



Asia Adventist Seminary Studies

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PREFACE

This issue of *AASS* is dedicated to Dr. Edwin Reynolds, founding editor of this theological journal. It was indeed a challenging experience to bring such a publication to fruition and it was under Dr. Reynolds' leadership that this journal is now indexed by ATLA, the American Theological Library Association, which deals with over 700 religion journals from around the world.

In this issue we have a number of articles written by various scholars, including AIIAS Seminary Faculty. Submissions cover a wide spectrum of areas, including theology, biblical studies, linguistics, and church ministry. We express our deepest appreciation to the authors who expended the time, energy, and effort in submitting articles that were scrutinized by their peers. In a special way, we say "thank you" to Dr. George Knight who deliberately set aside time in his busy schedule to make six presentations at the annual AIIAS Theological Forum. We have included one of these in this issue of the journal and hope to publish others in subsequent issues.

Also, we are indebted to Dr. William C. Address who so graciously gave us permission to reprint his article that was previously published in *International Forum*, 3 (April 2002): 5-22. All articles in this issue are interesting, provocative, and well worth reading, even as they express the opinions of the individual authors.

As usual, we have also included abstracts of theses and dissertations successfully completed since the last issue. In addition, there are critical book reviews submitted by faculty and students of AIIAS.

For your information, we now have an e-mail address, semjournal@aiias.edu, so you can contact us readily. We also extend an open invitation to those who wish to write and have their work published, subject to the rigors of the review process. We trust that you will enjoy this issue and will subscribe to our journal, if you do not already do so. Please note that each year we reduce the number of complimentary copies. Kindly make sure that this will not be the last issue you receive.

Kenneth D. Mulzac

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GROUND ZERO IN THE BATTLE BETWEEN CHRIST AND SATAN

GEORGE R. KNIGHT, Ed.D.

Ground Zero is where the action is. Ground Zero took on vivid meaning for me in July 1994 as I stood just below the spot in Hiroshima where 49 years before, history's first atomic bomb exploded, immediately snuffing out over 100,000 lives and flattening a major city. More recently, on September 11, 2001, Ground Zero found new meaning for a generation that had largely given up on the reality of personal evil. Ground Zero is where the action is. Ground Zero, according to Webster, is either "the land or surface area directly below or above the point of detonation of a nuclear bomb" or, alternatively, a beginning or starting point.

In this presentation I will examine the starting point, the hot spot, the center of action in the galactic struggle between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. I would like to suggest that Ground Zero for this great struggle of the ages centers on the word *agapē* or love. *Agapē* in one form or another enters into every aspect of the galactic struggle of the ages. We will look at this in a series of eight propositions.¹

¹Several of the themes that will be highlighted have been worked out in greater detail in my books such as *I Used to Be Perfect: A Study of Sin and Salvation*, 2d ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2001); *Meeting Ellen White* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1996); *The Pharisee's Guide to Perfect Holiness* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1992); *My Gripe With God: A Study in Divine Justice and the Problem of the Cross* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1990).

Proposition 1: SIN Is Love

This proposition sets the foundation of the struggle between Christ and Satan. *Agapē* stands at the very center of the origin of sin. Isa 14 suggests that sin originated in heaven when Lucifer sought to become equal with God; when he loved himself more than his Maker (vv. 12-14). Lucifer's rebellion eventuated in what Rev 12 calls "war in heaven." The result was that "the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to earth" (vv. 7-9). That casting down brings us to the familiar story of Adam and Eve. That story, for all of its brevity, sheds a great deal of light on the ultimate nature of sin. Too many have read the story as if Eve's taking of the fruit was the problem. But when we read carefully we discover that she had sinned *before* she took the fruit. God had specifically told earth's first parents in Gen 2:17 not to eat the fruit; indeed, the day they did they would surely die.

In the temptation of Gen 3, Eve had the choice of accepting God's word or of rejecting it. She followed the latter course, took the fruit and ate it. But please note, something happened in Eve's head and in her heart *before* she took the fruit. By the time she had taken the fruit, she had already sinned. In essence, she had told God to leave her alone, that she knew better than He did what was good for her. She had rejected His word and His will and replaced it with her own wisdom and will. In short, before reaching for the fruit, Eve had chosen her own will and word over the will and word of God. She had put herself on the throne of her life, at the center of her universe. In actuality, she had focused her love on herself rather than on God. And that is the core of SIN.

Eve committed SIN when she loved herself and her desires more than she loved God and His will. She committed SIN in her heart. And that SIN in her heart led to the taking and eating of the fruit. Thus, SIN in the heart leads to sinful actions. But prior to actions, it is absolutely crucial to realize that something takes place in the heart and mind. First, there is SIN in the heart and mind. That SIN in the heart then gives birth to sinful actions.

Thus, proposition 1 in coming to grips with Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan is the fact that SIN is love (*agapē*). Emil Brunner came to a similar conclusion when he wrote that "all evil comes from our desire to be our own master, from loving ourselves more than God."²

For too long have Christians viewed sin merely on the level of outward actions. Some have acted as if becoming a Christian is cleaning up one's life. Such a misunderstanding of the nature of SIN leads to an inadequate solution to the problem. SIN in its essence is not a surface matter, but an issue of the heart and mind. Jesus made that plain when He said, "What comes out of the mouth proceeds

²Emil Brunner, *Our Faith*, trans. John W. Rilling (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d.), 51.

from the heart, and this defiles a man. For out of the heart comes evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft,” and so on (Matt 15:18, 19; cf. 12:34, 35).

At the very foundation of Christian understanding is the fact that SIN is love. SIN is *agapē*, that kind of God-like love that is central to the NT. In Luke 11:43, Jesus condemns the Pharisees because they had love (*agapaō*) for the best seats in the synagogue. Likewise, in 2 Tim 4:10 we are told that Demas left the Christian way when he fell “in love” (*agapaō*) with this present world. Similarly, in John 2:15 we are admonished not to “love (*agapaō*) the world or the things in the world.” Such do not have the love of the Father in them. These passages do not say that there is anything wrong with the world, but they do teach us that to put anything in God’s place is wrong.

SIN is love focused on the wrong object. SIN is to love the object more than the Creator of the object. It makes no difference whether that object is an external thing, another person, or one’s own self. To love anything or anyone more than God is SIN. SIN is love aimed at the wrong target, accompanied by a life lived in the direction of that SIN. Thus, if I love myself more than you, I see nothing wrong in taking your things if I am big enough; if I love myself more than God, I see nothing wrong with disrespecting His name and His person. In other words, SIN in the heart leads to sinful actions (sins) in the life.

Proposition 2: SIN and LAW Are the Same Thing

SIN and the LAW are the same thing because they are both related to *agapē*. Christ made that clear when He defined the essential LAW of God. For too long have Christians focused on the outward aspects of the law rather than its core. The result has been some very mean-spirited Christians. That condition comes about when people misunderstand the nature of LAW.

Let us take the Ten Commandments as an example. Do you think that God had to tell the angels to honor their fathers and mothers or not to commit adultery? And isn’t the seventh-day Sabbath of the Decalogue tied directly to the creation of planet earth? I would like to submit that the Ten Commandments are neither universal nor eternal. Rather, they are an adaptation of God’s eternal LAW to the condition of fallen beings, who after the origin of sin had an inbuilt desire to do wrong.

Jesus helped us come to grips with the LAW undergirding all laws when He was questioned on the greatest commandment in the law. He responded by saying, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matt 22:37, 38). Millard J. Erickson has pointed out that it is no accident that both Christ’s first and greatest commandment as well as the first commandment of the Decalogue, “You shall have no other gods before me” (Exod 20:3), focus on loving God above all else. After all, not placing God in the supreme place in our life is the essence of

SIN.³ Loving Him supremely is the antidote. But loving God supremely, in the eyes of Jesus, is not the sum total of the law. He followed up His first commandment with a second, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets" (vv. 39, 40).

Paul agrees with Jesus, but points to a further reduction in the LAW to one basic precept. Thus he wrote in Gal 5:14 that "the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" He makes the same point in Rom 13 where he pens that "he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law" (v. 8), and "love is the fulfilling of the law" (v. 10). But in Rom 13 Paul takes our understanding a giant step forward when he directly links the basic LAW of love to the laws expressed in the Ten Commandments. Specifically, the apostle tells us that the commandments against adultery, murder, and covetousness "are summed up in this sentence, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (v. 9). Thus he tied the second Great Commandment to the second table of the Decalogue.

Paul and Jesus are quite clear that the core of the LAW is love (*agapē*). But the concept of law does not end with the core. The ultimate LAW of love is made explicit and applicable to a fallen race in the Ten Commandments. Thus the first four commandments are an explication of aspects of the principle of loving God, while the last six particularize specific ways of loving one's neighbors. As a result, the progression of law is from the one LAW of love to the two laws of Jesus to the Ten Commandments. The ideal picture is that loving God's law in one's heart leads to a keeping of God's laws. As with SIN, a person's inward orientation leads to outward actions.

The New Covenant experience of Heb 8:10, of having God's law of love written in the heart and mind, leads Christians to a different way of life from that of the world around them. For example, because Christians love God they will glorify His name; because Christians love God they will honor His day; because Christians love God they will love their neighbors; because they love God they will not take their neighbors' things, covet their possessions, or use them as sexual objects.

It is unfortunate that some Christians think that they can love God without loving their neighbor. They live their church life as if God's LAW can be bisected or even dissected. But such is an impossibility. James makes it clear that the LAW of love is a unit. He writes that "whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" (James 2:10). Because the LAW is a unity of love to God and other people it cannot be split into pieces. Brunner put it correctly when he wrote that "he who keeps the first Commandment (of the Decalogue) keeps all the rest."⁴ It cannot be otherwise. Love cannot be divided up, with part of it being assigned to oblivion. The LAW is love and love is a unitary package.

³Millard F. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 580.

⁴Brunner, 51.

The purpose of God's LAW is clear enough, yet people have struggled with the place of the LAW in their lives. Some have seen it as a ladder to heaven, a position that Paul smashes repeatedly in the book of Romans. The function of the law, he notes, is to point out one's shortcomings and sins and thus one's need of grace (3:20-25; 7:7). The law is "holy and just and good" (7:12) in terms of its ideals, but it is not the way to heaven.

A second major mistake people make with the law is to see it merely as being negative. Jesus and Paul, in defining the LAW as love, move it beyond the realm of the negative to that of the positive. Christianity is not merely avoiding the negative; it is living out a life of Christlike service to God and others. That takes a Christlike transformation of one's entire way of thinking. Luther graphically touched on the topic when he wrote, "You must have as great a desire for chastity as you [once] had for fornication." This means, paraphrases Paul Althus, "That the good must become as natural for us as the evil was for our 'old man.'"⁵

Perhaps the greatest confusion in relation to Christians and the law is a confusion between the LAW in its essence and God's many laws. The problem is that people can attempt to keep God's several commandments without having the LAW of love in their hearts. That was the problem with the Pharisees of old. They sincerely kept the laws but broke the LAW and put Christ on the cross. There has traditionally been a spirit of meanness among those who focus on the laws rather than on the LAW. That meanness is especially aimed at those who disagree with them theologically and/or who may not be as zealous as they are regarding particular laws or rules or regulations. Those who have the laws without the LAW of love are subject to the spirit of inquisition, a temptation that has plagued many religious groups throughout history.

God's plea is for us to get our priorities right. He wants us to keep his LAW so that we can truly keep His laws. The order is absolutely essential. I can only truly keep the LAW when I keep it with my whole heart.

Proposition 3: The Cross Is the Ultimate Demonstration of LAW and SIN

Thus far we have examined two basic building blocks in the thesis that *agapē* is Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan; namely, that *agapē* is the essence of both SIN and LAW. Here we are dealing with the two great principles or life orientations that divide all humanity. On the one hand, we find selfishness and self-centeredness as the basis for life. On the other is the principle of self-giving and other-centeredness. The first position eventuates in alienation and hatred of those who block its desires; the second in an outgoing love that turns the

⁵Quoted in Paul Althus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), 140.

other cheek and leads to service. We have here the principles of two kingdoms in conflict—the guiding principle of the kingdoms of this world versus the central principle of the kingdom of God.⁶

The outworking of the principle of the kingdoms of this world is reflected in world history, the discouraging daily news, and a record of shattered lives and families. The outworking of the principle of God's kingdom is seen in lives dedicated to loving service to God and other people, especially as reflected in the life of Christ

The apex of the outworking of the conflict between the principles of SIN and LAW is the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ was not merely a vicarious substitutionary sacrifice in which He died for the sins of the world, it also brought to a climax the principles of both sides in the cosmic struggle between good and evil. The cross of Christ demonstrates, as nothing else could, both the love of God and the malignant hatred of Satan's kingdom, a point I have argued at some length in my book, *My Gripe With God*. The cross is not so much a rational explanation as it is a vivid demonstration. It is at the cross that the principles of both God's and Satan's kingdoms are exhibited in full maturity. At the cross the entire universe witnessed the outworking of the basic principles of the kingdoms of good and evil. At the cross God demonstrated that He could be trusted and Satan proved that he was indeed a liar and a murderer (John 8:44) when he took the life of the sinless Son of God, the one person in history who was beyond sin's death penalty. It was at the brutal foot of the cross that the God who "so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (John 3:16) demonstrated that He was both just and loving.⁷ R. J. Campbell sums up the demonstration of the cross when he writes, "At Calvary perfect love joined with perfect hate, perfect goodness with perfect wickedness, and became victorious by enduring the worst and remaining pure and unchanged to the last."⁸

Proposition 3 in coming to grips with Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan is the realization that the cross of Christ is the ultimate demonstration of the principles of LAW and SIN, of self-sacrificing love and love perverted.

⁶For an informative treatment of the principal conflict between the two kingdoms, see Donald B. Kraybill, *The Upside Down Kingdom*, rev. ed. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1990).

⁷For a fuller treatment of the outworking of the principles of Christ's and Satan's kingdoms at the cross, see *My Gripe with God*, 26, 27, 93.

⁸R. J. Campbell, *The New Theology* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 124.

**Proposition 4: People Move from SIN to LAW
through Crucifixion and Rebirth**

The above points seem clear enough. But a few questions linger: How does a person move from that kingdom based upon the principle of SIN to that kingdom based on the principle of LAW? How does a person move from loving one's self supremely to loving God and others supremely? How does a person move from one life orientation to another? The answer is certainly not by self improvement! One author writes

It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. . . . Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life.⁹

Transformation through improvement is the way of humanism rather than Christianity. It is the way of the Pharisee who is a "good" person and knows it. D. L. Moody once claimed that if anybody ever gets to heaven because of anything he did, we will never hear the end of it. Human effort that leads to human betterment is an insufficient solution. It merely leads to spiritual pride, and spiritual pride is a form of self love that stands at the heart of the SIN problem. Here is where Christianity is radical, where it parts company with all humanisms—both secular and religious. Nowhere do Paul and Jesus tell us that the way to become a Christian is to behave better and better. They could have done so if SIN primarily was an outward action or a series of actions rather than a condition of the heart and mind.

The NT answer to the SIN problem is a crucifixion and a resurrection (Rom 6:1-11); a death to the old orientation and a birth to the new (John 3:3,5); receiving a new heart and a new mind (Rom 12:2). According to Rom 12:2 it is a total transformation. In fact, the Greek word translated as "transformation" is *metamorphosis*, the same word used by biologists to describe the radical change from an earthbound, sluglike caterpillar to a colorful, flying butterfly.

The Bible's description of the process of moving from the principle of one kingdom to another is primarily inward and not merely outward; it is not gradual but radical. Jesus called it a "new birth." "Truly, truly," He said to Nicodemus, "I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, 5). Perhaps the biggest problem of the church down through the ages is "water Christians," those who have been baptized by water but have not been born of the Holy Spirit. All such have merely brought the principle of prideful self-love into the church. The image of crucifixion throughout the gospels is no accident. Christ had to surrender His will, His very self, in order to go to His cross

⁹Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, n.d.), 18.

(Matt 26:36-46), and so must we. It was no empty gesture when Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt 16:24,25).

Thus proposition 4 in coming to grips with Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan is that people move from perverted, self-centered *agapē* to the *agapē* undergirding the LAW through the transforming power of the Spirit rather than through effort and self-improvement.

Proposition 5: Sanctification Is the Process of Becoming More Loving

Proposition 5 flows directly out of proposition 4, in that, the process of sanctification is living the principle of the LAW; sanctification is the process by which people become progressively more loving. According to Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, "*Agapē* is a principle by which one orders life."¹⁰ Indeed, "It is the deepest focus of personality. It is that centering, organizing principle which gives direction to life"¹¹ for Christians. It is no accident that Paul refers to the fruit of the Spirit in the singular. It is also no accident that the foremost primary element in that fruit is *agapē* (Gal 5:22). Everything else in a Christian's life flows out of that orientation.

Christians live life from within a new perspective. Christianity affects every part of a person's daily life. Far from being something that happens to people when they are in church, true Christianity transforms people from the inside out. It changes their hearts, but that inner change, if genuine, carries over into family relationships, school, work, and even how people use their spare time. At this point we have arrived at the practical aspect of Christianity, the notion that God-centered, other-centered love informs a life of service. A person's outward actions flow out of the orientation of one's *agapē*. That is true for all individuals, regardless of whether their *agapē* is of the SIN or of the LAW variety.

Luther caught the significance of these diverse orientations. In his preface to Romans he defines faith as

a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1); it kills the old Adam and makes altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Ghost. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith; and so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. . . . He who does not these works is a faithless man.¹²

¹⁰Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *A Theology of love: The Dynamics of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1972), 33.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 87.

¹²Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. J. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids: Kregal, 1954), xvi.

Luther, like John Wesley and others, followed the lead of the apostle Paul in his emphasis on “faith working through love” (Gal 5:6). The God-centered *agapē* of the LAW forms the motivation and context for a Christian’s life. This is the essence of Sanctification, *the process of becoming more loving*. If that is true, someone may be thinking, what about the behavioral, life-style issues that are often confused with sanctification? Here we have a question of means and ends. Let me illustrate with a personal experience from the pastorate. As a young pastor I was holding a series of public meetings in a small church in Texas. It was a very small congregation of only 12 members, with 10 of them being over the age of 70 and 11 of them being female. Now I have nothing against old people (after all I’m becoming one) or females (my mother is a female), but as a young evangelist I desired a well-balanced audience. In spite of the rather discouraging circumstances, a good crowd was attending the meetings. I was especially thrilled that one non-church member was bringing five professionals from the community every evening. Then one day she said she was not coming the next evening and was not going to bring her friends. “Why not?” I queried. Her reply was that she didn’t like my topic, that I was going to tell her what she couldn’t do. I had thought my sermon title, “Why I Don’t Eat Rats, Snakes, and Snails,” was kind of cute, but she saw it as offensive. I told her to come the next evening and to bring her friends, and that she would say it was the best sermon yet.

The only problem was that I did not know what I was going to say. I was preaching six nights a week and twice on Sabbath and did not have any sermons prepared. That night I tossed and turned on my cot in the back of the church until about 4 a.m., when suddenly I had my topic: “God loves me and because He loves me He wants me to be happy.” Now He knows I am not happy when I am ill. In fact, I am a bear to live with when I am sick. He also knows that I am happiest when I feel good. Therefore, He has provided me with a few helpful tips that will make me healthier, happier, and better able to express His love in my daily life.

The next evening, as my lady friend left with her friends, she remarked that that was the best sermon yet. If it was good for her, it was even better for me. Not only had I rooted my understanding of healthful living in the love of God, but I had seen that the real purpose of good health is to make us better lovers. For the first time I clearly saw that health reform is not sanctification itself but is an aid to living the sanctified life. The same can be said for Sabbathkeeping, which provides me time to grow and relate to God and other people. It is also true for stewardship, which helps me to become more like the God who loved the world so much that He gave His only Son. Indeed, it is true for every Christian activity. All are means to aid us in living the *agapē* life of the LAW, aids to forming a character more and more like Christ’s.

Proposition 6: Perfection Is Becoming Like God in Love

Proposition 6 in unpacking the concept of Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan is that the essence of biblical character perfection is living the *agapē* life of the LAW. That proposition follows from the concept that the sanctified life is becoming more and more in character like the loving Jesus and God the Father (cf. 1 John 4:8).

The clearest biblical teaching on the topic is found in Matt 5, which concludes with the well-known verse 48: “You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” That text has sent countless thousands of believers of all faiths into monastic situations in which improving their behavior by avoiding sin and sinners becomes central.

But such an approach ignores the context that tells us the meaning of what Jesus is teaching. In vv. 43-45a we read: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, *so that* you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.” I have emphasized the words *so that* because they are the key words. They provide the context of how to be perfect like the Father. And how does the Father act? “He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (v. 45b). Can you do that? Can you love like God loves? Can you love even those who despitely use you? To do so is to become perfect like the Father.

John Wesley caught the idea of biblical perfection. For him perfection is perfect love to God and our neighbor expressed in word and action. And to love God, Wesley so wisely penned, is “to delight in him, to rejoice in his will, to desire continually to please him, to seek and find our happiness in him, and to thirst day and night for a fuller enjoyment in him.”¹³ He defined perfection as “pure love filling the heart, and governing all the words and actions,”¹⁴ and, of course, all of a Christian’s relationships.

That same definition is found in the context of the statement that has perplexed many regarding perfectly reproducing Christ’s character. The contextual focus is on having one’s love made perfect as people more and more reflect the likeness of Christ.¹⁵

Biblical perfection is a dynamic concept related to maturing in God’s likeness. It has nothing to do with the Greek concept of the unchanging perfection of behavior (generally defined as behavioral sinlessness) that set the stage for the

¹³John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), VII: 495; XI:446.

¹⁴John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1966), 61.

¹⁵Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1941), 67-69.

monastic movements of history. Biblical perfection is not withdrawing from society so that one can avoid temptation. Rather, it is an entering into society in a servant relationship to God and other people that ever more clearly lets God live His love in our lives. Thus, Christian perfection is not a negative; it is a positive. No one will ever become perfect by what he or she has avoided. To the contrary, perfection is related to becoming actively involved with others in the spirit of Christ.

Wynkoop caught that idea precisely when she wrote,

The most important single characteristic of the biblical meaning of perfection is its positive nature. Perfection is not, principally, the absence of all that is less than perfect, but the presence of love with all the dynamic meaning of love.¹⁶

Proposition 7: The Basis of Judgment Is Love

Proposition 7 in evaluating the idea of Ground Zero in the struggle between Christ and Satan is that the judgment is fueled by love as well as justice. God not only needs to be just in the judgment, He also desires to do the most loving thing for each person.

There are two corollaries to this proposition. The first is that everyone who could be happy in heaven will be there. More specifically, all who could be happy with God will be in the kingdom. Now that may sound like a rather fluffy statement, but it is filled with implications. After all, for people to be happy with God they will have to be in harmony with the great principle of *agapē* that undergirds the LAW of the kingdom. And having *agapē* in the heart, we have already noted, will shape *every* action and thought. *Agapē* is heaven's way of life. Lifestyles built on selfishness, carelessness of others, and self-centeredness stand over against the LAW of the kingdom and would, if transferred to heaven, continue the present disharmony of SIN that has made planet earth a place of death and misery.

When I think of potential happiness as the key to judgment, I think of my own experience. In the late 1950s I was living on a merchant ship stationed in San Francisco Bay. God and His type of love were the furthest thing from my mind. I was out for me and what I could get, with no thought of others. Then I met a girl who I wanted to be with very much. But there was one problem. She was a Christian, and that caused me a great deal of conflict. Wanting to be with her, however, I eventually consented to attend church. That was bad enough, but then the preacher invited us to dinner during my next shore leave, which was about two weeks later. Those were the longest two weeks of my life as I anticipated the dinner. I dreaded having to be with a minister for an entire afternoon. I did not have

¹⁶Wynkoop, 299.

anything in common with such people. I did not even have much shared vocabulary, let alone principles. The day came, and I was truly miserable.

Only years later could I look back and realize that the only people who could possibly be happy in heaven would be those in harmony with the principle of God's kingdom. All others would be absolutely miserable living for eternity in the presence of One who could read even their selfish thoughts. In their case heaven would be hell.

The great God of love, I submit, wants everybody in the kingdom who will be happy there. But to be happy, individuals will have to have the great principle of true *agapē* (LAW) in their hearts. Those operating on the perverted *agapē* of self-centeredness (SIN) would be out of harmony and unhappy for eternity.

That brings me to the second corollary in a judgment fueled by love as well as justice, namely, God is no monster who tortures people endlessly. Some years ago I published an article entitled "The Infinite Hitler," which won a national award from the Associated Church Press.¹⁷ The basic idea undergirding the article was that many people's picture of God makes Him infinitely more sadistic than Hitler. After all, Hitler's victims eventually died, but God, from one perspective, keeps them writhing in pain throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Such a Being would make Hitler and Stalin look like rather pleasant characters.

Clark Pinnock was thinking along that same line when he wrote:

Everlasting torture is intolerable from a moral point of view because it pictures God acting like a bloodthirsty monster who maintains an everlasting Auschwitz for his enemies whom he does not even allow to die. How can one love a God like that? I suppose one might be afraid of him, but could we love and respect him? Would we want to strive to be like him in this mercilessness? Surely the idea of everlasting conscious torment raises the problem of evil to impossible heights. Antony Flew [an influential atheistic philosopher] was right to object that 'if Christians really believe that God created people with the full intention of torturing some of them in hell forever, they might as well give up the effort to defend Christianity.'¹⁸

There is nothing more grotesque than picturing the so-called "God of love" operating an eternal torture chamber. That is Satan's best argument against Christianity. No doctrine has done more to help sensible people turn their backs on Christianity than Satan's caricature of God. After all, questioning God's love and justice stand at the heart of the battle between Christ and Satan. The British theologian John Wenham raises that very issue:

¹⁷George R. Knight, "The Infinite Hitler," *Signs of the Times*, July 1997, 10-13.

¹⁸Clark Pinnock, "The Conditional View," in William Crockett, ed., *Four Views on Hell* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 149-50.

Unending torment speaks to me of sadism not justice It is a doctrine which makes the inquisition look reasonable I believe that endless torment is a hideous and unscriptural doctrine which has been a terrible burden on the mind of the church for many centuries and a terrible blot on her presentation of the gospel.¹⁹

The fate of the wicked in death is not a peripheral topic in the struggle between Christ and Satan. God is either love or He is not. Part of the gospel is that the universe will, in the future, be cleansed of all evil and sin. The manner of God is not endless torture for His rebellious children but eternal death. This is what the Bible calls the second death (Rev 20:14). With that understanding in mind, Brunner's statement that "the wrath of God is the love of God"²⁰ makes good sense. In His judgment on sin, God does the best thing possible in a perplexing situation. P. T. Forsyth is correct in his evaluation,

Get rid of the idea that judgment is chiefly retribution. Realize that it is, positively, the establishing and the securing of eternal righteousness and holiness. View punishment as an individual and collateral necessity, like the surgical pains that make room for nature's curing powers.²¹

God's final solution for those who refuse to let loose of SIN once again demonstrates that He is righteous, trustworthy, and does the most loving thing, even in what appears to be an impossible situation.

Before moving away from the topic of judgment, we need to emphasize that *even judgment is gospel* and is integrally related to the heart of the struggle between Christ and Satan. One point that needs to be highlighted is that the Judge is not neutral. The Judge so loved the world that He sent the Savior (John 3:16). Beyond that, Dan 7:22 is clear that final judgment is "for" or on behalf of the saints, and according to Deut 32:36 judgment is for the vindication of God's people.

A second thing that needs to be pointed out is that, according to the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matt 25:31-46, Jesus pictured the final judgment as being based upon one point, namely, the internalization of the LAW of love. That internalization leads to an outward expression of love in the lives of those who will be in the heavenly kingdom.²²

¹⁹John W. Wenham, "The Case for Conditional Immortality," in Nigel M. de S. Cameron, ed. *Universalism and the Doctrine of Hell* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 187, 188, 190.

²⁰Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1947), 187.

²¹P. T. Forsyth, *The Work of Christ* (London: Hodder & Stouton, n. d.), 135.

²²Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 637.

**Proposition 8: The Praise of the Ages Will
Focus on God's Love and Justice**

This final proposition in understanding Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan is that the songs of the ages will focus on the loving character of God and the fact that He followed the best option in His handling of the SIN problem. Perhaps the best illustrations of those songs are in the Apocalypse of John. The songs of chaps. 4 and 5 focus on the worthiness of God and the Lamb "to receive glory and honor and power." That worthiness is founded especially on the substitutionary sacrifice of the "Lamb who was slain." It will be seen that it is only God's love that led Him to provide that sacrifice that alone has made it possible for Him to justify sinners and yet still remain just (Rev 4:11; 5:4, 9, 12).

The songs are picked up again in Rev 15 and 16. But there it is for His just judgments that God is repeatedly praised. "Yea, Lord God the Almighty," we read in 16:7, "true and just are thy judgments" (cf. 15:3, 4; 16:4). The songs climax in 19:1,2, where we read: "Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just." Before God puts an end to the controversy with Satan with the second death in Rev 20, all the universe will be clear that His ways truly are best. God's great principle of other-centered *agapē* stands vindicated, while the destructiveness of *agapē* perverted stands fully revealed as God in a movement of "tough" love acts to bring harmony into a universe of warring principles. At the end of the struggle between Christ and Satan it will be seen that the *agapē* undergirding the LAW is the only way to life and peace.

It is no accident that the massive history of redemption found in the five volumes of the *Conflict of the Ages* series begins and ends with the same three words, "God is Love."²³ Is He? That is the question of the ages. It is the question that stands at Ground Zero in the battle between Christ and Satan.

Conclusion

The most important single word in understanding the conflict between Christ and Satan is *agapē*. *Agapē* in its various forms stands at the center of the biblical understandings of SIN, LAW, the cross, grace, conversion, sanctification, perfection, judgment, the character of God, and worship. The tension between true *agapē* and *agapē* perverted is the problem of the ages. As such, a better understanding of *agapē* is an essential prerequisite to forming a more accurate biblical theology. And a more adequate biblical theology will, in itself, inform a more Christian approach to ministry.

²³Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1958), 33; idem, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1950), 678.

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SANCTIFICATION AND SALVATION IN ELLEN G. WHITE'S EARLY RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

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Introduction

Ellen White was reared in a Methodist home and baptized as a Methodist. Examination of her early published writings reveals a great emphasis on sanctification and right behavior. Her preoccupation with holiness and human responsibility tends to raise questions concerning the early development of her concept of salvation, especially with respect to the relationship between sanctification and salvation. The problem addressed in this study is that of seeking to understand how factors in her early life, especially her early experience in the Methodist Church, influenced her early religious development.

The purpose of this paper is (1) to investigate the influence of Methodism in relationship with other significant factors on the formation and development of Ellen White's early religious thought; and (2) to examine how these influences may have affected her views concerning the relationship between sanctification and salvation.

Ellen White's Early Religious Environment

Ellen Gould Harmon-White¹ and her twin sister Elizabeth were born to Robert and Eunice Harmon at Gorham, Maine, on 26 November 1827 as the last of eight children in the Harmon family.² Sometime between 1831 and 1833, the family

¹Ellen White's married name is used throughout this study although she was not married until 1846.

²Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 1:9.

moved about twelve miles east to the seacoast town of Portland, where Ellen's father practiced the trade of hat making.³ There Ellen spent most of her childhood and youth.

According to Ellen White, her parents were "devoted members" of the Methodist Episcopal Church during her early years. In that church they "held prominent connection," "labored for the conversion of sinners," and helped to "build up the cause of God" for some forty years.⁴ Ellen's father served as an "exhorter" and led out in Methodist meetings.⁵ As Methodists, Ellen's parents were expected to show a continuing desire for salvation by attending to such "ordinances of God" as regular public worship, listening to the word of God read and expounded, studying the Bible, family and private prayer, and fasting.⁶

Methodist religious leaders were urged to take special interest in the young. Where there were ten or more children whose parents belonged to a Methodist society, society leaders were to meet with the children every week, or a least every other week. Leaders and/or parents were admonished to "procure our instructions or catechisms" for the children. Teachings presented in the catechisms were to be explained and impressed on the hearts of the children. Children were urged to read the Methodist catechisms and commit their teachings to memory.⁷ The catechisms were to be used as extensively as possible, both at Sunday school and at home. Preachers were to "enforce upon parents and Sunday school teachers the great importance of instructing children in the doctrines and duties of our holy religion."⁸ Whenever church leaders visited a home, they were to talk and pray with the children there. Elders, deacons, and preachers were to keep a list of the names of

³Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White*, vol. 1, *The Early Years* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1985), 18.

⁴White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:9.

⁵Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1915), 38.

⁶Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: B. Waugh and T. Mason, 1835), 80. Hereafter cited as *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1835.

⁷*Ibid.*, 59. Cf. Methodist Episcopal Conference, *The Catechisms of the Wesleyan Methodists: Compiled and Published by Order of the British Conference: Revised and Adapted to the Use of Families and Schools Connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 3 vols. (New York: J. Emory and D. Waugh, 1829). These catechisms were first published in America in 1826. They were used extensively by the Methodist Episcopal Church in the north until 1852, and by Methodists in the south until at least 1910. The first catechism was designated "for children of tender years." It is hereafter referred to as *Catechism 1*. The second catechism was prepared "for children of seven years of age and upwards," and is hereafter referred to as *Catechism 2*. The third catechism was intended "for the use of young persons," and is hereafter referred to as *Catechism 3*.

⁸Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1840), 62. Hereafter cited as *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1840.

the children, and when any gave evidence of being spiritually awakened, admit them into the society.⁹ Prior to being accepted into the church, all candidates for membership were to be examined before the congregation by the minister in charge, and “give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of their faith, and their willingness to observe and keep the rules of the Church.”¹⁰

The effectiveness of the religious influences that surrounded Ellen White during her early years was evidenced by the conversion of all eight Harmon children to the Methodist faith.¹¹ Ellen herself experienced conversion while attending a Methodist camp meeting.¹² After being baptized some time later, she was received into the Methodist Episcopal Church as a member.¹³

Interest in Christ's Second Coming

When Ellen was nine years old, she found a scrap of paper that told of a man in England who was preaching that the world would be consumed in about thirty years. Interested, she took the scrap home and read it to her family. As she thought about the predicted event, she was seized with “great terror.” She could hardly sleep for several nights, and prayed continually that she would be ready for Christ's return.¹⁴

Serious Injury

Ellen was still nine years old when she was struck on the nose by a stone thrown in anger by an older school acquaintance.¹⁵ The injury was serious. Only her mother believed that she would live.¹⁶ For three weeks she remained in a state of unconsciousness.

⁹Nathan Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Church* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1840), 1:215. In this reference, Bangs appears to have been quoting from the *Doctrines and Discipline* voted at the 1784 General Conference at which the Methodist Episcopal Church was officially organized in North America. Cf. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1835, 59-60.

¹⁰*Doctrines and Discipline*, 1840, 84.

¹¹White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:9.

¹²Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, *My Christian Experience, Views and Labors in Connection with the Rise and Progress of the Third Angel's Message* (Battle Creek, MI: n.p., 1860), 12. Hereafter cited as *Spiritual Gifts*, 2.

¹³*Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁴Ellen G. White, “Mrs. Ellen G. White: Her Life, Christian Experience, and Labors,” 20 January 1876. This article is part of an autobiographical series with the same title in *Signs of the Times*, 6 January- 11 May 1876. Reprinted in Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 4 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, n.d.), 1:21.

¹⁵White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:7.

¹⁶White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:10.

After regaining consciousness, Ellen lay for many weeks in a large cradle made for her. During that time she was “reduced almost to a skeleton.”¹⁷ Overhearing friends remark with pity on her appearance, she requested a mirror and was shocked by what she saw. Her nose had been broken, and every feature of her face seemed changed.¹⁸

Ellen’s injury profoundly affected her emotional and spiritual life. The thought of carrying her disfigurement through life seemed unbearable to her. Seeing no pleasure in life, she had no desire to live, but “dared not die,” for she was “not prepared.”¹⁹ Concerned about her spiritual condition, and fearing that she might not live, she found some measure of relief through prayer. Recalling her childhood feelings in later years, she wrote,

When Christian friends visited the family, they would ask my mother if she had talked with me about dying. I overheard this and it roused me. I desired to become a Christian and prayed as well as I could for the forgiveness of my sins. I felt a peace of mind resulting. I loved every one and felt desirous that all should have their sins forgiven and love Jesus as I did.²⁰

The sense of pardon and peace Ellen had found did not last. Because of the continuing physical effects of the injury, school authorities advised that she be withdrawn from school until her condition should improve.²¹ She never returned to school except for a brief period of attendance at a female seminary when she was about twelve years old.²² Sensitive to the treatment she received from others because of her disfigurement and inability to attend school, she often felt “mortified and wretched in spirit” and sought out some lonely place in which to brood over her trials.²³ Her ambition “to become a scholar” was thwarted by inability to concentrate on her studies. Feeling “unreconciled” to her “lot,” she sometimes “murmured against the providence of God for thus afflicting me,”²⁴ and felt condemned for allowing “such rebellious thoughts” to “take possession” of her mind.²⁵ Reflecting on this period she wrote,

¹⁷White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, 17.

¹⁸White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:8-9.

¹⁹Ibid., 9.

²⁰White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:20.

²¹Ibid., 11-12.

²²Ibid., 14; White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:13. Because of chronological inaccuracies in some of Ellen White’s autobiographical accounts, there is room for some uncertainty concerning her exact age when she attended the female seminary.

²³White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:20.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:21.

The happy confidence in the Saviour's love that I had enjoyed during my illness, was gone. . . . At times my sense of guilt and responsibility to God lay so heavy upon my soul, that I could not sleep but lay awake for hours, thinking of my lost condition and what was best for me to do. . . . My prospect of worldly enjoyment was blighted, and heaven was closed against me.²⁶

Attendance at the 1840 Millerite Meetings

In March 1840, William Miller presented a series of lectures in Ellen's home town of Portland on his belief that Christ would return to earth about the year 1843, only a few years away. Like many others, Ellen went to hear his "solemn and powerful" sermons at the Casco Street Christian Church.²⁷

Miller's lectures had a "great effect" upon Ellen, yet it seemed hard for her to "give entirely up to the Lord."²⁸ She "knew" that she "must be lost" if Jesus would come and find her as she then was. At times she was "greatly distressed" about her "situation."²⁹ In spite of coming forward to take her place at the "anxious seat" with "hundreds" of other "seekers" responding to Miller's invitation, Ellen remained in "darkness and despair."³⁰

Conversion and Probation in the Methodist Church

During the "following summer," Ellen accompanied her parents to a Methodist camp meeting at Buxton, Maine. Still spiritually anxious, she was "fully resolved to seek the Lord in earnest there, and obtain, if possible, the pardon of my sins."³¹

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid. According to L. D. Flemming, pastor of the Casco Street Christian Church, more than two hundred persons professed conversion in meetings which continued after Miller's departure. Several grogshops were converted into meeting houses, one or two gambling places were shut down, and small prayer meetings were established in almost every part of the city. On April 4, Fleming went to one such meeting in the business section of town, where he found thirty or forty men from different denominations gathered together for prayer at eleven o'clock in the morning. See F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1944), 76-78.

²⁸White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:12.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:21.

³¹Ibid. While the "following summer" would seem to have been the summer of 1840 that followed Miller's first series of lectures at Portland in March, it may actually have been the summer of 1841. This possibility is raised by consideration of the probable length of her probationary period in the Methodist Church which began shortly after her return from the Methodist camp meeting at which she experienced conversion, and presumably lasted until the time of her baptism. This chronological uncertainty is discussed below in connection with the time of her baptism.

Reference to her conversion experience, which took place during one of the meetings at Buxton, is found in several of her autobiographical editions. In 1851 she stated simply, "at the age of eleven years I was converted."³² In 1860 she declared, "I commenced there to seek the Lord with all my heart. My mind was in great distress; but at a prayer meeting I found relief."³³

Not long after returning home from the camp meeting at which she experienced conversion, Ellen, with several other persons, was taken into the Methodist Church on probation.³⁴ Ellen herself seems to have felt the need for such a period. In 1852 she wrote that at the time of her conversion a minister had spoken to her about being baptized. She had told him she could not be baptized then, but wanted first to see if she could "endure the trials a Christian must endure" before she received such a "solemn ordinance."³⁵ This decision seems to have reflected a great concern for sanctification and a tendency to feel that she must be consistently good in order to remain in God's favor. She often feared that she was not a true Christian and was "harassed by perplexing doubts" as to the genuineness of her conversion.³⁶

³²Ellen G. White, "Experience and Views," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Extra, 21 July 1851, [1]-2. Reprinted in Ellen G. White, *Present Truth and Review and Herald Articles*, 6 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, n.d.), 1:13-14.

The assertion that she was converted at the age of eleven is probably not correct. She was born in November 1827. Her conversion appears to have occurred after her attendance at Miller's lectures in March 1840, and thus could not have taken place earlier than the summer of 1840, about four months after her twelfth birthday. In the same article, she wrote that she attended Miller's second series of lectures at Portland when she was thirteen. This is incorrect, since these lectures were in June 1842, more than six months after her fourteenth birthday.

³³White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:12.

³⁴White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:23. Ellen White has given little information about the nature and purpose of the probationary period, but according to *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1840, 84, prospective members were not to be received into the church unless "recommended by a leader with whom they have met at least six months on trial, and have been baptized." The fact that those desiring membership must "*on examination by the minister in charge, before the Church, give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of their faith, and their willingness to observe and keep the rules of the church*" suggests that they probably received instructions during the probationary period. Emphasis mine.

³⁵Ellen G. White, "Communications," *Youth's Instructor*, December 1852, 21.

³⁶White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:23.

Attendance at the 1842 Millerite Meetings

From 4-12 June 1842, William Miller conducted a second series of lectures at Portland.³⁷ Ellen attended these meetings and was impressed by what she heard, but felt that she was “not holy, not ready to see Jesus.”³⁸

Responding to the first invitation for sinners to come forward for prayer, she found some relief from her anxiety. Yet she “knew” that a “great work” must be done in order for her to be prepared for heaven. She was “hungering and thirsting for full salvation, and an entire conformity to the will of God.” She longed for entire sanctification, for “full and free salvation, but knew not how to obtain it”³⁹ Her feelings were apparently based, as earlier, on “despair of at once attaining to the perfection of Christian character.”⁴⁰

Baptism

In spite of her continuing anxiety, Ellen was baptized by immersion in the sea (Casco Bay) with eleven other candidates and received into full membership in the Methodist Church on the same day.⁴¹ From the sequence of events presented in her autobiographical accounts, it appears that her baptism occurred prior to her attendance at Miller’s lectures. Documentary evidence indicates, however, that she was received into the Methodist Church on 26 June 1842, two weeks after Miller left Portland.⁴²

³⁷See “Portland Conference and Lectures,” in *Signs of the Times*, 22 June 1842, 96. This journal was published by Millerites and should not be confused with the later *Signs of the Times* in which Ellen White’s 1876 series of autobiographical articles was published.

³⁸White, *Present Truth and Review and Herald Articles*, 1:13. Cf. White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:23.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:22.

⁴¹Ibid., 23.

⁴²The membership records of the Portland Methodist Episcopal Church of which Ellen (Harmon) White became a member, give only the year of her baptism on the page which records her immersion. The page which records her being disfellowshipped gives 26 June 1842 as the date of her entry into the church. According to her testimony, this was the same day as her baptism. A photocopy of pertinent membership records from Ellen’s church is available at the Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University, in DF 571.

Although it is possible that the date given in the Methodist Church records for Ellen’s acceptance into the church as a member is incorrect, it would seem more likely that the actual sequence of events is reversed in her autobiographical accounts. Other chronological discrepancies in her autobiographical accounts have already been noted. In addition, none of these accounts gives a specific date for her baptism as do the church records.

Baptism was an emotional experience for Ellen. Recalling the event, she wrote in 1860, "When I arose out of the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of God rested upon me. Such a rich blessing I never experienced before. I felt dead to the world, and that my sins were all washed away."⁴³

Perplexity Concerning Sanctification

After Miller's departure from Portland and Ellen's subsequent baptism and full acceptance into the Methodist Church, she frequently attended Millerite meetings that continued in the Casco Street Church. She believed Jesus would come soon, and "constantly dwelt upon the subject of holiness of heart."⁴⁴ A tendency to regard acceptance by God as dependent on sanctification seems evident in her later description, "I longed above all things to obtain this great blessing [holiness of heart], and to feel that I was entirely accepted of God."⁴⁵ She explained,

My ideas concerning justification and sanctification were confused. These two states were presented to my mind as separate and distinct from each other. Yet I failed to comprehend the difference or understand the meaning of the terms, and all the explanations of the preachers increased my difficulties.

I felt that I could only claim what they called justification. In the Word of God I read that without holiness no man should see God. Then there was some higher attainment that I must reach before I could be sure of eternal life.⁴⁶

Since her confusion and anxiety occurred while she was a Methodist, examination of the relationship between sanctification and salvation as taught by Methodists seems appropriate.

Wesley's Views about "Entire" Sanctification

According to Wesley, sanctification is "in some degree, the immediate *fruit* of justification."⁴⁷ Indeed, "In that instant [of justification]" believers are "'born

⁴³White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:13.

⁴⁴White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:24.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid. Reference to Heb 12:14 suggests that her belief in the need for holiness was grounded in Scripture, not Methodism. However, this passage was emphasized by Wesley and reflected a Methodist emphasis.

⁴⁷John Wesley, "Justification by Faith," *The Works of John Wesley*, vols. 1-4: *Sermons*, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984-1987), 1:187. Cited hereafter as *Sermons*. Emphasis mine.

from above,' 'born of the Spirit.' There is a *real* as well as a *relative* change."⁴⁸ Sanctification begins at the new birth. Believers "go on from grace to grace;" are "careful to 'abstain from all appearance of evil';" are "'zealous of good works';" and "walk in all his [God's] ordinances blameless," but they are not yet entirely sanctified. They "wait for entire sanctification, for a full salvation" from all their sins in which they "'go on to perfection'," or "perfect love" which excludes all sin and fills the heart, "taking up the whole capacity of the soul."⁴⁹ While a justified Christian should be "so far perfect as not to commit sin," it is only those who "are strong in the Lord," and "have overcome the wicked one," of whom it can be said that they are "in such a sense perfect, as, secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers."⁵⁰ To Wesley, being "sanctified throughout" meant being "renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness."⁵¹ It meant being a "perfect Christian" and "loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul."⁵² He avoided the term "sinless perfection" and taught that perfection in this life does not exclude minor "involuntary transgressions" or mistakes which he did not regard as sin.⁵³

While Wesley regarded sanctification as a gradual work of grace, he held that "entire" sanctification (being "sanctified, saved from sin and perfected in love") is an instantaneous work.⁵⁴ He noted that it is often not received until a little before death, because it is generally not expected sooner.⁵⁵ Perfection is available

⁴⁸Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," *Sermons*, 2:158. The "relative" change was justification, pardon, forgiveness, and acceptance with God based on the blood and righteousness of Christ as the "meritorious cause." The "real" change was inward renewal and the process of sanctification. *Ibid.*, 157-60.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 159-60.

⁵⁰Wesley, "Christian Perfection," *Sermons*, 2:116-17.

⁵¹John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (Cincinnati: Swormsted and Poe, 1859), 45.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 49.

⁵³In Wesley's words: "(1.) Not only sin, properly so called—that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law—but sin, improperly so called—that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown—needs the atoning blood. (2.) I believe that there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. (3.) Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. (4.) I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. (5.) Such transgressions you may call sins, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above mentioned." *Ibid.*, 68-69. See also pp. 42-43, 64, 116-17, 171.

⁵⁴Wesley, "The Scripture Way to Salvation," *Sermons*, 2:168-69. Cf. Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 35-36, 82.

⁵⁵Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 50. Note also pp. 50-59, 170, 175. According to Wesley, perfection usually comes many years after justification, but can come much sooner.

at any time after justification.⁵⁶ Although it is received by simple faith, God “does not, will not, give that faith unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which He hath ordained.”⁵⁷ As believers wait for “perfection,” they are to be vigorous in obedience, to zealously keep all of God’s commandments, and to closely attend to all the ordinances of God.⁵⁸

In the light of Ellen White’s frequent sense of guilt and anxiety, it is important to note Wesley’s contrasting teaching that those who have not yet reached “entire” sanctification should continue in peace and joy until they are perfected in love.⁵⁹ He insisted that the repentance that follows justification differs widely from that which precedes justification in that it “implies no guilt, no sense of condemnation, no consciousness of the wrath of God.”⁶⁰ Further, though he believed for a time that those who reached the state of “entire” sanctification could not fall from grace, he later became convinced that they could, but that “entire sanctification” could be regained.⁶¹

There was, however, a further aspect to Wesley’s concept of sanctification that must undoubtedly have been closely related to Ellen White’s spiritual anxiety. While Wesley opposed those who “contend that a man must be sanctified, that is, holy, before he can be justified,” he added, “unless they mean that justification at the last day, which is wholly out of the present question.”⁶² The fundamental importance he attached to “entire” sanctification as an essential preparation for “final” justification seemed evident in 1745 when he asked, “Is it not written. . . ‘Without holiness no man shall see the Lord’? And how then, without fighting about words, can we deny that holiness is a condition of final acceptance?”⁶³

“Entire” Sanctification in American Methodism

Wesley’s views concerning sanctification and “entire” sanctification were reflected, and at times given considerable emphasis, in American Methodism. According to early New England Methodist preacher Freeborn Garretson, the purpose of preaching is to awaken sinners and bring them to Christ, and to urge believers to attain holiness of heart and life. This objective should be accomplished by pressing the old “Methodistical doctrines” of justification by faith, the direct evidence by God of forgiveness, and adoption into His family.

⁵⁶Ibid., 63.

⁵⁷Ibid., 83.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid., 84.

⁶⁰Wesley, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” *Sermons*, 2:164.

⁶¹Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 135-36, 155, 171.

⁶²Wesley, “Justification by Faith,” *Sermons*, 1:191.

⁶³John Wesley to Thomas Church, *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M., Sometime Fellow of the Lincoln College, Oxford*, 8 vols., ed. John Telford (London: Epworth, 1931), 2:187-88. Hereafter cited as *Letters*.

Preachers should not be ashamed of the "unfashionable doctrine" of Christian perfection, but urge "travail of soul, not only for justification, but for sanctification and the evidence of it."⁶⁴ Garrettson's views appear to have been in harmony with Wesley's 1785 letter to him urging that as soon as any converts found peace with God, he should "exhort them to go on to perfection," for "the more strongly and vigilantly you press all believers to aspire after full sanctification as attainable now by simple faith the more the whole work of God will prosper."⁶⁵

John Leland Peters has suggested that there was a lack of effective effort in America to make personal application of the doctrine of "entire sanctification" for about two decades prior to the mid 1830s. By the mid 1830s, however, some sectors of the church began to be agitated because of a renewed emphasis on holiness.⁶⁶ In 1835, Mrs. Phoebe Palmer and her sister Mrs. Sarah Langford began to sponsor a weekly prayer meeting for women called the "Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness" at the Palmer home in New York. In 1837 Palmer experienced "entire" sanctification. Thereafter she strongly promoted this "unspeakable blessing" among fellow Christians. In 1839 Mrs. T. C. Upham, who likewise experienced "entire" sanctification, opened the door for all who were interested, including men, to attend the Tuesday holiness meetings. About the same time, Timothy Merrit began to publish the *Guide to Christian Perfection*, later changed to *Guide to Holiness*.⁶⁷ The *Guide* reported in May 1840 that "it is believed that no year of our experience as a Church has been as fruitful in sanctification as the past."⁶⁸

In 1840, ministers at the Methodist General Conference were challenged in a pastoral address to personally experience sanctification. In the address it was declared:

The doctrine of *entire sanctification* constitutes a leading feature of original Methodism. But let us not suppose it enough to have this doctrine in our standards: let us labour to have the *experience* and the *power* of it in our *hearts*. Be assured, brethren, that if our influence and usefulness, as a religious community, depend

⁶⁴Cited in George Claud Baker Jr., *An Introduction to the History of Early New England Methodism, 1789-1839* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1941), 25-26.

⁶⁵John Wesley to the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, *Letters*, 7:276.

⁶⁶John Leland Peters, *Christian Perfection in American Methodism* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1956), 121.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 109-10. It is interesting to speculate if Pheobe Palmer's emphasis on sanctification may have been associated with the Millerite movement. Her Millerite leanings are evidenced by her authorship of "Watch Ye Saints," hymn number 598 in the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1985). The words of this hymn depict the imminent second advent of Christ.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 115.

upon one thing more than any other, it is upon carrying out the great doctrine of sanctification in our life and conversation. When we fail to do this, then shall we lose our pre-eminence; and the halo of glory which surrounded the heads, and lit up the path of our sainted fathers, will have departed from their unworthy sons. O brethren, let your motto be, "Holiness to the Lord."⁶⁹

The available evidence suggests that there was a widespread response to this call for renewed emphasis on sanctification. In 1841 the *Methodist Quarterly Review* noted that the "*work of holiness* is reviving among us," and declared that there had been "clear, sober, and Scriptural professions of that state among our people."⁷⁰

"Entire" Sanctification and Religious Enthusiasm

From its earliest beginnings, American Methodism was primarily a missionary movement.⁷¹ By preaching faith, repentance, and holiness, preachers sought to arouse hearers emotionally so they would "immediately show signs of God's work"⁷² upon them. Such preaching tended to foster religious enthusiasm, and early revivals were often characterized by emotionalism that included various types of physical manifestation. Reporting on a revival that occurred in 1797 in the Penobscot circuit of Maine, Jesse Lee reported: "Many professed to be awakened and converted, and some Christians professed to be sanctified."⁷³ Something "new and strange" in that part of the country was that some people, "when struck under conviction, would fall helpless on the floor; and some Christians, when very happy, would lose the use of their limbs, and lie helpless for some time."⁷⁴ According to Lee, "The work was generally acknowledged to be of God."⁷⁵

The period between 1800 and 1805 was a time of "gigantic" camp meetings where "Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist ministers worked side by side, where crowds were numbered in the hundreds and frequently the thousands, and where

⁶⁹Methodist Episcopal Church, *Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Held in the City of Baltimore, 1840* (New York: G. Lane & C. B. Tippet, 1844), 161. Emphasis mine.

⁷⁰Cited in Peters, 114-15. Emphasis mine.

⁷¹Wayde Crawford Barclay, *History of Methodist Missions, Part One: Early American Methodism 1769-1844*, vol. 1: *Missionary Motivation and Expansion*, (New York: Board of Mission and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, 1950), 100.

⁷²Baker, 25.

⁷³L. Jesse Lee, *Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America Beginning in 1766, and Continued till 1809* (Baltimore, MD: Magill and Cline, 1810), 218.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

scores were swept into mass hysteria by the frenzied proceedings."⁷⁶ At one "General Meeting" in 1802, fifteen ministers, including Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists, preached to a crowd of about three thousand. Preaching, praying, and singing continued all Friday night and again Saturday night. At the close of the sacrament on Sunday evening, "some fell to the earth beneath the power of the Lord; the work went on, and the meeting continued all night."⁷⁷ Monday morning was the "greatest time of all. The people were crying for mercy on all sides."⁷⁸

By 1825, the practice of holding camp meetings was, according to Johnson, "almost exclusively a Methodist institution."⁷⁹ As frontier areas became more developed, camp meetings tended to become smaller, more effectively managed, more highly systematized, and less disorderly and emotional.⁸⁰ Still, a considerable amount of religious enthusiasm seems to have been manifested among Methodists in Maine during Ellen White's childhood.

Effects on Ellen White

The renewed emphasis on sanctification and perfection among Methodists during the late 1830s and early 1840s coincided with the time of Ellen White's conversion, probationary period, baptism, and acceptance into the Methodist Church as a member. This emphasis probably contributed substantially to her frequent spells of spiritual anxiety during that period of her life.

Prior to her conversion, Ellen White had felt "despair of at once attaining to the perfection of Christian character."⁸¹ She had sought for the pardon of her sins and tried to give herself to the Lord, but had not experienced the "spiritual ecstasy" that she had been led to believe would be evidence of her acceptance with God, and "dared not believe" that she was converted without it.⁸² Yet the demonstrations of religious enthusiasm that were often associated with "entire" sanctification perplexed her. While at the camp meeting where she experienced conversion, she saw people clap their hands, shout at the top of their voices, and appear very excited. Meetings continued all night in some places as people prayed for "freedom from sin and the sanctification of the Spirit of God."⁸³ Some fell to

⁷⁶Charles A. Johnson, *The Frontier Camp Meeting: Religion's Harvest Time* (Dallas, TX: Southern Methodist University Press, 1955), 41, 49. He also notes that the precise origin of camp meetings is uncertain, but that they became common around 1800. *Ibid.*, 31-40.

⁷⁷Lee, 286.

⁷⁸Lee, 287.

⁷⁹Johnson, 80.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 98.

⁸¹White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:22.

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*, 21.

the ground and remained motionless for a period of time under the influence of strong mental excitement. Many believed these physical manifestations to be evidence of sanctification, but she was uncertain. "Terrified by such peculiar demonstrations, and at a loss to understand them," she "despaired of ever becoming a Christian if, in order to obtain the blessing, it was necessary . . . to be exercised as these people were."⁸⁴

Although Ellen had found some relief at Miller's lectures in June 1842 and felt pardoned and cleansed from sin at the time of her baptism shortly thereafter, her anxiety returned, due largely to her concern over the question of "entire" sanctification. As she continued to attend Millerite meetings after Miller left Portland, she "constantly dwelt upon the subject of holiness of heart."⁸⁵ That she tended to regard continuing acceptance by God and favor with Him as being dependent, at least in part on sanctification, seems evident from her statement: "I longed above all things to obtain this great blessing [holiness of heart], and to feel that I was entirely accepted of God."⁸⁶ Christian friends urged her, "Believe in Jesus *now!* Believe He accepts you *now!*" She tried to do so, but was unable to feel the same electrifying "exaltation of spirit" others seemed to feel. She seemed "different from them, and forever shut out from the perfect joy of holiness of heart."⁸⁷

The opposition toward belief in the imminent return of Christ which Ellen witnessed among some Methodists who claimed "entire" sanctification apparently added to her perplexity. Their attitude did not seem consistent with the holiness they professed. Yet she wondered if true sanctification could be found only among the Methodists and feared that she might be shutting herself off from the experience she so greatly desired by continuing to attend the "Advent meetings."⁸⁸ At the same time, her belief in the Millerite message intensified her desire to experience "entire" sanctification. Looking back at her turmoil, she wrote in 1876,

I studied over the subject [sanctification] continually, for I believed that Christ was soon to come, and feared He would find me unprepared to meet Him. Words of condemnation rang in my ears day and night, and my constant cry to God was, What shall I do to be saved?⁸⁹

Ellen White's spiritual anxiety about her seeming inability to experience "entire" sanctification was heightened by the concept of eternal hellfire taught by Methodists. In 1876 she observed:

⁸⁴Ibid., 22.

⁸⁵Ibid., 24.

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Ibid.

The frightful descriptions that I had heard of souls lost in perdition sank deep into my mind. Ministers in the pulpit drew vivid pictures of the condition of the damned. They taught that God never proposed to save any but the sanctified. The eye of God was upon us always, every sin was registered and would meet its just punishment. God himself was keeping the books with the exactitude of infinite wisdom, and every sin we committed was faithfully recorded against us.⁹⁰

On the basis of this belief, Ellen came to view God "as a tyrant, who delighted in the agonies of the condemned."⁹¹ It seemed hard for her to believe that He would condescend to save her from the terrible doom reserved for sinners.⁹²

Experience of "Entire" Sanctification

It was probably not long after her baptism that Ellen felt impressed, while praying for the "blessing" of sanctification, that she should pray aloud at a small group prayer or "social" meeting. Timid and unaccustomed to praying or speaking in public, she was afraid of becoming confused, having to stop, and being again, unable to express her thoughts. A severe inner conflict ensued. "My sufferings were intense," she recalled. "Sometimes for a whole night I would not dare to close my eyes, but would . . . quietly leave my bed and kneel upon the floor, praying silently with a dumb agony that cannot be described."⁹³ Fearing the horrors of everlasting hellfire, she felt unable to live long under such mental stress, yet "dared not die and meet the terrible fate of the sinner."⁹⁴ Every time she went to God in secret prayer, she thought of the "unfulfilled duty" and felt that her prayers were only "mocking God." Finally she ceased to pray altogether, and "settled down in a melancholy state which increased to deep despair."⁹⁵ She remained in this state for three weeks.

While in this state of despair, Ellen had two dreams that gave her "a faint ray of light and hope."⁹⁶ In the first she saw a temple into which all who were to be saved before the close of time must enter. Outside the temple was a multitude of people deriding those attempting to enter. Ellen braved the taunts of the crowd

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²It may have been sometime in 1843 that Ellen White abandoned belief in the immortality of the soul and, in so doing, rejected the idea of eternal torment. See *ibid.*, 1:27-28.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:16. Cf. White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:24. The precise time of this three week period is uncertain, but it was probably not more than a few months after her baptism in June 1842.

⁹⁶White, *Present Truth and Review and Herald Articles*, 1:13.

“knew that it was our sins that caused this lamb to be thus torn and bruised,” and that “all who entered the temple must come before the lamb and confess their sins” in order to join a “happy throng” of people who were occupying “elevated seats” in front of the lamb.⁹⁷

Filled with a sense of shame at the thought of confessing her sins in the presence of others, Ellen was hesitantly approaching the lamb, but had not yet reached it, when suddenly a trumpet sounded, the building shook, the temple “seemed to shine with awful brightness, and then all was dark, terrible [sic] dark.”⁹⁸ The company of “those who had seemed so happy” was gone, and Ellen was left alone in complete darkness with a horror of mind that she later felt unable to adequately describe. When she awakened from the dream, she could not at first convince herself that it had only been a dream. Commenting in 1860 on her feelings after the dream, she wrote, “Surely, thought I, my doom is fixed, I have slighted mercy, and grieved the Spirit of the Lord away, never more to return.”⁹⁹

The second dream came soon after the first. In this dream Ellen was sitting in deep despair thinking that if only Jesus were on earth and she could talk with Him in person, He would understand her sufferings and would have mercy on her. Soon a beautiful being entered the room, asked if she would like to see Jesus, assured that she could, and asked her to follow him. She was then led up a steep, frail staircase to a door through which she passed into the presence of Jesus.¹⁰⁰

Although the face of Jesus reflected benevolence as well as majesty, His piercing gaze seemed to read Ellen’s heart and all the circumstances of her life. She tried to avoid looking at Him in her dream, but to no avail. Then Jesus smiled, drew her near, laid His hand upon her, and said, “Fear not.” Overwhelmed with relief and joy, she fell prostrate at His feet. While lying there helpless, she witnessed “scenes of glory and beauty.”¹⁰¹

In her dream, Ellen was given a coiled green cord which she was told to wear near her heart and stretch out whenever she wanted to see Jesus. She was admonished to use it frequently, or it would become knotted and hard to straighten out. Placing the cord near her heart, she returned to earth praising the Lord and telling others where to find Him. She understood the green cord to represent faith.¹⁰²

Ellen White’s first dream heightened her spiritual anxiety. Her fear that she had “grieved the Spirit of the Lord away, never more to return” clearly demonstrates that she was afraid she had committed the unpardonable sin. The second dream gave her hope of forgiveness and courage to confide in her mother.

⁹⁷White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:16-17.

⁹⁸Ibid., 17.

⁹⁹Ibid., 17-18.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 18-19.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 19.

¹⁰²Ibid., 19-20.

At her mother's suggestion, she sought the counsel of Elder Stockman, a young Methodist minister who preached the Millerite message. Elder Stockman listened sympathetically to her story. He assured her that there was hope for her through the love of Jesus, and that her agony of mind was evidence that God's Spirit had not left her but was striving with her. As grievous as the misfortune of her injury had been, he told her, she would in the great future life realize the wisdom of God's providence that had seemed so cruel.¹⁰³

Ellen was greatly comforted by Elder Stockman's sympathetic attitude, kind words, and sincere prayer on her behalf. Returning to her home, she went before the Lord in prayer, promising to do and to suffer anything He might require of her if only the "smiles of Jesus" would illuminate her heart. That same evening at a Millerite prayer meeting, she acted upon her promise. When the time came for prayers, she knelt with others. After several prayers had been offered, she began to pray. "As I prayed the burden and agony of soul that I had so long felt left me, and the blessing of God came upon me like the gentle dew."¹⁰⁴

During this experience of spiritual and emotional ecstasy, Ellen "lost consciousness" of all that was going on around her and was unaware of everything but "Jesus and His glory."¹⁰⁵ When she was at first "struck down," some at the prayer meeting were alarmed and were about to run for a doctor. Ellen's mother urged them not to worry, assuring them that the "wondrous power of God" had prostrated Ellen, and that she would be all right. When Ellen finally "awoke to realization," she found herself being cared for by others in her uncle's home where the prayer meeting had been held. Not until the next day did she recover sufficiently to return to her home. Describing her feelings after this experience, she declared:

Faith now took possession of my heart. I felt an inexpressible love for God, and had the witness of his Spirit that my sins were pardoned. My views of the Father were changed, I now looked upon him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience. My heart went out towards him in a deep and fervent love. Obedience to his will seemed a joy, it was a pleasure to be

¹⁰³White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:25.

¹⁰⁴White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:20.

¹⁰⁵White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:25-26. Ellen White's experience of prostration appears to have been quite similar to other reported incidents of prostration. One such "strange circumstance" related by Lee occurred in October 1806. A young woman who was "under conviction" at a camp meeting "fell on the floor, and was both helpless and speechless." She was soon taken into a tent where friends sat up with her through the night. When she was finally able to speak the next morning, her first words were, "Love, love, love: Glory, glory, glory." She then sank again into a helpless state that lasted for about nine days, after which her speech returned, and she was "well and happy, and able to go about, and attend to business." See Lee, 218, 281, 316-18.

in his service. My path was radiant before me, no shadow clouded the light that revealed to me the perfect will of God.¹⁰⁶

The night after receiving “so great a blessing,” Ellen went to a hall where “the Advent people worshiped” and there related what God had done for her. Elder Stockman, who was present at the meeting, was deeply moved by her experience. Soon thereafter she was asked to give her testimony at a conference being held in the Portland Christian Church. Upon hearing her experience, many wept, others praised God, and when “sinners were invited to arise for prayers,” many responded to the call.¹⁰⁷ However, the reaction of the Methodists to Ellen’s testimony at a Methodist class meeting was not so positive. She had indicated that belief in the imminent return of Christ had been instrumental in her sanctification experience because it had “stirred” her “soul” to “seek more earnestly for the sanctification of the Spirit of God.” According to Ellen, “The class leader interrupted me, saying, ‘you received sanctification through Methodism, through Methodism, sister, not through an erroneous theory.’”¹⁰⁸

The significance that Ellen White placed upon this experience is evident in her various autobiographical editions. In 1860 she wrote, “I had at last found the blessing I had so long sought for—entire conformity to the will of God. . . . I have not since, for so long a time, been perfectly free in the Lord.”¹⁰⁹ And in 1876 she declared, “For six months not a shadow clouded my mind, nor did I neglect one known duty.”¹¹⁰

Ellen White did not specifically identify her experience as “entire” sanctification, but it seems apparent that she regarded it as such at the time. The experience was preceded by prayer for the blessing of sanctification and holiness of heart. It included physical prostration, which was seen by many Methodists as one evidence of “entire” sanctification. Even though she had questioned the necessity and validity of such physical manifestations, she had doubted the genuineness of her conversion without them. After experiencing physical prostration, she wrote of the experience as part of the “witness of the Spirit” that her sins had been pardoned. Her declarations that she lived in “complete conformity to the will of God,” and that for six months she was completely at peace with God, felt love in her heart, and “did not neglect one known duty” seem consistent with the Methodist understanding of Christian perfection associated with “entire” sanctification, and thus provide strong evidence that she conceived of the experience as “entire” sanctification. Her subsequent use of the term

¹⁰⁶White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:26.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, 46.

¹⁰⁹White, *Spiritual Gifts*, 1:22, 27.

¹¹⁰White, *Signs of the Times Articles*, 1:26.

“sanctified” in talking with Methodists about the experience seems to substantiate this conclusion.

Conclusion

Methodism, as communicated to Ellen White by her parents and church, was a primary factor in the development of her early religious experience. The Methodist emphasis on sanctification, and especially the renewed emphasis on “entire” sanctification during her childhood and teen years undoubtedly contributed significantly to her own emphasis on sanctification, especially in her early writings.

Ellen White’s injury at the age of nine, and its physical and emotional results, helped to shape her spiritual life and make her more sensitive to religious issues and interests. It seems likely that feelings of inferiority because of her disfigurement and inability to remain in school with her peers added to her interest in the Millerite message and her desire for Christ to come very soon, since His coming could bring deliverance from her condition. At the same time, however, her understanding of Methodist teachings concerning “entire” sanctification and her continuing inability to experience the emotional exaltation and joy with which she associated it because of feelings of discontent with God for allowing her injury and unhappiness, led to intense feelings of guilt and fear of Christ’s return. The dynamic tension between desire for Christ’s return and fear of His return was eased by her dream of seeing Jesus and subsequent experience of “entire” sanctification.

Ellen White’s insistence that it was belief in Christ’s return that led her to seek earnestly for sanctification was not unjustified. However, it must be recognized that Methodism played a very significant role also, since it placed great emphasis on the need for “entire” sanctification and defined its nature, conditions, and results.

Suggestions for Further Study

First, in later years Ellen White rejected belief in instantaneous “entire” sanctification and held that while justification is the work of a moment, sanctification is the work of a lifetime. A study of how and why this change occurred could be helpful.

Second, Ellen White’s beliefs in the condition of believers after the “close of probation” appears to somewhat parallel the condition expected by Methodists in “entire” sanctification. A study of the similarities and differences could lead to greater understanding of Ellen White’s eschatology.

CLEANLINESS AND HOLINESS: PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

WILLIAM C. ANDRESS, DrPH

Old Testament theology is a portrayal of God's attempts to restore the broken relationship that exists between people and their Creator. Genesis begins with God proclaiming each act of creative reality to be "good," until in its completed totality it is declared to be "very good" (Gen 1:3).¹ As the crown jewel of that magnificent handiwork, mankind was included in this proclamation. Fashioned in God's "own image and after His likeness" (v. 27), mankind was given dominion over the earth and its creatures (v. 28). However, in an attempt to achieve equality with Divinity (Gen 3:5), Adam found himself instead to be separated and in open rebellion. He had surrendered his allegiance to a foe. His offspring quickly sank into degradation (chaps. 3-6), a far cry from what God had ordained in the beginning. Throughout the ensuing oracles of Genesis, numerous pictures depict God's efforts to reconcile lost humanity to Himself.

It was God's intention that the reconciliation process be consummated by the nation of Israel. Prior to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, Moses was reminded of the covenant relation that had been established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I *am* the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for an heritage: I *am* the Lord. Exod 6:4-8

¹Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the KJV.

After 215 years of Egyptian exile,² the Abrahamic covenant was about to be actualized, both physically and redemptively. Bondage to Egypt was to be eradicated. The Israelite nation headquartered in Canaan was to be exalted as God's special people of the covenant.

Geographically, Egyptian residency terminated with the crossing of the Red Sea. Yet figuratively, Egypt continued with the Israelites. Physically, this was demonstrated by the mixed multitude; spiritually, it was illustrated by an incessant craving for the pleasures of Egypt (Num 11: 4-6). If Israel was to be Yahweh's holy nation (Exod 19: 6), a holy, special people above all other nations (Deut 7:6), a holy people unto the Lord (14:2), then it was mandatory that a sanctifying process or cleansing, take place between the Red Sea and the Promised Land. Without it Israel could never maintain her part of the covenant. Both Sinai, where God's holy and eternal law was proclaimed, and the wilderness wanderings, which offered daily opportunity for character development, were key elements in God's plan to transform the seed of Abraham. His ultimate goal was that Israel, as His chosen people, would be holy, even as He was holy.

Nowhere is this concept more clearly expounded than in the book of Leviticus. Indeed, the expression, "Be holy for I am holy," could accurately be termed the motto of this book.³ "Holy" (*qādōsh*), together with cognate terms such as "sanctify" (*qādēsh*) and "holiness" (*qōdesh*), occur 152 times in this book alone, about twenty percent of the total number of occurrences in the entire OT.⁴

What then was the essence of the meaning of "holiness" to the author of the Levitical laws? In marked contrast to the animistic "belief in which natural objects are invested with supernatural force,"⁵ holiness speaks of an innate quality understood to mean "that which is unapproachable or withdrawn from common use."⁶ Moses impressed the Israelites with the possessiveness of the term. It was more than something that was simply unapproachable or withdrawn. Rather, "to be holy" became a positive concept, an extension of God's will. Fundamentally, it meant to live the life of godliness.⁷ Holiness thus moved from being a rational idea to a condition, a personal quality. W. Eichrodt states correctly, "The man or woman who belongs to God must possess a particular kind of nature, which by

²"The Chronology of Early Bible History," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (SDABC), rev. ed., ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington DC: Review & Herald, 1976-80), 1:184-86.

³B. L. Gordon, *Medieval and Renaissance Medicine* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 18.

⁴Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 18.

⁵Jacob Milgrom, "The Biblical Diet Laws as an Ethical System," *Interpretation* 17 (1963): 293.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

comprising at once outward and inward, ritual and moral purity will correspond to the nature of the holy God."⁸

This matter of holiness was not an option for the Israelites. Indeed, "Israel had to be holy, for her God, Yahweh, was holy."⁹ Included in the meaning of the word were the attributes of sanctification, cleanness, purity, being set apart, and separation from sin. "In the Levitical context, *to be holy is to be whole, complete; to be one—holiness in unity, integrity, and perfection of the individual.*"¹⁰ To the children of Israel, it meant to live "a life entirely dedicated to God and to be set apart for His use."¹¹

Therefore, a critical question that needs to be addressed is, "How was God's ideal, this elevated state of holiness, to be effectually realized?" In over two centuries of Egyptian bondage, Abraham's descendants had become mentally blinded and debased by slavery and heathenism.¹² Israel had adopted egregious idolatrous practices while the knowledge of God's holy law had been lost sight of and replaced with pagan customs and ideas.¹³ The nation was utterly unprepared to be the holy people according to the ideals of the Abrahamic covenant. To bring them from a state of depravity and make them worthy of being the recipients of these sacred precepts, Yahweh spelled out in precise language the very procedures necessary for this transformation to take place. To be God's chosen people Israel had to be holy because God is holy. To that end a process of cleansing or sanctifying had to take place.

In addition to religious instruction, Levitical statutes address a wide spectrum of human health issues. Examples include sexual morality, personal hygiene, quarantine of communicable diseases, burial of human excreta, measures for the prevention of the spread of fungal diseases, prohibitions against tattooing, and dietary restrictions. To understand those laws which had a bearing on the day-to-day physical life, it is helpful to understand the conditions that existed in Egypt during the XVIIIth dynasty.¹⁴ Further, archaeological records reveal that morality had reached the lowest depths of decadence. Marriage between siblings, especially amongst royalty, was common.¹⁵ Such consanguineous marriages were the rule

⁸W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 1:137.

⁹Walter Kaiser, *Toward and Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 111.

¹⁰M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1966), 4. Emphasis mine.

¹¹Kaiser, 116.

¹²Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1958), 10.

¹³*Ibid.*, 333, 334.

¹⁴Cf. "The Chronology of Early Bible History," *SDABC*, 1:188-94.

¹⁵H. E. Sigerist, *Primitive and Archaic Medicine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 239.

rather than the exception. For example, Ramses II had at least 170 children¹⁶ and took a large number of his acknowledged daughters as his wives in order to have "children like unto himself."¹⁷ Brothels were well established institutions since prostitution was an accepted practice.¹⁸ Such promiscuity resulted in extensive blindness due to gonorrheal infections passed on from mothers to their newborns.¹⁹

In marked contrast, Israel was to be a holy people. Not only were such abominable practices to be shunned, they were punishable by death (Lev 20:25). The apodictic law thundered from Sinai proclaimed, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exod 20:14). To clarify, specific explicit instructions were given, detailing types of sexual relationships that were unholy (Lev 18, 20). The gonorrhea that afflicted the Egyptians would have been a natural result of disobedience to the above commandment (Deut 28:27-29). In fact, it is likely that the plague that emaciated the Israelite camp after it had engaged in intercourse with the Edomites, was a particularly virulent strain of a sexually transmitted disease.²⁰

It was by appeal to religious values that hygienic laws were also established.²¹ Cleanliness was to encompass the whole camp, not just individuals. In the region of the Nile, the rudiments of personal hygiene existed. For example, daily bathing was commonplace.²² Nothing that was impure was allowed into the temple, the dwelling place of the deity. Washing areas were even installed in the courtyards of temples so that hands could be washed prior to religious ceremonies.²³ However, such practices were nowhere near as extensive as those found in the Mosaic Health Code with its detailed emphasis on personal cleanliness. Some of these procedures included:

Incinerators placed outside the camp for waste disposal

The skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt. Lev 4:11-12

¹⁶Ibid., 241.

¹⁷J. Thorwald, *Science and the Secrets of Early Medicine* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1963), 90.

¹⁸Sigerist, 91.

¹⁹Ibid., 334. The Canaanites were even more corrupt. Their vile practices included ritual prostitutes of both sexes, bestiality, and human sacrifices. (Cf. Lev 20:2-5).

²⁰C. R. Smith, *The Physician Examines the Bible* (New York: Hallmark-Hubner, 1950), 73.

²¹P. Wood, *Moses: The Founder of Preventive Medicine* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1920), 47-48.

²²Sigerist, 246.

²³J. B. Hurry, *IMHOTEP, the Vizier and Physician of King Zoser and Afterward the Egyptian God of Medicine* (New York: AMS Press, 1978), 166.

Human excreta buried outside the camp

Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad: and thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shall be, when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee. Deut 23:12-13

The priests as physical and spiritual examples

Speak unto Aaron saying, "Whosoever *he be* of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God. For whatsoever man *he be* that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous, or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, or crookbakt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed or hath his stones broken; no man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God. Lev 21:17-21

Sterilization procedures

Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, "This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses; only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead, everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make *it go* through the fire, and it shall be clean: nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water. And ye shall wash your clothes the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp." Num 31:21-24

R. Hubbard points out that *Young's Analytical Concordance* lists 63 separate texts in the laws of the Pentateuch where the word "wash" is used. Washing preceded the eating of food, serving in the sanctuary, offering a sacrifice, and was to follow childbirth and sexual intercourse.²⁴ Upon recovery from disease, an individual had to pass a purification test.²⁵

The above examples provide strong evidence that cleanliness was associated with holiness while uncleanness was associated with unholiness. Thus cleanliness and godliness were very much akin to each other. Spiritual cleanness could not be attained apart from physical purity. No filth, whether physical or spiritual, could be tolerated by a holy God. And so God declared that as His chosen people, Israel should be "holy even as He was holy."

²⁴R. Hubbard, Syllabus for Historical Perspectives of Health, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, CA, 1975. (See p. 27).

²⁵Smith, 32.

The book of Leviticus knows of nothing that is beyond God's control or concern. All aspects of life: religious (chaps. 21-24), sexual (chaps. 18,20), neighborly relationships (chaps. 19, 25), atonement for sin (chap. 16), and even our diet (chap. 11), are important to the Covenant Redeemer. To be certain, God was careful to institute guidelines or principles in the Mosaic Health Code that were designed to prevent diseases. These are illustrated in the chart below.

EXAMPLES FROM THE MOSAIC HEALTH CODE

PRINCIPLE	TEXT	DISEASE PREVENTED
Sexual Morality	Exod 20:14: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Lev 18:22: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind." Lev 19:29: "Do not prostitute thy daughter."	STDs AIDS
Burial of Human Excreta	Deut 23:12,13: "When thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig . . . and cover that which cometh from thee."	Gastrointestinal diseases, Typhoid, Cholera, Other vector-borne diseases.
Incineration of Waste	Lev 4:11- 12: "Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place . . . and burn him on the wood with fire."	Vector-spread diseases
Sterilization Procedures	Num 31:21-23: ". . . everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean . . . and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water."	Various infections
Personal Hygiene	Lev 15:13: "He shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water."	Communicable diseases
Quarantine or Communicable Diseases	Num 5:2, 3: "Put out of the camp every leper every one who hath an issue. . . without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps."	Communicable and infectious diseases, especially leprosy and skin diseases

Tattooing Forbidden	Lev 19:28: "Ye shall not make any cutting in your flesh for the dead."	Hepatitis, Tetanus
Prevention of Fungal Disease	Lev 13:47-59: Care of clothing. Lev 14:38-42: Treatment of houses.	Allergies, Spore-borne diseases
Exercise and Rest	Exod 20:8-11: "Six days shalt thou labor, but the seventh day is the Sabbath . . . in it thou shalt not work."	Stress related illness. Maintenance of physical fitness
Low Fat and low Cholesterol Diet	Lev 3:17: "Eat neither fat nor blood." Lev 7:23-26: Eat no manner of fat of ox or sheep or goat	Heart disease. Cancer, and Diabetes

Clean and Unclean Meats

Because Seventh-day Adventists have emphasized Lev 11 more than any other chapter in the book of Leviticus, with the possible exception of chap. 16, I would like to address the issue of clean and unclean meats in some detail. It must be recognized that it is within the context of holiness that the distinction between clean and unclean foods is made. After explicitly defining what is clean and what is unclean, the following proclamation is made:

For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I *am* holy. . . For I *am* the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy. Lev 11:44-45

Again it must be emphasized that "holiness" meant entire separation from heathen, worldly practices. Israel was to exemplify God's holy ideals to the nations with regard to sexual purity, personal hygiene, control of environmental pollution, disease free environs, and obedience to God's commandments and statutes. But why should diet have anything to do with physical cleanliness, not to mention sanctification? What difference would partaking of a pork chop versus a beef steak make in one's relationship with God? Why should certain aquatic life be clean and acceptable while other creatures swimming in the same waters be relegated to uncleanness?

Biblical scholars cite about five possible underlying reasons for the Levitical distinction between clean and unclean meats.²⁶ Following is a brief evaluation of

²⁶Cf. Wenham, 166; Milgrom, 288-301.

each position. Since the hygienic stance is the one usually forwarded by Seventh-day Adventists, it will be addressed last.

The Distinction is Arbitrary

This position assumes that the rationale behind the distinction is known only to God. If He made a distinction, then it must be regarded precisely, whether or not there is any logical moral or physiological explanation.²⁷ Though this was the view of some of the rabbis, Wenham recommends it only as a last resort.²⁸ God is reasonable and He puts reasonable demands upon His people. Because of who He is, He does have the right to be arbitrary, but such a label should not be automatically attached to that which is obscure to human intellect. In this instance, the weight of evidence is so great as to deem arbitrariness to be implausible.

The Distinction is Based on Cultic Grounds

There appears to be some tenability for this explanation. Both M. Noth and Eichrodt support this position²⁹ on the basis that the pig was an ancient sacrificial and domestic animal that was used for food. In researching food taboos, F. J. Simoons could find "no hint of negative reaction to pigs or pork throughout the early period of pig keeping in Egypt."³⁰ In fact, Pharaoh, himself possessed pigs and they were bred on the temple grounds at Abydos, the "most sacred place in all Egypt."³¹ Mice, serpents, and hares were regarded in magical belief as especially effective media of demonic power.³² Fried mouse was an Egyptian remedy for toothache.³³

While cultic practices of the Egyptians and Canaanites were taboo to the Israelites, the above explanation cannot be accepted as the major impetus for forbidding unclean foods. The Canaanites sacrificed the same general range of animals as did Israel. The bull in particular was an important cultic mammal in both Egyptian and Canaanite ritual.³⁴ Because of the bull's esteem in Egypt, Israel

²⁷Cf. A. Bonar, *A Commentary on Leviticus*, 5th ed. (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1966), 209.

²⁸Wenham, 166.

²⁹M. Noth, *Leviticus: A Commentary*, rev. ed., trans. J. E. Anderson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 91-96; Eichrodt, 134.

³⁰F. J. Simoons, *Eat Not This Flesh: Food Avoidances in the Old World* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961), 15.

³¹Ibid.

³²Eichrodt, 134, 135.

³³P. Ghalioungui, *The House of Life: Magic and Medicine in Ancient Egypt* (Amsterdam: B. M. Israel, 1973), 130, 146.

³⁴Wenham, 167.

did not engage in sacrificial offerings while in captivity.³⁵ In the ancient Egyptian Medical Papyri, both bull's blood and pig's blood were prescribed for certain ailments.³⁶ It seems logical that if pagan ritual was the reason behind the separation of clean and unclean animals, then either the cow should have been considered unclean, or the swine clean. Certain heathen customs were indeed forbidden on moral grounds, but nowhere is such an explanation given for the separation recorded in Lev 11 and Deut 14.

The Distinction is Based on Ethical Grounds

Milgrom agrees that several factors may have been involved but emphasizes that "in no manner can they begin to account for the biblical dietary system in its entirety. . . . Of all the theories, only the ethical one best fits the facts; to teach reverence for life through restricted access to animal life for food."³⁷ The laws were intended to have an immediate effect upon the consciousness of the Hebrew. Such statutes would make him abhor cruelty to animals as a monstrous crime; such abhorrence would then extend beyond animal life to the ultimate goal of reverence for human life. Ritual was necessary for a pragmatic display of lofty principles of life.

Such arguments leave one wondering why the distinctions are made in the manner in which they are. Could not the same reverence for life be taught using different criteria to determine what is clean and what is not? It seems that the logical conclusion to be drawn from an ethical approach would be abstinence from all flesh foods, not just an arbitrary division between clean and unclean meats.

The Distinction is Based on Symbolic Grounds

The symbolic interpretation allegorizes the behavior and habits of clean animals into living examples of how righteous Israel should live. In opposition, the lifestyles of the unclean symbolize sinful humanity. According to Douglas, well known approaches to the allegorizing tradition include the first century Epistle of Barnabas and Bishop Challomer's notes on the Westminster Bible at the beginning of the twentieth century.³⁸ Such an approach can be dangerous in that it offers no hermeneutic guidelines, thereby resulting in an *ad infinitum* possibility of interpretations. An illustration of the lengths that such allegorization may be taken to is Bonar's assertion that each animal is designed to teach people something about their relationship with God. The camel, an unclean animal that in some ways

³⁵White, 333.

³⁶C. D. Leake, *The Old Egyptian Medical Papyri* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1952), 79.

³⁷Milgrom, 296.

³⁸Douglas, 47, 48.

is similar to the clean ruminants, merely teaches that it is safe to trust God in areas of doubt. Conies teach that we are to hide from the least appearance of evil. The pig impresses us with the filth of iniquity. The Lord as shepherd, God's sustaining providence, the saint panting after his Savior, and the beauty of holiness are illustrated through the clean sheep, wild goat, hart, and roebuck, respectively.³⁹

Douglas attempts to give guidelines to avoid such tangents. All of these injunctions must be explained by the command to be holy.⁴⁰ The concept of holiness is developed to the point that it means correct definition and discrimination; it is order, not confusion.⁴¹ To put it another way, "the notion underlying holiness and cleanness was wholeness and normality."⁴² The analogy between holiness in humanity and cleanness in animals extends to the point that creatures conform to the standards of the biological group to which they belong just as a person must conform to the norms of moral and physical perfection.⁴³ Cud-chewing, cloven-hoofed mammals are the proper kind of food for a pastoralist.⁴⁴ Any creature digressing from the normal order of things would then be considered unclean. Split hooves and rumination were criteria for normalcy among land animals. Fins and scales were characteristics of proper aquatic life. Predatory fowls were classified as unclean because feasting on carnage and carnivorous lifestyles were contrary to holding life sacred. Unfortunately, such reasoning leaves Douglas to conclude that there is no deeper reason for the prohibition against swine than its failure to live up to the criteria of being a ruminant.⁴⁵

There are a number of arguments against establishing symbolism as the primary intent of the dietary restrictions given by God to Moses. Distinctive classes of clean and unclean did not originate at Sinai but prior to the Flood (Gen 7:2). Leviticus only enumerates what had already been established. Further, the Bible does not equate cleanness with that which is edible while uncleanness is associated with that which is inedible. Proper equivalents that are better suited for such distinctions are "pure" in contrast with "defiled."⁴⁶ Allegorization disavows the correlation between healthful living and spiritual growth.

³⁹Bonar, 214.

⁴⁰Douglas, 48.

⁴¹Ibid., 53.

⁴²Wenham, 169.

⁴³Douglas, 14.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., 55.

⁴⁶Robert Young, *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, 22d American ed., s.v. "cleanness;" "uncleanness."

The Distinction is Based on Hygienic Grounds

The proponents of symbolism are adamant in decrying the trend of the twentieth century to make Moses an enlightened public health administrator. While allowing for the fact that there might be some hygienic values undergirding these statutes, they feel that the Israelites themselves did not regard them as such.⁴⁷

In the Torah, it is not necessary for God to preface His decrees with physiological reasoning every time He addresses a distinct segment of human existence. Yet on several occasions the correlation between freedom from disease and obedience to God's commandments is made. Such notable passages include:

If ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them . . . the Lord will take away from thee all sickness and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee. Deut 7: 12, 15

If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book . . . He will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt. Deut 28: 58; 60

If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee. Exod 15: 26

Here is definite evidence that obedience to God results not only in spiritual blessings but also physical health. Disobedience inevitably leads to disease. The true impact of the conditional promise in Exod 15:26 can only be realized when its magnitude is properly understood. Translations of medical papyri, as well as autopsies performed on Egyptians mummies disclose that prevalent diseases in ancient Egypt included chronic rheumatism, dental caries, smallpox, schistosomiasis, arthritis, tuberculosis, staph infections, pneumonia, pleurisy, digestive illnesses, gout, kidney stones, atherosclerosis, constipation, polio, bubonic plague, dysentery, cholera, malaria, gonorrhea, visceral pains, urinary disorders, epilepsy, fevers, and a wide assortment of diseases caused by poor sanitation in general.⁴⁸

Medical historians agree that the height of ancient Egyptian medical perspicuity was during the XVIIIth dynasty,⁴⁹ roughly about the time of the Exodus. The priest-physician had access to several very valuable medical texts. They contained a mixture of magic, sorcery, and ignorance intertwined with scientifically rational therapy. Since the official doctors belonged to the class of priests, and their training centered around the temples, it is likely that Moses had

⁴⁷See Wenham, 167; Douglas, 29.

⁴⁸Thorwald, 34-46.

⁴⁹Leake, 35, 36.

been educated in the healing arts of the time. Yet within the Mosaic Health Code, not even a fragment of Egyptian medicine can be found. Rather than being curative, the Mosaic Health Code is entirely preventive. The dietary laws formed a part of that system of preventive medicine. They also had significant religiosity in that God was trying to impress upon Israel the fact that breaking a law of physical well-being was just as much a defilement as it was to break one of the Ten Commandments.⁵⁰

The general connection between health and holiness needs to be extended to the specific distinctions between clean and unclean meats. Most theologians bypass the fact that such laws were casuistic, matters of conscience having particular importance at only a certain time and place in history, namely the wandering in the wilderness. It must be reiterated that in the beginning God never intended for mankind to eat flesh of any kind. Yahweh was not making arbitrary ritual demands upon His holy people but was rather giving instruction for their betterment, intending to eventually bring them back to the original vegetarian diet.⁵¹ To aid the Israelites in making the transition from flesh-eating to vegetarianism, the animals most likely to cause diseases were forbidden. The animals deemed unclean were the carnivores, the scavengers, the so-called "garbage collectors." God knew that eating such flesh would so enfeeble the brain that sacred things could not be discerned.⁵²

Even with those animals deemed as clean, strict instruction was given regarding their preparation. "It shall be a perpetual statute . . . that ye eat neither fat nor blood" (Lev 3:17). And to be doubly sure that the Israelites understood that He was talking about the "clean" animals, a few verses later God spelled it out very clearly, "Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat . . . Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast" (Lev 7:23 -26). Was it permissible to eat clean animals? Yes. But clear prohibitions were given against consuming their fat and blood. Considering that more than eighty diseases can be transmitted from animals to humans,⁵³ the most logical conclusion seems to be that even the clean meats were not intended to become a permanent part of the diet. But to the Israelites, the ritual became an end unto itself and they failed to understand the connection between physical habits and spiritual health. Thus, even on the borders of Canaan they still lusted after the diet they had eaten while in Egyptian servitude.

Wenham is quite accurate when he states that the dietary laws were for specific people in a specific situation; that they were part of the blueprint for

⁵⁰Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Washington DC: Review & Herald, 1938), 17.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 378.

⁵²Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948) 1:9.

⁵³Otto H. Christensen, "Diet and Spiritual Health," *Review*, September 1976, 153.

making Israel holy.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, instead of perceiving God's desire to ultimately bring His people back to the original diet, he suggests that in the Christian dispensation there is no longer any reason for making a distinction between "clean" and "unclean" animals; hence, all flesh is permissible for food.

In general, Seventh-day Adventists have also missed the casuistic intent of Lev 11. If we are going to selectively choose which parts of the Levitical laws are binding on Christians today, then we should at least be consistent and also teach *complete abstinence from all animal fat and blood*. The Levitical message is straightforward in this aspect.

Paul clearly understood the intent of Leviticus. He begged the Jewish Christians in Rome, "I beseech you therefore, brethren . . . that ye present your *bodies* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world. . . ." (Rom 12:1,2).

In the final analysis, the spirit of holiness cannot be attained with diseased bodies and minds.⁵⁵ Holiness is not possible while the body is being polluted with the unclean. The message communicated throughout Leviticus may be paraphrased in modern parlance, "You are my special people. As such, you are to be separate from heathen practices of the nations around you. The state of holiness is so lofty that you were not even able to conceptualize it. Therefore, as part of the covenant relationship, I am going to instruct you in the way of holiness." Such instruction pervades more than just the moral law embodied in the Ten Commandments. It involves more than a ritual of sacrifices and offerings. It envelopes holiness and sanctification and is deeply concerned with every aspect of living: flocks and herds, houses, work, leisure, and certainly diet. Israel could never be "holy" as long as they were living the lifestyle practiced in Egypt. Geographical separation was not enough. The camp could only be clean, the people could only be sanctified, when they stopped lusting after the Egyptian lifestyle. This was a lesson that Israel never learned and the consequences were far reaching. Ellen G. White's comment is quite insightful:

Had they been willing to deny appetite in obedience to God's restrictions, feebleness and disease would have been unknown to them. Their descendants would have possessed physical and mental strength. They would have had clear perceptions of truth and duty, keen discrimination, and sound judgment. But they were unwilling to submit to God's requirements, and they failed to reach the standard He had set for them. . . God let them have flesh but it proved a curse to them.⁵⁶

The essence of Leviticus, then, is that physical life is enmeshed with spiritual sanctification. One cannot be separated from the other. To relegate the Levitical

⁵⁴Wenham, 161.

⁵⁵White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 1:554.

⁵⁶White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 378.

laws to mere ritual is to miss their intent. To make the ceremonies all-important is to obliterate their purpose. To rebel against them is to engender destruction.

A Historical Application

In 1348, the Black Death (bubonic plague), the worst epidemic the world has ever seen, broke out in Europe and continued for the next 40 years. It is estimated that between two thirds and three fourths of the entire population of Europe was decimated.⁵⁷ So many died that the pope consecrated the Rhone River as a final burial place for the afflicted.⁵⁸ H. W. Haggard indicates that the plague threatened to exterminate the human race.⁵⁹

It is interesting to note that 800 years earlier a similar outbreak of bubonic plague, called the Plague of Justinian, ushered in the Dark Ages. It too ravaged the whole known world, wreaking its devastation for seventy years. A whole host of plagues and epidemics flourished between these two outbreaks of bubonic plague including leprosy, smallpox, diphtheria, measles, influenza, tuberculosis, anthrax, cholera, and syphilis.

What caused these pandemics that nearly wiped out the human race? A clue can be found in the burial of Thomas A. Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was murdered in 1170. When the monks undressed him for burial, they found lice everywhere in his undergarments "like boiling water."⁶⁰ Under papal Christianity, the Levitical emphasis on cleanliness had become lost. The pagan Greek belief that the soul is good but the body is evil and, therefore should be shunned, was adopted into papal dogma. As a result, personal hygiene and health were neglected. Living in filth became a sign of sanctity. In summarizing medical historians on this point, Hubbard states that throughout the Middle Ages cleanliness was a sign of weakness, and worldliness, and luxury.⁶¹ He concludes,

While the squalor and dirty habits may have been the physical cause, the intellectual stagnation of the Dark Ages which produced ignorance of the simplest rules of hygiene and sanitation would be closer to the truth. . . . Religious dogma, which had no basis in Scripture, produced results which still baffle historians and medical researchers.⁶²

⁵⁷Gordon, 462.

⁵⁸L. S. Goerke and E. L. Stebbins, *Mustard's Introduction to Public Health*, 5th ed., (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 10, 11.

⁵⁹H. W. Haggard, *The Doctor in History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934), 174-178.

⁶⁰A. Swinson, *The History of Public Health* (Exeter: Wheaton, 1966), 19.

⁶¹Hubbard, 144.

⁶²Ibid., 154-54.

Application for Today

First recognized as a distinct clinical entity in 1981, AIDS has since claimed the lives of over 21 million people. Approximately 16,000 new infections occur daily.⁶³ Had the sexual guidelines in Lev 18 been carried out, it would have been impossible ever to have an AIDS epidemic.

In some parts of the world we see the effects of not properly disposing waste and garbage and of not having proper sanitary measures for eliminating excrement. As a result gastroenteritis, intestinal parasites, typhoid, cholera, trachoma, schistosomiasis, and skin diseases are endemic in many developing countries. Yet, the amount of human waste pales in comparison to that produced by animals that are being raised for food. In the United States the livestock industry produces 250,000 pounds of excrement a second. This is 20 times more excrement than that produced by the entire human population of the country.⁶⁴ In America, a typical egg factory with 60,000 hens produces 165,000 pounds of waste per week while a pork operation of just 2000 pigs produces four tons of manure and five tons of urine, not in a week, but every day.⁶⁵

Further, it is the high consumption of animal foods in developed countries that is leading to huge morbidity and mortality numbers due to heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Today, in almost every Pacific Rim country, these are now the top three killers, whereas just 25-30 years ago they were almost unheard of in that part of the world. Even in the Philippines, heart disease is now the number one cause of death.⁶⁶

Perhaps it is time that the book of Leviticus, especially those verses containing parts of the Mosaic Health Code, be re-examined. Could it be that we are in danger of making the same mistakes as did the Israelites of the Exodus, or Christians in the Dark Ages?

The book of Leviticus is not about animal sacrifices. It is not about ritual cleansing. It is not about "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." Instead, it is about becoming and being clean: clean in our personal habits, clean in taking care of our environment, and clean in our relationships toward one another. The underlying theme throughout is that sinful, filthy, depraved, unclean mankind cannot stand in the sight of God unless he is sanctified. Cleanliness on the outside is indicative of a sanctifying process that has occurred on the inside. Without either, neither man nor woman, can ever be completely whole.

⁶³P. F. Basch, *Textbook for International Health* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 473.

⁶⁴John Robbins, *A Diet for a New America* (Walpole: Stillpoint, 1987), 372.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶National Statistical Coordination Board, *1998 Philippine Statistical Yearbook* (Makati City, Philippines: The National Statistical Information Center, 1998), 9-14.

THE JUDEAN REMNANT IN THE CONTEXT OF JUDGMENT IN JEREMIANIC THOUGHT

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The remnant motif is quite widespread in the book of Jeremiah. There are about sixty-eight explicit references to remnant terminology in the book, not to mention the numerous places where the motif is implicit.¹ Interestingly, the majority of these passages underscore judgment.² They highlight God's punitive actions against Judah because of the people's iniquities. The present examination focuses on four consecutive passages that use the technical term *š^eʿirit*, in order to determine how the prophet described the phenomenon of judgment, specifically as it relates to the remnant motif.

Jer 6:9-15

Translation and Textual Considerations

Thus says the Lord of Hosts:

“Like a vine, they shall thoroughly glean Israel's remnant (*š^eʿirit*).³”

¹Surprisingly, few studies have focused on this important aspect. For further details, see my study, “The Remnant Motif in the Context of Judgment and Salvation in the Book of Jeremiah” (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 1995; Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1996), 34-76.

²We must not overlook the fact, however, that the prophet also held out hope for salvation and a bright future. *Ibid.*, 287-365.

³Several commentators, following the LXX, emend the Masoretic text (MT) *ôlâ ye' ôlâ*, “they shall thoroughly glean” to *ôlâ 'ôlâ* (infinitive and imperative) “glean, glean!” See John Bright, *Jeremiah*, AB, vol. 21 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 44; J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 255; Robert P. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster 1986), 194.

However, it is better to accept the MT, as explained by Peter C. Craigie, Page H. Kelley, and Joel F. Drinkard Jr., *Jeremiah 1-25*, WBC, vol. 26 (Waco, TX: Word, 1991), 102: “The comparison, basic to the poetic structure, changes from an object (‘the vine’) to a person (the ‘grape-cutter’).” Hereafter cited as CKD.

Like a vintager, pass your hand over the tendrils.”⁴

(10) To whom shall I speak and give solemn warning that they may listen?

Indeed, their ear is uncircumcised,⁵ so that they are unable to pay attention.

Indeed, the word of the Lord has become a reproach so⁶ that they take no pleasure in:

(11) But I am filled with the wrath of the Lord.⁷ I am weary of holding it in.

“Pour (it) out⁸ on the children in the streets and on the bands of young men together; for both husband along with wife⁹ will be taken; the old with (those) filled with age.¹⁰

(12)¹¹And their homes will be turned over to others, their fields and wives alike. For I will stretch out my hand against the inhabitants of the land,” says the Lord.

(13)“For from the least to the greatest of them, all are greedy for gain; from the prophet to the priest, all practice falsehood.

⁴MT *salsillôt*, “tendrils,” is a *hapax legomenon*, the sense being understood from the context.

⁵MT ^ʿ*rēlāh ʿoznām*, literally, “their ears have a foreskin.”

⁶Many Mss, Syr. and Vg. read *w^ʿlō* before the final phrase instead of MT *lō*. MT suggests a relative clause, “in which they take no pleasure.” The reading here allows for a parallel with the resulting clause above, “so that they are unable to pay attention.”

⁷MT *w^ʿēh^ʿma ʿdōnāy mālēʿi*, literally, “with the wrath of Yahweh, I (Jeremiah) am full.” *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) proposes reading *wa^ʿnī* (cf. Mic 3:8), “but as for me,” instead of *w^ʿē*. Following the LXX, *ton thumon mou*, “my wrath” (which equals *h^ʿmāʿ*), Yahweh, and not Jeremiah is the speaker. It will then read, “But as for me, my wrath is full.”

⁸MT reads *šepōk*, “pour out,” while LXX reads *ekcheō*, “I will pour it out,” which equals BHS’ proposed reading *šāpōk*.

⁹MT reads *gam-ʿiš- im- ʿiššāh*, literally, “both husband with wife.” It is possible to read, “both man and wife.”

¹⁰BHS proposes inserting *lō* before “filled with age” (haplography). A contrast is then made between the old and those *not* filled with age. As Carroll, 194, comments, “This is unnecessary in view of the grouping ‘man and wife . . . old and aged’ ascending from children and youths.”

¹¹Verses 12-15a are parallel to 8:10-12 with some slight variations and omissions. In v. 12, houses, fields, and wives are given to others, and Yahweh stretches out His hand against the inhabitants of the land, while in 8:10 wives and fields are given away, but nothing is said of houses or of Yahweh’s opposition against the inhabitants of the land.

(14) They have healed the wound of my people¹² superficially, saying, 'Peace! Peace!' But there is no peace.¹³

(15) They should have been ashamed because they did detestable things; but they were not ashamed; they do not know how to be ashamed.¹⁴ Therefore, they shall fall among the fallen; they will be brought down when I punish them,¹⁵ says the Lord.

Structure

The expression $\text{׃mar } \text{׃dōnāy}$, "says the Lord," forms an inclusio for the unit, vv. 9–15.¹⁶ The same expression starts a new section in v. 16.

The internal structure is that of a dialogue between the Lord and the prophet:

1. The Lord speaks of judgment (v. 9)
2. Jeremiah responds with a question and a complaint (vv. 10–11a)
3. The Lord answers, commenting on the nation's evil and impending judgment (vv. 11b–15).¹⁷

Historical Background

Since there are no specific datelines for developing the historical milieu behind this passage, commentators have seized on certain "hints" in an attempt to establish the setting. The expressions "gleaning" and "pass your hand once more" imply a prophecy of a two-stage judgment. W. L. Holladay believes that this

¹²Many MSS read *ba-ammī*, literally, "daughter of my people," meaning "poor people."

¹³MT $w^{\epsilon} \text{ ̣n } \text{šālôm}$, "but there is no peace," is read by the LXX as *kai pou estin eirēnē*, "and where is peace?" This equals $w^{\epsilon} \text{ ayēh}$ that BHS suggests inserting. The declarative statement of MT seems stronger than the interrogative.

¹⁴MT reads the hiphil infinitive construct *halīm*. Cf. the preferable niphil (passive) form in 8:12, *hikkālēm*.

¹⁵MT $p^{\epsilon} \text{ qatīm}$, "I punish them," is understood by the LXX as *episkopēs autōn*, "their visitation," which equals $p^{\epsilon} \text{ quddāām}$, as in 8:12. This latter reading renders, "They will be brought down at the time of their visitation/reckoning."

¹⁶Leading commentators see this as a unit: Wilhelm Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 3d ed., HAT 12 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1968), 38-39; Albert Condamin, *Le Livre de Jérémie*, 3d ed., Etudes Biblique (Paris: Lecoffre, 1936), 54; Bright, 49-50. Paul Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia*, KAT 10 (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1922), 73-79, sees a complicated unit: vv. 9-11a; 8:8-9; 6:11b-15 = 8:10b-12; idem, *Studien zum Text des Jeremia*, BWANT 25 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1920), 47-49.

¹⁷CDK, 102; W. L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 211.

suggests the fall of Samaria and the fall of Jerusalem.¹⁸ John Bright tentatively suggests the death of Josiah in 609 B.C.E. or sometime after the deportation from Jerusalem in 597 B.C.E.¹⁹

Since Jer 9:6-15 is a segment of a larger block (Jer 4:5-6:30),²⁰ which predicts divine judgment against Jerusalem using the agent of the "foe from the north," a designation for Babylon,²¹ it appears that the setting here is one immediately preceding Babylonian actions in 597 B.C.E.

Interpretation

The expression of divine judgment uses the image of a grape-picker or gleaner to indicate thorough-going, punitive action against the people. Enemy hosts who have already been summoned as instruments of judgments (5:10; 6:1) are the gleaners.²² As the remnant of the Israelite nation (that is, the combined kingdoms), Judah is likened to the vineyard and its forthcoming judgment is like the excision of the fruit from the vine. Even the remnant, that which is left over, will not escape the deserved punishment. There is no guarantee that it will remain and even faces the possibility of total destruction. Indeed, "the use of the word 'glean' and the reference to 'remnant' implies the totally comprehensive nature of the judgment."²³

¹⁸Holladay, 213. He dates the setting to December 601 or early in 602. Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia*, 75 and Rudolph, 45, opt for the fall of Samaria and suggest a date sometime between 625-622 B.C.E.

¹⁹Bright, 51.

²⁰For linkages between this and other parts of the block, fusing it as a single unit, see W. L. Holladay, *The Architecture of Jeremiah 1-20* (London: Associated University Press, 1976), 91, 92.

²¹James H. Gailey, "The Sword and the Heart: Evil from the North and Within, An Exposition of Jeremiah 4:5-6:30," *Interpretation* 9 (1955): 298; John Bright, "The Book of Jeremiah: Its Structure, Its Problems, and Their Significance for the Interpreter," *Interpretation* 9 (1955): 276; J. P. Hyatt, "The Peril from the North in Jeremiah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 59 (1940): 509; Brevard S. Childs, "The Enemy from the North and the Chaos Tradition," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 78 (1959): 187-98.

²²CDK, 103. Some exegetes assign the task of gleaning to Jeremiah, claiming that his "prophetic ministry, however fruitless it seemed, was a kind of grape harvesting, a gleaning of the vine of Israel." Thompson, 257. Cf. J. P. Hyatt, "Jeremiah: Introduction and Exegesis," *Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George A. Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon, 1951-57), 5:589; and Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 213.

²³CDK, 103; B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia*, KHAT 11 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1901), 67, sees the reference to the remnant as an eschatological gloss. He also relates the search for remaining grapes to Abraham's question regarding the fate of Sodom.

Although some exegetes insists that the idea of gleaning here is a positive image,²⁴ it is clear that the tone of the passage is wholly negative.²⁵ The imagery of “harvest” elsewhere is negative. Further, the action of passing the hand over the branches again (*hasēḥ yāḏkā*, “return your hand”) highlights a “mopping-up operation,”²⁶ where the harvesters/gleaners run their hands over the vine once again to pick any small clusters of remaining fruit. A note of finality is struck “because the harvesting of the grapes is the final stage of the summer’s work when the late fruit and vintage are gathered. It is also the final act for what is here gleaned is what’s left of Israel, *š^e ʿirīt yiśrāʾēl*.”²⁷

The objective of the gleaning of the remnant is that nobody escapes the deserved punishment. Indeed, “the utter destruction of Israel is envisaged by the image of the thoroughly gleaned vine.”²⁸

Jeremiah’s rhetorical query (v. 10a) concerns his listener: to whom should he speak? The remnant of v. 9? He protests that no one will listen to this word because their ears are uncircumcised. This may be a veiled way of speaking of the unfaithfulness of the people to the covenant, of which circumcision was the sign. Hence, uncircumcised ears may indicate bold refusal to listen to, and obey Yahweh’s word.

Jeremiah was so full of the Lord’s wrath that he was about to explode. Yahweh’s reply (vv. 11b–12) insists that Jeremiah must proclaim the word of judgment to all strata of society, for they were all equally guilty, clergy and people alike, of greed and unjust gain. Lulled into a sense of false security they had become morally blind (vv. 13–15). Hence, the divine oracle concludes, given the widespread nature of the nation’s practice of evil, that all will fall in the impending day of judgment. Even the remnant will be ravaged in the judgment. It is a situation of hopelessness.

²⁴John M. Berridge, *Prophet, People and the Hand of Yahweh: An Examination of Form and Content in the Proclamation of the Prophet Jeremiah*, Basel Studies of Theology 4 (Zürich: EVZ Verlag, 1970), 79. He claims that Jeremiah is to search for a “possible point of connection for Yahweh’s essential will of salvation for Judah.” See also Josef Schreiner, *Jeremia 1–25, 14*, Die Neue Echter Bibel (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1981), 50.

²⁵Cf. Judg 20:45 and Isa 17:4–6 where the same root (*ll*) is used as in Jer 6:9.

²⁶Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 213. He believes that it is possible to see *š^e ʿirīt*, “remnant,” as the reversal of *rē šīt*, “first fruits,” of Jer 2:3 where Israel was the firstfruits of Yahweh’s harvest. This harvest is then related to the vineyard. “It would be a temptation then to translate ‘remnant of Israel’ here as ‘first fruits’ of Israel.” *Ibid.*

²⁷Carroll, 195.

²⁸*Ibid.* This is the equivalent of the destruction rendered to the terraces and the stripping of the branches of the vineyard in 5:10.

Jer 8:1-3

Translation and Textual Considerations

(1) "At that time," says the Lord, "They shall bring forth the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem from their graves. (2) And they shall spread them out before the sun and the moon and the whole host of heaven whom they loved and served and followed and consulted and worshiped. They will not be gathered up or buried, but will be like dung on the face of the earth. And death will be preferred to life by all the remnant (*hašš²ērîl*) which remain (*hanniš²ārîm*) from this evil family, in all the remaining (*hanniš²ārîm*)²⁹ places where I have driven them," says the Lord.

Structure

Jer 8:1-3 forms a unit, the expression *ne²um²dōnāy*, "says the Lord," forming an inclusio (vv. 1,3). It is the concluding unit to a series of units extending from 7:1 to 8:3.³⁰ The entire section may be divided as follows:

1. God's command to Jeremiah to speak His word (7:1-2)
2. Jeremiah's response: The Temple Sermon (7:3-15)
3. God's command to Jeremiah not to pray for the people and His denunciation of their idolatry (7:16-20)
4. First oracle by Yahweh (7:21-28)
5. Second oracle by Yahweh (7:29-34)
6. Third oracle by Yahweh (8:1-3).³¹

²⁹BHS, following the LXX and Syr. suggest deleting *hanniš²ārîm*, "remaining," on dittographic grounds since two forms of the word are already present. But as CKD, 116, point out, "The duplicative style may be a further example of the prophet's prose style (cf. 7:4)."

³⁰Holladay, *The Architecture of Jeremiah 1-20*, 102-5, regards Jer 8:1-3 as a concluding appendix to the prose section 7:1-8:3. The key word *mākōm*, "place," is a literary thread linking the entire unit: 7:4,6,12,14,20,32, and 8:3. CKD, 120, say that the conjunction of "place(s)" and "Lord of Hosts" (7:3: 8:3) may constitute an inclusio for the narrative as a whole.

³¹It has been suggested that 7:29-8:3 is one unit: Rudolph, 55; H. L. Ellison, "The Prophecy of Jeremiah, Part XIII: The Shame of Judah," *Evangelical Quarterly* 34 (1962): 98. However, the inclusio in 8:1-3 is convincing enough to have separate units. Cf. Bright, *Jeremiah*, 58.

Historical Background

It is generally agreed that the material of 7:1-8:3 has a unity of theme that deals with the inviolability of the temple³² and the pursuit of heinous idolatrous practices such as child sacrifice and astral worship. These suggest a period shortly after 609 B.C.E. after Jehoiakim had assumed the throne and permitted such practices to return.³³

Interpretation

The entire block sounds an ominous note. Yahweh initially commands the prophet to stand in the temple gate and speak (vv. 1-2). In the Temple Sermon (vv. 3-15) Jeremiah attempts to persuade the people not to put their trust in the presence of the temple to protect them, and warns that Yahweh will destroy both temple and nation if they refuse to change their conduct. In vv. 16-20 Yahweh tells Jeremiah not to intercede on the behalf of the people and calls attention to their worship of the Queen of Heaven. Since this is a breach of covenant loyalty, it is not surprising that oracles of doom follow. The first oracle condemns the people for the attitude that the offering to sacrifice was a substitute for obedience. The second oracle condemns child sacrifice and other evils. The third oracle, which concerns us, is a condemnation of astral worship. While this oracle proclaims a future judgment ("at that time," vs. 1),³⁴ "the urgency of the prophet's message as a whole suggests the future is not too far distant."³⁵

The horror of the judgment is seen in the disinterment of the bones of the dead.³⁶ This exhumation is comprehensive in scope: the bones of the nobility and religious leaders, as well as ordinary citizens, will have no guarantee against

³²For the treatment of this theme, see J. Bright, *Covenant and Promise* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 49-77; and R. E. Clements, *Abraham and David: Genesis 15 and Its Meaning for Israelite Tradition*, Studies in Biblical theology, 2d series, 5 (Naperville, IN: Allenson, 1967), 76-80.

³³Thompson, 274; Bright, *Jeremiah*, 58.

³⁴This has prompted some to see these verses as coming after the fall of Jerusalem. See Carroll, 225. Holladay, *The Architecture of Jeremiah 1- 20*, 271, regards it as an exotic insertion.

³⁵CKD, 126.

³⁶This desecration of graves was common in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, both in terms of robbery and in ritual dishonoring. Ashurbanipal gives record of such action in his campaign against Susa, the capital of Elam. See Morton Cogan, "A Note on Disinterment in Jeremiah," in *Gratz College, Anniversary Volume*, ed. Isidore David Possaw and Samuel Tobias Lachs (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 30. R. K. Harrison, *Jeremiah and Lamentations*, TOTC (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1973), 88, suggests that the disinterment may be incidental in the process of constructing a siege ramp for the assault on Jerusalem.

abuse.³⁷ Further, the irony of the scene is highlighted in that the astral deities to which Judah gave so much devotion would look upon the exposed bones without being able to help.

The judgment also holds a note of finality and absoluteness. These exposed bones become like dung, useless and grotesque, with no possibility of reburial.³⁸ The force of the message now comes home in v. 3, that despite the desecration of the dead, the remnant would prefer death to life. This shows the enormity of the coming judgment. The exile would be so difficult that the remnant from "this evil family,"³⁹ those who survived the catastrophe of the invasion, would deem death preferable to life. Thompson sums it up correctly, "The lot of the survivors would be even more miserable than the fate of those who perished."⁴⁰

Jer 11:18-23

Translation and Textual Considerations

(18) The Lord made it known to me, so I knew; then you caused me to see their evil deeds. (19) But I was like a trusting lamb led to slaughter. I had not known that they had devised plots against me: "Let us destroy the tree with its sap in it,⁴¹ and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name be remembered no more."

(20)" O Lord of Hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart⁴² and the mind,⁴³ let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I

³⁷See further B. Lorenz, "Bemerkungen zum Totenkult im alten Testament," *Vetus Testamentum* 32 (1982): 229-34.

³⁸In 7:32 all of Topheth becomes one huge burial ground; in v. 33 there is no burial; and now in 8:3 there is unburial.

³⁹Thompson, 296, n. 3, correctly says that the "evil family" points to Judah, who at this stage represented all that remained of the former Israel.

⁴⁰Ibid. Jutta Hausmann, *Israels Rest: Studien zum Selbstverständnis der nachexilischen Gemeinde*, BWANT 7 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1987), 97, claims that the remnant here is positive. However, she fails to support her position.

⁴¹MT *našhitāh ʿēs b'lahmō*, "let us destroy the tree with its flesh." BHS; Thompson, 347; and CDK, 175, suggest *b'l ʿhō* for *b'lahmō* and read "in its sap." Cf. Deut 34:7. M. Dahood, "Ugaritic Studies and the Bible," *Gregorianum* 43 (1962): 66, agrees but treats the *mem* between the noun and the suffix as enclitic.

The LXX reads *deute kai embalōmon xulon eis ton arton autou*, "come and let us put wood into his bread." The words "wood" and "bread" led early Christians, notably Justin Martyr, to see the cross and body of Christ as being in view here. See F.C. Burkitt, "Justin Martyr and Jeremiah xi 19," *Journal of Theological Studies* 33 (1932): 371-73.

⁴²MT *k'lāyōt*, literally, "kidney."

⁴³MT *leb*, literally "heart."

have committed⁴⁴ my case/lawsuit.” (21) Therefore, thus said the Lord concerning the men of Anathoth who seek my life⁴⁵ saying, “Do not prophecy in the name of the Lord that you do not die by our hand.” (22) Therefore, thus says the Lord of Hosts, “Indeed, I will punish them; the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine. (23) And there shall be no remnant (*š^e-ʿivī*) of them. For I will bring evil on the men of Anathoth, the year of their punishment.”

Structure

Jer 11:18-12:6 is a dialogue between the prophet and Yahweh. It may be divided into four distinct sections: (1) Jeremiah’s complaint (11:18-20); (2) Yahweh’s answer (11:21-23); (3) Jeremiah’s complaint (12:1-4); and (4) Yahweh’s answer (12:5-6).⁴⁶

⁴⁴MT *gillitī*, “I have revealed,” is understood by BHS as *gallōfī*, “I have rolled upon,” that is, “entrusted” or “committed.” Cf. Ps 22:9 (Eng. v. 8); 37:5. See also Thompson, 347; CDK, 175; and Carroll, 275.

⁴⁵MT has “your life” but the LXX has “my life” fitting the context more smoothly.

⁴⁶Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 365, claims that originally 11:18-23 and 12:1-6 formed separate units and were only secondarily brought together. He is followed by CKD, 177, who give an outline of the components of the two units.

There is considerable debate regarding “assumed dislocations” in the text. Several rearrangements have been proposed: Bright, *Jeremiah*, 89-90, indicate the following: 12:1-6; 11:18-23; H. H. Rowley, “The Text and Interpretation of Jeremiah 11:18-12:6,” *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature* 42 (1926): 217-27, suggests 11:18; 12:6; 11:19-20; 12:1-3; 11:21-23; 12:4-5; W. Thiel, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25*, WMANT 41 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973), 159 points out the following: 11:18; 12:6; 11:19-23; 12:1-5. For further discussion see, Kathleen M. O’Connor, *The Confessions of Jeremiah: Their Interpretation and Role in Chapters 1-25*, SBL Dissertation Series 94 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1984), 7-26.

The question of structure is complicated by attempting to determine which verses are poetry and which are prose. See Walter Theophilus Woldemar Cloete, *Versification and Syntax in Jeremiah 2-25: Syntactical Constraints in Hebrew Colometry*, SBL Dissertation Series, 117 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1989), 166.

While scholars are divided on the form of the passage,⁴⁷ it may be construed as a lament, the basic components of which may be outlined as shown in Table 1.⁴⁸

<i>Formal Lament</i>	<i>1st Lament</i>	<i>2nd Lament</i>
Invocation	11:18	12:1a
Complaint	11:19	2:1b, 2
Prayer	11:20	12:3-4
Divine Response	11:21-23	12:5-6

This discussion is restricted to the first lament which deals specifically with the remnant motif.

Historical Background

This lament is born out of a plot against Jeremiah's life instigated by his own relatives and fellow townspeople of Anathoth.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, we cannot

⁴⁷The passage is generally seen as constituting one of the prophet's laments. O'Connor, 24, sees it as a creative adaptation of a psalm of individual lament that serves a particular theological purpose. Cf. Artur Weiser, *The Psalms*, OTL, trans. Herbert Hartwell (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 69; Claus Westermann, *The Psalms: Structure, Content and Message* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1980), 55-56. Carroll, 275-79, argues for a communal lament on the strength of the tree motif (11:19; 12:2) which was used in 11:16 for the destruction of the entire community, the nation. Henning Graf Reventlow, *Liturgie and prophetisches Ich bei Jeremiah* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 1963), 253-54, argues that vv. 18-20 constitute a segment from a thanksgiving psalm. Others argue for a classification of a lawsuit based on the presence of legal language: Sheldon H. Blank, "The Confessions of Jeremiah and the Meaning of Prayer," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 21 (1948): 332; Franz D. Hubmann, *Untersuchen zu den Konfessionen Jer. 11.18-12.6 und Jer. 15.10-21*, *Forschung zur Bibel* 30 (Stuttgart: Echter Verlag, 1978), 162-63. A. R. Pete Diamond, *The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context: Scenes of Prophetic Drama*, JSOT Supplement Series 45 (Sheffield: JSOT 1987), 23-24, regards it as a borderline case between lament and thanksgiving. G. von Rad, "The Confessions of Jeremiah," trans. Anne Winston and G. L. Johnson, in *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies*, ed. Leo G. Perdue and Brian W. Kovacs (Winoma Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns), 341, sees it as a riddle. The latter was originally published as "Die Konfessionen Jeremias," *Evangelische Theologie* 3 (1936): 265-76.

⁴⁸CDK, 177. These elements have also been outlined by S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 1:229-39; 2:9-11.

⁴⁹Rowley, 218, interprets "the men of Anathoth" as the local priesthood, members of the same priestly family as Jeremiah. They resented the Deuteronomic reformation since it exalted the Jerusalem priesthood but marginalized the provincial priesthood. Rowley adds that Josiah's reform exalted the House of Zadok while the House of Abiathar, to which the priests of Anathoth belonged, was degraded and displaced. Since Jeremiah supported the reform, he was considered a traitor.

determine with certainty when this occurred and what specific provocation is in view, although it has been guardedly suggested that the plot of Hananiah during the reign of Zedekiah (chap. 37) may be in the background. It appears, however, that the prophet was so disturbed that he fled to God in great despair and pain. Thompson aptly comments, "The village, which gave him his basic social and psychological security, turned against him; and he was alone, cut off from those with whom he grew up and unable to count on the support which was normally available to a villager."⁵⁰

Interpretation

Jeremiah begins the lament abruptly, invoking that it was Yahweh who had revealed the malicious plot. However, neither the nature of the revelation nor the intricacies of the plot are revealed. Perhaps the abruptness reflects his initial lack of awareness regarding the hideous cabal.⁵¹

In his complaint (v. 19) Jeremiah compared himself to a sheep being led to slaughter; he is unaware of the threat of death. He is also described as a tree about to be cut down in the spring of life. His picture from an earlier proclamation of judgment against the people, that although they were like a tree of good foliage they will be destroyed (11:16), is mirrored here in that these same people are threatening to cut him down like a green tree. The prophet who had revealed to the people their fate at the hand of God (11:1-17) now has his fate at the hand of the people revealed to him by God. Hence, "the prophet's fate and the people's fate are intertwined."⁵²

In the prayer section of the lament Jeremiah asks God to intervene. The enormity of the situation was so overwhelming that he cries out for divine vengeance (*n^eqāmāh*) to settle his lawsuit (*rīb*). The implication of the verse is that God, as righteous tester, will find Jeremiah innocent and his adversaries guilty and deserving of punishment.

The divine response provides for exactly such judgment. Yahweh reveals that it was Jeremiah's steadfast denunciations of evil in the name of Yahweh why the men of Anothoth desired the prophet's life (v. 19), that is, the obliteration of

E. W. Nicholson, *Jeremiah 1-25* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 115, believes that the plot was perpetrated because Jeremiah was perceived as a traitor for his advocacy of surrender to Babylon, preaching that God had delivered the nation to the Chaldeans. The people of Anothoth would not harbor such a traitor.

⁵⁰Thompson, 350.

⁵¹CDK, 177.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 278.

his name.⁵³ The motif of the “name” (*šēm*) is significant here. In v. 19 the prophet’s name is to be erased from memory, while in v. 21 he is to be destroyed because of prophesying in Yahweh’s name. “In effect, the obliteration of the prophet’s name also means the obliteration of Yahweh’s name from Israel.”⁵⁴ Not so, says Yahweh. He declares unprecedented judgment against the antagonists: they will be overtaken by sword and famine until no one survives. Yahweh intends to destroy these adversaries so that they will have no one, no remnant, to carry on their posterity. Their evil plotting will be reserved so that their name will be forgotten and they will have no progeny to carry on their legacy.

Franz D. Hubmann has demonstrated the relationship between Jeremiah’s speech (vv. 18-20) and God’s response (vv. 21-23).⁵⁵ He shows how both sections have a tricolon at their midpoint that are parallel:

Plotters: Let us destroy the tree with its fruit
Let us cut him off from the land of the living
Let his name be remembered no more (v. 19b).

Yahweh: The young men shall die by the sword
Their sons and daughters shall die by famine
They shall have no remnant (vv. 22b-23a).

Further, the root *pqd*, “to deal with,” “to punish” (v. 22), answers Jeremiah’s prayer for vengeance or recompense in v. 20 (the root *nqm*). This pronouncement of judgment has a sense of finality. Collectively, the offspring, young men,⁵⁶ sons and daughters, will be annihilated. Therefore, no one, no remnant, will survive the catastrophe of famine and the sword.⁵⁷ Indeed, the consequences for opposing Jeremiah’s prophesying is destruction: *and a remnant shall not be left to them.*

⁵³Thompson, 350, explains: “Jeremiah’s enemies intended to destroy him so that he had no one left, no remnant to carry on his name. His early death would ensure that there was no progeny like him being born. His name would be forgotten, a tragic end for a man of Israel, for whom descendants demonstrated the divine blessing on his life.”

⁵⁴O’Connor, 19.

⁵⁵Hubmann, 79-81.

⁵⁶BHS suggests that *bahūrīm*, “young men,” is dittographic and should be deleted. Whereas the expression does break the poetic pattern, it is better to see it as an alliteration with *hereb*, “sword.”

⁵⁷Famine, sword, and pestilence are common in the book of Jeremiah. See 4:13, 15, 16; 15:2, 3; 21:7, 9; 24:10; 27:18, 13; 29:17, 18. They refer to destruction due possibly to military invasion.

This calamity comes “in the year of their punishment.”⁵⁸ This phrase occurs elsewhere only in Jer 23:12 in an oracle against the prophets, and in Jer 48:44 in an oracle against Moab. In short, the impending judgment against the prophet’s personal enemies is described in the same terms as used in the wider context of the nation and a foreign entity.

Jer 15:5-9

Translation and Textual Considerations

- (5) “For who will take pity on you, O Jerusalem?
And who will mourn for you?
And who will turn aside to ask about you welfare?
(6) You, you rejected me,” says the Lord.
“You kept going backward so I stretched out my hand against you and destroyed you; I was weary of relenting.⁵⁹
(7) And I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork
in the gates of the land. I made (them) childless: I destroyed my
people: they did not turn from their ways.⁶⁰
(8) I have made their widows⁶¹ more numerous than the sand of the
sea.⁶² I have brought to them, upon the mother of the youth⁶³ a
destroyer at noonday: I let fall upon her suddenly, anguish and terror.
(9) She wastes away who has borne seven;
she breathed out her life, her sun has gone down while yet day;
she was ashamed and humiliated;
and their remnant (*š^ʿ ʿrīlām*) I shall give to the sword before their
enemies,” says the Lord.

⁵⁸As Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 375, explains, this phrase is in parallelism with *rā āh*, “disaster,” “evil,” in the previous line. Therefore, “year” is a parallel object of “bring” in the previous line. Hence, there is balance.

⁵⁹The LXX reads *kai ouketi anēsō autous* which is the equivalent to BHS’ suggested reading, *niḏēi hannihām*, “and I will no longer spare them.”

⁶⁰The LXX reads, *dia tas kakias autōn*, “because of their iniquities.”

⁶¹Reading *ʾlmⁿōlām* with BHS. Cf. LXX, Syr., and Tg. CKD, 199, indicate that the *mem* dropped out by haplography.

⁶²BHS suggests placing this phrase at the end of the verse.

⁶³This is the literal translation of MT. BHS proposes “a destroying people” in place of “upon the mothers of the young men.” For further discussion on the problems here, see CKD, 199; Carroll, 322; G. R. Driver, “Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* (New Series) 28 (1937), 113.

Structure

Verse 9 is the final statement of a lament⁶⁴ constituting 15:5-9.⁶⁵ It may be divided into two sections:

1. A brief word of lament by Jeremiah, introduced by the interrogative particle *mî*, “who?” (v. 5).⁶⁶

2. The divine oracle (vv. 6-9). The formulaic expression, “thus says the Lord,” forms an inclusio. The first-person pronominal form dominates, being used eight times in reference to God.⁶⁷

Historical Background

The reference to Manasseh (v. 4) seems to point to 2 Kgs 21:1-17 and the abominable acts of that king.⁶⁸ However, the imagery in Jer 15 points to the ravages of invasion and war. Scholarly opinion is divided with regard to the exact historical

⁶⁴W. A. M. Beuken and H. W. M. van Grol, “Jeremiah 14.1-15, 9: A Situation of Distress and Its Hermeneutics, Unity and Diversity of Form-Dramatic Development,” in *Le Livre de Jérémie: le Prophète et son milieu, les oracles et leur transmission*, BETL, 54, ed. P. -M. Bogaert (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1981), 314. Deep distress characterizes the person addressed and the subject matter.

⁶⁵Many commentators regard this as part of the larger section 14:1-15:9. See CDK, 195-200; Holladay, *The Architecture of Jeremiah 1-20*, 145-46; Reventlow, 150-53; Condamin, 123-30. Others like Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. P.R. Ackroyd (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 355-56; Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia*, 158-68 (who calls it, “The Great Drought); and G. R. Castellino, “Some Observations on the Literary Structure of Some Passages in Jeremiah,” *Vetus Testamentum* 30 (1980): 407. assume a unity for 14:1-15:4. Some, however, dispute this claim: John Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion: Studies in the Life of Jeremiah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), 128, calls it “a mixed collection of oracles.”

⁶⁶The *qinah* form is communicated throughout the section. It is quite pronounced in Jeremiah’s three rhetorical question of v. 5: “Who will pity you, O Jerusalem?” “Who will mourn for you?” “Who will stop to ask about you?” In all cases, the answer is an implied negative. On this stylistic element, see Walter Brueggemann, “Jeremiah’s Use of Rhetorical Questions,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 92 (1973): 358-74.

⁶⁷C. F. Keil, *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, 2 vols. in one, Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 8 (n.p., n.d.: reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 1:256.

⁶⁸Clements, 95, sees the mention of Manasseh as the deliberate cross-referencing of a scribe. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1*, 427, dates it to November/December 601 B.C.E.

point.⁶⁹ I am inclined to agree with J. P. Hyatt that the details are not sufficiently clear for a definite decision to be made.⁷⁰

Interpretation

This poem describes the fate of Jerusalem. The theme of terrible judgment depicted in 15:1-4 is continued, for the particle *kī* in v. 5 connects both sections. God denotes that even great intercessors like Moses and Samuel cannot deter the divine punishment that is coming on the people of Jerusalem (v. 1).⁷¹ The terrible measures of judgment in vv. 1-3 are now mirrored in the divine action in vv. 6-9.

The questions in v. 5 expect a resounding negative reply: no one will pity, console, or inquire of Jerusalem's *šālôm*.⁷² Indeed, a loss of *šālôm* is implied. This signals a reversal of prosperity and well-being in the cultic community, and more importantly, the claim of Zion's inviolability.⁷³

The judgments expressed in vv. 6-9 are also overwhelmingly negative. The repetition "you, you" places emphasis on the rebellious action of Jerusalem against God in v. 6a. This is compounded by the expression *ʾāhōr tēl'ēki*, "You keep going backwards," which is indicative of taking "the initiative to sever an existing relationship."⁷⁴ In short, this is a breach of covenant. Therefore, in vv. 6b-9 emphasis is placed on God's punitive actions against Jerusalem. This is well summarized: "Through the litany of judgment, the Lord described the horrible

⁶⁹Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia*, 169, places it as the invasion of 602 B.C.E. as recorded in 2 Kgs 24:2. Rudolph, 89, assigns it to 598 B.C.E. while Thompson, 389, holds to the Babylonian invasion of 587 B.C.E. Skinner, 270, claims that the passage "depicts the desolation of Jerusalem as already accomplished, and in such terms that even if its language be only the language of prophetic anticipation, it must express the feelings with which he looked back on the history which had culminated in this immeasurable tragedy."

⁷⁰Hyatt, "Jeremiah: Introduction and Exegesis," 937.

⁷¹On this matter, see W. L. Holladay, "The Background of Jeremiah's Self-Understanding: Moses, Samuel and Psalms 22," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83 (1964): 153-64; reprinted in *A Prophet to the Nations: Essays in Jeremiah Studies*, ed. Leo G. Perdue and Brian W. Kovacs (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1984), 313-37.

⁷²Beuken and van Grol, 316, indicate that such an inquiry marks the absence of every kind of help in situations of distress.

⁷³Jonathan Paige Sisson, "Jeremiah and the Jerusalem Conception of Peace," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986): 437, 438. He adds that the loss of peace meant the upstaging of Jerusalem as the center of the created order, the disruption of the natural and social spheres of life, the deterioration of the political situation and increased hostilities against the city. In short, it describes a state of disorder and desolation especially since the loss of *šālôm* from Jerusalem coincided with the abandonment of Zion as the divine residence.

⁷⁴Beuken and van Grol, 318.

deeds forced upon him by the people's action. The people had rejected him for the last time; the time of judgment had come."⁷⁵

The judgment is described in terms of destruction (v. 6), winnowing⁷⁶ and bereavement caused by childlessness (v. 7), widowhood (v. 8),⁷⁷ and the shameful languishing and death of the remnant (v. 9). This is inevitable since the people are charged with rejecting God to the point where the divine declaration is, "I am weary of relenting." The irony is biting for the Lord had grown "'weary' of relenting or leaving off his judgment on the people who had grown 'weary' of repenting (9:4)."⁷⁸

The expression "mother of seven" is a proverbial description of the fulfilled or satisfied mother (cf. Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam 2:5). But here she is filled with dissatisfaction and dismay comparable to that of the nobles and farmers of Jer 14:3-4, who are suffering in the midst of drought. Therefore, Judah languishes or wastes away. Further, the expression "her sun is set while it is yet day" is balanced by the reference to the devastator at noon in v. 8. This reflects on the loss of young men in battle while still in their noonday, that is, their strength and vigor of manhood. This is a curse for she is left with no future heir.⁷⁹ Despite all this anguish and suffering a word of finality is added: Yahweh will bring the enemies' sword against those who are remaining, the remnant, who survived the brutality of the invaders. Nothing less than absolute annihilation is in view here. Even the remnant will eventually become fatalities. The end result of the judgment will be the destruction of even the remnant. Jerusalem, the mother-city of Judah, has no positive future, no hope.⁸⁰ The totality of destruction, enveloping even the remnant, is forcefully emphasized by Beuken and van Grol:

No one is interested in Jerusalem's fate, because God made her childless (vs. 7b). There are only widows left, without any protection, because not only the

⁷⁵CDK, 205.

⁷⁶The act of winnowing is one of separation and reduction. It implies the presence of a remnant as that which has been left behind.

⁷⁷This is a negation or reversal of the promise given to Abraham that his offspring will be like the sands by the sea, too numerous to be counted (Gen 15:5; 22:17). Now the people are childless and their widows outnumber the sands.

⁷⁸CDK, 204. Beuken and van Grol, 317, see this as an announcement of the inevitability of judgment for "God no longer regrets the execution of judgment."

⁷⁹Thompson, 390.

⁸⁰Hausmann, 98. This comes as the conclusion to the several judgments in the entire pericope. This heightens the intensity: drought (14:2-6); lament of the people (vv. 7-9); God's judgments against them even prohibiting the prophet to pray on their behalf (vv. 10-16). In short, lament (vv. 17-8) follows lament (vv. 19-22). Again God prohibits intercession (15:1) and threatens powerful judgments (vv. 2-4). Without pity or compassion, more scathing judgments befall the people (vv. 5-9) until death becomes inevitable. See also Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia*, 163.

mother who leans on a young son, but even the very prolific and therefore unimpeachable woman stands alone. And so the figures in which beaten Jerusalem appears, already show . . . the tragic effect of the judgment, which not only hits the leaders—the oracle does not mention them—but also those who need protection, the women and mothers, on whom the progress of life rests.⁸¹

Tragically, the distress of the city and the cutting off of its remnant, is that she brought this on herself. God stands there, grieved but powerless.⁸²

Conclusion

The evidence indicates that judgment against the remnant of Judah was decisive and that God was behind it. Evidently the people had violated the covenant ideals and had become disobedient. As such, Yahweh moved against them, employing even their enemies to execute the fatal blow. No protection could be found in the temple or in any religious activity. The finality of the judgment is sounded throughout.

⁸¹Beuken and van Grol, 320.

⁸²Ibid., 324.

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE WORD *QOHELETH*

YOSHITAKA KOBAYASHI, Ph.D.

The Hebrew word *qōhelet* is translated as *Ekklesiastēs* in the Septuagint and means “a member of an assembly” rather than “preacher” or “convener.” Jerome transliterated the Greek *Ekklesiastēs* into “Ecclesiastes” in the Vulgate,¹ identical to the English title of this book. The Syriac Peshitta version transliterated the Hebrew *qōhelet* into *qwhlt* (*qūhlat*).² However, Jerome interpreted this word as *concinator* or “assembler of people.”³ Since it is difficult to consider the Qal participle⁴ as causative, the meaning of *concinator* is dubious. Further, there is little difference between Jerome’s *concinator* and modern translations of this word, including “Preacher” (RSV, NKJV, NASB), “Teacher” (NRSV, NIV), and “Speaker” (NEB). These meanings given for *qōhelet* point to important and rather exalted designations. However, the meaning of the word may point in the direction of something much less sophisticated, such as “a member of assembly,” as in the Septuagint. The situation is such that O. S. Rankin has remarked, “The exact content of meaning attached to the word Koheleth may never be determined.”⁵ In this paper I would like to challenge Rankin’s negative prospect with regard to the determination of the meaning of *qoheleth*.

This paper limits itself to the questions of the meaning of *qoheleth* (Eccl 1:1) and the reason why it has a feminine ending (*-et*).⁶ In order to find possible

¹*Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1969), 2:986.

²*Syriac Peshitta Version* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1954), 383.

³Cf. Francis Brown, with S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (BDB), based on the lexicon of William Gesenius (1952), s.v. “*qoheleth*.”

⁴The Qal masculine participle *qōhēl* means “attendee of an assembly” or “a member of an assembly.”

⁵O. S. Rankin, “The Book of Ecclesiastes,” *Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 5:3.

⁶The verb *qhl* is not used in Qal but the word (*qōhelet*) has the form of a Qal participle feminine singular. In the Hebrew Bible many examples of the same pattern—a noun or Qal feminine participle with *-eth* ending—are attested. Examples include: *’ōhebet* (Gen 25:28),

answers to these issues I will follow a two-step process: the first is largely a lexical-grammatical approach, supported by the second, which is a brief contextual study.

Lexical and Grammatical Study

Since the term usually takes the form of a Qal feminine participle, I will first point out examples of this form and then compare them with masculine participles to see if there is any difference in nuance between them. The purpose for doing this is to ascertain if there is possibly a rule whereby masculine objects are represented by feminine participles.

Qal Participles (Masculine and Feminine)

The word *zōhāl*, “crawler” (e.g., Deut 32:24; Micah 7:17), is used in parallel with “snake” as a synonym in the masculine form. However, in 1Kgs 1:9 the participle is used in the feminine form *zōhelet*, implying that a “snake” is a particular “crawler,” one among those that crawl. In other words, there are many things which do crawl, but a “snake” is a particular “crawler.” From this observation, a rule may be tentatively suggested for the use of the feminine participle in that it may be used to show its particularity, in this case, specific to “crawler.”⁷

Hōbēr generally means “uniting” (e.g., Deut 18:11; Ps 58:6). The feminine *hōberet*, “something that joins” (Exod 26:4,10; 36:17) is used in reference to the curtain-pieces of the Tabernacle. The feminine form is used there for a particular joint or juncture used only for the tabernacle. Therefore, it appears that this feminine form may also be understood as the feminine of particularity, not merely the feminine form to simply express feminine gender.

The word *yōnēq* means “young plant,” or “sapling” (e.g., Isa 53:2). The feminine *yōneqet* means “young shoot” (e.g., Job 8:16), that is, a particular part of the young plant. This too may suggest the feminine of particularity.

In Amos 9:13 and Ps 109:12 *māšāk* means “drawing.” The feminine *māšeket* (e.g., Job 38:31) means “a cord” that is used for drawing; it is a particular item useful for drawing. It may also be the case that this is a feminine of particularity.

While *sōper* means “secretary,” the feminine *sōperet*, was used as a name of a man, Sophereth (Ezra 2:55; Neh 7:57). This may be one of the numerous

⁷*ōkelet* (Exod 24:17), *ōmeret* (1 Kgs 3:22), *bō'eret* (Jer 20:9), *yōledet* (Gen 17:19), *yōredet* (Eccl 3:21), *yōrešet* (Num 36:8), *yōshebet* (Lev 15:23), *yōteret* (Exod 29:13), *kōteret* (1 Kgs 7:16), *nōhelet* (Isa 1:30), *sōheret* (Ezek 27:12), *sōperet* (Neh 7:57), *sōreret* (Zech 7:21), *ōmedet* (Hag 2:5), *ōperet* (Job 19:24), *rōheset* (2 Sam 11:2), *rōkelet* (Ezek 27:20,23), *šō'eleṭ* (1 Kgs 2:20,22), *šōkebet* (Ruth 3:8), *šōpeket* (Ezek 22:3).

⁷Note that the feminine form was not used for the female snake.

theophorous names. It may imply that here, this “secretary” is a particular divine “secretary.” Therefore, this feminine form is also considered as the feminine of particularity. This is an important example because this name is similar to the case of Qoheleth.

’Oleh means “going up” (e.g., Gen 38:18; Isa 24:18). The feminine *’olâ* is a variation of another feminine ending *-eth*, and it means either a “burnt-offering” that goes up to heaven or a “stairway” on which one may “go up” (Ezek 40:26). The feminine forms, both with *-â* and *-et* endings, were used for particular items that go up, and on which one may go up.

The masculine form *šômēr* means “guard, watch.” The feminine *šôm’râ* (e.g., Ps 141:3) is used for a mouth, a particular organ of body that needs to be watched or guarded. An organ that needs to be watched was referred to metaphorically as a “watch” organ. In this case, the mouth is a particular organ that needs watching. Therefore, this may also be an example of the feminine of particularity. (Cf. Prov 13:3; 21:23; Eccl 5:2,6).

From the above observations of these Qal participles, we may assume that the feminine participles, both with *-â* and *-et* endings, were used for specific, particular, or peculiar unnatural things. The forms are feminine, but their natural genders could have been masculine, apparently not feminine. These examples of Qal participles point us in the direction that at times the feminine forms may have been used to indicate non-feminine objects. However, I want to extend the search to nouns and substantives, in addition to Qal participles, to see if a similar phenomenon occurs with nouns having feminine endings. The attempt is to try to find the difference in meanings between masculine and feminine substantives that have the same patterns.

Masculine and Feminine Substantives with the Same Patterns

The following examples provide evidence that feminine forms may be used to indicate peculiarity. The masculine form is first given, followed by the feminine.

’Addâr means “majestic” while the feminine *’adderet* means “glory,” a particular majestic thing. *’Okel* means “eating,” “food,” while the feminine *’oklâ* means “eating,” “devouring,” or “consuming” by wild beasts or by fire, not by a human being. The feminine form may suggest unnatural, or non-human eating and consuming. Further, *bârâq* means “lightning.” The feminine forms, *bâreqet* (Exod 28:17; 39:10) and *borqat* (Ezek 28:13) point to “shining stone,” something like lightning. The word may actually be translated as “lightning-stone,” that is, a particular stone that shines like lightning. *Gan* means “enclosure,” or “garden” while the feminine *gannâ* refers to a garden that is a particular enclosure. *Hâsîd* means “kind” but the feminine *h^a’sîdâ* is a name of a bird, namely, the “stork,” so called because it is kind and affectionate to its young.⁸ *Tebah* means “slaughtering”

⁸Brown, BDB, s.v. “h^a’sîdâ.”

while the feminine *ṭibhā* is a particular “thing slaughtered.” *Kinnôr* is “lyre” while the feminine *Kinneret* is the name of a lake that is shaped particularly similar to the lyre. *Keter* is translated as “crown” while the feminine *kôteret* is a particular “crown” for a pillar. *Lābān* means “white” but the feminine *l̄bānā*, “moon,” is a particular object that looks “white.”

More examples may be evidenced. *Nābāl* points to a “fool” while the feminine form *n̄bālā* means “senselessness.” It is a particularly common characteristic of the fool. *ʿAṣṣāb* means “sufferer” but the feminine *ʿaṣsebet* means “pain.” Indeed, the feeling of “pain” is particularly common among the sufferers. *Ma ʳrāk* means “arrangement.” The feminine *ma ʳreket* indicates “the row of shewbread,” a particular arrangement of bread in the Tabernacle.

One final set of words will illustrate this matter of feminine form particularity. *Paḥat* means “hole” while the feminine *pihetet* describes a “leprous decay in a garment,” that is, a particular hole in a garment. *Qāʾā*, a feminine participle, means “vomiting.” *Qāʾat* is a pelican, a bird that vomits up “food from its crop for its young.”⁹ *Šālôm* means “peace.” The feminine is attested in a man’s name *Šlômôt*, meaning of course, “peace.” This may be a theophorous name that refers to the “God of peace.” The sue of this feminine form probably implies the particularity of a non-human God. *Mišqāl* means “weight” while the feminine *mišqōlet* is a particular “weight for leveling.”

We also find feminine nouns derived from masculine nouns having the same root consonants, but with different patterns. For instance, *ʾaryēh* means “lion;” however, the feminine *ʳāyôt* are the “decorative lions” on the base of the molten sea (1 Kgs 7:29,36; 10:13; 2 Chron 9:18,19). This is an example of the feminine of particularity. Further, the rebellious kings of Judah were likened to the roaring lions (Zeph 3:3; Jer 51:38). The lions in the simile were certainly masculine figures or persons but they were described with feminine forms. These lions are not living natural lions. So this is a case of the feminine of particularity of non-naturality.

The masculine *tāmār* is a “palm tree” but the feminine *timōrā* denotes a “palm-tree figure” and *tīmārā* is a “palm-like column” spreading at the top. These feminine nouns essentially indicate a “palm-tree,” but not the natural palm-tree. This is also an example of the feminine of particularity in the sense of non-naturality.

The masculine noun *ʾāpār* means “dry-earth.” The feminine *ʾōperet* means “lead,” a kind of a refuse metal obtained in the process of refining silver (Jer 6:29). It is a masculine noun,¹⁰ but it has the form of a Qal feminine participle. The name was probably given because it was the softest metal known in the biblical period and its color is somewhat similar to the masculine noun *ʾāpār* (“dry-earth” or “soil”). Probably the lead was at first considered as a particular dust or soil,

⁹Ibid., s.v. “*qāʾat*.”

¹⁰Ibid., s.v. “*ʾaphereth*.”

different from the ordinary soil. So the feminine form here may be understood as an example of the feminine of particularity.

Contextual Study

The use of the words in the book of Qoheleth and 1 Kgs 3:7-9, 11b-14 are similar. The latter passage records Solomon's humble prayer and God's response to his prayer. In the book of Qoheleth, common words are to be found, including "king" and "David" (Eccl 1:1); "people," "hear," and "search" (Eccl 12:9); "seek" (12:10); "wisdom" (12:11); "commandment" (12:13); and "good and evil" (12:14). In 1 Kgs Solomon considers himself only "a little child" (3:7). In other words, Solomon considered himself as being only one of the Israelite *qōhēl* or "congregation," or even less than that, according to his words. However, according to the same passage in 1 Kgs 3, God gave him "wisdom" in order that he may judge His people properly. Thus, Solomon became a particular member of the *qōhēl*, different from other members of God's congregation. In this way he may properly be called *qōhelet*, a particular member of the *qōhēl*, or God's assembly, gifted with the wisdom of God.

Conclusion

When Qal feminine participles are used for male persons those feminine participles denote particularity, rather than gender. This phenomenon is also observed among many of the feminine nouns that were derived from the masculine nouns. From this lexical and grammatical study we may draw a conclusion that the feminine form of the word Qoheleth, applied to Solomon, denotes his "particularity." The brief contextual study of the book of Qoheleth and 1 Kgs 3:7-9, 11b-14 shows similarity in the use of certain words.

THE USE OF THE ARAMAIC WORD *bar* (“son”) AS A NOUN OF RELATION IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

ZDRAVKO STEFANOVIC, Ph.D.

The common noun *ben* (“son”)¹ is one of the most frequently used words in the Hebrew Bible and with some 5,000 occurrences it “is easily the most frequent substantive in the O[ld] T[estament].”² Its Aramaic counterpart *bar* is well attested in the Aramaic portions of Ezra and Daniel. Usually, this word is translated as “son,” while at times its meaning is more gender-inclusive and as such it corresponds to the English word “child.” In several places, the non-literal meanings of this word seem to fit well the contexts in which it is found. In such instances, *bar* may mean “descendent,” “grandson,” “follower,” and so forth.³

The function of the words *ben* and *bar* as a noun of relation (*nomen relationis*) has long been recognized by Hebrew and Aramaic scholars. Ernestus Vogt, for example, noticed that there are times when the Aramaic *bar* stands as a construct noun (*nomen regens*) in the construct chain and should be translated as “a member of a certain category or a group of people.”⁴ At times, some scholars

¹Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the NIV.

²J. Kühlwein, “*ben son*,” *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, ed. Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 1:238. Kühlwein’s list indicates that this noun is used 4,929 times in the OT. See also, Elmer A. Martens, “*bēn*,” *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr. and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 1:114, who claims that the word occurs “almost five thousand times.” Larry A. Mitchel, *A Student’s Vocabulary for Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 1, puts the number of occurrences at 4887.

³Francis Brown, with S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (BDB), based on the lexicon of William Gesenius (1952), s.v. “*ben*.” Cf. W. L. Holladay, ed., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (1988), s.v. “*ben*.”

⁴Ernestus Vogt, ed., *Lexicon Linguae Veteris Testamenti* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1971), 31, “*indicat plura vel individuum*” (“indicates several individuals or a single individual”).

leave this word untranslated altogether, or they may choose to render the whole phrase in which the word is found by a single English word or by an idiom.⁵

In the Aramaic text of Daniel, *bar* is attested ten times. In only two of these cases the word may literally mean “son(s)” (Dan 5:22;⁶ 6:24).⁷ In the remaining eight instances, the word clearly functions as a noun of relation (*nomen relationis*), a fact that is often overlooked by the translators of some ancient and modern versions of the Bible. A wider recognition of *bar* as a noun of relation needs to be advocated by scholars in order to gain a clearer understanding of the meaning of this word in biblical Aramaic, as well as in the other biblical and extra-biblical Aramaic texts. This in turn will lead to a more consistent way of translating *bar* in English and other modern languages. In this short article each of the eight occurrences of *bar* as a noun of relation is examined in its context. A suggestion is also given on how these *nomen relationis* examples should impact on modern translations of the text of Daniel.

Designating a Person's Belonging to a Group

In the Aramaic of Daniel, whenever the word *bar* is found in a phrase which designates a person's belonging to a group of people, its plural construct form is used. It is also placed as a construct noun (*nomen regens*) in the construct chain and it is often preceded by the preposition *min* (“from”). The absolute noun (*nomen rectum*) that follows normally comes in the plural form, unless that noun is an abstraction, and then it is used in its singular form. In either case, the noun takes the definite article (*status determinatus*). For example, the student of Biblical Aramaic can easily recall some well-known parallel expressions from Biblical Hebrew, such as *benê-yisrael* (“the children of Israel,” or “the Israelites”),⁸ or *bat-sÿyôn* (“the daughter of Zion,” or “the inhabitants of Zion”). In such cases the construct noun (*nomen regens*) clearly functions as a noun of relation (*nomen relationis*), a fact important to remember in the process of translating the text of the Bible.

In no less than five verses, *bar* is used in Daniel as a noun of relation with the purpose of designating a person's belonging to a certain group of people (“gentilic role”). Three of these verses contain the phrase *benê galûta'* (“the children of the

⁵Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. by T. Muraoka (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 2:469.

⁶In Dan 5:22 *ben* is used in reference to Belshazzar as Nebuchadnezzar's son, a highly problematic situation. For a brief survey of the possible solutions to these problematic statements, see Zdravko Stefanovic, “Like Father, Like Son: Belshazzar's Relationship to King Nebuchadnezzar,” *Asia Adventist Seminary Studies* 1 (1998): 27-31.

⁷Outside of the Aramaic of Daniel this meaning of *bar* is found in Ezra 5:1,2 and 6:14. See also Dan 9:1 (Hebrew).

⁸The Hebrew equivalent is found in Dan 1:3, 6.

exile,” or “exiles”), a general designation for the group of Jewish exiles in Babylon. Thus, in the first instance found in 2:25, Arioch, who seems to be unaware of Daniel’s previous contact with the king (1:18-20), introduces Daniel as *gebar min-benê galûta’* (“a man from among the exiles from Judah”).⁹ Likewise, in 5:13, King Belshazzar seems to ignore Daniel’s brilliant career in Babylon and instead of addressing him by a customary title, opts to call him *dî-min-benê galûta’ dî yehûd* (“one from the exiles from Judah”), an expression that is absent from the speech made in Belshazzar’s presence by the queen-mother.¹⁰ Finally, this same expression *benê galûta’* is found once more in 6:14 (Eng. 6:13) where the jealous satraps, who devise a scheme to trap Daniel in order to be able to destroy him, describe him exactly the same way as Belshazzar did, *dî min-benê galûta’ dî yehûd* (“one from the exiles from Judah”).

The phrase *benê-‘enaša’* (“sons of men,” or “humankind”) is found in two places in the Aramaic section of Daniel, 2:38 and 5:21. In the first reference, the phrase describes all the inhabitants of the world who, along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, are subject to the God-given universal rule of king Nebuchadnezzar. In the second reference, the identical phrase is used in relation to this king who was punished by God and driven from among *benê-‘enaša’*, “the humans” or “people,” because of his pride.

The examples given above lead us to a conclusion that it is best *not* to translate the word *benê* literally whenever it functions as a noun of relation (*nomen relationis*) for the purpose of designating a person’s belonging to a group of people. The whole phrase in which this word is found should be rendered in another language by a corresponding expression which can aptly convey the idea or the concept that lies behind the phrase. While most translators have kept this fact in mind in the case of *benê galûta’* (“the exiles”), some have overlooked this fact and have rendered the phrase *benê ‘enasha’* as “the sons of men,”¹¹ instead of the more correct “the human beings.”¹²

Stating a Person’s Age

Dan 6:1 (Eng. 5:31) gives the age of Darius the Mede at the time when he assumed the role of Babylonian ruler. The Aramaic idiom used in this verse is a typical Semitic idiom found throughout the OT.¹³ The expression, *kebar shenin*

⁹Notice the difference between Nebuchadnezzar’s introductory words to Daniel, “Are you able . . . ?” (2:26) and Belshazzar’s, “Are you Daniel . . . ?” (5:13).

¹⁰All the references made to Daniel by the queen-mother in this chapter are highly respectful in regard to the prophet’s position in Babylon.

¹¹See the New King James Version (NKJV) and the Revised Standard Version (RSV).

¹²See the NRSV and the NJB. The NIV translates the phrase as “mankind” or “people.” For a Hebrew parallel to this phrase see Dan 10:16.

¹³Virtually all Hebrew reference grammars take note of this idiom.

shittîn wetartên, if translated literally, would mean “as a son of years sixty and two.” It is a construct chain in which the word *bar* functions as the construct noun (*nomen regens*) preceded by a preposition of comparison *ke* (“as”, “like,” “according to”). The noun *bar* is then followed by another noun, *shenîn*, which is the plural of *shenâ* (a year), and then follows the numeral. The noun *bar* in this instance may again be considered to function as a noun of relation (*nomen relationis*), since it is a part of a construct chain and its meaning is not literal. In this case, the translators of the Bible are unanimous in considering this whole phrase as being an idiom. Biblical linguists, however, should recognize this function of *bar* as that of a noun of relation.

Describing a Person’s Rank

In two rather famous verses of Daniel, the word *bar* is used as a noun of relation in order to describe a person’s rank. In both of these cases, *bar*, which stands as the construct noun (*nomen regens*) in a construct chain, is preceded by a preposition, while the absolute noun (*nomen rectum*) that follows is in the absolute state, either in the singular or the plural.

Dan 3:25 records king Nebuchadnezzar’s reaction to the triple miracle that took place in the fiery furnace on the plain of Dura. The author states that the last of the three miracles was the presence of a companion to the three young men, and his appearance is laconically described as *dameh lebar ’elahîn*, which literally means “looking like a son of the gods.” The presence of the preposition *le* (“to”, “unto”) can be best explained as a preposition that follows the participial form *dameh*. The word *’elahîn* (“gods”) is sometimes understood as referring to a singular person much like the Hebrew *’elohîm*,¹⁴ but it is safest to assume that the plural was intended by the author in this case, given the fact that Nebuchadnezzar was a polytheist. The suggested translation in this case would be “one resembling a divine being,” or “looking like a member of the divine family,” or simply “looking like a divine person.”¹⁵

The second example comes from 7:13 where a person is described as *kebar ’enaš*, literally “as a son of a man.” This being is portrayed in the chapter in sharp contrast to the four beasts shown to the prophet in a night vision. The presence of the accompanying clouds suggests the divine nature of this person, while the phrase *kebar ’enaš* is used in this text to point to this person’s link with the universal human family on earth of which the reader of Daniel’s book is a member.

While the translation “a son of man” is widespread, it is best to see the noun *bar* here as functioning as a noun of relation used to describe a person’s rank. A more fitting translation in this context would be to say “a human-like person” or

¹⁴The KJV reads “like the Son of God,” while the NIV reads “like a son of the gods.”

¹⁵The translation, “a divine being,” is even more direct. See F. Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), 80.

“a member of the human family,” thus omitting the use of the word “son” altogether.¹⁶ The often cited extra-biblical parallels from Old Aramaic Inscriptions (Inscriptions of Sefire) and Late Aramaic (Genesis Apocryphon) support this way of translating the phrase *kebar 'enaš*.¹⁷

Conclusion

It may be affirmed that whenever the Aramaic word *bar* is used as a noun of relation (*nomen relationis*) in the book of Daniel, it is best *not* to translate it literally as “son,” but rather to consider it as a part of the whole idiom or phrase in which it is found in the text. Moreover, there is a need for further study of the use and function of the Hebrew noun *ben* as a noun of relation in the text of the OT. This is in order to better appreciate the ways in which the people in biblical times thought and expressed themselves, and also in order for modern readers to better understand the meaning of the biblical text. Finally, a number of similar nouns in Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic that are used and function as nouns of relation need to be carefully and systematically studied so that we may have a more complete picture of the presence and significance of this phenomenon in biblical languages.

¹⁶For example the KJV reads “like the Son of man” and the NIV reads “like a son of man.” For a Hebrew parallel see Dan 8:17.

¹⁷See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1967); idem, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Cave 1: A Commentary*, 2d rev. ed. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971); idem, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula: Scholars, 1979), 143-60. See also, Zdravko Stefanovic, *The Aramaic of Daniel in the Light of Old Aramaic* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992), 56.

DID THE NEW TESTAMENT CONTEXTUALIZE THE OLD?

JULIUS M. MUCHEE, Ph.D.

The need for the contextualization of the Christian message has long been felt and advocated.¹ The question that is still being discussed is how such contextualization can be done. There is no agreement in view. Therefore, there is a need to provide a sound biblical basis for such contextualization. Can the Bible itself provide such a model?

Much of the discussion concerning the relationship between the OT and the NT, and the appropriation of the OT in the NT, does not address the possibility of the contextualization of the OT by the NT. It is discussed only by the missiologists and interpreters who deal with the relationship between theology and exegesis in hermeneutics. Yet, when one considers some NT texts that either quote or allude to the OT, one wonders whether contextualization, as understood today, did not occur. And if it did occur, is it appropriate to include contextualization as one of the hermeneutical methods used by NT authors in interpreting the OT? In this paper, I attempt to show that the NT writers, in some instances, contextualized the OT.

¹Many missionaries have expressed this need in various places. See Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 3-261; Bruce J. Nicholls, *Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979); Chris Sugden, *Seeking the Asian Face of Jesus: The Practice and Theology of Christian Social Witness in Indonesia and India, 1974-1996* (Oxford: Regnum, 1997), 7-8; Charles Kraft, "Interpreting in Cultural Context," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21 (1978): 368; Chung-choon Kim, "The Contextualization of Theological Education," in *Missions and Theological Education in World Perspective*, ed. Harvie M. Conn and Samuel F. Rowen (Farmington, MI: Urbanus, 1984), 41-50; David W. Henderson, *Culture Shift: Communicating God's Truth to Our Changing World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 140-53; Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (Downers Grqve, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 137-45; and Elliott E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 240.

The Meaning of Contextualization

The use of the word "contextualization" as a method for interpreting Christian teaching is credited to Shoki Coe, Aharon Sapsezian, James Bergquist, Ivy Chou, and Desmond Tutu.² In "contextualization" they go beyond the notion of "indigenization," which is the response of traditional cultures to the Gospel. Contextualization extends further by also taking into account "the process of secularity, technology, and the struggle for human justice."³ For these thinkers, indigenization failed to address these new social realities, which were certainly a part of the context in which the church exists. They wanted a word that would mean what was understood by indigenization and that would also address the realities of injustice common to the Third World. In the words of David Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen, contextualization meant "involvement in the struggle for justice within the existential situation in which men and women find themselves today."⁴

Contextualization received mixed reactions in the scholarly world. These may be placed in two broad categories: the radical and the conservative. Radical theologians received the term "contextualization" wholesale. They used it to support the existing ethnic and social-related theologies, such as Liberation Theology, Black Theology, African Theology, Asian Christian Theologies, and others.⁵ The general characteristics of this radical contextualization include the following: (1) rejecting the traditional view of divine revelation as written in the Bible; (2) denying that the Bible has propositional truths; (3) believing that all Scripture is culturally and historically conditioned; (4) treating the Bible message

²Shoki Coe, Aharon Sapsezian, James Bergquist, Ivy Chou, and Desmond Tutu, *Ministry in Context: The Third Mandate Programme of the Theological Education Fund (1970-77)* (Bromley, England: Theological Education Fund, 1972). The Theological Education Fund was started by the International Missionary Council in 1957-58 at its assembly in Ghana. It assists certain theological schools of the Third World with funds, textbooks, and library facilities. Now it is a program of the World Council of Churches.

³Ibid., 20-21. The concept of indigenization was developed by Henry Venn (1725-97) and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880) and was popularized by the use of the catch-words "self-governing," "self-propagating," and "self-supporting." The actual indigenization process included changing forms of worship, social customs, church architecture, and methods of evangelism, in light of existing cultures. See B. J. Nicholls, "Contextualization," *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. S. B. Ferguson and D. F. Wright (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 164.

⁴David J. Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen, *Contextualization: Meaning, Methods, and Models* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1989), 341.

⁵For an overview of the use of contextualization in radical scholarship, see Bong Rin Ro, "Theological Trends in Asia: Asia Theology," *Asia Theological News* 13 (October/December 1987): 2-3; Hesselgrave and Rommen, 46-47.

as relative and situational; and (5) using a prophetic reading of the times, not the exegesis of the text, as the beginning point for hermeneutics.⁶

The meaning of contextualization as espoused by the Theological Education Fund was not accepted in conservative circles because it was tainted with liberal presuppositions.⁷ Conservatives accepted the term but gave it new meaning. For them, contextualization means “that dynamic process which interprets the significance of a religion or cultural norm for a group with a different (or developed) cultural heritage.”⁸ But this “dynamic process” must safeguard the content of the Bible. According to Grant R. Osborne, the radical understanding of contextualization has four hermeneutical shortfalls: (1) too little of the text is supracultural; (2) it makes the Bible have too little theological truth; (3) it creates a canon within the canon; (4) it makes the receptor culture more authoritative than the Bible.⁹

Osborne’s model of contextualization is based on distinguishing the form from the content the text. Contextualization takes place at the level of the form, not of the content. He admits that there are cultural norms that need to be identified and interpreted according to the receptor culture. But how does one distinguish between cultural texts and supracultural ones? Osborne suggests the following three steps:

1. Check for supracultural indicators in the passage; for example, an appeal to some external principles.

2. Determine the degree to which commands are tied to cultural practices present in the Bible times but not today.

3. Finally, one must “note the distance between the supracultural and cultural indicators.”¹⁰

The dividing line between the radical and conservative contextualizers is the identification of the supracultural/divine elements in biblical revelation. The more a scholar sees divine elements in biblical revelation, the more that scholar leans towards what is described as a conservative position, and vice versa (see fig. 1).

In my understanding, therefore, contextualization takes place when the gospel truth is presented in the language and thought forms of the receptor culture, transforming and adapting good practices of the receptor culture, without affecting the content of the gospel. This definition agrees with the Apostolic Contextualization model in fig. 1. In contextualization, I see the task of the

⁶Bruce J. Nicholls, “Theological Education and Evangelization,” in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide, 1975), 165.

⁷Bruce C. E. Fleming, *Contextualization of Theology: An Evangelical Assessment* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey, 1980), 60-67.

⁸Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991), 318.

⁹*Ibid.*, 322.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 328-29.

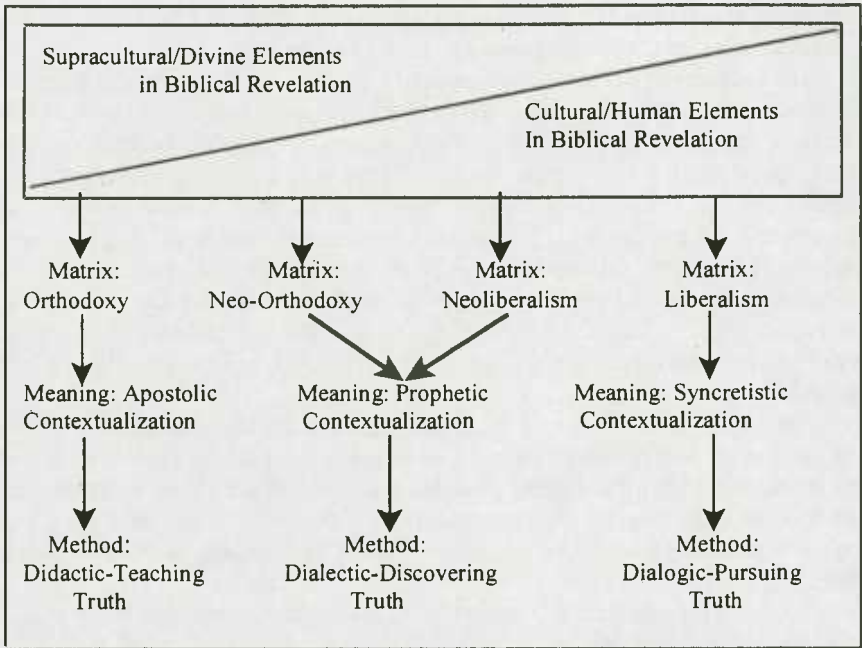


Fig. 1. The Contextualization Continuum¹¹

transmitter being first to get the meaning of the text in its original setting and then translating the “meant” into the “means” in the context of the receptor culture.

Contextualization may be done on two levels. The first involves modes of communication. The translation of the Bible, creeds, and other theological ideas into the languages of the receptor cultures is at this first level of contextualization. The second level involves changing the thought forms and practices that accompany these modes of communication. Singing Christian hymns in the tune of the receptor cultures and using the instruments of the receptor cultures fits this level.

Examples of NT Contextualization of the OT

It is generally accepted by those who advocate contextualization as a method of biblical interpretation that the NT contextualized the OT.¹² However, scholarship has not been able to build a clear case for such a presupposition.

¹¹This contextualization continuum is taken from Hesselgrave and Rommen, 157. Used by permission of Baker Book House.

¹²Osborne, 320-21.

Norman R. Ericson believes that there are five reasons for this neglect in evangelical circles: (1) the emphasis on the unity of the Bible; (2) the single-minded way of using Scripture; (3) the tendency to think of biblical literature as a programmed manual of operations; (4) the effort to extract and absolutize the teachings of the Bible, as in systematic theology; and (5) little emphasis on hermeneutics.¹³ Whatever the reasons, the need for such a study is long overdue.

Since the first level of contextualization is exemplified in the use of the language of the receptor cultures,¹⁴ let us now examine examples of the second level of contextualization. We will proceed from the Gospels, to the Acts of the Apostles, and finally to Paul's writings.

The Gospels

The Gospels provide at least three examples of contextualization. One is the Sabbath pericope (Mark 2:23-28; cf. Matt 12:1-8 and Luke 6:1-5). In this passage, Jesus and the disciples had picked some heads of grain as they walked through the grainfields. The Pharisees accused them of working on Sabbath, but Jesus defended their action by appealing to David and his men, who were allowed to eat holy bread (1 Sam 21:1-6). The picking of wheat on Sabbath was not identical to eating holy bread; nevertheless, in the context of Jesus' mission, He saw some dynamic parallel between the need of David's soldiers and the need of His own disciples. Jesus was appealing to the "spirit-of-the-law principle,"¹⁵ which the high priest used to give holy bread to David's soldiers, even though they were not priests. An OT text was contextually applied to a totally different situation.

A second example is found in Luke 16:19-31. In this passage Jesus gave a parable based on some mythological belief about Abraham's life after death. The parable certainly does not discuss actual life after death. It teaches the need to care for the needy around us, echoing Isa 58:6-12. Contextualization took place because a local story was used to teach the principles taught in the OT. Listeners could

¹³Norman R. Ericson, "Implications from the New Testament for Contextualization," in *Theology and Mission: Papers Given at Trinity Consultation No. 1*, ed. David J. Hesselgrave (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), 71-73.

¹⁴This trend is observed in the Judaism of Jesus' time and earlier. The LXX and the works of Philo show that the Jews of the Diaspora interpreted the OT in terms that were familiar to the Hellenized Jewish communities. Philo borrowed both the language and the thought forms of the Alexandrian Jews. See Philo *De Plantatione* 30-31 (trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, LCL, 3:276-79).

¹⁵The "spirit-of-the-law principle" refers to the underlying principles behind the actual command. When two laws come to some conflict, the underlying principle is appealed to. Although the Sabbath commandment prohibits working on Sabbath, a work of saving life would not be regarded as "work," following this principle. An underlying principle of the fourth commandment is "love for the creation of God," since the Sabbath celebrates God's sovereignty as Creator.

easily relate to the known myth and so learn about the importance of caring for the needy.

A third example is from John 1:1-14. The author's use of the Hellenistic *logos* motif was intended to solve the Christological controversies in his community. Osborne calls this "polemical contextualization."¹⁶ It refers to the use of an opponent's language against him.¹⁷ The personified use of *logos* does not find parallel in the OT, but it is common in Hellenistic literature. John, therefore, uses it in a way that was familiar to his audience but without borrowing all its Hellenistic notions. Contextualization must have some limits.

The Acts of the Apostles

In the Acts of the Apostles there is a clear attempt to present the gospel differently to different groups of people. The approach to the Jews would not apply to the Gentiles. Thus, Acts 15 is the breaking point for recognition of a contextualized gospel. The Gentile approach must not include offensive Jewish cultural practices like circumcision. Cultural elements of the OT must not be forced on the Gentiles (Acts 15:10,19). But supracultural truths, such as the teachings against immorality and idolatry, must be maintained (cf. Rev 2:14, 20). Of course, the compromise did not do away with all Jewish practices. This was to be done later in Pauline communities, where the ruling on meat sacrificed to idols (Acts 15) was not enforced except on an individual level (1 Cor 8-9).

Another important example of contextualization in the Acts of the Apostles is Paul's ministry in Athens (Acts 17:16-34). The famous Areopagus sermon, where Paul used an inscription about an unknown deity to introduce the God of heaven, is one of the best examples of contextualization. The OT message was here dressed in a form familiar to the Greek philosophers of Athens.

Paul's Writings

There are several examples of contextualization in the Pauline corpus. I will cite only three.

In 1 Cor 8-10 Paul addresses the issue of food sacrificed to idols. Interestingly, the OT does not have an injunction *per se* on eating food sacrificed to idols (*eidōlothytos*). The first appearance of the term is in 4 Macc 5:2.

¹⁶Osborne, 321. However, Osborne does not use this pericope as an example of polemic contextualization. His examples are derived from Paul.

¹⁷For discussions on the use of *Logos* in the Gospel of John, see Ben Witherington III, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster, John Knox, 1995), 52-53; and Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), 19-83.

However, Rabbinic Judaism prohibited eating meat offered to idols on the ground that "the flesh is offered to the dead or to unreal entities."¹⁸ It is also possible to connect the prohibition of eating food sacrificed to idols to the problem of idolatry (Lev 17:8-9; 20:2-3; Ezek 14:7-8). Thus, in Acts 15:20, the food sacrificed to idols is said to be polluted by idols. It then follows that eating such food is tantamount to worshipping the idol (see 1 Cor 10:18-20).

The Apostolic Council, believing that the silence of the OT on this issue invoked prohibition, required the Gentiles to abstain from eating food sacrificed to idols. Although the prohibition of eating food offered to idols is not mentioned in the Mosaic law precisely, it became a norm because it was supported by both Jewish and apostolic exegesis. But to those who had already accepted that idols are not deities, the food offered to such idols, when bought at the market place, had no religious significance. However, if the eating was done in the temple or in the presence of those with a tender conscience, it broke two principles: the principle of love, because it created a stumbling block for those with a sensitive conscience (Rom 14:13-15, 20-21; 1 Cor 8:9-13); and the principle of rejecting idol worship, because eating in the temple of idols exposed the believer to demons (1 Cor.10:20).

Contextualization took place, because in theory, Paul allowed some Christians to eat food sacrificed to idols if they were strong Christians (for whom idols are not deities) and if they did not offend a weaker Christian. The context of the eating determined the meaning. The context of the local community was the determinant of whether or not one should eat food sacrificed to idols.

The second example of contextualization is found in 1 Cor 9:7-12. In this passage, Paul contextualizes Deut 25:4 to apply to a situation which he was trying to address, namely, the need to take care of the ministers of the gospel. Deuteronomic law was based on the principles of justice and equity (Deut 23:15-25:16). These laws were meant to protect the weak, such as slaves, women, foreigners, debtors, animals, and others. The principles of fairness in business, justice in disputes, and support for the family are dealt with. A working ox had some kind of "animal rights" that were to be protected, according to the text. Paul, using this principle of an ox's right to food while working, established the need for a remuneration system for those laboring in the gospel commission. The same principle may be used in different contexts. The context this time is not cultural but economical.

The third and final example of contextualization is found in Paul's teaching on how women should behave during the time of worship (1 Cor 11:8-9; 14:34-35; 1 Tim 2:13-14). He appealed to Creation and to the Fall in his argument. The principle which he derived from these stories is that women should be submissive to their husbands. This principle is applied in various ways in the above texts. In

¹⁸F. Büchsel, "Εἰδωλόθυτον," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76), 2:378-79.

1 Cor 11:8-9 a woman showed her submissiveness by covering her head, either with her veil or with long hair. In 1 Cor 14:34-35 and in 1 Tim 2:13-14 the same principle is applied to speaking and teaching in public. The Corinthian women were to be silent while in church, and if they had an inquiry, they were to ask their husbands at home. The Ephesian women were not allowed to teach men authoritatively. The principle of submissiveness is supracultural, but the various ways in which this principle is to be practiced is cultural.

The Contextualization Principles Used by NT Writers

With the above examples, we have argued that in some instances the NT contextualized the OT. After carefully studying the above examples of contextualization, let us now suggest some general principles that were used during the contextualization process.

1. The meaning of the text controls the extent of contextualization. No contextualization is based on the issues of the receptor context unless both contexts can be related. All the examples given show this.

2. The OT content must remain constant, as was demonstrated by the texts surveyed.

3. The OT context creates a parallel for the receptor context. This was demonstrated in the appropriation of Deut 25:4 by 1 Cor 9:7-12.

4. Contextualization takes place at the level of application. Theology per se is not affected. The examples from the Gospels illustrate this point.

5. Sometimes the language of the receptor culture is appropriated. John's use of *Logos* for Jesus and the use of various translations of the OT are the best examples.

6. Cultural practices of the receptor culture that have no conflict with biblical principles are accommodated and sometimes enforced. The case of 1 Cor 11:8-9 is a good example.

7. Cultural practices that are not in harmony with the biblical principles are condemned. Polygamy, for example, is discouraged in 1 Tim 3:2.

The NT does not support a contextualization model which is interested in formulating a theology that is culturally based, unless the cultural values agree with what was understood as the revealed truth. No external radical social changes were proposed or supported by either Jesus or Paul.

Conclusion

The NT indeed contextualized the OT. But the model for this contextualization does not necessarily follow the radical understanding of contextualization. The contextualization practiced by the NT writers did not depart from the content of the OT. There is a clear attempt to present the gospel differently to different groups in the Acts of the Apostles. Paul also contextualized the gospel in his attempt to be

“all things to all men” so that by all means he might save some (1 Cor 9:19-23). In a few instances, the Gospel writers also show Jesus contextualizing His message for the benefit of His listeners.

Contextualization is a must in our modern world. However, interpreters must desist from departing from the content of the Bible. The demythologizing program of liberal NT scholars and theologies which emphasize acculturation at the expense of biblical truth, must not be followed. The seven contextualization principles established in this paper provide a workable guide on how contextualization may be done.

THE SEVEN-HEADED BEAST OF REVELATION 17

EDWIN REYNOLDS, Ph.D.

One of the serious challenges of the book of Revelation is how to interpret the seven-headed beast of Rev 17. The interpretation, naturally, is affected by the presuppositions which one brings to the text. Consequently, a great variety of interpretations have been put forth, each reflecting the particular presuppositions which the interpreter has brought. It is my purpose to attempt to avoid external presuppositions as far as possible, listening closely to the text and reading it as far as possible within its own internal context. I realize, of course, the impossibility of coming to the text with no presuppositions whatsoever; however, I hope to consciously avoid insofar as possible letting such presuppositions influence the interpretation. Therefore, there will be few references to the literature in this article, since the purpose is to listen as closely as possible to the text without introducing the bias brought by previous interpreters.

Listening to the Text

In interpreting the book of Revelation it is imperative to take the claims of the text at face value if we hope to understand what the author was intending to communicate, since he would have expected his readers and hearers to take them at face value. I do not mean that the symbolic language should be taken literally, but that John's claims and intentions should be taken seriously. When he states that he saw and heard things that pertain to the readers' future, we should interpret the text accordingly. This is the case particularly with regard to the visions recorded from 4:1 (*deixō soi ha dei genesthai meta tauta*: "I will show you what must take place after this"¹) to the end of the book. In other words, these visions pertain to events which John was instructed would take place between his day and the eschaton. Each of the visions from 4:1 through 14:20 appear to cover events which would take place in historical time, since they pertain to the historical future and culminate with eschatological events associated with the Parousia. The sixth seal brings the reader to the eschaton (6:14-17), and the seventh seal occurs in

¹Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the NIV.

eschatological time (8:1). The seventh trumpet announces the end of history and the beginning of the reign of God (11:15-18). The vision recorded in chaps. 12-14 also ends with the Parousia, specifically, the two harvests, gathering the righteous for Christ's kingdom and destroying the wicked (14:14-20).

There is a change that takes place in the subsequent visions. From 15:1 onward, each of the visions appears to be purely eschatological in nature. There are no historical events that transpire under these visions. Although there is a brief historical reference in 17:10 ("Five have fallen, one is"), this is given only for the purpose of making an identification of the symbol, not by way of pointing to any actual historical events. Therefore, the visions from 15:1 to the end of the book should not be interpreted historically, but eschatologically. This means that the vision of the judgment of the Harlot City, Babylon, in chaps. 17-18, which is a further explication of the fall of Babylon under the seventh vial (16:17-21), should not be interpreted as depicting historical events, for it relates to eschatological events. That does not mean that the symbols there portrayed have no historical role, since the text makes clear that they do; rather, it is not historical events that are portrayed in Rev 17. It is a portrayal of the judgment of the great Harlot (17:1).

Having said that, it must be admitted that the symbols themselves are interpreted to John by the angelic interpreter in terms that permit him to make a partial historical identification. When the angel tells John that five of the seven heads of the Beast have fallen and one has an ongoing existence (17:10), John is enabled to locate his own historical situation with relation to that of the Beast. He knows that five of the powers represented by the seven heads are already past history, and it is the sixth head of the Beast which is in power in his day. One head remains to come to power at some future point, then the Beast himself will rule as an eighth king, in the consecutive line of the seven (v. 11). Finally, the Beast will go to perdition or destruction (vv. 8,11). We will return to this matter later.

Rev 17 is not the first time John records seeing a beast with seven heads and ten horns. He saw similar beasts in chaps. 12 and 13. Can it be that there are three different beasts that are very similar in their particulars? Let us evaluate the similarities.

The Seven-headed Dragon of Rev 12

In 12:3 John saw a great fiery-red Dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads. This Dragon came from heaven (vv. 4-5,7-10,12-13) and stood before the Woman who was about to give birth to the Male Child to attempt to destroy the Child as soon as it was born (v. 4). Verse 9 tells the reader that this Dragon, or Serpent, is a symbol that represents the devil, or Satan, who was cast out of heaven for his rebellion against Michael. The text does not tell what the seven heads and ten horns represent, but it seems reasonable, according to the principles of biblical interpretation and the unity and interconnectivity of the book of Revelation, that they do not represent something different here in chap. 12

from what they do in chap. 17, namely, kings or kingdoms. In other words, the Dragon, a power of celestial origin, accomplishes his work on earth through his heads and horns, which are the ruling powers of earth. Thus, when the Dragon figuratively stands before the Woman to devour her Manchild as soon as He is born, it is one of the heads, which rule consecutively (17:10), that is acting on behalf of the Dragon. So the crowns (*diadēmata*, signs of royal authority and rulership) are shown to be on the heads in this vision, signifying that the period represented is that during which the heads are ruling consecutively, as opposed to the portrayal in 13:1 in which the crowns are on the ten horns, which rule contemporaneously at a later period (17:12-13). Since the activity of the Dragon in 12:3-4 involves a failed attempt to destroy the Manchild at His birth, it is reasonable to assume that the head or kingdom which is portrayed as acting on behalf of the Dragon is imperial Rome, represented by its client king Herod the Great at Jesus' birth and by its governor Pilate at His trial and crucifixion. Notwithstanding the Dragon's attempts to destroy Him, the Messianic Child "was snatched up to God and to his throne" (12:5), and the Dragon turned his anger against the Woman and her other offspring (vv. 6,13-17).

In short, we have in chap. 12, a beast represented as both a dragon and a serpent (cf. vv. 9,14). It existed in heaven before it was cast to the earth following a rebellion against the powers of heaven, represented by Michael (vv. 7-8). It is called "the ancient serpent, called the devil, or Satan" (v. 9). Its work on earth is to persecute and attempt to destroy the Woman (vv. 13-16) and her offspring, both the Manchild (vv. 4-5) and "the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (v. 17). It does its nefarious work on earth through its heads or earthly civil and political powers, which are shown as wearing crowns, or ruling (v. 3).

The work of the Dragon in this passage encompasses the whole period of human history and beyond, signaling the reader that this story encapsulates the whole of the great conflict between good and evil, which began in heaven (vv. 7-9; cf. vv. 3, 12) and was brought to this earth when Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven into the earth. The imagery of the serpent of old who deceived the whole world (v. 9) and who seeks to destroy the seed of the Woman clearly points back to the story of the Fall and the entrance of sin and death in Gen 3, along with the curse on the serpent and the promise of the Messianic Seed in Gen 3:15. The imagery of the Woman being given two wings of a great eagle to fly into the wilderness where God had prepared a place for her to be protected from the attacks of the Dragon/Serpent, along with the swallowing up of the devouring flood of water (Rev 12:14-16), reminds the reader of the escape of Israel from Egypt and their crossing of the Red Sea, even of the Jordan River (Exod 19:4; Ezek 29:3; Ps 106:9-10; Isa 11:15-16; Josh 4:23). The imagery of the birth of the Manchild who would rule all nations with a rod of iron, and His being caught up to God and to His throne (Rev 12:5), point to the birth of the Messiah (Ps 2:1-9; Isa 9:6-7) and His victorious resurrection and ascension to heaven (John 20:17; Heb 12:2; Rev

3:21). The imagery of the inbreaking of salvation accompanied by the second overthrow of Satan, the Accuser (Rev 12:10), and the defeat of the Accuser through the blood of the Lamb (v. 11), point to the salvation achieved by Christ at the Cross and the consequent casting down of Satan and his evil hosts with finality (John 12:31-33; Col 2:15). The 1260-day time period found in Rev 12:6, which finds its obvious parallel in the “time, times, and half a time” of v. 14, points to the same time period found in Dan 7:25, as well as in Rev 11:3. The forty-two-month period of 11:2 and 13:5 are clearly the same period, indicated not only by the mathematic equivalency but also by the description of the events that take place during that period, a period during which the people of God are persecuted by the evil powers variously described as the blaspheming Little Horn or “king” that arises from Daniel’s fourth beast (Dan 7:24-25), the nations who trample the holy city (Rev 11:2), the seven-headed Dragon/Serpent (Rev 12), and the blaspheming Beast from the sea (13:5). This long period, according to Daniel, reaches to the time of the end (Dan 7:17-18,21-22,25-27; cf. 8:17-25; 12:6-9). Therefore, Rev 12:17 should be seen as describing events which take place near the end of human history, since it is a sequel to the events of vv. 13-16. Thus, the vision of Rev 12 encompasses the essence of the entire struggle between good and evil since the beginning of the rebellion in heaven until the power of the Dragon and his heads is finally shattered at the eschaton, as revealed in the ensuing chapters.

The close connection between Rev 12 and 13 indicated by a repetition of similar events taking place in the same time period reveals that chap. 13 is a more detailed description of the events described in 12:6,13-17. After the failure of the Dragon/Serpent to destroy the Woman during this extended period of persecution, it turns its anger against the rest of the Woman’s offspring, those who keep God’s commandments and have the testimony of Jesus (12:17). In order to understand chap. 13 and the identity of the seven-headed, ten-horned Beast found there, it is imperative to read it in the light of chap. 12. A close comparison reveals that what is found in chap. 13 is the activity of the last two crowned heads of the Dragon of chap. 12, represented as two Beasts which do the work of the Dragon during the history of the Christian era.

The Seven-headed Beast of Rev 13

The first of the two Beasts of Rev 13 is the most important and the most enduring. It is depicted as rising up out of the sea. In this regard it reminds us of the four beasts of Dan 7. In Rev 17:15 the angelic interpreter tells John that waters symbolize peoples, multitudes, nations, and language groups. This suggests that the Beast of 13:1 is portrayed as arising from the same populated regions as Daniel’s beasts. Indeed, the description and activities of the Beast are taken from the description of Daniel’s fourth beast and its horns. But before we consider those features, we need to notice that this Beast is first described in terms very similar to the Dragon of chap. 12, for it is shown with seven heads and ten horns.

At the same time, however, it is distinguished from the Beast of chap. 12 in that it has, not seven crowns on its heads, but ten crowns on its ten horns. Wherever else we see these ten horns, whether in Dan 7 or Rev 17, the ten horns rule contemporaneously, not consecutively like the seven heads. This strongly suggests that they all appear together on one of the heads, just as they all appear together on Daniel's fourth beast. Since the language of Dan 7 is so strongly represented in the description of the Beast from the sea in Rev 13, as we shall see, it is reasonable to assume that it should be interpreted in the light of Dan 7. Therefore, the ten horns which rule during the period of this vision should probably be seen as the same ten horns depicted on the fourth beast of Dan 7. This suggests the time period of the Beast from the sea, which is confirmed by the fact that the time period during which the Little Horn, acting during the time of Daniel's fourth beast and its ten horns,² oppresses the saints in Dan 7:25, is the same period during which the Beast from the sea makes war against the saints in Rev 13:5,7, as shown above. The fourth beast in Dan 7 represents the Roman empire, as can be shown by a careful comparison with the other Danielic visions.³ Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that Rome is represented by the head on which the ten horns grow in Rev 13 as well. It is not reasonable to depict the ten horns, as in most artwork depicting the Beast from the sea, as growing from all seven heads, four heads with one horn each and three with two apiece. This confuses the interpretation, which should be first biblical, not imaginative. The ten horns all belong together in one period of history, namely during the period of the Roman empire and its decay into the nations of Europe that survive to the present day. Comparison with Dan 2 reveals that the legs of iron, represented by Rome, blend into the feet and toes of iron mixed with clay, which persist until they are destroyed and ground to powder by the stone kingdom of God (Dan 2:44).

Returning to Rev 13, we note that the Beast from the sea looks like the beasts of Dan 7, but cannot represent any of the first three beasts of Dan 7, since it has characteristics of all three of them. Like the fourth beast of Dan 7, it defies description, but is terrifying. It has the overall appearance (in body) of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion. Thus, it contains the destructive power of all of the first three of Daniel's beast powers, listed in reverse order. And on

²John ignores the detail of Daniel that three of the ten horns are subdued by the Little Horn at its rise. The ten horns are considered as a group, not individually.

³The visions of Dan 2,7,8, and 11 are parallel in some aspects, though they do not all begin at the same point. Dan 2 and 7 begin with the kingdom of Babylon, which was ruling the world at the time. Dan 8 and 11 begin with the kingdom of Medo-Persia, which was ruling at the time those visions were given. Dan 2:38 is explicit in this regard, as are also Dan 8:20-21 and Dan 11:1. The chronology of Dan 7 can easily be deduced by careful comparison with these more explicit visions. The four beasts, respectively, represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (cf. Dan 7:17, 23). There can be little doubt in this regard.

each of its heads are written names which blaspheme God (Rev 13:1), a parallel with the characteristic activities of the Little Horn of Dan 7, which had a mouth speaking arrogant words and defying the Most High (Dan 7:8,11,20,25).⁴ Perhaps most significantly, the Dragon gave this Beast his own power and throne and great authority. So the Beast from the sea may *look like* the Dragon, but it is *not* the Dragon. Closer observation reveals that the Beast apparently represents one of the seven heads of the Dragon, specifically, the head with the ten horns which are shown to be crowned in this vision. The focus of this vision is a head which appears to have suffered a fatal wound (v. 3), yet whose fatal wound is healed. The Beast cannot be disconnected from its head, but is represented at a particular period of history by a head which has ten crowned horns.

As a result of the Beast's miraculous recovery from its seemingly fatal wound, everyone on earth whose name is not written in the Book of Life marvels and is led to regard the Beast with awe, even to the point of worship (vv. 3-4,8). In worshiping the Beast, the people of earth are indirectly worshiping the Dragon, whose power, throne, and authority are represented by the Beast (v. 4). They believe that the Beast's remarkable recovery is a sign of its superiority and omnipotence, and they are unwilling to compete with it (v. 4).

The various activities of the Beast from the sea are virtually all adapted from the description of the Little Horn in Dan 7 and 8:

1. It is allowed to speak great blasphemies against God (vv. 5,6; cf. Dan 7:8,11,20, 25).
2. It is given authority to do whatever it wants for forty-two months (v. 5; cf. Dan 7:25).
3. It slanders God's name, His sanctuary, and those who have their dwelling in heaven, namely, the saints and angels (v. 6; cf. Dan 8:10-12).
4. It is allowed to wage war against the saints and to overcome them (v. 7; cf. Dan 7:21,25; 8:24-25).
5. It is given authority to rule over every tribe, people, tongue, and nation (v. 7; cf. Dan 8:23-25).

Thus, by constant allusion to Dan 7 and 8, John aids the reader in identifying the power in view in Rev 13:1-8. It is no other than the Little Horn power of Dan 7,8, a power in open rebellion against God, against His sanctuary in heaven (Dan 8:10-12; Rev 13:6) in which the salvation of humanity is accomplished by our

⁴Blasphemy takes various forms in Scripture, generally, though not always, with relation to God: (1) it may imply derisive remarks, insults, or curses (Exod 22:28; 2 Kgs 19:22; Acts 6:11; 19:37; 2 Pet 2:12); (2) it may involve using someone's name in a demeaning or debasing way (Lev 24:11-16); (3) it may involve dishonoring someone's reputation by misrepresenting them (Isa 52:5; Ezek 20:27; Rom 2:24); (4) it may take the form of deliberate and defiant sinful acts (Num 15:30); (5) it may involve a claim to the prerogatives of God, such as the ability to forgive sins (Matt 9:3); or (6) it may take the form of a claim to be God or the Son of God (Matt 26:65; John 10:33,36).

heavenly High Priest (Heb 8:1-2; 9:23-24; Rev 5:6-10; 8:3-5; 11:19; 15:5; 16:17). and against those who worship God in His sanctuary by faith and thus have their dwelling in heaven (Heb 11:13-16; 12:22-24; 13:10,14). It was an outgrowth of the Roman empire, coming to power during the reign of the Ten Horns which arose in connection with the decay of the Roman empire, and it became dominant for a period of 1260 prophetic days, or literal years, following the time-honored prophetic principle of a year for each day (Num 14:34; cf. Ezek 4:5-6).⁵ After that, it would receive a seemingly fatal wound, but would recover and continue until the eschaton, becoming once again ever more powerful until the whole world would seem to be in its grip, worshiping it and believing in its superiority and omnipotence.

The Second Beast of Rev 13

Apparently somewhere around the time that the Beast from the sea receives its "fatal" wound, another Beast appears on the scene. This Beast comes not from the sea but from the earth. In that way it is unlike any of the other beasts in Scripture, all of which come from the sea. This distinction should not be taken lightly. If we understand this prophecy in the light of 12:13-17, there is a helpful interpretive clue. In 12:6,14 the Woman flees from the Dragon into the desert, where God protects her and sustains her. In 12:15 the Dragon/Serpent casts a great flood of water out of its mouth to drown the Woman in the desert, but the earth helps the Woman by opening its mouth and swallowing up the flood of water (v. 16). The flood of water, like the sea, represents great multitudes of people, or a large population. The earth, which swallows up the flood of water, is equated with a desert, or deserted area, a place with no significant population. At the time in history represented by the prophecy, this would equate with the opening up of the New World, where people who were persecuted in the Old World fled for protection. Out of this New World, according to 13:11 comes a new Beast, a Beast which at first offers a contrast with the Beast before it. Instead of having seven heads and ten horns, it has only two horns, like the horns of a lamb (v. 11). This simple, seemingly unpretentious power at first offers refuge to those escaping the persecution of the Beast from the sea, and the Woman escapes the attempts of the Dragon to destroy her in the Old World ruled by the Ten Horns and the Little

⁵This principle has been found useful in understanding the prophecy of Dan 9:24-27. for example, which points to the coming of the Messiah sixty-nine "weeks," or 483 days. "from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem." The 483 years from the issuing of the decree in 457 B.C.E. to the baptism of Christ in 27 C.E. seems to be a clear fulfillment of this prophecy, lending credibility to the "year-for-a-day principle." It would have been on the basis of this principle that the time for the coming of the Messiah would have to have been understood beforehand.

Horn, or the Beast from the sea. In this way, John makes an advance over the book of Daniel, which does not introduce any New World power before the eschaton.

John, however, reveals how God uses the New World to foil the Dragon's attempts to destroy the Woman, and as a result, the Dragon becomes very angry and goes off to make special war against those who remain of her offspring (12:17). This shows that there is a renewed attempt by the Dragon late in history, after the 1260 years of persecution and the opening of the New World, to destroy by any possible means those who remain faithful to God. These are identified by two significant characteristics: they are those who (1) keep the commandments of God and (2) have the testimony of Jesus. The mention of keeping the commandments of God may be seen in a very general sense to point to an attitude of obedience and faithfulness to God. Yet, at the same time, the urgent message of the first angel of 14:6-7 may signal a more specific focus, namely, the worship of God as creator of heaven, earth, the sea, and the springs of water, a clear allusion to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. Likewise, reference to having the testimony of Jesus may be understood in a very general sense as overcoming the Dragon by the word of their testimony (12:11). However, in the light of 19:10, which explicitly defines the testimony of Jesus as the spirit of prophecy, there may be an intentional pointer here to a restoration of spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy, among the people of God at such a time.

Despite the fact that the Beast from the earth seems to be rather harmless in its initial phase, the text goes on to point out that it will nonetheless begin to speak as a dragon (13:11). In what way does it speak as a dragon? It exercises all the power of the first Beast (v. 12), the Beast from the sea, who exercised all the authority of the Dragon (v. 2). It does this by requiring all the earth to worship the first Beast, whose "fatal" wound had been healed (v. 12). This description reveals not only the politico-religious relationship of the two Beasts, but the time relationship between them. One is first, the other is second. The second begins to act in the same way as the first, but only after the "fatal" wound of the first has been healed. Both have political power, but exercise it in such a way as to control worship, and the worship is directed by the second to the first, though ultimately, in worshipping the first Beast, the Dragon is being worshiped. These Beasts are but the heads or earthly representatives of the Dragon, acting out his nefarious will. Their work is the work of the Dragon/Serpent, namely, to deceive the people of the world and thus to bring them to destruction (v. 14). Because Satan, the Dragon, is the great deceiver, the father of lies, and a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44), his heads behave in the same way. The Beast from the earth uses miracles to deceive those who live on the earth (v. 13), and the people are impressed by these miracles, just as they were by the first Beast's miraculous recovery. The Beast then orders the people of earth to make an image, or likeness, of the first Beast, and it gives breath to the image, causing it to speak. Next, like Nebuchadnezzar, it commands all to worship the image, on pain of death. Additionally it requires everyone to receive a mark signifying loyalty to the Beast,

and no one may buy or sell unless they have the mark. This is another way of enforcing loyalty in violation of conscience, with effective socio-economic death for those unwilling to compromise their consciences.

It is not the purpose of this paper to attempt to provide historical identifications for each of the details of these prophecies, but to note the defining characteristics of each of these Beasts and the relationships between them. The promise to Daniel was that the wise will understand these things (Dan 12:10). Up to this point we have considered the Dragon of Rev 12 and the two Beasts of Rev 13. We see these three together in Rev 16:13 in such a way that we cannot confuse them, but we can see the relationship between them once again. There they are called the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet. There is no cause to be in doubt as to what the False Prophet represents, for it is described in 19:20 in such a way as not to be misunderstood. The False Prophet is there said to be the one who had performed the miraculous signs on behalf of the Beast, with which he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. This is a clear pointer to the Beast from the earth as described in 13:14. The False Prophet, therefore, is another name for the Beast from the earth. The Beast in 14:9,11; 15:2; 16:2,10,13; 19:19-20; and 20:4,10 is consistently the Beast from the sea, as the respective contexts indicate. These two unite with the Dragon himself in 16:13 to attempt to deceive the kings and nations of earth into gathering for a last great (spiritual) battle against God Almighty (v. 14). This battle is symbolically portrayed in 19:19-20, and the result is that the Beast and the False Prophet are thrown into the lake of fire (v. 20), a symbol for the second death (20:14; 21:8), that final end from which there is no recovery. The Dragon goes into the lake of fire at the end of the thousand years (20:10).

Now that we have drawn a fairly clear picture of the three main evil figures from Rev 12-13, we must turn to the scarlet Beast of Rev 17. How does this Beast relate to the other three? Is it one of the others or a different entity altogether? The solution is not a simple one, but the clues are there for a biblical answer, I believe.

The Seven-headed Beast of Rev 17

The Beast of Rev 17 first appears as a beast in 11:7: "Now when they [the Two Witnesses] have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them." To know who this Beast is, one must turn to 17:8, which describes the Beast there in similar terms: "The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction." There is only one Beast which goes into the Abyss in Revelation and comes out of it again. It is the Dragon, described in 20:2-3 as being bound in the Abyss for a thousand years, then being released for a little while before going into the lake of fire (v. 10). This Dragon/Beast is the same one seen in chap. 12, acting through his heads to accomplish his will on earth. In 11:7-

8 he takes an active role in the death of the Two Witnesses, his most powerful antagonists on earth. The Two Witnesses follow in the steps of their Lord, first prophesying, then being killed, their deaths celebrated, then being raised after three and a half days, and finally ascending to heaven in a cloud in the sight of their enemies. The Dragon loses again. That is the short answer. But we need to carefully assess the text of Rev 17 in full in order to provide a clear answer that meets all of the objections that arise.

We begin with a reminder that chap. 17 is an eschatological vision, which Rev 11 is not. In Rev 11, we expect a historical fulfillment between the first century and the eschaton. It is the heads of the Dragon/Beast that are acting on earth. This is not so in Rev 17. Thus, when the Beast is introduced in 17:3, we see that it still has seven heads and ten horns, but there are no crowns. This tells the reader that the historical kingdoms are not in authority. The essential character of the Beast, however, has not changed. It is covered with blasphemous names (v. 3). Its color is the same as that of the clothing of the Harlot who is sitting astride it, namely, scarlet, a color associated with harlotry in Josh 2:18,21 and Jer 4:30 and with sin in Isa 1:18. It is slightly different from the word for red (*puros*, fiery) used of the Dragon in 12:3; however, it is a difference only in hue, not in basic color. The significance of the Beast in chap. 17 is its relationship with the Harlot, who is the primary focus of chaps. 17-18. These two chapters are about the judgment of the Harlot (17:1). They are an explication of the judgment on Babylon under the seventh vial of 16:17-21, specifically v. 19. As such, the description of the Beast which the Harlot sits on is somewhat incidental to the purpose of the vision. Nonetheless, the relation between the two is significant enough to be given considerable attention in explaining the reason for the Harlot's judgment. The Harlot's name, Babylon, is called a "mystery" (17:7), which means that it requires an explanation to be clearly understood. So the attending angel provides John with the requisite explanation in terms that will be meaningful to him.

The complicating factor is that there are two time frames of reference in the angel's explanation. One is the time frame of the events being depicted in connection with the vision itself, which is eschatological time, the time of the Harlot's judgment, which takes place under the seventh vial, immediately prior to the Parousia. It also includes subsequent events, such as the Beast's ascent out of the Abyss and his going to perdition. The other time frame is John's own historical period, from which standpoint John is enabled to understand the prior historical aspect of the Beast in order to identify its heads and horns, which have a historical application, though that application is in the past from the perspective of the vision. Let us evaluate the text to see how these different time frames play out in the explanation.

The angel informs John in 17:8, "The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction." This explanation is from the perspective of the time frame of the vision, that is, eschatological. John had been told in v. 1, "Come, I will show you the punishment

of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.” Then he was shown a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns. In vv. 7-18 the angel explains to him the mystery of the Woman and of the Beast in the setting in which he saw them. In that eschatological setting, the Beast is said to have had an active existence in the past, no active existence in the present, but a revival to an active existence in the future, when he comes up out of the Abyss until he goes to his destruction. This explanation, which seems to be in contrast to the Sovereign God who lives forever and ever, who never ceases to have an active existence (1:8; 4:8-9; 11:17), reveals two times when the Beast has no active existence: one at the judgment time to which the vision pertains, when the Beast goes into the Abyss, and another after the Beast comes out of the Abyss, when he goes to his destruction. The first is temporary, while the second is permanent. The first period during which the Beast was active was historical, when he operated on earth through his heads and horns to deceive and to destroy.⁶ The second period is eschatological, associated in 20:7-10 with a short period at the end of the thousand years during which the Beast is once again given freedom to deceive the nations and lead them in a last desperate effort to attempt to overthrow the place of God’s throne and of the inheritors of His kingdom. It becomes evident that the time of the vision is the eschatological period beginning with the judgment on Babylon under the seventh vial and continuing through the binding of Satan in the Abyss for one thousand years, ending with his release from the Abyss and his going to destruction in 20:10.

This relationship between the Beast and the Abyss confirms the initial conclusion that the Beast must be the Dragon, that Serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan (20:2). Just as with the Beast from the sea, to whom the Dragon gave his power, his throne, and great authority, and who received a seemingly fatal wound from which it recovered, the (resurrected)⁷ wicked are amazed by the seemingly miraculous return to activity of this scarlet Beast after a thousand years of being bound in the Abyss, unable to be active in any way (17:8). It is like a return from the dead.

⁶In 9:1 John is shown a star that had fallen from heaven to earth, and the latter was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. In v. 2 he opens the shaft and releases a numberless horde of destroying agents depicted as a swarm of devouring locusts which darken the sky with their numbers like the smoke from a huge furnace. In v. 11 this “king” of the destroying horde is called the angel of the Abyss, and his name is Abaddon and Apollyon—the destroyer. The star that had fallen from heaven is a destroying angel who at that point has charge of the destructive powers of the Abyss. Later, in 20:1-3, he is bound in his own headquarters by another angel from heaven with his own key to the Abyss. During that time his powers to deceive and destroy are rendered inactive.

⁷The wicked are all slain at the Parousia (19:21), but are resurrected at the end of the thousand years (20:5, 13), at which time Satan gathers them together for a final battle to take the city of God (20:8).

Having thus identified the Beast at the time of the vision, the angel shifts gears in v. 9 to identify the heads and horns of the Beast, a reference to its past activities in historical time. This explanation is given to John with reference to his own historical time frame. The angel says, "This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes he must remain only a little while" (vv. 9-10 RSV). We notice first that the shift in time frames is marked by a call for a mind with wisdom. One needs to be alert, to pay close attention, and to let the Holy Spirit guide the mind with wisdom from above. The reader should recall the promise to Daniel that the wise will be enabled to understand in the time of the end (Dan 12:9-10). Next we notice that two different, albeit not incongruous, explanations are given for the seven heads. First they are described as seven mountains,⁸ then as seven kings. The former is another symbol, which can represent a kingdom in Scripture (Jer 50:25-26; cf. Rev 8:8), while the latter is a literal interpretation. Because the angel wants to depict the Woman as sitting, he first uses the symbol of a mountain rather than the literal interpretation of a king to describe this in a meaningful way. Yet ultimately, the seven heads represent seven kings, or kingdoms. In this same connection, we note, significantly, that the Harlot is depicted as sitting on the heads of the Beast, not on the Beast itself. This is confirmed in the interpretation given in vv. 1, 15, and 19, which inform us that the Harlot sits upon many waters, which represent peoples, multitudes, nations, and language groups, and that she is the Great City that rules over the kings of the earth. The Harlot is primarily a historical figure, which is judged and destroyed immediately before the Parousia. She sits on, or rules over, the kings, nations, and peoples of the earth, not over Satan, the Dragon/Beast himself.

The angel goes on to explain, from John's historical perspective, that five of these kings or kingdoms have fallen, one is presently active, and one remains to appear in the future. He further informs John that when the last kingdom appears it will last for only a relatively short duration. It was not difficult, therefore, for John to place himself historically in the prophecy with respect to the seven heads of the Beast. He was living during the dominion of the sixth head. Five were already past history to him. Only one still lay in the future. If the Roman empire was the sixth head, what were the five that preceded it? Daniel only portrays three world powers before Rome, namely, in reverse order, Greece, Medo-Persia, and Babylon. But Daniel was already late in the history of God's people. Two other

⁸The Greek word is *orē*, mountains, not hills, as in some versions, which would be *bounoi* (cf. Luke 23:30). The translation "hills" is based on a presupposition that there is meant to be an allusion to Rome, sometimes referred to in ancient literature as the "City of Seven Hills." However, in a search I conducted in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, the word *orē* did not appear in any of the ancient references to the seven hills of Rome.

significant world powers meeting the same criteria had preceded him. Bible historians have had little difficulty in identifying these. Using the biblical criteria for the behavior and characteristics of the other heads of the Beast, Assyria and Egypt, respectively, in reverse order, seem to fit the criteria.⁹

If, then, the first six heads of the Beast represent, respectively, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, what must the seventh head represent? It should be another world power that does the same work as the powers which precede it, and it should appear elsewhere in the prophecies of Revelation, with additional information given about it that would help the reader to identify it as another head of the Beast. It must also meet the criteria given by the interpreting angel to John, namely, that it had not yet appeared, but when it would appear it must remain for a short time (*oligon auton dei meinai*).¹⁰ The priority of *oligon* in this Greek phrase shows that the emphasis is not on "must remain," as some would have it, but on "for a short time," or "for a brief period." In other words, the seventh head would only appear at a very late point in earthly history, since it is the last of the seven heads and it continues for only a relatively brief period. Compared with the sixth head, Rome, which began to rule in the first century B.C.E., was ruling at the time John had his vision, and, including the Ten Horns on its head, would continue ruling after receiving the "fatal" wound, and being healed therefrom, will continue to rule until the eschaton, the seventh head would rule for a very brief period. What other world power could meet these criteria?

The sixth head of the Beast, representing Rome, appeared in Rev 12 as well as in Rev 13. In Rev 12, the Dragon was acting through its Roman head to attempt to destroy the Manchild as soon as it was born, then continued to persecute the Woman after failing to destroy the Manchild. The earth helped the Woman by opening its mouth to swallow up the flood of water that the Dragon/Serpent spewed out to overwhelm her. We have seen that this represented, at least in part, the opening of the lands of the New World to permit the Woman to escape the religious persecution threatening to overwhelm her in the Old World. In Rev 13, the Beast from the sea represents the Little Horn power of Dan 7 which arises from among the Ten Horns on the fourth beast, which represents Rome. After it

⁹The description of these powers from Daniel and the Revelation suggest the following criteria: (1) they are dominant world powers; (2) they oppressed, enslaved, or took captive the people of God in a formal way, using civil power to accomplish their oppression, and they killed or attempted to kill leaders of God's people; (3) they manifested a contempt for the God of heaven and for His worship and enforced or attempted to enforce alternative forms of worship upon the people of God.

¹⁰There has been some controversy over what *oligon* means here, but it is imperative to remember that *oligon* here must be understood in the context of *auton dei meinai*, which is a clear reference to the time during which the seventh head must remain or continue, namely, a short or brief time.

receives its "fatal" wound and recovers, another Beast arises from the earth and ends up enforcing the worship of the first Beast. It seems only reasonable to assume that this Beast, which is a world power which does the same work as the Beast before it, which is the work of the Dragon, is the seventh head of the Beast of Rev 17. This power appears late in earth's history and begins to speak like the Dragon after the healing of the "fatal" wound of the Beast from the sea. It acts in this way only during a brief, final period of earth's history, making an image to the first Beast and causing all who will not worship the first Beast and its image to be killed. These events have not yet taken place, but the Revelation to John predicts the certainty of these events before the end and points to the earthly powers that will accomplish them. Lest any reader fails to take the warnings seriously, the third angel of Rev 14:9-12 makes a last, desperate appeal to avoid the impending judgments to be executed against those who worship the Beast and its image and who receive its mark.

The vision of Rev 17, however, is not primarily about the seven heads of the Beast. They are somewhat incidental to the activities of the Beast itself and to the Harlot which sits astride the heads. The vision is primarily about the judgment of the Harlot, yet the Harlot is in collusion with the Beast and rules over its heads. The interpreting angel goes on to tell John, "The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction" (17:11). The word "king" which appears here in the NIV is not found in the Greek, but it is implied by the masculine form of "eighth." It cannot refer to an eighth head, since the word for "head" is feminine. This eighth king, the angel says, belongs to the seven kings; that is, he is the eighth in the consecutive line of the seven kings as opposed to the ten kings which rule contemporaneously as the Ten Horns. There are only seven historical kings or world powers that are represented as the heads of the Beast, but when their historical rule is ended, in the eschatological period the Beast asserts himself to rule as an eighth king, to lead the final assault against the throne of God and the Lamb. This final assault is portrayed in the subsequent verses.

In 17:12-14 the angel tells John, "The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers." The fact that the Ten Horns have not yet received a kingdom when the angel is interpreting the vision to John shows that they come at some point after the beginning of the rule of the sixth head, which was already ruling at the time of John, according to v. 10. Both the Ten Horns and the seventh head lie in the future with reference to John, though the precise time of their rise is not indicated. What is evident is that both the Ten Horns and the seventh head continue until the eschaton. If the Beast from the sea and the Beast from the earth are the sixth and seventh heads of the Beast, respectively, as argued

above, both the sixth and seventh heads continue until the eschaton, one in the Old World and the other in the New World. Judging from the allusions to Dan 7, the Ten Horns appear to arise from the sixth head, Rome, and they also continue until the eschaton, just as the feet and toes in Dan 2 continue until the coming of the stone kingdom.

In Rev 17:12 the Ten Horns receive authority as kings for one hour with the Beast. This is now a description of what takes place at the eschatological time of the vision, when the Beast is functioning as an eighth king. It says nothing about when the Ten Horns began to rule historically. That was defined in 13:1-8, when the Ten Horns appear with crowns. Verse 13 points out that the Ten Horns “have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast.” This means that in the eschatological period they surrender their authority to rule to the Beast and submit to his authority for a particular purpose. That purpose is indicated in v. 14: “They will make war against the Lamb.” The Beast, who is the Dragon, has always been the leader in the war against the Lamb. He has worked historically through his heads and horns to make war against the followers of the Lamb, but now he personally assumes the leadership in the eschatological period, and the Ten Horns, representing the civil powers of earth at the end of history, surrender their power and authority to his leadership in the final battle against God and the Lamb.

This final battle is the eschatological battle called “the battle on the great day of God Almighty” in 16:14. The Dragon, the Beast (from the sea), and the False Prophet, are depicted in 16:13-14 as having evil spirits coming out of their mouths, which “are the spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.” The Ten Horns represent “the kings of the whole world,” who join with the Dragon and his sixth and seventh heads in the final war against God and the Lamb. This is a spiritual battle, not a military one. Its goal is to overthrow the kingdom of God. This is the last desperate battle in the war that began in heaven and was brought to this earth. The issues in this war are described in Isa 14:12-15:

How you have fallen from heaven,
 O morning star, son of the dawn!
 You have been cast down to the earth,
 you who once laid low the nations!
 You said in your heart,
 “I will ascend to heaven;
 I will raise my throne
 above the stars of God;
 I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly,¹¹

¹¹“The mount of assembly,” also called here “the sacred mountain,” is the place of God’s throne, which Satan coveted for himself. In the Hebrew it is *har-mô`ed*, which some scholars have seen as perhaps the best solution to the vexing problem of transliterating and interpreting *Harmageddōn* in Rev 16:16, since the text points to a place name found in the

on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.
 I will ascend above the tops of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the Most High."
 But you are brought down to the grave,
 to the depths of the pit.

The battle to culminate this war does not actually take place under the sixth vial, which is merely a preparation for the battle by gathering the forces of earth together, but it happens under the seventh vial, which depicts the collapse of Babylon and of the cities of the nations. Rev 17-18 is an extended delineation of this final battle, as noted above, depicted as the judgment of the great Harlot. It is natural, therefore, to find this battle portrayed in 17:14 as the final act that leads to the judgment of the Harlot by fire.

The final battle in this war is further described in 19:19: "Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army." The Rider on the white horse is none other than Jesus Christ, the Lamb, as indicated by his titles, including "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (19:16), which is parallel to that of the Lamb in 17:14: "He is Lord of lords and King of kings."

As indicated in 17:14, there is no serious contest in this final battle, for "the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers." This is the same picture portrayed in 19:20-21: "But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. . . . The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh."

The judgment of the great Harlot is not forgotten in all of this. Rev 17:16-17 tells the story: "The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God's words are fulfilled." The purposes of the Beast and of the Ten Kings are overruled by the purposes of God, and they become the tools in God's hands to accomplish the destruction of the Harlot, who had ruled as a despot over the kings of the earth (v. 18). As always, sin works the destruction of those who engage in it.

Hebrew, that is, in the Hebrew scriptures. See, e.g., Meredith G. Kline, "Har Magedon: The End of the Millennium," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39 (1996): 207-10; C. C. Torrey, "Armageddon," *Harvard Theological Review* 31 (1938): 237-48. The theological significance is remarkable, and the significance of gathering to a place called "the mount of assembly" is also notable.

Conclusion

This overview of the scarlet Beast of Rev 17 and its backgrounds in the book, has attempted to demonstrate that the scarlet Beast with the seven heads and ten horns is none other than the Dragon of chap. 12, who began his rebellion in heaven and, when he was cast out into the earth with his angels, continued that rebellion against God and the Lamb through his heads and horns, which represent the dominant ruling powers of earth. These world powers have cooperated with the Dragon to accomplish his work of deceiving the people of earth into joining the rebellion against heaven and against those who ally themselves with God and the Lamb. Nonetheless, God and the Lamb, with their faithful followers, will prevail in the end, and the Dragon and his followers will be destroyed. The issues at stake in this great controversy revolve around loyalty and worship. Those who believe that God is faithful and just, that His laws are reasonable and immutable, will worship and obey Him faithfully, despite threats and intimidation, even to death.

DETERMINISM AND GRACE: AN INVESTIGATION IN THE PROLOGUE AND EPILOGUE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

JOEL N. MUSVOSVI, Ph.D.

Introduction

A fundamental issue in studies on the book of Rev is whether or not it is oriented toward grace. Is the Apocalypse of John a graceless, deterministic book that expresses a legalistic outlook? Is the book perhaps sub-Christian in its spirit and outlook? To determine answers to such questions we shall examine the prologue and epilogue of the book.

Rev is written in a general epistolary format. The prologue and epilogue have many, though not all, of the epistolary form. For example, in the prologue we have several characteristics that indicate this form: the identification of John as the writer (1:1,4,9); the recipients, the seven Churches which are in Asia (v. 4); and the greeting, which includes the invoking of divine grace (vv. 4-6). Notably, the elements of prayer and thanksgiving are missing in this introduction. It may be noted that the epilogue also contains the invoking of divine grace on the recipients (22:21) but includes no personal comments. A question to be settled is whether or not this epistolary format is merely incidental or done by specific design of the author. Certain features of this epistolary introduction would suggest a specific purpose by John in using the letter format in his composition. This feature will be discussed later.

While there were many more churches in Asia Minor, the choice of these specific seven may have been influenced by a number of considerations, most important of which may have been the symbolic significance of these particular seven. Leon Morris observes that if one were to visit these churches according to the order in which they are named, one would make a complete circle, an idea that communicated the symbolism of completeness.¹ The number seven, as students of

¹Leon Morris, *The Revelation of St. John: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 47.

the Apocalypse generally note,² becomes a characteristic number for the rest of the document.³ The meanings of the names of these seven churches and their specific inner spiritual qualities may also have played a determinative role in their selection.

We must carefully examine the prologue of Rev, for an author often includes leading elements of the main body of the epistle in the greeting. As Craig S. Keener has correctly observed, “The preface, or exordium, of a work sets the tone for a work . . . ; expansions on any part of the traditional letter introduction, including the blessings, often provide clues to themes in the rest of a letter.”⁴

Determinism in the Apocalypse

The basic outlook of apocalyptic prophecy points in the direction of unconditional prophetic outcomes. The warnings and passionate prophetic pleas for a people to come to repentance in order to avert possible divine judgment are generally missing, or at least, are not explicitly stated in apocalyptic literature. In this literary genre, human events are portrayed as having gone beyond certain preliminary stages, leading to an almost inevitable divine response. In the controversy between good and evil, certain powers have taken an irrevocable stance of opposition against God and His people. Thus, while individuals may yet change sides, and are urged to do so, the beast powers will not change their attitude of antagonism against God. In describing the kings associated with the beast we find deterministic language in the declaration that they

will receive authority as kings along with the beast. They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast. They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.⁵ 17:12b-14

²John Wilcox, *The Message of Revelation: I Saw Heaven Opened*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1975), 33; George Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdsman, 1981), 53; Morris, 47.

³For example, there are septenary series such as the seven churches in chaps. 2-3, the seven seals in chaps. 6-8, the seven trumpets in chaps. 8-11, and the seven plagues in chap. 16. There are also seven golden lampstands (1:12); seven stars (1:16); seven spirits (1:5); seven thunders (10:3); seven thousand people killed in the great earthquake (11:13); seven heads of the dragon with seven crowns (12:3); seven heads of the leopard-like beast (13:1); and seven mountains that are also seven kings (17:9,10).

⁴Craig S. Keener, *Revelation*, The NIV Application Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 69.

⁵Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are from the NIV.

D. S. Russell has argued that one of the primary functions of apocalyptic literature is to address the problem of unfulfilled prophecies.⁶ What were the people of God to make the glorious prophecies that had apparently not been fulfilled? How were they to reconcile the divine promises of deliverance and glory for the faithful with the dire situations of present repression, persecution, and defeat? What had become of the great prophecies promising glory? Apocalyptic literature provides an answer pointing beyond the intermediate time of suffering to the ultimate consummation. This may partly suggest why this genre alludes continuously to the prophetic writings.

Further, in apocalyptic literature, history is portrayed as having been determined beforehand. As Russell points out, "There was therefore an inevitability about history; through travail and persecution it would move unerringly to its predetermined goal—the defeat of evil and the establishment of God's kingdom in the time of the End. The past was fixed; the future was fixed also."⁷ Thus, according to this deterministic understanding, *what must be will be*. But if the future has already been predetermined, what is the place and function of divine grace? What is the function of human freedom and will? How does the sovereign God of history act graciously to allow the exercise of human freedom in a situation of predetermined history? H. H. Rowley reflects on this issue from the perspective of the OT. He says, "The divine activity in history does not override human freedom. It but uses it to serve the divine will."⁸ Rabbi Akiba had already provided an answer that represents standard Judaism, "All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given."⁹ While several examples of determinism and human free will are present in Jewish apocalyptic,¹⁰ this study limits itself to the prologue and epilogue of the book of Revelation.

Even though the book of Rev presents a cosmic sweep that is cast in the setting of the universal conflict between Christ and Satan, there are conditional statements within its larger prophetic profiles which suggest grace. For example, while Laodiceans are threatened to be expelled from the Lord's mouth if they remain in a lukewarm condition (3:16), there are also great promises reserved for the overcomers in Laodicea (vv. 20-22). Similar promises are given to overcomers in each of the seven churches (2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21). However, it must be

⁶D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 181-87.

⁷Ibid., 230.

⁸H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic: A Study of Jewish and Christian Apocalypses from Daniel to the Revelation* (London: Athlone, 1944), 144.

⁹Mishnah *Pirke 'Abot* 3:16.

¹⁰For example, the Book of Jubilees (5:13; 41:24 ff.) expresses the idea of an individual's future as being fixed in the heavenly tablets, but at the same time urges each person to choose righteousness so that condemnation may not be recorded against him or her in the heavenly annals. Cf. Psalms of Solomon 14:5 and 2 Enoch 53:2 for additional examples that express the same sentiment.

observed that none of the conditional elements or offers of grace are big enough to change the larger, predetermined prophetic outcome. Thus, we may say that insofar as the larger prophetic outcome is concerned, apocalyptic literature in general is bound by a strong element of unconditionality. There are no large variables that can now alter its historical forecast. What has been decreed is now unfolding according to the determinate sovereignty of God. Babylon *must* fall, break up, and come under the final judgments of God. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet *must* come under divine judgment and punishment. Armageddon *must* come with unnegotiable certainty.

Some have seen in the harsh language of biblical apocalyptic an indication of a vindictive divine Sovereign.¹¹ Indeed, the language of fire and brimstone is sobering; and the fate of the persecutors of the saints is portrayed in grim pictures. But it must be noted that within this determinism of the destruction of the strongholds of evil, there is a persistent conditionality of grace for individuals. A divine window of hope is left open for the repentant.

In the letters to the seven churches, Jesus' self-introduction always inspires hope and implies an invitation. Christ, the author of the seven letters, "holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven candlesticks" (2:1). He "is the First and the Last who died and came to life again" (2:8). He is "the faithful and true witness" (3:14). To each church He holds out hope and promise for the overcomer. He appeals to all who have ears, to hear what the Spirit says to the churches (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22). Clearly, these invitations and appeals offer a conditionality of grace for individual salvation. They also underscore the tender compassion of the sovereign God of the Apocalypse. The God who has determined the larger outcomes of history has also made gracious provision for individuals making determinant decisions for their eternal destiny. This is grace.

Grace in the Prologue

Interestingly, the word "grace" (*charis*) occurs only twice in Rev, once each in the prologue (1:4) and epilogue (22:21). Our examination is to see if the occurrence of the word, used specifically and only at these two points in the document, is merely customary or has definite theological intention. A careful study of Rev shows that while the word "grace" appears only in the prologue and epilogue of the book, the theme of grace is evident in a number of other passages. This study, however, focuses only on the prologue and epilogue.

¹¹For example, Walter Bauer, "Das Gebot der Fiendesliebe und die alten Christen," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 27 (1917): 40, says, "The Apocalypticist breathes a glowing hatred against all enemies and persecutors of Christianity and assuages himself with thoughts about the terrible sufferings which await them." See also W. D. Davies, "Ethics in the New Testament," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (1962), 2:176; J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 4.

In the use of *charis* in the prologue, some have seen only a traditional formulary, perhaps borrowed from Paul as a form of Christian greeting, with no special significance.¹² But this seems hardly possible in the light of several Johannine innovations connected with this word in the Apocalypse. First, it is notable that John has lengthened the usual greeting formula from “grace and peace,” to a longer formula that includes the source of grace and peace as the Father, the Spirit and the Son. While we have evidence of a lengthened greeting formula in a number of other NT epistles,¹³ this one is by far the longest, spanning three verses (1:4-6). Second, we may also note that while Paul consistently uses the expression (with practically no variation), “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,” John, in addition to using a longer formula, varies the order of the source of grace to Father, Spirit, and then Son, and not the traditional trinitarian order of Father, Son, and Spirit. In his description of the Father as the source of grace and peace, John describes Him as “him who is, and who was, and who is to come” (1:4). This is unique to John. What is particularly interesting and noteworthy here is that John’s construction goes contrary to Greek grammar. He uses the nominative case of the personal pronoun (*ho*) three times in this construction (*apo ho ōn kai ho ēn kai ho erchomenos*) referring to God. Grammatically, John should have used the genitive case, which normally follows the preposition (*apo*). William Barclay suggests that John employs such an unusual grammatical construction in order to preserve the correct Hebrew form of the divine personal name.¹⁴ It seems that God’s self-revelation to Moses in Exod 3:14, “I AM WHO I AM,”¹⁵ stands behind this expression. The Septuagint rendering correctly uses a nominative case, but this is because the pronoun here does not follow the preposition as in Revelation. George Beasley-Murray also suggests that this awkward Greek expression probably reflects John’s attempt to translate a Hebrew original.¹⁶ George B. Caird comments that by keeping the divine title in the nominative case John is indicating that “God is, so to speak, always in the nominative, always the subject; he holds the initiative, and things happen because he chooses, not because men force his hand and so put him into the accusative.”¹⁷ This may recall the Exodus, a movement initiated by the grace of God. By this connection we may view John’s audience as a community of grace called out by

¹²This may be seen in that commentators often see the expression “grace and peace” as merely a customary Christian salutation that combines the Hebrew “*shālôm*” and the Greek “*charis*.”

¹³Cf. Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; Eph 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2; 2 John 1:3.

¹⁴William Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, rev. ed., The Daily Study Bible Series, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 30.

¹⁵NIV indicates that this may also be expressed as “I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE.”

¹⁶Beasley-Murray, 54.

¹⁷George B. Caird, *The Revelation of Saint John*, Black’s New Testament Commentary, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1966), 16.

God to a new Exodus—a new call of grace to become God’s special people.¹⁸ The divine intention to make the people of the old exodus movement “a kingdom of priests” (Exod 19:6) was an expression of grace. It seems that John creates a marked connection between the implied divine name in Rev 1:4 and its explicit use in Exod 3:14. He underlines that connection with the description of this new people of God as “a kingdom of priests” (Rev 1:6), just like their OT counterparts. Such a linkage seems too clear to be incidental and unintended. Additionally, the recurring exodus motif under different images in the rest of the book points strongly in this direction. For example, the symbolism of the trumpets (chaps. 8-11) and the plagues (chap. 16), the Song of Moses and the Lamb, as well as the Sea of Glass mingled with fire (15:1-3), all emphasize the exodus theme. Hence, in the greeting of grace we are ushered into the motif of the new exodus of grace. John reminds his readers that they constitute a movement initiated by God’s grace; they are a new exodus people.

From the foregoing argument it seems evident that grace in the Prologue is not a traditional greeting; rather, John uses it to introduce a major theological framework for the whole book. The Church of Revelation may be understood as the people of grace. They came into existence by the grace of Yahweh, and they live by His grace.

The second source of grace and peace in the greeting is from “the seven spirits before the throne” (1:4). The seven spirits are not synonymous with the stars who are defined as the seven angels (1:20). This may be deduced from the fact that in the Greek text of Rev 3:1 (*ta hepta pneumata tou theou kai tous hepta asteras*, “the seven spirits of God and the seven stars”), each substantive stands with its own definite article, thereby denoting distinct entities. Probably the seven spirits allude to the seven-fold Spirit of Isa 11:2, thus pointing to the third member of the Godhead. In this way John may be describing his audience as the community of the Spirit, a relevant NT motif. Therefore, this audience may be understood as a community that came into existence through the activity of the Spirit and it continues to live by the Spirit.

The third source of grace and peace in this initial greeting is the longest and is placed in an unusual order. The description of Jesus Christ (vv. 5-6) is placed last:

and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

¹⁸The new Exodus motif is also found in the book of Jeremiah. See Kenneth D. Mulzac, “The Remnant and the New Covenant in the Book of Jeremiah,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 34 (1996): 240-42.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

Perhaps this placement of the description of Christ, coming as it does at the end of the greeting, is intended to put special focus on Him in order to introduce and concretize the Christological focus and foundation that is so self-evident in the whole document. I submit that on the basis of this extended greeting in the prologue, John intended to communicate the centrality of grace as the underlying motif for his whole presentation and proclamation. We find that as an added expression of this grace, the doxology of vv. 5-6 outlines from the very beginning, the basis of the saints' standing with God. This is cause to burst into joyous worship and adoration: "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood . . . to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen." Such is John's passionate response to Jesus Christ.

Grace in the Epilogue

The closing benediction of Revelation also makes reference to grace. Textual variants noted in Rev 22:21¹⁹ do not affect the meaning and significance of the word "grace." Perhaps it may be argued that its brief expression in a very customary way simply closes the book in an appropriate manner. Martin Kiddle sees in this closing benediction John's desire "that his readers will be given that grace which brings to birth good deeds."²⁰ Allan F. Johnson sees the mention of grace in the epilogue as having theological significance for the message of the book itself. He says insightfully, "We may, however, agree that nothing less than God's grace is required for us to be overcomers and triumphantly enter the Holy City of God, where all shall reign for ever and ever."²¹ The book opens with the mention of grace and closes with the mention of the same. Ranko Stefanovic notes correctly, "John closes his book by reminding God's people that in the midst of all

¹⁹Textual variants of *kuriou Iesou* include *kuriou Iesou Christou* and *kuriou hēmōn Iesou Christou*. The first is found in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus among others, and is given an A rating as being most certain. Other variants include *meta pantōn* ("with all") or *meta pantōn hēmōn* ("with you all") or *meta pantōn tōn hagiōn* ("with all the saints"). Still other variants either include or exclude the final word "Amen." The word "grace" is present except for the Coptic manuscript from the 9th century C.E. (Cop^{bo}), which omits v. 21 altogether. See Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, et. al.; ed., *The Greek New Testament*, 4th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Biblia-Druck, 1993), 886.

²⁰Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of Saint John* (New York: Harper), 457.

²¹Allan F. Johnson, *Revelation*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 603.

the confusion and fears regarding the things that are about to come upon the world, their only hope is in the grace of Christ. His grace is sufficient for them.”²²

Finally, the last two chapters of Rev climax the great conflict between good and evil on a rich note of grace. In this section, grace is not expressed verbally but is clearly indicated in the final display of divine actions toward sinners who were once lost. Rev 21 opens with John seeing “a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had passed away.” He views the New Jerusalem being prepared as a bride dressed in festal array for her husband. The New Jerusalem then comes down to the new earth. God changes His dwelling to earth and lives among His people. The use of tabernacle language in the phrase *idou he skēnē tou theou meta tōn anthrōpōn, kai skēnōsei met autōn* (“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them,” 21:3), again recalls the exodus theme that was already introduced in the prologue. The same God who had commanded the construction of a Tabernacle or Sanctuary so that He might dwell among His people (Exod 25:8), now comes in His unfiltered glory to dwell among the new humanity (21:1-3).

When one recalls the history of sin, rebellion, and shame that has characterized fallen humanity, one appreciates that it is only by grace that one may be saved. Indeed, the dramatic portrayal of God’s final initiative in coming to dwell with humanity presents a picture of grace that is greater than all human sin. The universe itself finds a final climactic demonstration of the meaning of grace. If in the parable of Luke 15, the lost son was treated with grace by his father, lost humanity is treated with ultimate grace in Revelation. The book is one that demonstrates the final display of divine grace.

Conclusion

The book of Rev is not set in a deterministic mode; rather, it is framed by grace both in the prologue and epilogue. Indeed, these are the only places in Rev where the word “grace” occurs. But while the explicit mention of grace occurs only in 1:4 and 22:21 the motif of grace is threaded throughout the book. In the prologue and epilogue the work is part of an epistolary greeting, but is expressed in an extended manner that suggests a clear theological purpose. Within the context of the suffering and persecution, John wished to reassure his audience that just as they came into existence by God’s initiative of grace, they will be sustained in the hour of trial by that same divine attribute. Therefore, grace provides the theological framework within which we are to read and interpret the message of Revelation.

²²Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2002), 610.

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GRACE-DRIVEN MINISTRY: A PARADIGM FOR EFFECTIVE MINISTRY IN ASIA AND BEYOND

REUEL U. ALMOCERA, D.P.S.

Key Thought: Experiencing God's grace is essential to ensure effectiveness in our ministry.

The encounter between the rich young ruler and Jesus, recorded in Matt 19:16-22 and Mark 10:17-22, is a meaningful experience that helps us as we reflect on the theme of this Forum. Let us revisit the narrative and rediscover the primacy of experiencing God's grace in the practice of ministry.

Employers are very particular with the qualifications of their employees. When they hire workers, they require them to submit to interviews and present transcripts of academic records in order to ensure that the applicants are qualified for the job. Now this rich, young ruler came to Jesus for an interview. His motives seemingly revealed that he wanted to become one of Jesus' ministers. Perhaps everybody assumed and expected that this rich, young ruler would pass the interview. After all, to all appearances, it seemed that he was certainly qualified to be one of Jesus' disciples. But to our surprise and disappointment, he flunked the qualification test.

Definitely, the young Christian organization could have used the services of this very qualified young man. It was difficult to accept that the rich, young ruler could not qualify for the ministry. Imagine! Rich, young, and a ruler at that! Such a combination of wealth, good health, and power can certainly propel someone to "get ahead" in ministry. Hence, we are forced to question, "Why was this young man disqualified?" To do so, let us take a close look and examine the qualifications of this "would-have-been" disciple of Jesus. Besides being rich, young, and a ruler, he had several other outstanding qualifications.

1. **Earnestness.** This young man was very earnest in his desire to follow Jesus. In Mark's account, he "ran up to" Jesus (10:17). This is quite a picture!

Imagine running to Jesus! How happy we would be if our ministers were full of vigor and enthusiasm in doing the Lord's work. We admire ministers who are full of energy and always on the go, being conscious not to waste time or opportunity. We appreciate such workers. But to Jesus, earnestness in doing the Lord's work is one quality, but it is not enough.

2. **Courage.** This young man must have been very courageous. Others were reluctant to be associated with Jesus. Although he admired Jesus, Nicodemus came to see Him by night because he did not want to be identified with the great Rabbi. But this young man came to Jesus in broad daylight. Today, we need ministers who are assertive and courageous. We need ministers who are not afraid to be identified with Jesus. But to Jesus, courage alone is not enough.

3. **Humility.** This young man must have been very humble because when he finally caught up with Jesus, he knelt down before Him (Mark 10:11). What a picture of humility! Here was a ruler kneeling before a lowly peasant, Jesus. We certainly admire ministers who are humble, while we may not have the same admiration for those who are proud. Ellen White wrote that if we humble ourselves, souls will be converted by the hundreds instead of by the few.¹ Humility is one quality necessary when we are engaged in the Lord's work. But to Jesus, being humble is not enough.

4. **Good judgment and sharp intellect.** This young man must have been in possession of these admirable assets. While the leaders of his day despised Jesus and considered Him as of the devil, this young man readily acknowledged Jesus as a good master. He also recognized Jesus as divine. But merely recognizing Jesus as divine is not enough. In fact, the devils also recognized Jesus as divine. They even trembled in His presence. We admire ministers who are intelligent, having their transcripts full of A's, and generally being described as "bright." But to Jesus, good judgment and sharp intellect are not enough.

5. **Sterling religious life.** This young man was religious. He came to Jesus seeking eternal life asking, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17).² Multitudes followed Jesus for several reasons. Some flocked to Him because they wanted to be healed. Others came to Jesus because they wanted to eat. But this young man came to Jesus not to ask for material blessings, but rather to inquire about the salvation of his soul. He came to Jesus seeking eternal life. This young man must have been very religious. But to Jesus, appearing to be religious is not enough.

6. **Faithfulness in keeping the Ten Commandments.** When Jesus told him to keep the commandments, he boastfully said, "All these I have kept since I was a boy" (Mark 10:20). But to Jesus, keeping the commandments faithfully is not enough.

¹Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 9:189.

²Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the NIV.

7. **Sincerity.** Although sincere, this young man acknowledged that he still lacked something. In Matthew's account, he asked, "What do I still lack?" (19:20). Mark 10:21 declares, "Jesus looked at him and loved him." Commenting on this Ellen White says that such an expression came from Jesus as He saw the sincerity of the young man.³ Many ministers are very sincere. But to Jesus, sincerity is not enough.

These were the qualifications of this rich young ruler. Were they not enough to qualify him to be one of Jesus' ministers? From our human point of view, this young man was more than qualified. In fact, it would appear that he had *all* the qualifications. He deserved, at the least, a chance to be a minister for God. Why was he disqualified?

The simple answer is that the young man disqualified himself because he failed to recognize that effective ministry comes essentially by responding to God's amazing grace. Ministry is a gift from God. God calls those who should minister for Him. Ministry, to be effective, should be driven by a response of love to God's call; a response of love because of God's grace. I can almost hear the reaction of the disciples upon seeing that the young man walked away. They must have reacted adversely, perceiving from the interview only the good qualities, the external competencies of the rich, young ruler. They forgot the goodness and the grace of Jesus Christ. The disciples failed to recognize that one could not earn the right and privileges of ministry through one's own "goodness" and abilities. God called us into the ministry, not on the basis of our goodness. We were called into the ministry on the basis of God's mercy, grace, and love.

Neither being rich nor young disqualified the young ruler. It is true that the love of money is the root of all evil, but at least, we may say, Jesus must have realized that the church needs money to uproot evil. Being young was not the ground for his disqualification either. Age has nothing to do with commitment.

The problems of that young man were not found in the external qualities he so richly possessed. The young man lacked the qualities that could only be measured in the heart. Ellen G. White's comment is insightful,

Christ read the ruler's heart. Only one thing he lacked, but that was a vital principle. He needed the love of God in the soul. This lack, unless supplied, would prove fatal to him; his whole nature would become corrupted.⁴

Talking about fatality, this was real heart failure. He failed to respond positively to God's love and grace.

³Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages: The Conflict of the Ages Illustrated in the Life of Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 519.

⁴*Ibid.*

Let me end this devotional with a short story that illustrates the concept of grace-driven ministry. In 1993, I was invited by the graduating class of Mountain View College to be the consecration speaker for their weekend graduation ceremonies. When I received the printed program, I was surprised to notice that the then vice-president of the Philippines, Salvador Laurel, was the commencement speaker. Although my speaking assignment was scheduled for Friday evening, I decided to stay on campus until Sunday evening to listen to this great statesman. In his speech, Vice-President Laurel exhorted the graduates to serve humanity and the country in the truest sense of the word. He illustrated the concept with the story about an incident which happened to his father, Speaker Jose P. Laurel.

Speaker Jose P. Laurel was appointed by the Japanese as the Head of the Provisional Government of the Philippines during the Japanese occupation in the second World War. Many patriotic Filipinos felt that by cooperating with the Japanese, Speaker Jose P. Laurel was a traitor. One day, while Speaker Laurel was playing golf, a gunman ambushed him. Fortunately, he was not fatally wounded. While recuperating in the hospital, the military police presented the assassin to the Speaker. The police told him that they would be executing the assassin in a few hours on the grounds of attempted murder. The Speaker told them that he had forgiven his would-be assassin. By virtue of his being president of the provisional government, he was setting the man free.

According to the Vice-President, when the would-be assassin heard this expression of undeserved grace, he knelt down before the Speaker and promised that he would give his service and his life for him in return for this new lease of life.

According to the story, that would-be assassin became the closest security officer of the Speaker for the rest of his life. In fact, his family served the Laurel family for many years. The service, the ministry, rendered by that would-be assassin is definitely grace-driven. Grace-driven ministry will surely be effective. It will not fail.

It pays to have good qualifications. But qualifications are not enough. Today, our loving Master, Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, reminds us that if we are to become successful and effective in our ministries, it is not because of our abilities, but because of our availability. It is only by His grace that we will succeed. We are in the ministry because of God's grace. We will be successful in the ministry when we are driven by that experienced, indwelling, sustaining grace of Christ. Amen!

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CALLED TO BE A SERVANT

JAIRYONG LEE, Ph.D.

The Apostle Paul, who is the great biblical champion of the theology of God's grace, called himself a servant of Jesus Christ. If he were to summarize his theology, it may be put like this, "I have been saved by the grace of God, and now I am a servant of Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, I am what I am." This was his conviction throughout his life.

In his letter to the believers in Rome, Paul introduces himself with these words, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle set apart for the Gospel of God. . . ." (Rom 1:1).¹ He is the *doulos* of Jesus Christ. *Doulos* is translated in the RSV as "servant," but adds in a footnote, "slave." Paul called himself a "servant" or a "slave" of Jesus Christ. He says in effect, "I am a *slave* of Jesus Christ."

What was a servant or a slave? What was a *doulos* in the first century C.E.? While there are pockets of slavery in different countries around the world today, most of us have not experienced this firsthand. But Paul must have clearly understood what a slave was because there were many slaves in the first century Roman world. In fact, in many places, slaves made up the majority of the population. Sometimes there were more slaves than ordinary citizens. Indeed, slavery was widely practiced almost everywhere in the Roman Empire.

The law classified slaves as domestic animals like cows or dogs. They were like goods and products. They had no "human rights" and could own no property. Their masters owned them. Even their families did not belong to them; they were the property of their master. They had no genealogies, and therefore, there was no possibility of tracing their origin. A slave was considered merely a piece of property. He could be bought and sold in the market place. His life and labors

¹Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the RSV.

totally belonged to his master. Yet the Apostle Paul, with all these connotations of *doulos* in his mind, remarked, "I am a servant or a slave of Jesus Christ."

Paul was a great man. After he finished his elementary education in his hometown, Tarsus, he went to Jerusalem for further study. There he was educated under Gamaliel who was a renowned Pharisee. He was a great teacher, not only to people living in Jerusalem, but also to citizens of the surrounding nations.

Paul himself was a Pharisee, one of the top religious leaders of the Jewish community. As a young man, (some say in his early thirties), he became a member of the Sanhedrin, which was the supreme council of the Jewish nation in the time of Christ. There were about seventy-one members in the council and Paul was one of them. He had Roman citizenship by birth; and with this he could enjoy all kinds of privileges in society.

He was also a linguist. As we understand, he could speak at least four different languages very fluently: Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Aramaic. On this strong language foundation, he had built an admirable ivory tower of scholarship. He was a brilliant and promising young man.

Perhaps Paul was a rich man in various aspects. He had sufficient knowledge in many areas; he occupied a highly respected position in the Jewish nation, both in terms of politics and religious activities. He had knowledge, fame, position, wealth, and power. He was proud of himself. He was self-confident. He relied on these outward accoutrements.

But one day, on his way to Damascus, Paul or Saul as he was then called, met Jesus Christ. Rife with hatred against Christians, he sought them out wherever they were living. On this occasion, Saul, who had severely persecuted the Christians in Jerusalem, got a special letter from the high priest to deal severely with all Christians, men and women, that he might find in Damascus. Scripture says that he was "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord. . . ." (Acts 9:1). This was indeed a reign of terror. Religious terror no less!

As he and his companions were nearing Damascus, suddenly a dazzling light that was brighter than the high sun flashed about them and Saul fell prostrate on the ground. He immediately lost his eyesight. And there he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, Why do you persecute me?" And Saul said, "Who are you, Lord?" And the voice answered, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." (See Acts 9:3-5).

He met Jesus there on the way to Damascus. It was this same Jesus who was crucified on the cross. He is the Lord. He is our Savior. He is the Messiah. He was resurrected from the dead. He ascended to heaven and now is sitting on the right hand of the throne of God. But Saul did not know it. At that very moment, when he saw Jesus and heard His voice, when he met Jesus personally, his attitude was totally changed and by the grace of God, he became a new man in Christ. This was signified in his name change, from Saul to Paul. And with great conviction he could then declare, "I am a *servant* or a *slave* of Jesus Christ." For the rest of his life, for about thirty years, the Apostle lived and worked as a faithful servant of

Jesus Christ. He used his knowledge, his health, his talents, his time, his energy, and his property, not for his own glory but for the glory of his master Jesus Christ. He loved to introduce himself to others as a “servant of Jesus” because he knew that he was saved by the grace of God. Truly he was a faithful servant of Christ.

There are many great people in the world today: wealthy people, those with political power, good and influential positions, possessing outstanding talents, and commanding respect. But from among many people, God has chosen us and brought us from the world of darkness, and He has led us into the marvelous light of truth. He has saved us from the depths of our sin, and He has given us eternal life. God has made us His servants, His *douloi*.

We are servants of God. Do we always remember that we have been chosen by God to serve Him and to serve His people? It is easy to say that we are servants of Christ. But it seems that it is not always easy to live as His servants. Therefore the Apostle Peter tells us, “Live as servants of God” (1 Pet 2:16). This is a sobering statement that forces us to acknowledge the question, “Do we live as faithful servants of God?” Let us briefly examine some characteristics of a servant.

1. A Servant Has Nothing to Boast about in Himself

A servant refuses to boast about himself because nothing he has belongs to him. Everything he has belongs to his master: his clothes, knowledge, power, strength, spouse and children, and even his life. Absolutely everything he possesses belongs to his master. He is merely a steward of these things and gifts. Therefore, he cannot boast about anything he has, does, or accomplishes, no matter how beautiful or brilliant. He cannot be proud of anything. Everything that is in his care has been entrusted to him by his owner.

As the servants of God, do we have anything of which we are proud? What is our pride and our glory? Could it be that our academic degrees, polished manners, outstanding knowledge, and competent skills furnish us with pride and glory? What about our positions or the beautiful things that we have in our houses? Maybe even our talents or those of our children dress us in pride? Do we have anything in us, or with us, that we are proud of, such that it replaces the glory of God in our lives? If there is anything in me that produces such pride, then I am not a servant, but a master. Paul says in Rom 3:27, “Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded.” If there is anything in us that we can boast of, it must be the cross of Jesus Christ. The Apostle teaches in Gal 6:14, “But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” Why? Because God’s mercy and grace are resident in the cross of Jesus. As the servant of God, therefore, we do not receive honor and glory, but always give honor and glory to Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. A Servant Is to Serve and not to be Served

Service is the servant's work and responsibility as long as he lives as a servant. Christ's purpose for coming into this world was to serve people, no less than a fallen race of rebellious human beings. He Himself declared, "For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The disciples of Jesus had a serious problem of pride and self-exaltation. Their primary concern was, "Who is the greatest among us?" They were full of themselves, always reaching for self-aggrandizement. Their chief concern was being "better" than others. They were not willing to serve others but were always ready to be served by others. Jesus knew that was a great problem, and He tried to correct it. He said, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Matt 23:12). He also said, "But many that are first will be last, and the last first" (Mark 10:31).

Jesus came to this world to serve others. He has called us to be His servants to serve other people. We have been called by God, not to be served but to serve. Are we sure that we are servants of God? Then we should love other people. We should understand other people. We should honor other people. We should respect other people. In effect, we should actively *serve* other people.

3. A Servant Must be Satisfied with his Status as a Servant

If a servant does not abide by this tenet he is not a good servant. He must always be ready to serve. He must like to serve others. He must live only for service.

Are we satisfied with our status as the servants of Christ? Are we always ready to serve? Are we always willing to serve? Do we always like to serve others? As fellow workers for God, do we love, understand, help, and cooperate with each other? When we serve people with a humble spirit, they will know that we are Jesus' servants.

A servant does not seek his own glory but always that of his master. I think this aspect is extremely important. I am not here to praise myself but to praise my master. I am not here for my glory but for the glory of my Master, Jesus Christ. Jesus said in Luke 17:10, "So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'" We are all servants of God. Let us serve our God and other people. Let us always remember that we have been chosen, not to be served but to serve. Let us not fight and bicker over position and place of authority, coveting the cherished places, but let us be satisfied with our calling as servants. Let us be satisfied with the status of service, hence, servanthood.

4. A Servant Always Does the Work that his Master Commissions him to Do

A servant does not do things according to his own will but only according to the will of his master. One of the best illustrations of this principle is found in Gen 24:1-12. I quote it here at length:

Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years; and the LORD had blessed him in all things. And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his house, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred and take a wife for my son Isaac." The servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land; must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?" Abraham said to him, "See to it that you do not take my son back there. The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and swore to me, "'To your descendants I will give this land,' he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you must not take my son back there." So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master; and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of the evening, the time when women go out to draw water. And he said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, grant me success today, I pray thee, and show steadfast love to my master Abraham."

In this chapter, we see a beautiful and well-known story of Abraham's faithful servant, Eliezer. Before sending his servant to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor, Abraham called him to oath to take a wife from among his own people and not from among the heathen Canaanites. And then Eliezer departed for the city of Nahor. After several days travel, when he arrived at the entrance of the city, near the well of water, he earnestly entreated God for direction. Scripture testifies that before he had finished his prayer a girl came to get water. From the brief conversation that ensued, Eliezer realized that God had answered his prayer and that Rebekah was chosen as Isaac's wife.

Now Rebekah ran home and rehearsed the entire incident. Her brother Laban dashed outside to meet the man at the spring and invited him home. Eliezer was invited to the big dining table at Laban's house. The table was probably full of delicious food and after several days of extensive and tiresome travel Eliezer must have been very hungry. But foremost in his mind was fulfilling the task, the objective, set out for him by his master. And even though he may have been starving, Eliezer said, "I will not eat until I have told my errand" (v. 33). Here we see a beautiful picture of a faithful servant. He never forgot his errand as the

servant of Abraham. Performing his duty as a servant was more important than food, or sightseeing, or his personal need. What determination! "I will not eat until I have told you my errand."

Then he told his hosts the long story about his master Abraham, how God had led his life and had bestowed great blessings upon him and his household. He also told them how he had met Rebekah at the well, and how quickly his prayer was answered by God. His story was enough to convince Laban and his house: "Then Laban and Bethuel answered, 'The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has spoken'" (vv. 50,51).

Now the servant had successfully finished his duty. He proved to be a loyal and faithful servant to his master. His mission was accomplished. Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night. When they arose in the morning, Eliezer said to Laban's family, "Send me back to my master" (v. 54). Rebekah's mother was astonished. So soon! Her mother protested, "Let the maiden remain with us a while, at least ten days; after that she may go" (v. 55). This is like saying, "Your job is done. I think you did a good job for your master. You deserve some rest. There are some nice places to visit for sightseeing. There are also some good shopping centers. Why don't you go and buy some gifts for your wife and children?" But this faithful servant was not to be distracted. He replied, "Do not delay me, since the LORD has prospered my way; let me go that I may go to my master" (v. 56). His only concern was to do the will of his master. He did not seek his own pleasure. He did not idle away his time. He did not squander his master's money. Instead he thought of his master and the work his master had assigned him to do. And he did all things to the best of his ability in order to satisfy the will of his master.

My dear fellow workers, we are servants of Christ. Our Lord has chosen us to serve him. Let us do our best in the work the Lord has given to us, and let us do it according to His will and for His glory.

Once an evangelist visited a certain college campus. At the gate of the college he met a young teacher and asked him what he taught at the college. He answered that he taught students about Christ. So the evangelist thought that he was a Bible teacher. A few minutes later, he met another teacher and asked him the same question, "What are you teaching here in the college?" He too answered, "I teach students about Jesus Christ." So the evangelist thought that he was another Bible teacher. That day he met a few more teachers and put the same question to each of them. Without fail, their answers were more or less the same, "I teach students about Jesus Christ. In fact, they all taught different subjects in the college, such as English, philosophy, psychology, biology and so on. But the conviction of all those teachers was that they had been called by God to instruct students about Jesus Christ in all the courses they were teaching.

Paul puts it well in 2 Tim 1:11, "For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher." Regardless of our specific responsibilities, our main

work assigned to us by Christ is to teach the Gospel and be His witnesses. This should be an integral part of our daily agenda.

5. A Servant Has No Authority in and of Himself

The actions and activities of a servant are executed according to his master's authority. Without his master's authority he is nothing. Nobody will pay attention to him. Nobody will listen to him. Nobody will consider his words as authoritative or trustworthy. But when he comes with the authority of his master the story is different, especially if his master is the king of the nation.

As the servants of God we operate under the authority of God. We dare not operate on our own wisdom or knowledge, especially when we have the authority of the scriptures, the word of God. But if we do not know the word of God, how can we use the authority of that word? Are we diligent students of the word of God? I hope we are.

In closing, I will read a few verses from the Gospel of Matthew.

Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with the drunken, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will punish him, and will put him with the hypocrites; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. Matt 24:45-51

We have been saved by the grace of God. Without God's merciful grace, we are nothing and our destiny will be eternal destruction. By His grace, God has forgiven our sins and granted us the gift of eternal life and made us His servants.

We are not keeping the Sabbath in order to be saved, but we are observing the Sabbath because we have been saved by the grace of God. We do not return tithe and give offerings in order to be saved, but we return tithe and give offerings because we have been saved by the grace of God. We are not working for the church to be saved, but we are working for the church because we have been saved by the grace of God. By His grace, God has chosen us to serve Him, His church, and His people. What we need to do is to be faithful to Him and the work that He has given to us until the day when our Master comes to take us home to heaven. Let us ask God to bless us so that we can be, and work, as faithful servants of God all our lives.

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PRESENTING GRACE TO PEOPLE LIVING IN THE 10/40 WINDOW

PRABAN SAPUTRO, Ph.D.

Let us focus our attention, not heavenward but earthward, and specifically on the so-called 10/40 Window. Clearly the Bible delivers a message about grace. But what should we do with that message of grace? I suggest that we expose people living in the 10/40 Window to that marvelous grace.

Who are the people of the 10/40 Window? They are those who live in countries located 10 to 40 degrees north of the equator, a vast mass of territory extending from North Africa to the Middle East and Central Asia, including most of the Asian subcontinent. Fifty-nine countries are located in this area.

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Afghanistan | 13. Egypt | 25. Japan | 37. Morocco | 49. Syria |
| 2. Algeria | 14. Eritrea | 26. Jordan | 38. Myanmar (Burma) | 50. Taiwan |
| 3. Bahrain | 15. Ethiopia | 27. Korea, North | 39. Nepal | 51. Tajikistan |
| 4. Bangladesh | 16. Gambia | 28. Korea, South | 40. Niger | 52. Thailand |
| 5. Benin | 17. Gibraltar | 29. Kuwait | 41. Oman | 53. Tunisia |
| 6. Bhutan | 18. Greece | 30. Laos | 42. Pakistan | 54. Turkey |
| 7. Burkina Faso | 19. Guinea | 31. Lebanon | 43. Philippines | 55. Turkmenistan |
| 8. Cambodia | 20. Guinea-Bissau | 32. Libya | 44. Portugal | 56. United Arab
Emirates |
| 9. Chad | 21. India | 33. Macau | 45. Qatar | 57. Vietnam |
| 10. China | 22. Iran | 34. Mali | 46. Saudi Arabia | 58. Western Sahara |
| 11. Cyprus | 23. Iraq | 35. Malta | 47. Senegal | 59. Yemen |
| 12. Djibouti | 24. Israel | 36. Mauritania | 48. Sudan | |

Although I do not fully agree with the territory marked out by the 10/40 Window, since it does not include my country Indonesia, the biggest Muslim country in the world, I still believe that it is vitally important that we pay serious attention to it. Why do we need to focus on the 10/40 Window? Luis Bush, who

"The 10/40 Window: Getting to Core of the Core," available from <http://www.ad2000.org/1040coun.html>; Internet; accessed 19 August 2003.

coined the expression in his presentation at the Lausanne II Conference in Manila, July 1989, lists seven reasons:²

1. It has historical and biblical significance. The Bible begins with the account of Adam and Eve placed by God in what is now a part of the 10/40 Window.
2. It is home to the majority of unevangelized people, those who cannot hear the gospel because they are hindered by cultural and geographical barriers.
3. It is the heart of three major world religions, namely, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.
4. It is the place where the majority of the poorest of the poor live, surviving on less than five hundred US dollars per person per-year.
5. It contains the largest groupings of ethno-linguistic megapeoples (over one million per group).
6. It includes a majority of the unevangelized megacities (those with a population of more than one million).
7. It includes numerous strongholds of Satan.

We may add more reasons to this list as we recognize the need to focus our attention here. For me, another vitally important reason is that people inhabiting this region believe in their good works or merits, instead of God's grace, as the means of attaining salvation. For example, Muslims attempt to gain salvation through adherence to an endless system of laws and rituals while Hindus and Buddhists attempt the same through Dhamma. In Islam there is no assurance of eternal life while in Hinduism and Buddhism there is neither forgiveness nor supernatural aid. Permit me to illustrate this by reference to a Buddhist story that is similar to the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15. According to the Buddhist version, the prodigal comes home and meets his father, but then has to work off the penalty for his past misdeeds by years of service to his father before he is fully accepted into sonship again. How different is this story from that in the gospel! In the gospel story the father never entertained the idea of making his son one of his servants. The loving father arranged a great feast to welcome him home.³

This fact forces us to question: "How do we present the biblical message of grace to people of the 10/40 Window who fervently believe in personal merits as the only way to attain salvation? I would like to present four suggestions that stem from the perspective of Christian mission and anthropology.

1. **Understand their worldview.** Charles Kraft, a Christian missionary anthropologist, says this about the purpose of communicating the gospel, "The intention of the communication of the gospel is to influence and change people at

²Luis Bush, "Opening the 10/40 Window," *Frontlines: Following Jesus the Unreached* 2(1995); available from http://net.heartofgod.com/editions/1995_Fall/opening_the_1040_window.htm; Internet; accessed 12 August 2003.

³Michael Green, "But Don't All Religions Lead to God?" *Navigating the Multi-Faith Maze* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 2002), 16.

the worldview level.⁴ Worldview is defined as the basic assumptions underlying the beliefs, values, and behavior of a given culture.⁵ It provides people with the lens, so to speak, that enable them to see how reality is perceived and interpreted. In ones worldview, assumptions are not reasoned out, but assumed to be true and are taken without prior proof. These assumptions are taught to each generation so persuasively that they seem absolute and are seldom questioned. Now you may imagine the enormity of the challenge to present the message of grace to people in the 10/40 Window who believe in merits as the means of attaining salvation.

The good news is that ones worldview may be changed. Every worldview has internal conflicts, which if challenged, may lead to change. The truth of the matter is that in every culture, all questions are not satisfied by assumptions taken unchallenged from the worldview. Hence, if another and more adequate worldview is presented, people may reject the old and adopt the new. Experience testifies that this has occurred several times for Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists who have decided to become Christians when they found that Christianity offered better answers to their questions than their old religions.

2. Live According to the Message You Present. Incidentally, many people who live in the 10/40 Window share a common similarity with Christians in that they place high esteem on Jesus and His teachings. This is because His life was in accordance with His teaching. Therefore, He is the sinless prophet to Muslims; Hindus place Him among the Brahma; and Buddhists regard Him as one of the Buddhas. This brings us to the second suggestion in presenting the message of grace to people in the 10/40 Window, that is, live according to the message you present.

Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists all revere Jesus because He lived what He taught. In a similar way, they would like to see Jesus' followers live according to His teachings. They would like to see Christians who present the message of grace live according to the dictates and values of that message. This is especially challenging for those who have suffered the indecencies and victimizations of colonization and imperialism forcibly imposed by foreign powers. They demand that grace be demonstrated in our lives and it must be in accordance with the message about God's grace that we often speak about. In other words, we cannot merely give lip service to the idea of grace. Its effect and maturity must be transparent in our everyday lives. In short, the old adage is true, "Practice what you preach."

3. Concentrate on the Group Dynamic. Generally speaking, people in the 10/40 Window constitute wholistic-thinking societies. Sherwood G. Lingenfelter

⁴Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 58.

⁵Lloyd Kwast, "Understanding Culture," in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, ed. Ralph Winter and Steven C. Hawthorn (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992), C-3-6.

and Marvin Mayers define wholistic thinking as “that pattern of thinking in which particulars are not separated out from the context of the larger picture. A holistic thinker insists that the whole is greater than the parts and reasons on the basis of perceived relationship within the whole.”⁶ In wholistic-thinking societies, major decisions are made by the group and not the individual. It would be correct to say that the decision to change from a major religion to Christianity is precisely such a major decision and therefore the group dynamic comes into play. Hence, we must be careful that in appealing for a decision to accept the message of grace, we must not be influenced by the ideals of individualism. Be patient and wait for the group decision. It may involve a great deal of time but there is virtue in patience. Indeed, waiting to baptize the majority of the group is highly advisable in most cases. After all, we need to demonstrate that grace is patient in waiting for people to make the decision to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. As the Bible says, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but to come to repentance” (2 Pet 2:9).

4. Ask God for help. In wholistic-thinking societies, people want to see how supernatural beings are directly involved in ones personal life. In this way, the close relationship between supernatural beings and human beings may be demonstrated, even proven. Indeed, people seek help from supernatural beings who in turn, are willing to provide such help. This leads to the importance of prayer. The power of God should be demonstrated in our lives as Christians. Further, people want to see and experience how the grace we speak about is also functional in social, person-to-person relationships. So let us engage in fervent prayer, asking God to empower us through the presence of His Holy Spirit so that our lives will be dynamic and not static in our witness to these people. In short, when we pray, we will receive power from God and the people will be able to see this and experience it as we encounter them, even on social occasions.

I pray that we will all be ready and willing to implement these suggestions and work assiduously to present the Gospel of grace to the millions of people who now live in the 10/40 Window.

⁶Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An International Model for Personal Relationships* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 55.

AIAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DISSERTATION AND THESIS ABSTRACTS

THE NATURE OF THE “HOLY ONES” UNDER ATTACK AS ENVISIONED IN DANIEL 7-12

Researcher: **Gideon Ada Durante**, Ph.D., 2002

Adviser: **Aecio Cairus**, Ph.D.

The problem to be solved in this dissertation is whether the “holy ones” under attack as envisioned in Dan 7-12, are earthly or heavenly beings. In comparison with other beings, the “holy ones” under attack and the thousands of angels are not identical, since those angels are attendants and not the object of the judgment in Dan 7. However, the “saints of the Most High” are not attendants but are the object of such judgment, and they received the everlasting kingdom while the attendant thousands of angels did not.

The “saints” are distinct and separate individuals from the “one like a Son of man,” who, as a divine being, is worthy of worship. The “saints of the Most High” are not worthy of worship. The “one like a Son of man” is not a “mere” collective symbol of the “saints of the Most High.” Rather, as a “federal head,” he represents the “saints of the Most High” in receiving the everlasting kingdom.

Identifying *qaddiše* (“saints,” Dan 7:25) as a genitive of genus, specifies the “saints of the Most High” as “people” (*am*), “people-saints of the Most High.” The “people-saints” can be destroyed through persecution by the assailant in his earthly expansion attack. The “people who know their God,” especially the “wise,” shall undergo a persecution by “sword,” “flame,” “captivity,” and “plunder.” The end-time “people” will be oppressed at the “time of trouble,” but Michael will deliver those whose names are written in the book of “mankind” (the living).

This study concludes that the “holy ones” under attack are envisioned in Dan 7-12 as earthly human beings because: (a) the “holy ones” under attack are not identical to the heavenly beings, the thousands of angels, or the divine “one like a Son of man;” and (b) the “saints of the Most High” are specified as “people” who are destructible, and whose names are written in the book of “mankind.” The

“holy ones” are the eschatological “people” of Daniel, the “spiritual Israel” composed of Jews and Gentiles who are “in Christ.”

THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE ἙΤΕΡΟΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΑ OPPOSED IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Researcher: **Julius Mucunku Muchee, Ph.D., 2003**

Adiver: **Aecio Cairus, Ph.D.**

It is common knowledge that the main background of the Pastoral Epistles (PE) is heresy, but the historical situation that produced it has not been fully explained. Some have assumed that the heresy was Gnosticism and understood its background to be the same as that which produced the Gnostic ideas that floated during the early second century, and which the Apostolic Fathers fought. This research questions the above assumption, and explores other possible backgrounds for the heresy opposed. The research seeks to answer the question, what is the best time to frame the heretical ideas opposed in the PE?

The actual heretical ideas being opposed in the PE are not well described. And exegesis of the passages that deal with the heresy show that the primary ideas that controlled the teaching of the false teachers in the PE were Jewish mythology and genealogy, ascetic commandments relating to food and marriage, and a dualistic interpretation of realized eschatology.

A comparison between these heretical ideas and the teaching of some of the Gnostic documents from the Nag Hammadi, *The Gospel of Thomas*, *The Apocryphon of John*, and *The Epistle to Rheginus*, do not show a likelihood that they were the background for PE's opponents. A similar result is experienced when one compares the heretical ideas opposed in the Apostolic Fathers with those opposed in the PE. The opponents of the Apostolic Fathers are less likely to be of the same milieu with the opponents of the PE.

The best parallel for the heretical ideas opposed in the PE seems to be in I Cor where similar ideas and practices are opposed. These ideas seem to have a similar background, namely, the Hellenistic Jewish interpretation of the Christian message. When these ideas are studied in the light of Philonic literature, they seem to clearly depend on a background similar to that of Philo. This background could have been mediated through the ministry of Christians like Apollos, an Alexandrian Christian preacher whose ministry was centered in both Ephesus and Corinth.

The conclusion of this study affirms that the best parallel material for studying the opposition in the PE is the Pauline Epistles, and the best background for it is Hellenistic Judaism, similar to that propagated in Philo. The best time to frame these heretical ideas is therefore during the lifetime of Paul. It is therefore not necessary to date the PE later than Paul.

THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SALVATION: A STUDY OF THE VIEWS OF LUTHER, CALVIN, AND WHITE

Researcher: **Tito Venegas**, Ph.D., 2003

Adviser: **Francisco Gayoba**, DTheol.

The main question of this study is Christ's human nature: Which properties of His nature were or are "like sinful flesh," and which "sinless" or without sin, are the views of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ellen G. White? In what way does Luther, Calvin, and White connect Christ's humanity with His work of salvation?

The three do share some similarities concerning Christ's human nature with that of humanity's fallen nature, and agree that Christ's body was corruptible or mortal. Luther and White share similar views on the emotions that Christ experienced and also similarities of Christ's unlikeness to fallen humanity.

The study shows differences concerning Christ's human nature. For Luther, Christ had three presences: the physical body, the spiritual body, and the majestic body. For Calvin, Christ could not sin. White differs from the other two, in that, Christ's will was liable to yield to temptation. He could sin.

Luther, Calvin, and White connect Christ's humanity with salvation. One of the conclusions of this study is the unique view of Luther, Calvin and White about Christ's humanity. To Luther, though Christ assumed genuine humanity, His body was spiritual and divine, which shows few similarities to fallen humanity. To Calvin, since Christ could not fall, it separated Christ's will from the will of all human beings. In White's view, Christ's humanity was genuine, and similar to fallen humanity and though He was sinless, He needed divine help not to sin.

Luther, Calvin, and White are similar in their general statements concerning Christ's human nature "in the likeness of sinful flesh." To Luther, Christ assumed "sinful nature." Calvin also writes that Christ assumed "sinful" nature. White believes that Christ "took fallen humanity," or "sinful nature."

A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE ELITE CHURCH MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN EVANGELIZING THE ELITE PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA

Researcher: **Israel Paypa Andoy**, D.Min., 2003

Adviser: **Praban Saputro**, Ph.D.

Pasay Seventh-day Adventist Church (PAC) is a church whose purpose is to accomplish the Great Commission of Jesus, specifically to the people of Metro Manila, including the elite. Most of the PAC members are elite people. However,

they do not know how to evangelize their fellow elite citizens because they have never been trained to do so.

The purpose of this study is to provide a training program for the Metro Manila elite SDA church members so they may learn how to evangelize their elite society. Biblical principles and theological reasons for training are established. The three theological reasons for training are set in motion: the Great Commission of Jesus, the great mission of the church, and the great harvest of the elite. Jesus' training model of selection, instruction, commission, supervision, and multiplication is implemented.

The training program was implemented at PAC. It covered objectives, participants, curriculum, schedule, and budget. The result of the evaluation of the training program was shared and suggestions were made as to how to improve it. From the project, the derived suggestions correspond to an acronym, a word spelling "ELITE." "E" - Elite members of a local church need to be selected; "L" - Lessons need to be developed and presented; "I" - Investiture ceremonies need to be conducted; "T" - Teamwork of trainees need to be supervised; "E" - Excellent forum needs to be organized.

The conclusion is that a training program is very important for the elite SDA local church members to help them fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus, specifically to evangelize the elite people.

AN INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE IN-CAMPUS MNISTRIES OF MOUNTAIN VIEW COLLEGE FROM 1987-2000

Researcher: **Don Leo Miraflores Garilva, D.Min., 2003**

Adviser: **Lester P. Merklin, Jr., D.Min./Miss.**

There are about 60 million college students around the world, including students in Adventist colleges. Although this is roughly only one percent of the world's population, this segment has been called the "powerful percent," because college students compose the future leaders of the world and the church.

Mountain View College (MVC) is one of the two colleges run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Southern Philippines. Since its founding days, MVC has formulated strategies and activities for its in-campus ministry program to win non-SDA students primarily, and also to enrich the spiritual lives of its Adventist students and faculty members. The main purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the strategies and activities used in MVC's three in-campus ministry programs from 1987-2000.

To accomplish this, Biblical and theological bases were laid. The biblical components of an ideal in-campus ministry were given, along with some management factors which may have affected the effectiveness of the strategies or

activities. A survey was made of what other Adventist campus ministries are doing.

An interview with a sample population of MVC's in-campus ministry participants was done. Those interviewed gave their perception of the effectiveness of the strategies and activities. Their responses, together with the observations and evaluation of the researcher, were analyzed based on the biblical components, management factors, and on what other Adventist campuses are doing.

This research found that each of MVC's three in-campus ministries had strengths and weaknesses. A list of suggestions is given to make the strategies and activities of each ministry more effective.

TOWARD CONTEXTUALIZING THE BIBLICAL WORSHIP PRACTICES INTO THE MUSLIM CULTURAL CONTEXT FOR AN SDA CHURCH PLANT IN BANGLADESH

Researcher: **Dauglas Dilip Roy, D.Min., 2003**
Adviser: Lester P. Merklin, Jr., D.Min./Miss.

Winning Muslims to the Adventist faith and keeping them in the Seventh-day Adventist church has long been the challenge of Bangladeshi Adventists.

A major barrier in converting and helping them remain faithful Adventists in a predominantly Western-Hindu worship style is a problem. This project focuses on contextualizing the biblical worship practices into the Muslim cultural context to provide a friendly church for the former Islam faithful, without extracting them from their culture.

This purpose and element of worship in both the Bible and Islam have overlaps that make merging of the two possible. In the contextualization concept, this project makes some recommendations.

The approach of teaching Muslim converts to change their culture and lifestyle in order to look "Adventist" has not worked. Practices such as calling God Allah, washing and removing one's shoes in the worship house, worshipping while sitting on the floor, fasting, singing/chanting, are a few things that are not contrary to Scripture and may be worth trying.

This study has produced a manual using different practices to help contextualize and accommodate Muslims.

A STRATEGY FOR TRAINING SMALL GROUP LEADERS OF AREAS 3 AND 4 IN CENTRAL LUZON CONFERENCE

Researcher: **Robin A. Saban**, D.Min., 2003
 Adviser: **Francisco Gayoba**, DTheol.

Central Luzon Conference, being one of the largest among the conferences in the entire Seventh-day Adventist church in the Philippines, does not have a meaningful and successful small group program. Records show that small groups do not thrive very well within its territory.

A survey aimed at knowing the number one factor for the success or failure of small groups in Areas 3 and 4 in Metro Manila was conducted. A total of four hundred and ninety-one members were surveyed. This involved a cross-section of pastors, local church leaders, and members. The survey revealed that a lack of small group leadership training is the number one factor why small groups failed. This project aims to remedy the situation by formulating a strategy to train small group leaders for stronger and healthier groups. The strategy follows the process stated below.

The strategy is composed of four stages. The first stage involves promoting small group awareness among church members. This promotion aims for the eventual acceptance by the local church to organize the members into small groups. The second stage is the recruitment of potential small group leaders. This is followed by the third stage which involves pre-service training. Six weekends are allotted to cover the entire sixteen lessons. The fourth stage of the strategy includes organizing of small groups in the church. The in-service training will follow immediately after organizing. A total of eleven lessons are covered in this stage, and seven weekends are allotted for this.

A HEALTH MINISTRY APPROACH TO CHURCH PLANTING IN REACHING THE MINANGKABAU PEOPLE IN CENTRAL SUMATRA MISSION OF INDONESIA

Researcher: **Berson Richard Simbolon**, D.Min., 2003
 Adviser: **Adrie Legoh**, D.Min.

The church can evangelize the world in many ways. This project aims to develop a strategy that can be implemented by planting churches through the health ministry approach to the Minangkabau people in Central Sumatra Mission of Indonesia. In order to accomplish this purpose, the biblical-theological foundations of the health ministry approach to church planting is examined. Based on an examination of the historical/geographical, economic, cultural, and religious

dynamics, as well as the health conditions of the Minangkabau people, a workable church planting strategy through a health ministry approach is developed.

A health ministry approach to church planting proposed in this project consists of seven steps. These steps are constructed in harmony with local conditions. In order to make these steps workable, it is recommended that a health ministry committee be formed, and together with trained church planters, be committed to implementing the program. Generous support from institutions such as Central Sumatra Mission (CSM) and West Indonesia Union Mission (WIUM) are vitally needed.

Some recommendations for Central Sumatra Mission and West Indonesia Union Mission are given to make the strategy more effective.

FOLK RELIGION AMONG KAREN IN THAILAND

Researcher: **Jameson Alagappan, M.A., 2003**
Adviser: Lester P. Merklin, Jr., D.Min./Miss.

The Karen people are the largest ethnic minority group in Thailand. Most Karen follow their traditional religion, which involves appeasing and propitiating many different kinds of spirits.

The Seventh-day Adventist work among the Karen in Thailand started in 1967 and has been on-going for the past thirty six years, without much success. This failure can be attributed to: (1) the lack of understanding concerning their beliefs and practices, and (2) the lack of contextualization strategies to evangelize this people group. This paper fills that gap in knowledge. It also provides some suggestions for evangelism among the Karen people.

This paper examines the following aspects of traditional religion: worldview, legends, realm of the spirits, types and nature of spirits, taboos, divination, and the role and function of ritual specialists. It also examines the various rituals performed for appeasement and propitiation throughout the year. The concluding chapter deals with some strategies for evangelism among the Karen people.

DIVERSITY IN THE REMNANT CONCEPT IN THE HISTORY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH (1841-1931)

Researcher: **Gidson Duran Ondap, M.A., 2003**
Adviser: Kyung Ho Song, Ph.D.

This study endeavors to explore if the unconventional concept that the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is not the end-time remnant, but a part of it, has any foundation in the history of Adventism, or is it just purely a new creation.

To accomplish this goal, it investigates, traces, and describes the diversity of the remnant concept in the history of SDA theology.

Chapter 2 describes the development of the remnant concept among Sabbatarian Adventists from 1841 to 1863. The term “a remnant” was generally connoted by Sabbatarians as being a few in number, the ones who would go through sufferings, but would be saved in the end. The term “the remnant” indicates the Sabbatarian position of being the whole remnant. However, some Sabbatarians surmised that the remnant concept was applicable to others outside of their company. Others, holding the concept of a remnant of remnants, believed that a final remnant would be gathered from among their ranks.

Chapter 3 examines the development of the remnant concept in the SDA Church from 1863 to 1872. Adventists in this period generally conceived the term, “a remnant,” as an undetermined, small number of people who would at last be saved. They saw themselves as this definite small company and connected the remnant concept to the Laodicean Church. Some Adventists declared that the Laodicean message was not only for Adventists but also for other Christians.

Chapter 4 surveys the development of the remnant concept in the SDA Church from 1872 to 1931. Adventists in this period generally accepted the idea that they were “the remnant” or “the last church.” However, some Adventists held that membership in the SDA Church would not guarantee salvation. Still others believed that a sifting process would determine the final remnant.

Chapter 5 concludes that the study found no direct declarations, within the periods covered, which explicitly expressed that the SDA Church was a part of the remnant and not “the remnant.”

TOWARDS A CONTEXTUALIZED ISLAMIC PRAYER FORM IN THE ADVENTISTS SETTING

Researcher: **Felixian Tolentino Felicitas, M.Min., 2003**

Adviser: **Kyung Ho Song, Ph.D.**

Evangelizing in the Muslim community has been a challenge for Adventist Ministry for a long time. It has been an area where ministers of the gospel would like to focus their study.

It is for this reason that this paper has been conceptualized, namely, to find ways of how Muslims can adapt to the style of worship and prayer that Adventist use. Usually, newly converted Muslims to the Adventist faith are not accustomed to the prayer form and ways of worship that Seventh-day Adventist Christians practice. At times, this gives them the feeling that they have abandoned not only their religion, but also their family and culture.

It is therefore suggested in this paper that a contextualized prayer form be used in worship by Muslim converts, with emphasis on the concept of Jesus Christ and

His work of saving us from sin. Postures and time of prayer are very biblical. These could be adopted when Muslims have been converted to Christianity. Their ways of prayer, which have been part of their culture for many years, are regarded as special to them. To avoid resistance among Muslims, they should be approached in such a way, that they can still feel comfortable in worship though they have accepted Christianity. Providing they understand the concept of Christian worship, know why, how, and whom they worship, they should feel comfortable praying as an Adventist Christian.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AS A TOOL FOR REACHING THEIR PARENTS IN MAE LA REFUGEE CAMP, THAILAND-MYANMAR BORDER, THAILAND

Researcher: **Saw Edric**, M.Min., 2003

Adviser: Yoshitaka Kobayashi, Ph.D.

The growth of the work of evangelism in the refugee Thailand-Myanmar border camp, Thailand, is very slow. The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) churches in the camp are doing their best. Due to the political situation and the temporary resident status of the refugees, the SDA Thai Mission does not accept them into permanent membership. However, the churches do get some support from the Mission, as well as some from aid agencies.

The SDA churches of Mae La camp need to reach out to their neighbors. The church has youth, lay workers, and teachers. These members can participate in soul winning work. If they are rightly trained in their given situation, the gospel will spread further than where a lay member or a pastor can take it. The members must be equipped with evangelism tools so that they will be able to participate in the service of God.

There are strategic plans in reaching people with the gospel. Reaching out to children through Vacation Bible School (VBS) draws the attention of parents to the gospel. This method will work in refugee camps. The plan of the VBS is related to the setting of the refugees in Mae La.

After receiving training for the VBS program for outreach ministry, the youth, teachers, and lay members of the Mae La refugee camp will be well equipped and can be challenged to participate in soul winning work.

BOOK REVIEWS

Calian, Carnegie Samuel. *The Ideal Seminary: Pursuing Excellence in Theological Education*. Louisville: Westminster /John Knox, 2002. 137 pp.

Carnegie Samuel Calian is the president of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and the author of *Survival or Revival: Ten Keys to Church Vitality* and *Theology without Boundaries: Encounters of Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Tradition*, both available from Westminster/John Knox Press.

If a seminary is seriously seeking excellence, it will need the cooperative efforts of all who have “ownership” in the seminary. This is why Calian writes his book to all who have such a stake: administrators, faculty, students, as well as the church and community. Although Calian admits that an “ideal” seminary is not easy to define and even more difficult to produce, he proceeds to search for that definition and to outline necessary steps toward “pursuing” that goal. He writes with the authority that comes from over twenty years of contemplation on this theme as President of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

The book’s twelve chapters are organized into three sections: (1) Institutional Challenges, (2) Program Challenges, and (3) Student Concerns. Although the contents of the book do not seem to fit neatly into these stated divisions, the discussions in each section are important to the elusive quest for the ideal seminary. The emphasis is on the various challenges that must be overcome if the Seminary is going to fulfill its mission to prepare leaders for the church and the community.

Each chapter concludes with “discussion starters” to assist the Seminary community in contextual application which moves it towards the ideal. It is in the first section that Calian asks us to consider who really “owns” the seminary. Are we “accountable” to the students, faculty, or board? Do we make our decisions and policies for the accrediting agency or for the church? The mission, objectives, and programs of a seminary will be influenced by our answers to these questions. The reader will discover the heart of this chapter in this key sentence, “Ownership of our schools starts with God and ends with society, and within this range of ownership there is more interdependence than we have admitted to ourselves” (40). An ideal seminary will recognize this truth and endeavor to find the right balance, under God, as it weighs the input of all its “stakeholders.”

Calian focuses next on curriculum in the second section. He believes that “there continues to be a gap today between learning and doing in seminary life” (48). This is not an argument for more ministry and less learning. Instead, he observes that seminaries often attempt to emphasize the practical ministries without the proper preparation. The seminary is where the spiritual core and the theological foundations are discovered and internalized so that ministry will not be guilty of “malpractice.” These foundations must include the gospel of love and reconciliation as well as “missional” motivation. He reminds us that a love that approaches that of John 3:16 love will drive us to understand the world and its societies so that we can serve them effectively. This should be the objective of the curriculum in the ideal seminary.

In directing our attention to the student concerns in section three, the author asks if it is possible to attend the Seminary “without losing your faith” (90). He reminds us that academically studying truth does not automatically bring spiritual revival. Faculty must consciously endeavor to build faith rather than destroy it. This is important because seminary studies invariably lead the students to questions they have never asked before. He says insightfully, “Too often we theological educators sacrifice the art of being simple in our attempts to be academically more precise” (93). Calian thus challenges seminary administration and faculty to consider the importance of prayer, devotions, and small group interaction as tools to keep faith alive while we investigate deeper concepts in the classroom.

The strength of this book is the quantity (and quality) of its questions. It will cause all seminary-connected readers to focus on important areas that need improvement in their school. Unfortunately, this is also the weakness of the book. Because the author covers a multitude of issues and asks more questions than he can supply answers, the book is not smooth, relaxed reading. This should not, however, deter any person with concern for the excellence of our seminaries from reading the book. Take each chapter as an area to study and analyze for your seminary’s context. Even better, use each chapter as study material with a group of your “stakeholders.” There is very little in these pages that the reader would find irrelevant to his or her context.

Lester P. Merklin, Jr.

Doukhan, Jacques B. *Israel and the Church: Two Voices for the Same God*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002. x + 108 pp.

Jacques B. Doukhan is professor of Hebrew Language, Exegesis, and Jewish Studies, and director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at Andrews University. He is the editor of *Shabbat Shalom* and *L’Olivier*, two journals devoted to Jewish-Christian dialogue. He is the author of several works, including *Secrets of Daniel*

(Review and Herald, 2000) and *Drinking at the Sources: An Appeal to the Jew and the Christian to Note Their Common Beginnings* (Pacific Press, 1981).

Doukhan lives in the tension of being a Jew who loves his heritage and history but walks that road in Christian shoes. This book embraces his reflections on that tension. The focal question is plaintive, can there be “reconciliation between the two Jews, between Moses and Jesus, within the hearts, minds, and lives of Christians and Jews . . .?” (x).

Four chapters comprise this book, each seasoned with powerful ideas that affirm the author’s long years of serious thinking on the subject. The first, “When They Walked Together,” is aptly named because it broadly traces the history of solidarity between Jews and Christians, when they “walked together; they worshiped together; they believed and hoped together” (1). Jesus, the founder of Christianity, had deep Jewish roots, seen not only in His connection with King David, but also in His stories, parables, humor, irony, and disciples. Indeed, the Jewishness of Christianity is attested in biblical (primarily the New Testament), rabbinical, archaeological, and sociological data.

In chapter 2, “The Parting of the Ways,” Doukhan indicates “that the decisive factor that separated Jews and Christians is to be found [when] the church rejected the Jews” (39). Starting in the fourth century, this may be observed in rejection of the Law, Sabbath, and then the Jews as a people. Here was the genesis of anti-Semitism which reached its climax in the twentieth century with the Holocaust (50).

Doukhan speaks of “supersessionist” or “replacement” theology as a way of describing the rejection of the Jews, in chapter 3. In short, God rejected old Israel and replaced her with a new Israel, the Christian church. Hence, churches replaced synagogues; grace replaced law; the NT replaced the OT; Sunday replaced Sabbath; and salvation replaced creation (56-70). This led to the Jewish-Christian polarization.

Chapter 4 discusses the Christian mission to Jews. Titled “Mission Impossible,” this chapter indicates that both Christians and Jews have caused the failure of this mission. Yet, Doukhan’s closing words offer hope and hark back to his original question,

Christians and Jews have come closer to each other simply because they have recovered their Jewish roots. The horizon of this new adventure is not clear. We should only hope that ‘the two Jews’ would one day dare to look at each other and run the risk to witness to each other on behalf of the truth that transcends both of them (88).

In a Postface Doukhan says that the church and Israel are two witnesses that need each other. As complementary entities, they need to hear “the voice of the *same* God—then, at last, the voice of God will be heard” (99). The book closes with a subject and name index followed by an index of ancient sources. A bibliography would have been useful here.

This book is compelling and even revolutionary. It seriously challenges the thinking and must be read slowly, carefully, and with an open mind. Doukhan's writing is simple and well-documented as evidenced by extensive footnotes. But beyond that it is clear that he has a burden for peace, not merely tolerance, to be brokered between both parties. As both Jews and Christians recognize our common heritage we may become a powerful force in fulfilling the purposes of God on this earth. I recommend this book in the superlative for anyone interested in Jewish-Christian relations and especially for those involved in the so-called mission to the Jews. In all future discussions on the subject, this volume cannot be ignored or taken lightly.

Kenneth D. Mulzac

Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. 3d ed. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2002. xxviii + 458 pp.

James M. Kouzes is chairman emeritus of the Tom Peters Company, a professional services firm which specializes in leadership development. He is also an executive fellow at the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University. Barry Z. Posner is professor of leadership and dean of the Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University.

The book is presented in thirteen chapters. The first two describe the authors' point of view about leadership, defining four qualities on which great leadership is built: honesty, a forward looking vision, competence, and inspiration (25). These have been consistently foremost in leadership surveys conducted between 1987 and 2002 in different parts of the world.

The next ten chapters elaborate on the aim of the authors to strengthen leadership abilities and uplift the human spirit. This is done by detailing principles and practices concretely based in research that started in 1983. Kouzes and Posner wanted to know what people did when they were at their personal best in leading others. In essence, the book reports the results of more than twenty years of study on how ordinary people engineer the accomplishment of extraordinary achievements in their respective organizations. The study focuses on specific actions that leaders take in order to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives of their organizations. The result of this inquiry underscores five essential practices of exemplary leadership: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, empowering others to act, and encouraging the heart.

The heart of these chapters is the discussion that successful leaders are committed to ten ideals. These include: (1) clarity of personal values; (2) setting the example by aligning their actions with shared values; (3) envisioning the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities; (4) enlisting others in a common

vision by appealing to shared aspirations; (5) searching for opportunities by seeking innovative ways to change, grow, and improve; (6) experimenting and taking risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes; (7) fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust; (8) strengthening others by sharing power and discretion; (9) recognizing contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence; and (10) celebrating values and victories by creating a spirit of community in the organization.

Several factors stand out in this volume:

1. Overall, it is easy reading. One does not have to read the chapters chronologically but may start with what catches ones interest and attention and then move on to other parts of the book and still get its message.

2. Its message that leadership may be learned and is accessible to all. Each one has the capacity to lead and the first place to look for leadership is within oneself.

3. Emphasis is placed on human relationships as the foundation of successful leadership. As it were, this is the theme that courses throughout the book. It may be summarized in one sentence, "Whatever the time, whatever the circumstances, leadership is a relationship" (xxviii).

4. The interest that successful leadership is based in love. Leadership is a love relationship. In fact, the very last paragraph captures this intentionality:

Of all the things that sustain a leader over time, love is the most lasting. It's hard to imagine leaders getting up day after day, putting in the long hours and hard work it takes to get extraordinary things done, without having their hearts in it. The best-kept secret of successful leaders is love; staying in love with leading, with the people who do the work, with what their organization produces, and with those who honor the organization by using its work (399).

5. Its scholarship is evidenced by extensive endnotes and a useful index that make the book very user friendly.

6. Its discussions are marked by specific recommendations on what readers may do in order to sharpen their skills and develop into mature leaders. These are illustrated with true-to-life examples as well as tables and graphs. The downside of this approach is that readers are led to believe that since the concept or idea worked well in that particular case, it will automatically work well for them. But this is not always the case.

On the whole, this book is compulsory reading for all who are interested in leadership. And although it is not written from the perspective of the pastor or church administrator they will derive great benefit in listening and adhering to its principles.

Warren, Mervyn A. *King Came Preaching: The Pulpit Power of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001. 223 pp.

Mervyn A. Warren is professor of preaching at Oakwood College. He has also written *Black Preaching: Truth and Soul* (University Press of America, 1977) and *God Made Known* (Review and Herald, 1984). *King Came Preaching* is a recast of his 1966 doctoral dissertation done at Michigan State University.

The book opens with a homiletical biography that places King squarely in the tradition of preaching and the life of the church. This chapter provides a thorough history of King's education, both formal and practical, as well as the people and events that influenced him to follow the paths of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather in going into the ministry. It also establishes the fact that King's foremost principle was preaching the Gospel and not merely promoting a political agenda.

In discussing King as a black preacher, Warren makes two important points: (1) King's preaching was certainly relevant, especially as he called for justice; (2) his principles were concentered in the Bible, family, and theological underpinnings (48,50). King, however, made a clear distinction between his sermons and civil rights speeches: the former addressed congregants while the latter addressed mainly the socio-political masses. Nevertheless, his sermons spoke to civil rights issues and his speeches were infused with theological information (56-57).

The core of this book deals with the content and themes of King's sermons. As far as content is concerned, Warren contends that in terms of ethos (ethical substance) "*the preacher as person* constitutes the strongest content of any preaching situation" (77). And such was the case with King. His ethos was characterized by sincerity, uncompromising convictions, competence, persuasion, and goodwill (78-79). Although attacked on several fronts, King's ethos has stood the test of time (80-86). Warren then uses actual examples from some of King's sermons to demonstrate that he used both rational and emotional substance to make his point. His sermons were rife with examples, narratives and stories, statistics, and quotations (87-97).

King was profoundly influenced, though not always in total agreement, with certain philosophers. For example, from Henry David Thoreau and Mohandas K. Ghandi he learned "nonviolent resistance;" from Walter Rauchenbusch he learned about the "social gospel;" from G. W. F. Hegel he learned that "growth comes through struggle" (121); and from Jesus Christ he learned the "love ethic." Certain themes highlight his sermons: good neighborliness, God, Jesus Christ, the church, the preacher, people, the balanced life, prayer, faith, and good and evil (123-39).

To illustrate the power and sheer rhetorical beauty of King's words, Warren dedicates a chapter to "Language in Kingly Style." He analyzes sixteen sermons and demonstrates that King's sentences were simple, yet direct and varied; vividness and imagery were achieved through devices such as alliteration,

comparison and contrast, synecdoche, and so forth (144-51); and all the elements of oral style are to be found in his presentations.

In terms of sermon design, preparation and delivery, Warren says that King usually followed the textual and topical, though not the expository style. His sermons generally had an introduction, a three-part body, and a conclusion. King spent numerous hours in preparation and prayer over his sermon. He delivered extemporaneously, marked by confidence, control, poise, and dignity. He practiced good articulation and pronunciation in a southern style and was quite adaptable to his diverse audiences.

Warren believes that in terms of King's contributions to preaching and theology, three elements are focal: (1) the emphasis on relevance and application; (2) love for God means love for our fellow human beings, especially those in struggle; and (3) the use of philosophy and reasoning in proclaiming and defending Christian doctrine (169).

The book closes with five appendices consisting of a 1962 address at Oakwood College, three sermons, and the most useful, an analysis of King's use of sources. This book is must reading for anyone intrigued by preaching and even the history of the Civil Rights Movement. It is commendable on several fronts:

1. It is well researched as evidenced by extensive footnotes, although I think that footnotes would have served the reader better. Further, it would be useful for a future edition that a bibliography be provided.

2. Warren's language is beautiful and this promotes the readability of the book, urging one not to pause in its reading.

3. This book tells us not only about King's preaching but also informs us about preaching both as an art and a science. Warren's studies in communication come to the fore in a forceful and powerful manner. It uplifts the preaching of not only "one of the most effective and celebrated preachers in Western history" (12) but also encourages all preachers to be better, more responsible communicators of the word of God.

4. A special treat in the book are the pictures (98-113), particularly those that show King in the pathos of preaching. I was also moved by the portrait of Ghandi that overlooks the family dining. It suggests King's deep respect for a man in similar throes. Perhaps, too, it implies that King's multi-cultural ideas were well entrenched even before the term itself came into common parlance.

5. Finally, a future edition may see light in providing an in-depth analysis of King's famous "I have A Dream" speech. Though delivered as a Civil Rights speech, its power, beauty, and magnitude are as moving and dynamic as a sermon.

Kenneth D. Mulzac

Whidden, Woodrow, Jerry Moon, and John W. Reeve. *The Trinity: Understanding God's Love, His Plan of Salvation, and Christian Relationships*. Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2002. 288 pp.

Woodrow Whidden is professor of Religion at Andrews University; Jerry Moon is chair of the church history department at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University and editor of *Andrews University Seminary Studies*; John W. Reeve teaches courses in church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University while pursuing his Ph.D.

These authors address their work to Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) and deal with three major issues: (1) the revival of anti-Trinitarianism in Adventism; (2) the neglect of the theology of the Godhead; and (3) renewed awareness of the pioneers' views on this doctrine (7-9). Their aim is to involve SDAs in a deep and honest discussion of the Trinity. Plain language, openness, and working tools (such as a glossary at the beginning of each section), make this dialogue possible.

The book is divided in four sections. In section one (15-119), Whidden explores the biblical data that provide information about the Trinity. He focuses, not on God the Father, but on Christ's eternity and deity, the personhood and deity of the Holy Spirit, and the mysterious unity of the three persons of the Godhead. In this enterprise, Whidden uses the NT as his starting point and works back to the OT, following links and allusions provided by the texts.

According to Whidden the strongest biblical evidence for Jesus' deity is the NT ascription to Him of OT titles and attributes of Yahweh. The better-than-creation Jesus of *Hebrews* is approached and worshiped as Yahweh of the OT; the Alpha and Omega—attributes of Yahweh in the OT—of the *Apocalypse* is Jesus who shares the throne with the Father; and Jesus of the Gospel of John introduces Himself as the great "I AM," nomenclature for Yahweh. The most straightforward evidence for the Holy Spirit's personhood and deity are found in texts that speak of grieving (Eph 4:30) or blaspheming (Matt 12:31,32) the Spirit who is equated with God by means of Hebrew poetic parallelism.

In section two (121-160) Reeve explores the historical dimension of the doctrine of the Trinity. He provides an overview of the development of the doctrine from the first to the sixteenth centuries and acknowledges that these times witnessed the unwarranted import of unbiblical concepts from Greek philosophy into theology. But this does not deny the fact that the doctrine of the Trinity emerged from intense and honest study of the Bible. During the Early and Medieval periods of church history, the doctrine of the Trinity may have been altered but was certainly not an invented or altogether imported teaching.

In section three (161-238), Moon continues this historical enterprise from the period of the Reformation up to the time of the discussion of the doctrine in Seventh-day Adventism. He asserts, "During the Reformation the varieties of belief on the Trinity reflected the range of attitudes toward the authority of Scripture"

(181). Though they believed that the Bible was the sole basis for theology, the Reformers unwittingly retained many elements of the earlier doctrine of Trinity in their teachings. It was only with the radical rejection of tradition by the Anabaptists that the doctrine of the Trinity pointed in the direction of being genuinely biblical. This phenomenon influenced American denominational development, ushering in both anti-Trinitarian and Trinitarian theologies.

Moon distinguishes five major periods in the development of Trinitarianism in Seventh-day Adventism. In the initial period (1846-1888), SDA teaching on the matter was dominated by the Unitarian and Restorationist (Christian Connexion) theology largely because several Adventist pioneers had come from these denominations. However, during the second period (1888-1898), because of the emerging Christ-centered theology, an increasing number of SDAs became dissatisfied with the earlier anti-Trinitarian trend. The years 1898-1915, the third period, witnessed a historic paradigm shift caused in part by Ellen White's clear Trinitarian statements in publications such as *The Desire of Ages*. The next period, 1915-1946, saw the decline of anti-Trinitarianism. The last phase, extending from 1946 to the present, has seen Trinitarianism dominate the Adventist theological scene.

In concluding section three, Moon provides an extensive study of Ellen G. White's role in the settlement of the doctrine of the Trinity among SDAs. He acknowledges that there was progression in her understanding of the doctrine but she never contradicted herself (206). It is also here that Moon deals with a crucial question that is at the heart of the Adventist Trinitarian debate: Does the shift from the anti-Trinitarian to Trinitarianism indicate apostasy, or is it the result of progress in Bible study? Moon argues for the latter position. Indeed, Adventist pioneers first rejected this doctrine because of its philosophical connotations acquired in the Early, Medieval, and Reformation periods of Christianity. But as SDAs advanced in their study of Scripture, its teaching on the Trinity became evident. The only remaining task then was to purge this teaching of its philosophical additions. In the second half of the twentieth century, this task was successfully accomplished and SDAs now adhere to a really biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

The Trinity would have been lamentably incomplete without section four (239-281) in which Whidden returns with some theological and practical reflections on the biblical and historical information previously discussed. Theologically, the doctrine of the Trinity touches on love, the essential characteristic of the nature of both God and humans. God's love is not only the model of our love but also the source of our love.

In addition, the concept of the Trinity is foundational to several crucial Christian doctrines such as Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Revelation, Atonement, the Great Controversy, Judgment and Salvation. The doctrine of the Trinity constitutes the cornerstone of all Christian doctrines. Without it Christianity would lose its identity and uniqueness. In practical terms this doctrine deeply

influences several aspects of our existence such as ethics, home and church life, gender issues, and leadership.

Although not scholarly in approach, *The Trinity* is a valuable acquisition for all SDAs. With its openness and directness, accessible language and candid spirit, the book proves a profitable tool for Adventists in their encounter with anti-Trinitarians. It is also a reliable resource for teachers of Adventist history and theology. I would only suggest that such discussions will also be welcome on the scholarly level.

Gheorghe Razmerita

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