the Father, the revelation of the Son, and the revelation of the Spirit in Hebrews.

The Revelation of the Father

The writer to the Hebrews is indebted to the OT in referring to God, who in Hebrews is identified as the Father of Jesus Christ.[22] We have already seen in the first two verses of the letter that God is a speaking God, a God who reveals himself (1:1–2; cf. 5:12; 6:5).[23] He spoke in and through the myriad forms of OT revelation, and he has spoken the last word, the final word in his Son. Indeed, the citations from the OT Scriptures are often attributed to the Father (1:5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13; 4:3, 4; 5:5, 6; 6:14; 7:21; 8:5, 8, 13; 10:30, 38; 11:18; 12:5–6, 20, 26; 13:5). God is a talking God, a God who reveals his will and his ways to human beings. We recognize, given the redemptive historical nature of Hebrews, that God's revelation is progressive in that the culmination of his revelation is in the Son. Such a culminating revelation fits with the progressive unfolding of the Trinity; what wasn't as clear in the OT is unveiled fully in the NT.

God's word is also said to be "living and active," penetrating to the deepest recesses of the human heart (4:12–13). God's word represents God's own character and action. The OT repeatedly tells us that God is the living God (e.g., Deut 5:26; Josh 3:10; 1 Sam 17:26; 2 Kings 19:4; Pss 44:2; 84:2; Jer 10:10; Dan 6:26), and Hebrews affirms the same (3:12; 9:14). The reference in Jeremiah 10:10 is particularly instructive since in the context Yahweh is distinguished from idols (Jer 10:7–10), showing that the living God is the one and only true God and the idols of the nations are fantasies and illusions. The OT backdrop of Hebrews confirms that there is only one God; the NT teaching on the Trinity doesn't surrender the truth that God is one (Deut 6:4).

God is the sovereign creator of the world, creating the entire world through his Son (1:2; cf. 4:4, 10).[24] Indeed, he created the universe through his word (11:2), which clearly reflects on Genesis 1 where we are told repeatedly that God spoke and the things in the world came into existence. The supremacy

and greatness of God is captured when we are told that all things exist for him and through him (2:11) so that God is not only the creator of the world, as the one and only true God, but also all glory and praise belong to him (13:15, 21). God's sovereignty is also apparent in his appointing the Son to be the heir of all things and in anointing him as the exalted one (1:2, 9). God also raised his Son from the dead, appointing him to sit at his right hand as the ruler of all and declared him to be the Melchizedekian high priest (1:13; 2:8–9; 5:7, 10; 10:12; 12:2; 13:20; see Pss 8:6; 110:1; cf. 11:19).

The sovereignty and greatness of God is expressed by the word Majesty. He is "the Majesty on high" (1:3)—"the Majesty in the heavens" (8:1), and the word for Majesty (*megalōsynē*) is used of the one true God in the OT (1 Chron 29:11; Pss 144:3 LXX; 150:2). As the transcendent Lord of all, God resides in heaven (9:24). All creatures serve God and belong to him since he is the Lord and creator of all, including the angels (1:6–7), and God has determined that the world will be under the rule of human beings instead of the angels (2:5–18).

As the creator and sovereign of all, God judges those who are in sin, pouring out his anger on those who don't trust in him or obey him (3:17–19; 6:7; 9:27; 12:23; 13:4). His judgments are awesome and terrifying, especially the final judgment (10:27, 30), and thus we are told that "it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (10:31). The coming judgment (12:25–28) reminds us that "our God is a consuming fire" (12:29), and the phrase derives from the OT (Exod 24:17; Deut 4:24; 9:3; Isa 33:14). The God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is truly the "Holy One of Israel" (e.g., Isa 1:4; 5:19; 30:11; 37:23; 41:16). Conversely, those who trust and obey the Lord are blessed and rewarded by God since he is pleased with them (6:7; 11:2, 4, 5, 6; 13:16), and he is the God who saves his people through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the great high priest. Even though God disciplines his people, he does so for their good so that they will live holy and righteous lives (12:5–9). God, as the OT teaches is just and righteous (e.g., Gen 18:25; Deut 32:4; Pss 92:15; 119:75); he doesn't forget the good that human beings do (6:10) because he always keeps his promises, just as he kept the promises made to Abraham (6:14–18).

God is the covenant God, and since he cannot lie (6:17–18) what he promises he will fulfill; his unchangeable saving purposes will be realized. He will never abandon or forsake his people and will help them in every

circumstance (13:5–6). Once again Hebrews evokes the OT where we are told that God never lies, that he is the very definition of truth (Num 23:19; Ps 31:5; Isa 65:16). God established the old covenant (9:20), but he also promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34 that there would be a new covenant, and he has fulfilled that promise through his Son, the great high priest (8:7-13; 10:15-18) since he is a faithful God (11:11). God is a God of grace and any good believers perform is a result of his mercy, and God works what is good in believers (cf. 4:16; 12:15; 13:9, 21, 25; cf. 2:9), promising a heavenly city to those who trust and obey him (11:10, 14–16), and the final reward is seeing God (12:14).

Hebrews teaches that God is the Father, and Jesus is the Son (1:5; 5:5). God is also the Father of all believers and brings them all to glory (2:10–11; cf. 12:7, 9),[25] but he is uniquely the Father of Jesus as his Son. The sonship of Jesus will be explored in due course, but we see here some of the wells from which the doctrine of the Trinity is drawn. The Father and the Son are both fully God, and yet there is only one God. Monotheism is maintained, and yet we see that the monotheism of the NT is complex in that both the Father and the Son are God. In addition, the relationship between the Father and the Son is personal since Father-Son language is used. Certainly the language is analogical and not univocal, but at the same time it reveals truth about God. The relationship between the persons of the Trinity is personal, analogous to the relationship between fathers and sons on earth, though the Father-Son relationship is beyond what we can understand and express. The Father-Son language here relates especially to the economic Trinity in Hebrews, but it has often been said that the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity are closely related, though the nature of the relationship is disputed. The economic Trinity sheds light on the immanent Trinity, though there are continuities and discontinuities that must be articulated.

It is instructive to see what Amy Peeler says about the Father by considering his relationship with the Son.

> By analyzing the Father's relationship with the Son, several things about the character of God emerge. First, it is clear that he is a powerful Father. He is the God to whom the priests direct their service, the Creator and controller of all things, who will remain to see the end of all things being subjected to his Son. Second, he has chosen to be in relationship with another, a relationship of intimacy, naming

> Jesus as his Son. Third, in this relationship he has chosen to involve his Son in his reign and to share his glory. Fourth, he appoints the Son to his vocation as heir and high priest. In so doing, God is portrayed as a Father who listens to His children. Yet God's attendance to their prayers does not mean that he delivers them. Instead, God allows his children to suffer so that they might be perfected and be able to fulfill his plan for them. God's fatherly *ethos* with his firstborn Son is powerful, relational, generous, appointing, attentive, and perfecting. In many ways, this fatherly relationship will be similar with humanity; for, although, he is the firstborn, Christ, too is a Son.[26]

To sum up, the portrait Hebrews paints of God accords with the OT which emphasizes that there is only one God. God is the great and sovereign creator who rules all things according to his word. He saves those who put their trust in him but judges the wicked. He will bless and reward those who trust and obey him, those who endure in the faith. He is a faithful God who fulfills his covenant promises and grants grace to believers. The God of Hebrews fits with the OT conception that there is one true and living God who reigns and rules over all things. At the same time, this God is the Father of Jesus Christ and of all believers, though he is uniquely the Father of Jesus. The implications for the Trinity are significant since Hebrews clearly draws on the OT vision of the one and only God. Yet at the same time, we see that there is both a Father and a Son; the nature of God's oneness can't be explained simplistically. There are indications of complexity in the being of the one true God. There are not two gods, and yet both the Father and the Son are God, and the Father-Son terminology signals a personal relation between Christ and the Father. The word Father signifies ultimate authority and power, and yet there is no indication that the Son lacks any attribute of the Father. The Father, for instance, creates the world through the Son (1:2). Father-Son language is analogical in relation to God instead of being univocal, but at the same time it truly reveals truths about the nature of God. We know truly even if not completely or exhaustively.

The Revelation of the Son

The author of Hebrews clearly emphasizes that Jesus Christ is a human being.[27] He suffered and died as the Melchizedekian priest for the sake of his brothers and sisters (1:3; 2:10; 13:20). Believers are his brothers and sisters (2:11–13),

and like us he was a person of flesh and blood (2:14). He was lower than angels for a time (2:7, 9), and he was "like his brothers and sisters in every way" (2:17) in that he suffered and was tempted (2:18; 4:15; 5:8). He experienced tears and the groaning and sighing and sorrow so characteristic of human life (5:7). And the moment of his greatest suffering was his crucifixion (6:6), when he offered himself as a sacrifice for sins (7:27; 10:10, 12), spilling his own blood in death (9:12, 14, 28; 10:19). The humanity of Jesus is crucial in Hebrews and imperative to understand his person. Still, the relationship of Jesus' humanity to his divinity was worked out more fully at Chalcedon, and since this essay is on the Trinity, the focus will be on Jesus' deity. Both the humanity and deity of Jesus will inevitably enter into the subsequent discussion, but I will concentrate on his deity in Hebrews since his deity plays the most important role in a discussion on the Trinity.

The deity of Jesus is especially evident in chapter one, though, as we shall see, a few scholars dispute this notion. Verses 1-4 are shaped chiastically. The middle of the chiasm refers to the *nature* of the Son, who he is (D and D^1), the beginning and end of the chiasm identifies his name: Son (A and A^1). The B and C elements of the chiasm express what he has done: he rules as king as the one who has atoned for sins (B and B^1), and he also rules the world as its creator and preserver (C and C^1). The chiastic arrangement informs us that what Jesus has accomplished can't be separated from, and is indeed dependent upon, who he is.

A Son 1:2	D^1 Express image of his being 1:3
B Heir 1:2	C^1 Bearing all things by the word of his power 1:3
C Through whom God created the world 1:2	B^1 Sat down after cleansing sins 1:3
D Radiance of his glory	A^1 More excellent name: Son 1:4

The author begins by emphasizing that Jesus is God's Son. God has spoken his final and climatic word in the Son (1:2), showing that all previous revelation culminates in him. Such a claim fits with what we read elsewhere in the NT, where Jesus is the last Adam (Rom 5:12–19; 1 Cor 15:20–22, 45–49); the true offspring of Abraham (Gal 3:16), the true Israel (cf. Hos 11:1; Matt 2:15), the final and better prophet (Deut 18:15; Heb 3:1–6), the true Davidic king (e.g., Matt 1:1–17, etc.); and the Melchizedekian priest (Heb 7:1–28). He is superior to the angels in that he is inherited a better name than they, and that name is Son (1:4). Some scholars think the name

Jesus received is Yahweh, which is certainly possible.[28] But such a reading is less likely because 1:4-5 are tied together with a "for" (*gar*), explaining why Jesus has a name superior to angels, and the author cites Psalm 2:7 and 2 Samuel 7:14, stressing that Jesus is God's *Son*.

Jesus' sonship here is an indication of his deity, of his divine identity and nature. The implications for Trinitarian thinking are significant because the Son is distinct from the Father in that he is the Son rather than the Father. Thus, any notion of modalism is removed.[29] John Webster rightly remarks, "to spell out the respective agencies of θεός and υἱός does demand some kind of distinctions within God's eternal being which enacts itself in their common, though differentiated, revelatory work."[30] The relationship between the Father and the Son is explicated analogically in terms of the relationship between fathers and sons among human beings, which points to the personal relationship that exists between the Father and the Son. We have here the resources which eventuate in the notion that there are different persons, and yet they share the same essence or nature. The Son is no less divine than the Father, and yet he is distinct from the Father as the Son.

It could be objected, however, that the appellation Son doesn't point to deity here, and that leads us back to Hebrews 1. In saying that God appointed Jesus as the "heir of all things" (1:2), we find an allusion to Psalm 2:8 where the Davidic king is promised that the nations will be his inheritance, but such a promise is given to the Davidic king as a human being, and thus we don't have a clear indication from this statement that the Son was divine. The same could be said about the OT citations referencing the Son in verse 5. In 2 Samuel 7:14 the son referenced is clearly a son of David, a king, since the promise is given at the inauguration of the Davidic covenant. There is no indication in 2 Samuel 7 that the king here is divine. The same could be said about the reference to the son lifted from Psalm 2 (Heb 1:5). It is imperative here to consider the historical context of the psalm. Gentile kings are infuriated and rebel against Yahweh and his anointed one, which is the Davidic king (2:1–3). Yahweh finds their opposition to be amusing, while at the same time he is angry at these kings for resisting his rule (2:4–5). Their rebellion will not succeed because the Lord has installed his king—David—on his holy mountain which is Mount Zion in Jerusalem (2:6). The psalm shifts in verse 7 and now the king himself begins to speak. In the historical context of the psalm David informs the nations of Yahweh's decree. The Lord has

appointed David as his son, and the Lord has become David's father (2:7). In other words, the Lord has installed David as his king, as his vice-regent. Thus the Davidic king will rule over the nations as his inheritance (2:8–9). If the kings of the earth have any sense, therefore, they will serve Yahweh and pay homage to the son, the Davidic king, for otherwise they will perish (2:10–12).

The reference to Psalm 2:7 in Hebrews 1:5 and 5:5 is often appealed to in defense of the eternal generation of the Son: the notion that the Father has begotten the Son eternally.[31] We have seen in the historical context of the psalm that the address is from Yahweh to his son David, and the generation of David here is to his appointment as ruler, to his installation as king. When we examine Hebrews, it is quite probable that the author sees a correlation, or better a fulfillment in a more profound and deeper way (typological escalation!) in the life of Jesus Christ. What is quite remarkable here is a "divine conversation" which "takes place at the time of the enthronement of the Son on high."[32] Jesus gave himself for the sins of human beings, but he has been installed and appointed as God's Son as the ruler of the world by his resurrection and ascension.[33] It is instructive to see that Paul in Acts 13:33, in citing Psalm 2:7, understands the verse in exactly the same way. He doesn't see in the psalm the eternal generation of Jesus but his resurrection and ascension, and at Jesus' resurrection, he was appointed and installed as Lord and king of all.[34] In both its NT and OT context, then, Psalm 2:7 doesn't have to do with an eternal generation of the Son by the Father, but of the installation and appointment of the Davidic king as Lord of all.

The installation of the Son to rule over all of creation pervades Hebrews 1. We have already seen that Jesus as the Son rules as the heir over all creation (1:2). The same theme emerges when we read about the Son sitting down at God's right hand (1:3, 13). Similarly, the Son entering the inhabited world (*oikoumenē*) in 1:6 refers to his exaltation, not to his incarnation.[35] Such a reading fits with chapter 2 where the coming world (*tēn oikoumenēn tēn mellousan*) isn't under the authority of angels but human beings. We know that the author is thinking of human beings since he immediately cites Psalm 8:4–6 in Hebrews 2:6–8, which celebrates, as the psalmist considers the original mandate given to Adam and Eve (Gen 1:28; 2:15), the truth that the rule over the world is given to human beings, particularly Jesus Christ. Indeed, chapter 2 of Hebrews impresses upon readers in the strongest terms

that Jesus' rule over angels is only accomplished by virtue of his suffering and his death so that his rule would never be realized if he wasn't a human being. Along the same lines, Hebrews 1:9 cites Psalm 45:7, and the verse claims that Jesus is exalted over his companions because of his rectitude, because of his obedience.

The humanity of Jesus, the humanity of the Son, as the above discussion shows, is quite clear. Still, things are not so simple, as a careful reading of Hebrews 1 reveals. The author doesn't restrict himself to saying that the Son reigns as a human being, as the Davidic king. He also reigns and rules as the divine Son. In other words, Jesus' humanity and deity are intertwined here. After identifying Jesus as the Son, we are told that he is the heir (Heb 1:2), just as the Davidic king is the heir (Ps 2:8), but the next statement lifts us into a different dimension since God created the universe (*tous aiōnas*) through the Son. We see elsewhere the word *aiōn* may designate the world God has made (Wis. 13:9), and it certainly has that meaning here in Hebrews. The Son is the agent through whom God created the world, and the agency of the Son in creation is a common theme elsewhere in the NT (John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16). In identifying the Son as the agent for the created world the author picks up wisdom traditions (Prov 3:19; 8:22–31; Ps 104:24; Jer 10:12; Wis. 7:22; 9:2). God, according to the OT, created the world in wisdom, but now we see in an elevated sense, since the Son is personal, that the world was created through the Son. The world was created by the divine word according to Genesis (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26), and the author of Hebrews, much like we find in the Gospel of John (John 1:1–3), informs us that God created the world through a person. The agent of creation, however, can't be a creature. If he created all things, he is sovereign over all that is created (cf. Col 1:15–17). In other words, he is a divine being. We see here an important insight for the doctrine of the Trinity; the Father and the Son work in concert together. The Father is the creator (Heb 11:2) and the Son is the agent of creation. The Son's "instrumentality is not an indicator of inferiority but of the perfect accord of will and activity between Father and Son."[36] We see justification for the inseparable operations of the Father and the Son since they created the world together. At the same time, there is room here for distinctions between the Father and the Son since the Son is the agent through whom the world was created. The Son and the Father share the divine essence, and yet they are distinct from one another as well and play unique roles as different persons of the Trinity.

The argument being made here is that the author's use of the word Son is subtle, that it includes notions of both humanity and divinity. The Son isn't only the agent of creation but also the sustainer of the created order. All things are preserved and ordered by his powerful word (Heb 1:3). We find the same notion in Colossians 1:17, "by him all things hold together." Only a divine being can sustain the created world, and thus the Son of Hebrews isn't limited to his humanity. The Son's role as creator finds expression in the astonishing appeal to Psalm 102:25–27 in Hebrews 1:10–12. In its historical context the reference is clearly to Yahweh as creator. The author of Hebrews, however, ascribes creation in the psalm to Christ, and thus a text about Yahweh in its OT context becomes a resource for divine Christology. We should also observe that the author of Hebrews isn't the only one to make this move; Paul often sees Christ in texts that refer to Yahweh in the OT (e.g., Rom 10:13; 14:11; 1 Cor 1:31; 2:16; 10:22, 26; 2 Cor 10:17; Phil 2:10–11; 1 Thess 3:13; 4:6; 2 Thess 1:7–8; 2 Tim 2:19).

The Son, then, established the earth and formed the heavens. Caird fails to persuade when limits the reference to the Christ being "appointed to a cosmic role" as the wisdom of God.[37] Such a reading fails to see that Psalm 102:25–27 cited in Hebrews 1:10–12 speaks of the Son's direct creation of the world, and the language of agency from 1:2 shouldn't be imposed on 1:10-12. We see again evidence of inseparable operations; the Father and the Son equally created the universe. The divine nature of Christ is also evident since the heavens and earth will pass away as part of created reality, but the Son is eternal and remains the same forever (Heb 1:12; cf. 13:8). We have a clear reference here to Jesus' preexistence and eternity,[38] and thus he shares the same attributes as God himself. But neither should we interpret what we see here as modalism, as if texts describing the Father are also ascribed to Jesus so that there is no distinction between them. A comparable argument appears in Hebrews 3:1-6 where the Son is greater than Moses ontologically since he is the creator and Moses is a creature.[39] We have already seen that the Father created the world *through* the Son (1:2), and he spoke to human beings via the Son (1:2). The divinity of the Son doesn't erase the Father from the picture but points to distinctions within the being of the one God. The oneness of God isn't a solitary oneness or an impersonal oneness; there is a complexity and richness in the divine being.

We have seen that the Son is a human being as the heir of all things and as the Davidic king. Still, even here we must avoid simplistic dichotomies. The

OT itself points to the Davidic king being divine. The king is, as Isaiah says, the "Mighty God" (Isa 9:6) and is called "Immanuel" (Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10). More to the point, Psalm 45 is a song dedicated to the king, and Hebrews appropriates the psalm in 1:8–9. There the king is identified as God, and Murray Harris has shown in a careful study that the divinity of Christ is clearly intended when the author of Hebrews appropriates the psalm.[40] At the same time, these verses (Heb 1:8–9) clearly refer to the righteousness of the king as a human being with the result that God rewarded Jesus by exalting him as Lord over all. As we contemplate Hebrews which features both the deity and the humanity of Christ, we find that the Chalcedonian creed captures well what Hebrews teaches about Jesus the Christ.

> We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [co-essential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.

We see another indication of Jesus' humanity and divinity in Hebrews 1:13 where the author cites Psalm 110:1, which he already alluded to in 1:3. Jesus' ascension and session at the right hand of the Father play a central role in the letter (cf. 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). Jesus also appealed to the psalm during his ministry (Matt 22:41-46 par), puzzling the Pharisees by asking how the Messiah could be both David's Lord and son. Psalm 110, then, answers the question posed here. Jesus is the Davidic king, and he is both human and

divine; he is both David's Lord and his son. NT writers regularly call upon Psalm 110:1 to support the truth that Jesus was exalted by God (Acts 2:34; 5:31; Rom 8:34; 1 Cor 15:25; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; 1 Pet 3:22). He reigns both as the Davidic king and as the Son of God (cf. 3:6; 4:14; 5:8; 6:6; 7:3, 28; 10:29).

Jesus has sat down at God's right hand since his atoning work is finished (1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2), and his session at God's right hand is a common theme in the NT (Matt 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; Luke 20:42; 22:69; Acts 2:33, 34; 5:31; 7:55; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; 1 Pet 3:22).[41] Jesus is exalted as the son of David as a human being, but sitting at God's right hand also signals the Son's deity. The charge of blasphemy is leveled when Jesus claims he will come in power seated at God's right hand (Matt 26:64-65; Mark 14:62-64; Luke 22:69-71).[42] Bauckham says, "potent imagery of sitting on the cosmic throne has only one attested significance: it indicates his participation in the unique sovereignty of God over the world."[43] As the one seated at God's right hand he grants forgiveness and repentance which are divine gifts (Acts 5:31). His intercession for believers as the risen and reigning Lord is a divine activity (Heb 7:25; cf. Rom 8:34), and his divinity is also indicated by angelic powers being subjected to him (Heb 1:4-14; 2:5, 16; cf. 1 Pet 3:22).

Jesus' divinity and humanity aren't merged together in Hebrews, as if his divinity swallows up and cancels his humanity, or as if his humanity robs him of his divinity. He is both human and divine, and he reigns as the divine Son of God *and* as the Davidic king. The author of Hebrews doesn't tease these matters out for us, but we see here one of the sources for the notion that Jesus was one person with two different natures.

Verse 3 clearly sets forth Jesus' deity. The author doesn't limit himself to what Jesus did but who he is; we have here a "metaphysical diamond against the black crepe of narrative," where the "speculative, philosophical implications" of Christ's person are considered.[44] He is "the radiance of God's glory" (Heb 1:3). The word "radiance" (*apaugasma*) could be translated "reflection," and in that case it would be similar to the notion that Jesus is the image (*eikōn*) of God (2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15). Some scholars opt for the translation "reflection" since the same word (*apaugasma*) is found in Wisdom 7:26, and according to the NRSV wisdom "is a reflection of eternal light."[45] But the matter isn't so simple since the word *apaugasma* could be translated

as "radiance" in Wisdom 7:26 as well.[46] A decision between radiance and reflection is difficult and in any case it doesn't affect the main point about Jesus' deity. The etymology of the word, which is, of course, not an invariable indication of the meaning of a word supports radiance.[47] BDAG indicates that the fathers supported radiance, including Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Theodoret, and Chrysostom.[48] Such a reading fits with the Nicene Creed which says "light of light," pointing to the truth that the Son shares the fullness of the Father's divinity.[49] The Son is also the representation (*character*) of God's being (*hypostaseōs*, Heb 1:3). The word character is used of the impression made by coins.[50] Webster says that Jesus is "the exact representation of the divine essence. The point of the metaphor is correspondence or perfect ontological accord in the relation of the Father and the Son."[51] Peeler says, "the Son bears the character of God's being. The divine Son replicates the central core of who God is. If God the Father has glory the Son radiates it because he has the same nature."[52] He represents who God is perfectly since he is also fully divine.[53] The citation of Psalm 45:6 in Hebrews 1:8 clearly identifies Jesus as God. The one who reigns on the throne is God himself.

The letter to the Hebrews emphasizes in a particular way the deity of Christ. We have seen that the author emphasizes as well Jesus' humanity, but at the same time Jesus has divine functions in creation and providence, as well in his reign at the Father's right hand. In verse 3 we have some of the most striking statements about the Son's ontological deity in the NT. Further, the Sonship of Jesus' points to his deity as well, and the author isn't shy about labeling the Son as God. Still, there is no hint of modalism; the deity of the Son doesn't erase the Father from view. Distinctions between the Son and the Father are maintained; the Father is the Father and the Son is the Son, showing complexity in the being and the identity of the one and only true God. The oneness of God has different dimensions—different persons!

The Revelation of the Spirit

We don't find in Hebrews extensive references to the Holy Spirit, but what we find is illuminating and is tied to redemptive history, to the unfolding of God's plan to save his people. The Spirit is revealed more clearly with the coming of the Son. The Spirit speaks, testifies, and bears witness to the grace dispensed in the new era that commences with the ministry, death, resurrection, and exaltation of Christ. Indeed, the grace given includes the gift of the Spirit himself.

In Hebrews 2:1–4 the readers are admonished not to drift away from the salvation that is theirs in the Son. The truth of their salvation is authenticated by the "signs and wonders" and "miracles" God granted with the coming of the Christ (2:4). At the same time there were "distributions of gifts from the Holy Spirit," which probably refers to the gifts given by the Spirit which accompanied the proclamation of Jesus as the high priest who by one sacrifice cleansed his people of their sins (1:3). The gifts bestowed verify and further the work of Jesus as the Melchizedekian priest. From this we see that the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, testifying to the great work of redemption he accomplished.

The Spirit also speaks and testifies, which is a divine activity.[54] We saw earlier that the Father spoke in the Son and in the Scriptures (1:2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13; 4:3, 4; 5:5, 6; 6:14; 7:21; 8:5, 8, 13; 10:30, 38; 11:18; 12:5–6, 20, 26; 13:5). Similarly, the authoritative word of the Spirit reveals that he has divine qualities, for he speaks as God speaks. The words from the Spirit reveal that the Spirit is personal, contra Lindars,[55] since speech comes from persons. The words of Psalm 95, cited in Hebrews 3:7–11, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, but at the same time these words are from God himself. Schenk rightly says, ""the author thinks of God and the Holy Spirit as the same speaker ... The Holy Spirit speaking is God speaking."[56] In Hebrews 10:15-18 the Spirit testifies about the arrival of the new covenant (Jer 31:31–34). The reference to the Spirit fascinates in that the Spirit is associated with the coming of the new era, the new dispensation so that the old covenant is no longer operative (cf. Heb 8:13). The Spirit speaks of the new covenant, which secures forgiveness of sins (10:17), based on Christ's once for all time offering of himself as a sacrifice for sin. The Spirit, in other words, works in tandem with Christ, testifying to his atonement on the cross.

The reference to the Spirit in Hebrews 9:8 is similar. The priestly ministry in the tabernacle where the high priest enters the most holy place once a year on the day of the atonement represents a message from the Spirit (9:6–10). The Holy Spirit was revealing (*dēlountes*) that access to God's very presence was not freely available under the old covenant and its service of worship. The Holy Spirit was revealing that God's promises would be fulfilled in the future, in the days of fulfillment when access to God was granted to all through the blood of Jesus. Again, the Holy Spirit points to the insufficiency of the old and to the superiority of Jesus. Hebrews doesn't replicate the Johannine

idiom, but what he says about the Spirit fits with the words about the Spirit in John's Gospel where Jesus says that the Spirit "will glorify me" (John 16:14).

We see an implicit Trinitarian reference in 10:29, where readers are threatened with punishment if they trample on God's Son, or consider the blood of Christ to be unclean, or insult "the Spirit of grace." The punishment here almost certainly stems from the Father, and we clearly have references to the Son and to the Spirit. The Father who punishes is conversely the one who saves, and we see from the verse that he saves through the sacrificial blood of the Son, and the Spirit grants grace based on Jesus' priestly work. From the content of the verse we see that the grace of Spirit is tied to the sacrificial work of the Son, and thus the grace granted by the Spirit is a gift of the new era, the new age inaugurated in Jesus Christ. At the same time, grace, which the Spirit gives, is a divine gift—only God gives grace, and thus we have an indication of the Spirit's deity. The distinct roles of the Father, Son, and Spirit are also intimated here: the Father punishes, or saves through the atoning work of the Son, and the Spirit by grace applies the work of the Son to the hearts of believers. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit all perform divine functions, showing that they work in concert.

The severe warning in 6:4–6 also has Trinitarian dimensions. The writer refers to God's word, the crucifixion of the Son, and sharing in the Spirit. When we think of the message of Hebrews as a whole, it is clear that the gift of the Spirit is the gift of the new age (cf. Acts 10:44-48; 15:7-11; Gal 3:1-5), and the Spirit is granted on the basis of Christ's purifying sacrifice. The Spirit, as John says in his distinctive idiom, isn't given until Jesus is glorified (John 7:39). Hebrews puts it another way but clearly shares the same viewpoint. We have further evidence that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit work together in accomplishing salvation. The Father announces the word and grants salvation through the work of the Son, and as a result of the Son's death the Spirit is given, and believers enjoy his presence.

The meaning of Hebrews 9:14 is controverted, "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works so that we can serve the living God." Some claim that the eternal Spirit (*pneumatos aiōniou*) refers to Christ's human spirit[57] or even to his divinity.[58] Such interpretations of the word *pneumatos* here are possible, but not the most likely. It is more plausible to see a reference to the Holy Spirit, given the usage of the word

pneuma elsewhere in the letter. If we see a reference to Jesus' human spirit, it is difficult to figure out what this even means since the spirit is described as eternal.[59] Human spirits aren't eternal. Thus the claim that we have a reference to Jesus' divinity is more plausible, but this view also suffers from lack of evidence since we don't have any parallels where Christ's spirit points to his intrinsic divinity. On the other hand, a reference to the Holy Spirit fits with the references to the Spirit elsewhere in the letter and accounts for the use of the term "eternal." If we grant that we have a reference to the Holy Spirit, the word eternal signifies the divinity of the Spirit, showing that the Spirit is everlasting just as the Father and the Son are everlasting.

When Jesus offered himself to God as the one who cleansed the consciences of believers through his blood, he did so through the Holy Spirit. What the author of Hebrews has in mind fits with the Lukan picture of the Spirit in the life of Jesus. In Luke Jesus was anointed with the Spirit at his baptism (Luke 3:22), was "full of the Spirit" and "led by the Spirit in the wilderness" (Luke 4:1), conducted his ministry "in the power of the Spirit" (Luke 4:14), and emphasized at the outset of his ministry the role of the Spirit in anointing him (Luke 4:18). Probably the author of Hebrews has the same conception in mind. Jesus gave himself up as a sacrifice for sins under the impetus of the Spirit—the Spirit empowered him in his ministry and his self-giving.[60] At the same time, we have a Trinitarian reference here. The Son offered himself to God through the Spirit, and there is a suggestion here that the forgiveness of sin, the salvation of God's people, is planned by God the Father, carried out by God the Son, and empowered by God the Spirit. The eternality of the Spirit emphasizes that Jesus was empowered by the Spirit who has always, throughout redemptive history, empowered and strengthened the people of God.

Hebrews doesn't contain as much teaching on the Spirit as some other books of the NT, but we see the doctrine of inseparable operations in texts where the word of the Lord spoken in the OT is ascribed to the Spirit in Hebrews. The Spirit puts the spotlight on the work of Christ, both in pointing to and in applying his once for all time sacrifice. The Spirit testifies that the new covenant has arrived, that the last days have come. At the same time, we see texts where the Father, the Son, and the Spirit together accomplish salvation. Salvation is a divine work, and thus we see from such texts that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are equally divine, and yet there are not

three gods. There is one God, but the oneness of God is a complex matter since there is also a threeness in the oneness, which the later church rightly explained in terms of one God in three persons.

Soundings from Early Traditions on Hebrews and the Trinity

If we consider the early writers in church history on the Trinity in Hebrews, we see that their reading does not differ dramatically from what has been argued here, which suggests that ancient writers read the Scriptures along the same lines as what is proposed in this essay. We see from this state of affairs that our ancestors were careful readers of Scripture as well. In the brief comments that follow, there is no attempt here to be exhaustive. Instead I take a few soundings from some of the earliest interpreters of Hebrews to discern their teaching on the Trinity.

For instance, Theodoret of Cyrus, who wrote a commentary on Hebrews in the fifth century, argued that Jesus is divine as creator.[61] Similarly, Christ's effulgence (Heb 1:3) shows that there is between the Father and the Son a "shared eternity and oneness of being."[62] Still, modalism is ruled out since the appellation Son shows he is a different person.[63] On the other hand, he maintains that Christ being heir refers to his humanity in Hebrews 1:2,[64] as does his sitting at right hand of God.[65] The reference to Jesus being begotten by the Father in Hebrews 1:5, which is indebted to Psalm 2:7 doesn't, according to Theodoret of Cyrus, refer to the eternal begetting of the Son but to Jesus' incarnation.[66] In the same way the anointing of Jesus in Hebrews 1:9 refers to his humanity,[67] while the reference to creation in 1:10-12 points to his "divine nature."[68] Theodoret also affirms the deity of the Spirit since the Spirit is eternal and therefore not created.[69]

Chrysostom reads the letter in a similar way. Jesus' role as heir of all things (Heb 1:2) refers to his human nature.[70] Surprisingly, the more excellent name also denotes his human nature (Heb 1:4).[71] Like Theodoret of Cyrus the begetting of Jesus refers to his incarnation, not his eternal begetting,[72] but his anointing in Hebrews 1:9 doesn't contradict his deity.[73] It is clear from Hebrews 1:3 that Jesus "is neither greater nor less" than the Father; he is "light of light."[74] The Son has need of nothing just like the Father,[75] and thus it is clear that Chrysostom upholds the full divinity and full humanity of the Son.

One of the great Trinitarian theologians, Gregory of Nyssa, emphasizes Jesus' divinity. He contends from Hebrews 1:3 that the Son shares all that belongs to the Father.[76] "The majesty of the Father is expressly imaged in the greatness of the power of the Son, that the one may be believed to be as great as the other is known to be ... Even as the ray is of the sun—for there would be no ray if the sun were not—the sun is never conceived as existing by itself without the ray of brightness that is shed from it. So the apostle delivered to us the continuity and eternity of that existence which the Only Begotten has of the Father, calling the Son 'the brightness of God's glory.'"[77] The Son always existed from the beginning,[78] and he shares the same substance as the Father, "for it is not possible that the express image should be less than the person contemplated in it."[79] Jesus' heirship doesn't denote his humanity but the truth that he shares everything in common with the Father.[80]

When we probe more deeply, we see that the early tradition reflects some of the exegetical debates that continue until this day. They also disagreed at times on the meaning of particular verses, even when they shared in most respects the same Trinitarian conception. Some of the early fathers interpreted Psalm 2:7 which is cited in Hebrews 1:5 and 5:5 to refer to the eternal begetting of the Son by the Father from all eternity.[81] Athanasius, for instance, saw a reference here to the eternal begetting of the Son, but Gregory of Nyssa, along with Theodoret of Cyrus, Chrysostom, Theodore Mopsuestia, and Oecumenius argued that the text refers to the incarnation.[82]

In any case, the consensus is that the full divinity of the Son is clearly taught in Hebrews. Athanasius argued from Hebrews 1:3 that the Son shared the same nature as the Father and for *homoousios*. Theodore of Mopsuestia asserted that "Christ's nature bears the accurate representation of God's nature since Christ's nature does not differ from God's in the least."[83] Since Christ was the creator, he can't be a creature and we see an indication here of inseparable operations since what is true of the Father is also true of the Son.[84] Similarly, both Hebrews 1:10-12 and 13:8 point to the Son's immutability and thus his deity.[85] Jesus in Hebrews 3:1-6 is divine since he was the builder of the house, the creator.[86]At the same time, Theodore sees in the citation of Psalm 45 in Hebrews 1:8–9 the two natures, Jesus' humanity and divinity, in one person. Epiphanius of Salamis emphasizes at some length that Melchizedek was not divine but a man, and he is joined in this by Severian of Gabala, Theodoret of Cyrus, Ambrose, Chrysostom,

and Theodore of Mopsuestia,[87] though the latter sees in the text a reference to the two natures of Christ.[88] A reference to the two natures fits Theodore's understanding of Son in Hebrews which includes a reference to both Jesus' humanity and divinity.[89]

Surprisingly, Athanasius sees loving of righteousness and hating wickedness not of Jesus' humanity but as a reference to his deity.[90] So too Jesus being faithful in 3:2 refers to deserving belief, not Jesus' faithfulness.[91] Greer rightly says about Athanasius's exposition of Hebrews that "he has considerable difficulty treating in any full way the humanity of Christ."[92] Basil, on the other hand, takes the reference to Psalm 45 in Hebrews 1:8–9 in reference to Jesus' humanity,[93] and John of Damascus also relates the anointing to Jesus' humanity.[94]

The early church fathers argued from Hebrews for the deity of Christ and for the doctrine of the Trinity. They naturally didn't mine Hebrews much for the deity of the Spirit since they had many other texts in the NT to draw on to support that notion. The early fathers didn't agree on what the generation on the Son means in Hebrews 1:5, for some saw an eternal generation in the verse, while others saw a reference to Christ's humanity. They differed on other details of interpretation as well, but they agreed in saying that the Son was fully God and in suggesting that there was no sense in which the Son as a divine being was inferior to the Father.

Conclusion

We have seen that the epistle to the Hebrews provides a rich resource for the doctrine of the Trinity, that there is decisive evidence in the letter for the notion that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit equally share the one divine essence; no person of the Godhead is inferior to the other. The triunity of God doesn't deny the oneness of God but reveals to us that there is complexity and richness in the unity of God. The understanding of the Trinity in Hebrews defended here accords with the understanding promulgated in the early church. This is not to say that the earliest interpreters understood all the verses in the same way I do, but we have also seen that exegetical disagreements surfaced among the orthodox in the early centuries. They didn't explicate the texts with uniformity. We must guard against a naïve and simplistic idea that the great tradition, even among the orthodox, agreed on every detail. But the agreement they had was significant. They all confessed

that there was one God in three persons, and that all three persons were equally and fully God.

We have seen in our essay that the person of Jesus is explicated in an epistle that emphasizes the fulfillment of God's covenant promises. The work of Jesus is unpacked in redemptive historical terms so that his person and work represents God's last and final word to human beings. The Spirit testifies to the coming of Christ, to the fulfillment of God' promises, to the efficacy of Christ's high priestly sacrifice. It is imperative to defend the Trinity in Hebrews for soteriological reasons. The once for all time sacrifice which atoned for our sins was accomplished by one who was fully man and fully God. Our salvation isn't finally a human work but a divine work—the accomplishment of God himself. The Father commissioned the Son, the Son offered himself in love as the definitive and final sacrifice, and the Spirit is both the gift given to us as a result of the sacrifice and the one who testifies to and applies Christ's sacrifice to us. As believers then we give great praise to our triune God who has saved us, as we reflect on the Father's wise covenant plan, on the Son's love in accomplishing our salvation through his self-giving sacrifice, and on the Spirit applying the sacrifice to our hearts.

We see in Hebrews the love of each of the persons of the Trinity. The Father points us to the great work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ gives himself as a sacrifice because of his love for the Father and for us, and the Spirit doesn't call attention to himself but to the work of Christ. The Trinitarian work of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in Hebrews is no abstraction but represents the fundamental soteriological message of the NT.

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1. A version of this article will appear in the forthcoming book, *The Bible and the Trinity* (ed. Brandon D. Smith; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic), and it is used here by permission.
2. I owe the references in notes two and three to Barry Joslin, "The Triune God of Hebrews," in *God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays on Biblical Theology in Honor of Thomas R. Schreiner* (ed. Denny Burk, James M. Hamilton Jr., Brian Vickers; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2019), 119–20.
3. Harold Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 250.
4. James Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1924; repr., 1952), 124.
5. L. D. Hurst, "The Christology of Hebrews 1 and 2" in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird* (ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright; Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 155.
6. Joslin, "The Triune God of Hebrews," 119–33.
7. Nathan D. Holsteen, "The Trinity in the Book of Hebrews," *BibSac* 168 (2011): 334–46.
8. José Rondón, "Trinitarian Solidarity with Mankind in the Book of Hebrews," *Faith and Mission* 21 (2004): 46–64.

9. Jonathan I. Griffiths, "Hebrews and the Trinity," in *The Essential Trinity: New Testament Foundations and Practical Relevance* (ed. B. D. Crowe and C. R. Trueman; Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 135–53.
10. Richard Bauckham, "The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. R. Bauckham, D. R. Driver, T. A. Hart, and N. MacDonald; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 15–36.
11. C. Kavin Rowe, "The Trinity in the Letters of St. Paul and Hebrews," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* (ed. G. Emery and M. Levering; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41–54.
12. John Webster, "One Who Is Son: Theological Reflections on the Exordium to the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. R. Bauckham, et al.), 69-94.
13. Amy Peeler, "What Does 'Father' Mean: Trinity without Tiers in the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *Trinity without Hierarchy: Reclaiming Nicene Orthodoxy in Evangelical Theology* (ed. M. F. Bird and S. Harrower; Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2019), 57–79.
14. Martin Emmrich, *Pneumatological Concepts in the Epistle to the Hebrews: Amtscharisma, Prophet, and Guide of the Eschatological Exodus* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2003).
15. G. B. Caird, "Son by Appointment," in *The New Testament Age: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke,* vol. 1 (ed. W. Weinrich; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1984), 73-81; Hurst, "The Christology of Hebrews 1 and 2," 151-64.
16. Webster, "One Who Is Son," 80–81.
17. Murray J. Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992), 205–27.
18. Hurst, "The Christology of Hebrews 1 and 2," 160.
19. Harold W. Attridge, "God in Hebrews," in *The Forgotten God: Perspectives in Biblical Theology* (ed. A. A. Das and F. J. Matera; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 197–209.
20. Amy L. B. Peeler, "The Ethos of God in Hebrews," *PRSt* 37 (2010): 37–51.
21. See Scott D. Mackie, "Confession of the Son of God in the Exordium of Hebrews," *JSNT* 30 (2008): 437–53; John P. Meier, "Structure and Theology in Heb 1,1–14," *Bib* 66 (1985): 504–33; Joshua W. Jipp, "The Son's Entrance into the Heavenly World: The Soteriological Necessity of the Scriptural Catena in Hebrews 1:5–14," *NTS* 56 (2010): 557–75.
22. See Harold W. Attridge, "God in Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. R. Bauckham, et al.), 95–110. Peeler ("What Does 'Father' Mean," 58–59) shows that texts that speak of the Father and the Son in Hebrews indicate different persons.
23. God acts in the world through his word. See Jonathan Griffiths, "The Word of God: Perfectly Spoken in the Son" in *The Perfect Saviour: Key Themes in Hebrews* (ed. J. Griffiths; Nottingham: Inter-Varsity, 2012), 35–48.
24. Edward Adams, points to God's work of creation in the letter ("Cosmology in Hebrews," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. R. Bauckham, et al.), 124–30).
25. Believers are God's household (3:2; 10:21).
26. Peeler, "The Ethos of God in Hebrews," 45. See also her work, *You Are My Son: The Family of God in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (LNTS 486; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014).
27. For a creative study of Jesus' character in Hebrews, see Brian C. Small, "The Use of Rhetorical *Topoi* in the Characterization of Jesus in the Book of Hebrews," *PRSt* 37 (2010): 53-69.
28. See Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2006), 71; Bauckham, "The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," 21-22; Jody A. Barnard, *The Mysticism of Hebrews: Exploring the Role of Jewish Apocalyptic Mysticism in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (WUNT 2/331; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 157-70.
29. As Rowe says, "in the theology of Hebrews 'God' is not collapsed into 'Son' or 'Jesus' any more than it excludes them. That is to say, 'God' is sufficiently relational in its meaning to require of the reader nimbleness in thought, a movement between selfsameness and difference" ("The Trinity in the Letters of St. Paul and Hebrews," 47).
30. Webster, "One Who Is Son," 80.
31. E.g., Bauckham, "The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," 34. Madison N. Pierce, "Hebrews 1 and the Son Begotten 'Today,'" in *Retrieving Eternal Generation* (ed., Fred Sanders and Scott Swain; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 117–31. Athanasius saw a reference here to the Son's eternal generation and Gregory of Nyssa to the incarnation (see D. Stephen Long, *Hebrews* [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011], 47). Matthew W. Bates defends this reading as well, seeing at as evidence of prosopological exegesis (*The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus God and Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretations of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 68-70.
32. Griffiths, "Hebrews and the Trinity," 139.

33. Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 191; Philip Edgecumbe Hughes, *Hebrews, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 55.
34. I am not denying eternal generation of the Son; only the notion that it is found in this text.
35. See especially Ardel B. Caneday, "The Eschatological World Already Subjected to the Son: The Οἰκουμένη of Hebrews 1:6 and the Son's Enthronement," in *Cloud of Witnesses: The Theology of Hebrews in its Ancient Contexts* (ed. R. Bauckham, D. Driver, T. Hart, and N. MacDonald; LNTS 387; London: T&T Clark , 2008), 28-39; David M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of the Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (SuppNovT 141; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 56-69; John P. Meier, "Symmetry and Theology in the Old Testament Citations of Heb. 1:5-14," *Bib* 66 (1985): 507-11.
36. Webster, "One Who Is Son," 84.
37. Caird, "Son by Appointment," 76.
38. Contra James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Enquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 206-09; Kenneth L. Schenk, "A Celebration of the Enthroned Son: The Catena of Hebrews 1," *JBL* 120 (2001): 469-8. Kenneth Schenk says ("Keeping His Appointment: Creation and Enthronement in Hebrews," *JSNT* 66 [1997]: 104-15) that the Son was not preexistent since he draws on wisdom and logos motifs, but this does not account well for the Son's creating the world (1:10–12) and his eternality (13:8). For a more convincing explanation, see John P. Meier, "Symmetry and Theology in the Old Testament Citations of Heb. 1:5-14," *Bib* 66 (1985): 531-33. Barnabas Lindars nuances the matter by affirming that the Son of God pre-existed but not Jesus as a human being (*The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* [New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991], 34).
39. See here Peeler, "What Does 'Father' Mean," 62.
40. Harris, *Jesus as God*, 190-202. Against Attridge, *Hebrews,* 58.
41. Some of these texts do not specifically say that Jesus is seated (cf. Acts 2:33; Rom 8:34; 1 Pet 3:22).
42. See Darrell Bock, *Blasphemy and Exaltation in Judaism and the Final Examination of Jesus: A Philological-Historical Study of the Key Jewish Themes Impacting Mark 14:61–64* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000).
43. Bauckham, "The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," 33.
44. Meier, "Structure and Theology in Heb 1,1-4," 180.
45. So O. Hofius, "ἀπαύγασμα," *EDNT*, 1:117-18.
46. Wisdom 7:26 doesn't settle what the translation should be (rightly Attridge, *Hebrews*, 42).
47. Cf. *LN* 14.48; G. Kittel, "ἀπαύγασμα," *TDNT* 1:508; Webster, "One Who Is Son," 85; Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 98-99; Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 94; Peeler, "What Does 'Father' Mean," 60.
48. BDAG, s.v. "ἀπαύγασμα." See the further discussion below.
49. So also Webster, "One Who Is Son," 85.
50. G. Kelber, "χαρακτήρ," *TDNT* 9:418; K. Berger, "χαρακτήρ," *EDNT*, 3:456
51. Webster, "One Who Is Son," 87.
52. Peeler, "What Does 'Father' Mean," 61.
53. Some (e.g., Jerome H. Neyrey, "'Without Beginning of Days or End of Life' (Hebrews 7:3): Topos for a True Deity," *CBQ* 53 [1991]: 439-55; Bauckham, "The Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews," 28–32) see Jesus' divinity where he is said to be like a Melchizedekian priest "without father, mother, or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Heb 7:3). He has an "indestructible life" (7:16). Such a reading is possible and would accord with what is said here about Jesus' deity. But such a reading of Hebrews 7 is unlikely since Jesus is compared to a Melchizedekian priest, and the latter was clearly human.
54. Bates, *The Birth of the Trinity*, 164–65 suggests that the Spirit is also the one speaking in Heb 1:8–9, but this isn't clear to me.
55. Lindars, *Theology of Hebrews,* 57.
56. Kenneth L. Schenk, "God Has Spoken: Hebrews' Theology of the Scriptures," in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. R. Bauckham, et al.), 334–35.
57. Moffatt sees a reference to Christ's spiritual and inward nature (*Hebrews,* 124).
58. Cf. Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays*, 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1903), 264.
59. Rightly Koester, *Hebrews,* 410–11; William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9–13* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1991), 240.
60. In support of this view, see Joanne J. McGrath, *"Through the Eternal Spirit": An Historical Study of the Exegesis of Hebrews 9:13–14,"* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1961). McGrath shows that the history of

interpretation supports a reference to the Holy Spirit, who animated and filled Christ, and he is eternal because the effects are eternal. See also Otto Michel who sees reference to the Holy Spirit as the power which enabled him to offer himself to God (*Der Brief an die Hebräer* [Kritisch-exegegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966]), 314.

61. *Theodoret of Cyrus: Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul,* vol. 2 (trans. with introduction by R. C. Hill; Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011), 139.
62. Ibid, 140.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., 138–39.
65. Ibid., 141, 144.
66. Ibid., 142.
67. Ibid., 143.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid., 173–74.
70. *St. Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews* in vol. 14 of *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (ed. P. Schaff; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956), 367.
71. Ibid., 368.
72. Ibid., 373.
73. Ibid., 376.
74. Ibid., 370–71.
75. Ibid., 370.
76. *Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises* in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (ed. P. Schaff; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1954), 107. So also Cyril (see Rowan Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews* [BGBE 15; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973], 321–23).
77. Gregory of Nyssa, *Hebrews* in Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ed. E. M. Heen and P. D. W. Krey; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 10.
78. *Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises,* 94.
79. Gregory of Nyssa, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 12.
80. *Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises,* 119.
81. Cf. Bates, *The Birth of the Trinity*, 70.
82. Rowan Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews* (BGBE 15; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973), 118, 253; Gregory of Nyssa, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 23.
83. Gregory of Nyssa, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 10. Cf. *Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises,* 156–57.
84. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 27. See also Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation*, 238. Greer says that Theodore follows the Cappadocians in seeing the first part of Heb 1:3 as indicating the unity of the Father and the Son, while the second part denotes "the separation of Father and Son in two hypostaseis" (p. 245). So also Chrysostom and Theodoret of Cyrus (Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation*, 283, 297).
85. Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation*, 75–76.
86. So Photius, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 53.
87. Gregory of Nyssa, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 98–105.
88. Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation*, 259.
89. Ibid., 259–60.
90. Ibid., 92.
91. Ibid., 94–95.
92. Ibid., 96.
93. Ibid., 123–25.
94. Gregory of Nyssa, *Hebrews,* Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 12.

Leading Many to Glory: An Exposition of Hebrews 2:5-3:3[1]

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Some time ago the international media came alight with the news that members of Britain's royal family had eschewed the private jet and flown on a commercial airline for their summer getaway. Fellow passengers on the budget flight could hardly believe that the royals had come so low, sharing their flight and traveling alongside them. When people of noble birth or celebrity fame are found walking among us, we are often fascinated and surprised. At the heart of the Bible's message is the startling news the news that the eternal Son of God was born in a stable, lived among us, and gave his life on a Roman cross. The second chapter of Hebrews invites us to give careful thought to that stunning reality.

The prologue and main opening section of Hebrews (1:1-2:4) address the dignity of Jesus Christ and the degree of his exaltation.[2] Comparing Jesus to the angels (as respective agents of divine revelation), chapter 1 demonstrates that Jesus is not only the promised King of Israel, but the King who is truly and ontologically the Son of God. As the true Son of God, he is the

most exalted person in the entire universe. Therefore, Hebrews reasons, we need to listen carefully to the salvation message he brings (2:1-4). The first readers of Hebrews (who were likely believers from a Jewish background) needed to hear that message. They were evidently coming under pressure to treat the Old Testament (OT) Law as the final and complete body of divine revelation, and in so doing to set aside the gospel revealed by Jesus and return once more to the rites and rituals of the OT Law. They needed to see that the promised Messiah would not simply be called God's "son" as a somewhat hyperbolic courtesy given to kings of old (see Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14, cited in Heb 1:5), but as an ontological reality as the true Son.[3] The OT expected that the coming Messiah would indeed be God himself, the truly exalted one, whose salvation word must be heeded. That was the focus of the opening section.

If main first section of Hebrews tackled the question of just how exalted Jesus is, this second section (2:5-3:3) tackles a rather different question: Given that Jesus so highly exalted in his being—*given that he is indeed God himself*—then why did he come so very low in his humanity, suffering and death?

At the time of writing, Canada has recently gone through a national election season, and the United States is soon to enter its own. During a political campaign, it is always important for candidates to project the right kind of image: unassailable confidence, an ability to win, and a plausible capacity to take their place representing a great nation on the world stage. For the people of Israel in the first century, the promised Messiah was expected to be a great political and military leader. He would remove the yoke of Roman oppression from Israel and lead the nation to take its rightful place within the international order as God's chosen people. That was the popular expectation. And so, when the true Messiah came and showed no interest in entering the world of politics or mounting a military campaign, he was a great puzzle to many. Doubts about his messiahship seemed to be confirmed when this would-be King not only failed to defeat the Romans but was rather defeated by them, enduring humiliation and execution as a criminal.

In 1 Corinthians 1, Paul writes of this offence of the cross of Christ and notes how, for the people of Israel, it became a stumbling block to their acceptance of him: "For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, *a stumbling block to Jews* and folly to Gentiles…" (1

Cor 1:22). It is the issue of this "stumbling block" that the writer is dealing with here in the second main section of Hebrews (2:5-3:3). If Jesus is truly the exalted Messiah, the divine Son of God, then why did he come so low in humanity, suffering, and death?

Coming Low to Lead us to Glory

In the city of Ottawa, where I live, there has been a plan in place to construct a light rail transit system for a number of years. After a decade and more of intensive planning and sixteen months of delays, the long-awaited Confederation Line recently opened. It was a day of rejoicing to see the project completed and the promises of civic leaders fulfilled. Like with many long-range infrastructure projects of this kind, there were times in the process when one could have been forgiven for wondering if the plan had be derailed, forgotten or sidelined in some way. Were the authorities still committed to it, despite wrangling at city hall, despite sinkholes appearing in awkward locations in the city center, despite budgetary challenges, engineering obstacles, and all the rest?

There is no doubt that God had a grand plan for humanity back at the very beginning, in the Garden of Eden. He created the man and woman to be his image-bearers and vice-regents in the world (Gen 1:26-28). He gave them a dignified mandate and a glorious calling. That was a long time ago, however, and there have been plenty of setbacks and disappointments along the way: the fall, the flood, ongoing rebellion and revolt, and ultimately the murder of the very Son of God. With so many setbacks over so many years, we might be tempted to ask: Does God's original plan still stand? Is he still committed to it? Will we ever see humanity fulfill its glorious mandate?

Hebrews wants us to know and understand that God cares deeply about humanity and has never for a moment abandoned his great plans for us. Having spent quite a lot of time in chapter 1 discussing the stature of angels, the writer opens this new section with an insistence that the world to come is not built for their sake (2:5). The angels may be dignified creatures, but God's plans do not center on them. The special focus of God's plans for the world to come is humanity. To remind us of this purpose, and to open up that purpose to us, the writer turns (in verse 6) to Psalm 8. It is worth having the Psalm in its entirety before us:

O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?
Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,

and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Reflecting on this psalm, we might say that it looks back *wistfully* to the Garden of Eden and humanity's fist days before the fall, while at the same time looking forward *prophetically* to the day of Jesus Christ. David, the author, recalls the Garden of Eden and the wide dominion God gave to humanity at creation. Adam and Eve were set just a little lower than the angels and were crowned with glory and honor as God's image-bearers and vice-regents. Yet, as he writes the psalm, David knows that the first humans failed to be the representatives of God that they should have been. They failed to rule God's world in God's way as his true image-bearers. Writing long after the fall of Genesis 3, David knows that the pattern is not functioning as it should; the

creation is not sitting peaceably under the feet of humanity. As we remember that this is the context in which it is written, we see that the psalm is actually filled with hope. Despite the mess that the world is in, and despite the fact that God's design for his creation is not currently working as it should, David's looks in faith to the original divine pattern and to its coming fulfillment. His psalm points forward to a renewal and a redemption yet to come.

In quoting the psalm here, the writer of Hebrews is saying to us that the grand divine plan for humanity is still in view. More than that, he is signaling that the self-lowering of the Son of God in his descent to earth is at the heart of God's work to bring that plan to fruition. He opens up the psalm in a Christ-centered way to drive home the point: "Now in putting everything in subjection to him he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." (2:8b-9) God put everything in subjection to humanity in the Garden. Because of the fall, however, we do not yet see all things in the creation subject to us human beings in general. But here is what we do see: the Jesus who came low, now exalted on high.

God had a glorious plan for humanity. We failed in our exercise of the dominion he gave us. So, is that the end of the line, the dream dead, and the plan forgotten? No, the Father sent Jesus to be a human being this world, "son of man". More than that, he sent him to be *the Son of Man*, the true and perfect representative of humanity to whom Psalm 8 points. The Father sent Jesus to become one of us and, as a human being, to fulfill the human calling perfectly. In Jesus, we see the one man who never failed, never sinned, never denied the glorious calling of God in creation. Having lived the perfect human life, Jesus then suffered a death he did not deserve, but one which we amply deserve because of our failure to fulfill our calling as people made in the image of God.

What was the result of all this? The result was that Jesus was able to bring many fallen human beings to glory: "For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, *in bringing many sons to glory*, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering" (2:10, emphasis mine). Through his incarnate life and suffering, Jesus was leading his saved people to glory, to the world to come, where the saints will share in his rule and his reign. He was leading the way to a glorious renewal where his redeemed

people will exercise dominion in a new heaven and a new earth, just as God created and called humanity to do, right from the start.

That is God's great plan and vision for humanity. But for it to come to pass, the divine Son-King, the Messiah, had to become a human being. He had to become one of us to save us: "For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers" (2:11).

This language of "brotherhood" is significant within the point that the writer is making. It is at the heart of Jesus' saving purpose to become human and, through his incarnation, to gain the ability to call his people his "brothers." The incarnation, and the suffering that it entails, becomes the means by which Jesus redeems and gathers these "brothers" to himself. At 2:12 Hebrews cites Psalm 22:22 to establish this point and to demonstrate that it was set out in the Old Testament as God's plan and purpose for the Messiah: "I will tell of your name to by brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise."

Psalm 22 is a vitally important psalm for the New Testament (NT) in its understanding of Jesus' work at the cross, speaking as it does with such prophetic clarity of the Messiah's suffering and death. Having laid out in some detail the agony of the Messiah, it moves beyond the suffering of his death to his triumph in resurrection life. The keystone of the victory and vindication that follows his suffering is the gathering of a "congregation" of brothers in whose midst the King will praise the name of the Lord. The fruit of the Messiah's death and ensuing triumph will be that people from the ends of the earth will join in worshipping the Lord, led by the vindicated King. The vision of the psalm is of a redeemed humanity joining the King in true worship after his suffering.

On the anniversary of the September 11 attacks this year, news outlets once again published photographs recalling the devastation of the attacks in New York. As they do each year, the photographs brought home once again the horrendous tragedy of it all, the suffering and the loss of life. Images of the firefighters on the scene called to mind the agonizing decision the first responders all faced on that fateful day: Do we run *away* from the danger of buildings which were in danger of collapse, or do we run *inside* to save the perishing? So many heroic first responders ran inside, and perished through their outstanding acts of bravery.

With our world in such a disastrous state, it is worth pondering: Why did Jesus choose to come down and enter into all this? Why did he choose to expose himself to all the suffering, all the misery, and all the mess of a fallen and broken world? Why did he willingly embrace a sure and certain death in doing so?

Hebrews proclaims to us the astounding news that Jesus came down that he might raise us up. He became human that he might lead human beings to glory. He came down to this world that he might suffer for us; and he suffered for us that he might redeem us; and he redeemed us that we might join him as a congregation of brothers, who will together declare the praises of the Lord. That is the big picture. But having given us the big picture, the writer now takes time to walk us through the some of the closer details. Why, specifically and precisely, did Jesus need to become human to lead us to glory? What are the theological underpinnings to that?

Coming Low to Defeat Death

> "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." (2:14-15)

Death is the great enemy of humanity; it is the supreme achievement of the devil; it is the sadness at the heart of our existence; it is the tragedy lurking in the shadows at the edge of every loving relationship. This exposition comes to publication in the midst of the greatest pandemic the world has seen in a century and more. The grim reality of death is all around us at the present time. Our news feeds are filled with tragic mortality figures and shocking pictures of mass graves and overflowing mortuaries. In normal times, our society does its best to ignore death and to pretend to be largely untroubled by it. But Hebrews calls out our pretense: in what is really a profound psychological insight into human society, the writer insists that human beings live in lifelong slavery to the fear of death (2:15). In this time of pandemic, we can no longer pretend that death is not coming to us or that it holds no fear for our society. Death is the menacing prospect before each one of us, and it is by no means irrational to fear it in our natural state.

One of our children had a bit of a nasty fall just recently, and we ended up spending quite a few hours at the hospital as a result. When the accident first happened, it was a little startling both for us and for him. The rather dramatic gash led to plenty of bleeding and required a certain amount of repair. When that kind of thing happens, as it does from time to time with children, we parents are reminded of their fragility. Most children bounce around fairly happily most of the time, full of life and vitality. But when the injury comes, there is a reminder that, although they are young and strong, they are also very fragile. Children are flesh and blood. They are vulnerable and, ultimately, of course, they are mortal.

Hebrews wants us to see that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, stepped into the fragility that is ours as the "children" of humanity. He did so that he might defeat our great enemy, the devil, through death itself. The whole shape of the biblical narrative tells us that the price of sin is death. The Lord affirms it in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:17); the sacrificial system of the OT reinforces it (Lev 4:20-35); the great Servant Song of Isaiah 53 presupposes it; and the NT teaches it (Rom 6:23). According to the logic of the Bible, the bottom line is that sin will result in death. Either we will die for our sin, or another will die in our place; but the wages must be paid. The heart of the gospel message is that Jesus came to pay that price for us as our substitute. However, in order to pay this price through death as our substitute, it was essential that he should become human. In his divinity, the eternal God cannot die. He lives forever and never changes. And so for the eternal God to save us *from death through death*, he had to join humanity in the Person of his Son. God the Son had to become a human being. This could be no mere show or illusion; he needed a genuine humanity that could truly die. And so Jesus the Son of God partook of these things that he might defeat the devil, undo his terrible work, and "deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery."

Coming Low to Become our High Priest

> "Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." (2:17-18)

In recent months *The Economist* has carried recruiting advertisements for the Central Intelligence Agency. Recent ads have given the following invitation: "For the intellectually curious adventurer looking for an unparalleled, high-impact international opportunity, we offer a way of life that challenges the deepest resources of an individual's intellect, resilience and judgment." The ad is limited in what it says about the kinds of skills and qualifications the Agency seeks, but the reader knows they will certainly need to have a powerful intellect, unusual resilience, and very wise judgment. Those would surely be the minimum requirements for anyone who would join their number and participate in their very sensitive work. We might imagine that, in addition, applicants would need facility in multiple languages, outstanding analytical skills and problem-solving abilities, deep psychological insight into people, among a whole host of other skills. After all, the nation's security would rest on their shoulders.

Within the people of God, there can hardly be a more significant and sensitive role than that of high priest. The high priest mediates between God and his people, representing God before the people and the people before God. What are the requirements and qualifications for the job? They are many, and the writer is going to spend some time and energy outlining them before he is finished his discourse. But here is the basic qualification: the high priest for the people of God must be a true human being who has experienced trial and suffering as a human (2:17-18). If Jesus was going to be faithful and merciful in the job of high priest, he needed to know something of the reality of human life in a world of suffering and sin. He needed to know what it was like to come under trial, to face opposition, to undergo the attacks of the evil one, to suffer physically, and even to die. He had to become like us.

It is worth noting here that the word translated "tempted" (*peirastheis*) in verse 18 could equally be translated "tested." In light of the immediate context, it seems likely that the emphasis here falls on the "testing" that Jesus endured as he did the propitiatory work mentioned in the previous verse. Jesus' loyalty and obedience to the Father were sorely tested as he approached the cross. As he was tested in this way, he suffered very deeply. Because of this experience, he is able to help those who are being tested as they go through their own experiences of deep suffering.

As a pastor, I have the privilege of meeting with people at crucial points in their lives, often in times of suffering, trial, and difficulty. Sometimes a

member of the church family will be going through an experience that I have myself gone through in some measure. In such times, I can speak from real personal experience as I seek to encourage and help them. But then, on other occasions, a person or a family will share with me the details of a trial that they are facing, but it will be a trial that I have not experienced in any measure. I feel for them and I want to support them, but I know that I am somewhat limited in my ability to help them in that time because I have not shared their experience.

Wonderfully, Jesus our High Priest plumbed the depths of human suffering. It is not the case that he faced every type of human suffering in every type of way. However, Jesus' experience of suffering is such that we can never point to any suffering in our experience and say that it goes further or deeper than the suffering of Jesus Christ. At the cross, Jesus took on himself the sin of the guilty and faced not only the physical agony of the worst execution the Romans could orchestrate, but the very judgment of God.

The familiar hymn "Crown Him with Many Crowns" captures well something of the wonder of the fact that the Son of God identified with us in this way:

> Crown him the Son of God,
> Before the worlds began,
> And ye who tread where He hath trod,
> Crown Him the Son of Man;
> Who every grief hath known
> That wrings the human breast,
> And takes and bears them for His own,
> That all in Him may rest.
>
> – Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring

For many people, the question of suffering is a real sticking point in coming to trust in Jesus. How can a loving God look on, unmoved, while his creatures suffer? This is an important question, but the truth we are considering shatters its basic objection and presupposition. We may yet have all kinds of questions about the problem of human suffering, but we can hardly say that God has stayed on the sidelines. We can hardly charge that God does

not care or claim that God does not understand. No; in the person of his Son, he has come down; he has entered into human suffering; and he has plumbed its very depths.

Because he has done this, the Lord Jesus is fully qualified to be our High Priest, the representative of a suffering humanity before a compassionate God. It is not uncommon to go through a time of very deep trial and feel very isolated because of the sense that no one else could understand. Some will keep quiet about trial and grief for that very reason; it is a pain to bear alone because no one else could really comprehend it. The Lord Jesus suffered profoundly when he went through the deepest of trials at Calvary. He suffered as he bore the insults of his enemies, the betrayal of his friends, and the agony of the cross. He suffered terribly as he faced the very judgment of God. Because of this, Jesus is the one person to whom we can feel utterly confident bringing our suffering. He is the one person who will understand with compassion and depth of insight as we endure painful trails of many kinds. He is qualified—*truly qualified*—to be our High Priest.

These insights shed light on Hebrews' potentially perplexing statement that the Father should choose to "make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering" (2:10). We might imagine that the idea of perfection involves the removal of a fault or deficiency, or even the purging of sin. But it makes best sense to understand the language of "perfection" here in terms of vocational preparation. Jesus was made fully ready for his work as our High Priest through the hard experience of human life and suffering in a fallen world. This did not involve the removal of any fault or sin in Jesus (for there was none, 4:15), but rather the preparation for a new role.[4]

As High Priest, Jesus sympathizes and he understands. There is, however, more to the role than simply being a sympathetic ear. The high priest was required to bring the sacrificial offering to address the sin of the people. He needed "to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (2:17). To "propitiate" is to address, satisfy and turn away anger. For Jesus, as High Priest, to make propitiation for the sins of the people required him to bring an offering that fully addressed the just and righteous anger of God due to the wrongdoing of the people. The OT priests brought animal offerings for that purpose. Hebrews later tells us that these sacrifices were never effective in taking away sin (10:4). They were symbols and placeholders, in anticipation of a truly effective offering. But this High Priest brought, not an animal, but

himself. As the Son of God offered himself as a blameless and pure sacrifice of infinite worth for the sins of the people, he was able to be the true and final propitiation for sin.

The humanity, the suffering, and the death of Jesus were entirely essential in order for him to be the saving High Priest we needed. Despite how it may have seemed to the onlooker, the suffering of Jesus was no accident of history, but rather the eternal plan of God. Jesus had to come low—very low, even to the lowest depths of creaturely humanity—if he was, in fact, going to save human beings.

Considering Christ

> "Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house." (3:1)

What are we to make of the incarnation, suffering and death of Jesus our High Priest? What is our right response to these things? As we find repeatedly in Hebrews, the expected response is set out for us in very simple terms with an exhortation marked with the call "therefore" to take specific action. In this case, the action required is simply this: "consider Christ."

Often when coming to study the Bible or hear sermons, many have an appetite for a quick how-to message. You know the sort of thing: how to reduce stress in three easy steps, or how to improve my marriage in five steps. In light of that appetite, the kind of application that Hebrews gives us here ("consider Jesus") can sound a little flat for some hearers. The same was true in the previous section, where the application was simply to "pay much closer attention" to the salvation message we have heard from Jesus (2:1). However, the more we reflect on these applications that Hebrews gives us, the more profound we find they are, and the more we see how urgently we need to hear and heed them.

The biggest need of the human heart is not to find three easy steps to reduce stress our lives, or to find five easy steps to make our marriages better. No, the biggest need of the human heart is to see Jesus Christ with the eyes of faith and delight in him more. The greater he becomes for us, the more everything else falls into its proper place. And so, rather than try to fix all

our practical problems (and the first readers of this letter had all the same kinds of challenges and problems we face today), the writer instead focuses on renewing and expanding our vision of Jesus Christ.

The writer impresses upon us the awe-inspiring truth that God the eternal Son humbled himself and entered his own creation as heaven's "apostle" (emissary) to earth. He sets before us the fact that the Son became incarnate, suffered, and died as a human being, that he might be our Great High Priest in heaven above. He shows us that Jesus did all this in faithfulness to the Father who appointed him. He opens our eyes to see that Jesus endured all this he might make us sharers in a "heavenly calling," leading us to glory, enabling us to enjoy the fullness of our humanity as God intended it. He reminds us that God made us dignified creatures, bearing his image, with the noble function of exercising dominion under him in his world. He made us for glory. We squandered so much in the fall, but in his grace and mercy, Jesus has come low that he might raise us up. He has come low that he might defeat that great enemy, death itself. He come low that the profound sadness that hangs like a cloud over every moment of life on this earth might be lifted from us. He has come low that he might qualify to be our Great High Priest; that he might make the truly effective offering for sin; that he might know our trials and our testing and our suffering, and so be merciful and faithful as he serves on our behalf.

And so, brothers and sisters – all who share in a heavenly calling – let us "consider Jesus."

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1. This exposition was originally delivered to the Metropolitan Bible Church, Ottawa, Canada on September 15, 2019. It has been edited from its original form, but is offered here as a pastoral exposition of the passage rather than an exhaustive academic treatment.
2. On the division of these sections and the broader structure of Hebrews, see Jonathan I. Griffiths, *Hebrews and Divine Speech* (LNTS 507; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 28-35.
3. For a helpful treatment of the title "Son of God" as applied to OT kings and ultimately to Jesus, see D. A. Carson, *Jesus the Son of God* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2012).
4. David Peterson very helpfully sets out this understanding of the language of "perfection" in Hebrews in his monograph and in a shorter article: David Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection: An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the 'Epistle to the Hebrews'* (SNTSMS 47; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) and "Perfection: achieved and experienced," in *The Perfect Saviour* (ed. Jonathan Griffiths; Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2012), 125-145.

Seeing is NOT Believing: Faith Versus Sight in Hebrews

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Introduction

We've all heard, and likely used, phrases like "The Heroes of the Faith," or "The Hall of Fame of Faith" to describe Hebrews 11. Those titles are fine as far as they go but often the sermons, lectures, books, chapters, and articles that use such titles tend to deal with chapter 11 in the abstract, apart from the context Hebrews. The result is that chapter 11 becomes something like a collection of *WW#D?* What would Abraham do? What would Moses do? What would Samson do? I doubt anyone has proposed *WWSD*, but he is in the chapter and if we take the "Heroes" approach, we need to include him. One of various problems with this perspective on Hebrews 11 is that the answer is, inevitably, "he'd believe, just like you need to believe." The real danger here is that what is arguably the single-most faith focused chapter in the Bible becomes, ironically, about what we *need to do*. The minute we start looking at the various characters in this chapter and say "you *need* to believe just like Abraham believed," there is a high probability that we will turn faith back in on ourselves, the exact opposite

direction that faith takes. Faith always looks outside itself for hope, help, and assurance. The person of faith is not a hero. The only true hero is the object of faith, Jesus Christ. He is the fulfillment of God's promise to which all the characters in chapter 10 looked forward. If we preach, teach, or just read Hebrews 11 and the only application we come up with is, "Now go and believe likewise," then the believer and his or her effort or determination to believe becomes the focus. The object of faith, Jesus, is replaced by the subject, the believer. If we read chapter 11 and only think, "These people put my faith to shame (which, by the way, they do) I'd better start believing more," we have, probably unconsciously, made ourselves both the subject and the object of faith. I am absolutely not denying that the characters in this chapter are exemplars, models of faith after whom we are meant to pattern our lives. The characters are exemplars in so far as they show us the true nature of faith. In Enoch, Moses, Abraham and the rest, we have examples of people who looked outside themselves, looked beyond and through what they could see with their eyes, and put their trust in God. The star of the chapter, however, is God and his promise in Jesus.

Enough Faith?

The author of Hebrews does not mean for these characters to make his audience feel guilty about how they don't believe enough. Rest assured, no reader, myself first and foremost, believes enough. On the other hand, we don't need a warehouse of faith, but only a mustard seed. We must not, however, fall into the trap of making the seed metaphor about quantity. When Jesus commends a mustard seed of faith (Matt 17:20), he's not talking about a measure but saying that, for his followers, there is only faith and to resort to anything else leads to certain failure. Either trust God or trust yourself. So when he condemns them for having "little" faith, we should read "little" as *no* faith. If "little" means size of faith, then why illustrate the faith that's needed with a mustard seed? If quantity is the point it would make more sense to say "a barn full." Faith, however, is not a matter of either quantity or quality, not a thing that can be measured and never a thing about which we can say, "I have *this* much faith," or "I have *enough* faith."

Only God "Measures" Faith

To be sure, there are examples in the Gospels when Jesus declares that people have astonishing faith, particularly in contrast to those who don't believe. The Centurion (Matt 8:10), the woman with a hemorrhage (Luke 8:48), the blind man on the road to Jericho (Luke 19:42), are all examples of people in whom Jesus recognized true faith. In none of those examples do we see people measuring, judging, or declaring their own faith—it is Jesus who declares their faith. Faith always cries out, in one voice with the father who brought his demon possessed son to Jesus, "I believe, help my unbelief." The examples in Hebrews 11 are just the same. It is the author's interpretation and God's commendation of their faith that counts. As readers are well aware, all the characters in their own OT narratives were often marked by doubt, uncertainty, contradictions, and sometimes outright sinfulness. In their original narrative contexts they are not "heroes of faith," they are, however, people who believed, however imperfectly, that God did, will, and therefore does keep his promises.

We "See" Jesus

If I could go back in time and ask my grandmother to tell me about faith, or to define it, I have no doubt she would have quoted Hebrews 11:1 from memory. My grandmother knew the Bible as well or better than anyone I've known. I imagine the verse is familiar to you too: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."[1] My grandmother would have called that a "definition" of faith. It seems to make sense to call it a definition since, after all, the author does say, "Faith *is* the…." For various reasons scholars like to point out that 11:1 isn't really so much a definition of faith but a description of what faith *does* or *looks like* generally or specifically in the context of Hebrews. Is it a "definition" in the sense of it being a comprehensive, universal end-all-be-all statement of faith? No, it isn't. There is, however, nothing wrong with calling it *a* definition.[2] No one is going down the primrose path to destruction for thinking 11:1 is a definition. We can at least agree that it serves as a contextual definition in Hebrews. I would say that it goes beyond a mere contextual definition and should be at the heart of any attempt to "define" biblical faith. Nevertheless, the statement in 11:1 will be clearer, and so less an abstraction, if set in the context of the letter. A context built on the idea that we *see* Jesus.

The Context of Faith in Hebrews

Before turning to chapter 11 there is some groundwork needed to set it in its context. Contrary to how we might think of "faith" specifically in Hebrews, focused as we usually are on chapter 11, the author lays down the foundation from the beginning. Simply put, before the author begins his argument in earnest, he sets the entire letter in the context of faith in Jesus as the fulfillment of God's entire plan. Recall the memorable opening line: "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world" (1:1-2). That is not merely a dramatic introduction to get readers' attention—though it does—but a summary statement of the main theme of the entire letter. Jesus is the divinely appointed heir, the end-point and goal of God's speaking to the world. God spoke creation into existence (Gen 1:3ff) through his Son and now speaks his final word to the world in and through him. Soon after, having begun his argument for the supremacy and finality of Jesus, the author sets his reader's lives squarely at the convergence of the past and the future. Through believing the Apostolic witness in the present, they look back on God's past work in Jesus that secures salvation and the future (2:3). That, in a nutshell, is faith. Based on God's perfect track record in the past in Jesus, which secures his promise for the future, we live in the present by faith.

The author continues building this foundation when he says that God has subjected the world to Jesus in fulfillment of Psalm 8:4-6 to such an extent that there is "nothing outside his control" (2:6-8). He then makes an unmistakable contrast between the experience of physical sight and perception and the experience of seeing by faith: "At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone" (2:8-9). We do not *see* the world subjected to Jesus, yet according to God the Father revealed in the Apostolic word of the cross, the world is absolutely subjected to him. So Jesus rules and reigns over the world with supreme and sovereign power, but where is the proof? There is, quite simply, no proof other than the Apostolic word of the Gospel. Yes, the Apostolic word was attested by "signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit" (2:4), but those things witnessed to the authenticity of

the word about Jesus, they didn't *prove* anything in and of themselves. Signs and wonders pointed to the greater thing, they were (nor are) the thing itself. Keep that idea in mine as you read on.

For us, 2000 plus years of history has done nothing if not underscore the fact that the world *looks* anything but subjected to Jesus. Violence, injustice, murder, war, and a global pandemic dominate the news and, as a result, our thoughts. On a personal level, the ongoing struggles with temptation, sin, failure, and general malaise, leave us equally in doubt about Jesus' sovereignty. Doubt, by the way, doesn't have to be conscious or much less expressed out loud. Our practical doubt, however, is evident in our various attempts to create order, to fix ourselves, to justify ourselves, to reach out for what appears to give relief or some sense of stability. Of course there are times of joy, peace, fulfillment and contentment too, but even good things have a subtle way of drawing our attention to what we see as a reason to believe. In other words, everything we see often lines up and asks, "Did God actually say…?" (Gen 3:1).

Over against the visual, experiential, and perceivable, there is a different kind of seeing, namely the seeing by faith. As the author says, we don't see everything subjected to Jesus at the moment, "but we *see* him" reigning as king having conquered sin and death for our sake (2:8-9). It is by faith, alone, that we see Jesus. It sounds so simple, but the challenge to believe is the greatest challenge we face on a daily basis. The same was true for the original audience of Hebrews.

Christ is the Goal

The problem(s) Hebrews addresses may be summarized in a similar way: "Did God actually speak once and for all in Jesus?" The author writes to people on the brink of disaster, a disaster of faith. His purpose is to forestall a death-march back into something that was never meant to be permanent and that had fulfilled exactly the role for which God intended it. The Mosaic covenant was never a stopping point in God's eternal plan, never a source of salvation. That covenant, through which God spoke with one purpose above all is over. God's speaking through that covenant, including the temple, the priesthood, the sacrifices and even Moses himself, ended when he spoke finally in his Son. The draw of the Mosaic covenant had on the Jewish Christian audience was fueled by sight. They could *see* it, touch it, feel it, smell

it, experience it, and connect to it personally. In that way, they were doubly mistaken for not only was the Mosaic covenant fulfilled, the things in it were always and only pointing to something beyond themselves. Their desire to go back reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the covenant itself. So, it is three strikes and you're out. The Mosaic covenant is past; strike one. The Mosaic covenant could not, nor was meant to, save; strike two. The Mosaic covenant only pointed to something else, and it (he) has come; strike three.

To be sure, the draw back to the Mosaic covenant was not simply a matter of sight over faith. Also, don't confuse "sight" with only physical seeing. The author is not saying essentially, "Your problem is that you like the Mosaic covenant because it's filled with things you can see." It is not that simple. They were undoubtedly influenced by various things such as culture, history, social pressures, and confusion about how the coming of Jesus affected or connected to the Mosaic covenant. The audience was not only interested in the trappings of the covenant. They were under substantial pressure from without to (re)conform to their ancestral heritage. There is, however, an unmistakable contrast between the many aspects of the Mosaic covenant the author addresses and the new reality of faith in Jesus as the fulfillment of the entire covenant. The priesthood, the temple, the sacrifices, and Law itself, all offered tangible evidence of the covenant and membership in the covenant. The issue is, however, that they were never *the thing*. Not only were the Hebrews wrong to want to go back, they wrong about how it functioned all along as well.

Now that Jesus has come, those things have been fulfilled, purposefully replaced by the goal to which they all pointed. Unlike the earthly priests who offered sacrifices perpetually both for themselves and the people (8:3, 5; 9:6-7; 10:11), Jesus, in the order of Melchizedek, came as a prefect high priest leaving no need for others to come after him (7:11-17; 10:12). In contrast to the earthly tabernacle containing the Holy place with a lampstand, table, and bread of the Presence, the Most Holy Place containing the golden altar, arc, and urn, Aarons staff, and the tablets of the Law (9:1-5), Jesus entered "a more perfect tent, not made by hands, that is, not of this creation" (9:11). Over against the blood of the sacrifices (9:19-22) that could never deal finally with sin and which served as a constant reminder of sin (10:3-4), Jesus, the priest, offered his own blood as a sacrifice once and for all (9:12; 10:12-14). In place of and in fulfillment of the earthly priesthood,

tabernacle, and sacrifices, there is forgiveness, reconciliation and peace with God through Jesus (10:19-22).

Heavenly Shadows

The problem the author addresses runs much deeper than the simple difference between the tangible elements of the Mosaic covenant and faith in Jesus. As mentioned above, it can't be boiled down to the Mosaic covenant being merely sight—the problem is they failed to recognize that the priesthood, Temple, and sacrifices were, from the very inception of the Mosaic covenant, were only reflections of a greater, heavenly reality. The author makes this point more than once. The priests "serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (8:5), meaning that the very plans for and construction of the tabernacle/temple and all its furnishings were *always* pointing to something beyond themselves. He also calls the entire sacrificial system "copies of the heavenly things" (8:23), again emphasizing their transitory nature as signs of something greater. What he says in this regard is not only essential for understanding Hebrews, but for our entire conception(s) of redemptive history. We tend to think of redemptive history, promise and fulfillment, or even typology as moving along tied inevitably to the passing of time, a linear line moving from creation to new creation. The author of Hebrews however, while of course sharing that chronological perspective, doesn't just draw a line moving from A to B historically; his line starting with the Mosaic covenant points up *then* forward—like a right triangle (if that helps).[3] In other words, what the Hebrews were on the verge of missing is what many in the nation of Israel missed throughout their history (not that we should boast of doing much better), namely, that the entire covenant was a sign of a greater, heavenly reality, and never the reality itself. The tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices were meant to lead worshippers to see though them by faith up to God and his promises past, present, and future. That's why it was a fatal error to turn back to the Mosaic covenant. Turning back meant abandoning God's revelation of himself in Jesus, the fulfillment of all his promises, in favor of earthly trappings that never contained the reality to begin with. The conflict between faith and sight isn't a new covenant invention, the distinction is built in from the start. That's what paves the way to reading chapter 11 in context.

Recalled to Faith with a Warning

The end result of the author's discussion concerning the fulfillment of the Mosaic covenant in Jesus is a plea for faith. Since believers (and he speaks to them as believers), may enter God's presence on the basis of Jesus' blood fully persuaded that he is the great high priest over God's house—not an earthly man-made house—he enjoins them to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (10:22). Why can they have such confidence? Because "he who promised is faithful" (10:23). The one who was faithful in the past and who offers full forgiveness without question is the one who promises their future. With that past and future foundation they can persevere in the present looking forward to the coming day of salvation (10:25).

The promise does not come without a warning. Though the warning in chapter 6 gets the lion's share of attention, the warning in chapter 10 is every bit as stark and definitive. He warns about continuing to "sin deliberately" after receiving the Gospel (10:26). The deliberate sin is fundamentally the sin of unbelief—recall the first warning in 3:12: "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God." Drawing an analogy from the Mosaic covenant, the author argues from the lesser to the greater. Sin against the Mosaic covenant resulted in death (10:28). So, if sin against God in a covenant that was temporary and which served to point to a greater covenant was punished by death, how much more will sinning against the once for all sacrifice of Jesus be punished (10:29)? I often put it this way when lecturing to my students: "If sin was that serious in a covenant ratified by the blood of animals that could not save and was administered by human priests, why do we act like sin is really no big deal in a covenant ratified by the blood of Jesus the great and final high-priest?" Falling into "the hands of the living God" (10:31), is not *less* dreadful in light of the revelation of God in Jesus than it was during the time of promise. It is, in fact, *more* dreadful. The warning is meant to snap them back to the reality—the draw backwards to Moses meant nothing less than rebellion against Jesus.

Notice that their sin of unbelief was not just a failure mentally to agree to some propositions about Jesus. Biblical faith is not mere mental assent to truth. That does not deny cognitive agreement, but we must differentiate biblical faith from the way we, say, believe the earth revolves around the sun. I mentally assent to that solar truth largely because I accept the evidence of

centuries. Biblical faith of course *agrees* with the gospel of Jesus Christ, no doubt. Biblical faith *agrees* to the historicity of the biblical accounts. We can never say less than that, but we must say more in order to speak biblically. Faith, though which we are united to Jesus, preservers in the face of a world that sets itself up to destroy faith. Though faith must be held distinct from the life (or works) that results, it must not be separated from the life it brings in Jesus. The Hebrews slide into unbelief is illustrated through a comparison to their former way of life. Their current way of life was not in keeping with faith. This is similar to the way the disobedience of Israel revealed their failure to believe (3:19). The author interprets Israel's rebellion in Numbers 14:2 evidence of unbelief.

The author reminds them how they endured suffering, showed love for others who suffered, and put up with injustice in light of their future hope (10:32-33). His purpose is not to fill them with so much guilt that they finally recognize the error of their ways. He is reminding them of what they *have* in Jesus—hope for the future. Freedom, by faith, to live as God's people. The warning here, as all the warnings throughout the letter, is not "you'd better watch out or God's going to get you!" but, a warning founded in grace and hope. The warning, built on his entire case for the excellency and supremacy of Jesus, draws them back to Jesus, draws them back to faith. God's perfect track record in the past guarantees his promise for the future and so provides faith for living in the present. That is precisely the theme that dominates chapter 11.

Faith from First to Last

The author says that through faith "the people of old received their commendation" (11:1; see also 11:4, 5, 39). The commendation, or approval, they received is from God. This does not mean that these people managed to drum up enough faith to please God, but that what God approves, what establishes a relationship with him, is faith. To be sure, true faith shows itself in acts of compassion, in perseverance and endurance, and any number of other ways. But obedience is by faith. The order cannot be reversed. Obedience does not lead to faith. That's why every mention of obedience throughout chapter 11 is "by faith." Another way to put it is that faith itself is not something *done*, but that which rests in God and trusts that God keeps his promises. I

understand what people mean by "active faith," but it's more accurate to say "acts *of* faith." Believing God keeps his promises is what frees and enables obedience. Faith is the foundation of a life that is pleasing to God. Faith is what makes the characters here (and us too) acceptable to God. The idea of commendation from God on the basis of faith runs throughout the chapter. The thing to note is that faith is not simply a new covenant issue, but that from the beginning of human history, faith has always been the basis for acceptance with God.

Faith in the Creator

In a rush to get to the "heroes" we might miss the point the author makes about faith and the creation. The hope and assurance of the future is always rooted in God's past which is also grasped by faith. The phrase "God's past" is something of a misnomer since God has no past, present, or future in the way we perceive time. He who does not have a beginning (Ps 92), who is himself the beginning and the end (Isa 44:6; Rev 22:13), is he who knows the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10). The author points out that it is by faith we know God created the world. The most basic tenet of orthodox Christianity is known only by faith. No amount of evidence, however compelling, proves that God created the world, and much less proves that all we see around us was created from what is invisible. Besides, we can only repeat the idea that God created something from nothing. We have no mental or existential analogy for making something from nothing. There is no abstract *ex nihilo* (creation from nothing) theology here nor is the author seeking to prove creation—he simply, like the rest of the biblical authors both OT and NT, asserts it. The earth and all we see around us was not made by hands or from earthly stuff. This idea fits hand in glove with the author's teaching with regard to the Mosaic covenant. Recall the context from earlier, how the author said the elements of the tabernacle/temple, including the priests, pointed to a heavenly, invisible reality (9:23) and that Jesus entered the temple that was "not made with hands, that is, not of this creation" (9:11). The principle of knowledge of God by faith is the foundation of all knowledge and experience. We know by faith. Before he shows how the OT characters related to God by faith he establishes that at every level we relate to and know God and his works (including his work in Christ) by faith alone. In this sense, the creation itself is God's past track record which we know and have confidence in by faith.

Righteousness by Faith: Abel, Enoch, and Noah

The meaning of the "commendation" of faith becomes clear in verse 4. It was Abel's sacrifice done in faith that God approved. The author says specifically that God "commended" Abel "as righteous." The sacrifice itself wasn't commended as righteousness but, in contrast to Cain, Abel's faith, demonstrated in the sacrifice, was commended as righteousness. This should get our attention. The author doesn't simply recount the narrative of Genesis, which focuses on Cain as much or more than Abel, but he interprets it. He will do the same thing with all the characters included in chapter 11. In Genesis, the first time faith and righteousness are used together explicitly is in 15:6: "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Though usually not included in discussions on justification, the writer of Hebrews establishes the roots of the doctrine from Abel. That is not to say that Hebrews 11 is *about* justification in the way that, say, Romans 3-5, Galatians 1-3, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 2:9-10, or Titus 3:3-7 deal with justification, but that the author connects "commendation" from God on the basis of faith to righteousness before God. For the author to interpret the Genesis narrative s teaching that Abel was "commended as righteous" does mean, however, that the principle of righteousness by faith was not novel even with regard to Abraham, much less the New Covenant. When God declares, or "commends" a person as righteous he does so on the basis of faith. This is how Abel "still speaks" through his faith; not just because there's a story about him we can read in Genesis, but that through the Apostolic interpretation of the narrative Abel's faith testifies to what pleases God. Faith pleases God and God commends faith as righteousness in his sight. The author gives us the authoritative reading of the narrative that can and should transform the way we read it in Genesis.

The same is true for the story of Enoch. It takes four verses in Genesis to tell Enoch's rather enigmatic story (Gen 4:21-24), but it stands out over against short accounts of Adam's other descendants. Twice in those four verses it says "Enoch walked with God," (4:22, 24) and then, unlike everyone in the OT but Elijah (2 Kings 2:1, 11), "and he was not, for God took him." From Genesis we can put together that God had a special relationship with Enoch. In the midst of the downward spiral of human history from Adam to Noah, Enoch is singled out as the one who "walked with God." It is Hebrews, however, that gives us the details and without which we would have little

to say about Enoch. Like with Abel, Genesis doesn't mention Enoch's faith but according to Hebrews, Enoch was taken by God "by faith" and that he "was commended as having been pleasing to God" (11:5). From what the author says about Abel, we can conclude with confidence that Enoch was "commended as righteous" by faith. This conclusion is further supported by the commentary-like statement that comes next. To make his point unmistakable, the author adds: "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him" (11:6). This statement serves to connect the stories of Abel and Enoch to the rest of the chapter, and to the larger epistle where drawing near to God in Jesus is major theme (4:16; 10:22). The author interprets two brief narratives which form the basis for understanding not only faith in general, but more specifically the people and stories he includes next. Abel and Enoch establish that by faith alone a person is commended as righteous by God, that faith is the only thing pleasing to God, and that a relationship with him, and that God rewards faith. The meaning of "reward" will become clearer below, but the reward is God's future, his promise.

With Noah we come to the first character in Hebrews 11 with a substantial narrative in the OT. For the purpose here, two things from Noah's story need attention. First, in Genesis 6 Noah stands out in stark contrast to the rest of the world engulfed in wickedness and sin (Gen 6:5): "Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord;" and, second, "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God" (Gen 6:9). Notice that the declaration that Noah was righteous took place in the context of judgment and Noah's obedience in building the arc followed on God's revelation of the coming flood (Gen 6:11-22). The story provides the building blocks for faith and unbelief as the deciding factors in salvation or judgment in the rest of Scripture. Ultimately there is only faith or unbelief. Hebrews picks up on this by saying that it was because of faith that Noah, after God warned him of the coming judgment, built the arc (11:7). Noah believed God exists, that he will do what he says, and reward those who believe. By believing Noah "condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith." The inheritance is the fulfillment of God's promise which comes to all whose righteousness is by faith alone. Noah did not condemn the world by declaring it condemned, but his faith in God resulting in obedience served as a public witness to the world's unbelief (see, John 16:8-9). Humanity's wickedness and evil were signs of unbelief but

Noah's obedience was a sign that he believed God and was accepted by God, that he was righteous before God. When the author says Noah "became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith," he directly connects Noah to the larger story of righteousness by faith that will become explicit with Abraham. In doing so, Hebrews helps us understand what Genesis 6:9 means by saying Noah was righteous. He is righteous by faith. His obedience is the evidence, but his faith in God is his righteousness. There is no need to separate out notions of righteousness as moral action and righteousness as a legal declaration. God declares those who believe are *righteous* in his sight—the description of those those who *do* righteousness, i.e., they are described as righteous, is declared by God on the basis of faith.

Faith in the Promise: The OT Fathers

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob function in Hebrews similar to Paul's discussion of Abraham in Romans 4. The audience, while knowing Abel, Enoch, and Noah, were the children of Abraham. The story of Abraham and his sons, and the implications for faith and what is pleasing in the sight of God, predate the Mosaic covenant. Before the priesthood, temple, and sacrifices, there was Abraham, the father of Israel, the man who believed God.

In class I read Genesis 15:6 and ask, "Is this the first time Abraham believes? After all, it's the first time the word for 'believe" appears in the Bible. My students, suspicious that it's a trick question and intuitively assuming it's not the first time Abraham believed, mostly answer, "No." Then I follow up with a second question: "How do you know, based on the Bible that he believed before Genesis 15:5?" Typically I'll get an answer something like this: "He's been following God for years by that point." That answer is correct and shows good biblical sensitivity and awareness. Abraham's faith prior to Genesis 15:5 is implicitly clear in the narrative. A narrative can and does teach faith (or any number of things) just as much as an explicit proposition such as Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:8, or Galatians 2:15-16 teaches faith—narrative just teaches it in a different, implicit, way. Then I ask a third question: "Ok, yes, we can see faith in the narrative, but can anyone give me a specific text that *tells* us that Abraham believed before Genesis 15:6?" Inevitably a student will speak up and say, "Hebrews 11." Right answer.

Again, obedience flows from faith as Abraham sets out from his homeland not knowing exactly where God would lead him but believing that God will

do exactly as he says (11:4; Gen 12:1). Perhaps we could say that he believed in an invisible goal. Hebrews generally follows the order of events but, as before, his point is not a retelling of the narrative but an interpretation of the larger Abraham narrative in light of faith. Next the author draws a distinction already familiar to his readers—Abraham and his sons, heirs of the promise, lived in tents which is contrasted with a fulfillment that went beyond the physical space of land. Not even the Promised Land was the ultimate fulfillment of the promise for they looked beyond to a permanent "city with foundations, whose designer and maker is God" (11:10). Of course neither Abraham nor his sons took possession of the Land in earnest (though see Gen 23:17-20), but that doesn't negate the point. The land itself, just like the later tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices of the Mosaic covenant, pointed to a heavenly reality.

The mention of Sarah's faith in regard to the birth of Isaac (11:11) might create some friction for a reader familiar with Genesis 18. Sarah overhears the Lord telling Abraham that in one year she will have a son. Her response may seem something short of faith—she laughs to herself, doubting that a "worn out" woman and an old man would have a child (Gen 18:12). It doesn't stop there, for the Lord asks her why she laughed when she hear him promise that she will have a son and she lies about it saying, "I didn't laugh." The Lord replies, "No, you did" (Gen 18:15). I can fully understand and sympathize with her. I would have laughed, and then sworn adamantly on the nearest available grave that the last thing I'd do is laugh at something the Lord said. Hebrews, however, doesn't focus on Sarah's (or any other character's) moment(s) of doubt, but underscores that God's promises come only to faith and not on the basis of the person who believes. Faith saves apart from the works or perfection of the believer, otherwise it wouldn't be faith. As with the rest of the chapter, Sarah teaches us that faith is not perfect, beyond-doubt, certainty, but trust that in the face of doubt and impossible odds God keeps his promises. It is not the strength, quality, or quantity of faith that fulfills the promises, but God who fulfills his own promises. Again, we must not make faith a work that gets what it deserves like a paycheck at work (e.g., Rom 4:4-5). Faith is keenly aware of its imperfections—that's precisely why it looks away, outside itself, beyond what is seen (including doubts and fears), to God for whom nothing is "too hard" (Gen 18:14).

The writer sums up the Abraham section to this point with a commentary that applies throughout. Those generations of believers, "strangers and exiles" (11:13) who knew this world was not their home, whose lives were spent looking beyond to a "heavenly" country (11:16), all died having not received what was promised (11:13). To put it in the larger context, they died not having entered God's rest (3:11; 4:3; 4:5; 9). We might hear that and ask, "But didn't Abraham and Sarah *have* Isaac, and wasn't he was the son of the promise?" Hebrews answers that question from the same perspective that looks on everything created, whether the world, land, children, or the tabernacle; the fulfillment of the promise is not finally *of* the world for all those things point to something beyond themselves. The promise will come *into* the world from the greater heavenly reality. Yet, they did have the fulfillment of the promise in this sense: having God's promise is as good as having the fulfillment. Their faith is why God "was not ashamed to be called their God" (11:16), that is, the people commended, approved, and accepted by God are his people by faith and because they are his people, he has a city ready-made for them (11:16). They didn't receive the city, but that future is confirmed in God's commendation of their faith.

Hebrews includes the story from Genesis 22 to show that the son of the promise was not himself the promise. Though declared righteous by faith in Genesis 15:6 (which is Moses' commentary on Gen 15:16, not part of the dialogue), God tested that faith by commanding that he take Isaac up on the mountain and sacrifice him. For the purpose in Hebrews, what matters is that Abraham obeyed because he believed that not even the death of Isaac meant the death of the promise. The author says Abraham believed God would raise him from the dead and that is exactly what God did (11:19). Once Abraham set off up the mountain the thing was as good as done. In other words, Isaac was in a sense sacrificed. The author says that Abraham did get Isaac back figuratively from the dead. On the basis of God's promise rooted in the past (Gen 12; 15; 17; 18) and guaranteeing the future, Abraham believed even over a grave.

The Vision of Faith: Moses and Israel

From Moses to Israel the author continues to show that God's people are those who cling to God's promise. Again Hebrews offers an interpretation of the narrative events asserting that whether it's Moses' parents (11:29),

Rahab (11:31), David (11:32), or unnamed people suffering horrible persecution, death, and rejection (11:36-38), faith in God's promise is what marked God's people throughout the Mosaic era.

The author gives the promise a name: Christ. He says that Moses, "considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward" and that "he endured as seeing him who is invisible" (11:26-27). The author is not saying that Moses had a vision of Jesus of Nazareth or knowledge of exactly how God's promise would be fulfilled in him. The author's point is that Moses' suffering (and the suffering of those included later) was for the sake of God's promise which would be revealed only later in Jesus. Jesus *is* the promise so believing the promise is believing in Jesus the fulfillment. Jesus *is* the reward for which Moses looked. By faith, the promise is as good as the fulfilment. Every story of faith in the OT is a story of faith in Jesus in the form of God's word of promise.

An analogy may help. If you were asked "How was Abraham saved?" how would you answer? You might say, "By faith," and that would be correct. Abraham was saved by faith in God's promise. Jesus is that promise. So a legitimate answer would also be "Abraham was saved by believing in Jesus." It's just that he had that salvation in the form of promise. Similarly, the reproach Moses bore in Egypt was on account of his belief in God's promise as greater than anything Pharaoh and Egypt could offer. The reproach was for the promise, and the promise is Jesus. The blood of the Passover that Moses sprinkled on the door lentil (Exod 12:22; Heb 11:28), foreshadowed the blood of the great high priest (Heb 9:11-12). The author is doing what we are often hesitant to do, namely, assert that the entire OT narrative is comprehended *only* through God's full revelation of himself in Christ. Every person in the OT narrative that believes God, that perseveres in the face of persecution, that obeys God in spite of what is seen all around, is accepted by God through Christ.

Once again readers might notice what seems to be a discrepancy between Hebrews and the OT narrative. He asserts that Israel crossed the Red Sea by faith, but in Exodus when the people found themselves between the sea and an enraged Egyptian army we hear something a little different: "They said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?" (Exod 14:11-12). They did, however, cross on dry ground as God promised and the Egyptians were destroyed. That the chapter is not really the "Heroes

of the Faith" is abundantly clear. The author is not unaware of their continual grumbling and rejection of Moses. He made a major point about Israel's failure to believe earlier in the letter (3:16-19), even asserting that it was the people who left Egypt who rebelled. The point about the Red Sea story is that only through faith can a gigantic group of people walked between two walls of water and cross to the other side. He is not making a point about Israel's perfect track record. The "Heroes" theme just won't work unless we cherry pick our favorites and ignore their less than perfect records (e.g., David). The only true hero here, as throughout the chapter, is God who keeps his promises. This is what will keep his audience from falling back from Jesus.

The best, or worst, example of how the *"Heroes"* approach doesn't do justice to the chapter is Samson. There have been all sorts of answers given to justify Samson's inclusion (11:32). There's really nothing to be gained from reviewing them. On the whole, Samson, though the toughest man in the Bible, blatantly disregarded the covenant, was disobedient to his parents, was boastful, and a liar. In my view, the best we can say is that Samson is included because his last recorded act, reduced by that time to a blind court jester, was crying out to God and bringing down the house on over three-thousand Philistines, killing himself in the process (Judg 16:28-30). Even then, however, his motive is less than pious. He wanted revenge on the Philistines for gouging out his eyes (Judg 16:28). I'm not saying I would have meditated blissfully, wishing nothing but the best for the people who cut out my eyes, but even at his "best" Samson seems at least double-minded. Hebrews, however, doesn't dissect Samson's life or motives, he simply lists him among others like the prophets who, by faith, performed miraculous feats against God's enemies. The theme here is not, "Be a Samson" or "Be a David (though not all the time) any more than it's "What Would Israel Do?" The theme is that God kept his promise to make Abraham a great nation and to defeat Israel's enemies. God kept his promise to faith. Hebrew's interpretation read along with the OT narratives serve to take the attention off the characters and their all-too-relatable sins and imperfections, and cast it on the God who works through the faith of inconsistent and flawed people to fulfill his word of promise. If there are moral-exemplars, they are such not because they were exemplary moral people, but because they were people who put their faith in God.

The chapter ends with a positive call to faith. The result is a definitive answer to the original readers' desire to look back on and hold on to a bygone

era. The faithful in that era, and going back in time immemorial, lived by faith, looking *forward* the fulfillment of the promise—the very time in which the audience lives. Rather than simply warn them of the mortal danger of falling back on the Mosaic covenant, the author points them to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of their faith (12:2).

Throughout the epistle, the author's way of diverting his reader's desire to fall back on the Mosaic covenant goes beyond telling them it is over and done with. What he does is show them their fundamental misunderstanding of how that covenant functioned in the first place. It was always pointing to something invisible, not of this world. Shadows and copies of something greater. The astonishing thing is that the invisible became visible and entered this world. Jesus is heavenly reality in the flesh. In him everything known about God from creation through covenant, is fulfilled in him. The past-present-future dynamic of faith continues, but has been overhauled now that the invisible is revealed in Jesus. Whereas, in the past, when God's people lived by faith looking back on his word of promise that guaranteed the future, now believers *rest by faith* in the fulfillment of the promise of forgiveness, righteousness, and reconciliation which guarantees the future. God's act in Jesus guarantees his future and, so, believers live by faith in Jesus in the present.

Conclusion*: Worthy to God*

The "Heroes" and "Hall of Fame" perspectives on chapter 11 have a way of abstracting the chapter from Hebrews. Far worse, however, is the tendency the "Heroes" view has to turn the chapter on faith to a chapter on "do this and live." If the application in preaching or teaching is "You need to be like Enoch then God will reward you" (since we'll never choose Samson) then the hearers are left with simply another thing he or she must *do* if there's any hope of pleasing God. Such guilt and law-based preaching will only, ever, result in hopelessness. If people can only dredge up enough faith then God will reward them. Reward them with what? Crowns or whatever other "heavenly rewards" we pull out of context to make heaven a carrot on a stick, something we work toward rather than something we have by faith in the fulfilled work of Christ, the great and final high priest who gave his own blood for our forgiveness and in whom we have entered God's rest? The reward, the inheritance, of faith is the promise—Jesus is the reward, and we have him by faith! While we should take

stock of our own faith living as we do on this side of the promise in comparison to the countless believers who died while keeping faith in God even though the promise was never realized in their time, they should inspire rather than leave us with yet more guilt and despair.

In faith, we are always aware that we do not have enough. In faith we are always, and painfully, conscious that we don't measure up. That is precisely the point. If we had enough faith (whatever that means); if we have arrived at perfect-never-a-hint-of-doubt faith; if our faith measured up then there would be no need for faith. If, however, we can grasp that faith never rests content in itself, never feels self-assured, never feels perfect, then we may be on the road to true faith. Faith does not pay attention to itself but is fixed on the one who is eternal, who always keeps his promises, and who declares full and perfect forgiveness in the sacrifice of Jesus.

We are not so different than the original audience. The substance is likely different, but we are nevertheless drawn to what we can see, point to, and take comfort in. We are bombarded by temptation and by the world, all of which sets itself up as an alternative to what God speaks in Christ. The visible constantly struggles against the invisible. The good news is this: it is not the perfection of our faith that makes us perfect, but the one who perfects our faith, that is, Jesus the object, end goal, and perfecter of our faith. In him, and by faith alone, God commends and approves us.

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1. Unless otherwise noted, all English translations are taken from, *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Crossway Bibles, 2016.
2. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews* (Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation; Nashville: B&H, 2015), 338–39.
3. See, for instance, the article by Ardel Caneday in this issue of SBJT.

Theology Unto Doxology: New Covenant Worship in Hebrews

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Introduction

From the opening sentence of the sermon to the Hebrews, we can see that something is different. There has been a change—a change that is so great and so fundamental, that it requires a complete reorientation of how the people of God approach him in worship. Everything related to the worship of Yahweh has been affected by Christ, a line of reasoning that the writer of Hebrews carefully unfolds in a cascading argument of point after point, drawing his readers to an inevitable conclusion and to an inevitable choice: would they choose to return to the old covenant, with its limited and anticipatory cultus, or would they go with Christ "outside the camp, bearing his reproach," and thus stake their claim as well as their lives and their eternal salvation on what this new priest has accomplished? Is he indeed able to "save forever those who draw near to God through him, by faith" (7:25; 11:1-16)? If so, it amounts to a complete reorientation of the worship of God's New Covenant people.

Indeed, that is precisely the point that the writer of Hebrews makes. Through a complex and integrated argument rooted in the Old Testament (OT), he, as David Peterson asserts, "presents the most complete and fully

integrated theology of worship in the New Testament."[1] As such, this sermon is "truly essential reading for those who would establish a Christian theology of worship."[2] No other New Testament (NT) book says more about Christ's role as the high priest, mediator, and sacrifice. There are no more imperfect and sinful priests who themselves need atonement. There is now one perfect High Priest. He does not offer animals for sin; He has become the perfect sacrifice for sin, never to be repeated. As our high priest, he always intercedes for his New Covenant people and reorients our worship of God.

Further, no other biblical book says as much about the New Covenant. Hebrews explains the coming of the New and the departure of the Old more than any other. The OT had foretold the fact that one day the God would bring a New Covenant in place of the Old. Covenants are God's way of relating to His people, and the New Covenant that was promised through Jeremiah (Jer 31:31-34) is here. Jesus said that His blood is "the blood of the new covenant." Hebrews refers to it as the "eternal covenant," since it cannot be rescinded (13:20).

As a result, New Covenant worship is therefore to be an overflow of what his people know and accept by faith to be true. *In short, the main point is that Hebrews' theology of New Covenant worship can be distilled into one simple phrase: Theology unto Doxology*.

In the following pages, I will consider a few key "doxa-centric" passages, Hebrews 12:28-29, and especially 13:1-6 and 15-16. Each centers on the New Covenant believer's doxological response and what acceptable worship actually is. But first, it behooves us to summarize what leads the writer of Hebrews to the particular point of the believer's worshipful application of truth. As is the pattern throughout the canon of Scripture, theology and sound doctrine must *precede* and therefore *ground*, doxology—which our response to what God has done for us in Christ. Otherwise our worship is pagan and decidedly not an "acceptable service of worship" (12:28-29).

Theological Summary

The writer begins by announcing that just as God spoke long ago through the prophets, he has now spoken to us in his Son, his perfect representative (1:1-4). God's Son is superior to the angels and all prophets, the greatest of which was Moses. It was through angels that Moses' revelation was mediated,

yet the new revelation in Christ is superior to that. Therefore, we should all take care to listen to Him (1:5-13; 2:1-4). Christ came to earth and for a time was positionally lower than the angels (2:5-9; cf. Psalm 8), and in doing so suffered "so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone" (2:9). He became a merciful and faithful high priest who is "not ashamed to call them brothers" and who can uniquely aid his people since he knows the suffering of temptation, yet not the accomplishment of sin (2:10-18).

Next, whereas Moses was a servant to God, Jesus is the Son of God and is the supreme example of faithfulness to God (3:1–6). This is immediately contrasted to the OT wandering wilderness generation, who were cursed to die outside of the Promised Land because although they saw the mighty works of God, they did not believe (3:7-19; Psalm 95). Therefore, we all are to be careful that this same kind of unbelieving heart does not exist in any of us (3:12-14) lest we too not attain to what God as promised, namely, the promised rest of God (4:1-13). Those who truly believe will endure to the end and by faith receive the promised rest of God. Therefore, we must hold fast our confession of faith in Christ. We may draw near to God and seek grace and help since we have a merciful and faithful high priest in the person of Christ who sympathizes with our weaknesses.

Hebrews 5:1-10:18 begins by noting the superior compassion and qualifications of Jesus Christ, who is a priestly mediator between God and His people. His priesthood is better than the OT Levitical priesthood. God had forecasted in the OT (Psalm 110:4) that there would be another priesthood, that of the order of Melchizedek (5:1-10). Yet before the writer of Hebrews can say all he wants to say about Melchizedek, he first exhorts them at length to consider their present state and to warn them again (5:11-6:20). They have been believers long enough that they should be teachers by that time, but since they have become spiritually lethargic and lazy, they have to go back and recap the basics (5:11-6:3). Such a spiritual step backwards elicits one of the strongest warnings from the author: if they abandon Christ, there is no other place to turn. There is no "Plan B." Those that have "ears to hear" will hear and heed the warning (6:4-9). The writer of Hebrews immediately mitigates such difficult words by expressing his confidence in them and his desires for them (6:9-12) and reminds them of God's promise as the basis of Christian hope (6:13-20).

Following the necessary exhortation of 5:11-6:20, the pastor is ready to explain his main point: "we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the

right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven" (8:1). The new priest is not a Levitical priest, but Melchizedekian. He is one without beginning or end, superior in every way to the Old Covenant's priesthood. Since there is a transformation of Old Covenant priesthood (7:1-10), there is a transformation of the Old Covenant Law as well. Apart from Christ, the Law made nothing perfect due to its being external and weak (7:15-19). The Law of God was "over" them, and not "in" them, a problem that is remedied in the New Covenant (Jer 31:31-34).[3] What is needed is a new and eternal covenant meditated by a new and eternal priest (7:11-28).

As such, the writer of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 in full (8:8-12) and announces that the promised New Covenant of Jeremiah 31 has begun. Since there is a New Covenant, the Old Covenant is obsolete (8:13). For the writer of Hebrews, the New Covenant promised two essential "better promises" (8:6): the internalization of God's laws and forgiveness of sin (8:10-12). In contrast to the way of the Old Covenant people who always broke the Law and did not believe God (recall 3:7-19), the New Covenant people would be a forgiven and believing people marked by worshipful obedience from the heart. These two acts are accomplished by God and God alone and are so essential that He repeats them in summary form at the end of this large section in 10:16-17.

But how can these better promises be realized? How can God grant these New Covenant blessings? Answer: by inaugurating the promised New Covenant. Therefore, in 9:1-10:18 the writer of Hebrews unpacks how Jeremiah 31 has been fulfilled in the work of Christ. The ideas of law, tabernacle, and blood sacrifice are all part of what it means to be in a covenant relationship with God. Therefore, the writer of Hebrews explains that Christ is both the high priest and the sacrifice at the same time. Blood is *required*, since without it there can be no forgiveness (9:22). In contrast to the repeated annual Yom Kippur sacrifices (Lev 16), Christ's sacrifice is only to be offered once, since the blood of Christ is sufficient to take away sin permanently. Christ is the preeminent example of one who obeys the will of God, since he offered his own body as a sacrifice for sin. He was raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God where he sits down, in contrast to the Old Covenant priests who could never sit because their work was never finished (10:11-14).

In light of all that God has done in Christ (as explained in 7:1-10:18), the New Covenant believers should respond a certain way; this is reflected

in a life of joyful, worshipful obedience. As such, the writer of Hebrews returns to exhortation for the rest of the letter. In 10:19-12:29 the author compels them to love, encourage, and meet with one another (10:19-25), utters another significant warning to them against turning away (10:26-31), and admonishes them towards endurance, since this is their greatest need (10:32-39). What they need is to live by faith (Hab 2:4), like so many that have come before them did. Therefore, since faith is what marks believers in every age, the writer of Hebrews challenges them with examples of OT believers who endured in faith (11:1-40). Many of them lost their lives, and most faced persecution of some kind due to their unshakable faith in God. Let us follow their example, fix our eyes on Jesus, and lay aside all stumbling blocks and every sin that entangles us from running the race of faith set before all of God's covenant people (12:1-3). In doing so, there will be trials as well as the loving discipline of God the Father. Such discipline is proof that we are children of God (12:4-17). As the children of God, we are heirs of an eternal kingdom (12:18-24) that is unshakable. Therefore, the writer of Hebrews issues one final warning not to reject God's word, but rather to show gratitude with reverence and awe to the one God who is a consuming fire (12:25-29).

Therefore, we may summarize to this point by saying that we have a new High Priest, we have a new covenant mediator, we have a new covenant cultus (see esp. Heb 9) centered around the blood, not of animals, but of Jesus our eternal High Priest, ("blood" is used 14 times in Heb 9-10 alone[4]). The New Covenant people therefore have access to God through Christ, and though we may still live as sojourners in these latter days, the eternal city of the heavenly Jerusalem is certain.

This is the theology that drives us to doxology—to which we will now turn.

Doxology

As with the rest of the NT, "worship" is not something we do simply as we gather on the Lord's day. It certainly includes that, but the writer of Hebrews envisions New Covenant worship as a description of our entire lives, fueled by and grounded in the theological truth of Christ's accomplished work. All of worship is Christo-centric and Christo-telic, beginning in Heb 1:6, when God commands the angels to render homage to the Son. Peterson rightly

notes, "The way we share on earth in the homage of the angels is not in some cultic activity but in the life of faith and obedience to Christ and his message."[5] While Christ is the object of worship, Hebrews is clear that more is in view, namely, that Jesus Christ is the *means* by which New Covenant believers render acceptable worship. This is seen most clearly in Hebrews 12:28-29, and 13:1-17.

Hebrews 12:28-29

Given what Christ has done, as well as his ongoing priestly ministry at the right hand of the Father, we are summoned into the presence of God without fear, the ceremonial curtain having been removed at the cross. With cleansed consciences (9:11-14), believers can now render worship and service to God with reverence and awe, with grateful hearts (12:28). Our New Covenant reality is an already-but-not-yet, as we have received the "unshakable kingdom," yet we are still pilgrims walking by faith on a faith journey towards the heavenly Jerusalem.

Yet this gift is not one-sided; it provokes a response from the people of faith. We are to "show gratitude" (ἔχωμεν χάριν) as part of our worshipful response. Indeed, such a posture of thanksgiving and gratitude *must* accompany such a privilege. And with gratitude, we are to render to God "acceptable service with reverence and awe, since our God is an all-consuming fire" (28c–29). The term rendered "offer service" (λατρεύωμεν) is found in 8:5, 9:9, 10:2, and 13:10 is a cultic term, used in 9:14 "to describe the aim of Christ's cleansing of the worshippers' conscience."[6] This indicates that even in the New Covenant, there are still sacrifices to be offered, this time by all believers, a point that is made specific later in 13:15-16. Believers are to offer service to God that is acceptable and pleasing (εὐαρέστως τῷ θεῷ), offered with reverence and awe. We offer sacrifices and service to God, since he is to be reverentially feared. This exhortation is grounded by the next phrase, "for God is a consuming fire" (γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ καταναλίσκον).

In 12:29, the reference to God being a "consuming fire" is frequently a reference to judgment (Is 33:14; Wis 16:16; Ps. Sol 15:4; Matt 24:41; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Cor 3:13,15; 2 Pet 3:7), and this metaphor of God being a consuming fire comes from Deuteronomy 4:24. In the Deuteronomy passage, verse 24 concludes a section in which Moses warns the people against idolatry *in the context of worship*.[7] This is significant for our purposes today,

since the exhortation in Heb 12:28-29 to respond to God with gratitude and acceptable service also comes in the context of a warning about right worship. In other words, the same warning against idolatrous worship given to the exodus generation is applied to New Covenant believers: if God is to be worshipped, he must be worshipped with gratefulness, reverence, and awe.[8] All other worship is idolatry and subject to the consuming fire of God. As Schreiner notes, it is "through such gratefulness that believers serve God in a way that pleases him ... it is a humble gratefulness, a gratefulness mixed with holy fear ... a joy that is sweetened by a sense of awe."[9] Like the Old Covenant exodus generation, New Covenant believers are on the verge of entering the land—the heavenly city—and must be warned of what happens to those who fail to persevere in faith and obedience.[10] Likewise, Attridge concludes, "In the context of such worship, the unshakable kingdom is present ... (and) forms a conceptual link with the call to sanctification (12:14), and introduces the central topic of the concluding section of paraenesis,"[11] chapter 13:1-17. This serves to underscore my point that *theology fuels doxology*. Our understanding of who God is and what he has done for us in Christ (as well as that which awaits us) grounds and fuels our grateful response of a life of worship. This is unpacked in the verses that follow.

Hebrews 13:1-17

While it is true that Hebrews 13 functions as an epilogue, it fits well with what comes before and expands on the kind of service and worship that is acceptable to God (12:28-29). Verses 1-6 focus on what it means to show love and hospitality in vv. 1-3, as well as on one's personal behavior of sexual purity, and generosity in vv. 4-6. Verses 7 and 17 open and close this section with a command to remember those faithful leaders who have died (recalling Heb 11), and obey their present leaders, while the intervening verses of 9-16 exhort them to live lives of sacrifice in keeping with the new altar of the New Covenant rather than returning to the Old. Again, in keeping with the thesis of this essay, worship in Hebrews is an entire way of life; it is "doxological perseverance" and a living out of the New Covenant promise of the "law written on our minds and engraved on our hearts" (8:10-12; 10:15-17).[12] It is "theology unto doxology."

Chapter 13 points us in the right direction concerning how the New Covenant believer lives this life of worship.[13] Attridge states, "In the context of

such worship, the unshakable kingdom is present ... (and) forms a conceptual link with the call to sanctification (12:14), and introduces the central topic of the concluding section of paraenesis,"[14] chapter 13:1-17. While chapter 13 is not exhaustive, it does give us solid ground for discerning what the New Covenant life of doxology is all about.[15] Cockerill notes, "Those who live this life truly 'serve' God by approaching him with praise and the obedience of good works"[16] as described in chapter 13.

First, New Covenant believers are marked by "brotherly love." The imperative is to "let brotherly love continue" (Ἡ φιλαδελφία μενέτω), and forms the basis not only for the next five verses, but also sets the tone for all of chapter 13.[17] This is a kind of love that is distinctly Christian and familial, and grounds the following admonitions. Further, this is not an occasional act of familial love, but an ongoing habit,[18] the verb being a present imperative.

Verses 2-3 express what this brotherly love looks like. Believers are "**not to forget** to show hospitality to strangers" (v.2, τῆς φιλοξενίας **μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε**)[19] and are to "**remember** those who are in prison" (v.3, **μιμνήσκεσθε** τῶν δεσμίων). Showing hospitality to strangers is a general command but might specifically refer to hosting fellow believers as they traveled. In this time, it was common for believers and church leaders to travel, and the practice of hospitality was both common and expected (cp. 2-3 John). The reference to "entertaining angels" recalls both Abraham (Gen 18:1-15) and Lot (Gen 19:1-22) who did just that without knowing the exact identity of these "strangers." This kind of hospitality "is no begrudging offer of kindness, but a generous sharing of what one has."[20]

Those in prison (v.3) are likely there due to their faith in Christ, and recalls 10:34a, when the readers "showed sympathy to the prisoners." Given the conditions of first century prisons, "remembering the prisoners" is a summons to provide for their physical needs, since prisons were under little obligation to do so. Prison life in the first century was deplorable,[21] and those who visited imprisoned believers risked incarceration themselves. Still, a life of doxology and gratefulness to God, rooted in the knowledge of Christ's own sacrifice for them ought to compel the readers to do so without concern for their own safety. For as the pastor reminds them in v.6, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" citing Psalm 118:6. Jesus commanded the same thing in Matt 25:35-36, "I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me;

I was in prison, and you came to Me.'" The brotherly love that they are to show sacrifices for all who are in the household of faith, those in prison, those brothers in sisters who are in need, and all who are suffering mistreatment. In doing so, it brings the justice and blessing of the unshakable kingdom to those most in need of it.

Whereas verses 2-3 describe what brotherly love looks like, verses 4-5 prohibits the kind of actions that violate brotherly love. The "doxological life" is to be marked by love and good deeds, and thus not to be characterized by sexual immorality or the love of money. Marriage is to be held in honor, and in contrast to the pagan culture, the marriage bed is to be undefiled. Sexual immorality and adultery will be judged by God, the consuming fire, and is a violation of the command to love found in 13:1.

Likewise, greed and the love of money are in direct contrast to the kind of love that is to mark those who live a life of worship to God. As David Allen notes, "An inordinate concern for one's possessions can supplant care for those in the Christian family and foreigners."[22] Why is such greed forbidden? Once again, the writer grounds his command in God's truth, for God has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."[23] To be sure, a life of doxology and anticipation of the unshakable kingdom finds its rest in the love and care of God, who is faithful to meet all of one's needs. As such, contentment with one's spouse sexually and one's income financially are further doxological expressions that mark the New Covenant worshiper. Cockerill has summarized verses 4-6 well when he writes, "Those who ignore the heavenly City and pursue the things of this life are often characterized by both [sexual immorality and the love of money]. Thus, it was natural for the pastor to move from concern for sexual purity to warning against the love of money."[24] Such is in contrast to the command to love in v.1, and is therefore in contrast to a lifestyle of worship. It is because of what God has done in Christ that the worshiper can assert by faith that "the Lord is my helper" (Ps 118:6, v.6).

Verses 7-17 exhort the readers to imitate and obey their spiritual leaders (an inclusion, vv. 7, 17), and to "identify with Christ in his suffering and to offer the sacrifices of praise and good works."[25] While there is much to mine here, I want to focus on verses 10 and then 15-16 given they specifically use the terminology of New Covenant worship.

Verse 10 refers to an "altar," which some have argued is a reference to the Eucharist (especially Roman Catholic interpreters), while others see this

as referring to a sacrificial altar located in the heavenly sanctuary.[26] I find both of these options unpersuasive and instead suggest that the "altar" is the writer's shorthand way of referring to the accomplished work of Christ on the cross.[27] *This entirely reorients the worship of God in the New Covenant*. For in the New Covenant era, such Old Covenant sacrifices brought to the altar are of no value. Rather, what pleases God is a life of grateful obedience, brotherly love, sexual purity, humble sacrifice and generosity – in short, a life of doxology that is rooted in the doctrinal truth—theology—of what God has accomplished for us in Christ.

Of course, verses 15-16 add another component to our understanding of New Covenant worship. This life of doxology is marked by, and indeed ***must*** be marked by, "sacrifices of praise to God." This, of course, is the pattern of the whole Bible, since expressions of one's gratefulness and thankfulness to God consistently redound unto praise from Genesis to Revelation. Thus, there is continuity in the midst of discontinuity.[28] Verse 15 says, *"Through Him [therefore] let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise, that is, fruit of lips that confess his name."*[29] Once again, the writer includes himself by way of a hortatory subjunctive, here expressing continuous, habitual aspect via usage of the present tense.[30] The genitive *ainéseōs* (αἰνέσεως) rendered "of praise" in most English translations, is likely epexegetical[31] ("sacrifice that is/consists of praise"). Wallace refers to this as a genitive of apposition, and many have agreed. A hard distinction between an epexegetical genitive and genitive of apposition is not necessary, since either fit the context and the pastor's meaning is clear: the sacrifice ***is*** the praise offered to God through Christ by the New Covenant people of God.

Further, the concept of specifically praising "the divine name of God" (Yahweh) is common in the OT.[32] (For example, see 1 Chron 16:35; 29:13; Neh 9:5; Ps 7:17; 9:2; 18:49; 22:22; 30:4; 61:8; 66:2; 69:30; 74:21 [ct. v. 18]; 99:3; 100:4[33]; 102:21; 106:47[34]; 113:1; 135:1, 3; 145:1, 2, 21; 140:13[35]; 148:5, 13; and essentially every usage of "hallelujah" (הַלְלוּ יָהּ) in the Psalter, since it means "praise the name of the God of Israel = Yah/Yahweh"). In the background of Hebrews 13:15 likely stands the fellowship offering of Leviticus 7:11-21, as well as Psalm 50:14 and 23, where the covenant people are commanded by Yahweh to "offer a sacrifice of praise."

In short, for these first century Jewish Christians to be exhorted to confess/profess God's name as an act of praise[36] would have evoked a common

practice. Though an ancient practice, in these "latter days" (1:2) such a sacrifice has been "transposed into a higher, Christological key" since this sacrifice of worship "to his name" (τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ) is made through Christ (δι' αὐτοῦ).[37] It is a sacrifice "to God," professing "his name" in praise as the "fruit" of one's lips, likely borrowing the expression from Hosea 14:3. As previously noted, professing the name of YHWH (ὁμολογούντων τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ) as an act of corporate worship was common in the OT, and is commanded in verse 15, albeit amplified given the new eternal High Priest through whom this sacrifice of praise is made.

This pattern of priestly mediation for acceptable sacrifice was established under the Old Covenant and has now come to its Christotelic end, as explained in Hebrews 1–12. As Cockerill notes, now, at the end of the sermon, "if the ... hearers remain unmoved after this powerful, long-prepared-for appeal, he has nothing more to say."[38] The "sacrifice of praise"[39] from the redeemed community of believers is a key component of acceptable sacrifice of worship that New Covenant believers ought now render through Jesus.[40]

Indeed, "at every crucial point in his argument the pastor has directed his hearers to focus their attention on the exalted, all-sufficient Son of Psalm 110:1, and 4, to enter [God's] presence *through him* (1:13; 4:14-16; 8:1-2; 10:19-25; 12:1-3).[41] And I assert that here it is no different. Worship is "acceptable" because it is offered through Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, our High Priest who intercedes for us, the mediator of our worship to God. It is theology unto doxology. The writer directs the minds of his readers to what is true about Christ, and because of what is true, he exhorts them to a life of worship.

Finally, in verse 16, the writer comes full circle back to the beginning of chapter 13,[42] adding that along with such sacrifices of praise, acceptable New Covenant worship also consists in good works, and sharing what one has. In 13:1-6, he explained how good works are a form of "acceptable worship, with reverence and awe" (12:28-29). These are the kinds of sacrifices that are pleasing to God. As Attridge states, "Having a share in Chris's altar means finally to follow him on the road of suffering, to worship God through sacrifices of praise, and to devote oneself to loving service of other members of the covenant community."[43]

Conclusion

All of life in the New Covenant is to be worship. Our lives become a continuous outpouring of sacrifice to God, a kind of "doxological living" that is our response to God. It is marked by joyful praise as we sing and recite God's truth in our liturgy, as well as joyful living characterized by the love of others, generosity, purity, and obedience to God. All of life becomes a sacrifice of worship to God, made acceptable through Christ, since Jesus is the epicenter of New Covenant worship. As Harold Best asserts, the believer's New Covenant worship means "living continuously in love toward God, toward other people and toward oneself in a richly fitted vocabulary of work, service, and obedience, knowing that with such sacrifices God is pleased."[44] The writer of Hebrews would agree. New Covenant worship is the daily overflow that comes from knowing God and believing what he has accomplished for us in Christ; *it is theology unto doxology*.

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1. David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1992), 228.
2. Peterson, *Engaging*, 253.
3. For a full discussion on the transformation of the Law, see Barry C. Joslin, *Hebrews, Christ, and the Law* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 2009), esp. 141–72; 208–223. See also David Allen, *Hebrews* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2010), 420-22; 447-56.
4. "At first, sight, it is puzzling to see how Hebrews lumps together the daily sacrifices of Judiasm, the annual Day of Atonement sacrifices, the sacrifices inaugurating the Sinai covenant, and allusions to the red heifer ceremony. What all these sacrifices have in common, however, is the single point of blood: 'blood provides the medium of drawing near to God.'" (Peterson, *Engaging*, 236; cf. W. G. Johnsson, "Defilement and Purgation in the Book of Hebrews," PhD diss. [Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 1973], 228).
5. Peterson, *Engaging*, 237.
6. Harold Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 383, cf. fn 71.
7. Note the context of Deuteronomy 4:24, 15 "Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, 16 beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, 18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. 19 And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven."
8. In fact, the whole context of Hebrews 12:18-29 has Deut 4:9-24 in the background, where the people are reminded of what they have seen on the holy mountain, that shook with God's presence, with "darkness, clouds, and thick gloom" when the people drew near (Deut 4:11). God declared his covenant with them, to *perform his statutes and commandments* (4:13-14), and then solemnly warned them against creating idols for themselves. They saw no form on the mountain that day (4:15), and the order of idols they are not to make in 4:15-19 is actually creation in reverse (I owed this insight to my colleague, Dr. Adam Howell). It is as if Moses is saying that idolatry is a reversal and undoing of what God has been doing since the creation of the world. This helps us to understand the nature of acceptable worship in

the New Covenant – it is grounded by the statement of fact that our "God is a consuming fire" (Deut 4:24; Heb 12:29). See also Exodus 24:16-17.

9. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Hebrews* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2015), 407.
10. Ibid.
11. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 383.
12. This is fueled by the Christo-centric theology that marks the book from its opening sentence and is our "doxological response" to what God has done in Christ. It is our response, in faith, to the definitive word that God has spoken in his Son.
13. Acceptable worship is one's participation in the promised unshakable kingdom of God. See Peterson, *Engaging*, 242.
14. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 383.
15. Any other response to the word spoken in God's Son makes one subject to the warnings of chs. 2, 3, 6, 10, and 12.
16. Gareth Lee Cockerill, *Hebrews* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 672.
17. Ibid., 678–79.
18. Ibid., 679.
19. Cf. Judges 6:11f., 13:3f., Tob 3:17; 5:4-16; 12:1-20.
20. Ibid., 680.
21. D. Allen, *Hebrews*, 608; Craig Koester, *Hebrews* (AB vol. 36a; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 564.
22. D. Allen, *Hebrews*, 610.
23. As most scholars note, this is not an exact OT quotation, but likely comes from Gen 28:15; Deut 31:5,6,8; Josh 1:5; 1 Chron 28:20.
24. Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 684.
25. Ibid., 676.
26. See esp. D. Allen for a good summary of these views (*Hebrews*, 615-16).
27. Allen suggests this is a use of synecdoche, the part (altar) to reference the whole (Christ's finished work of atonement). *Hebrews*, 616.
28. Type to antitype, shadow to fulfillment, anticipation unto fulfillment, temporary to eternal, etc.
29. Δι' αὐτοῦ [οὖν] **ἀναφέρωμεν θυσίαν αἰνέσεως** διὰ παντὸς τῷ θεῷ, τοῦτ' ἔστιν καρπὸν χειλέων ὁμολογούντων τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, (Heb 13:15).
30. Recall Heb 7:27, where the writer teaches that Jesus offered up himself *once*, but here, New Covenant worshipers are to offer up praise *continually*.
31. See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 95-101.
32. Attridge agrees. *Hebrews*, 400-01.
33. This example is interesting in that it uses a cognate of the same verb (ἐξομολογεῖσθε αὐτῷ αἰνεῖτε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ (Ps 99:4 LXX).
34. ἐξομολογήσασθαι τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἁγίῳ σου (Ps 105:47 LXX).
35. ἐξομολογήσονταί τῷ ὀνόματί σου (Ps 139:14 LXX).
36. BDAG, s.v. "**ὁμολογέω**." Note, the only other use of this verb is in 11:13, Κατὰ πίστιν ἀπέθανον οὗτοι πάντες, μὴ λαβόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας ἀλλὰ πόρρωθεν αὐτὰς ἰδόντες καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι καὶ **ὁμολογήσαντες** ὅτι ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί εἰσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. "These all died in faith, having not received the promised things but having seen and welcomed them at a distance, and **having professed** that they were strangers and exiles on the earth." Note the cognate noun in 3:1; 4:14; and 10:23.
37. In contrast to verse 11: the sacrifices of animals whose blood is brought into the holy places as a sacrifice for sin, which is offered through the high priest (διὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως).
38. Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 702.
39. See Lev 7:12 (τῆς θυσίας τῆς αἰνέσεως (Lev 7:12 LXX). The closest parallel in the LXX to καρπὸν χειλέων is found in Hosea 14:3, καὶ ἀνταποδώσομεν καρπὸν χειλέων ἡμῶν. See also 2Ch 29:31, "Then Hezekiah said, 'Now *that* you have consecrated yourselves to the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD.' And the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all those who were willing *brought* burnt offerings," (2Ch 29:31 NASU).
40. It is worth noting that during the decade AD 60-70, likely when Hebrews was written, there was a substantial Jewish nationalism present, that ultimately fuel rebellion against Rome, and subsequently, the demise of Jerusalem. As Allen notes, such Jewish nationalism "likely brought pressure to bear on Jewish-Christians to identify with the homeland against the ever-growing Roman threat," (D. Allen, *Hebrews*, 622).
41. Cockerill, Hebrews, 701.

42. "Do not forget" specifically recalls 13:2, where the command is identical, μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε. 2Pl Pres Mid/Pass Imptv.
43. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 391.
44. Harold M. Best, *Unceasing Worship: Biblical Perspectives on Worship and the Arts* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 42.

From Deuteronomy to Hebrews: The Promised Land and the Unity of Scripture

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Introduction

"The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land" (Gen 12:7a). With these words God brought his promises to a climax. He had already promised to bless Abraham, to make him a great nation, and to bless the world through him (Gen 12:2-3). The land would be the place that gave concrete shape to fulfillment.

These promises to Abraham address the degenerate state of the human race depicted in Genesis 1-11. Through distrust and disobedience Adam and Eve have usurped God's lordship over their lives and thus forfeited the divine presence, disrupted the harmony of human community derived from that presence, and suffered exile from Eden the place of blessing. They

have become inhabitants of a world under God's curse. Through faithful Abraham God begins the process of redemption. He promises to restore his presence, to establish a new community of people whose life and character reflect that presence, and through that community to offer blessing to an accursed world. He also promises to provide a blessed land as the locus for the fulfillment of these promises.

When we think of the unity of Scripture our minds turn to such concepts as divine presence, salvation history, promise, covenant, and kingdom.[1] The Promised Land, of course, is closely related to these themes: it is the place of God's promised presence, as the context for covenant obedience it is an integral part of salvation history, and it is the locus for the initiation of restored divine rule. With the establishing of Davidic dynasty and the City of Jerusalem, the Temple becomes the focus of divine presence in the Land and thus together Temple and Land become the physical embodiment of God's dwelling among his people. Recently N. T. Wright has argued for the Temple as a microcosm that anticipates "the Glory of the Lord" filling the entire cosmos. The God who dwelt in Eden as his Temple will fill a renewed heaven and earth with his presence. Thus the Temple and the Land become an anticipation of the New Jerusalem/Temple within a renewed creation.[2] While acknowledging this connection with city and Temple this study focuses more narrowly on the Land motif.

Perhaps the Land has received less attention in relationship to the unity of Scripture because it is more prominent in the Old Testament (OT) than in the New Testament (NT). However, the Land-theme is important because it gives substance and shape to the entire complex of Abrahamic promises. We might think of it as the basket that holds the other promises until final fulfillment. It is a bucket without which the promises leak through our fingers. And thus, without denying the importance of presence, covenant, salvation history, or kingdom, we offer this exploration of the Land's contribution to the unity of Scripture as a stimulus for further discussion.

God begins to fulfill his promise in Exodus through Numbers by delivering Abraham's now numerous descendants from slavery in Egypt and establishing a covenant with them at Sinai. His presence dwells in the Tabernacle at the center of their "camp."[3] They have become the new community of the people of God who acknowledge his lordship. But the generation delivered from Egypt fails to enter the Promised Land due to persistent unbelief and rebellion

against their Sovereign. Their behavior set a pattern too-often followed by succeeding generations. It is their children, however, that Moses addresses on the Plains of Moab in Deuteronomy as they are preparing to enter the Land. Arie C. Leder has suggested that the storyline of the Pentateuch sets the tone for the rest of the Bible by ending here in Deuteronomy with God's people in the wilderness "waiting for the Land."[4]

"Waiting for the Land:" From Deuteronomy to Hebrews

The Letter to the Hebrews is the NT book that most self-consciously adopts this approach to the Land. In order to understand Hebrews' Land-perspective, however, we must grasp Hebrews' understanding of the continuity of the people of God based on the continuity of God's self-revelation.

In the opening chapters its author lays the foundation for the entire Book of Hebrews when he asserts that the God who spoke to "the fathers in the prophets" has now "spoken to us" in the incarnate, now exalted, eternal Son seated at his right hand (Heb 1:1-2). The author uses the term "prophets" with deliberate care for two reasons. First, it is general enough to encompass the entire OT, to include all of the "various times and various ways" God had spoken "of old."[5] Second, the term "prophets" implies fulfillment of what is prophesied. All of God's ancient word finds fulfillment in "one who is Son." We, then, who have heard God speak in his Son are the heirs of those who received his ancient word. The people of God has always been constituted by, and called to respond to, the word of God.

God's Covenant at Sinai, however, is the heart of his ancient self-revelation. Thus it is not surprising that the author of Hebrews focuses on the relationships (1) between the revelations mediated by the Son and at Sinai (Heb 1:5-2:18), (2) the resulting situations of those who received these revelations (Heb 3:1-6), and (3) their ultimate destinies (Heb 3:7-4:13).

First, in Hebrews 1:5-2:18 the author assumes that God's word spoken "in one who is Son" fulfills the angel-mediated Sinai revelation (Heb 2:2) and establishes a relationship between those who have received these revelations.[6] That is why the consequences suffered by those who neglect the fulfillment are more certain than for those who disobeyed its anticipation under which "every violation and disobedience received its just punishment" (Heb 2:2).

Second, Hebrews 3:1-6 clarifies this assumed relationship between the recipients of the Sinai and Son-mediated revelations. Both "we" and the Sinai/wilderness generation are part of the one "household" of God. This identification of present believers as the continuation of those who stood around Sinai and then journeyed through the wilderness is fundamental not only to the author's use of the wilderness generation as a warning in Hebrews 3:7-4:13, but also to his development of the fully-sufficient Priesthood of the eternal Son in Hebrews 4:14-10:18. Moses, the "steward" within that one household, "bore witness to the things that would be spoken" in "the Son" who rules over that household. The word that God spoke through his "steward" at Sinai established the Tabernacle with its priesthood, sacrifice, and covenant as means of approaching God. The word spoken in "one who is Son" fulfills all that those institutions anticipated.[7] Through his "once-for-all" sacrifice the Son has become both the fully-sufficient High Priest who ushers the faithful into God's heavenly sanctuary during the course of their pilgrimage (Heb 4:14-10:18, but especially 10:19-25), and the "Pioneer" (Heb 2:10, 12:1-3) who, at his return (Heb 9:28), will bring God's people into the final "rest" that is their true promised "homeland."[8]

Third, the way in which the author uses the OT Promised-Land terminology of "rest" in Hebrews 3:7-4:13 confirms this unity between the present people of God with the wilderness generation by affirming that the ultimate goal of the people of God has always been the same. The "rest" that they forfeited, and that we their descendants must gain, was never *simply* the Promised Land that was entered under Joshua, but has always been the "Sabbath rest" into which God entered at the culmination of creation. The "my rest" of Psalm 95 is the rest forfeited by the wilderness generation through rebellion (Heb 4:6; cf. 4:3; 3:11, 18), the rest offered in the time of David (Heb 4:7-8), and the "rest" that "remains" for those addressed by Hebrews (Heb 4:9-11) and thus for the people of God "today."[9] The Promised-Land imagery and the use of "rest" in contemporary sources indicate that this is not merely a blessed state but also a place where God's people dwell in his presence.[10]

By a careful study of Hebrews hortatory style and use of Deuteronomy, David Allen has suggested that Hebrews is a re-presentation of that book.[11] There is continuity between those addressed by Deuteronomy and Hebrews. Moses addresses the children of the disobedient wilderness generation. Hebrews addresses its hearers as the children of that same generation. Both

Moses and Hebrews remind their hearers of the consequences that ensued from that fateful refusal to enter the Land at Kadesh Barnea.[12] Both urge faithful obedience. Both anticipate entrance into the Land.

However, this continuity is a continuity of fulfillment. Moses addressed Israel on the plains of Moab as the children of the wilderness generation not merely because of physical descent but because they, too, had stood before Sinai (Deut 4:10, 15; 5:2).[13] Hebrews addresses its hearers as the heirs of the wilderness generation because they have received the fulfillment of Sinai in the Son. The Aaronic sacrificial system through which that generation approached God while traveling to the Promised Land has been fulfilled by the all-sufficient Great High Priest through whom God's people persevere until entrance into the eternal "rest" foreshadowed by the earthly Promised Land.

This fulfillment brings the exponentially greater privilege of "such a great salvation" and the correspondingly greater responsibility of "how shall we escape" (Heb 2:3). It also confirms the continuity of the people of God throughout history as heirs of the same promise and bound for the same eternal "rest."

By addressing the original children of the wilderness generation Moses addressed future generations of God's people as those who stood before God's revelation at Sinai in anticipation of the Promised Land.[14] So Hebrews addresses every generation of God's people as those who have received God's final revelation in the eternal, incarnate, now exalted High Priest who sits perpetually at the Father's right hand ever ready to aid those who "draw near to God" through him in route to the rest that "remains for the people of God" (Heb 4:9).[15] In this profound way "we" join the generation Moses addressed "waiting for the Land."

Our understanding of the Land motif in Hebrews, however, would be incomplete if we did not examine the author's exhortation to join the history of the faithful in Heb 11:1-40. This exhortation is the appropriate balance and counterweight to the warning against association with the unbelieving wilderness generation in Hebrews 3:7-4:13. By beginning with the wilderness generation the author is able to establish the "Promised Land" as the ultimate destiny of the people of God. However, the faithful who heard God speak "at various times and in various ways" before, and in anticipation of, Sinai are also part of God's one "household." The author has ordered these passages with consummate rhetorical skill. He would turn his hearers away from disobedience

(Heb 3:1-4:13) to faithfulness (Heb 11:1-40). He would arouse their fear of sharing the loss of the disobedient (Heb 3:1-4:13) so that they would embrace their all-sufficient High Priest (Heb 4:14-10:18) in order to persevere with the faithful (Heb 11:1-40).[16] This close parallel relationship between the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11:1-40 and the wilderness generation in Hebrews 3:7-4:13 confirms our interpretation of the "Sabbath rest" as the ultimate destiny of the people of God by identifying it with the "place" (τόπος) that God promised Abraham (Heb 11:8). It is the "homeland" (Heb 11:14) and "city with foundations whose architect and builder is God" (Heb 11:10) pursued by the faithful of the ages. There can be no doubt that the "Promised Land" has become the ultimate destiny of the people of God throughout history, the concrete place where the faithful will dwell with God forever.[17]

By this time it has become obvious that Hebrews has no interest in ethnic Israel inhabiting Palestine. The people of God throughout history have always been constituted by the word of God and the response of faith. Its destiny has always been "the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God." Hebrews knows nothing of the Pauline Jew/Gentile conflict. The author of Hebrews is not concerned with Jewish identity markers, such as circumcision, dietary laws, or Sabbath.[18] The heroes of chapter eleven are not distinguished, as were the Maccabean martyrs, by their loyalty to such markers but by their trust in God's promises and power.[19] There is no replacement of one people of God with another. The whole point of Hebrews is that the all-sufficient Son of God brings the faithful of all time into their "inheritance."[20]

Some, however, have suggested that the "rest" lost by the unfaithful wilderness generation in Hebrews 3:1-4:13 might represent a present spiritual reality or experience rather than the ultimate destiny of the people of God.[21] Hebrews 3:1-4:13 has an immediacy that is lacking in Hebrews 11:1-40. It urgently addresses the hearers lest they harden their hearts "today." It envisions the people of God at Kadesh-Barnea about to enter the Promised Land. Hebrews 11:1-40, on the other hand, envisions the people of God in need of perseverance for a possibly long journey to the eternal "homeland." And yet, in my judgment, the author does not intend for this immediacy to suggest that the "rest" was a present spiritual state. In Hebrews 3:7-4:13 the author is warning his hearers against ultimate loss. Therefore, he takes them to what should have been the end of the wilderness generations journey in order to make them face the ultimate fate to which their indifference, laxity,

and drifting might lead. We might draw a parallel with the way in which the immanence of Christ's return is meant to keep believers alert so that they will persevere until he does return. Furthermore, a sense of immediacy is characteristic of the warnings throughout Hebrews. Hebrews' description of its hearers in the present tense as "we who have believed *are* entering that rest" (Heb 4:3, my translation, emphasis added) is perfectly compatible with this interpretation. By persevering in faithful obedience "We" (inclusive of author and hearers) are in the process of entering that ultimate rest. In my judgment, when we grasp the fact that Hebrews uses the language of priesthood to describe our present approach to and experience of God through Christ and the language of Promised Land when speaking of our ultimate entrance into his dwelling place, the entire book makes sense.[22] Every passage fits within this perspective without remainder.

And yet the "Most Holy Place" into which the Great High Priest provides access during our journey and the "homeland" which is its goal both describe the same reality, as evidenced in Hebrews 12:18-24. I have argued elsewhere that the first "mountain" in this passage confronts the hearers with the ultimate destiny of the apostate and the second, with their own ultimate destiny as the faithful people of God.[23] Thus the author can say that, in some sense, those who have been "drawing near" through their Great High Priest "have come" to and tasted their ultimate destiny—"Mount Zion, . . . the City of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." In this way he climaxes with the same immediacy that we found in Hebrews 3:1-4:13 in order to underscore the need for perseverance!

The Promised Land, then, is the ultimate destiny of the people of God, "the City of the living God" where his redeemed people live in the "Most Holy Place" of his presence and join the angels in joyful worship through the mediation of Jesus. There is nothing ethereal about this concrete reality. The author underscores its eternal permanence when he calls it the "Unshakeable Kingdom" (Heb 12:29).

The only question is whether this reality is the renewal/culmination of the present creation, or its replacement. Hebrews has already supported the Son's deity by affirming that he is the one who will "roll up" the creation as if it were a garment (Heb 1:12). The way in which the author uses Haggai 2:6 in Hebrews 12:26-27 also suggests replacement: the God who "shook" the earth when he spoke at Sinai will "once more" shake "the heavens and the earth" when he speaks at the Judgment. Furthermore, that shaking will be "the

removal of things that can be shaken as things that have been made, in order that the things that cannot be shaken might remain" (my translation). The NIV translates "things that have been made" as "created things." And yet there are features of Hebrews that suggest that this "Unshakeable Kingdom" is the fulfillment rather than the replacement of creation. First, as noted above, this ultimate reality is identified with the "rest" entered by God at the culmination of creation (Heb 4:4, 9). Second, the opening verses of Hebrews suggest that as the Heir of all things the Son, through his incarnation and exaltation, will bring creation to its God-intended goal.[24] Third, bodily resurrection is a close corollary with the renewal of creation. I've argued elsewhere that belief in the bodily resurrection of the faithful and in a "God who raises the dead" is central to the faith recommended in Hebrews 11:1-40. The descriptions of Abraham's resurrection faith in Hebrews 11:17-19 and of the "better resurrection" in 11:35 are the chiastic center and heart of Hebrews 11:1-31 and 11:32-40 respectively.[25] In my judgment the author is not as concerned with the removal of the physical world as with the demise of the present world order that is hostile to believers because it is characterized by temptation, persecution, and the danger of apostasy.[26] We might think of Paul's description of living "according to this age" and "according to the prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2). It is certain that this order will pass away. The destiny established for the people of God on the seventh day of creation is the goal of creation.

Both Deuteronomy and Hebrews, then, envision the people of God in the wilderness "waiting for the Land." However, there are two major differences brought about by fulfillment in the Son. First, Hebrews does not share Deuteronomy's pessimism. Moses predicts persistent disobedience resulting in ultimate loss of the Land (Deut 31:14-29, 32:1-43). The author of Hebrews has no hesitation about warning his hearers, but he is confident that "we are not of those who shrink back to destruction" (Heb 10:39). He tells them, "You have come to Mount Zion" (Heb 12:22). He can be confident of their perseverance because of the *sufficiency of Christ*!

Second, in Hebrews the Promised Land is no longer Canaan. The true destiny of the people of God is, and always has been, the "rest" God entered at the culmination of creation, the heavenly "homeland" pursued by Abraham and the faithful, "Mount Zion, the City of the Living God, a heavenly Jerusalem." It is the "Unshakable Kingdom" the faithful will receive at the return of Christ (Heb 9:28) and the ultimate "shaking" of all things (Heb 12:25-29).

The OT: The Expansion of the Promise

With these two differences in mind we return to the OT. When we do we discover, first, that the perennial disobedience of God's people predicted by Moses repeatedly frustrated the fulfillment of the Land promise. But, second, this very frustration also led to an expanded understanding of the Land promise from settlement under Joshua, to Solomonic empire, to New Heaven and Earth. And so the promise reaches the proportions set for it from the beginning by Genesis 1-11.[27]

First, the generation that stood on the Plains of Moab did enter and possess Canaan so that Joshua could say "not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed" (Josh 23:24, cf. 21:45). This was Israel's primary, foundational entrance into the Land. Each tribe and family had its own inheritance. All was well. And yet there was a certain elusiveness about this land possession. The person who began reading from Genesis one might think, "life" in the Land is good, but not as good as the "life" lost in Eden. And how has blessing spread to the nations? Furthermore, there are still enemies within the possessed Land.

On the surface the declaration that Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and the elders who outlived Joshua is reassuring (Josh 24:31). But at a subtler level it forebodes the disobedience and loss of Land predicted by Moses. For, according to Judges 2:10-11, the next generation did what was "displeasing in the eyes of the Lord" because they did not know the Lord or the great things he had done. Judges narrates the subsequent story of degeneration. All of the promises begin to unravel—the knowledge of God, life in the covenant community, and possession of the Land. Instead of being a blessing to the nations, God's people are oppressed by the surrounding nations, resulting in loss of the Land: in Gideon's day the peoples of the east "did not spare a living thing for Israel." They covered the land "like swarms of locusts" (Judges 6:4-5).

God will not leave his promise in such disarray. He addresses the sinful condition of Israel by making his covenant with the house of David, whose mission is to "plant" Israel (2 Sam 7:10, 1 Chron 17:9, cf. 1 Kings 2:3) in the Land by leading them to obey the Law of Moses. As God's regent David is to restore God's rule inaugurated at Sinai but rejected by his sinful people. The institutions of Davidic Dynasty and Jerusalem/Temple are meant to secure

the promise by ensuring obedience to God's rule. These institutions bring the Land-promise to a previously unimagined glorious fulfillment. And yet the "weight" of this fulfillment and the foreign entanglements inherent in its magnitude led to the idolatry and oppression that was its undoing. This undoing began with the division of *the Land* at Solomon's death but climaxed in exile from *the Land* in the days of Jeremiah. Something more than institutions would be necessary to secure the obedience of the people of God. The final fulfillment could not be a *mere* repetition of the Davidic Monarchy. After all, if the Messiah were simply David's son why would David call him "Lord" (Mark 12:35-37)? Meanwhile, the exile has replaced the wilderness as the place of "waiting for the Land."

Ezra and Nehemiah tell the story of how God used Cyrus King of Persia to bring his people back from exile and once again establish them in the Land. This third "possession," however, is as diminutive as the previous one was glorious. The returned exiles occupy little more than the area surrounding Jerusalem. They remain the servants of a foreign king who, as Nehemiah confesses, receives the bounty of the land that once went to the people of God (Neh 9:36-37). God's promise must mean more than this! The Chronicler encourages the returned exiles by retelling Israel's history with an emphasis on the mighty way in which God fulfilled his promise in the time of David and Solomon. The problem of disobedience still persists, as indicated by Nehemiah's final prayer (see Neh 13:1-31). And yet there is hope that the God who so wondrously fulfilled his promise in David and Solomon's time will do so again. More than ever, God's people, though returned from exile, are "waiting for the Land." They desperately need someone who will "save his people from their sins" and restore God's rule.

What, then, will this fulfillment be for which the exiles so fervently yearn? Will it be possession of the earthly Canaan as in Joshua's day? Or will it be entrance into the "Unshakeable Kingdom" envisioned by Hebrews? The two share many similarities. Both are the dwelling place of a holy God. That is what makes them unique. Both are God's gift to his people. Both are the place where God's people dwell with him as a holy community. Both are the place of blessing. Both are concrete realities. And yet one vision of the Land is temporal, the other, eternal.

As already suggested, there are indications within Genesis that the ultimate meaning of the Land surpasses Canaan real estate. Abraham's obedience

contrasts with Adam's failure. God's promise to Abraham is a promise to restore blessing to the sinful, scattered nations of Genesis 1-11. The land is the new place of fellowship with God that replaces Eden. In fact, this land of blessing contrasts with the earth cursed through sin. Is it, then, intended to be merely the home of one nation or the beginning of a new creation?

The great prophets of Israel looked beyond exile to a far greater fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise based on their confidence in the character of God. All that God had done before established a pattern for the vision of what he would yet do. Thus, they could describe this fulfillment in terms of a new Eden, a new creation, a new exodus, a new covenant, a new entrance into the Land, a new Jerusalem/Zion, even a new Temple. This fulfillment would be brought in by a new Moses, a new priest, and especially by a new David, who, as the Servant of the Lord would make atonement for sin and establish God's people is obedience to God's rule. The prophets envision a fulfillment that reaches beyond Israel and the earthly Promised Land to encompass the nations of the world and a new creation.[28] Oren Martin, who discusses the development of these themes in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, summarizes his findings thus:

> This eschatological resolution will be accomplished by the work of the future Messiah, the Davidic king who comes as the Servant of the Lord, whose death will inaugurate a new covenant and usher in the age of the Spirit, extend his kingdom to the ends of the earth and finally bring about a new creation.[29]

The NT: A Fulfilled Promise

When come to the NT, we discover that Christ fulfills this prophetic vision. We turn, again, to Hebrews, the book that has the most to say about the Land: through his incarnation, suffering, and self-offering for sin in obedience to the Father the eternal Son fulfills all that the prophets have spoken. According to Hebrews he offered a once-for-all sacrifice for sin, thus becoming the all-sufficient High Priest able to bring us into God's presence, establishing the new covenant of obedience, and taking his seat in fulfillment of God's promise to David at God's right hand, the place of all authority.[30] God's people are still in "the wilderness," but they enjoy unhindered access to God in order to receive

all that they need to persevere in obedience until they enter the "heavenly Jerusalem," that "Unshakable Kingdom" at Christ's return when his enemies become his footstool (Heb 1:13) and all that is not eternal is removed (Heb 9:26-27). We are reminded of the New Heaven and Earth in Revelation 21 and of the "holy city New Jerusalem" coming down from heaven.

Two further observations before leaving Hebrews. (You thought we'd never get beyond Hebrews!). Hebrews is the only NT book that so consistently envisions God's people as *in the wilderness*. Several employ the related imagery of being in exile (James 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1-2, 2:11). After all, Israel "waited for the Land," in the way we are using that term, under a variety of circumstances in the OT. Second, as noted above, there is nothing ethnic about Hebrews: the people of God are and *always* have been those who heard the word of God and responded in faith. Since there is nothing distinctly Jewish about the way Hebrews describes the people of God it has no need to contrast Israel with the nations.

Paul, on the other hand, echoes the prophets with his concern for the nations. The offer of salvation by faith to the nations is the fulfillment of *both* the promise to bless the nations through Abraham (Gal 3:8) *and* the promise to make him the father of many nations (Rom 4:17). Through faith the nations experience God's promised presence and become part of the people of God. They receive the gift of God's Spirit (Gal 3:14, 4:6-7) and adoption as children of God (Gal 3:26). They were once "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise" but have now become "fellow heirs with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph 2:12, 19). Just as Abraham received God's promise with obedient faith (Rom 4:1-25), so those who now embrace its fulfillment in Christ with obedient faith become children of Abraham and heirs of the promise.

All of this has been made possible through Christ, who is the "seed" to which the promise pointed (Gal 3:16). By his death on the cross he has taken upon himself the curse of disobedience that was exposed and exacerbated by the law (Gal 3:13). Thus, he has addressed the perpetual unfaithfulness that so plagued God's people of old. And the nations who were so far from God have been "brought near by the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13).

But what does Paul say about the promise of land? In 1 Corinthians 10:1-12 Paul joins Hebrews by associating his hearers with the disobedient wilderness generation. He warns them against the sins of that generation—lust, idolatry,

fornication, murmuring, and tempting "Christ." He doesn't focus as narrowly on unbelief at Kadesh Barnea, but is concerned lest they be "overthrown in the wilderness" through divine displeasure. This at least suggests that the final goal of believers is the ultimate "Promised Land." Furthermore, the gift of the Spirit (Gal 3:14, 4:6-7) to all believers is, according to Paul, the "earnest" of their ultimate "inheritance" at the time of their final redemption (Eph 1:14; 2 Cor 1:22, 5:5). OT usage of "inheritance" language suggests that Paul is referring to the ultimate Promised Land, "a possession and heritage given by God."[31]

Finally, Romans 4:13 is one of our best indications of Paul's thinking concerning the Land promise: "It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that *he would be heir of the world,* but through the righteousness that comes by faith" (italics added). The promise of "inheriting" Canaan has become a promise of inheriting the world. This "expansion" of the promise fits well both with the prophets' emphasis on the universal nature of the Abrahamic promise (e.g. Isa 11:10-14, 55:3-5)[32] and the original purpose of the promise in Genesis as God's antidote for a fallen world. As the new place of fellowship with God the Promised Land becomes the place of blessing in a cursed world. If the conversion of the nations is the way that God "blesses the world" through Abraham and makes him "the father of many nations," then it is reasonable that the Land where the faithful would enjoy this blessing expand so that the curse be removed from the entire world. When Isaac Watts wrote "He comes to make his blessing known far as the curse is found" he was referring to Christ's second coming. Paul anticipates a new creation, the New Heavens and Earth which will become a reality at Christ's return (see 2 Cor 5:17, Gal 6:15, cf. Rev 21:1-5). Hebrews is burdened for the perseverance of the faithful while Paul's primary concern when referring to the Abrahamic promises is the inclusion of the nations. Yet Paul's vision of the Land as New Creation is not irreconcilable with Hebrews' "heavenly Jerusalem" and "Unshakable Kingdom."

The Land is, of course, the place of restored divine rule. However, when we turn to the Gospels, the restoration of God's kingdom becomes dominant. Christ's fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises is fundamental to Matthew's thinking.[33] He begins by linking the "book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" with the "book of

the genealogy of heaven and earth" (Gen 2:4) and "the book of the genealogy of Adam" (Gen 5:1). Matthew divides Jesus' genealogy into equal segments: from Abraham to David "the King," from David "the King" to the "deportation to Babylon," and from the "deportation to Babylon" to Jesus, "who is called the Messiah."[34] The initial fulfillment of the Abrahamic Promises that was achieved under David the King, but lost in the exile, will be brought to final fulfillment in Jesus, the Messiah. By overcoming the exile he will bring God's people into the ultimate Promised Land. This is the "earth" that the meek will inherit (Matt 5:5), the "new world" where the twelve will sit on thrones representing the new people of God (Matt 19:28). Thus it is imperative that Jesus' followers "make disciples" of all nations (Matt 28:16-20). There is no space in this study for a proper consideration of Luke-Acts. Gary Burge, however, has made the interesting suggestion that Acts 1:8 is Jesus' answer to the disciples question concerning the restoration of the kingdom to Israel.[35] The kingdom is restored through preaching the Gospel to the entire world.[36]

Only Hebrews reserves Promised-Land language *exclusively* for the ultimate destiny of God's people.[37] The Gospel of John, on the other hand, uses the language of Temple and Promised Land to describe present fulfillment more than any other NT writer. Jesus, as the place where God dwells with us, is not only the new Tabernacle (John 1:14) but the new Bethel (John 1:50-51) and the new Temple (John 2:20-22). Through the gift of the Spirit he is present with his followers everywhere effectively making the entire world a Temple (John 4:21-23). Just as the faithful of old were to enjoy "life" in the Promised Land, so believers now enjoy "eternal life" (John 3:16, etc.). Sometimes other NT writers use Promised-Land language in this way as well. Jesus' offer of "rest" in Matthew may be more closely related to wisdom terminology than to the "rest" of the Promised Land (Matt 11:28-29).[38] Even though, according to Paul, the Spirit is the "earnest" of future inheritance his presence in the church makes it even now a Temple (1 Cor 3:16, Eph 2:21-22).

Nevertheless, our study agrees with Oren Martin when he says, "[T]he New Testament presents the land promised to Abraham and his offspring as finally fulfilled in the (physical) new creation, as a result of the person and work of Christ."[39]

Conclusion

The way in which the manifold development of the Land promise in the OT foreshadows, pictures, and typifies the ultimate destiny of the people of God provides a rich resource for understanding the purposes of God. Its fulfillment in the New Creation through Christ prevents the "spiritualization" of the ultimate destiny of God's people. Despite sin, Creation, through Resurrection, leads to New Creation. Thus, familiarity with the Bible's development of this theme provides helpful insight whether one is preaching from the OT or the NT. Properly understood, the Land-promise is both motivation for our own faithful perseverance (Hebrews) and for carrying the Gospel to the nations of the world (Paul).

An understanding of the Biblical significance of the Land-promise has also helped me to understand some of the "harsher" laws pertaining to life in the Land, particularly those that required capital punishment for numerous offenses.[40] Ultimate blessing required the exclusion of all evil. Thus, it was necessary to exclude all covenant unfaithfulness if the Land was to be a true foreshadowing of the New Creation. Any breach diminished the blessing of the entire community. Of course, in the OT God forbore exacting punishment time and again offering forgiveness and calling his people to repentance.

Finally, it seems to me that current discussions about the ethics of the conquest need to begin with an understanding of the significance of the Land-promise for the entire Bible. If we peremptorily dismiss the conquest as a misunderstanding of God's will or say that it did not happen,[41] do we not rend the fabric of Biblical theology?

Finally, we are all still "waiting for the Land." The land-promise still provides motivation, as it did in the NT, for faithful perseverance and for carrying the Gospel to the nations of the world. We acknowledge our status as those "waiting for the Land" when we confess in the words of the Creed, "we await the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come."

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1. John H. Walton, *Old Testament Theology for Christians: From Ancient Context to Enduring Belief* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 7-8, 21-22, 26-28, 52-53 mentions these themes as the most common proposals for a Biblical unifying theme. He rejects "salvation history" in favor of "divine presence" because he claims that the Old and New Testaments have fundamentally different views of salvation—in the OT salvation is, according

to Walton, primarily corporate physical deliverance, while in the New it is individual "forgiveness of sins." This assertion does not take sufficient account of the problem caused by sin throughout the Old Testament. Neither does it adequately account for the NT doctrine of salvation which culminates in the renewal of heaven and earth.

2. N. T. Wright, *History and Eschatology: Jesus and the Promise of Natural Theology* (The 2018 Gifford Lectures; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2019), 159-170, *passim*.
3. Exodus climaxes with God coming to dwell in Israel's midst in the Tabernacle. Leviticus, then, is instructions for life in God's presence. In Numbers, Israel is organized as an army around the God-indwelt Tabernacle. See Arie C. Leder, *Waiting for the Land: The Story Line of the Pentateuch* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010), 93-164, especially the chapter summaries on pages 93, 115, and 141.
4. Leder, *Waiting for the Land*, 181-212.
5. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews* (BTCP; Nashville: Holman, 2015), 53.
6. In chapters one and two the author compares God's Son-mediated revelation with the Sinai revelation understood as "the word spoken by angels" (Heb 2:2). See Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews*, 80, Harold W. Attridge, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989) 65, n. 28, and David M. Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation in Hebrews: A Study in Narrative Re-Presentation* (WUNT 238; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 105-106.
7. In my judgment, Moses' faithfulness as "a witness of things yet to be spoken" would be an odd way of referring to his prediction of a coming prophet in Deut 18:15, 18-19 (*pace* Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews,* 118). Within this context it makes much more sense to understand this as his being a "witness" to what would be "spoken" in God's Son through his high priestly work in fulfillment of the old sacrificial system established by Moses. See, most recently, John W. Kleinig, *Hebrews* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 157, 164.
8. The NT warrants seeing the salvation brought through Christ's death and resurrection as a new "exodus": as Israel was delivered from a bondage to Pharaoh that prevented them from serving God in order to enter the Promised Land so the people of God today are delivered from bondage to sin and Satan in order to become part of a renewed creation (See R. E. Watts, "Exodus," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* [Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000]: 478-487, especially pages 482-48). "The exodus ... became the paradigm, a type, of the Lord's redeeming love." It "can be conceived of as the new creation of Israel, pointing toward the new creation in the future" (Thomas R. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013], 30). Hebrews, of course, acknowledges that Moses led Israel out of Egypt "by faith" (Heb 11:29). However (*pace* Watts on page 486 of the article cited above) it focuses on God's self-revelation and covenant at Sinai as the definitive act of salvation, on Moses as the "steward" of the Sinai revelation that is now fulfilled in Christ, and perhaps on Moses as the ἀρχηγός ("Pioneer" Heb 2:10, 12:1-3 NRSV/RSV) who led Israel through the wilderness as Christ now shepherds his people on their way to their ultimate "rest." Without denying the importance of the Exodus, we would argue that this emphasis on Sinai has both OT warrant and is shaped by the author's pastoral concern. First, let's examine the OT warrant. Though the Exodus is important, it is preliminary to God's establishing his presence among his people at Sinai. As note in note #3 above, the Book of Exodus begins with the necessary deliverance from Egypt, but climaxes at Sinai with God coming to dwell among his people in the Tabernacle. Leviticus, the heart of the Pentateuch, gives instruction on life in the divine presence. In Numbers God's people are organized as a community centered on the presence of God. Yes, the Lord is the God "who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," but he brought them to Sinai. Sinai is the heart of the Pentateuch. Salvation that began with deliverance from Egypt finds its fullness in this provision for atonement necessary for life in his presence. Second, this emphasis is pastorally appropriate. The author of Hebrews is not concerned about bringing people to faith or converting the unconverted. He is concerned about the *perseverance* of his hearers who are suffering from discouragement, fatigue, doubt, ostracism, and potential if not actual persecution (Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 16-23). He would convince them that their access to God through the all-sufficient high priest is fully adequate for their journey to the promised "rest." As a side note, one might suggest that contemporary evangelicalism take note of this emphasis. In my judgment we have too often been fixated on salvation as deliverance from God's wrath and failed to see that the goal of such deliverance is loving God and living in joyful fellowship with him.
9. Although on page 143 Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews,* limits the "rest" that was lost by the wilderness generation in Heb 3:7-11 to the loss of Canaan, yet on p. 133 he more accurately reflects the logic of the text by writing as if the "rest" forfeited by the wilderness generation was the "rest" established by God at the culmination of creation. There is no basis in the text for differentiating between the "rest" lost by the wilderness generation and the "rest" offered to the recipients of Hebrews.

10. Jon Laansma, *"I Will Give You Rest': The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3-4* (WUNT 98. Tübingen, Siebeck, 1997), 278-279, has shown conclusively that this "rest" is both future and refers to a "place." See also Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 199-213.
11. David M. Allen, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation in Hebrews: A Study in Narrative Re-Presentation* (WUNT 238; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).
12. Daniel Lynwood Smith, "Feet in the Wilderness, Eyes on the Promised Land" (*Journal of Theological Interpretation*, 12/2, 2018): 290-295.
13. The fact that "Deuteronomy forms a second and authoritative recitation of 'this law' ('this torah' ...)" (Leder, *Waiting for the Land*, 170) and that it is a document of covenant renewal (p. 175) reinforces this identity between the "second generation" and the generation that came out of Egypt and stood before Sinai.
14. Leder, *Waiting for the Land,* 178: "the second generation stands in for all the subsequent generations of God's people."
15. For a discussion of the eternal, incarnate, now exalted High Priest seated at God's right hand as the basis for the contemporary relevance of Hebrews see Gareth Lee Cockerill, "The Truthfulness and Perennial Relevance of God's Word in the Letter to the Hebrews," *BibSac* 172 (April-June 2015) 190-202.
16. On the careful way in which the author has structured Hebrews in order to move his hearers to perseverance see Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 60-81.
17. The identification between the "rest" of Heb 3:7-4:13 and the "homeland" of 11:1-40 is supported both by the way the OT identifies "rest" with the Promised Land (Deut 12:10, also Exod 33:14; Deut 25:19; Josh 1:13, 15; 21:44; 22:4; and 23:1) and by the way in which both apocalyptic and rabbinic literature interpret "land" and "rest" as the ultimate place where God will dwell with his people (see Gareth Lee Cockerill, *Hebrews* [NICNT, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012], 199 n. 15). *Pace* Judith Hoch Wray, *Rest as a Theological Metaphor in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of Truth: Early Christian Homiletics of Rest* (SBLDS 166; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 90, minimizes both the naturalness of this identification and the evidence from these parallels. Contrary to her contention, 91 the limitation of "rest" language to Heb 3:7-4:11 is no hindrance to its identification with the "homeland" and "city" of 11:1-40 (p. 91). Hebrews regularly uses the specific language of an OT text, here Ps 95, only when explaining that text. Her attempts to find some support for "rests" as present entrance only expose the weakness of the evidence (see pages 73-78, cf. 34, 47).
18. Heb 13:9-10 is the only possible reference to Jewish ritual practice. For comment on this verse see Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 692-693.
19. Pamela Eisenbaum, *The Jewish Heroes of Christian History: Hebrews 11 in Literary Context* (SBLDS 156 Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 187-188 *passim.*
20. Thus, "faith" is and always has been living as if God's promises for the future are certain and his power for present perseverance is real. The all-sufficient Son-High Priest, who was part of the promise for OT believers, has now become the source of divine power for perseverance. See commentary on Heb 11:1 in Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 520-22.
21. My own Wesleyan-Holiness tradition has often understood the "rest" as an experience of sanctification available for the believer in the present (see, for instance, Andrew Murray, *The Holiest of All*, [Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, ND], 155-158). Others appear to interpret it as a present experience out of concern for the possible theological implications of admitting that the wilderness generation suffered eternal loss (Randall C. Gleason, "A Moderate Reformed View" *Four Views on the Warning Passages in Hebrews.* Ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007]: 350-352). The context of Hebrews provides no basis for understanding this "rest" as loss of rewards or of participation in a millennial kingdom (see David A. deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle "to the Hebrews."* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 156-163).
22. Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 197, 63-67.
23. Gareth Lee Cockerill, "Hebrews 12:18-24: Apocalyptic Typology or Platonic Dualism?" *TynBul* (69 no 2 2018): 225-239.
24. See the discussion of "whom he made heir of all things" in Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 91-93.
25. Gareth Lee Cockerill, "The Better Resurrection (Heb 11:35): a Key to the Structure and Rhetorical Purpose of Hebrews 11," *TynBul* (51.2, 2000): 216-234.
26. Note Paul Ellingworth's comment: "total annihilation probably lies beyond the author's horizon" in *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 688.
27. The article by Chris Wright, "A Christian Approach to Old Testament Prophecy Concerning Israel" (in *Jerusalem Past and Present in the Purposes of God* [ed., P. W. L. Walker; Cambridge: Tyndale House, 1992), 1-19 deserves more attention than it has received. He argues that OT prophecies should be interpreted

within the "Universal Context of God's Promises to Israel" (1) established by Gen 1-11 and in accord with the "Universal Thrust of Old Testament Eschatology" (2-3). Although prophecies of the future were inevitably in terms of the meaningful realities of Israel's life, such as "the land, the law, Jerusalem, temple, sacrifices and priesthood" (3), there was, even within the OT, an expectation that fulfillment would go beyond these realities (3-4). According to Wright, it is important to distinguish between "prediction" and "promise." Although there are specific OT predictions, promise is the larger category that allows for fulfillment beyond the wording of the promise at the time it was given (4-6). It is also clear that the OT does not see two separate futures for Israel and for the Nations, but that the Nations will be incorporated with Israel as the people of God (7-8). Jewish hopes in Jesus' time looked forward to an ingathering of the nations (8-9). Furthermore, Jesus and the entire NT see his coming as a renewal of Israel that includes the nations within the people of God (9-19).

28. This paragraph is heavily dependent on Oren R. Martin, *Bound for the Promised Land: the Land Promise in God's Redemptive Plan* (NSBT 34, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 95-114.
29. Ibid., 96-97.
30. See Gareth Lee Cockerill, "Structure and Interpretation in Hebrews 8:1-10:18: A Symphony in Three Movements," (*BBR,* 11.2, 2001: 179-201, in which I argue that because Christ's death atoned for sin in fulfillment of the Day of Atonement sacrifice, and indeed the entire sacrificial system (8:3-6; 9:11-15; 9:25-10:14), it was also the sacrifice through which he was consecrated High Priest (8:1-2; 9:1-10; 9:23-24)) and by which he established the New Covenant (8:7-13; 9:16-22; 10:15-18). According to the crucial passage, Heb 10:5-10, the eternal Son accomplished this atonement through his earthly obedience.
31. NIDNTTE, 2, 696.
32. As do some writings from the Second Temple period (Sirach 44:21; Jubilees 19:21; 2 Baruch 14:13, 51:3).
33. This section on Matthew draws heavily from Oren Martin, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 119-126.
34. Most commentators attribute significance to this arrangement of Jesus' genealogy in Matt 1:1-18. See, for instance, R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 26-33, though opinions differ as to the nature of that significance.
35. Burge, Gary M. Burge, *Jesus and the Land: The New Testament Challenge to "Holy Land" Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010) 60-62.
36. If Luke sees Jesus' death and resurrection as the new exodus, and Pentecost as the new Sinai, then it takes little to imagine the spread of the Gospel throughout the world as an anticipation of the new Promised Land.
37. As noted above, in Heb 12:18-24 the writer shows us that the heavenly Most Holy Place into which we now enter through Christ and the ultimate "Rest" of the people of God at his return are the same reality. Nevertheless, he consistently describes our present access to God's presence in terms of the one and our final entrance in terms of the other.
38. See France, *The Gospel of Matthew,* 447-451.
39. Martin, *Bound for the Promised Land*, 119.
40. Such as murder (Exod 21:12-14, Lev 24:17, 21), idolatry (Deut 13:6), adultery (Lev 20:10), kidnapping (Exod 21:16), blasphemy (Lev 24:6), Sabbath breaking (Exod 31:14), rebellion of a son (Deut 21:18-21), etc.
41. As does Peter Enns, *The Bible Tells Me So: Why Defending Scripture has Made Us Unable to Read It* (New York: Harper One, 2014), 58 or, on a more popular level, Adam Hamilton, *Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today* (New York: Harper One, 2014), 210-217.

God's Parabolic Design for Israel's Tabernacle: A Cluster of Earthly Shadows of Heavenly Realities

Ardel B. Caneday

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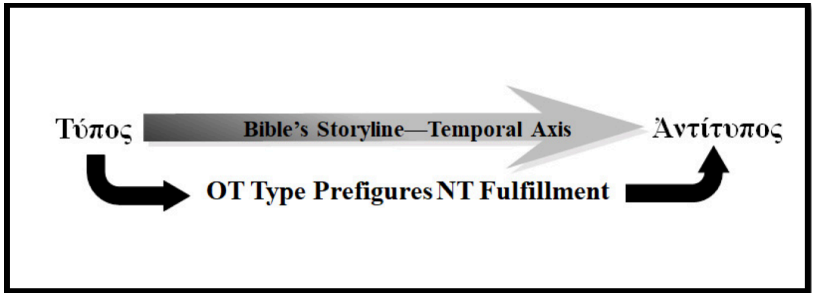
Introduction: The Two Axes of the Bible's Types—Spatial and Temporal

Theological study of the Bible's types is hardly confined either to the Bible's uses of "type" (τύπος) or to those types expressly identified as such by the writers of the New Testament (NT).[1] Though "type" with its derivatives (typology, typological, typologically) is a word that receives

frequent use among Christians, but especially scholars who engage in intertextual studies, the τύπος word group is rather rare in the Greek NT and the Septuagint.[2] Of the fifteen occurrences of τύπος within the NT the majority are in Paul's letters, three are in Acts, two in John's Gospel, and one each in Hebrews and 1 Peter.[3] Of these fifteen uses of τύπος rarely do NT writers explicitly employ the word "type" (τύπος) to identify persons, institutions, events, or settings from the Old Testament (OT) that bear foreshadowing significance concerning things to come. In fact, only three uses have reference to elements from the OT pertaining to Messiah, and they materially contribute to a study of OT types (Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 10:6; Heb 8:5). Far from suggesting the rarity of biblical types, this paucity, the few NT uses of τύπος are only suggestive concerning the full measure of how extensively figural representations are woven throughout the fabric of the OT whether the NT writers expressly mention them, implicitly allude to them, or instinctively assume them as essential aspects of the OT backstory concerning Messiah's anticipated and foreshadowed advent.[4] Because these uses of τύπος contribute to a cluster of other terms—τύπικως, ἀληθινός, ἀντίτυπος, σκιά, ὑπόδειγμα, παραβολή—they provide significant insight by which one can discover and explain numerous other OT prefigurements of Messiah and his kingdom.[5]

From his temporal vantage point of fulfillment, the Apostle Paul employs τύπος and the adverb τύπικως to refer to the OT earthly persons, institutions, events, or settings which God imbued with symbolic significance anticipatory of greater things to come at the ends of the ages (1 Cor 10:6, 11). The following sketch aptly illustrates how the NT writers other than the writer of Hebrews employ τύπος and ἀντίτυπος along the temporal axis that traces the biblical storyline from the OT to the NT. Thus, though the Apostle Paul does not use ἀντίτυπος, his uses of τύπος with reference to Adam (Rom 5:14) and with reference to Israel's experiences in the wilderness (1 Cor 10:6) calls for recognizing that ἀντίτυπος properly answers the types' corresponding fulfillments, Christ and the Corinthians' situation respectively. Likewise, Peter's use of ἀντίτυπος with reference to the waters of baptism assumes the propriety of conceiving that τύπος would fittingly attach to the waters of the Noahic flood though he does not use the actual word (1 Pet 3:21).



Understandably, this temporal axis of the OT *type* followed by the NT *antitype* fulfillment tends to dominate contemporary formulations concerning biblical types and the study of typology. Nevertheless, lost in much recent scholarly discussion of biblical types is the revelatory nature of the types which was present among earlier Christian writers. Whereas some notable earlier scholars regarded biblical types a species of revelation, now the tendency is to identify biblical types as a species of human interpretation despite the clarity of the Apostle Paul's statement—"These things occurred typologically to them and were written down for our admonition"—makes clear (1 Cor 10:11).[6] With the location of types as a species of hermeneutics, discussions concerning biblical types tend to focus on disagreement whether the Bible's types are predictive captures much scholarly attention. One view, defended by R. T. France and David L. Baker, contends that types are not foretelling or detectable forward but are analogies and examples that become discernible only retrospectively.[7] More dominant is the view that regards the Bible's types as prophetic foreshadows of latter day things which when fulfilled come into greater focus than when first given in the OT.[8]

The Creator designs shadows within the natural realm to instruct us concerning earthly shadows of heavenly realities. A shadow is not identical to that which casts the shadow; it is only a fleeting copy. Despite its ephemeral and imperfect representation of the actual form, the shadow's resemblance reveals its evident relationship to the thing of which it is the shadow. Indeed, because God designed earthly persons, institutions, events, and settings to function as earthly copies and shadows of heavenly realities the Bible's numerous types are revelatory. Because they are revelatory they are organically prophetic concerning the good things to come with Messiah.[9] These earthly copies of heavenly realities provide divine instruction calling for the patriarchs and for Israel to trust the Lord God

whose covenant promises established them as participants in a grand earthly drama, a symbolically-laden allegory which for them anticipates the latter days when the promised Messiah will fulfill God's covenant promises by bringing heavenly realities to earth so that at last heaven and earth become one (cf. Eph 1:10; Rev 21:1-3). Thus, from the vantage point of fulfillment we, "on whom the ends of the ages have come," see more clearly than OT saints did concerning how all the heavenly good things to come with Messiah were shadowed on earth among the patriarchs while prophetically presaging those good things "so that only together with us would they be made perfect" (Heb 11:40 NIV).[10]

Given how other NT writers use τύπος, ἀντίτυπος, and other expressions that accompany their appeals to OT foreshadows of fulfillments now attained with Messiah's coming, among biblical scholars there is a proclivity to focus almost exclusively upon biblical types along the horizontal temporal axis of the biblical storyline concerning the times of promise and fulfillment (as the figure above shows). Thus, because the author of Hebrews uses this same set of terminology, τύπος and ἀντίτυπος concerning OT types with different referents, it is understandable that his uses seem to introduce a measure of confusion. This element of confusion ensues because when the write to the Hebrews describes the "true tent" set up by the Lord, not humans, he uses familiar words but employs them with what may seem to be unfamiliar referents. He portrays the tabernacle where the priests serve as an earthly "copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσιν τῶν ἐπουρανίων, 8:5). Yet, as will be shown, the Preacher's vertical or spatial axis does not contradict the temporal axis but rather augments it.[11]

To explain biblical types by focusing upon the temporal-historical axis fails to do justice to the multidimensional nature of all the Bible's types which derive their typological forward looking function from their spatial relationship to heavenly realities, namely their divinely authorized revelatory functions. It is biblically shortsighted to restrict one's definition of typology to the temporal-historical axis.[12] This essay endeavors to demonstrate that the coherence and complementarity of these two axes, the revelatory-spatial and the historical-temporal, is essential to how all biblical types function. To do this, the essay features Hebrews' portrayal of the tabernacle as a type, a parable (ἥτις παραβολὴ εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα, 9:9).

The True Tabernacle in Heaven and the Shadow Tabernacle on Earth

The author of Hebrews effectively demonstrates that Jesus' priesthood is superior to Aaron's. This is true because Melchizedek, whose priesthood predates Aaron's and whose lineage does not trace to Levi as Aaron's does, is the more primal earthly analogy of the heavenly priesthood of Jesus. Melchizedek's sudden appearance to Abraham, which Moses literarily captures by his unique exclusion of both the king-priest's ancestry and succession, thereby resembles the Son of God who is without beginning or ending.[13] Thus, Melchizedek's priestly role which is superior to Aaron's is the proper earthly priesthood that most closely resembles the heavenly priesthood of the Messiah.[14]

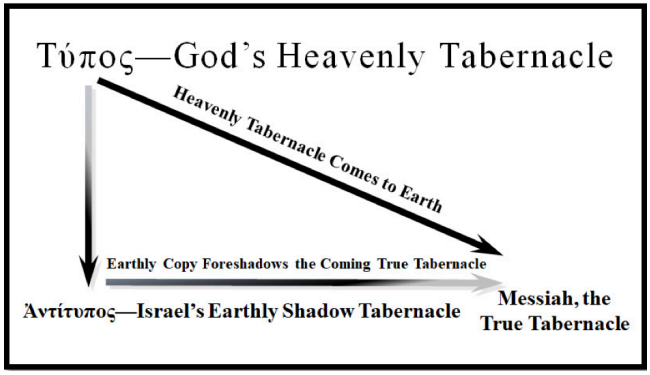
With ease Hebrews moves from the presentation of Jesus Christ as our eternal priest who is in keeping with the order of Melchizedek (chap. 7) to Jesus as our high priest who occupies the seat of honor at the throne of the Majesty in heaven, who serves in God's sanctuary (τὰ ἅγια), the true tabernacle (ἡ σκηνή ἡ ἀληθινή) which the Lord established, not any human (8:1-2). Noteworthy is the adjective "true," which occurs twice in Hebrews where both describe the Tabernacle or Holy Place in heaven (ἡ σκηνή ἡ ἀληθινή, 8:2; ἀντίτθπα τῶν ἀληθινῶν, 9:24). As the adjective's multiple uses in the Gospel of John where ἀληθινός bears the sense of "real," "authentic," "original," or "genuine" over against "copy," so also with its two uses in Hebrews.

Accordingly, the earthly tabernacle is only a "copy and shadow" of the true, the original, the heavenly tabernacle which is God's dwelling place (8:1, 5). As the figure shows, the Preacher uses τύπος distinctively to refer to the *heavenly original* of the tabernacle which the Lord showed Moses on the shrouded mountain (8:5; cf. Acts 7:44), and he uses ἀντίτυπος to depict

the *OT earthly copy* that Moses constructed in the wilderness (Heb 9:24).[15]

Because of the Preacher's distinctive use of these terms and his diverse and frequent mentions of persons, events, settings, and institutions from the OT, perhaps Hebrews is the most instructive portion of the NT concerning biblical types. Thus, it is crucial to observe that this use of τύπος to refer to the heavenly original tabernacle necessitates that we acknowledge that this spatial or vertical axis is not at all contrary to but complementary to the temporal axis representation of types and their fulfillments (shown earlier).

The author reinforces this spatial or vertical relationship between the heavenly original and the earthly copy and shadow by reminding readers that the Lord God cautioned Moses when he was about to erect the tabernacle, "See that you make all things in keeping with the *model* which was shown to you on the mountain" (8:5; τύπος, citing Exod 25:40). Later, once again the author uses the plural ὑποδείγματα with the vertical axis to refer to earthly things as "copies" of heavenly things (Heb 9:23). He also uses "shadow" (σκία, 10:1) again but not in the same way as in Hebrews 8:5. In 10:1, the author speaks of the Law Covenant as a "shadow" not with a vertical or heavenly orientation but with a horizontal or temporal orientation like the Apostle Paul refers to festivals, new moons, or sabbaths as "shadows" of "the coming things" (ἃ ἐστιν σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντον, Col 2:17). Thus, the Preacher affirms that the Law Covenant is a shadow of "the good things that are coming" (τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, Heb 10:1), it is "not itself the representation of the real things" (οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων, 10:1).



Among all the NT writers, the author of Hebrews provides the fullest portrayal concerning how biblical types function. He does this by showing

how the temporal (horizontal) axis is fused with the spatial (vertical) axis as represented in the graphic above. The dwelling of God, which is the heavenly sanctuary shown to Moses on the cloud-enveloped mountain, is the original that he was to represent for the Israelites with an earthly model faithfully constructed according to the heavenly template, the τύπος (ὅρα ποιήσεις κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν δεδειγμένον σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει, Exod 25:40; cf. 1 Chron 28:11-12; cf. Acts 7:44, ποιῆσαι αὐτὴν κατὰ τὸν τύπον ὃν ἑωράκει).[16]

Thus, it is the spatial axis that has priority over the temporal axis because the heavenly original imbues the earthly copy or shadow with symbolic representation which serves as God's earthly habitation both for the Israelites to whom the earthly tabernacle was given but also for the instruction of all on whom the ends of the ages have come with the presence of Messiah. So, it is the revelatory spatial axis that infuses the temporal axis with meaningful significance of prophetic anticipation to foreshadow the latter days of fulfillment when Messiah would emerge from the heavenly tabernacle and come to the earthly one to put an end to sacrifices and open fully the way of access to God. Expressed another way, apart from the revelatory nature of the vertical axis suffusing the temporal axis of the biblical storyline the latter would hold no meaning or significance either for our forefathers or for us in these last days (cf. Heb 1:1). Consequently, the tabernacle Moses constructed is a shadow with two orientation points. Its first orientation as a copy (ὑπόδειγμα) of the heavenly tabernacle, suffuses the earthly shadow (σκιά) to function as an imperfect system of atonement for Israel with resemblance to the heavenly original (8:5). Given the tabernacle's and the law covenant's divinely designed imperfect resemblance of the heavenly sanctuary, its second orientation as the earthly shadow (σκιά, 10:1), is its prophetic expectation of the good things to come with its own demise by way of fulfillment of unrestricted access to God in the Sanctuary the True Tabernacle not made by human hands (ἡ σκνὴ ἡ ἀληθινή, 8:1-2).

The Earthly Tabernacle as a Parable of the Heavenly Tabernacle

The wilderness tabernacle, the construction of which Moses supervised according to the heavenly original the Lord had showed him, is a shadow with two reference points. The first referent is the heavenly sanctuary, God's

dwelling, of which it is but an earthly copy; the earthly tabernacle is a shadow cast by the heavenly original. The second referent is the forthcoming end to the earthly tabernacle which is a (fore)shadow of its own earthly fulfillment anticipated by its own divinely designed inefficacy. Consequently, the tabernacle of Moses functions for the instruction concerning worship by two different covenant people, those of the old and new covenants. First, the tabernacle regulated Israel's worship as its barriers, curtains, and repeated bloody sacrifices offered by human priests all signified the tabernacle's ineffectualness to cleanse the conscience and the covenant people's restricted access to God. The tabernacle did not encompass the true presence of God but only an earthly manifestation of his presence. Thus, the tabernacle simultaneously pointed away from itself to heaven, to God's true habitation, and forward to its own prophetic fulfillment in the arrival of the true tabernacle when an effectual sacrifice would end all sacrifices and open direct access to God. Second, the tabernacle now instructs God's latter day people concerning their proper worship of God who through the effectual sacrifice of Jesus' own blood enter into God's presence without restriction, without barriers, without curtains, and without repeatedly offering bloody sacrifices through human priests who need to make offerings for their own sins.

Now, if God's heavenly sanctuary is the original (τύπος, Heb 8:5) after which Moses was to construct a copy (ἀντίτυπος, 9:24), the earthly tabernacle, the warranted implication is that the worship to be offered in the earthly tabernacle also has a corresponding worship that belongs to the original sanctuary which is in heaven. Furthermore, if God's heavenly tabernacle is the original, the necessary conclusion is that the sacrifices to be offered in the earthly tabernacle also have a correlating heavenly original sacrifice. To the earthly tabernacle's corresponding greater worship and superior sacrifice worthy of God's habitation the Preacher now turns in chapter 9. To this end, the Preacher rehearses the design and layout of the earthly tabernacle in Hebrews 9:1-10. In this passage the Preacher provides the essential aspects of the earthly tabernacle's arrangement with two chambers, the Holy Place containing the lampstand and the table of consecrated bread, and the Most Holy Place containing the ark of the covenant, with its various contents (9:1-5).[17] Then the Preacher presents the activities within these two chambers. Priests entered daily into the Holy Place to conduct their ministrations but only the high priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year on Yom Kippur

to make an offering for the sins of the people (9:6-10; cf. Lev 16:11-15).

According to the Preacher the design and layout of the earthly tabernacle is revelatory which the Holy Spirit teaches us. At minimum mention of the Holy Spirit's role features the giving and authorization of Holy Scripture's record concerning the tabernacle's design.[18] To think that the Spirit's role here is restricted to the inspiration of Scripture would be shortsighted. Surely, the Preacher is also affirming that the Holy Spirit revealed to Moses not only the tabernacle's arrangement but also the regulations restricting who could go into the tabernacle's two chambers, when they could enter, and under what circumstances they could do so. As in Hebrews 3:7 and 10:15, the Preacher speaks of the Holy Spirit's revelatory role concerning Scripture. In 9:8, it seems reasonable to infer that the Spirit is also now unveiling, in the time of fulfillment, what was previously hidden in plain view both within the regulations of Israel's worship and in Scripture's portrayal of the barriers to full access to God.[19] The Spirit is disclosing that the series of restrictions, entailing physical chambers and curtains as well as timing, shows that God has not yet revealed the way into the Most Holy Place so long as the tabernacle retains its divinely authorized function as the Holy Place. This arrangement signifies the sacrificial system's ineffectiveness to absolve the conscience of guilt before God, for the conscience is not made habitable for God by fleshly regulations that concern food, drink, and ceremonial washings.

Concerning Types, Earthly Shadows, and Parables

Παραβολῆ occurs fifty times in the NT but only twice outside the Synoptic Gospels, once each in Hebrews 9:9 and 11:19. English versions of both Hebrews 9:9 and 11:19 tend to mask the connotations of the Preacher's use of παραβολῆ. His two uses of παραβολή are close to an equivalent of τύπος outside Hebrews.[20] Within Hebrews παραβολή does not correspond to the Preacher's use of τύπος (8:5, as the heavenly original) but does have the same referent as his use of ἀντίτυπος (9:24, as the earthly copy).[21]

English translations of Hebrews 9:9 vary: "which was a figure" (KJV), "this is an illustration" (NIV), "which is symbolic" (ESV), "this is a symbol" (HCSB, NRSB), and "which is a parable" (DRV) is the simplest but most forthright.[22] Likewise, concerning the use of παραβολή in Hebrews 11:19, where most English versions translate ἐν παραβολῇ (11:19) adverbially, they offer a variety of renderings: "in a manner of speaking" (NIV), "figuratively speaking"

(ESV; NRSB); "as an illustration" (HCSB); and one version translates the phrase "as a type" (NASB).[23] Many exegetes claim that παραβολή in both Hebrews 9:9 and 11:19 has little connection with its use in the Gospels, only that the idea of "comparison" remains. However, within Hebrews παραβολή intersects with ὑπόδειγμα (sketch, prototype, model) and σκία (shadow), both used in Hebrews 8:5, but παραβολή adds depth, dimension, and expansion to these terms. Given its use in Hebrews 9:9, the translation of παραβολή in the Douay-Rheims version as "parable" is apt, showing its essential sameness to its uses in the Synoptic Gospels. It will be shown that παραβολή in both Hebrews 9:9 and 11:19 retains the essential sense it bears in the Gospels even if the Preacher's use of παραβολή concerns OT narratives concerning real events, persons, and places that portray heavenly realities while Jesus' use also portrays heavenly realities but with fictional events, persons, and places.

The Episode of Abraham and Isaac on the Mountain as a Parable

In Hebrews 11:19, the Preacher uses καὶ ἐν παραβολῇ ἐκομίσατο as a depiction of the episode of Abraham offering his son Isaac on the mountain and of his receiving his son back, as he reasoned, from the dead. That the Preacher uses παραβολή hardly suggests that the account in Genesis 22 is fictional but rather a narrative account concerning a drama that entails historical persons, events, and places. It is true that the text of Genesis 22 does not explicitly say that Abraham reasoned that God who promised a nation through Isaac was able to raise his son from the dead after the knife would plunge into his chest. Nevertheless, the account begins with the Lord commanding Abraham, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you" (22:2). Because of this the Preacher realizes that the account is punctuated with implicature so that he correctly infers Abraham's reasoning from the account. The implication is prominent in the account when Abraham instructs his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you" (22:5). The same is true when Isaac asks, "Father ... the fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" (Gen 22:7), and when Abraham responds, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son" (22:8).[24]

So, what does the Preacher's use of ἐν παραβολῇ in Hebrews 11:19

encompass? Exegetes tend to restrict ἐν παραβολῇ to Isaac's *figuratively* rising from the dead. Schreiner observes, "Isaac functions, then, as 'an illustration' (παραβολῇ) or type or figure of the resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ."[25] Similarly, Lane reads ἐν παραβολῇ in Hebrews 11:19 in light of the use of παραβολή in 9:9 as "a foreshadowing." As the tabernacle "foreshadows in some way a reality that is yet to come" so Abraham's receiving "Isaac from the altar of sacrifice" was also a "foreshadowing of the future resurrection from the dead."[26] Lane also suggests that ἐν παραβολῇ "implies that the 'foreshadowing' was veiled."[27] Yet, he does not accept that this veiled "foreshadowing" encompasses the whole episode including the sacrifice of Isaac and his deliverance from death by the Lord's provision of the ram, which Abraham's faith anticipated, as a foreshadow of the sacrificial death of the coming Messiah.[28] Hughes is a better guide: "It is not surprising that from the earliest times this event has been seen by the church as parabolic or typical of the death and resurrection of Christ."[29] Isaac's question—"Father ... but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"—with Abraham's reply—"God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."—obligate readers to acknowledge that the entire episode narrated in Genesis 22 is parabolic. Though the Preacher appeals only to Abraham's reception of Isaac as confirming his belief in resurrection, it is evident that the parable's various elements are infused with representations that exceed the use in Hebrews 11:19 to feature the strength and depth of Abraham's faith. Thus, it is reasonable to infer that the human father and son are earthly shadows engaged in a parabolic drama that foreshadows the heavenly substitution when the Heavenly Father does not spare his own Son but gives him over for us all, whose Son subsequently rises to life. Like Jesus' parables, aspects of this episode correspond to heavenly realities even as the whole event portrays things that are greater than what its individual elements signify. Given Abraham's confidence that both he and the boy would return to the servants and Abraham's confident response to Isaac's query, which prompt the Preacher to draw out one aspect from the parable, does not the parable of Genesis 22 also indicate that Isaac lives because of substitutionary sacrifice—the ram's life is taken to spare Isaac's life?[30]

When speaking of earthly things reflecting heavenly realities, whether of Abraham's receiving Isaac back as a kind of resurrection or of the tabernacle as an earthly shadow of the true presence of God, the Preacher uses

παραβολή to describe both. That his are the only two uses of the word in the NT outside the Synoptic Gospels obligates us to give due consideration to his choice of the word. The Preacher's use of παραβολή functions as a synonym for antitype (ἀντίτυπος), copy (ὑπόδειγμα), and shadow (σκιά); all four terms describe the earthly sanctuary in relation to the heavenly one.

Παραβολή *in Hebrews and the Synoptic Gospels*

An immaterial difference between uses of παραβολή in Hebrews and in the Gospels is that the latter regularly use παραβολή to refer to Jesus' numerous timely aphorisms like the Parables of the Wineskins or Unshrunk Cloth (Mark 2:21-22) or his frequent story-like portrayals of the heavenly realities of God's dominion with earthly analogies like the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-9).

On the other hand, Jesus' parables are substantially integrated with OT types because both derive their analogical functions from the same source, namely, God's design for the natural world and human affairs to analogize heavenly things. Jesus' parables and OT types are both species of divinely designed earthly analogies of heavenly realities. Because earthly things and human affairs bear the Creator's purposeful analogical imprints OT types and Jesus' earthly analogies do not function fortuitously but according to their creational design. It is not as if redemptive history retroactively imprints them as analogies.[31] No, the Bible's types bear within themselves the revelatory imprint of heavenly realities because the Creator engraved the OT types with analogical significance by virtue of the intersection of two forms of divine revelation—(1) creational, entailing God's providence over the created order; and (2) spoken, entailing God's word revelation given through prophets.

Thus, it is incorrect to think that God gives earthly copies of heavenly realities to the Israelites, including the tabernacle, and that Jesus instructs the Jews with earthly analogies of God's Kingdom to render his teaching more intelligible so that the simplest minds can comprehend. This is not Jesus' purpose for teaching the crowds with parables. Instead, just as the OT types, which are earthly shadows (earthly analogies) that simultaneously disclose and shroud heavenly things, Jesus unveils God's rule with earthly analogies both to reveal and to conceal spiritual realities in a single symbol-laden speech-act.[32] "For nothing is hidden except that it be revealed, and nothing is concealed except that it be brought into the open" (Mark 4:22). The power

of all earthly analogies to reveal spiritual or heavenly realities, whether considering Jesus' parables or OT shadowy types, has its roots much deeper than in the skillfulness or cleverness of the one who recounts an earthly drama or who tells parables. The effectuality of OT types or of Jesus' parables to disclose the nature of God's dominion resides in the fact that the Creator stamped his created order with an organic affinity with heaven's realities so that the natural realm exudes resemblance of the spiritual realm.[33]

Steven Stanley improperly attributes the genius of the parable when he claims that from the vantage point of Christ's entrance into the heavenly sanctuary, the Preacher "makes the ministry of the priests within the earthly tent a παραβολή for his own time."[34] Without disputing his intelligence, the genius of types and of parables is not due to the ingenuity of the Preacher nor of Moses, who constructed the tabernacle and narrated its design and function, nor of the skilled teller of parables. Rather, this genius belongs to God. This is true because our Creator designed the whole of creation to bear a revelatory resemblance to heavenly realities so that the natural world functions as a shadow or copy of the heavenly realm.[35] Given the Creator's signature imprinted upon his creations, whatever they may be, God imbued the tabernacle with symbolic representations so that its very design with its barriers of direct access to God by its material veils and by its priests' daily activities functioned as a parable so long as it had its proper role for Israel but also for us who receive the good things that have now come (Heb 10:1).[36]

The Tabernacle Structure and Priestly Functions as a Parable

Given the revelatory design of God's creation and of his appointed institutions for Israel, the Preacher speaks of the tabernacle with its structure and ceremony as a parable. He seems to use παραβολή to characterize the whole of the tabernacle with its symbolic appointments and sacred priestly activities as an earthly model of the original, God's heavenly sanctuary (cf. Heb 8:1-7). What does the Holy Spirit make evident concerning the ceremonial activities of the Levitical priests? The Holy Spirit makes clear that the Israelites had no regular or direct access to God either in the earthly sanctuary or the heavenly one. To this the Preacher adds this: "which is a parable for the present era" (ἥτις παραβολὴ εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα). A desire for exegetical precision generates a debate whether ἥτις refers to the whole of vv. 6-8 or to only the "the first tent" or "the outer sanctuary" (πρώτης

σκηνῆς) at the close of v. 8.[37] Whether the antecedent of ἥτις is the whole tabernacle's arrangement and function (9:1-8) or πρώτης σκηνῆς (vs. 8), the effect is essentially the same.[38] The Preacher seems to ascribe παραβολή to the whole of the tabernacle with its symbolic appointments and sacred priestly activities as an earthly model of the original heavenly sanctuary.

Hebrews 9:8-10 present the tabernacle's design and priestly activity as a parable εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα. This phrase is ambiguous. Is the Preacher contrasting two time periods "the time then present" with "the time of the new order?" Should the phrase be understood as "the time then present," referring to the era of the old covenant?[39] Or, should the Preacher's phrase be read as "the time now present," speaking of the era of the new covenant?[40] If "the time then present" is correct, the enduring presence of the tabernacle served as a parable for all who worshiped there that the way to God was not yet open. If "the time now present" is right, the tabernacle's parabolic function bears upon the present situation with an emphasis on the contrast between free access to God now and restricted access signified by the entire arrangement of the tabernacle's structure and ceremony.[41]

As with the antecedent of ἥτις, the question concerning the time referent for εἰς τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα is more academic than necessary. Regardless the time reference, the Preacher's interest is that the tabernacle is a parable. Given his previous portrayal of the earthly tabernacle which is a copy and shadow of the heavenly one, the Preacher is hardly suggesting that the tabernacle only now received its parabolic function with the dawn of "the time of the new order" (καιρὸς διορθώσεως). From its inception, at the giving of the pattern to Moses on the mountain, God imbued the tabernacle with its parabolic function, its earthly shadow role. So, for the Israelites and Christians alike the tabernacle holds a parabolic function to signify that so long as it had a standing that both material and temporal barriers impeded access to God.

This is all made evident by the Holy Spirit who first guided Moses to write Scripture concerning the symbolic roles and purposes of the tabernacle with its Levitical priests, all revealed to him on the mountain, and now gives greater insight concerning all these to Messiah's people who inhabit the time of the new order.[42]

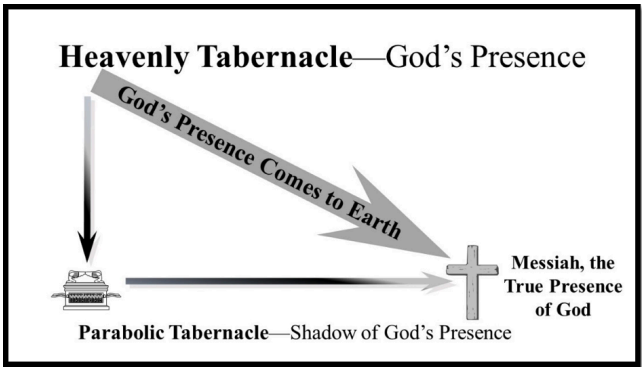
Like Jesus' spoken Parable of the Sower with its several symbolic elements, so the tabernacle is an edifice with several features—curtains, chambers,

furnishings, priests, and sacred activities—all with parabolic functions appointed by God. Given as a multifaceted but cohesive unit, the tabernacle with its many symbols (types) is a παραβολή, the term used in Hebrews 9:9.[43] As a parable, the tabernacle's many symbols with unified functions served as a divinely cast copy and shadow of the heavenly presence of God to instruct the Israelites (Heb 8:1-6) concerning the heavenly sanctuary and the kind of sacrifice God requires for humans to access his presence. Even for the Israelites it signified the sacrificial system's ineffectiveness to absolve the conscience of guilt before God, for the conscience is not an earthly chamber made habitable for God by external regulations that concern food, drink, and ceremonial washings. Thus, as a parable, the tabernacle and its functions that shadowed the heavenly sanctuary also foreshadowed the heavenly realities that awaited full disclosure "until the time of the new order" (9:10) inaugurated when Messiah entered the heavenly sanctuary as high priest of the good things that are now here, including the cleansing of the conscience (9:11).[44]

Concerning the Arrival of the Original Tabernacle

Now, in Hebrews 9:11, the Preacher reiterates the definitive new covenant acclamation: "We have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, who serves in the sanctuary, even the true tabernacle which the Lord established, not any human" (Heb 8:1-2). The advent of the Messiah rendered the earthly tabernacle, which contained copies of the heavenly things (9:23), obsolete and outdated, ready to disappear (cf. 8;13). The heavenly "good things," of which Moses' tabernacle with all its adornments and functions was but a parable, are now "the good things that have already come" because the High Priest, the Messiah, "passed through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made by human hands, which is not of the earthly creation" (9:11, 24). This "greater and more perfect tabernacle" where Jesus, who is greater than Melchizedek, ministers by virtue of his perfect sacrifice, is the true tabernacle of which the one Moses built was but an earthly shadow, a mere copy, a parable. The old parabolic tabernacle of God's presence with all its appointments and functions has been displaced by the true dwelling place of God, Messiah Jesus. Every aspect of the parabolic dwelling place of God with its sacred appointments and priestly functions is fulfilled at one in the Messiah who is himself: (1)

God's true dwelling place among humans, (2) the sinless High Priest, (3) the sinless sacrifice that ends all sacrifices that by their repetition cried out for the one offering that would make true atonement.



When the Preacher says that Messiah "through his own blood entered into the Most Holy Place once for all time obtaining eternal redemption" (9:12), Christians need to keep in mind that *the earthly is the analogy of the heavenly*. Thus, the earthly Most Holy Place is an *analogy* of the heavenly Most Holy Place which is God's dwelling. The temptation may be to invert the analogy by forgetting that the earthly Most Holy Place is only the copy and that the true, the original, is the heavenly tabernacle, the habitation of God's presence. Such reasoning may seek to objectivize the heavenly as if it were the analogy, needing tangibility. It is easy to lapse into thinking incorrectly by forgetting that the heavenly tabernacle is the real one, the true, the original, which is not to be confused with tangible or visible.[45] The true sanctuary is God's presence. Messiah, who is the presence of God on earth (cf. John 1:14), accomplished the real atoning sacrifice in his own body which all the earthly copy sacrifices offered in the earthly tabernacle could never achieve. He who is unblemished offered his sacrificial death through the eternal Spirit to God effectively cleanses the consciences of us worshipers from dead works to serve the living God (Heb 9:14).[46]

Conclusion

Consider Israel's tabernacle as God's perpetual parable for the instruction of his covenant people. God designed the tabernacle with its activities to be

an ongoing parable, as the temporary earthly space of his dwelling within Israel figurally representing his invisible presence and abode in the heavens. He gave Moses the "heavenly pattern" (τύπος) for the tabernacle's edifice, furnishings, and functions, "a sketch" (ὑποδείγματι) and "shadow" (σκιᾷ) of the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 8:5). Moses knew and communicated to the Israelites that the earthly tabernacle constructed under his guidance shadowed the heavenly one revealed on the mountain. By insight given from the Holy Spirit, who inscribed the OT accounts concerning the tabernacle, the Preacher recognizes that the tabernacle with each of its furnishings and functions, each one a type but collectively they are a parable by divine design as an earthly shadow of the heavenly sanctuary, teaching its worshipers concerning its purposeful limitations and designed ineffectualness to cleanse their consciences awaiting the true tabernacle to come.

This essay's objective has been to show from the Preacher's message to the Hebrews a more comprehensive understanding of how the OT's types not only prophetically anticipate fulfillment in the latter days but also derive this predictive feature from their revelatory function and nature. Focus has been exclusively on understanding the Preacher's identification of Israel's tabernacle not only as the "figure" (ἀντίτυπος) of the heavenly "pattern" (τύπος) shown to Moses on Mount Sinai but also as a "parable" (παραβολή). What an apt and expansive term is "parable" to indicate that the curtains, the segregated rooms, the furnishings, especially the gold plated ark of the covenant, and the daily and annual routines of priestly functions in the earthly tabernacle are all a unitary cluster of symbolic representations divinely designed to signify that unobstructed access to the true presence of God awaits the supreme blood sacrifice. The whole of Israel's tabernacle functioned as a daily parable with its trappings and routines, each bearing discrete appointed roles to foreshadow the arrival of "Emmanuel," of "God with us."

This study of the Preacher's presentation of Israel's tabernacle as the earthly shadow and copy of the heavenly Most Holy Place demonstrates that the characteristic focus among scholars upon the temporal-historical axis between an OT type and its NT fulfillment does not adequately address the multidimensionality of Scripture's types because their prophetic or anticipatory function derives not from their temporal axis but from their revelatory functions assigned by God who authorizes them to be earthly copies and shadows of heavenly realities. For this reason, any definition of

biblical typology that does not account for a type's revelatory aspect given it by virtue of its earthly shadowing of a heavenly reality falls significantly short of doing justice to the Scriptures presentation of OT types.

The tabernacle's holistic function served as God's projected earthly model and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary to tutor Moses and the Israelites regarding the sanctuary in heaven and what kind of sacrifice is required by God (Heb 8:1-6). The tabernacle represents the ineffectiveness of the old covenant sacrifices to cleanse the conscience of guilt before God, because the conscience is not made inhabitable by God with outward protocols concerning food, drink, and ceremonial cleansings. The tabernacle institution given by God as an earthly shadow and copy of the heavenly sanctuary, more than that as an instructive παραβολή (Heb 9:9), is like the institutions and events Paul says *occurred as* τυποί, which things he also affirms, "*happened typologically* [τυπικῶς] to them and were written down for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Cor 10:11).

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1. See, e.g., Herbert Marsh argues, "There is no other rule, therefore, by which we can distinguish a *real* from a *pretended* type, than that of Scripture itself. There are no other possible *means*, by which we can *know*, that a previous design and a preordained connection *existed*" (*A Course of Lectures*, Part III.A [Cambridge, England: 1813], 107).
2. Still, perhaps the fullest semasiological accounting of τύπος is by Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical* ΤΥΠΟΣ *Structures* (AUSDDS 2; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University,1981), 116-190.
3. See Rom 5:15; 6:17; 1 Cor 10:6; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:7; 2 Thess 3:9; 1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7; Acts 7:43, 44; 23:25; John 20:25 (2X); Heb 8:5; 1 Pet 5:3. Concerning ἀντίτυπος see Heb 9:23 and 1 Pet 3:21. Paul is the only one who uses the adverb τυπικῶς (1 Cor 10:11; a hapax legomenon). The noun ὑποτύπωσις occurs only in 1 Tim 1:16 and 2 Tim 1:13.
4. Concerning the breadth of OT prefiguration of Christ and his domain as he counters various schools of thought, most of which are reproduced in our current era, see Patrick Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture: Viewed in Connection with the Entire Scheme of the Divine Dispensations*, vol. 1, 3rd edition (Philadelphia: Smith, English and Company, 1857), 17-58.
5. Cf. the discussion by David L. Baker for the range of sense τύπος came to bear (*Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments* [3rd ed.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010], 175-176).
6. See Ardel Caneday, "Biblical Types: Revelation Concealed in Plain Sight to be Disclosed—"These Things Occurred Typologically to Them and Were Written Down for Our Admonition," in *God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays on Biblical Theology in Honor of Thomas R. Schreiner* (eds. Denny Burk, James Hamilton, Jr. and Brian Vickers; Nashville: B&H Academic), 135-155.
7. R. T. France insists, "A type is not a prediction; in itself it is simply a person, event, *etc*. recorded as historical fact, with no intrinsic reference to the future. Nor is an antitype the fulfilment of a prediction; it is rather the re-embodiment of a principle which has been previously exemplified in the type" (*Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* [London: Tyndale Press, 1971; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982], 39-40). David L. Baker agrees, "It is only in retrospect that an event, person or institution may be seen to be typical" (*Two Testament, One Bible*, 183).

8. Davidson distinguishes this view from that of France and Baker (*Typology in Scripture*, 15-93). Cf. Paul Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (Paternoster Biblical Monographs; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006), 18-36. The designations, "traditional" and "post-critical" are Davidson's ("The Eschatological Hermeneutic of Biblical Typology," *TheoRhēma* 6.2 [2011], 8).
9. Jonathan Edwards speaks eloquently concerning these matters. "We find by the Old Testament, that is has ever been God's manner from the beginning of the world, to exhibit and reveal future things by symbolical representations, which were no other than types of the future things revealed. Thus when future things were made known in visions, the things that were seen were not the future things themselves, but some other things that were made us of as shadows, symbols or types of the things" (Jonathan Edwards, Miscellanies 1069 §1 in "Types of the Messiah," *The Works of Jonathan Edwards: Vol11/Typological Writings*, Wallace E. Anderson, Mason I. Lowance, Jr., eds. With David Watters [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993], 192).

    Also, see this from Jonathan Edwards as he continues (*Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 11 Typological Writings*, ed. Paul Ramsey [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957], 152):

    I expect by very ridicule and contempt to be called a man of a very fruitful brain and copious fancy, but they are welcome to it. I am not ashamed to own that I believe that the whole universe, heaven and earth, air and seas, and the divine constitution and history of the holy Scriptures, be full of images of divine things, as full as a language is of words; and that the multitude of those things that I have mentioned are but a very small part of what is really intended to be signified and typified by these things: but that there is room for persons to be learning more and more of this language and seeing more of that which is declared in it to the end of the world without discovering all.

    To say that we must not say that such things are types of these and those things unless the Scripture has expressly taught us that they are so, is as unreasonable as to say that we are not to interpret any prophecies of Scripture or apply them to these and those events, except we find them interpreted to our hand, and must interpret no more of the prophecies of David, etc. For by the Scripture it is plain that innumerable other things are types that are not interpreted in Scripture (all the ordinances of the Law are all shadows of good things to come), in like manner as it is plain by Scripture that these and those passages that are not actually interpreted are yet predictions of future events.

10. See Caneday, "Biblical Types: Revelation Concealed in Plain Sight to be Disclosed," 135-155.
11. Hereinafter the writer to the Hebrews will be referred to as "the Preacher."
12. Biblical scholars must guard against constraining the biblical text to fit their prescribed definitions. Immediately after acknowledging that Hebrews uses τύπος to refer to the heavenly tabernacle (8:5) and ἀντίτυπος to refer to the earthly tabernacle (9:24), Paul Hoskins claims, "At this point, *we are not yet dealing with typology*, because we have defined typology as having to do with a type that prefigures an antitype that comes later and fulfills it" (emphasis added). Hoskins explains, "A second part of the picture is developed in Hebrews 9-10. The tabernacle on earth and the sacrifices that occur there are set up to prefigure the events that will one day occur in the True Tabernacle in heaven. *Now we are dealing with typology proper*. It may help to summarize the situation this way. the Tabernacle on earth is a copy and shadow of the True Tabernacle in heaven. As a copy and shadow of the True Tabernacle, its setup reflects the setup of the True Tabernacle. Sacrifices that take place in the tabernacle prefigure the sacrifice of Christ that will one day open up the way into the True Tabernacle. This is where typology comes in" (*That Scripture Might Be Fulfilled: Typology and the Death of Christ* [N.p.: Xulon Press, 2009], 120, emphasis added).
13. The Preacher makes much of the absence of a genealogy and succession of Melchizedek in the Genesis account.
14. Observe that what this essay argues concerning the tabernacle as a biblical type is true of Melchizedek also. The Preacher expressly states that Moses' account concerning Melchizedek shows that he "resembles the Son of God" (***ἀφωμοιωμένος*** δὲ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεοῦ, Heb 7:3).
15. It seems that appeal to Exod 25:40—ποιήσεις πάντα κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν δειχθέντα σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει—governs how Hebrews uses τύπος as the heavenly original and ἀντίτυπος as synonymous with ὑπόδειγμα and σκιά to speak of earthly copies. See Geerhardus Vos, *The Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Nutley, NJ: P&R, 1975), 55-68.
16. The sketch is adapted from Geerhardus Vos, *The Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 55-57. Many argue that biblical types are of two kinds: (1) the more dominant has a horizontal axis, for God designed certain OT persons, events, institutions, and events to foreshadow NT realities; (2) the less common has a vertical axis with correspondences between the heavenly and earthly realms. As my diagrams throughout this

essay show, I contend that all biblical types entail both vertical and horizontal axes, though one axis may be featured in any given passage. Each biblical type is principally an earthly shadow of a heavenly reality and at the same time it is a foreshadow of the heavenly reality that is to come in the latter days. No biblical type foreshadows (temporal axis) what is to come apart from shadowing (spatial axis) what is in heaven. Hence, for example, observe the implied axes embedded in Paul's recognition of the Adam-Christ typology: (1) horizontal-temporal axis: the First Man, Adam, foreshadows the Second Man, Christ Jesus; (2) the vertical-spatial axis: the Earthly Man, Adam, shadows the Heavenly Man, Christ Jesus (1 Cor 15:45-49).

God's revelatory Word draws upon its confluence with the revelatory nature of creation itself, infused by the Creator, within which God ubiquitously designed objects and shadows to resemble heavenly realities that cast earthly shadows. Of course, the creation of humanity in God's image, after his likeness, is supremely noteworthy. Hence, we are God's earthly analogues. We are copies or shadows of God, which is why Scripture states that God made Adam in his image and likeness (Ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν, Gen 1:26 LXX). How did the apostle Paul recognize Adam to be a type of Christ (Rom 5:14)? Is this not because Adam was not only the first human formed but also that he was made to be like God, bearing the divine image and likeness? Is this not why Paul presents Adam, "the man of dust" (ὁ χοϊκός), the head of the human race, who prefigures Jesus, "the man of heaven" (ὁ ἐπουράνιος, 1 Cor 15:48), the head of a new humanity? Hence, Paul affirms, "And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, so also we shall bear the image of the man of heaven" (καὶ καθὼς ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ, φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου, 1 Cor 15:49.). Does not Adam's typological pointing to Christ derive from the spatial-revelatory axis of his being made in God's image? Therein are the two axes: (1) the spatial-revelatory axis, and (2) the temporal-biblical storyline axis.

17. Concerning the mention of the incense altar and its location, see F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 184-187.
18. Philip E. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 321.
19. Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 223. See also Thomas R. Schreiner, *Commentary on Hebrews* (BTCP; Nashville: B&H, 2015), 262. William L. Lane observes, "The phrase τοῦτο δηλοῦντος τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, 'the Holy Spirit showing by this,' connotes more than an acknowledgment of the Spirit's role in the inspiration of the text of Scripture ... It constitutes a claim to special insight which was not previously available to readers of the OT but which has clarified the meaning and purpose of the cultic provisions for Israel in the light of the fulfillment in Christ" (*Hebrews 9-13* [WBC, vol. 47B; Dallas: Word, 1991], 223). The phrase τοῦτο δηλοῦντος τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, as a genitive absolute stands unconnected grammatically but nonetheless conceptually to both main clauses. See Steve Stanley, "Hebrews 9:6-10: The 'Parable' of the Tabernacle," *NovT* 37 (1995): 392.
20. For example, see Paul Ellingworth who observes, "Παραβολή here clearly does not mean a narrative parable, as in the synoptics. It has rather the older sense of a rhetorical figure of speech involving a comparison ... [T]he παραβολή is secondary to the reality to which it corresponds. The underlying way of thinking is typological" (*Hebrews* [NIGCNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993], 440, cf. 604). Cf. Moises Silva, ed., "παραβολή," *NIDNTT*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 609. Concerning Heb 9:9 & 11:19, he states, "In both of these passages the sense of the term seems to be 'type.'"
21. It seems that the citation of Exod 25:40—ποιήσεις πάντα κατὰ τὸν τύπον τὸν δειχθέντα σοι ἐν τῷ ὄρει—governs how Hebrews use τύπος as the heavenly original and ἀντίτυπος as synonymous with ὑπόδειγμα and σκιά to speak of earthly copies. See Geerhardus Vos, *The Teach of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 55-68.
22. Cf. BDAG s.v. "παραβολή" (first definition, p. 759) "someth. that serves as a model or example pointing beyond itself for later realization, type, figure."
23. Others translate ἐν παραβολῇ "in a figure" (KJV) or "in a manner of speaking" (NIV). Cf. BDAG in note 22.
24. Hughes, *Hebrews*, 484.
25. Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 358.
26. Lane, *Hebrews*, 363. Lane, however, is reticent to accept the full measure of what ἐν παραβολῇ entails.
27. Ibid. Lane improperly extrapolates that it "is not necessary to believe that Abraham recognized the connection between the receiving of Isaac from the altar and resurrection from the dead. But the Christian community is capable of recognizing the deeper import of the event." Yet, is this not precisely what the Preacher insists that Abraham did recognize? See also Harold W. Attridge, who claims that the Preacher's use of Genesis 22 goes "way beyond the scriptural data. They probably are derived from a Jewish confessional formula, acclaiming God who raises the dead, which was readily adapted by early Christians" (*Hebrews* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989], 335).

28. Ibid. Lane reasons, "For the writer the sacrifice of Isaac is not a type of the sacrificial death of Christ (as it is already in the early second century, cf. *Barn*. 7.3). There is no evidence for this early period that the narrative of Gen 22 had been related to the cross and resurrection of Jesus."
29. Hughes, *Hebrews*, 484. Hughes adds, "This analogy may well have been in our author's mind here and also in the mind of Paul when, speaking in a manner that is strongly reminiscent of the Genesis narrative, he speaks of God as 'he who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all' (Rom. 8:32)." He cites early interpreters who acknowledge Genesis 22 as a parable, a type: Barnabas 7; Clement of Alexandria (*Paedagogue* 1.v); Origen (In *Genesim Homilia VIII*); and Athanasius (*Festal Letter* VI).
30. See A. B. Caneday, "Covenant Lineage Allegorically Prefigured: 'Which Things Are Written Allegorically' (Galatians 4:21-31)," *SBJT* 14.3 (2010): 62.
31. Despite citing R. C. Trench concerning "the law of secret affinity" (for this see footnote 33 below), it is evident that David L. Baker does not adequately apprehend the proper or full measure of Trench's discussion that fills up his use of "secret affinity," which is the revelatory resemblance between the natural world and the spiritual realm by virtue of the Creator's design of the creation. Instead of acknowledging this resemblance as revelatory Baker regards it as a species of hermeneutics, as a pattern for interpretation (*Two Testaments, One Bible*, 177). Thus, it is understandable why Baker insists that the Bible's types are neither prophetic nor prospective but are discernible as analogies and examples only retrospectively.
32. That Jesus taught with parables to conceal and to reveal the kingdom of God simultaneously is too obvious to make the mistake of thinking that he taught with parables to simplify complex spiritual truths for simple minds. When asked about his teaching with parables, Jesus explains, "To you has been given the mystery of God's rule, but to those on the outside all things are given in parables in order that they may be always seeing but never perceiving, and always hearing but never understanding lest they repent and forgiveness be granted to them" (Mark 4:11-12).
33. Suitable here is an extended citation from Richard C. Trench, *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd., 1906), 12-15. "[T]he parable or other analogy to spiritual truth appropriated from the world of nature or man, is not merely illustration, but also in some sort proof. It is not merely that these analogies assist to make the truth intelligible, or, if intelligible before, present it more vividly to the mind, which is all that some will allow them. Their power lies deeper than this, in the harmony unconsciously felt by all men, and which all deeper minds have delighted to trace, between the natural and spiritual worlds, so that analogies from the first are felt to be something more than illustrations, happily but yet arbitrarily chosen. They are arguments, and may be alleged as witnesses; the world of nature being throughout a witness for the world of spirit, proceeding from the same hand, growing out of the same root, and being constituted for that very end. All lovers of truth readily acknowledge these mysterious harmonies, and the force of arguments derived from them. To them the things on earth are copies of the things in heaven. They know that the earthly tabernacle is made after the pattern of things seen in the Mount (Exod. Xxv.40; 1 Chron. Xxvii.11, 12); and the question suggested by the angel in Milton is often forced upon their meditations,—

'What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?'

For it is an entire misunderstanding of the matter to regard these as happily, but arbitrarily, chosen illustrations, skilfully selected out of the great stock and storehouse of unappropriated images; from when the same skill might have selected others as good, or nearly as good. Rather they belong to one another, the type and the thing typified, by an inward necessity; they were linked together long before by the law of a secret affinity. It is not a happy accident which has yielded so wondrous an analogy as the husband and wife, to set forth the mystery of Christ's relation to his church (Ephes. v.23-32). There is far more in it than this: the earthly relation is indeed but a lower form of the heavenly, on which it rests, and of which it is the utterance. When Christ spoke to Nicodemus of a new birth (John iii.), it was not merely because birth into this natural world was the most suitable figure that could be found to express that spiritual act which, without any power of our own, is accomplished upon us when we are brought into God's kingdom; but all the circumstances of this natural birth had been preordained to bear the burden of so great a mystery. The Lord is King, not borrowing this title from the kings of the earth, but having lent his own title to them—and not the name only, but having so ordered, that all true rule and government upon earth, with its righteous laws, its stable ordinances, its punishment and its grace, its majesty and its terror, should tell of Him, and of his kingdom which ruleth over all—so that 'kingdom of God' is not a figurative expression, but most literal: it is rather the

earthly kingdoms and the earthly kings that are figures and shadows of the true. And as with the world of man and human relations, so also is it with the world of nature. The untended soil which yields thorns and briers as its natural harvest is a permanent type and enduring parable of man's heart, which has been submitted to the same curse, and without a watchful spiritual husbandry will as surely put forth *its* briers and *its* thorns. The weeds that will mingle during the time of growth with the corn, and yet are separated from it at the last, tell everyone and the same tale of the present admixture, and future sundering, of the righteous and the wicked. The decaying of the slight unsightly seed in the earth, and the rising up, out of that decay and death, of the graceful stalk and the fruitful ear, contain evermore the prophecy of the final resurrection; even as this is itself in its kind a resurrection,—the same process at a lower stage,—the same power putting itself forth upon meaner things (1 Cor. xv.35-38). Of all such correspondences, as drawn out in Scripture, we ought not to say that they are finely chosen similitudes, but rather rightly appropriated types."

34. Stanley sustains his claim by asserting, "Our author's genius, then, lies in his handling of the divisions within the old system itself in such a way as to help his readers better understand the division between the old, Mosaic system and the new, Christian system he advocates" ("The 'Parable' of the Tabernacle," 399).
35. That God imbued his created order with analogical correlations to heavenly realities does not mean that every facet of creation should be regarded as on the same par as biblical types. The Bible's types are unique forms of such analogies because of God's special providence revealed within biblical history. It is crucial to bear in mind that the Apostle Paul identifies at least two essential features that distinguish OT types: they occurred by God's special providence and God authorized that they be recorded in Scripture. "Now these things *took place as types* of us lest we crave evil as they did ... Now these things *occurred typologically* to them and they were written down for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Cor 10:6, 11; emphasis added). See Caneday, "Biblical Types: Revelation Concealed in Plain Sight to be Disclosed," 148-150.
36. The tabernacle as a parable is of the same origin as Jesus' parables of oral teaching, of miraculous signs, and of prophetic actions. See, e.g., Craig L. Blomberg, "The Miracles as Parables," *Gospel Perspectives*, *Vol. 6: The Miracles of Jesus* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 327-359. See also D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (PNTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1991), 172. On the correlation of parable and allegory see Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 29-69. He properly concludes that the parables of the Gospels are allegories (69).
37. F. F. Bruce thinks ἥτις refers to the whole of vv. 6-8 and is attracted to the gender of παραβολή (*Hebrews*, 195, n. 60). Attridge takes only πρώτης σκηνπης as the antecedent of ἥτις (*Hebrews*, 241).
38. Hughes observes, "It is unnecessary to seek a precise term, such as τῆς πρώτης σκηνῆς or στάσιν, as the antecedent for ἥτις" (*Hebrews*, 323, n. 73). Cf. Stanley, "The 'Parable' of the Tabernacle," 389, 393. Contrast Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 263. Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 225. Ellingworth takes τῆς πρώτης σκηνῆς (v. 8) as the antecedent of ἥτις (*Hebrews*, 439).
39. So, John Chrysostom, Homilies on Hebrews XV (Heb 9:9); Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 234; George H. Guthrie, *Hebrews* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 300; CSB.
40. So, Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 263; Stanley, "The 'Parable' of the Tabernacle," 394; B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 252; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 241; Ellington, *Hebrews*, 441.
41. Bruce, *Hebrews*, 197.
42. Hebrews uses the Holy Spirit to refer to Scripture. See, e.g., 3:7, introducing Ps 95 and 10:15 quoting Jer 31. Cf. Stanley, "The 'Parable' of the Tabernacle," 392.
43. Clare K. Rothschild observes, "Closely akin to ἀλληγορία, it [παραβολή] suggests that the Jewish scriptures contain a dazzling array of enigmatic oracles both solved and fulfilled in Christ" ("Παραβολή in Hebrews," in *Hermeneutik der Gleichnisse Jesu: Methodische Neuansätze zum Verstehen urchristicer Parabeltexte* [eds. Ruben Zummermannn and Gabi Kern; WUNT 231; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008], 378).
44. Stanley notes, "The παραβολή, then, is in the fact that a restriction applied to the heavenly sanctuary similar to the restriction that applied to the earthly holy of holies: as long as the earthly tent had a standing, access to the heavenly tent was denied" ("The 'Parable' of the Tabernacle," 396).
45. Both Bruce and Schreiner engage views that seem to derive from this confusion. See Bruce, *Hebrews* 200-201 and Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 266-267. The wording of Schreiner's response may need some clarification: "Strictly speaking, there isn't a tabernacle at all in the heavenly realm. The heavenly tabernacle becomes a vehicle for describing the indescribable, for depicting the presence of God." His point seems rightly to be that "the heavenly sanctuary" is the presence of God.
46. Albert Vanhoye overstates his case when he says, "The risen body of Christ is 'the true tent' (Heb 8:2) that has come to replace the tent in the desert, which was simply the prefiguration of it" (*The Letter to the Hebrews: A New Commentary* [New York: Paulist Press2015], 146). Schreiner seems to overcorrect Vanhoye: "The tabernacle here doesn't refer to Christ's physical body" (*Hebrews*, 266).

Typology in Hebrews: A Response to Buist Fanning[1]

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Introduction

I am deeply grateful for Buist M. Fanning, not least because of what I learned in his second semester Greek class in the spring of 1997 when I was a student at Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS). Over the years Professor Fanning's words of encouragement to me, his affectionate way of telling me he appreciated the work I was doing or something I had written, has meant a great deal. My enormous respect for him gave weight to his kind words.

I agree with and appreciate the way Dr. Fanning describes and defines typology, and I find the examples he discusses stimulating and insightful. Dr. Fanning's discussion exhibits the care and exegetical acumen that I have admired since I first sat in his class over twenty years ago.

Being so much in agreement with what he has done makes it difficult for me to know exactly how to respond. What I would like to do by way of response should not be understood as a critique but as an attempt to supplement the argument.

If I can adapt Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 3, like a skilled master builder Dr. Fanning has laid a foundation. I am going to attempt to build on it with gold, silver, and precious stones, but I'm glad for this opportunity for Dr. Fanning to let me know if he thinks I'm using wood, hay, and stubble! That is to say, I take it upon myself to add to what Dr. Fanning has done, recognizing that he may or may not appreciate these additions.

Dr. Fanning has mined diamonds from the letter to the Hebrews. He has done so with skill and care. What I would like to do is place a black cloth under the diamonds he worked so hard to find and remove from the mine, then turn a bright spotlight on them to highlight their beauty. In terms of this metaphor, the black cloth is the Old Testament (OT) background, and the bright spotlight is the narrative undercurrent the author of Hebrews seems to assume as he makes his statements.

The metaphor is not entirely helpful, of course, because the OT is more than a backdrop, and the author's interpretive perspective is more than a spotlight. Let us therefore attempt to leave behind every entanglement and press on better things.

The OT Storyline

My thesis here is that the author of Hebrews has read the OT a certain way: he has read it correctly, that is, in accordance with the intentions of the OT's human authors. From that reading of the OT the author of Hebrews has learned a master story. He has then assumed the master story he learned from the OT and applied it in his letter. In doing this, he expects his audience to have read the OT the same was he has, and he assumes they will therefore understand his typological interpretation and application of that story to the Christian life.

I do have a twofold critique here, but it is not a critique of Dr. Fanning but first of Christian OT scholarship and second of the separation of the disciplines. This critique applies to Dr. Fanning only to the extent that these realities have impinged upon him.

Much Christian OT scholarship has not read the OT the way the author of Hebrews does. Reading the OT some other way than the NT authors do is out of step with the idea that the Holy Spirit inspired the author of Hebrews. The ideas that God breathed out the Scriptures (2 Tim 3:16) and

that the prophets spoke from God as they were carried along by the Spirit (2 Pet 1:20–21) entail the idea that the Holy Spirit did not allow error to enter the later biblical author's interpretation of earlier Scripture. A working presupposition for evangelicals, then, is that the author of Hebrews has correctly understood the OT.

I am going to attempt to sketch in the way the author of Hebrews read the OT. I may very well make errors as I try to trace out his intellectual steps, but he made none as he took them. Because he did not show all his work—spelling out his assumptions and explaining his exegetical moves, in order to understand how the author of Hebrews interpreted the OT we must fill in some of the blanks. What the author of Hebrews had in those blanks was inerrant; in my attempt to reconstruct the content of those blanks, on the other hand, I could be making mistakes. Still, I contend that Christians who believe Hebrews to be inspired should be trying to read the OT the way its author did.

This relates to the separation of the disciplines. Because we have "OT Studies" and "NT," those who teach the one do not typically teach the other, because those who do PhDs in the one do not do PhDs in the other. I suspect that those who read the original languages of the one do not always stay on top of the language of the other. My brothers, this should not be.

To speak of my own experience at DTS: it would have been a better Bible Exposition (BibEx) course that had Dr. Fanning as its teacher, even if that BibEx course had been on the Pentateuch. And from my own limited experience of getting to teach from both Testaments, I think teaching the Law, Prophets, and Writings would only have enriched Dr. Fanning's teaching of everything from Elementary Greek to Exegesis of Romans. But alas, the guild is what it is, and what is bent is not easily straightened (Eccl 1:15).

To the OT story as the author of Hebrews reads it.

What Reading of the OT Makes Sense of What the Author of Hebrews Says?

God created the world as a cosmic temple, and within that cosmic temple he placed his living image and likeness. His purpose was for the image and likeness to reign as king in his stead, mediating the knowledge of him to others as a kind of priestly prophet. Adam is thus a prototypical king-priest. Adam was also made in the likeness of God in the same way that Seth, son of Adam, was in his father Adam's image and likeness (Gen 5:1, 3). This implies

that Adam being in God's image and likeness means he was, in some sense, God's son. Luke seems to have read Genesis this way (Luke 3:38).

Seeing these important Adamic roles gives us perspective on why Moses would include Melchizedek in the Genesis narrative. Unlike other significant figures in Genesis, the king of Salem's genealogical line is untraced and his parents, birth, and death go unmentioned (Heb 7:3, "he is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life").

The author of Hebrews sees in Melchizedek a royal priest who worships the creator, "God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen 14:19). Moses has already established in Genesis that God will bless those who bless Abram (Gen 12:3), and Melchizedek blesses Abram (14:19). The author of Hebrews may have read Moses presenting Abram immediately using Melchizedek's terminology to describe God (Gen 14:22) as an indication that Melchizedek instructed Abram, and he certainly saw significance in the tithe Abram rendered to Melchizedek (Gen 14:20; Heb 7:4–10). The author of Hebrews seems to suggest that Melchizedek served as a priest between God and Abram.

We can note here, too, that Melchizedek's blessing of Abram (Gen 14:19–20) recalls Noah's blessing of Shem. Noah himself was a new Adam (Gen 9:1, 7; cf. 1:28) who had a new fall that exposed shameful nakedness. Like Abram after him, Noah built an altar and offered sacrifice (8:20–21), almost like a royal priest himself.

Adam had royal and priestly roles in the garden, and Noah was an Adamic royal priest. Melchizedek was a royal priest standing between God and Abram. God then made the nation of Israel a royal priesthood (Exod 19:6), a royal priesthood he had earlier identified as his son (Exod 4:22–23).

Israel, God's son, had been liberated from Egypt at the exodus, and the whole complex of events became paradigmatic for the way God would continue to intervene on behalf of his people. Everything from the descent into Egypt with Joseph having been "sent ahead" (Ps 105:17) to the burning bush, the plagues, the Passover, the crossing of the Red Sea, the manna from heaven and water from the rock, the law and tabernacle at Sinai, the pilgrimage through the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, and the allotment of the land to the tribes—all of it figures into the paradigmatic pattern of events. Israel's past becomes the schema that Israel's prophets and Psalmists use to interpret her present and point to her future.

Along the way God raised up David as king, promising him both a house—a dynastic line of descent—and a seed whose throne would be established forever. This descendant of David would be a son to God, and God would be a father to him. David seems to have understood this royal sonship in Adamic terms (see esp. Pss 2 and 8). The seed of David would be a son to God in the sense that Adam and Israel were. The son of David would be a son to God as the new Adam and patriarchal head (and thereby the federal head) of the nation of Israel.

In the buildup to the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7 it becomes evident that the future king from David's line (2 Sam 7:13–14) would be the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) who would bring about the blessing of Abraham (Gen 12:1–3) as the king from Judah's line (Gen 49:8–12) in fulfillment of the Balaam Oracles (esp. Num 24:9, 17–19). Thus would be the Adamic kingship of the seed of David, seed of the woman.

Will the future king from David's line have a priestly role? In the Pentateuch the only things to be anointed are the tabernacle (and things associated with it) and the priests (e.g., Exod 28:41; 29:7, 36; 30:26, 30; 40:9–11, 13, 15). This means that in Israel's foundational body of literature, the only *people* the Torah instructs Israel to anoint are her priests. Because of this, when God commissions the prophet Samuel to *anoint* a king over the nation, the anointing colors the king with a hue that previously shaded only the priests. This doesn't establish that Israel's king is a royal priest, but it does strongly associate him with the priesthood, as does the way Solomon would build the temple with his own house attached (1 Kings 10:5, KJV).

King David also wore a linen ephod, a priestly garment, when he brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem (1 Sam 6). David's sons are referred to as *cohanim* (כהנים) in 2 Samuel 8:18. While the CSB renders this "chief officials," the ESV does the line as "David's sons were priests." These priestly overtones, then, join with the indicators of royal priesthood associated with Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Israel, to inform the things that David said about Melchizedek in Psalm 110. Psalm 110, moreover, has significant links with earlier Scripture.

This way of thinking about Psalm 110 would not lead anyone to view the Psalm as a lightning bolt out of nowhere, but that is precisely how much Old Testament scholarship has seen it. For instance, John Goldingay writes of Psalm 110,

> There is no indication that it speaks of a future king, nor any necessity to reckon that it would be interpreted messianically . . . some of its verses are applied to Jesus . . . though as a whole it does not fit him, and most of its application to him in the NT requires it to be understood in a way that would not correspond to its meaning in any OT context.[2]

Goldingay has also rejected the canonical context and Davidic authorship of the Psalm. Against the evidence of the superscription and the way Jesus identified David as the speaker of the Psalm, Goldingay writes, "The speaker is unidentified," then goes on to claim regarding the Psalm as a whole, "Any theory about its background is an inference from circumstantial evidence. We will never know its origin."[3] We will not know its origin if, with Goldingay, we reject the superscription and refuse to read it in canonical context! Nor if we ignore the authoritative interpretation of the text found in the Spirit inspired NT on the lips of Jesus himself (see, e.g., Matt 22:41–46; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44).

The author of Hebrews, on the other hand, seems to view Psalm 110 in relationship not only to earlier Psalms, chiefly Psalms 2 and 8, but also in light of the rest of the OT and the hopes it generated.[4]

The Narrative Undercurrent

I want to turn now to the narrative undercurrent the author of Hebrews seems to assume as he makes his statements to his audience. My contention is that this storyline adapts and applies the OT's schema to the new covenant life of faith.

What Story Did the Author of Hebrews Take for Granted?

The statements made by the author of Hebrews reflect an assumed storyline, a salvation historical narrative that begins at creation and stretches to new creation, with the OT's paradigmatic narrative foreshadowing the new covenant situation in which his readers find themselves. He begins with assertions about the revelation God has now made in the last days by his son (Heb 1:1–2). This son is identified with God, ruler of the world, and the one who has made purification for sins (1:3a). Having fulfilled his mission, he has been installed at God's right hand in fulfillment of the Davidic hope for

a Psalm 110 King-Priest (1:3b), and he is also the new Adam, new Israel son of God addressed in Psalm 2:7, promised to David in 2 Samuel 7:14 (1:5). He is the anointed King, identified with God himself, addressed in Psalm 45 (1:8–9), and through him all things were made, both the original creation and the expected new creation, as declared in Psalm 102:25–27 (1:10–12). He will reign at God's right hand until God puts all his enemies under his feet (Ps 110:1; Heb 1:13).

The author of Hebrews views the old covenant revelation as having been completed (1:1), with a last days revelation begun in Christ (1:2), continuing in the ministry of the eyewitnesses (2:3), and ongoing in what God says through him in his letter: "See that you do not refuse him who is speaking" (12:25). The time of the old covenant has been completed, the new covenant has been inaugurated (Heb 8), and the author refers to the yet future new creation in his quotation of Psalm 102 with its description of the changed garment (1:12), along with when he speaks of "the city that has foundations" (11:10).

Within the outer boundaries of creation (Heb 11:3) and new creation (11:10), when the cloud of witnesses will be made perfect with the author's audience (11:40), the events in the old covenant portend what will take place in the new.

The author of Hebrews maps the mediation of the Mosaic law through angels, the disobedience of the Israelites, and the consequent punishment right onto new covenant experience in the warning of Hebrews 2:2–3,

> For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape ...

The author's next words similarly set the deliverance of Israel from Egypt in parallel with the salvation his audience has experienced:

> ... if we neglect such a great salvation? (Heb 2:3a)

The signs and wonders the people experienced in the attestations given to Moses, the plagues visited upon Egypt, and the Spirit on Moses and the seventy elders likewise seem to find fulfillment in the signs and wonders that accompany the new covenant salvation:

> while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will (Heb 2:4).

The gifts of the Holy Spirit given to Moses and the 70 elders (Num 11) find parallel in the way the Spirit fully endowed the ministry of Jesus and was then poured out upon his followers (Acts 2).

The author next moves to the subjection of the world-to-come to the Psalm 8 new Adam, new David son of man (2:5–8). Then follow statements about the fulfillment of what David and Isaiah typified: just as they stood in solidarity with the believing old covenant remnant, so Christ stands in solidarity with his followers (2:11–13).

Having presented Jesus fulfilling what was typified in David and Isaiah, the author presents points of historical correspondence and escalation between Jesus and Moses in 3:1–6, as he again presents Israel in the wilderness as a typological warning for Christians. With Jesus the new and greater Moses, Christians take on the role played by the wilderness generation, with an opportunity to enter rest where they failed (3:7–15).

Hebrews 1 presents Jesus as the fulfillment of OT prophecies and patterns, and Hebrews 2 places Christians in the role of those delivered from Egypt. This continues in chapter 3, where Jesus is the new Moses and Christians are urged not to fail as the wilderness generation did (3:16–4:3).

The repeated references to "building" and the "house built" in Hebrews 3:1–6 seem to connote creation, tabernacle, temple, church, and the fulfillment of all these in the cosmic temple of the new creation. Creation comes specifically into view in 4:3, and the entrance into the land seems to have been an attempt to regain rest in God's new creation, which the wilderness generation failed to attain (4:4–5). David then urged his generation to enter that rest and overcome where the wilderness generation failed (4:6–7). David's urging shows that what Joshua accomplished did not bring about the full realization of the promised rest (4:8–9). David perhaps places himself in the role of Joshua, with his people in the place of the conquest generation. When the author of Hebrews picks up the language of Psalm 95, he seems to put Jesus where Joshua and David were, with those who follow Jesus in the place of the people.

The author of Hebrews then seems to move his discussion from the exodus–wilderness–conquest sequence of events to the way Christ fulfills

what was typified in the "Leviticult" [*sic*].[5] Dr. Fanning has ably shown how the high priest according to the order of Melchizedek fulfills and replaces the ministry of the descendants of Aaron (Heb 5–7). We might also again note the implied relationships in this typological presentation of Jesus as the new and greater priest and sacrifice: where the priests and the offerings stood, we now have Christ and his death on the cross. This understanding would also seem to suggest that whereas under the old covenant we had the Israelites who brought their offerings to the priests to be sacrificed, in the new covenant we have those who persevere by faith in following Jesus.

This typological relationship between the priest, the sacrifice(s), and the worshipers would seem to point to the new covenant church as a typological fulfillment of old covenant Israel. Further, just as only those who confess their sin and make sacrifice for atonement benefit from the old covenant priests and sacrifices, it would seem that only those who turn from sin and trust in Christ benefit from the ministry of the High Priest of the new covenant and the sacrifice he offered for sin.[6]

The new priesthood of Jesus likewise brings about the new covenant (Heb 8–9). It seems that when the author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 40 in Hebrews 10, with reference to the assumed timeline reflected in his statements, he has his readers "in the land." The exodus has been fulfilled. The wilderness has been traversed. And now the people are in the land. Just as Joshua's generation experienced fulfillment but not ultimate realization of what had been promised, so Christians experience an already-not yet inauguration of what yet remains to be consummated.

Having discussed the new covenant and the superior sacrifice of Christ (10:1–18), the author urges his audience to draw near, hold fast, and spur one another on (10:19–23). The discussion of the priesthood, the covenant, and the offering dominated chapters 5–10. Prior to that the author established the identity of Jesus (Heb 1–2) and then took his audience on a symbolic journey that began at the exodus from Egypt and continued through the wilderness to the land of rest: "we who have believed enter that rest" (4:3).

The Hebrews 5-10 discussion of the priesthood, the covenant, and the offering seems to presuppose life in the land. That setting is taken for granted in the warning at the end of Hebrews 10 as well (10:26–39). The one who dies on the evidence of two or three witnesses for setting aside the Torah of Moses in 10:28 would appear to envision an Israelite living in the land

between conquest and exile. The plot points on the author's assumed narrative seem to go:

Exodus – Sinai – Wilderness – Conquest – Jerusalem/Kingdom

God's intention to establish his kingdom, as discussed by the author in what we call chapters 3-4, seems to have entailed the conquest of the land for the establishment of Edenic-New Creation Rest. But Joshua did not give them rest. Instead, the people set aside the law of Moses and were exiled. The implied New Covenant plot points on the author's assumed narrative seem to go:

Cross – Zion – Wilderness – New Conquest – Jerusalem/Kingdom

Israel failed in the wilderness, and the author of Hebrews urges his audience not to repeat that mistake in 2:1-4. Israel also failed in the land, and the author seems to urge his audience not to repeat that mistake in 10:26-31. The OT faithful in Hebrews 11 model the kind of already-not yet perseverance the author urges on his audience.

The race set before the letter's audience (Heb 12:1) has been run by the OT faithful (Heb 11), and they typified the one who fulfilled the patterns, Jesus (12:2). The author exhorts his audience to consider Jesus' suffering and endure discipline (12:3–17; cf. 2:10).

The author seems to return to his symbolic parallel narrative in 12:18–24. Israel came out of Egypt and met God at Sinai. Christians have been redeemed by Christ, who accomplished his exodus in Jerusalem, and they have come not to Sinai but to Zion, fulfillment of Sinai. There seems to be an already-not yet dynamic at work with the Zion to which believers have come. Believers have come to Zion, but the earthquake at Sinai awaits a yet future fulfillment when once more God will shake heaven and earth, leaving only things that cannot be shaken (Heb 12:25–27). The parallels seem to work as follows:

Exodus from Egypt – Sinai

Cross of Christ – Zion (Holy Place? Heb 9:9)

Return of Christ – Future Zion/New Jerusalem (Holy of Holies? Heb 9:9)

It seems that the author assumes that just as Israel entered the land and sought a rest in a kingdom they did not realize, so Christians have already entered into the new covenant rest seeking a not-yet kingdom rest that will

be consummated when Christ comes. Accordingly, as Moses gave Israel instructions for life in the land, the author of Hebrews gives believers instructions for life in the land (Heb 13:1–9). Old covenant Israel engaged in the "Leviticult," but new covenant believers in Jesus partake of the new covenant, eating from an altar from which those who persist in the ways of the old covenant do not benefit (13:10-16). The author seems to set participating in the Lord Supper across from old covenant Israel's celebration of her feasts.

Conclusion

God did not dictate to the author of Hebrews what he was to say to his audience. The author engages in an interpretive exercise in which he powerfully brings to bear both his understanding of the OT and his application of that reading. He spoke from God as he was carried along by the Spirit (2 Pet 1:21), but he used his brain, his language, his patterns of speech. He interpreted the OT.

We today have the joy of tracing out the interpretive perspective of the biblical author that we might embrace it for ourselves. That perspective entails understanding the story he assumes, knowing how the symbolism and imagery interpret and explain the story, and discerning the patterns that repeat across the story. If we understand this perspective, it will be because God's word has been effective: God's promises create people who understand the import of what has been written, can apply it to our own lives, and know the type of thing God will do in the future because we have seen the type of things he has done in the past.

These things are written for our instruction, that we too might rightly divide the word of truth. I am thankful to have been taught by Prof. Dr. Fanning, and I am thankful for this opportunity to join him in the august task of interpreting the Epistle to the Hebrews.

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1. This article was originally presented as a response to Buist M. Fanning in the Invited Session of the General Epistles Section at the National Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society on November 14, 2018. Dr. Fanning presented on "Typology in the Book of Hebrews," and my assignment was to respond to his presentation.
2. John Goldingay, *Psalms 90-150* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), 292.
3. Goldingay, 291, 292.

4. See further James M. Hamilton, *Psalms*, 2 vols. (Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary; (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, forthcoming); and Matthew Habib Emadi, "The Royal Priest: Psalm 110 in Biblical-Theological Perspective" (PhD Dissertation, Louisville, KY, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).
5. I was attempting to type "Levitical cult," but erroneously keyed in the happy typo, "Leviticult," which I like and so keep here in the text.
6. On this point, see Stephen J. Wellum, "The New Covenant Work of Christ: Priesthood, Atonement, and Intercession," in *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective* (ed., David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson; Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 517-539.

Typology, Christology and Prosopological Exegesis: Implicit Narratives in Christological Texts

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Introduction

When reading the Old Testament (OT), several early church Fathers believed that they could detect the voice of the Father, the Son, or other characters in the divine economy.[1] One of the earliest descriptions of this phenomenon comes from Justin Martyr:

> But when you hear the utterances of the prophets spoken as it were personally, you must not suppose that they are spoken by the inspired [i.e. "inspired ones"] themselves, but by the Divine Word who moves them. For sometimes He declares things that are to come to pass, in the manner of one who foretells the future; sometimes He speaks as from the person of God the Lord and Father of all; sometimes as from the person of Christ; sometimes as from the person of the people answering the Lord or His Father, just as you can see even in your own writers, one man being the writer of the whole, but introducing the persons who converse (*1 Apol* 36:1-2).[2]

Here, Justin Martyr explains to his readers that, in addition to predicting the future, the Divine Word can speak as other characters (e.g., the Father, Son, the church, etc.) through the prophet. This practice has recently been termed *prosopological exegesis* (PE)[3] and a growing number of scholars suggest that this practice extends back to the New Testament (NT) itself.[4] It is argued, for example, that when Peter quotes Psalm 16 in his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:25-28), he understood the phrase, "For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will you give your holy one to see corruption,"[5] as not merely a prophecy about Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:30-31), but Christ *himself* speaking through David about his own future resurrection.[6] Some have disagreed with this assessment, however, and doubt that NT authors used prosopological exegesis.[7]

This paper aims to further this discussion by offering two categories by which potential prosopological texts can be distinguished and by evaluating prosopological explanations over against typological explanations on select NT texts.[8] To summarize, biblical prophets, at times, take on or address ambiguous characters in prophetic discourse which require further identification. However, some examples of prosopological exegesis (particularly in the patristic period) identify additional speakers or addressees where there is little apparent warrant for doing so. The former (PE1) is a product of plain reading or *sensus literalis*, whereas the latter (PE2) seems to evidence a special exegetical strategy. I argue that they should be distinguished when evaluating whether PE occurs in the NT. As test cases for PE2 in the NT, I will focus on the use of Psalm 16 in Acts 2 and Acts 13, followed by select texts in Hebrews. Lastly, as prosopological exegesis has been employed as a tool for Christology, I will close with reflections on the value of PE for Christology and discerning inner-trinitarian dialogue and offer an alternative model for accounting for the resonance readers find between OT dialogues and later NT figures. As many readers may be unfamiliar with prosopological exegesis, however, I will briefly summarize the practice and the current issues surrounding it.

Prosopological Exegesis and the Use of the OT in the NT

Prosopological exegesis (from πρόσωπον; "face," "person") is a technique by which a reader assigns a previously-unidentified character to a dialogue to

exposit the meaning of a text.[9] As articulated by Matthew Bates (a prominent voice for PE in the NT), early Christians believed that the prophets of the OT could at times, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, assume the role of a character (*prosōpon*)—God the Father, Christ the Son, or the Holy Spirit—from another point in the divine economy.[10] Unidentified shifts of person in prophetic dialogue were primary locations for seeing PE. For Justin Martyr, quoted above, the words of the Suffering Servant, "I set my back for whippings and my cheeks for beatings" (Isa 50:6), were the words of the future Christ reflecting on his road to the cross, with Isaiah speaking in his person (*1 Apol* 38.2). These words do not apply to the prophet, therefore, but to the future Christ who speaks through him.[11] In Bates's terminology, the implicit narrative for this exegesis is *theodramatic:*[12] "If not the ancient prophet, then a theodramatic character."[13]

Bates and others are convinced that parallels between NT and patristic exegesis are evidence that NT authors practiced some form of prosopological exegesis to explain the OT in light of the NT kerygma.[14] As such, they are valuable data for understanding NT exegesis (along with, e.g., Second Temple Judaism) and how the early Christians conceived of personhood and dialogue in the Trinity.[15]

Debates over PE in the NT

A critical issue for determining the value of PE for NT interpretation is its background(s). The backgrounds for PE are speculative, but Bates and others find examples that date to NT times.[16] Ancient rhetoricians, for example, taught that a speaker could at times take on a character for rhetorical effect (*prosopopoeia;* cf. Theon's *progymnasmata;* first century AD).[17] Bates also suggests a background in ancient Greco-Roman theatre where a limited number of actors adopted masks (*prosōpa)* to portray several characters and at times had to discern the speakers of unidentified dialogue changes in the script.[18] In addition to Justin Martyr (first century AD) and the Fathers (e.g., Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine), Bates has also argued for PE in Philo (second century BC).[19] Therefore, it seems that some practiced PE while the NT was being written.

However, several issues have caused doubt over the validity of applying the technique to the NT. The first is that while the Fathers often mark their PE with an introductory formula (e.g., ἀπο / ἐκ προσώπου),[20] none of the purported instances in the NT are marked.[21] Peter Gentry has recently voiced additional

concern over the temporal and cultural distance of the background sources for PE from the context of the NT writers. Gentry contends that much of the evidence for PE postdates the NT and, while Greco-Roman rhetoric and drama may help explain the practices of some of the Fathers trained in Greek rhetoric and philosophy (e.g., Augustine and Justin Martyr),[22] it is unclear what influence they would have had on the interpretation of Scripture by Palestinian Jews.[23] The debate over the influence of Second Temple interpretation on the NT—evidence which shares greater temporal and cultural overlap with that of the NT—only underscores the issue.[24] Thirdly, PE is often depicted as a non-contextual form of exegesis (i.e., one that does not respect the meaning of the OT passage),[25] which concerns some who hold that NT authors tended to respect the literal sense (though sometimes extended through typology or later inner-biblical interpretation). These issues have caused some to be skeptical of the claim that PE occurs in the NT.

Despite the amount of discussion on these matters, however, it seems that even Bates qualifies their value for confirming PE in the NT. For example, he says of Jesus's use of Psalm 110:

> Jesus need not to have mastered Greco-Roman rhetorical theory or even to have been consciously aware of what we have termed prosopological exegesis as a distinctive reading strategy. Jesus need only to have believed that David, under the inspiring influence of the Holy Spirit (cf. Mark 12:36), was capable of taking on a different persona when speaking as a prophet.[26]

The important point for Bates is that the authors of Scripture believed that the OT prophets could take on a role other than themselves under the Spirit's inspiration. This paper will not attempt to settle the issues related to PE's background, therefore, but will focus on whether PE best explains the scriptural data. Before proceeding to the texts, however, I will distinguish what I believe are two related, but distinct, phenomena that have together been labelled PE.

Textual Warrant: Two Categories

Matthew Bates has defined prosopological exegesis in this way:

> Prosopological exegesis is a reading technique whereby an interpreter seeks to overcome a real or perceived ambiguity regarding the identity of the speakers or

> addressees (or both) in the divinely inspired source text by assigning nontrivial prosopa (i.e., nontrivial vis-à-vis the "plain sense" of the text) to the speakers or addressees (or both) in order to make sense of the text.[27]

However, as defined here, Bates has equated what I would consider two closely-related, yet separate processes: the identification of ambiguous figures whom Scripture signals someone will fulfill (PE1) and a reading strategy that identifies speakers not indicated by the text. In both cases, the reader seeks to overcome perceived ambiguities in the text to interpret it. However, the location for warrant in these two processes is different and should be distinguished. A couple of examples should illustrate the point.

PE1 – "Normal" PE.

Many OT prophecies include an ambiguous figure who will fulfill a given role. Some of these figures either receive or give speeches in a prophetic address. A clear example would be Psalm 110:1, "The declaration of YHWH to my lord." David marks that YHWH speaks to David's "lord," who will receive global dominion and an enduring priestly office, but the exact identity of his lord is not given. In this case, grammar and syntax clearly mark the character within the text and the character has a defined role he is expected to fulfill. The Servant Songs of Isaiah are another example.[28] At times YHWH (or perhaps Isaiah himself) addresses an enigmatic servant figure who, while sometimes addressed as Israel, performs functions seemingly beyond what the nation could itself perform (e.g., 42:1-7; 49:5).[29] At other points, Isaiah appears to adopt the voice of the servant in the first person (e.g., Isa 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 61:1-2).[30] The identification of these figures will affect one's interpretation. These texts also share at least two common attributes: 1) they mark the presence of an additional enigmatic character and 2) they outline a profile against which a potential solution can be tested. In this instance, the reader merely expects greater clarity regarding the character who fills the role marked by the prophecy as YHWH's plan unfolds (e.g., Who is David's "lord"? Does the prophet speak about himself or someone else? Cf. Acts 8:34).[31] Therefore, when Jesus identifies the Messiah, the Davidic son, as David's greater "lord" (Mark 12:36), he does not exercise a unique reading strategy, but offers a fulfillment of the expected figure. Bates affirms the notion that some texts

require the reader to look for the fulfillment of a figure and places most instances of PE in this category.[32]

PE2 – "Special" PE.
In other texts, the warrant for identifying additional figures is unclear. The speakers and hearers do not seem ambiguous but are readily explained by the existing historical characters in the text. Many prophetic oracles, for instance, explicitly mark YHWH as the speaker ("A declaration of YHWH," נאם יהוה) and in most cases YHWH may be assumed as the speaker throughout the oracle.[33] Similarly, many psalms have superscriptions to identify the author(s). For example, Psalm 16 (Ps 15 LXX), begins with a superscription to David and maintains a consistent first-person speech with YHWH as the hearer.[34] In these instances, the text does not seem to signal or require an additional speaker or addressee, thus the warrant for positing one is less clear on a plain (*sensus literalis*) reading. One can readily find examples of this kind of PE in patristic interpretation. As noted by Bates, Justin Martyr is typical of Fathers who interpreted the entirety of Psalm 22 as referring to Christ, sometimes explaining the first-person speech as Christ's own (*Dial.* 98-99).[35] In Augustine's exposition of Psalm 3, for example, he notes briefly that the psalm belongs to David but that it seems to pertain much better to Christ (*Expos. Psalms* 3.1).[36] He then proceeds to interpret the entire psalm as a dialogue between Christ and the Father, disregarding David completely. While it is debatable whether the Fathers would have called their interpretations a "reading strategy" (perhaps rather a "spiritual sensitivity"),[37] the type of identification described in PE1 is adopted as a principle for finding Christ in the OT.

While Bates does not affirm every instance of PE in the Fathers and argues for controls on the practice, Bates's considers both phenomena PE without formal distinction.[38] For some, this is not an issue, but those who hold that the NT authors tended to respect the intentions of the OT text (like myself) will object to labelling these two processes as the same thing.[39] For PE1, where the reader finds unspecified dialogue around an ambiguous future figure, no peculiar reading strategy or exegetical technique seems required. A plain reading creates the expectation of the fulfillment of a prophetically-defined role (though there may be disagreement over who best fulfills it). In the second category, these features, and the attending warrant, are lacking.[40] The presence of this latter phenomenon in Scripture, in my view,

is debatable. As the above examples show, the primary principle, "If not the ancient prophet, then a theodramatic character,"[41] seems to place great weight on the subjective impressions of the interpreter rather than the cues of the text itself (as with Augustine's exegesis of Psalm 3).[42] The concern is that these prosopological readings eclipse the historical cues laden in the text because the words are felt to resonate so strongly with another figure. This seems to run at odds with the biblical authors' concern for historical progression (e.g., Acts 7; Rom 4, 7; Gal 3).[43] At least for the purposes of this paper, these categories will allow for greater precision when evaluating potential instances of PE.

Some Sample Texts for Evaluation

The following will focus on a selection of passages where PE2 seems present in the NT. The first two are speeches in Acts which make use of the Psalms to refer to the Messiah (Acts 2:14-36 and Acts 13:16-47), followed by selections from Hebrews. While many interpretations of these texts have been offered, the following will focus on PE vis-à-vis typology, as the two approaches operate with similar hermeneutical presuppositions.[44]

Acts 2

The use of Psalm 16 in Acts 2 and Acts 13 are important examples for Bates of PE in the NT against common typological explanations.[45] These cases are particularly useful for evaluating PE, as Psalm 16 is spoken in the first person throughout, the text is applied to Christ in both speeches, and the interpretive rationale of the author is more explicit. As Bates draws christological significance from these readings, I will first evaluate the plausibility of PE, then the christological conclusions.

As noted in the introduction, Bates argues that Peter's use of Psalm 16:8-11 (Ps 15:8-11 LXX) in Acts 2:22-36 is best understood prosopologically. That is, Peter believes that the Holy Spirit spoke through David the words of the future Christ.[46] To support this reading, he first emphasizes the contrast Peter makes between David and Christ. Peter highlights that the fulfillment of God's promise to deliver from death was found not in David, who did die, but in his royal offspring (Acts 2:29). David died, which made him an unfitting character for the words. This logic, argues Bates, tends away

from a typological reading, which supposes that both the type and antitype participate in the same image. Rather, the way that Peter links the first- and second-person speech in the psalm to Christ (2:31) demands that he construed the speaker of the psalm to be Christ, *not* David. Secondly, Bates contends David's perceived prophetic status emphasizes the future rather than the present circumstance of David. Peter therefore understands these verses of Psalm 16 to apply to Christ and not David, who prophetically adopted the character of Christ speaking of his future resurrection. The implicit narrative for interpretation is theodramatic.

Bates's argument rests on implication, for Peter nowhere attributes these words to Christ as the speaker, only that their content rightly applies to him. David as a prophet saw ahead and spoke concerning (περί, 2:31) Christ's resurrection. Nonetheless, his reading is possible. However, I believe that when the context is considered, a covenantally-informed typological explanation is more plausible.

Firstly, a contrast between David and the Messiah does not bar a typological[47] relationship. Types may indicate contrast as well as continuity (cf. Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12-21).[48] Moreover, Luke has signaled that both anointed kings operate under the same Davidic promise for an enduring throne (cf. Luke 1:32-33; cf. 2 Sam 7). Peter's contrast does not override these connections, rather, it assumes them.

Peter's use of Psalm 69:25 (Ps 68:26 LXX) and Psalm 109:8 (Ps 108:8 LXX) to refer to Judas in Acts 1:15-26 will help to illustrate that typological reasoning is likely in view in Acts 2.[49] On its face, Peter's speech in Acts 1:15-26 looks like another direct prophecy solved by PE. Peter here tells the brothers that Psalm 69:25 and 109:8 concerned Judas (περὶ Ἰούδα; 1:16). This scripture was "spoken beforehand" (προλέγω) by the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David, so as with Acts 2, David's prophetic role is in view. If interpreted prosopologically, the conclusion would be that David took on the character of Christ, who spoke to the Father concerning Judas, who persecuted him.[50] However, a PE reading is rendered problematic in that Peter changes the persons of the text. The referent of Psalm 69:25 (Ps 68:26 LXX) is *plural* in both the Greek and Hebrew (indicating a group), but Peter here has changed it to a *singular*.[51] This change, along with the others,[52] makes the idea that Peter saw this passage as the in-character speech of Jesus less likely.

However, a typological explanation works well here. That is, Peter likely saw Judas as a poignant instance in a pattern of opposition to YHWH's anointed one. This reading is strengthened by the use of Psalm 69 in the Gospels, which all evoke Psalm 69, either explicitly or by allusion, as they narrate Jesus's passion and crucifixion (Matt 27:48; Luke 23:36; Mark 15:36; John 19:29). Paul cites Psalm 69 in Romans 11:10 to imprecate those who oppose the spread of the gospel. In each case, the situation regards those who oppose the Davidic king and his covenant. Peter's speech in Acts 1 fits well with this reasoning: *the disciples see Judas as a supreme instance in a pattern of opposition to the anointed Davidic king*. Psalm 109:8 (Ps 108:8 LXX) can be explained the same way. What happened to Judas was *necessary* by way of the pattern of doom that had been outlined for those who maltreat YHWH's anointed.

Peter's use of Psalm 16 in Acts 2 likely follows the same line of thought. Given that Peter spoke to Jews, it was obvious to them that David was dead. The connection for Peter lies in the *certainty of the promise to the Davidic king*. David believed that he would live to attain the throne God had promised to him, or possibly referred to his future resurrection.[53] Either way, David believed the promises of God for his anointed and spoke prophetically about one who would ultimately fulfill those promises (cf. Psalm 110).

The Anointed Davidic King (Jesus) fulfilled the entire trajectory set and anticipated by the anointed David. In addition to possessing the promise of an enduring throne, David is the standard by which the prophets measure kings (1 Kgs 11:4; 15:3; 2 Kgs 14:3; 16:2; 18:3; 22:2). In the latter prophets, David stands for his line. Ezekiel, for example, says of Israel's future restoration: "they shall be my people, and I will be their God. My servant David shall be king over them" (Ezek 37:23c-24; cf. Hos 3:5).[54] By using "my servant David" as a synecdoche for his line, the prophet projects David's faithfulness onto the eschatological king. This line of thinking is reflected in the Psalter, where David's hymns are retained and take on additional significance in light of the Davidic promise and David's empty throne.[55] Furthermore, when the Gospel writers reflected on Jesus' passion and death, they noticed events that bore striking resemblances to David's own experience in the Psalms.[56] So when Peter uses Psalm 16 to refer to Jesus, he follows a long line of interpretation that connects anointed David with the Anointed Davidic King. Therefore, the Anointed One's resurrection was in effect prophesied

by David as he clung to his own promise and anointing. David knew that the faithful Davidic King would not see destruction; this was fulfilled to the utmost in the perfectly faithful Jesus.

The words of Psalm 16, then, are best understood by Peter to apply first and truly to David, but most fully to Jesus as Messiah. As for David, these words expressed that YHWH was at his side, ready to help him and fulfill the promise that he would be king.[57] As a prophet, however, considering YHWH's promises to him as the anointed king (1 Sam 16:1-13; 2 Sam 7, cf. Psalm 110), the trajectory of his thought extended beyond himself to his future Heir.

If the undergirding logic for the use of Psalm 16 in Acts 2 is best understood as covenantal and typological, the application of these words in the first-person to Jesus is better explained as a *rhetorical strategy* than a reading technique. Bates has noted the use of *prosopopoeia* in speeches, where a speaker takes on a character for rhetorical effect.[58] Peter applies this effect to the preaching of Christ to rhetorically strengthen the connection between David and his heir through the inspired words of Scripture.[59] Psalm 16 acts as a rhetorical shorthand for these trajectories, which can be a feature of preaching (especially summarized speeches like those in Acts).[60] Given the general sensitivity of the biblical authors (and assumedly their largely Jewish audience) to the history of Israel, it seems unlikely that they would argue that the words of Psalm 16 did not apply to David. One might gloss Peter's speech, then, in this way: when David said that YHWH would not let his holy one see corruption, he "in effect" spoke about the resurrection of Christ, to whom these words are even more fitting than they were for David.[61]

Immediately following, Peter identifies Jesus as David's "lord" in Psalm 110:1 (Ps 109:1 LXX; Acts 2:33-35). This is an example of PE1. Peter creates rhetorical contrast to show the supremacy of Jesus as Messiah, who fulfilled what David prophesied (namely, the Davidic covenant) in Psalm 110 by his ascension. For both texts, the implicit narrative is *covenantal*, resting on biblically defined trajectories which find their fulfillment in the Messiah.

Acts 13

Bates's explanation of Psalm 16:10 (Ps 15:10 LXX) in Acts 13:35 is slightly different.[62] Bates again stresses that the contrast offered by Paul, which mirrors that of Peter (13:36-37) undermines a typological explanation.

However, with respect to Psalm 16, Bates claims only that Paul saw Jesus, the Davidic heir, as the referent (not the speaker) of the psalm. This follows from his interpretation of Isaiah 55:3, where he argues the referent is also Jesus. In these quotations, God himself is fronted as the speaker, but this is consistent with the NT view of all Scripture as God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16). Using the categories described above, Paul's use of Isaiah 55:3 is an instance of PE1. The Davidic heir has merely been identified as Jesus (who has been confirmed as such by his resurrection).[63] The connection between Psalm 16 and the Christ, would, I contend, follow the same covenantal-typological reasoning given above.

Support for this understanding is found on either side of this section of Paul's speech. Notably, at the end of Paul's speech (13:47), he says that God has commanded (ἐντέλλω) Paul and his coworkers the text of Isaiah 49:6. Is there a case of double PE, here, where the Spirit supplies both the script of the Messiah and the apostles?[64] Or does Paul see his work as an extension of Christ's own work (even participation in Christ himself; cf. Gal 2:20), who fulfilled the expected role of the Servant (PE1)? The latter option is simpler. This reading becomes even stronger when Paul's rebuke to Elymas in the preceding narrative (13:10) is considered. Here Paul charges Elymas with making crooked "the straight paths of the Lord," alluding to Isaiah 40:3, dialogue which is everywhere in the Gospels applied to John the Baptist (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23). Again, if Bates's model is to be applied consistently, this would seem to entail that Luke saw two voices speaking in the theodrama, which is problematic for Bates, given his resistance to oscillation between multiple characters in the same voice (e.g., between Christ and the church).[65] A covenantal-typological logic better explains how the same text can apply to both John and Paul. Paul sees his commission to the Gentiles as an extension of John's work, preparing the way of the Messiah through his preaching. If these interpretations are granted, then the likelihood that a similar logic underpins Paul's use of Psalm 16 is reasonable.

Acts Summary

Both typological and PE explanations depend on inference. However, when the context of these passages is considered, a covenantal-typological narrative has greater explanatory power. Trying to apply the theodramatic narrative consistently in surrounding passages that would seem to qualify for PE turns

out to be problematic. However, an implicit covenantal narrative provides a coherent explanation and displays how the use of these texts can be drawn back to their original meaning.[66] Given that the apostles were heavily interested in what they understood as the correct interpretation of the OT (e.g., Acts 17:2; 18:24-28; 1 Tim 1:6-10; 2 Tim 2:15), this explanation seems better in line with their apologetic aims and should be preferred. I will now demonstrate how this same logic may apply in the use of Psalms in Hebrews.

Hebrews

Hebrews begins with the plain assertion that God speaks (Heb 1:1). While he has spoken in many ways and times in the prophets, he has now spoken ἐν υἱῷ. Space allows for only brief comment here, but the use of the Psalms in the opening catena and in Hebrews 10:5-7 have also been offered as examples of PE2.[67]

The author of Hebrews begins his sermon with the affirmation that the Son who has been "appointed" (ἔθηκεν) as the "heir of all things."[68] Whether this appointment was at the resurrection or in eternity past is debated, however, the opening verses of the catena support that the appointment be seen as the installment of the Davidic king.[69] This reading may be confirmed by the opening two quotations. Psalm 2:7 is followed immediately by 2 Samuel 7:14, which suggests that they are mutually interpretive; namely, Psalm 2:7 is understood in view of the Davidic promise.[70] While Psalm 2:7 has been seen by some as PE2, it is more difficult to account for the idea that Nathan took on character in his speech to David in 2 Samuel 7.[71] Peter Gentry has argued at length that the use of Psalms 2, 45 and 110 by NT authors were guided by the metanarrative of the OT and typology. All three feature in the opening catena of chapter one. Psalms 2 and 110, Gentry has argued, both reflect on the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7, to which Psalm 110 adds reflections from Genesis 14.[72] Trajectories in Isaiah blur the lines between YHWH and the Davidic king he promised to act through, which explains the language of Psalm 45.[73] In Gentry's view, the NT authors are sensitive to these Scriptural trajectories (as in Acts 2), wherein the literal sense of the original text is maintained.[74] In this case, the citations from Psalms 2 and 110 would be examples of PE1.[75] What I have argued above strengthens Gentry's case by trying to account for the language these texts use as hermeneutical shorthand, a rhetorical technique which can be expected in a homily where

the speaker and audience share some base of knowledge.[76] In these verses, the author of Hebrews establishes the eternal Son as the Davidic Son to whom all dominion is given.

Aubrey Sequeira has conducted a thorough study of the use of Psalm 40:6-8 in Hebrews 10:5-7.[77] He concludes, in light of the contextual cues both in Psalm 40 and in Hebrews, that a biblical-theological logic allows the author to develop the meaning in light of redemptive-historical developments which culminate in eschatological fulfillment in Christ.[78] Sequeira accepts the use of "prosopological exegesis" but also departs from Bates's logic in significant ways. Sequeira asserts that the words did truly apply to David as subject and speaker, whereas Bates's theodramatic model would hold David as the speaker but not the subject.[79] Sequeira also sees PE as compatible with typology, whereas Bates does not, and disagrees with Bates on the function of PE.[80] Put simply, while Sequeira uses the term, it is questionable whether his interpretation should be called PE, if it is to maintain any substantive connection Bates's model. I contend that his explanation better matches with the model I have outlined above.[81]

Christological Implications

In Bates's prosopological reading of Acts 2, he concludes that it is the *Father* who is at the right hand of elevated Son who sits on the royal throne.[82] This conclusion raises questions. In the NT, the Son is consistently depicted at the Father's right hand, not the other way around (cf. esp. Acts 2:33-34). Also, nowhere does the NT indicate that the Father would occupy a less-elevated position than the Son. Indeed, its authors take care to indicate the reverse (cf. 1 Cor 15:27-28). Secondly, while Bates contends that the Son later adopts a position at the Father's right hand as the "exalted son," installed as heavenly Lord (2:34), it is unclear how moving from the throne itself to the right side constitutes exaltation. Bates's theodramatic interpretation is therefore unconvincing.

If the exalted Son as Messiah (i.e., his human nature) is read as the focus throughout Peter's speech, the reading is more cohesive. Peter's main point is that God had planned that Jesus of Nazareth would die and be raised as both Lord and Messiah (2:22-24; 32). Psalm 16 and Psalm 110 both support the resurrection (γὰρ, 2:25, 34) in that it was not possible for Jesus to be held by death (2:24) and that the Messiah would ascend on high as David

foretold (2:34). A covenantal-typological explanation that is sensitive to the rhetorical strategies of Acts has greater explanatory power exegetically and christologically.

In Acts 13, Bates argues that Psalm 2:7 supports only the claim that God has fulfilled the promise to their fathers (i.e., the Davidic promise) and not the resurrection.[83] In doing so, Bates guards against interpretations that advance christological adoptionism.[84] That Christ was exalted as Son of God in power (Rom 1:3-4) does not necessitate adoptionism. Rather, it recognizes the role that God the Eternal Son now fulfills as the incarnate Davidic Son.[85] The brief catena in Acts 13:33-35 supports Paul's point that God has fulfilled the promise to the fathers by raising Jesus from the dead, confirming him as Messiah. This does not undermine the Son's divinity but does inform one's understanding of Christ's person and work.[86]

Bates also concludes that the earliest Christians understood this Psalm 2:7 to reflect a preincarnational begetting.[87] While this may be so of later church Fathers, it is not as clear that such was meant by the author of Hebrews. The Son's divinity is clearly affirmed (Heb 1:1-4). However, especially in light of 2 Samuel 7:14, Psalm 2:7 likely depicts the eternal Son's appointment as the divine-human Messiah. Psalm 110 is a case of PE1, merely identifying the expected figure. Psalm 40 follows the line of interpretation of Psalm 16 in Acts 2. The preacher uses these words in a rhetorically clever and fresh way to describe the work of the Son in coming to earth, but the underpinning logic is covenantal and typological, culminating in the Son's eschatological fulfillment.

Summary: Moving Forward with PE in the NT

I have argued for a distinction regarding texts under debate for PE based on the textual warrant for doing so. Where enigmatic figures are advanced by a prophetic text the reader naturally looks for a satisfying identity. The same is true in prophetic texts with unmarked shifts in person (e.g., Isa 55:3-5). This process, I contend, is normal reading, following grammatical and literary signals in the text itself. I have termed this PE1 for the purposes of this paper, but there may be readers who engage in this practice who would not agree with the applications in PE2. It is debatable, therefore, due to the association with PE2, that this practice should be called PE.

When a character assignment goes beyond the list of characters provided by a text or inserts a character when there is no discernible shift in person, the warrant for PE is less clear. I have termed this PE2. I have argued that this type of reading requires greater justification due to concerns of authorial intent and the historical axis of Scripture. In the test cases above, I demonstrated that it is difficult to apply PE consistently in the contexts of the texts offered by Bates and that a covenantal-typological logic has greater explanatory power, especially when the same dialogue is used for multiple persons (e.g., Paul and Isaiah 49:6). That is, these texts are better explained by covenantal-typological, rather than theodramatic, narratives.

These cases do not prove that PE does not happen in the NT but, in my view, they justify that greater care should be taken before applying PE (especially PE2) to the NT authors. This is supported, first, by the fact mentioned above that every purported instance of PE in the NT is unmarked. Of course, the NT authors may have practiced PE like the Fathers without marking it, but the absence of this marker should at least urge caution when making PE assignments, especially when models that have further biblical support are available. This leads to the second point, namely, that typology is broadly recognized as a feature of divine revelation and OT interpretation,[88] whereas there is little evidence, if any, for PE in the OT.[89] Given the privileged status of the OT as the means of preaching Christ, it would seem to follow that an event that was preached as a continuation of that history would make use not only of its texts, but also its methods. While this does not prohibit something like PE, if a solution can be found in categories native to already existing Scripture, it should be preferred.

Reflections on the Value of PE for Christology

Seeing how the architects of the doctrine of the Trinity, like Tertullian, argued for distinction within the Trinity based on inner-Trinitarian dialogues they saw in texts like the Psalms (cf. *Against Praxeus* 11), Bates contends that prosopological exegesis was "irreducibly essential" to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity.[90] PE allowed the early church "to read the one God as multiple persons in the ancient Scripture—Father, Son, and inspiring Spirit."[91] That is, this kind of exegesis privileged the "person" concept when considering distinctions within the one God, which was further articulated

in the Trinitarian language (οὐσία and ὑπόστασις) later centuries (e.g., Nicaea).[92] Therefore, he concludes, "if this method cannot find adequate hermeneutical footing, Trinitarian dogma… might be undermined."[93] That PE is indispensable to the development Trinity, however, is questionable for the following reasons.

First, for PE to happen, defined characters—or persons—must already exist. As Bates contends: "For a good reading, a correspondence must exist between the description of the speaker or addressee in the ancient text and what is known about the proposed theodramatic character as that character is revealed elsewhere in the divine economy."[94] PE therefore seems to require that a "person" already be recognized and individually defined. It is difficult, therefore, to see how PE is "irreducibly essential" to developing a concept it presupposes. YHWH is depicted in personal terms throughout the OT (speaking, hearing, commanding, promising) as is Jesus in the NT who speaks of himself in relation to both the Father and the Spirit (e.g., John 15:23-26).[95] If PE (particularly PE2) exists in the NT, then it only serves to illustrate already existing conceptions. Furthermore, Richard Bauckham has noted that for Greek (particularly Platonic) thinkers, personhood within God was not as readily defined.[96] In the PE of the early Fathers, we may see them bringing their doctrine of God into conformity with the Scriptures against their previously held concepts. If this is the case, then to claim PE as central to the doctrine of the Trinity appears to be an overstatement, as the content for personhood was already present, but was being translated into a new idiom.[97] If it should prove unwarranted, (or nonexistent in the NT for that matter), Trinitarian dogma will remain on firm foundations.

Secondly, however, while the recognition of Jesus as the Servant of Isaiah raises interesting questions regarding inner-trinitarian speech, PE as advanced by Bates (and practiced in the Fathers) seems vulnerable to losing valuable Christological connections by flattening the historical progression of Scripture. If, for example, David is understood to speak Psalm 22 in the character of Christ and not himself (taking here the example of the Fathers, not the NT), then the connection between David and Christ is limited; David merely adopts the character. But if David recognized that he, as the anointed king, was an instance in a pattern of God's deliverance of righteous sufferers (cf. Ps 22:4-5, 30-31), Jesus' quotation of Psalm 22:1 on the cross shows that he climatically fulfills these patterns (Matt 27:46 and Mark 43:51).[98] That is,

one better understands how the OT was "fulfilled" in Jesus. Prosopological exegesis, as advanced by Bates and practiced by some of the Fathers, runs the risk of subsuming these data points into a divine conversation, flattening the developments that inform Christ's person and work.[99]

Why the Resonance?

When the Fathers engage in prosopological exegesis, it is often easy to see the resonance between a given text and the prosopon assigned. As noted above, for example, Augustine interprets Psalm 3 first in the person of Christ, then the church, then the believer fighting his sin.[100] In some sense, David's words do seem strikingly appropriate for all three. Considering the discussion above, how might one account for this resonance?

The author of Hebrews discusses how major institutions, events, and people in the OT were *shadows* of what was to come (Heb 10:1). Given that all the promises and covenants of God find their fulfillment in Jesus, NT authors also saw that many of these patterns were continued in the Church (e.g., the temple in the OT, Christ as the temple [John 2:19-22], and then the church as God's temple and Christ's body [1 Cor 3:16-17]). To close, I will use Augustine's exegesis of Psalm 3 as an outline to illustrate the principles explored in this essay.

With respect to Christ, one follows the biblical authors who saw that David's significance extended far beyond himself because of the promise God made to him (2 Sam 7). When David died and Israel reflected on the implications of the promise, especially in exile, David's person was held as a paradigm for the Davidic heir. Jesus is the Davidic heir, and reflects David, but perfects what David lacked.[101] For example, in Acts 13, Paul links together David and Jesus in the sense that both were obedient to God's will (Acts 13:22, 28).[102] Therefore, what David experiences in the Psalms as the righteous, anointed king of God finds ready resonance with the life of Jesus.

As for the church, the NT authors stressed the intimate relationship between Christians and Christ. Just as they were "in Adam" in unbelief, believers are now "in Christ," his very body, and a temple of the Spirit (Rom 5:12-2; 1 Cor 3:16-17; 12:27). There is a deep and mysterious union between the Messiah and his followers, such that the experiences of one involve the other (e.g., Matt 25; Acts 9:1-4; John 17:23). As members of the new covenant, the Spirit of Christ works in God's people to the end of making them like

him (Rom 8:29; 1 John 3:2). Those who oppose the Messiah also oppose his people (Acts 9:4) and his followers take part in his sufferings (Phil 1:29). In as much as the people of God align themselves with the Davidic King Jesus, they enter his victories and struggles. Their hearts, by the Spirit, are aligned to the same trajectories as David's when he penned these psalms, but they are realized on an even grander scale. Thus, the church may rightly identify Psalm 3 in that they are confident that God will save and bless those who trust in him (cf. their prayer of Ps 2:1-2 in Acts 4:25-26).

The Christian's battle with sin is an extension of Christ's battle with sin. The opposition to the Davidic king was but one expression of rebellion against God's rule (Ps 2). Christ-followers, empowered by the Spirit of Christ, engage in the same resistance against passions which war against their souls, having died and been raised with Christ (1 Pet 2:11).

In my view, the Fathers often intuited biblically warranted connections, but the warrant is better explained in the trajectories established in Scripture itself. These are the ancient paths we should tread, and we honor the legacy of the Fathers by holding their methods accountable to the Scriptures they sought to explain and defend.

Conclusion

This article has aimed to advance the discussion over prosopological exegesis in the NT. I have offered category clarifications regarding the practice of prosopological exegesis and brought the theodramatic narratives of PE into deeper interaction with a covenantal-typological narrative. In the cases I have reviewed here, covenantally-informed typology seems to better account for the interpretations of the NT authors when the uses of the OT are compared with similar uses nearby. However, this evaluation is only a start. Much more work needs to be done on the relationship of typology to PE, how past prophetic speech of a character fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth relates to the Eternal Son (e.g., the Servant and Psalm 110:1), and the role of homiletical rhetoric in communication these points. I hope this article contributes toward a deeper knowledge of how the NT authors understood and preached these texts while heralding the good news of Jesus, the offspring of David and eternal Begotten of God.

1. For an overview of the history of prosopological exegesis, see chapter four in Matthew W. Bates, *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation: The Center of Paul's Method of Scriptural Interpretation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012); Matthew W. Bates, *The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God, and Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretations of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 28–30. Also see the introduction in Madison N. Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 178; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
2. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith, vol. 1; Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1885).
3. Scholars have labelled this phenomenon differently. Carl Andresen called it "prosopographic exegesis" (Carl Andresen, "Zur Entstehung und Geschichte des trinitarischen Personbegriffes," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 52, no. 1–2 [1961]: 1–39). Marie-Josèphe Rondeau used the term *exégèse prosopolique* (prosopological exegesis) which has become the preferred nomenclature for Matthew Bates and those who have followed him in arguing for the prosopological exegesis in the NT. See Marie-Josèphe Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques du Psautier: IIIe-Ve siècles*, 2 vols., Orientalia Christiana Analecta; 219-220 (Roma: Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1982); Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 184–87; Bates, *Birth*, 28–30.
4. See Bates, *Hermeneutics*; Bates, *Birth*; Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*; Craig A. Carter, *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 192f.; Susan E. Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study in Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament. 2. Reihe, 0340-9570; 260 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2009). Andresen believed that it was in Heb 1:5-13, 5:5f., and Acts 2:24-35 (Andresen, "Zur Entstehung und Geschichte des trinitarischen Personbegriffes," 20–21).
5. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.
6. As explained by Matthew Bates: "David was not merely speaking about him, but rather this yet-to-be-revealed Jesus was making an in-character speech at the time of David *through David*" (Bates. *Birth*, 153. Italics original).
7. See, for example, Peter J. Gentry, "A Preliminary Evaluation and Critique of Prosopological Exegesis," *SBJT* 23, no. 2 (2019): 105–22.
8. Matthew Bates, for example, has set his explanations for prosopological exegesis against typological explanations. See Bates, *Birth*, 9. Bates's primary interaction with typology, however, is with Richard Hays, whose version of typology (following Francis Young) fails to account for discontinuity in types. Other models of typology do account for discontinuity, however, like the model applied in this paper (e.g., Rom 5:12-21 expresses both continuity and discontinuity in an explicitly typological relationship). For further discussion, see Aubrey M. Sequeira, "The Hermeneutics of Eschatological Fulfillment in Christ: Biblical-Theological Exegesis in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (PhD Dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 96–100.but also develops and clarifies the original meaning in light of progressive biblical-theological development across the canon of Scripture and eschatological fulfillment in Christ. Furthermore, it is argued that an examination of citations and allusions to the OT illumines the biblical-theological framework and hermeneutical presuppositions guiding the author of Hebrews (his "interpretive perspective"
9. Bates, *Birth*, 2, 13, 84. This technique is aptly described by Madison Pierce: "The ancient exegetical technique known as 'prosopological exegesis' interprets texts by assigning "faces" (πρόσωπα), or characters, to ambiguous or unspecified personal (or personified) entities represented in the text in question." Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*, 4.
10. By "divine economy" Bates means, "God's administrative providence over all reality, both textual and metatextual, and the effects thereby achieved" (Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 117n29). In my view, when discussing potential *prosōpa* in OT texts, the idea has large overlap with that of "salvation history."
11. This is a fundamental feature of prosopological exegesis (Bates, *Birth*, 188, 196).
12. See Bates, *Birth*, 34–36. Bates describes three settings for PE. The first is the *prophetic setting*, which is the time and place of the prophet's speech (e.g. Isaiah during the kingdom's decline). The second horizon, the *theodramatic setting*, where the divine economy is abstracted ("the narrative world of the 'divine play,'" 35), allowing the prophet to speak words from another character at a given point in salvation history, speaking from the point of view of that person at that time (e.g. Christ speaking to the Father from the cross). The third setting, the *actualized setting*, is when the event of the theodrama occurs (that is, Christ on the cross). More simply, PE is when a prophet speaks from the perspective of another person or event in salvation history
13. Bates, *Birth*, 182, 188.

14. For Bates' argument for the kerygma, see chapter two in Bates, *Hermeneutics*.
15. See Bates, *Birth*, 1–2. He argues that as earlier texts help to illumine the intended meaning of a given text, so also do later texts. Bates calls this approach a *diachronic intertextuality*, where he seeks to "contextualize New Testament interpretations of the Old Testament by utilizing Second Temple Jewish resources and the early Fathers of the church." See Bates, *Birth*, 58; Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 53–56. This method compares *pre-texts* (the earlier writing that a given *Text* interprets), *co-texts* (interpretations of the same pre-text from the same period), and *post-texts* (later interpretations of the pre-text via the given *Text*). I have capitalized "*Text*" for clarity. Examples of using PE for trinitarian insights, see Bates, *Birth*; Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*.
16. The most complete treatment is chapter four in Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 183–221. See also Bates, *Birth*, 31–34; Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*, 6–11.
17. Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 194–99.
18. Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 192–94; Bates, *Birth*, 31.
19. Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 211–12.
20. An example from Justin Martyr: "And that this too may be clear to you, *there were spoken from the person of the Father* through Isaiah the Prophet, the following words: The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel does not know, and My people has not understood. Woe, sinful nation, a people full of sins, a wicked seed, children that are transgressors, you have forsaken the Lord" (*1 Apol* 37 in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, *ANF1*. Italics mine).
21. Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*, 21. The terminology 'marked' and 'unmarked' comes from Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 218.
22. For an analysis of Augustine's hermeneutical progression see Michael Cameron, *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). For Martyr's own account of his philosophical background, see *Dialogue with Trypho* §2. See also Gentry, "A Preliminary Evaluation," 108.
23. See Gentry, "A Preliminary Evaluation," 106–8, 119–20. Theon's handbook, the earliest available specimen of a *progymnasmata*, may be from the first century, but his location and Greco-Roman audience make it difficult to confirm whether his work would have already influenced the NT authors (see George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, vol. 10, Writings from the Greco-Roman World [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003], 1; Donald Andrew Frank Moore Russell, *Theon (3) (RE 5), Aelius* [Oxford University Press, 2012], https://www.oxfordreference.com). Philo also wrote from Alexandria and is not considered representative of standard Jewish interpretation (cf. Henning Graf. Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, trans. Leo G. Perdue, vol. 1 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 117. Much of the other material (e,g., later rhetorical handbooks of Hermogenes and Libanius, the Targums, Rabbinic material) postdates the NT.
24. Cf. Hays's caution for assuming that parallels entail influence, particularly from later sources, in Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 11. See also G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 3–4. Bates cites a possible example from 11QMelch, but again, while comparisons with Qumran literature are frequently offered, it is uncertain to what extent the Essenes reflect the thought of the biblical authors. Bates, *Birth*, 59–60; Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*, 10.
25. See Bates, *Birth*, 27; Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study in Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*, 177; Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*, 21. In his discussion on the literal sense, Bates urges his readers to consider the horizon or context to which the literal sense may be fixed. He describes how modern historical-critical methods have focused on original intent but often evaluate the correct reading via hypothetical reconstructions of the past at the expense of the literary context (including the canon). By contrast, he contends that the most vital (though not only) context for interpretation should be the "richer metatextual horizon" conveyed by the Old and New Testament, which is rooted in God's comprehensive providence (Bates, *Birth*, 81–84). I agree that the canon—respecting its inner covenantal structures—provides the proper and primary context for interpretation (see Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993], 290–311). However, in Bates's description, the relationship is between the scriptural horizon and the progressive unfolding history of Scripture.
26. Bates, *Birth*, 66. See esp. n52.
27. Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 218.

28. The precise identity of the speaker in the servant passages has long been debated (particularly ch. 49-55) For a brief summary of positions, see Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 40-66: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2009), 152–57, Retrieved from ProQuest Ebook Central. See also Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed (Wheaton: Crossway, 2018), 494–95.
29. For Bates's treatment of Isaiah passages, see Bates, *Birth*, 71–76, 79–80, 92–113, 125–26, 140–46.
30. See, for example, Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 394, Retrieved from ProQuest Ebook Central.
31. Another example would be Genesis 1:26, God speaks in the plural "Let *us* make man in *our* image." While the speaker is clearly God in this passage, to whom does he speak? While the plural has been variously interpreted throughout history, Irenaeus understood it to be the Father speaking to the Son, as did the writer of the Epistle of Barnabas. See Bates, *Birth*, 82. Irenaeus, *Epideixis.* 55, Epist. Barn 6:12. In this passage, supplying the identity of the addressee as the Son yields a particular interpretation and import for the author's argument.
32. See Bates, *Birth*, 196.
33. E.g., Gen. 22:16; Num. 14:28; 1 Sam. 2:30; 2 Ki. 9:26; 2 Chr. 34:27; Ps. 110:1; Isa. 14:22-23; Jer. 1:8; Ezek. 13:6-7; Hos. 2:15; Joel 2:12; Amos 2:11; Obad. 1:4, 8; Mic. 4:6; Nah. 2:14; Zeph. 1:2-3; Hag. 1:9; Zech. 1:3-4; Mal. 1:2
34. For a defense of the *lamed* of attribution (or ל *auctoris*) in Psalms, see Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1-59: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 22–23.
35. For further references, see Bates, *Birth*, 131–32. However, Justin seems to talk about other verses as prophetic. Ps 22:1, which Christ *did* later say, he speaks of it as an announcement beforehand, rather than the words of the Christ through David (*Dial.* 99.1).
36. Augustine: "The words, 'I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up,' lead us to believe that this Psalm is to be understood as in the Person of Christ; for they sound more applicable to the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, than to that history in which David's flight is described from the face of his rebellious son." Exposition on Psalm 3.1 in Augustine of Hippo, *Expositions on The Book of Psalms* (trans. John Henry Parker; London: Oxford, 1847). See also Justin's approach in *Dialogues with Trypho* 97-99.
37. See Michael Cameron's explanation of Augustine view of scriptural interpretation in Cameron, *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis*.
38. For Bates's proposed controls, see Bates, *Birth*, 175–202.
39. There is, of course, considerable debate over whether the authors of the NT respected OT contexts, which are far too complex to detail here. For a concise introduction with helpful notes for further reading, see Beale, *Handbook*, 1–18. For extended argumentation, see G. K. Beale, *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?: Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994); G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic; Apollos, 2007).
40. Bates is sensitive to this charge and locates warrant for PE in the divine author and canon (Bates, *Birth*, 81–84). While I would agree that the Bible must finally be understood in light of the whole canon, I would contend that the biblical authors show a greater respect for the historical-progressive sequence of Scripture than PE allows.
41. Bates, *Birth*, 182, 188.
42. Language that emphasizes the reader is common when describing PE. Pierce describes how in PE one "views the text through the lens of a new participant," which becomes the basis for new meaning. Pierce, *Divine Discourse in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Recontextualization of Spoken Quotations in Scripture*, 4–5. Pierce notes that this quality is the only one essential to prosopological exegesis: "the interpretation must introduce a new element to the text not otherwise clear from the original text itself." (p21). Docherty stresses this language as well (cf. Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study in Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*, 177).
43. See also Beale, *Handbook*, 1–18; D. A. Carson, "New Covenant Theology and Biblical Theology," in *God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays on Biblical Theology in Honor of Thomas R. Schreiner* (ed. Denny Burk, James M. Jr. Hamilton, and Brian Vickers; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2019), 23–25.
44. Bates offers a set of "enabling" presuppositions. These include: 1) the reality of the divine economy; 2) the divine authorship of the Jewish Scripture; 3) The unity and plot-arrangement of the ancient Jewish Scripture and 4) Prophetic participation in the divine economy (Bates, *Birth*, 190–92). The first three are assumed in most evangelical approaches to interpretation (cf. Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 107–58). The only point of disagreement would be over the role of theodrama and character-taking in prophetic participation.

45. Cf. Bates, *Birth*, 74–76, 153–55; Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 250n71 (see index as well).
46. "David was not merely speaking about him, but rather this yet-to-be-revealed Jesus as making an in-character speech at the time of David through David." Bates, *Birth*, 154. The material for this paragraph is from Bates, *Birth*, 153–55.
47. By "typology," I mean repeated patterns in redemptive history which are tied to the progression of the biblical covenants. I follow the description given by Wellum: "As God's plan is progressively revealed through the covenants, later Old Testament authors pick up the previous patterns, which then create a trajectory that New Testament authors rightly recognize as God-intended, predictive, and now coming to fulfillment in Christ and the new covenant age" (Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 114–18).
48. See also David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (3rd ed., rev.updated; Downers Grove IL: IVP Academic; Apollos, 2010), 183.
49. Cf. also Ps 41:9 in John 13:18; see Beale and Carson, *NT Use of the OT*, 285–88.
50. This is interpretation is my own, but I contend that it holds true to Bates's principles.
51. As noted by Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 102–3; Beale and Carson, *NT Use of the OT*, 530.
52. Luke's report of Peter substitutes the cognate adjective (ἔρημος) for the participle (ἠρημωμένη) and abbreviates the second clause (the following italics represent omissions in Peter's quotation: ἐν τοῖς σκηνώμασιν αὐτῶν μὴ ἔστω ὁ κατοικῶν), adding ἐν αὐτῇ at the end to maintain a sense of the original parallelism. The sense of the quote remains, but the inexact nature of the quotation is compatible with the idea that Peter is making a kind of comparison.
53. For interpretation of Ps 16 as David's indicating resurrection, see commentary ad loc.in James M. Hamilton, *Psalms*, 2 vols. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, forthcoming). For alternative interpretations, see Craig S. Keener, *Acts: Introduction and 1:1-2:47*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 945–46. For a recent work on resurrection in the OT, see Eun-Jung Kim, "Reconsidering Eternal Life in the Old Testament: The Idea of Resurrection Rooted in the Torah" (PhD Dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).
54. See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 141–44.
55. While the exact nature of the psalter is still a matter of debate. Persuasive arguments have been made for a Davidic focus. For recent examples, see Adam D. Hensley, *Covenant Relationships and the Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Library of Hebrew Biblical Studies 666; London: T&T Clark, 2018); Hamilton, *Psalms*. At the very least, the Davidic promise after the exile would have added depth and nuance to the Davidic identity reflected in the Psalms.
56. See the quotation of Ps 22:1 in Matt 27:46 and Mark 43:51 as well as the allusions to Ps 22:18 in Matt 27:35 and Mark 15:24; Ps 22:7 in Matt 27:39 and Mark 15:29; Ps 22:8 in Matt 27:43.
57. I will interpret the superscription to refer to Davidic authorship. For a defense of this view, see Hamilton, *Psalms*, sec. 4.1-4.2. *Pace* Keener, who sees this as a Levitical psalm (Keener, *Acts*, 2012, 1:945–46). Keener seems to overlook the priestly functions that David assumed himself and for his line (cf. 2 Sam 6:13-18; 8:18; Ps. 110).
58. Bates, *Hermeneutics*, 194–99.
59. Cf. Peerler's description of this technique in Hebrews in Amy L. B. Peeler, *You Are My Son: The Family of God in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (T&T Clark Library of Biblical Studies; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 33.
60. By way of illustration, H. G. Reventlow has commented on the difference between Origen's commentary on Song of Songs and his sermons. In his commentary, he follows a general pattern of expositing the literal meaning of the text before moving on parallels in the church's relation to Christ, the relationship of the soul to the word, and finally the application to his hearers. In the sermons, however, these interior steps do not appear, and one goes straight from "Let me kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!" (Song 1:2) to "Its meaning is, 'How long does my bridegroom send me kisses' though Moses and through the prophets?'" See Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:191. Both interpretations end at the same place. In the first, however, Origen is more careful to show the steps he took to get there. I propose that something similar is in view when we read these striking statements in Acts.
61. John seems to express a similar view of prophesy regarding Caiaphas's declaration in John 11:49:52. There is little in John's Gospel to indicate that Caiaphas intentionally prophesied that Jesus would die so that "the scattered children of God might be gathered into one" (11:52). Rather, John highlights the irony of the high priest's words and that he spoke better than he knew despite his evil intentions (cf. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (PNTC; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991], 421–23). I thank Paul Lamicella

for pointing this out to me. Interestingly, this passage was taken as something of a paradigm for Augustine for seeing multiple meanings in all of Scripture (cf. Cameron, *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis*, 274–76). A similar process may have happened with PE.

62. See Bates, *Birth*, 71–76.
63. See also the arguments for Isa 55:3 referring to David's faithfulness in Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 464–79.
64. Bates addresses this issue in a footnote (Bates, *Birth*, 106n44). He contends that the author of Acts did "not appear to regard Isaiah 49:6 as a dialogue between the Father and the Son." Interestingly, Bates entertains the conclusion discussed above, but does not call it typology. He contends, however, that considering the evidence elsewhere that the early church read the verse as dialogue between divine persons, that such is possible here as well. See Bates, *Birth*, 103, 105–6. Origen, for example, took this as the speech of Christ. See his Commentary on John Book 1.23. This raises the question, however, since Bates sees PE as a viable practice for the church today, how one could adjudicate between conflicting options.
65. On prosopological oscillation, see Bates, *Birth*, 189–90, 201. Bates considers his work to be mostly descriptive but makes an argument in chapter seven of *The Birth of the Trinity* that PE reading, under the conditions he prescribes, is normative.
66. On the extended implications that pertain to the NT use of the OT, see Beale and Carson, *NT Use of the OT*, 23f. Also see Wellum's definition of typology above.
67. In his study, Bates concludes that the earliest Christians understood this Ps 2:7 to reflect a preincarnational begetting: "For most early Christian readers, these two speeches when understood in light of one another would have been taken as referring to conversations after time began about *one and the same act of preincarnational begetting.*" (Bates, *Birth,* 80; emphasis original).Bates, *Birth*, 80. For his interpretation of Psalm 110 see Bates, *Birth*, 46. For Psalm 40:6-8 in Heb 10:5-6 see Bates, *Birth*, 86. For a general summary of other approaches to the use of the OT in Hebrews, see George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews' Use of the Old Testament: Recent Trends in Research," *Currents in Biblical Research* 1, no. 2 (April 2003): 271–94.
68. For evidence of Hebrews as a sermon, see Jonathan Griffiths, *Hebrews and Divine Speech* (Library of New Testament Studies 507; London: Bloomsbury, 2014).
69. Schreiner sees this as a clear allusion to the inheritance of the Davidic son in Ps 2:8. Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 380–81. Cf. also Rom 1:4 and Col 1:15-20. See also Stephen J. Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 183–88. For positions on 1:1-4, see commentary ad loc in William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary 47A (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1991).
70. I am indebted to Stephen Wellum for this insight. For the textual foundation of these verses see Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A Case Study in Early Jewish Bible Interpretation*. Susan Docherty has noted that by placing Psalm 2:7 with other texts in a catena, its meaning is refined and sharpened. She notes the catchword of "son" and the messianic import evidenced in later Judaism. Docherty's points would have been strengthened by emphasizing the covenantal connections between the two texts: 2 Sam 7 grounds the affirmation of Psalm 2 and its ongoing role in the psalter.
71. For PE explanations, see Bates, *Birth*, 80; Madison Pierce, "Hebrews 1 and the Son Begotten 'Today,'" in *Retrieving Eternal Generation* (ed. Fred Sanders and Scott R. Swain; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 117–31.
72. Gentry, "A Preliminary Evaluation," 110–19. For an in-depth treatment of Psalm 110, see Matthew Habib Emadi, "The Royal Priest: Psalm 110 In Biblical-Theological Perspective" (Louisville, KY, PhD Dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016).
73. See Gentry, "A Preliminary Evaluation," 109–10. Writing prophets like Isaiah, Gentry contends, depicted two lines of thought. First, salvation would come through YHWH as Israel's sole ruler (Isa 6, 24:23; 33:22; 41:21, 43:15, 44:6). Secondly, YHWH would act through the Davidic king (cf. Isa 7-11, 49-53). As these two lines develop, however, the distinctions between King YHWH and the Davidic king begin to blur (e.g. the divine names applied to the Davidic king in Isa 9:7). This explains the appellation of divine status to the Davidic king in Psalm 45.
74. Gentry, "A Preliminary Evaluation," 119–20.
75. Cf. Bates, *Birth*, 46. However, I do not believe that eternal generation is in view here.
76. See note above on Origen's sermons.
77. Sequeira, "The Hermeneutics of Eschatological Fulfillment," 163–240.but also develops and clarifies the original meaning in light of progressive biblical-theological development across the canon of Scripture and eschatological fulfillment in Christ. Furthermore, it is argued that an examination of citations and allusions

to the OT illumines the biblical-theological framework and hermeneutical presuppositions guiding the author of Hebrews (his "interpretive perspective"

78. Ibid., 238.but also develops and clarifies the original meaning in light of progressive biblical-theological development across the canon of Scripture and eschatological fulfillment in Christ. Furthermore, it is argued that an examination of citations and allusions to the OT illumines the biblical-theological framework and hermeneutical presuppositions guiding the author of Hebrews (his "interpretive perspective"
79. Ibid., 240. This departs from the core element of PE for Bates: "If not the ancient prophet, then a theodramatic character": Bates, *Birth*, 182, 188. For Bates's theodramatic interpretation, see Bates, *Birth*, 85–87.
80. Sequeira, "The Hermeneutics of Eschatological Fulfillment," 53–56, 99–100, 231n126.but also develops and clarifies the original meaning in light of progressive biblical-theological development across the canon of Scripture and eschatological fulfillment in Christ. Furthermore, it is argued that an examination of citations and allusions to the OT illumines the biblical-theological framework and hermeneutical presuppositions guiding the author of Hebrews (his "interpretive perspective" Also PE in Isa 8:17-18 in Heb 2:13, cf. 156, 160 but again based on typology and biblical theological exegesis.
81. I believe this is so because Sequeira writes of Christ's "speaking" as done *through* his life and work: "David's speech, in its 'theodramatic horizon,' is reflective of a heavenly David—the eternal Son—who ultimately speaks these words in their fullest sense through his life and work" (Sequeira, 240).but also develops and clarifies the original meaning in light of progressive biblical-theological development across the canon of Scripture and eschatological fulfillment in Christ. Furthermore, it is argued that an examination of citations and allusions to the OT illumines the biblical-theological framework and hermeneutical presuppositions guiding the author of Hebrews (his "interpretive perspective"
82. Bates, *Birth*, 153–55.
83. Ibid., 72-74. Though being that Paul addresses the audience as "children of Abraham," it seems likely that the whole of redemptive history, which culminates in the fulfillment of the Davidic promise, is in view.
84. Ibid., 74.n65,76-79. Madison Pierce, for example, argues that an adoptionist christological reading of Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5 fails because the prosopological reading of the author supposes his preexistence in Pierce, "Hebrews 1 and the Son Begotten 'Today.'"
85. See Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate*, 170–74.
86. Cf. the excellent work in Andrew Ter Ern Loke, *The Origin of Divine Christology* (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph 169; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate*, 147–208; Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).
87. "For most early Christian readers, these two speeches when understood in light of one another would have been taken as referring to conversations after time began about *one and the same act of preincarnational begetting.*" Bates, *Birth*, 80. Emphasis original.
88. For typology as a feature of the OT, see Francis Foulkes, "The Acts of God," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?: Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 342–71; Beale, *Handbook*, 13–25, 101; James M. Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 77–94.
89. In *The Birth of the Trinity*, Bates acknowledges that the evidence that OT prophets would have knowingly taken on these characters is slim, given that reading strategies like PE were developed later in a foreign context. Still, Bates appeals to the genuine dialogical shifts in the prophetic writings and contends that the symbolic roleplaying of the biblical prophets (e.g., Isa 20: 1-4; Jer 19. 1-11; Ezek 4: 1-5; Hos l: 2-3) constitute links through the universal categories of speech, dialogue, and performance. However, prophetic roleplaying in the OT differs from the role-playing envisioned by PE in that the roles are marked as symbolic and their significance is explained, which is true of every example he cites. Hosea, for example, is told to take a wife of whoredom because the land has committed whoredom, and each of their children become explicit symbols of God's judgment and restoration (Hos 1-3).
90. Bates, *Birth*, 27–28, 175.
91. Bates, *Birth*, 175. Cf. p. 110: "I have been arguing throughout this book that even when the church was first budding forth, Christians used a solution-by-person reading technique that is in direct continuity with those later Fathers who definitively framed the doctrine of the Trinity—to such a degree that it is not inappropriate to speak of the exercise of this reading strategy by the earliest Christians as necessary for the birth of the Trinity."
92. See Bates, *Birth*, 36–40. Bates acknowledges that there were a complex of terms used to express the personhood and being of God among the early centuries of the church.

93. Ibid., 176.
94. Ibid., 200–201.
95. This, I would contend, fits with Bates's description of the ancient notion of "person" which affirms a person "was capable of exercising personal will, had idiosyncratic affections, and were known as unique, distinct individuals" (Bates, *Birth*, 37). See also Loke, *The Origin of Divine Christology*, 19–20.
96. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 7. Bates has expressed concern that Bauckham's concept of divine identity diminishes "person" language (Bates, *Birth*, 23-26, 203-5). The personhood of Jesus and YHWH are presupposed in Bauckham's arguments, however. Still, including in the "divine identity" may not prove the best term for a wholistic account of the Trinity, it seems an appropriate term for describing the inclusion of the person Jesus in the divine being. See also discussion in Loke, *The Origin of Divine Christology*, 29–30.
97. In my view, this is underscored by early creeds like Nicaea, which do not make use of PE language or texts, at least those of a PE2 type.
98. The rich allusions which precede the cry only strengthen the identification. See the quotation of Ps 22:1 in Matt 27:46 and Mark 43:51 as well as the allusions to Ps 22:18 in Matt 27:35 and Mark 15:24; Ps 22:7 in Matt 27:39 and Mark 15:29; Ps 22:8 in Matt 27:43.
99. For an excellent summary of how redemptive history informs the work and person of Christ, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 768–82.
100. As I have noted above, some advocates of PE in the NT, like Bates, may object to Augustine's assignment of three voices to the same speech (see Bates, *Birth,* 189-90, 201). However, the principles I illustrate here apply to those texts where only one prosopon is assigned.
101. See this trajectory in the latter prophets in Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles*, 133–49.
102. The inclusion King Saul between Samuel and David emphasizes that God sought an obedient king. Paul draws out this line of God-appointed leaders to move from David to Jesus, both the physical heir according to God's promise (13:23) and as a spiritual heir: one who pleased God. The focus on Saul in this section likely functions more as a foil for David than a counterpoint with the redeemed Saul of Tarsus. See Keener, *Acts*, 2013, 2:2061; Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 5 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 576–77; Contra Blaire A French, "The Completion of King Saul in Acts," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 40, no. 4 (2018): 424–33. Blair's argument that Luke saw in Saul of Tarsus a comparison with King Saul is interesting, but the evidence is too thin to be convincing.

A Way-Station to Egalitarianism: A Review Essay of Aimee Byrd's *Recovering from Biblical Manhood & Womanhood*

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Evangelicals have been debating manhood and womanhood for decades, and the conflict shows no signs of subsiding. No little bit of ink is spilled every year by both sides, and many works have trouble getting through all the noise. Such is not the case with Aimee Byrd's new book *Recovering from Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: How the Church Needs to Rediscover Her Purpose* (Zondervan, 2020). The provocative title riffs off the name of the seminal complementarian work *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood*, edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Crossway, 1991). Byrd takes direct aim at what she believes to be the deficiencies of complementarianism as expounded by its chief proponents, especially the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW).

Summary

Byrd's Introduction presents the defining metaphor of the book—yellow wallpaper—which comes from a feminist novel authored by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (15). In the novel, Gilman describes a woman who loses her sanity in a room covered in yellow wallpaper. The main character begins to feel that there is a woman trapped behind the yellow wallpaper trying to tear her way out. The yellow wallpaper serves as a metaphor for patriarchal oppression from which women must free themselves. Byrd uses this metaphor to describe how women in evangelical churches are trapped behind patriarchal oppression in the form of "current teaching on so-called 'biblical manhood and womanhood'" (19). For example, she cites John Piper's definition of masculinity and femininity and contends that it focuses too much on authority and submission. She claims that Piper's complementarianism means that all women must submit to all men (22). Instead of authoritative male headship, Byrd wishes to emphasize "reciprocity" between male and female voices in scripture and between men and women in the church (25). She also wishes to "peel and reveal" the yellow wallpaper that keeps this reciprocity from being realized.

After the introduction, Byrd's book unfolds in three parts. Part 1, "Recovering the Way We Read Scripture," argues for new ways of reading Scripture to "reveal the reciprocity of both men's and women's voices that are coactive in teaching one another through God's Word" (26). She decries approaches to scripture which focus on female "weakness and victimhood" but which emphasize male "leadership and agency" (39). Relying heavily on Richard Bauckham's work,[1] Byrd argues that Scripture is filled with "gynocentric" interruptions of the "male-focused" material in the Bible (43). She argues that the book of Ruth, for example, is a gynocentric interruption that "demolishes the lens of biblical manhood and womanhood that has been imposed on our Bible reading" (49). Ruth after all is a woman who teaches Boaz, thereby establishing a model for all women (57). Indeed, women like Ruth, Rahab, and Huldah act as "tradents" who grant authoritative status to the canon of scripture (64, 67). Byrd even speculates that "Mary must have been a valuable resource for Luke when writing his gospel" (90). Byrd argues that in our churches today, these kinds of "gynocentric interruptions shouldn't just be permitted; they should be promoted" (70).

Part 2, "Recovering Our Mission," makes the case that parachurch ministries teaching biblical manhood and womanhood have gotten the church off its mission. This middle portion of the book focuses heavy criticism of CBMW and various personalities associated with it.[2] She argues that CBMW's complementarianism is premised on an unorthodox view of the Trinity. That trinitarian error then becomes the basis for errors about manhood and womanhood (100-101). Highlighting a handful of sentences in an appendix, Byrd argues that the foundational complementarian book—*Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*[3]—also rests on an unorthodox view of the Trinity (103). All of this fuels her impression that "organizations such as CBMW have reduced that distinction [between men and women] to an unbiblical principle—one of ontological authority and submission" (102-103). She condemns Wayne Grudem and other CBMW writers as teaching "unorthodox doctrine" (103). Her impression is that the complementarianism teaches that "the sole distinction between the sexes from the creation account [consists] in male/authority and female/submission" (116). The example of Phoebe—whom Paul appointed as a leader in the church at Rome—shows us that this paradigm is mistaken (148). Women must also be trained and prepared to teach and should not be inhibited by unbiblical notions of male headship. Evangelical parachurch organizations often foster these false teachings and seek to displace the church as the primary matrix for discipleship (157). Byrd complains that these "Complementarian parachurch organizations promote a male culture that prohibits reciprocity" (163). Byrd even rejects *The Nashville Statement*[4] in part because she views it as a "rebranding" of CBMW's "ontological authority/subordination teaching" (172-73).

Part 3, "Recovering the Responsibility of Every Believer," explains how both men and women should be carrying out their ministries in the church. Byrd argues that the word *helper* in Genesis 2 does not make women into "subordinate assistants" to men in the church but "necessary allies" in the ministry of the word (189). Thus, she complains that "many churches limit, in ways they do not limit for laymen, the capacity for laywomen to learn deeply and to teach" (188). She suggests that laywomen should be serving in the same capacity as laymen when it comes to the teaching ministry of the church (188). Rightly understood, Paul's command for women to keep quiet in the churches (1 Cor 14:34-35) does not prohibit women from this kind of teaching ministry over men (193-200). Byrd argues, "We need to

be careful not to make a corrective response to a specific situation a blanket theological position about gender" (195).

Evaluation

Byrd's views at first blush appear to be a classic narrow complementarian perspective—a male-only eldership with husband as "head" of the home.[5] In other words, her view sounds a little bit like Kathy Keller's view—that a woman can do whatever an unordained man can do in ministry.[6] But when you press into the details of Byrd's argument, it looks like she may be going further than that.

For example, when defining "headship," Byrd relies on a feminist scholar named Sarah Coakley to deny that "headship" involves any authority on a husband's part. Headship is a "bottom-up" rather than a "top-down" structure (107). Byrd uses the word "headship" (like other narrow complementarians) but she fills it with Sarah Coakley's meaning. The result: Rhetorically, Byrd sounds like a narrow complementarian. Substantively, she embraces a feminist definition of "headship." If Byrd embraces Coakley's definition of "headship," then Byrd isn't even a narrow complementarian. All complementarians believe that headship denotes authority, but Byrd does not embrace this truth.

Byrd's use of sources in general is troubling. For example, Byrd recommends the website IntersexAndFaith.org to readers as a resource for understanding intersex (123). That site was founded by Megan DeFranza, who is an LGBT-affirming feminist. DeFranza's book on intersex is also an LGBT-affirming book.[7] Byrd also quotes Virginia Woolf to refute complementarianism (170). As many readers know, Woolf was a lesbian novelist from the United Kingdom and a patron saint of feminists and lesbians everywhere. And Byrd is quoting Woolf to refute the teaching of the Danvers Statement. Why is Byrd appealing to feminist and pro-LGBT writers to interrogate complementarianism? Byrd is quick to denounce certain complementarians as outside the bounds of orthodoxy, but she offers no similar warnings about her feminist and pro-LGBT sources. Why is that?

It is not encouraging that Byrd stridently opposes *The Nashville Statement* (170) while commending "intimate but non-erotic" relationships as "a great hope for those who suffer with same-sex attraction" (172). This is a position

endorsed by the Revoice conference and writers at the Spiritual Friendship website[8] and which was roundly rejected by the PCA's study committee on human sexuality: "We do not support the formation of exclusive, contractual marriage-like friendships, nor do we support same-sex romantic behavior."[9] Instead of warning against these "marriage-like" same-sex friendships, Byrd commends them.

In addition to this, Byrd advances her view by relying on those who work from egalitarian or feminist frameworks: Charlotte Perkins Gilman (13), Richard Bauckham (43), Christa McKirland (45), Carolyn Custis James (53), Tikva Frymer-Kensky (79), Sarah Coakley (107), Phillip Payne (116), Kevin Giles (119-20), Lynn Cohick (146), Michael Bird (147), Ben Witherington (195), and Cynthia Westfall (198). To be clear, she's not arguing against these authors or engaging them critically. She's agreeing with these authors on a variety of matters. Indeed, the controlling metaphor of the book—the yellow wallpaper—comes from a feminist novel and represents patriarchal oppression, which Byrd claims is rife in complementarian churches. It's not wrong to quote egalitarians, but when she does she often embraces their arguments. Taken as a whole, her book shows no interest in really learning from complementarians even though she acts like she's occupying the middle of the road. Byrd is very clear that she does not wish to be known as a complementarian at all. She writes, "I cannot call myself a complementarian" (121).

Byrd makes a number of claims that can only be compatible with an egalitarian view. She says that in the Bible women served as "leaders of house churches" (190). She claims that Acts 16 depicts Lydia as a church planter alongside Paul. Lydia's responsibilities included "caring for the church" and even "to lead the church" until elders were put into place (192). Relying heavily on egalitarian scholars Lynn Cohick, Philip Payne, and Michael Bird, Byrd claims that Phoebe (Rom. 16:2) held "two leadership positions" (146). First, Phoebe was a *deacon* whom Paul had invested with his own authority to *teach* Paul's letter to the church in Rome (147). Second, Paul describes Phoebe as a leader who held a "position of authority" *vis-à-vis* the church of Rome (148). Byrd apparently views these women to be functioning as laywomen (151), but these women nevertheless teach and exercise authority in a way that is indistinguishable from elders. Perhaps most disturbing is the fact that Byrd identifies Junia (Rom 16:7) as a female apostle alongside the

apostle Paul and James the leader of the church in Jerusalem (224). Byrd contends that Junia's apostleship should be understood in the traditional way—an office held by one who was an eyewitness to Jesus and who had received a direct commission from him (224). All of these claims have been thoroughly debunked by complementarian scholars, and I'm not going to rehash that here. I'm simply pointing out that Byrd is citing egalitarian scholarship and is embracing their conclusions.

Byrd chafes against limitations on women teaching men. She accepts a male-only eldership but otherwise embraces women teaching men and exercising authority over them. She writes:

> "Laywomen … Like their brothers in the faith, they too are encouraged to seek the greater gifts and to mature in their knowledge of the faith so they can teach others. There's no qualifier in these verses, saying that men are not to learn from women or that women are only to teach their own sex and children. *Any divinely ordained differences that men and women have do not prohibit women from teaching. It would be disobedient to Scripture to withhold women from teaching*" (174, emphasis mine).

Byrd accuses broad complementarians of being "disobedient" to scripture in prohibiting women from teaching men. Yet she herself does not explain key biblical texts that say women shouldn't teach men (e.g., 1 Tim 2:12). You can't write a book arguing that women *can* teach men and then not deal with the key biblical text that says women *shouldn't* teach men. Kathy Keller takes a narrow complementarian view, but she at least does her readers the favor of explaining her interpretation of 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Corinthians 11. Byrd doesn't do that work. I am surprised that the publisher let that pass.

Byrd claims to be concerned mainly about lay ministry, but she believes that lay women ought to teach and admonish the elders of the church and that there is something wrong with churches where this isn't happening (228-29). Byrd shows no concern for submission to male headship because for her submission does not mean deference to authority but ranking someone else as more important than oneself (230). Byrd contends that women should not be made to feel "suspect" when they correct church members (including elders), nor should they be "viewed as trying to usurp authority from men" (230). Byrd's view may not allow women to hold the office of elder, but it certainly encourages women to behave like they do.

Byrd invests a great deal of energy in relitigating the 2016 Trinity debate and in debunking a view often referred to as "the eternal subordination of the Son" (ESS). She is apparently under the impression that if ESS is false, then so is complementarianism. To that end, Byrd makes a variety of misleading declarations about CBMW. For example, Byrd claims to have "found a CBMW document from 2001 on their position on the Trinity, connecting ESS directly to the complementarian position" (100). She claims that it is an "official statement" by CBMW endorsing ESS (121). That is false. The document in question is an old article published in *The Journal for Biblical Manhood & Womanhood.* But this article does not represent CBMW's position on the matter.

The Council has never approved any official statement endorsing ESS. Byrd's case against CBMW relies on there having been some official endorsement of ESS at CBMW, but that has never happened.[10] Many of the council members have *never* held to any version of ESS (however it is defined) and would resist any implication that they have. But Byrd misrepresents this. The only official statement that I am aware of is one that the CBMW board adopted in the wake of the Trinity debate in 2017, in which the board voted to affirm the Nicene Creed as defining its position on the Trinity.[11]

In any case, Byrd's argument falls flat because complementarianism neither stands nor falls on speculative parallels with the Trinity. Complementarians (and egalitarians for the record) have drawn such analogies over the years, but that has never been an essential ingredient of complementarianism. Readers should take a look at the *The Danvers Statement* and note that it doesn't mention the Trinity at all.[12] That is not to say that the Trinity is unimportant. There are lots of important doctrines not mentioned in Danvers. It is simply saying that analogies to the Trinity are not the emphasis of what the Bible teaches about gender and sexuality. If everyone who holds an ESS position were to cease holding that position today, the biblical case for complementarianism wouldn't be diminished at all. For Byrd to think that she has somehow weakened the complementarian case by opposing ESS is mistaken.[13]

But perhaps the most important aspect of Byrd's book is how it fits into the broader conversation among evangelicals about complementarianism. What is Byrd doing in the bigger picture? She's providing one possible doorway for a generation of complementarians to exit complementarianism. These are

people who, on the one hand, read their Bibles and recognize that it makes *some* distinction between the roles given to men and women—so they can't go *all* the way to egalitarianism. But, on the other hand, they don't like what they see in certain versions of complementarianism. A slightly more cynical take is that they're more shaped by our culture's androgyny and sharp disdain of any distinctions between men and women than they realize, even as they ironically accuse complementarianism again and again of doing this.

But never mind the more charitable or cynical take. Either way, there's a generation looking for a doorway, and Byrd provides it. Which means, she doesn't really need to make good arguments. She doesn't need to do careful exegesis. She can invoke whatever sources she wants. Why? Because she's got a pre-made audience. This audience is ready to jump and is just looking for a reasonably intelligent pretext for doing so.

It's often this way in popular Christian books. They tap into something people are already feeling. This was true of Rob Bell's material. It was true of Donald Miller's *Blue Like Jazz*. To be sure, both writers are extremely gifted. But many gifted writers never get noticed. Which ones do? The ones that articulate what people are already feeling, so that they can identify with it.

I don't know how popular Byrd's book will prove to be, but she's sharp, and she's tapping into something. Yet here's the catch. The bad arguments, even when brilliantly presented and popular in their moment, don't last. Where are Rob Bell and Donald Miller today? And their arguments? The world has moved on, and the only thing left behind are a vast number of sheep who were led astray a decade ago. Who knows how those sheep are faring in the faith today?

I predict arguments like Byrd's will prove over time to be a briefly held way-station on the movement from narrow complementarianism to egalitarianism. Readers who do not wish to take that journey should be cautious about Byrd's book.

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1. Richard Bauckham, *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002).
2. Full disclosure, I currently serve as the President of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW).
3. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991).

4. *The Nashville Statement* can be read here: https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement/.
5. In this essay, I refer to two different "camps" within the complementarianism—narrow and broad. Narrow complementarians believe that our application of complementarian principles should be limited to the church and the home. Pastors should be men, and husbands should lead their homes. Broad complementarians have argued that the Bible teaches us a much broader application of complementarian principles—broader application in the church and the home and broader application in society at large. Kevin DeYoung has written to me privately confirming that he is the one to have coined this terminology at a private speakers' meeting for Together for the Gospel a few years ago. As best as he and I can tell, the first print reference to the terminology appears in Jonathan Leeman, "A Word of Empathy, Warning, and Counsel for 'Narrow' Complementarians," *9Marks Journal*, February 8, 2018, https://www.9marks.org/article/a-word-of-empathy-warning-and-counsel-for-narrow-complementarians/.
6. Kathy Keller, *Jesus, Justice, & Gender Roles: A Case for Gender Roles in Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 21.
7. Megan K. DeFranza, *Sex Difference in Christian Theology: Male, Female, and Intersex in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015).
8. E.g., Wesley Hill, *Spiritual Friendship: Finding Love in the Church as a Celibate Gay Christian* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2015).
9. Bryan Chapell et al., "Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Human Sexuality to the Forty-Eight General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America" (Presbyterian Church in America, 2020), 12.
10. The view sometimes labelled as ESS does not really appear in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood*, except perhaps in an appendix that Wayne Grudem wrote on the Greek term *kephalē*. I say "perhaps" because what Byrd describes as ESS is not what appears in that appendix. Byrd describes ESS this way: "This doctrine teaches that the Son, the second person of the Trinity, is subordinate to the Father, not only in the economy of salvation but in his essence" (101). But this is not at all what appears in Grudem's appendix. Grudem writes that "the doctrine of the 'eternal generation of the Son' has been taken to imply a *relationship* between the Father and the Son that *eternally* existed and that will always exist—a relationship that includes a subordination in role, but not in essence or being... The orthodox doctrine has always been that there is *equality in essence and subordination in role* and that these two are consistent with each other." See Wayne Grudem, "The Meaning of *kephalē* ('Head'): A Response to Recent Studies," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), 457. To describe Grudem's position as an outright denial of the Son's equality with the Father would be a mischaracterization. Even in disagreement, charity requires describing an opponent's position in terms that they would recognize. I think Byrd has failed at this in describing her opponents' views on ESS.

    No matter how one interprets Grudem's appendix, this still doesn't constitute an official endorsement of ESS on the part of CBMW. As the preface to *RBMW* states: "We must say here that the positions advocated in the chapters are those of the individual authors. Yet the authors share a common commitment to the overall viewpoint represented in the book, and in every case the editors felt that the chapters were consistent with the position endorsed by the Danvers Statement." See John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), xv. The doctrinal unity of *RBMW* is the Danvers Statement, not any individual interpretation or position advocated in *RBMW*.
11. That statement can be read here: https://cbmw.org/about/statement-of-faith/.
12. *The Danvers Statement* can be viewed on the CBMW website: http://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement/.
13. For more along these lines, see Denny Burk, "Mere Complementarianism," *Eikon* 1, no. 2 (2019): 28–42; Denny Burk, "My Take-Away's from the Trinity Debate," *Denny Burk: A Commentary on Theology, Politics, and Culture* (blog), August 10, 2016, https://www.dennyburk.com/my-take-aways-from-the-trinity-debate/.

Book Reviews

Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar. 2nd Ed. By Page H. Kelley and Timothy G. Crawford. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2018, 460 pp., $40.00 paper.

A Handbook to Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar. 2nd Ed. By Page H. Kelley, Terry L. Burden, and Timothy G. Crawford. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2018, 249 pp., $28.00 paper.

The first edition of Kelley's *Biblical Hebrew* has been widely acknowledged as a classic grammar. It was designed to be simple and straightforward for students learning in a classroom setting. This edition and the accompanying handbook were the subject of several reviews when they were first printed. For example, the most detailed reviews are by Walter E. Brown, "Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar," *The Theological Educator* 54 (1996): 139-42, and Robert C. Stallman, "Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar," *Westminster Theological Journal* 56:1 (1994): 190-92. In addition, one may consult Ehud Ben Zvi, "Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar," *Hebrew Studies* 36 (1995): 126-28, and Robert P. Betts, "Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar," *The Reformed Theological Review* 52:1 (1993): 40-41. In light of the number of reviews for the first edition, this review will focus strictly upon the changes in the second edition. As Timothy Crawford notes in his preface, "there are changes on virtually every page … in a few places these are fairly significant" (xiii). The goal of the second edition was to keep Kelley's approach while updating some of the terms and clarifying ambiguities that were pointed out by instructors using the textbook in their classes.

In terms of layout and style, the second edition is much simpler than the first. The section numbering is much more logical. The first edition started each major section with a new number and continued that numbering throughout the book. This meant that the numbering did not follow the chapters (e.g., the first section of Lesson III was labeled section 4 and the last section of Lesson III was section 7). This edition enumerates each section in

the outer margin with the standard convention of chapter and section (e.g., Lesson 3 starts with 3.1 and the last section of Lesson 3 is 3.4). In addition, when students are asked to work with the Hebrew Bible, it is reproduced in the textbook every time whereas the first edition required students to use their BHS (29–30). Another stylistic change in the second edition is the use of gray boxes that define common terms. For example, masculine singular being represented by "ms" is defined in the new edition whereas the previous edition used the shorthand but never actually explained it (59, 76).

The simplified approach that was championed by Kelley has been taken further by Crawford's edition in the preference of simple terminology. Instead of "preformatives" and "afformatives," Crawford uses "prefixes" and "endings." This makes the text more readable, but, unfortunately, the more formal terms are not mentioned anywhere. It would be helpful if there was a footnote or even a paragraph in one of the early chapters explaining the alternative terminology but using the simpler terms makes the text much clearer. The transliterations of the letters and vowels have also been greatly simplified. So the vowel written *pătăh* in the first edition is now *patah* and *hŏlĕm* is *holem* in the second edition. The simplified spelling reduces the linguistic jargon and makes the language seem much more accessible to a beginner student.

In a number of chapters, a do-it-yourself section was added in the midst of the lesson. A paradigm is given with one verb, for example the Qal perfect of *šmr* (107). Then the root letters of another verb are placed just after it in a paradigm grid pattern, in this case *ktb* (108). Under this table of verb roots are step by step instructions on how to add the endings and the vowels for each person, gender, and number of the paradigm that was just presented. The intention is that the student will fill in the second paradigm, *ktb*, to match the paradigm that was just presented, *šmr*, by using the step by step instructions. This system of practicing during the lesson and not just in the exercises listed at the end is interesting. The strong verb Qal perfect and imperfect (108, 161) and the imperfects of the derived stems (174, 177, 179, 180, 182, 185) all contain this do-it-yourself section in the middle of the lessons but curiously the perfect paradigms of the derived stems do not have this section.

Another helpful feature that has been added to this edition is a synopsis of the stem patterns. For the perfect, imperfect, imperatives, and participles, Crawford added a table at the end of each chapter (148, 186, 221, 255). The table lists the preformative and standard vowel pattern of each stem. The

negative part of the table is that it does not use the terms of the stems but rather their meaning. So the columns are titled "simple," "intensive," and "causative," while the rows are "active," "passive," and "reflexive." The verb pattern with a prefixed nun, *hireq* under the preformative, *sheva* under the first root radical, and *patah* under the second radical is in the column "simple" and the row "passive" but the title *Nif'al* is not used in the table. Since the stems are not always consistent in their meaning (e.g., *Nif'al* is not always passive) it would be helpful to include the name of the stem as well as the sense that it conveys.

The last point about the second edition of the textbook is a piece that was not changed. The first edition used the traditional *Pe*, *'Ayin*, *Lamed* designations for the weak verbs. Crawford pointed to the newer system of I, II, III weak verbs but maintained the older system (105). His statement in the introduction to the weak verb classifications was that older books will use the traditional system. This is true, but the traditional system has fallen out of favor with almost every grammar and scholarly publication. It would seem beneficial to point out the traditional system and utilize the modern system so that students are more comfortable with terms they will undoubtedly encounter in current literature.

The handbook was released as a second edition by Crawford at the same time as the textbook. For the most part it is identical with the first edition. The major changes are: first, an updated bibliography under "Sources for Further Study," and, second, the removal of the "Accent Tables for *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*" section. The first part is definitely a positive feature as it brings in works that have been published in the last decade. However, the accent table is an unfortunate loss. The textbook does not deal with accents in depth and so the student does not get any introduction to minor accents or poetic accents (major accents are addressed on pages 22-5 in the textbook).

Overall the book is a helpful update to the first edition. The major changes, and even the minor ones, all help to clarify and simply the content. Kelley's approach to the grammar was to use simple language, be as comprehensive as possible, and use a wide range of biblically based examples and exercises (xv). Crawford took the simplicity one step further without sacrificing the essential content of the first edition.

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Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary by Conceptual Categories: A Student's Guide to Nouns in the Old Testament. By J. David Pleins with Jonathan Homrighausen. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017, 176 pp., $21.99 paper.

J. David Pleins is professor of Religious Studies at Santa Clara University and Jonathan Homrighausen is an MA student in Biblical Studies at the Graduate Theological Union. Their goal for *Biblical Hebrew by Conceptual Categories* is to help Hebrew students read the OT more fluidly by building vocabulary in a natural way (16). Instead of rote memorization by frequency of occurrence, this book presents words in logical categories so that memorizing follows the natural organization of thought.

The book deals only with nouns and divides them into four main categories: created order, human order, social order, and constructed order. These sections are further subdivided into narrower categories and then the words are listed by a specific concept (e.g., leg, foot, footwear, altars). The primary glosses were provided by Pleins with the help of older lexicons like Gesenius and Brown, Driver, Briggs. Many of the entries also contain more technical glosses after the primary one, along with the work that provided the more technical gloss (17).

Though frequency of occurrence in the Hebrew Bible is not part of the organization of the book, hapax legomena are marked with an H and words occurring less than ten times are also indicated with an R for rare. Since Pleins and Homrighausen limit the entries to nouns, many of them occur less than ten times. Each of the entries also contains a Scripture reference to provide a sense of the usage in context.

Pleins and Homrighausen include two appendices at the end. The first appendix is an annotated bibliography. The references are listed according to the logical subcategories used in the main section of the book. This appendix is brief but points the reader to deeper studies in specific areas like works dealing strictly with Hebrew terms for color or music.

The second appendix is a list of "cluster verses." These are passages that use multiple terms within the same category (e.g., Exodus 15:8 uses four words under the category of water: water, floods, depths, sea). The authors believe that these aid in memorization because the words are put into context and memorizing multiple terms within the same passage highlights the distinct nuance of each one (148).

The book also contains two indices. The first index lists all the Hebrew nouns in alphabetical order so that the reader can find the definition and category of a specific term for which they might be searching. The second lists the biblical citations used in the book.

Biblical Hebrew by Conceptual Categories pushes Biblical Hebrew vocabulary building in a relatively new direction in terms of methodology. Instead of focusing upon rote memorization and word frequency, the focus is upon learning a language in the most natural and logical way possible. The sections are short enough to allow for memorization of the entire list in one sitting (most subsections contain around ten terms). This is in sharp contrast to frequency-based vocabularies where the first ten terms in a section might not even cover all the terms that start with *aleph*.

In addition to the overall design of the book, the two appendices are incredibly informative and especially the second one. Learning vocabulary in context is helpful and identifying verses with clusters of related or synonymous words solidifies the unique nuances of each term in relation to the others. This again is a unique feature for a Hebrew vocabulary builder and makes the memorization more natural. Instead of just focusing on the list of words, students can memorize them within sentences like students of a modern language would.

However, the cluster verse appendix could be more helpful if the authors defined which terms were in each verse. The verses are listed under the logical category, but it is unclear which terms or how many of them appear in the passages listed. If a student wanted to memorize the most vocabulary in the least amount of time, it would be helpful to know which verses had the most vocabulary with the least amount of lexical overlap. If the terms used in each passage were listed, the student would not spend time looking up multiple cluster verses that contain the same or similar word clusters.

The annotated bibliography guides readers to deeper studies, but it is limited. The citations are only English sources and many of the entries state that English-language works are minimal or nonexistent (144). The book is intended as a student guide but limiting the bibliography to only English-language resources seems overly simplified. Though an exhaustive listed of works on specific nouns or noun categories would be beyond the scope of a vocabulary builder, significant works in other languages could be helpful for students doing research later in their academic career.

Another drawback of the text is the focus on nouns alone. Though nouns are easier to categorize conceptually and the limitation makes the book a more manageable size, verbs are some of the most frequently used words. The authors discussed the possibility of creating a verb vocabulary builder using conceptual categories in the future (19). However, Hebrew students still need to learn verbs through rote memorization at this time which challenges the goal of fluid reading as stated by the authors (16).

Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary by Conceptual Categories is a very useful resource. It would be helpful as a supplement to standard grammars and vocabulary builders. Even a first semester Hebrew student would benefit from the arrangement of terms by concepts because the list of terms flows naturally rather than being a list of frequently occurring but completely unrelated words. The appendices and indices would also be useful for Hebrew students as they facilitate deeper study in specific areas and allow students to find entries within the book quickly.

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The Biblical Hebrew Companion for Bible Software Users. By Michael Williams. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015, 140 pp., $18.99.

Michael Williams's volume is deceptively small. The 140 pages are packed with Hebrew language information. The aim of the book is to help someone with limited knowledge of Hebrew understand the parsing information of their Bible software. Williams goes beyond simply defining linguistic jargon and even attempts to show the exegetical insights that come along with the proper parsing of the terms.

The layout of the book is simple and reminiscent of an owner's manual. Each term is defined, described, and applied on two facing pages. So, for example, "apocopated" is defined as a shortened form and compared graphically with the long form (16). Then the usage is explained (jussive or waw consecutive) and the facing page has the exegetical insight that the apocopated form in Genesis 1:3 makes the phrase "let there be light" rather than "there will be light" if it was the long form (17). This middle ground between

an almost dictionary type entry and translation guide makes the volume appealing to a broad number of readers.

The appendices discuss consonants, vowels, accents, and syllables for the most basic students. This is in line with the goal of reaching even those without any Hebrew background. So also, the indexing of terms by English alphabetical order rather than grammatical function as most standard grammars would.

The goal of being accessible to people with a background in Hebrew and also those with no background whatsoever is the primary weakness of the book. The broad overview of forms finds a clear audience in current or former students of Hebrew who have forgotten some of the basic material. It is a helpful refresher that is easier to skim through than a full grammar, especially when there is only one questionable term in the software parsing. The example of jargon given by Williams is "an apocopated Hiphil Imperfect with a Waw Consecutive" but this form might still be challenging to a completely uninitiated reader even after using the book (5). Someone who has studied Hebrew previously might understand most of the phrase except one or two parts. A reader who has no background in Hebrew may have to look up every word in the phrase. After reading four different entries, they must piece it all together which would be quite difficult to do. Unlike a standard grammar these entries do not build upon each other, so the reader never gets a sense of the total parsing in a coherent whole.

The second weakness is the exegetical insight. Williams includes an insight in every entry, but some are more solid than others. For example, the entry on the perfect verb (88-9). The exegetical insight is from Genesis 22:2 with Abraham's son "whom you love." The emphasis is on the second person perfect verb. Since love refers to mental activity or disposition, the perfect does not strictly indicate past tense (89). Since this type of verb does not indicate time, Williams concludes with the encouragement to ponder God's timeless love in sacrificing Jesus, the son whom he loves/loved/has loved (89). This is undoubtedly an encouraging thought, but it strays far from the syntactical significance of the perfect. On the other hand, the entry on apocopated forms cited above has a very clear exegetical insight. The use of this form in Genesis 1:3 is important for understanding the verse and the description of God's act of creation (the volitional sense of the jussive is a very different statement from the factual statement of the imperfect).

For someone with a background in Hebrew, even a limited one, this text is unparalleled in its usefulness. Instead of digging through a large grammar, a quick glance through the handbook can help recall grammatical terms that might have been forgotten. Though the exegetical insights should be used with caution, the definitions of terms and usage of forms can provide quick insights when trying to understand the parsing provided by any Bible software that one might use.

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Textual Criticism of the Bible, Revised Edition. Lexham Methods Series. By Amy Anderson and Wendy Widder. Edited by Douglas Mangum. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018, 187 pp, $24.99. soft cover.

All students of the Bible and many longtime church members wrestle with the problem of textual variants. Whether this comes through direct study of ancient languages and papyri, deciding on a preferred English translation, or even the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls as they continue to be circulated through special exhibitions in museums around the world. In *Textual Criticism of the Bible*, Anderson and Widder define the term textual criticism as well as provide a broad overview of the field and examples of how to implement the text critical methods in any text that one may encounter. The book is intended to be introductory, and the audience is somewhere between layperson and scholar. Based upon the level of material and presentation, this is perhaps best viewed as a textbook for an introduction to textual criticism course in a college setting.

The book is laid out in a logical organization structure: introduction, overview of the field, OT textual criticism, NT textual criticism, and finally where that leaves the Bible today. The introduction primarily delineates what does not qualify as a text critical issue (translations, translation techniques, and conceptually ambiguous passages). The definition of textual criticism then provided by Anderson and Widder is: "analyzing the manuscript evidence in order to determine the oldest form of the text" (6). The chapter ends with an annotated bibliography which provides resources to address

topics that have been discussed in the chapter at a deeper level. An annotated bibliography is provided at the end of each chapter and gives an evaluation of some of the standard works in the field.

Anderson and Widder move into the importance of textual criticism in the second chapter. The main thread of the argument is transmission history. This is undoubtedly a sensitive area, especially in a book geared toward people who believe in the Bible rather than just study it. The crux of the argument for why textual criticism is important is, "the work of textual critics enables us to know with confidence what God has said through the human authors" (12). Biblical understanding resting in the hands of scholars, who may or may not hold Christian convictions, is a troubling thought for most religiously conservative students and laypeople. However, this statement is soon undermined by the statement that over 90% of the OT has no significant variation and even those variants do not affect doctrine or theology (12). Then later in the chapter, Anderson and Widder claim the plethora of early NT texts allows for a reconstruction of the Augsgangstext (40). Following from this description of the available variants texts is a list of transmission changes (intentional and unintentional) with examples from both the OT and NT for each one.

Chapters three and four are the main body of the book and they detail the OT and NT textual criticism methods as well as the history of the field of textual criticism itself. The first part of each chapter stretches from the earliest writers on textual variants to the modern critics. The inclusion of early writers' awareness of textual variants, like Origen or the Masoretic scribes, makes the critical method appear more legitimate than reciting only the modern scholarship that uses explicitly textual critical terminology. However, the challenge of appealing both to scholarship and to introductory students becomes apparent in some of the historical narrative. While certain terms including Origen, Masoretes, and Masoretic Text are written in bold text to indicate that they are defined in a glossary in the back, other items that are more technical are not. For example, Family 1 is mentioned on page 117 during the discussion of the history of the textual traditions of the NT but it is not emboldened nor is it defined until page 137 in the section on document types.

After the discussion of significant figures and movements in the history of textual criticism, the chapters move into discussions of textual witnesses. First, with ancient texts and fragments and then to the modern critical

editions. Not only are the ancient texts listed and described but the sigla used to identify them in the critical editions are presented in tables (15, 58, 135). The critical editions are also compared with each other and their significance in the history of textual criticism. The goal of the *Lexham Methods Series* is to provide a neutral overview and the discussion of the critical editions show this neutrality on the part of the authors as they describe the dissenters from the standard editions, BHS and NA28 or UBS5, while also acknowledging that they are recognized as the most useful editions by the large majority of scholars (67-9, 144-7).

The last section of the two chapters are the most useful if it is viewed as a textbook. Each section gives five step by step examples of how to do textual criticism using a Biblical text and the critical editions described earlier. The examples become progressively more difficult to the point that the final example in each one is left inconclusive and the authors admit that current scholarship has been unable to reach a consensus because of the difficulty of the texts (109, 174). Though the authors claim that readers can do textual criticism with little to no knowledge of the original languages by using an English translation and reading the footnotes, the examples rely heavily upon the Greek and Hebrew as well as at least one critical edition if not more (91, 149). The heuristic value of the step by step process is only seen with a basic knowledge of Greek and Hebrew so the intended audience should be a college or seminary level Bible student rather than a layperson.

The final chapter is about the effect of textual criticism on the Bible today. The first part of this is an overview of seven popular English translations and their textual critical approaches. The second half is a defense of inerrancy and inspiration. However, this section is very short, two pages, and seems to raise the question only to give a brief and, honestly, unsatisfying answer. The final answer given by Anderson and Widder is that the variants do not affect doctrinal issues and textual criticism is another example of God using people to preserve his Word (184). Undoubtedly this type of question has been in the minds of readers throughout the book, but a cursory treatment of a deep theological dilemma seems to only validate the perceived problem. An lack of treatment leaves the reader with more questions than even omitting the topic entirely.

Overall, the book would be very helpful as an introduction to the field. Many Bible students would benefit from the broad overview of the field and especially the difference between OT and NT techniques. However,

even beyond the main work, the step by step examples and the annotated bibliographies are a great resource to get beyond an introductory level of understanding as well.

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Literary Approaches to the Bible. Lexham Methods Series. Edited by Douglas Mangum and Douglas Estes. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017, 273 pp, $27.99. paper.

In this volume of the Lexham Methods Series, a number of critical literary theories are discussed. As Douglas Estes describes in his introduction, there has recently been a sea change in biblical studies from a historical-critical method to a literary-critical method (1). The authors of this volume attempt to tackle the major movements in literary criticism: canonical criticism, OT rhetorical and narrative criticism, inner-biblical interpretation and intertextuality, narrative criticism of the NT, rhetorical criticism of the NT, structural and post-structural criticism. Each chapter outlines the major works and authors that contributed significantly to the development of the method as well as outlining the overarching goal of the method. They also provide sections on the advantages and limitations of each method and the relationship of the approach to other biblical critical approaches. At the end of each chapter, the authors provide annotated bibliographies for further study.

The largest shortcoming in this work is the chapter on OT rhetorical and narrative criticism. Space allocation is always a challenge, but it is curious that the authors present one chapter on narrative criticism and a separate chapter on rhetorical criticism for the NT while the OT has only one covering both topics. Admittedly, the methods overlap significantly but rhetorical criticism is primarily done in the prophets and poetry while narrative criticism is done in the narrative sections of the OT which is usually outside of the prophetic and poetic books. The author, Suzanna Smith, notes this distinction in the chapter (85). However, Smith still describes both together as one methodology that is "difficult to nail down," and it undoubtedly becomes more elusive when addressing both as a single field of study throughout the chapter (92).

The other downside of this chapter is the annotated bibliography. Unfortunately, only one of the six entries specifically addresses OT literary approaches (94). In contrast, Daniel Brendsel's chapter on narrative criticism of the NT contains four entries in the bibliography with three of them being specifically related to the gospels (177-8). Douglas Estes's NT rhetorical criticism chapter also has four entries in the bibliography with three dealing specifically with either the gospels or Pauline literature (211-2).

Even with the critique of Smith's bibliography and the overly broad scope for just a single chapter, the information presented is still a helpful introduction. The most informative pieces of the chapter are the examples of narrative and rhetorical studies. In this section the two methods are treated separately and influential works in the historical, prophetic, and poetic sections of the Bible are described in turn. Since there is only one OT literary study in the bibliography, the works cited in this section provide the most helpful resources if one is willing to dig through the footnotes and the general bibliography at the back of the book.

The greatest strength is the final chapter of the book which describes the influence of post-structuralism. The focus upon the philosophical movement helps put literary criticism in its environment. John DelHousaye spends the majority of the chapter on Derrida and philosophical underpinnings with only a brief analysis of two biblical passages using this method. Though it might seem out of place in this volume because the previous chapters deal with specific types of literary criticism, it is a valuable examination into the philosophical world outside of biblical studies that significantly influenced biblical scholarship and literary criticism in particular. It is also important that DelHousaye introduces post-structural concepts without abandoning orthodox biblical interpretations. The post-structuralist models frequently go into territory that many conservative Christians might find uncomfortable. As stated by DelHousaye, post-structuralism is frequently "looking to expose patriarchal, homophobic, or colonial ideology" (266). However, DelHousaye uses examples and descriptions that elucidate the post-structural theories without delving into the more progressive or controversial views.

One example he uses is the text of Mark 12:24-27. In this text DelHousaye expounds upon the multilayered meaning in Jesus' response to marriage in heaven (270). Jesus's explanation of the patriarchs as still living because God is the God of the living and not the dead is confusing for many readers. So

when DelHousaye explains that Jesus is giving a multileveled answer, both that death annuls the marriage covenant and that the patriarchs must still be living if the covenant with God is still valid, it is not a faith shattering exegesis even if some of the readers might not agree with the conclusions (271). His description of post-structuralism as an act of love for the text and not semantic destruction also helps to draw more conservative readers into the discussion who might otherwise feel that using the ideas of Derrida destroys the core of the biblical text (257).

Literary Approaches to the Bible is a very helpful introduction. Each of the chapters presents the basic ideas and authors of a critical method. This format provides a reference point for students or scholars before delving into the more detailed works on the subject. Most of the sources are very recent so they provide an entrance into the current scholarly conversation and each author's place within the broader field of literary scholarship up to the present time.

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