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"vita vestra abscondita est cum Christo in Deo"—Col. 3:3

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The Eschatological Reversal of the Protological Reversal: Narrative Analysis and Chiastic Paradigms in Genesis 2:18-3:24

James T. Dennison, Jr.

The speeches of Genesis 2 are part of the narrative drama, the characterization and the literary markers of that chapter. I do not intend to negate the traditional elements which have been found here down through the history of interpretation: i.e., man's dominion over the creation; man's cultural mandate; man's covenantal status; man's entrance into the mystery of sexual union. Nor do I mean to ignore the eschatological vector in this revelation: the *imago Dei* is eschatologically oriented, reflective of the eschatological *Imago* Creator; the placing of man over the creatures and the creation is eschatologically oriented, reflective of the eschatological *Dominus* of creation; the covenant with man in the garden is eschatologically oriented, reflective of the eschatological *Foedus* (a perfected works disposition in response to a benevolent condescension); the mystery of male-female union is eschatologically oriented, reflective of an eschatological *Sponsus et Sponsa*.

Hook Pattern—Seamless Narrative

Speech in Genesis 2 is a central and crucial narrative category as speech is a central and crucial narrative category in Genesis 3. Genesis 3 is about

the reversal of man's condition: the fall from innocence, the descent into the opposite of benediction, the origin of sin. The chapter is intimately related to chapter 2, not only by reason of the antithesis between the two narratives, but because of the hook pattern which links the two narratives. Genesis 2:25 states that the man and his wife were naked (*'arûmmîm*) and not ashamed. Genesis 3:1 states that the serpent was more crafty (*'ārûm*) than any beast of the field. The connection between the two narratives is tagged by the literary hook—in this case a pun on the Hebrew root *'āram*. By the re-use of the root, the author has signaled his audience that his narrative is continuous and that the interloper is the reverse of the innocence of those whom he assaults. In Genesis 3:1, we have a naked and bare(faced) liar veiled in serpentine guise.

That verse 1 of chapter 3 marks the beginning of a new narrative unit is clear from the new character who appears. Satan, in the guise of the serpent, enters paradise and the garden is no longer the garden of chapter 2. The suggestion that man was responsible to guard the garden from intrusion is just that—a suggestion. There does not appear to be any reflection within the narrative of man's potential dereliction—nor yet anything outside of Genesis 3 suggesting man's culpability. If man is at fault for not barring Satan's entrance, how much more so God, Satan's Creator!?

Character Shift—Narrative Development

The character shift or character addition in 3:1 is hooked (by the pun "naked"/"crafty") to the previous narrative scene. The state of dress/undress (2:25) is followed by a new narrative unit which also concludes with a declaration of the state of dress/undress—3:7, "they knew they were naked" (*'êrummîm*). Hence we bracket the section 2:25 to 3:7 as delimited with a literary-narrative marker (*'āram*).

Scene Sequence—Plot Development

The next scene in the fall narrative will also conclude with a reflection on the man's state of dress/undress. In 3:21, God will provide garments to remedy man's inadequate covering. The use of the verb *'aśah* ("make") here is an

additional clue to the patterning of this narrative unit. Adam and Eve "make" (*'aśah*) fig-leaf coverings for their nakedness (3:7); God "makes" (*'aśah*) skin coverings for their nakedness (3:21); NB the state of nakedness in which God "made" (*'aśah*, 2:18; cf. 1:26) them. What God made is complemented by naked innocence (2:18-25, a narrative unit). What man made is demonstrative of his naked delinquence (3:1-7; a narrative unit). What God makes is made anew for man's consequence (3:8-21, a narrative unit). While it is clear from other considerations that these three units (2:18-25; 3:1-7; 3:8-21) are self-contained narrative scenes, the pattern of innocence, shame, reconciliation is delimited by the literary markers indicative of self-reflection (nakedness, 2:25; loin coverings, 3:7; clothed upon, 3:21). The theological/emotional/psychological/personal dimension of man/woman open to God, exposed to one another, ashamed in one another—this profound God-self analysis touches the borders of intimacy. And intimacy—openness to the divine person—intimacy is a relational category, an eschatological relational category. What *now* transcends the shame of nakedness is a garment—a robe—which itself transcends the shame. Christ's glory-robe hides the shame—his naked, pierced, nailed, bloodied shame. Christ's glory-robe outshines even his innocence; for that glory-robe is the eschatological garment of divine, eternal union—intimacy without end.

Character Revealed Through Speech

Returning to the characteristic paradigm of narrative speech, the defining nature of the fall narrative is found in the spoken dialogue contained in 3:1-19. The bantering between the woman and the serpent is unnatural, antithetical, diabolical. We learn the character of the deceiver—veiled, glamorous, flattering, deadly! And we learn of the shifting character of the woman—flesh of the man's flesh, bone of the man's bone, cleaving to the man as one intimate mind and heart—we now learn of an adulterated mind and heart, a seduced mind and heart, a mind and heart prostituted before the god of this world. The character of the woman is weak, vulnerable, malleable. But the character of the man? Alas, he is an imitator of the weaker vessel. And he adulterates his God-formed, God-shaped, God-breathed being for what? The goddess woman? Companionship? Togetherness? Sex? What? What induces, seduces, reduces him? "And

she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate" (v. 6). No dialogue; no conversation, no speech. She gave, he ate! Here is the characterization of narrative brevity—of tragic succinctness; of "what more can be said": he took, he ate. Adam the deliberate rebel; Adam the clear-eyed, full-knowledged enemy of God, his Creator ('my breath, my flesh is from his mouth, his hand'); of God, his Provider ('my garden paradise is from his planting'); of God, his Benefactor ('my other self, my *'išâ*, is from his love, his union-intimacy'). Adam without hesitation, without discussion, without inhibition—Adam reaches for God's throne, for God's arena, for God's prerogative. But he reaches as Satan himself reaches—reaches to dethrone God—reaches to make himself lord of God's arena—reaches to enthrone himself with the eschaton's prerogatives.

Reverse Antithesis

And now, in the height of man and woman's eschatological thrust—at the pinnacle of woman and man's eschatological assault—now the reversal: now the unsuspected antithesis—now the world turned upside down—now their heaven become a hell. The narrative drama reflects the theological and spiritual antithesis. The narrative spiral gyrates downward, not upward. Adam! Eve! How you have been betrayed. What is this downdraft—this chill downdraft of alienation, of exposure, of wide-eyed guilt (shameful, wide-eyed guilt), of dread, of terror, of fear, of death—of silent, cold, lifeless death. The downward spiral coils its serpentine powers down, down, down into Satan's arena, Satan's throne, Satan's prerogatives. Hide in this hellish domain—the Lord God will not see. Kneel at this hellish throne, woman-like—the Lord God will not see. Enlist in this legion, this band of angels—hellish angels: God will not see. Nakedness; fig leaves; loin coverings; garden trees—God will not see!

God's Advent

And God does not see! God comes—God comes with his throne, his arena, his prerogatives. God comes, walking, seeking his *imago*. It is as the eschatological Pastor that the Lord God comes seeking his fallen, lost and hiding sheep. Who is active in the history of redemption? Passive, cower-

ing, impotent man? Surely not! Who is active? Condescending, shepherding, omnipotent Lord God!! No autosoteric history of redemption in Genesis 3. No man-saves-himself history of redemption in Genesis 3. No man-saves-himself-by-his-free will history of redemption in Genesis 3.

Speech by the Eschatological Character

The downward spiral leaves the man and the woman covered by leaves and trees, uncovered to themselves, naked before the omniscient eye of the Lord God. His appearance marks a new narrative; in fact, Scene Two of the Temptation-Fall narrative. In parallel with the narrative-character marker which signals the shift from chapter 2 to chapter 3, the Lord God's (Yahweh Elohim's) character shifts the drama to interrogation (note the interrogatives in 3:9, 11, 13). As dialogue marks the plot sequence in chapter 2 and chapter 3:1-7 (even chapter 1:26-29), so dialogue becomes the key plot device and narrative/character pattern of chapter 3:8-20. The successive interchanges are not only a reflection of the downward spiral brought in by Satan's invasion and Eve's evasion; the dialogue between the Lord God and the protagonists (now God's antagonists) is pregnant with eschatological—indeed, redemptive-historical overtones.

SCENE ANALYSIS VIA NARRATIVE LITERARY MARKERS

2:18

Scene I: Innocence

2:25

Scene II: Delinquence

3:7

Scene III: Consequence

3:21

Scene IV: Deterrence

3:24

Narrative Palistrophe

The palistrophic or chiastic nature of Genesis 3 has been observed by many. Several press the chiastic inception back to chapter 2. I am not interested in disputing that observation at this point, only concerned to underscore the recognition of the chiastic pattern in chapter 3. For those who have observed it, the Genesis 3 chiasm is an etiological myth—adapted to the origin of mankind's inherent sense of guilt and shame. I am dismissing this naturalistic, this humanistic explanation on the grounds of our conviction and declaration (our presupposition, if you will) that the text is revelation—supernatural, top-down, intrusionary speech from God to man.

Eschatological Speaker

At the intersection of this vertical and horizontal interface (Gen. 3:8), the Eschatological Character initiates the dialogue. Especially here, in these early chapters of Genesis, it is crucial to observe who speaks and when. God alone? Or inter-Trinitarian God in chapter 1. At the climax of the work of creation, God speaks of the only one in creation who is capable of speaking in return—his very own *imago Dei*. The Lord God speaks in chapter 2 at the climax of the work of matching the creatures—man, God's *imago*, unmatched with any other creature, save himself, his other self, his *imago* female-wise. Lord God in chapter 2 matching *imago* with *imago*, and speech flows forth as man rejoices in his complement. Chapter 1—God speaks into his heavenly council; chapter 2—God speaks into his created arena; chapter 3—God speaks into his fallen arena. The downward spiral draws even God's speech to itself. The Lord God does not abandon the fallen arena; though it deserves no word—only silence. Nonetheless the Lord God, gracious and compassionate, speaks to a fallen world.

Encore! Character Shift

The dialogic palistrophe/chiasm in chapter 3 is pronounced—rich, profound, poignant. It portends much more than structure—mere structure. Here

structure is incarnational, prophetic, redemptive historical. The dialogic chiasm itself suggests the reverse of the downward spiral—even as the appearance of the Lord God himself suggests the reverse of the diabolic intruder. Character shift implies paradigm shift.

ESCHATOLOGICAL REVERSAL OF THE PROTOLOGICAL REVERSAL

A. Serpent (Satan)	(v. 1)
B. Woman	(v. 2)
C. Man	(v. 6)
D. God	(v. 8)
C'. Man	(v. 9)
B'. Woman	(v. 13)
A'. Serpent (Satan)	(v. 14)
B". Woman	(v. 16)
C". Man	(v. 17)
D". God	(v. 21)

The dialogic chiasm begins in v. 1 with the appearance of the demon-possessed serpent. His speech is addressed to the woman in a he said/she said repartee. Satan, you will observe, has the first word and the last word in this dialogic exchange. The man is drawn into this descending paradigm though he does not speak. His act of taking the interdicted fruit speaks louder than words. The dialogic paradigm in verses 1-7 sequences: Satan (1) → woman (2) → man (6).

Divine Intrusion

The appearance of the Lord God (8) interrupts the paradigm; in fact, halts the downward spiral—though the deleterious effects and alterations in

woman and man will be evident in the next scene of the narrative plot. God's presence in verse 8 is redemptive/salvific/pastoral/reconciliatory. Before an explicit word of redemption is spoken, God himself appears—he acts—he actively intrudes his presence/his person into the narrative. I do not intend to overemphasize the divine act here in verse 8 in distinction from the divine word in verse 15. Deed and word are together part of the Lord God's presence in the narrative. But note how wonderfully the Lord God *does* something—and he does something in person. A personal act by incarnational or adventual intrusion to break—*to break*—the downward spiral. What grace is this! What love is this! What a Person is this!

God's presence delimits the downward spiral: serpent → woman → man → God. But then the paradigm itself begins to reverse: God (8) → man (9) → woman (13) → serpent (14). The narrative scene-paradigm (vv. 8-19) once again unfolds by dialogue. The virtual demand of the text is to relate dialogue with dialogue—dialogue (vv. 1-7) with dialogue (vv. 9-19). And the result of this literary correlation is a perfect chiasm/palistrophe.

A. Serpent (3:1a)

B. Woman (3:2-3)

C. Man (3:6)

D. Lord God (3:8)

C'. Man (3:9)

B'. Woman (3:13)

A'. Serpent (3:14)

Reverse Mirror

The palistrophic nature of this double paradigm is emphatic—it is a reversal of the order of the characters. Who is tempted last is addressed first (C/C'). Who is tempted first is addressed next to last (B/B'). Who first tempts is

addressed last (A/A'). The dialogic chiasm is a reverse pattern of interrogation and unmasking (dis-robing/uncovering, if you will). The Interrogator exposes the speakers—exposes them in reverse order of their damnably rebellious complicity. We behold man and woman, so formerly pristine in integrity, harmony, mutuality, theocentricity—now skulking, scape-goating, self-centered in their egocentricity. How quickly being cut off from God's presence and intimacy poisons, nay kills/destroys, their own integrity. How desparately they need the Lord God's presence anew in their lives. How desparately they need life anew; for they have died and their life is hidden in their self—their fallen, incommunicado self (at best); or worse—their life is hidden with Satan in Hell. The antitheses of Genesis 3 are a radical reversal of the syntheses (God and man/woman) of Genesis 2. Antithesis of good with evil. Antithesis of intimacy with alienation. Antithesis of life with death (hiding in verse 8 is epexegetical of death: death inside, death outside, death horizontal, death vertical). All things have been made new by the opening of the sinful eyes—an antithetical newness from eyes antithetically focused (on self, earth, world, *this* arena).

Double Reversal

Verse 14 appears to be the climax of the palistrophic mirror. The reversal (3:1-6) is reversed (3:9-14): and that in the appearance of the Lord God (v. 8). But verse 14 is *not* the climax; it is the ante-climax. Notice that we are back to the serpent in verse 14, having descended from the serpent in verse 1. And we have returned to the serpent in verse 14 by descending to the woman (vv. 1-3), to the man (v. 6) and ascending in opposite order from the man (v. 9), to the woman (v. 13). And all of this, I remind you, dialogically. But as we move beyond verse 14, we once again discover the pattern of reversal. This is emphatic in the inspired narrative—it is dramatic in the inspired narrative—it is present in the inspired narrative for our instruction—for our theological instruction—for our biblical-theological instruction. Reversals top down, down up, beginning to end, end to beginning: reversals, reversals, reversals. God is turning things around. God is reversing things. God is reversing the reversal. So that what dominates the narrative pattern of Genesis 3 is the emphatic reverse character of the plot. And reversal of plot is reversal of story—man's miserable, sinful, rebellious story. The pattern of the narrative is a proclamation of the grace, the

love, the omnipotent gracious love of the Lord for sinners. See how he loves them. He comes to reverse their misery, their enmity, their death.

The double helix, as it were—the double reverse helix reverts at verse 14 from the serpent to the woman (v. 16) to the man (vv. 17-19) to the Lord God (v. 21). Genesis 3:1-21 is a double dialogic palistrophe; an overlapping dialogic reversal with the cosmic antagonists at the pivots—at the hinge points. The Lord God's appearance in verse 8 is the antipode of the second chiastic reversal. But note this carefully, the correspondence between the character who inaugurates the reversal (the serpent, v. 1) and the character who receives the inaugural judgment (the serpent again, v. 14) is duplicated in the character who inaugurates the reversal of the reversal (the Lord God, v. 8) and the character who concludes the reversal of the reversal (the Lord God, v. 21).

Eschatological Intrusion

The intrusionary nature of these reverse chiastic plot paradigms is patent—the Lord God intervenes; the Lord God condescends; the Lord God incarnates his presence as Pastor, as Interrogator, as Judge, as Reverser, as Savior. Yes, the gospel of salvation by divine and supernatural (yeah, eschatological) grace is present in Genesis 3. The very structure of the narrative demands it—requires that we see it—leaves us refuge in no horizontal venue. Only the Lord God himself and his arena will redeem this hopeless reversal.

Patterns of Unity—Alienation

One more desultory comment on the dynamics of Genesis 2 and 3. The unitary character of Genesis 2 is clear—God and man united in harmony; man and woman united in harmony; man and the earth—the earth-garden—united in harmony. But the binary character of Genesis 3 is clear—God and man alienated; man and woman alienated (from God and one another); man and the earth, the ground, the earth-paradise, alienated. Sin puts asunder what God has joined together. And that stark volte-face, that recission, that abrogation is all too apparent in the narrative, in the plot, in the structure, in the whole inspired record of Genesis 3.

Patterns of Unity—Restoration

Genesis 3:15, the so-called protevangelium (first preaching of the gospel), is Messianic. Only a federal person, standing alongside the divine protagonist in this drama, is sufficient to accomplish the eschatological reversal. That he will be a manchild (v. 15) is protologically anticipatory of the eschatological man—*the* Son of Man. If Messiah is to deliver his people, surely an aspect of that deliverance (the part for the whole) is deliverance from allegiance to the Devil. Redemptive reversal expressed protologically (3:15) unfolds to redemptive reversal expressed messianically (which is to say eschatologically). Note Paul's comment in Romans 16:20: "the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."

Eschatological Adam

The ejection of man and woman from the garden in 3:22-24 is the graphic illustration of man's unfitness for God's paradise. Eden is no place for sinners. And in barring the way with the theophanic sword, the Lord God indicates that there is no way to the tree of life save through the fire and under the sword. If man is to have the fruit of paradise's tree of life, he will have to contend with fire and sword—with death and torment. Reversal—re-entrance to the Edenic tree—will require submission to death and fire. Only one was qualified to do this—he who united God and man (binary entities) in one. Christ Jesus took the sentence of the sword; Christ Jesus submitted to the fiery flame; Christ Jesus fully bore—in Adam and Eve's place—the sentence of the Lord God—the wrath of the Lord God. We leave Genesis 3 longing for the Lord Jesus. We leave Genesis 3 loving the Lord Jesus—the Eschatological Reverser of the Protological Reversal.

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Charles Hodge on John Nevin: A Neglected Review.

INTRODUCTION AND ADDITIONAL NOTES

by

Benjamin W. Swinburnson

In the past few years, Reformed and Presbyterian churches have witnessed a revival of the theology of John Williamson Nevin. This revival has not been limited to one particular subset of our churches, but seems to permeate discussions on ecclesiology and worship all across the Reformed spectrum. Various writers associated with movements as apparently disparate as the "Federal Vision" and "Modern Reformation" have both self-consciously expressed dependence upon aspects of Nevin's "Mercersburg Theology."[1] The recent appearance of the full-length biography of Nevin by D. G. Hart, who is largely appreciative of Nevin's analysis of the American Presbyterian tradition, is also noteworthy in this regard.[2]

But the effects of this revival are being felt not only in our theological publications, but primarily in the Presbyterian and Reformed *churches*. In many worship services, a new emphasis is placed upon the centrality of the

1 Lawrence R. Rast, Jr. "A 'Whole Babel of Extravagance': Confessional Responses to American Revivalism." *Modern Reformation* 7/4 (1998) 18-23. Jason J. Stellman. "Where Grace is Found." *Modern Reformation* 16/4 (2007) 17-20. Jeffrey Meyers. *The Lord's Service: The Grace of Covenant Renewal Worship* (2003) 401, 423-24, 428. It is widely known and admitted that many of the advocates of the current "Federal Vision" theology look to the Mercersburg theologians (Nevin and Schaff) as a chief source of inspiration.

2 D. G. Hart, *John Williamson Nevin: High Church Calvinist* (2006).

Lord's Supper (even above the preaching of the word).[3] Sometimes this is even evident in the church architecture: the pulpit is moved to the side, while the Lord's Table is moved to the center. Many are abandoning the older Reformed "plain-style" worship services for ones that reflect the heavier liturgical emphasis of Nevin. The move towards a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper can also be credited in some degree to Nevin's influence.[4] Some ministers and laymen are even beginning to consider these practices as clear marks of a truly Reformed worship service. For many, Nevin's sacramental emphasis is welcomed as an effective antidote to the prevailing liturgical chaos of the contemporary evangelical and Reformed churches.

However, one thing that remains unspoken in many of these contemporary discussions of Nevin's theology is Charles Hodge's trenchant critique of his famous book, *The Mystical Presence*, a portion of which is reprinted below.[5] It is not as if Hodge's review goes entirely unmentioned. But when it does receive treatment, it is usually dismissed out of hand as an American "Puritanic" overreaction to Nevin's alleged return to the ecclesiology and sacramentology of the Magisterial reformers, particularly John Calvin. Nevin was simply trying to recover the robust sacramentology of the Reformation

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3 Among some advocates of this practice, the appeal to Calvin is extremely strange, considering that he himself said: "…nothing is more absurd than to extol the sacraments above the word, whose appendages and seals they are" (*Calvin's Tracts, Containing: Treatises on the Sacraments, Catechism of the Church of Geneva, Forms of Prayer, and Confessions of Faith* [1849] 2:227). The high-church Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud (1573-1645), declared, "I say [the sacrament is] the greatest, yea greater than the pulpit; for there it is *hoc est corpus meum* ['this is my body']; but in the pulpit, it is *hoc est verbum meum* ['this is my word']."

4 In our opinion, the wise judgment of the Westminster Divines ought to be heeded by all in this debate: "The communion, or supper of the Lord, is frequently to be celebrated; but how often, may be considered and determined by the ministers, and other church-governors of each congregation, as they shall find most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people committed to their charge. And, when it shall be administered, we judge it convenient to be done after the morning sermon."

5 John W. Nevin, *The Mystical Presence: A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* (1846). Charles Hodge, *Essays and Reviews* (1856) 341-92; originally published in *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 20 (April 1848): 227-78. Nevin wrote a lengthy response to the first portion of Hodge's review (dealing with the historical question of the Reformed view of the Lord's Supper) in the following essay: John W. Nevin. "Doctrine of the Reformed Church on the Lord's Supper." *The Mercersburg Review* 2/4 (1850) 421-548. All three of these documents are publicly available online at books.google.com. To our knowledge, Nevin never directly gave a public answer to the second portion of Hodge's essay (reprinted here), dealing with the Schleiermachian underpinnings of his entire theology.

(so the argument often goes), and Hodge's reaction is simply further evidence of how retrograde American Calvinism has become! The difficulty with these analyses is that they assume that Nevin's aim was simply to repristinate Calvin's sacramentology and ecclesiology as a healthy (liturgical, sacramental, and ecclesiological) corrective to the revivalist impulse of 19th century Presbyterianism. Of course, when the question is framed in this way (liturgy vs. revival; catechetical instruction vs. evangelism of children), it is not difficult to see why contemporary Reformed theologians and pastors would initially be attracted to the movement. Who among us does not see the liturgical confusion in our churches and the clear lack of catechetical instruction and covenant nurture among many of our Christian families? If all Nevin were offering were a return to the basic principles of 16th century Reformed worship, sacramentology, and covenant nurture, we ourselves would greet such a proposal heartily. But as Hodge informs us, he is up to something much more revolutionary than even that.

For Hodge, Nevin's theology was essentially a synthesis of historic Christianity with Schleiermachian theology.[6] As Hodge himself put it: "It is in all its essential features Schleiermacher's theory." Thus synthesized, Hodge regards Nevin's system as a whole to be "a radical rejection of the doctrine and theology of the Reformed church," as well as "some of the leading principles of Protestant, and even Catholic, theology." According to Hodge, Nevin's sacramentology smacks of Romanism and Lutheranism, his Christology of Eutychianism, and his Trinitarianism of Sabellianism. In short, according to Hodge, Nevin's theology is not a return to the theology a classic Genevan Reformer, but rather to that of a modern German deformer (Schleiermacher) of both classical Calvinism in particular and orthodox Christianity in general.

These are strong accusations. And they were not easy for Hodge to make. Indeed, as he tells us in the opening paragraph, he had the book on his desk for two years before he read it for review. Why the hesitation on Hodge's part? Was it because of the close connection between the two men—especially evident in Nevin's substitution for Hodge at Princeton during the latter's studies in Europe from 1826-28? Whatever the reason, Hodge's criticisms are certainly ironic. While he was away in Germany (with Nevin substituting for him at Princ-

6 At his "presuppositionalist best," Hodge clearly shows that he is very much aware of the role of philosophical presuppositions in aberrant theological systems!

eton), Hodge learned the theology of Schleiermacher firsthand, and he began to learn the dangers of the mysticism and pantheism inherent in his system.[7] How ironic it must have been for Hodge to return to the United States and only twenty years later see the very image of his unorthodox German professor in the face of his former substitute! There was no one in America better equipped to clearly recognize and critique Nevin's appropriation of Schleiermacher's theology than Charles Hodge.

We do not wish to insinuate that somehow everyone who has expressed appreciation for Nevin is necessarily guilty of all that Hodge accuses him or of all that Nevin believed. Indeed, in his own critique of Nevin, Hodge is careful to point out that "we do not assume to know how all these things lie in Dr. Nevin's mind." We too do not claim to know how all of Nevin lies in the minds of his contemporary advocates and admirers. On the contrary, we have found that to a large degree, Nevin's renewed rise to prominence in the contemporary Reformed world has taken place largely because of the stark alternative he provides to the contemporary worship movement that continues to dominate conservative evangelicalism. Indeed, many who are aware of some of Nevin's "quirks" attempt to extract the more attractive aspects of his theology out of the broader context of his system. Still others are largely ignorant of his broader system. However, it is precisely for this reason that we believe a republication of Hodge's critique of Nevin is so timely and important. Young pastors and seminary students (among whom I count myself) often lack a firm historic sense in which to contextualize and analyze contemporary discussions. With so many recommending Nevin's ecclesiology (and particularly his liturgics) to the Reformed world, it is hard to keep a critical eye.

Hodge helps us to do just that with Nevin. He engages Nevin's thesis on two basic fronts: historical and theological-philosophical. On the historical front (not reprinted here), Hodge tries to place Calvin's particular view of the presence of Christ in the Supper in its historical context, particularly stressing the importance of the *Consensus Tigurinus* as the rapprochement between the "Zwinglian" and "Calvinian" views of the presence of Christ in the Supper. On the theological-philosophical front, Hodge demonstrates that Nevin's point is not really to recover the pure "Calvinian" view of the sacrament, but is rather

7 His mature analysis and critique of Schleiermacher can be found in outline form in his *Systematic Theology* (II:138-140).

to bring the insights of continental Romanticism and Idealism (advocated particularly by Schleiermacher) to bear upon the Calvinistic system. Even Nevin's historical analysis is slanted by his Idealistic philosophical commitments.

In our opinion, those interested in reviving Nevin's theology have not done adequate work responding to the substance of Hodge's arguments. He has at times been too easily dismissed. This is a serious oversight, even on purely historical grounds. Hodge's review kept Nevin's influence on the Presbyterian Church in abeyance for the rest of the 19th century. In our opinion, a careful, objective reading of the primary documents (especially Hodge's review) will do exactly the same thing among contemporary Reformed churches today.

Doctrine of the Reformed Church on the Lord's Supper[8]

Dr. Nevin's Theory.[9]

Having already exceeded the reasonable limits of a review, we cannot pretend to do more in our notice of Dr. Nevin's book, than as briefly as possible state his doctrine and assign our reasons for considering it a radical rejection of the doctrine and theology of the Reformed church. It is no easy thing to give a just and clear exhibition of a theory confessedly mystical, and which involves some of the most abstruse points both of anthropology and theology. We have nothing to do however with any thing beyond this book. We do not assume to know how all these things lie in Dr. Nevin's mind; how he reduces them to unity, or reconciles them with other doctrines of the Bible. Our concern is only with that part of the system which has here cropped out. How the strata lie underneath, we cannot tell. Dr. Nevin, in the full consciousness of the true nature of his own system, says the difficulties under which Calvin's theory of

8 Taken from Charles Hodge's *Essays and Reviews*, 373-92. We have made slight changes in the original format of this article, including modernizing archaic spellings and providing English translations of the foreign language citations. We have also made some minor corrections and expansions of the citations. But we have not altered the content of what Hodge wrote.

9 In calling the theory in question by Dr. Nevin's name, we do not mean to charge him with having originated it. This he does not claim, and we do not assert. It is, as we understand it, the theory of Schleiermacher, so far as Dr. Nevin goes.

the Lord's Supper labors, are "all connected with psychology, applied either to the person of Christ or to the persons of his people" (p. 156). The difference then lies in the region of psychology. That science has assumed a new form. It has made great progress since the Reformation. "Its determinations," he says, "have a right to be respected in any inquiry which has this subject for its object. No such inquiry can deserve to be called scientific, if it fails to take them into view" (p. 162). There may be truth in that remark. It is, however, none the less significant as indicating the nature of the system here taught. It is a peculiar psychology applied to the illustration and determination, of Christian doctrine. It is founded on certain views of "organic law," of personality, and of generic and individual life. If these scientific determinations are incorrect, the doctrine of this book is gone. It has no existence apart from those determinations, or at least independent of them. Our first object is to state, as clearly as we can, what the theory is.

There is an organic law of life which gives unity wherever it exists, and to all the individuals through which it manifests itself. The identity of the human body resides not in the matter of which it is composed, but in its organic law. The same is true of any animal or plant. The same law may comprehend or reveal itself in many individuals, and continually propagate and extend itself. Hence there is a generic as well as an individual life. An acorn developed into an oak, in one view is a single existence; but it includes a life which may produce a thousand oaks. The life of the forest is still the life of the original acorn, as truly one, inwardly and organically, as in any single oak. Thus in the case of Adam; as to his individual life, he was *a* man, as to his generic life, he was the whole race. The life of all men is at least one and the same. Adam lives in his posterity as truly as he ever lived in his own person. They participate in his whole nature, soul and body, and are truly bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Not a particle of his body indeed has come down to us, the identity resolves itself into an invisible law. But this is an identity far more real than mere sameness of particles. So also in the case of Christ. He was not only *a* man, but *the* man. He had not only an individual but a generic life. The Word in becoming flesh, did not receive into personal union with himself the nature of an individual man, but he took upon himself our common nature. The divinity was joined in personal union with humanity. But wherever there is personality there is unity. A person has but one life. Adam had not one life of

the soul and another of the body. There is no such dualism in our nature. Soul and body are but one life, the self-same organic law. The soul to be complete, to develop itself as a soul, must externalize itself, and this externalization is the body. It is all one process, the action of one and the same living organic principle. The same is true as regards Christ. If he is one person, he has one life. He has not one life of the body, another of the soul, and another of his divinity. It is one undivided life. We cannot partake of the one without partaking of the others. We cannot be united to him as to his body, without being united also with his soul and divinity. His life is one and undivided, and is also a true human life. This is communicated to his people. The humanity of Adam is raised to a higher character by its union with the divine nature, but remains, in all respects, a true human life.

The application of these psychological principles to the whole scheme of Christian doctrine is obvious and controlling. In the first place, the fall of Adam was the fall of the race. Not simply because he represented the race, but because the race was comprehended in his person. Sin in him was sin in humanity and became an insurmountable law in the progress of its development. It was an organic ruin; the ruin of our nature; not simply because all men are sinners, but as making all men sinners. Men do not make their nature, their nature makes them. The human race is not a sand heap; it is the power of a single life. Adam's sin is therefore our sin. It is imputed to us, indeed, but only because it is ours. We are born with his nature, and for this reason only are born also into his guilt. "A fallen *life* in the first place, and on the ground of this only, imputed guilt and condemnation" (pp. 164, 191, etc., etc.).

In the second place, in order to our salvation it was requisite that the work of restoration should not so much be wrought for us as in us. Our nature, humanity, must be healed, the power of sin incorporated in that nature must be destroyed. For this purpose the Logos, the divine Word, took our humanity into personal union with himself. It was our *fallen* humanity he assumed. Hence the necessity of suffering. He triumphed over the evil. His passion was the passion of humanity. This was the atonement. The principle of health came to its last struggle with the principle of disease, and gained the victory. Our nature was thus restored and elevated, and it is by our receiving this renovated nature, that we are saved. Christ's merits are inseparable from his nature, they cannot be imputed to us, except so far as they are immanent in us. As in

the case of Adam, we have his nature, and therefore his sin; so we have the nature of Christ and therefore his righteousness. The nature we receive from Christ is a theanthropic nature. For, as before remarked, being one person, his life is one. "His divine nature is at the same time *human*, in the fullest sense" (p. 174). All that is included in him as a person, divinity, soul, and body, are embraced hi his life. It is not the life of the Logos separately taken, but the life of the Word made flesh, the divinity joined in personal union with our humanity; which is thus exalted to an imperishable divine life. It is a divine human life. In the person of Christ, thus constituted, the true ideal of humanity is brought to view. Christ is the archetypal, ideal man. The incarnation is the proper completion of humanity. "Our nature reaches after a true and real union with the nature of God, as the necessary complement and consummation of its own life. The *idea* which it embodies can never be fully actualized under any other form" (p. 201).

In the third place, divine human nature as it exists in the person of Christ, passes over into the church. He is the source and organic principle of a new life introduced into the center of humanity itself. A new starting-point is found in Christ. Our nature as it existed in Adam unfolded itself organically, in his posterity; in like manner, as it exists in Christ, united with the divine nature, it passes over to his people, constituting the church. This process is not mechanical but organic. It takes place in the way of history, growth, regular living, development.[10] By uniting our nature with the divine, he became the root of a new life for the race. "The word became flesh; not a single man only, as one among many; but flesh, or humanity in its universal conception. How else could he be the principle of a general life, the origin of a new order of existence for the human world as such?" (p. 210). "The supernatural as thus made permanent and historical in the church, must, in the nature of the case, correspond with the form of the supernatural, as it appeared in Christ himself.

10 Schleiermacher says, in his second Sendschreiben to Lücke, "Wo Uebernatüliches bei mir vorkommt, da ist es immer ein Erstes; es wird aber hernach ein Natürliches als Zweites. So ist die Schöpfung übernatürlich; aber sie wird hernach Naturzusammenhang; so ist Christus übernatürlich seinem Anfang nach, aber er wird natürlich als rein menschliche Person, und ebenso ist es mit dem heiligen Geiste und der christlichen Kirche ("Where I meet the supernatural, there is always a first but there would afterwards be the natural as a second. So creation is supernatural; but afterwards it would be a natural relation; so Christ is supernatural according to his origin, but he would be natural as a pure human person, and it is even so afterwards with the Holy Spirit and the Christian church"). Somewhat to the same effect, Dr. Nevin somewhere says, The supernatural has become natural.

For it is all one and the same life or constitution. The church must have a true theanthropic character throughout. The union of the divine and human in her constitution, must be inward and real, a continuous revelation of God in the flesh, exalting this last continuously into the sphere of the Spirit" (p. 247). The incarnation is, therefore, still present and progressive, in the way of actual, human development, in the church.

There are two remarks, however, to be here made. First, according to this system, the mystical union implies a participation of the entire humanity of Christ, for if we are joined in *real* life-unity with the Logos, we should be exalted to the level of the Son of God. Still it is not with his soul alone, or his body alone, but with his whole person, for the life of Christ is one. Second, this union of Christ and his people, implies no ubiquity of his body, and no fusion of his proper personality with theirs. We must distinguish between the simple man and the universal man here joined in the same person, much as in the case of Adam. He was at once an individual and the whole race. So we distinguish between Christ's universal humanity in the church, and his humanity as a particular man, whom the heavens must receive unto the restitution of all things (p. 173).

The incarnation being thus progressive, the church is in very deed, the depository and continuation of the Savior's theanthropic life itself, in which powers and resources are continually at hand, involving a real intercommunion and interpenetration of the human and divine (p. 248). It follows also from this view of the case, that the sacraments of the church, have a real objective force. "The force of the sacrament is in the sacrament itself. Our faith is needed only to make room for it in our souls" (p. 183). "The things signified are bound to the signs by the force of a divine appointment; so that the grace goes inseparably along with the signs, and is truly present for all who are prepared to make it their own" (p. 62).

In the fourth place, as to the mode of union with Christ, it is by regeneration. But this regeneration is by the church. If the church is the depository of the theanthropic life of Christ, if the progress of the church takes place in the way of history, growth, living development, it would seem as unreasonable that a man should be united to Christ and made partaker of his nature, otherwise than by union with this external, historical church, as that he should possess

the nature of Adam by immediate creation, instead of regular descent. It is by the ministration of this living church, in which the incarnation of God is progressive, and by her grace-bearing sacraments, that the church life, which is the same as that of Christ, is continually carried over to new individuals. The life of the single Christian can be real only as born and sustained to the end by the life of the church, which is the living and life-giving body of Christ. The effect of the sacraments, therefore, is thus to convey and sustain the life of Christ, his whole divine-human life. We partake not of his divinity only, but also of his true and proper humanity; not of his humanity in a separate form, nor of his flesh and blood alone, but of his whole life, as a single undivided form of existence. In the Lord's Supper consequently Christ is present in a peculiar and mysterious way; present as to his body, soul, and divinity, not locally as included under the elements, but really; the sign and thing signified, and inward and outward, the visible and invisible, constitute one inseparable presence. Unbelievers, indeed, receive only the outward sign, because they lack the organ of reception for the inward grace. Still the latter is there, and the believer receives both, the outward sign and the one undivided, theanthropic life of Christ, his body, soul, and divinity. The Eucharist has, therefore, "a peculiar and altogether extraordinary power." It is, as Maurice is quoted as asserting, the bond of a universal life and the means whereby men become partakers of it.

Such, as we understand it, is the theory unfolded in this book. It is in all its essential features Schleiermacher's theory. We almost venture to hope that Dr. Nevin will consider it a fair exhibition, not so satisfactory, of course, as he himself could make, but as good as could well be expected from the uninitiated. It is at least honestly done, and to the best of our ability.

It is not the truth of this system that we propose to examine, but simply its relation to the theology of the Reformed church. Dr. Nevin is loud, frequent, often, apparently at least, contemptuous, in his reproaches of his brethren for their apostasy from the doctrines of the Reformation. We propose very briefly to assign our reasons for regarding his system, as unfolded in this book, as an entire rejection not only of the peculiar doctrines of the Reformed church on the points concerned, but of some of the leading principles of Protestant, and even Catholic, theology.

First, in reference to the person of Christ. Dr. Nevin denies any dualism in the constitution of man. Soul and body, in their ground, are but one life. So in the case of Christ, in virtue of the hypostatical union, his life is one. The divine and human are so united in him as to constitute one indivisible life. "It is in all respects a true human life" (p. 167). "His divine nature is at the same time *human*, in the fullest sense" (p. 174).

That this is a departure not only from the doctrine of the Reformed church, but of the church universal, seems to us very plain. In one view it is the Eutychian doctrine, and in another something worse. Eutyches and afterwards the Monothelites taught, that after the hypostatical union, there was in Christ but one nature and operation. Substitute the word life, for its equivalent, nature, and we have the precise statement of Dr. Nevin's. He warns us against the error of Nestorius, just as the Eutychians called all who held to the existence of two natures in Christ, Nestorians. Eutyches admitted that this one nature or life in our Lord, was theanthropic. He was constituted of two natures, but after their union, had but one. He says, Ομολογω εκ δυο φυσεων γεγεννησθαι τον κυριον ημων προ της ενωσεως μετα δε την ενωσιν, μιαν φυσιν ομολογω ("I confess that our Lord was begotten from two natures before the union, but after the union I confess but one nature"). What is the difference between one theanthropic life, and one theanthropic operation? We are confirmed in the correctness of this view of the matter, from the fact, that Schleiermacher, the father of this system, strenuously objects to the use of the word *nature* in this whole connection especially in its application to the divinity, and opposes also the adoption of the terms which the council of Chalcedon employed in the condemnation of Eutychianism.[11] This, however, is a small matter. Dr. Nevin has a right to speak for himself. It is his own language, which, as it seems to us, distinctly conveys the Eutychian doctrine, that after the hypostatical union there was but one φυσις ("nature") or, as he expresses it, one life, in Christ. He attributes to Calvin a wrong psychology in reference to Christ's person. What is that but to attribute to him wrong views of that person? And what is that but saying his own views differ from those of Calvin on the person of Christ? No one, however, has ever pretended that Calvin had any peculiar views on that subject. He says himself that he held all the decisions, as to such points,

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11 Schleiermacher, Glaubenslehre, § 97 (English translation: *The Christian Faith* [1928] § 97 [389-413], esp. 410-13).

of the first six ecumenical councils. In differing from Calvin, on this point, therefore, Dr. Nevin differs from the whole church.

But in the other view of this matter. What was this one life (or nature) of Christ? Dr. Nevin says: "It was in all respects a true human life" (p. 167). "Christ is the archetypal man, in whom the true idea of humanity is brought to view." He "is the true ideal man." Our nature is complete only in him (p. 201). But is a perfect, or ideal man, any thing more than a mere man after all? If all that was in Christ pertains to the perfection of our nature, he was, at best, but a perfect man. The only way to escape Socinianisn, on this theory, is by deifying man, identifying the divine and human, and making all the glory, wisdom, and power, which belong to Christ, the proper attributes of humanity. Christ is a perfect man. But what is a perfect man? We may give a pantheistic, or a Socinian answer to that question, and not really help the matter—for the real and infinite hiatus between us and Christ, is in either case closed. Thus it is that mysticism falls back on rationalism. They are but different phases of the same spirit. In Germany, it has long been a matter of dispute, to which class Schleiermacher belongs. He was accustomed to smile at the controversy as a mere logomachy. Steudel objects to Schleiermacher's Christology, that according to him "Christ is a finished man." Albert Knapp says: "He denies the human and renders human the divine."[12] We, therefore, do not stand alone in thinking that to represent Christ's life as in all respects human, to say he was the ideal man, that human nature found its completion in him, admits naturally only of a pantheistic or a Socinian interpretation. We of course do not attribute to Dr. Nevin either of these forms of doctrine. We do not believe that he adopts either, but we object both to his language and doctrine that one or the other of those heresies is their legitimate consequence.

In the second place, we think the system under consideration is justly chargeable with a departure from the doctrine of the Reformed church, and the church universal, as to the nature of our union with Christ.[13] According to

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12 F. W. Gess: Uebersicht über Schleier. System. p. 225 (Friedrich W. Gess, *Deutliche und möglichst vollständige Übersicht über das theologische System Dr. Friedrich Schleiermachers und über die Beurtheilungen, welche dasselbe theils nach seinen eigenen Grundsätzen, theils aus den Standpunkten des Supranaturalism, des Rationalism, der Fries'schen und der Hegel'schen Philosophie erhalten hat*, 1837).

13 It is important to note that the issue between Hodge and Nevin is not whether Union with Christ is a foundational principle of Reformed soteriology. Hodge heartily affirmed this:

the Reformed church that union is not merely moral, nor is it merely legal or federal, nor does it arise simply from Christ having assumed our nature, it is at the same time real and vital. But the bond of that union, however intimate or extensive, is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, in Christ and in his people. We receive Christ himself, when we receive the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ; we receive the life of Christ when we receive his Spirit, who is the Spirit of life. Such we believe to be the true doctrine of the Reformed church on this subject.[14] But if to this be added, as

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"Can any reader of the Bible, can any Christian at least, doubt that union with Christ was to the apostles one of the most important and dearest of all the doctrines of the gospel? a doctrine which *lay at the root of all the other doctrines of redemption*, the foundation of their hopes, the source of their spiritual life?" (*Essays and Reviews*, 160). Rather his difficulty with Nevin lies is the *nature* of that union. As Hodge argues, some of the Reformed found that union to be the fruit and effect of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, whereas others also included the additional idea of a mysterious power emanating from Christ himself. Though Hodge favors the former as the best representation of the Reformed view, his difficulty with Nevin is not simply his embrace of the latter. Nor does the question concern the relationship between unitive and forensic categories in the *ordo salutis*. Rather, as elsewhere, Hodge's concern is that Nevin's doctrine of the mystical union is controlled by unbiblical Schleiermachian psychological-philosophical categories. For Hodge, Nevin's doctrine is thus fundamentally antithetical to *both* of the past Reformed formulations of the doctrine of union with Christ.

14 In the first half of the article (not printed here), Hodge added these words describing his acceptance of the historic Reformed doctrine of the mystical union: "The subject itself is mysterious. The Lord's Supper is by all Christians regarded as exhibiting, and, in the case of believers, confirming their union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever obscurity rests on that union, must in a measure rest on this sacrament. That union, however, is declared to be a great mystery. It has always, on that account, been called the mystical union. We are, therefore, demanding too much when we require all obscurity to be banished from this subject. If the union between Christ and his people were merely moral, arising from agreement and sympathy, there would be no mystery about it; and the Lord's Supper, as the symbol of that union, would be a perfectly intelligible ordinance. But the Scriptures teach that our union with Christ is far more than this. It is a vital union: we are partakers of his life, for it is not we that live, but Christ that liveth in us. It is said to be analogous to our union with Adam, to the union between the head and members of the same body, and between the vine and its branches. There are some points in reference to this subject, with regard to which almost all Christians are agreed. They agree that this union includes a federal or representative relation, arising from a divine constitution; and on the part of Christ, a participation of our nature. He that sanctified and they who are sanctified are all of one. On this account he calls them brethren. Inasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also, himself, likewise took part of the same (Heb. 2:11-14). It is in virtue of his assumption of our nature that he stands to us in the intimate relation here spoken of. It is agreed, further, that this union includes on our part a participation of the Spirit of Christ. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, and dwells without measure in him as our head, who dwells also in his people, so that they become one body in Christ Jesus. They are one in relation to each other, and one in relation to him. As the human body is one by being animated and pervaded by one soul, so Christ and his people are one in virtue of the indwelling of one and the same Spirit, the Holy Ghost. It is further agreed that this union relates to the bodies as well as the souls of believers. Know you not, asks the apostle, that your bodies are the members of Christ; know ye not that your body is

some of the Reformed taught, there was a mysterious power emanating from the glorified body of Christ, in heaven, it falls very far short, or rather is something entirely different from the doctrine of this book. Dr. Nevin's theory of the mystical union is of course determined by his view of the constitution of Christ's person. If divinity and humanity are united in him as one life; if that life is in all respects human, then it is this divine human life, humanity raised to the power of deity, that is communicated to his people. It is communicated too, in the form of a new organic principle, working in the way of history and growth. "The supernatural has become natural" (p. 246). A new divine element has been introduced into our nature by the incarnation. "Humanity itself has been quickened into full correspondence with the vivific principle it has been made to enshrine." Believers, therefore, receive, or take part in the entire humanity of Christ. From Adam they receive humanity as he had it, after the fall; from Christ, the theanthropic life, humanity with deity enshrined in it, or rather made one with it, one undivided life.

That this is not the old view of the mystical union between Christ and his people, can hardly be a matter of dispute. Dr. Nevin says Calvin was wrong not only in the psychology of Christ, but of his people. Ullman, in the essay prefixed to this volume, tells us Schleiermacher introduced an epoch by teaching this doctrine. This is declared to be the doctrine of the Church of the Future. It is denied to be that of the Church of the Past. There is one consideration, if there were no other, which determines this question beyond appeal. It follows of necessity from Dr. Nevin's doctrine that the relation of believers to God and Christ, is essentially different, since the incarnation, from that of believers before that event. The union between the divine and human began with Christ, and from him this theanthropic life passes over to the church. There neither was nor could be any such thing before. This he admits. He, therefore, teaches that the saints of old were, as to the mystical union, in a very different condition from that of the saints now. Hear what he says on that subject. In arguing against the doctrine that the indwelling of Christ is by the Spirit, he says: "Let the church know that she is no nearer God now in fact, in the way

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the temple of the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in you? The Westminster Catechism, therefore, says of believers after death, that their bodies being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection. This union was always represented as a real union, not merely imaginary nor simply moral, nor arising from the mere reception of the benefits which Christ has procured. We receive Christ himself, and are in Christ, united to him by the indwelling of his Spirit and by a living faith. So far all the Reformed at least agreed" (*Essays and Reviews*, 342-43).

of actual life, than she was under the Old Testament; that the indwelling of Christ in believers, is only parallel with the divine presence, enjoyed by the Jewish saints, who all died in the faith, 'not having received the promises;' that the mystical union in the case of Paul and John was nothing more intimate, and vital, and real, than the relation sustained to God by Abraham, or Daniel, or Isaiah" (p. 195). "In the religion of the Old Testament, God descends towards man, and holds out to his view in this way the promise of a real union of the divine nature with the human, as the end of the gracious economy thus introduced. To such a *real* union it is true, the dispensation itself never came . . . The wall of partition that separated the divine from the human, was never fully broken down" (p. 203). It was, he says, "a revelation of God to man, and not a revelation of God in man." Again, "That which forms the full *reality* of religion, the union of the divine nature with the human, the revelation of God in man, and not simply to him, was wanting in the Old Testament altogether." Let us now hear what Calvin, who is quoted by Dr. Nevin as the great representative of the Reformed church, says on the subject. He devotes the whole of chapters 10 and 11 of the Second Book of his Institutes, to the refutation of the doctrine that the Old Testament economy in its promises, blessings, and effects, differed essentially from that of the New. The difference he declares to be merely circumstantial, relating to the mode, the clearness, and extent of its instructions, and the number embraced under its influence. He tells us he was led to the discussion of this subject by what that "prodigiosus nebulo Servetus, et furiosi nonnulli ex Anabaptistarum secta" ("that monstrous rascal Servetus and a number of madmen of the Anabaptist sect") (rather bad company), taught on this point; who thought of the Jews no better, quam de aliquo porcorum grege ("than about some herd of swine"). In opposition to them, and all like them, Calvin undertakes to prove, that the old covenant "differed in substance and reality nothing from ours, but was entirely one and the same the administration alone being different" (10:2). "What more absurd," he asks, "than that Abraham should be the father of all the faithful, and yet not have a corner among them? But he can be cast down neither from the number, nor from his high rank among believers, without destroying the whole church" (2.10.11). He reminds Christians that Christ has promised them no higher heaven than to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Dr. Nevin ought surely to stop quoting Calvin as in any way abetting the monstrous doctrine, that under the old dispensation, God was only revealed *to* his people, while under the new,

the divine nature is united in them with the human nature, as in Christ ("the same life or constitution") in the way of progressive incarnation.

What, however, still more clearly shows the radical difference between Dr. Nevin's theory, and that of the Reformed church, as to this point, is what he says in reference to the sacraments of the two dispensations. Romanists teach that the sacraments of the Old Testament merely prefigure grace, those of the New actually confer it. This doctrine Calvin, as we have already seen, strenuously denies, and calls its advocates miserable sophists. He asserts that "whatever is exhibited in our sacraments, the Jews formerly received in theirs, to wit, Christ and his benefits;" that baptism has no higher efficacy than circumcision. He quotes the authority of Augustine, for saying, Sacramenta Judaeorum in signis fuisse diversa; in re quae significatur, paria; diversa specie visibili, paria virtute spirituali ("the sacraments of the Jews were different in their signs, but equal in the thing signified; different in visible appearance, but equal in spiritual power").[15] Dr. Nevin, however, is constrained by his view of the nature of the union between Christ and his people, since the incarnation, to make the greatest possible difference between the sacraments of the two dispensations. He even goes further than the Romanists, teaching that the passover, *e. g.* was properly no sacrament at all. "Not a sacrament at all, indeed," is his language," in the full New Testament sense, but a sacrament simply in prefiguration and type" (p. 251). In the same connection he says: "The sacraments of the Old Testament are no proper measure by which to graduate directly the force that belongs to the sacraments of the New. . . . To make baptism no more than circumcision, or the Lord's Supper no more than the passover, is to wrong the new dispensation as really" as by making Christ nothing more than a Levitical priest. Systems which lead to such opposite conclusions must be radically different. The lowest Puritan, ultra Protestant, or sectary in the land, who truly believes in Christ, is nearer Calvin than Dr. Nevin; and has more of the true spirit and theology of the Reformed church, than is to be found in this book.

In the third place, Dr. Nevin's theory, differing so seriously from that of the Reformed church, as to the person of Christ and his union with his people, may be expected to differ from it as to the nature of Christ's work, and method

15 Institutes, 4.14.26.

of salvation. According to him, human nature, the generic life of humanity, being corrupted by the fall, was healed by being taken into a life-union with the Logos. This union so elevated it, raised it to such a higher character, and filled it with such new meaning and power, that it was more than restored to its original state. This however could not be done without a struggle. Being the bearer of a fallen humanity, there was a necessity for suffering in order that life should triumph over the law of sin and death. This was the atonement. See p. 166.

The first remark that suggests itself here, is the query, what is meant by "fallen humanity?" Can it mean any thing else than a corrupted nature, *i. e.*, our nature in the state to which it was reduced by the fall? How else could its assumption involve the necessity of suffering? It is however hard to see how the assumption of a corrupt nature, is consistent with the perfect sinlessness of the Redeemer. Dr. Nevin, as far as we see, does not touch this point. With Schleiermacher, according to whom absolute freedom from sin was the distinguishing prerogative of the Savior, this was secured, though clothed with our nature, by all the acts or determinations of that nature, being governed in his case, by "the God-consciousness" in him, or the divine principle. This is far from being satisfactory; but we pass that point. What however are we to say to this view of the atonement? It was vicarious suffering indeed, for the Logos assumed, and by the painful process of his life and death, healed our nature, not for himself but for our sakes. But there is here no atonement, that is, no satisfaction; no propitiation of God; no reference to divine justice. All this is necessarily excluded. All these ideas are passed over in silence by Dr. Nevin; by Schleiermacher they are openly rejected. The atonement is the painfully accomplished triumph of the new divine principle introduced into our nature, over the law of sin introduced into it by Adam. Is this the doctrine of the Reformed church?

Again, the whole method of salvation is necessarily changed by this system. We become partakers of the sin of Adam, by partaking of his nature; we become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, by partaking of his nature. There can be no imputation of either sin or righteousness to us, except they belong to us, or are inherently our own. "Our participation in the actual unrighteousness of his (Adam's) life, forms the ground of our participation in his guilt and liability to punishment. And in no other way, we affirm, can

the idea of imputation be satisfactorily sustained in the case of the second Adam." "Righteousness, like guilt, is an attribute which supposes a subject in which it inheres, and from which it cannot be abstracted without ceasing to exist altogether. In the case before us, that subject is the mediatorial nature or life of the Savior himself. Whatever there may be of merit, virtue, efficacy, or moral value in any way, in the mediatorial work of Christ, it is all lodged in the *life*, by the power of which alone this work has been accomplished, and in the presence of which only it can have either reality or stability" (p. 191). This is very plain, we receive the theanthropic nature or life of Christ; that nature is of a high character, righteous, holy, conformed to God; in receiving that life we receive its merit, its virtues and efficacy. On p. 189, he is still more explicit: "How can that be imputed or reckoned to any man on the part of God, which does not belong to him in reality?" "This objection," he says, "is insurmountable, according to the form in which the doctrine of imputation is too generally held." "The judgment of God must ever be according to truth. He cannot reckon to any one an attribute or quality which does not belong to him in fact. He cannot declare him to be in a relation or state, which is not actually his own, but the position merely of another. A simple external imputation here, the pleasure or purpose of God to place to the account of one what has been done by another, will not answer." "The Bible knows nothing of a simple outward imputation, by which something is reckoned to a man that does not belong to him in fact" (p. 190). "The ground of our justification is a righteousness that was foreign to us before, but is now made to lodge itself in the inmost constitution of our being" (p. 180). God's act in justification "is necessarily more than a mere declaration or form of thought. It makes us to be in fact, what it declares us to be, in Christ" (*Ibid*.). Here we reach the very life-spot of the Reformation. Is justification a declaring just, or a making just, inherently? This was the real battle-ground on which the blood of so many martyrs was spilt. Are we justified for something done for us, or something wrought in us, actually our own? It is a mere playing with words, to make a distinction, as Mr. Newman did, between what it is that thus makes us inherently righteous. Whether it is infused grace, a new heart, the indwelling Spirit, the humanity of Christ, his life, his theanthropic nature; it is all one. It is subjective justification after all, and nothing more. We consider Dr. Nevin's theory as impugning here, the vital doctrine of Protestantism. His doctrine is not, of course, the Romish, teres atque rotundus ("[completely] smooth and rounded");

he may distinguish here, and discriminate there. But as to the main point, it is a denial of the Protestant doctrine of justification. He knows as well as any man that all the churches of the fifteenth century [*sic!* 16th century] held the imputation not only of what was our own, but of what though not ours inherently, was on some adequate ground set to our account; that the sin of Adam is imputed to us, not because of our having his corrupted nature, but because of the imputation of his sin, we are involved in his corruption. He knows that when the doctrine of mediate imputation, as he teaches it, was introduced by Placaeus, it was universally rejected. He knows moreover, that, with regard to justification, the main question was, whether it was a declaratory or an effective act, whether it was a declaring just on the ground of a righteousness not in us, or a making just by communicating righteousness to us. Romanists were as ready as Protestants to admit that the act by which men are rendered just actually, was a gracious act, and for Christ's sake, but they denied that justification is a forensic or declaratory act founded on the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, which is neither in us, nor by that imputation communicated as a quality to our souls. It was what Romanists thus denied, Protestants asserted, and made a matter of so much importance. And it is in fact the real keystone of the arch which sustains our peace and hope towards God; for if we are no further righteous than we are actually and inherently so, what have we to expect in the presence of a righteous God, but indignation and wrath?

In the fourth place, the obvious departure of Dr. Nevin's system from that of the Reformed church, is seen in what he teaches concerning the church and the sacraments. The evidence here is not easy to present. As he very correctly remarks with regard to certain doctrines of the Bible, they rest far less on distinct passages which admit of quotation, than on the spirit, tenor, implications, and assumptions which pervade the sacred volume. It is so with this book. Its whole spirit is churchy. It makes religion to be a church life, its manifestations a liturgical service, its support sacramental grace. It is the form, the spirit, the predominance of these things, which give his book a character as different as can be from the healthful, evangelical free spirit of Luther or Calvin. The main question whether we come to Christ, and then to the church; whether we by a personal act of faith receive him, and by union with him become a member of his mystical body; or whether all our access to Christ is through a mediating church, Dr. Nevin decides against the evangelical system.

It follows of necessity, as he himself says, from his doctrine of a progressive incarnation, "that the church is the depository and continuation of the Savior's theanthropic life itself, and as such, a truly supernatural constitution, in which powers and resources are constantly at hand, involving a real intercommunion and interpretation of the human and divine" (p. 248). The church with him, being "historical must be visible." "An outward church is the necessary form of the new creation in Christ Jesus, in its very nature" (p. 5). With Protestants the true church is "the communion of saints," the "congregatio sanctorum," "the company of faithful men;" not the company or organization of professing men. It would be difficult to frame a proposition more subversive of the very foundations of all Protestantism, than the assertion that the description above given, or any thing like it, belongs to the church visible as such. It is the fundamental error of Romanism, the source of her power and of her corruption to ascribe to the outward church, the attributes and prerogatives of the mystical body of Christ.

We must, however, pass to Dr. Nevin's doctrine of the sacraments, and specify at least some of the points in which he departs from the doctrine of the Reformed church. And in the first place, he ascribes to them a specific and "altogether extraordinary power" (p. 118). There is a presence and of course a receiving of the body and blood of Christ, in the Lord's Supper, "to be had nowhere else" (p. 75). This idea is presented in various forms. It is, however, in direct contravention of the Confessions of the Reformed churches, as we have already seen. They make a circumstantial distinction between spiritual and sacramental manducation, but as to any specific difference, any difference as to what is there received from what is received elsewhere, they expressly deny it. In the Helvetic Confession already quoted, it is said, that the eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood takes place, even elsewhere than in the Lord's Supper, whenever and wherever a man believes in Christ.[16] Calvin, in the Consensus Tigurinus, Art. xix., says: What is figured in the sacraments is granted to believers *extra eorum usum* ("without their use"). This he applies and proves, first in reference to baptism, and then in reference to the Lord's Supper. In the explanation of that Consensus he vindicates this doctrine against the objections of the Lutherans. "Quod deinde prosequimur," ("We next proceed

16 Second Helvetic Confession, chap. 21 (cf. A. C. Cochrane, *Reformed Confessions of the Sixteenth Century* [2003] 286).

to say") he begins, "fidelibus spiritualium bonorum effectum quae figurant sacramenta, extra eorum usum constare, quando et quotidie verum esse experimur et probatur scripturae testimoniis, mirum est si cui displiceat" ("that the effect of the spiritual blessings which the sacraments figure, is given to believers without the use of the sacraments. As this is daily experienced to be true, and is proved by passages of Scripture, it is strange if any are displeased with it").[17] The same thing is expressly taught in his Institutes, 4.14.14.

The second point on which Dr. Nevin differs from the Reformed church, as to the sacraments, relates to their efficacy. All agree that they have an objective force; that they no more owe their power to the faith of the recipient than the word of God does. But the question is, What is the source to which the influence of the sacraments as means of grace, is to be referred? We have already stated that Romanists say it is to be referred to the sacraments themselves as containing the grace they convey; Lutherans, to the supernatural power of the word, inseparably joined with the signs; the Reformed, to the attending power of the Spirit which is in no manner inseparable from the signs or the service. Dr. Nevin's doctrine seems to lie somewhere between the Romish and the Lutheran view. He agrees with the Romanists in referring the efficacy to the service itself, and with the Lutherans in making faith necessary in order to the sacrament taking effect. Some of his expressions on the subject are the following: Faith "is the condition of its (the sacrament's) efficacy for the communicant, but not the principle of the power itself. This belongs to the institution in its own nature. The signs are bound to what they represent, not subjectively simply in the thought of the worshipper, but objectively, by the force of a divine appointment. . . . The grace goes inseparably along with the sign, and is truly present for all who are prepared to make it their own" (p. 61). "The invisible grace enters as a necessary constituent element into the idea of the sacrament; and must be, of course, objectively present with it wherever it is administered under a true form. . . . It belongs to the ordinance in its own nature. . . . The sign and thing signified are by Christ's institution, mysteriously tied together, . . . The two form one presence" (p. 178). In the case of the Lord's Supper, the grace, or thing signified, is, according to this book, the divine-human nature of Christ, "his whole person," his body, soul,

17 John Calvin, *Calvin's Tracts, Containing Treatises on the Sacraments, Catechism of the Church of Geneva, forms of Prayer, and Confessions of Faith*, "Exposition on the Heads of Agreement" (1849) 2:236.

and divinity, constituting one life. This, or these are objectively present and inseparably joined with the signs, constituting with them one presence. The power inseparable from the theanthropic life of Christ, is inseparable from these signs, and is conveyed with them. "Where the way is open for it to take effect, it (the sacrament) serves in itself to convey the life of Christ into our persons" (p. 182). We know nothing in Bellarmine that goes beyond that. Dr. Nevin refers for illustration, as Lutherans do, to the case of the women who touched Christ's garment. As there was mysterious supernatural power ever-present in Christ, so there is in the sacraments. "The virtue of Christ's mystical presence," he says "is comprehended in the sacrament itself." According to the Reformed church, Christ is present in the sacraments in no other sense than he is present in the word. Both serve to hold him up for our acceptance. Neither has any virtue in itself. Both are used by the Spirit, as means of communicating Christ and his benefits to believers. "Spiritualiter," says Calvin, "per sacramenta fidem alit (Deus), QUORUM UNICUM OFFICIUM EST, EJUS PROMISSIONES OCULIS NOSTRIS SPECTANDAS SUBJICERE, IMO NOBIS EARUM ESSE PIONORA" ("In like manner, he nourishes faith spiritually through the sacraments, whose only office is to set his promises before our eyes to be looked upon, indeed, to be guarantees of them to us"), Institutes, 4.14.11.

We here leave Dr. Nevin's book; we have only one or two remarks to add not concerning him, nor his own personal belief, but concerning his system. He must excuse our saying that, in our view, it is only a specious form of Rationalism. It is in its essential element a psychology. Ullman admits that it is nearly allied to pantheistic mysticism, and to the modern speculative philosophy. In all three the main idea is, "the union of God and man through the incarnation of the first and deification of the second."[18] It has, however, quite as strong an affinity for a much lower form of Rationalism. We are said to have the life of Adam. He lives in us as truly as he ever lived in his own person; we partake of his substance, are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones. No particle of his soul or body, indeed, has come down to us. It all resolves itself into an invisible law. This and little more than this, is said of our union with Christ. What then have we to do with Christ, more than we have to do with Adam? or than the present forests of oak have to do with the first acorn? A law is, after

18 Preliminary Essay, p. 45.

all, nothing but a force, a power, and the only Christ we have or need, is an inward principle. And with regard to spirits, such a law is something very ideal, indeed. Christ by his excellence makes a certain impression on his disciples, which produced a new life in them. They associate to preserve and transmit that influence. A principle, belonging to the original constitution of our nature, was, by his influence, brought into governing activity, and is perpetuated in and by the church. As it owes its power to Christ, it is always referred back to him, so that it is a Christian consciousness, a consciousness of this union with Christ. We know that Schleiermacher endeavored to save the importance of a historical personal Christ; but we know also that he failed to prevent his system taking the low rationalist form just indicated. With some it takes the purely pantheistic form; with others a lower form, while others strive hard to give it a Christian form. But its tendency to lapse into one or the other of the two heresies just mentioned, is undeniable.

We feel constrained to make another remark. It is obvious that this system has a strong affinity for Sabellianism. According to the Bible and the creed of the church universal, the Holy Spirit has a real objective personal existence. There are three distinct persons in the Godhead, the same in substance and equal in power and glory. Being one God, where the Spirit is or dwells, there the Father and the Son are and dwell. And hence, throughout the New Testament, the current mode of representation is, that the church is the temple of God and body of Christ, because of the presence and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, who is the source of knowledge, holiness, and life. What the Scriptures refer to the Holy Spirit, this system refers to the theanthropic nature of Christ, to a nature or life "in all respects human." This supersedes the Holy Spirit. Every reader, therefore, must be struck with the difficulty Dr. Nevin finds from this source. He does not seem to know what to do with the Spirit. His language is constrained, awkward, and often unintelligible. He seems, indeed, sometimes to identify the Spirit with the theanthropic nature of Christ. "The Spirit of Christ," he says, "is not his representative or surrogate simply, as some would seem to think; but *Christ himself under a certain mode of subsistence*; Christ triumphant over all the limitations of his moral (mortal?) state (ξωοποιηθεις πνευματι ["made alive in the Spirit"]) received up into glory, and thus invested fully and forever with his own proper order of being in the sphere of the Holy Ghost" (p. 225). The Spirit of Christ, is then Christ

as exalted. On the following page, he says: "The glorification of Christ then, was the full advancement of our human nature itself to the power of a divine life: and the Spirit for whose presence it [the glorification of Christ] made room in the world, was not the Spirit as extraanthropological simply, under such forms of sporadic and transient afflatus as had been known previously; but the Spirit as immanent now, through Jesus Christ, in the human nature itself—the form and power, in one word, of the new supernatural creation he had introduced into the world." Again, "Christ is not sundered from the church by the intervention of the Spirit. . . . No conception can be more unbiblical, than that by which the idea of Spirit (πνευμα) in this case, is restrained to the form of mere mind, whether as divine or human, in distinction from body. The *whole* glorified Christ subsists and acts *in the Spirit*. Under this form his nature communicates itself to his people" (p. 229). But according to this book, the form in which his nature is communicated to his people is that of "a true human life;" it is a human nature advanced to a divine power, which they receive. The Spirit is, therefore, not the third person of the Trinity, but the theanthropic nature of Christ as it dwells in the church. This seems to us the natural and unavoidable interpretation of these passages and of the general tenor of the book. We do not suppose that Dr. Nevin has consciously discarded the doctrine of the Trinity; but we fear that he has adopted a theory which destroys that doctrine. The influence of his early convictions and experience, and of his present circumstances, may constrain him to hold fast that article of the faith, in some form to satisfy his conscience. But his system must banish it, just so far as it prevails. Schleiermacher, formed under different circumstances, and less inwardly trammeled, openly rejected the doctrine. He wrote a system of theology, without saying a word about the Trinity. It has no place in his system; he brings it in only at the conclusion of his work, and explains it as God manifested in nature, God as manifested in Christ, and God as manifested in the church. With him the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit which animates the church. It had no existence before the church and has no existence beyond it. His usual expression for it is, "the common spirit" (Gemeingeist) of the church, which may mean either something very mystical, or nothing more than we mean by the spirit of the age, or spirit of a party, just as the reader pleases. It is in point of fact understood both ways.

[*K:NWTS* 23/2 (Sep 2008) 38-39]

Zanchi on Justification[1]

Translated by James T. Dennison, Jr.

Nor do we approve of those who ground our justification on the remission of sins alone, denying the imputation of the righteousness and obedience of Christ, which seems to us to contend with the Scriptures. Isaiah 7 [sic! 9:6]: "A child has been given to us." Romans 5[:19]: "Just as by the disobedience of one man many have been constituted sinners, even so by the obedience of one many are constituted righteous."

The disobedience of Adam was a transgression of the divine command, therefore the obedience of Christ not only consists in his death alone, but also in his complete antecedent observation of the law. In the same manner, (since) that disobedience of Adam is wholly imputed to us, why not accordingly also the whole obedience of Christ? Likewise, in a twofold manner, we have been made sinners by the disobedience of Adam, namely by the imputation of his transgression and by the guilt of his sin (i.e., of concupiscence) overflowing

1 Giralamo (Jerome) Zanchi (Zanchius) (1516-1590) was, along with Peter Martyr Vermigli (1500-1562), one of the two noted Italian Reformers of the formative Protestant era. In fact. Zanchi was converted by Vermigli when the latter was prior at San Frediano in Lucca, Italy. It was from Lucca that the *famille Turretini* originated and emigrated, eventually to Geneva, Switzerland in the 16th century, and, in the 17th century, gave to the Reformed world arguably the greatest theologian of the Protestant scholastic era, Francis Turretin (1623-1687). Zanchi would cross the Alps in 1551 in order to escape the persecution of the Roman Catholic Inquisition and settled in Strasbourg (1553-1563). From 1563-67, he was pastor of an Italian church in Chiavenna (the Grisons, Switzerland). In 1568, he became the colleague of Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583) at Heidelberg, Germany where he served as Professor of Divinity until 1577. He then became pastor to a congregation in Neustadt an der Haardt until his death. I have translated anew a portion of his remarks from "Eiusdem Zanchii in suam Confessionem Observationes," Caput XIX: De Iustificatione as found in Giralamo Zanchi, *De religione Christiana fides—Confession of Faith*, ed. by Luca Baschera and Christian Moser (2007) 2:602-4.

(*derivationem*) into us. Why therefore are we not of the same opinion with regard to Christ? The efficacy of his obedience with regard to the commandments of God the Father is in fact imparted to us, in order that we may also begin to obey the law of God. What prevents (us) therefore! why may we not say that his complete obedience is imputed to us?

1 Corinthians 1[:30]: "He has been made by God to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Philippians 2[:8-9]: "He became obedient even to death, on account of which humbling of himself and obeying even to death, God has exalted him and us in him." He has merited eternal glory both for himself and us by his obedience, even as all the scholastics and fathers teach. Therefore his obedience also to the law is imputed to us for righteousness.

Galatians 4[:4-5]: "He was made under the law, that he might redeem those who were under the law." Therefore he kept the law for our sake and for our salvation. The testimony of the fathers, as the living teachers of this age, we omit for the sake of brevity. To sum up: we believe (this) concerning Christ—as it were, for the sake of us men and for the sake of our salvation, he descended from heaven and was incarnate, so also because of just that judicial process (*caussam*), he has kept the law and has performed all things pertaining to the forum of justice (*egisse*).

[*K:NWTS* 23/2 (Sep 2008) 40-48]

Christ in His Word[1]

2 Thessalonians 1:1-3; 3:16-18

Robert Van Kooten

During the summer of 2005, I had the privilege of having Benji Swinburnson as my summer intern at Sovereign Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Oak Harbor, Washington. I say privilege, because it was a privilege to work with such a gifted young man exited about God's Word, the Reformed faith and Biblical Theology. Benji was and is so enthusiastic about what he is learning. I have found him to be a true student of the Word as well as a man who catches on to things quickly. It was a joy and a tremendous encouragement to have him and his wife Christina with us for a summer in Oak Harbor.

Once we had the internship all set up and approved, Benji sent me an e-mail saying: "Pastor Rob, I have been working through 1 Thessalonians in a class here at Northwest Theological Seminary and I want to preach through the book during my internship this summer." I wrote back and said, "Benji, I just began to preach through 1 Thessalonians and I spent all my book money buying the commentaries and the things that I need, but maybe we could take turns preaching through the book during the internship." Benji wrote back that he did not want to take turns and then enthusiastically took on the task of preaching through another one of Paul's letters. Nevertheless, having done all that study the previous semester in 1 Thessalonians at Northwest Theological Seminary, Benji and I had a wonderful time discussing the book, interacting about it together, and talking about what the various verses meant.

1 A revised version of the Commencement Address delivered May 12, 2007 at Northwest Theological Seminary, Lynnwood, Washington.

Just recently, Benji sent me an e-mail saying: "You know, I heard a number of your sermons on 1 Thessalonians, but I didn't hear any of your sermons on 2 Thessalonians. I want to hear some of those too." And so for this commencement address this morning, we are going to focus on a message from the book of 2 Thessalonians.

The Mystery of Verse 17

The verse to which we are going to give careful attention this morning is verse 17 of chapter 3: "*I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine, it is the way that I write."* In doing research on this text, I found that this verse causes a lot of people to question the legitimacy of Paul's authorship of the letter. The first part of this verse is very familiar: "*I Paul write this greeting with my own hand."* The apostle concludes 1 Corinthians and Colossians with the same phrase. But it is the second phrase of the verse which raises suspicions for some, causing them to question whether Paul wrote this letter. The phrase reads: "*This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write."* Nowhere else in any of Paul's letters does he end a letter with such a phrase.

For conservatives like us, the second part of this verse allows us to conclude without a doubt that the apostle Paul wrote this letter. We believe the Bible is God's infallible and inerrant Word. We believe Paul wrote this letter because Paul tells us he did. We look at this verse as leaving us with no doubt that this is a letter of Paul, that he wrote it and that he was inspired by God to write it.

Nevertheless, for liberals who do not hold the Scriptures in such high regard as we do, this phrase causes them to wonder and to doubt. They point out that in chapter 2:2 of this same letter, the apostle shares how some have been writing to the Thessalonians claiming that their letters are from Paul. Some letters claim "the day of the Lord" has already come and that the Thessalonians have missed it. The liberal looks at 3:17 and says, "You see! This is the sign that Paul did *not* write the letter! This is somebody who is not Paul, trying to write this verse in such a way as to appear to be Paul. But the author is not Paul because the apostle does not close any of his other letters this way."

As conservatives, what we must ask ourselves as we look at this verse is: Why does the apostle conclude the letter in this particular way? What is his intention? What does he want us to know and see in this verse? And why does he conclude this letter in a way unlike any of his other letters?

The Immediate Context

To answer that question, it is important to look at the surrounding verses. You will notice at the end of verse 16 the phrase "*the Lord be with you all."* At the end of verse 18, we have the phrase "*the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."* In these two verses, we have parallel phrases—be with you all/be with you all. We know that whenever the Bible repeats itself in such a manner, there is something important God wants us to recognize about these verses and the verse which is surrounded by the parallel phrases (v. 17). In fact, we know this wording is intentional because the apostle ends his first letter to the Thessalonians with the phrase "*the Lord be with **you"*** (v. 28*)*. Now, in the second letter, he ends the same way, but adds the word "all"—*the Lord be with **you all*** (v. 18).

The Broader Chiastic Context

Having noticed this, we must determine the reason for it. What is the Lord telling us? What does he want us to recognize about these surrounding verses and how does it affect verse 17? To answer these questions, we have to see the chiastic structure between the first and last verses of the letter. In chapter 1:2, we have the phrase "*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* The apostle is expressing to the Thessalonians his apostolic salutation—*grace to you and peace*. At the end of the letter, in the benediction, the apostle reverses that order. "Peace" is expressed in verse 16 and "grace" is expressed in verse 18. So at the beginning of the letter, we have the order "grace and peace"; at the end of the letter, it is the reverse "peace and grace."

Why? The apostle wants us to see that his benediction is connected with his salutation. The chiastic structure which shows one form at the beginning

and the reverse at the end, indicates to us that there is a connection between the beginning and the end of the letter.

Beginning and Ending Connection

What is that connection? Let us look carefully at the first few verses of the letter. Paul begins his letter in a unique way—a way which he only uses in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. We note that the letter is sent from a trinity of apostleship: Paul, Silvanus and Timothy. You notice that there is nothing in this letter which is similar to the way Paul begins so many of his other letters—letters in which Paul begins by identifying himself as the apostle and Timothy (or whoever is with him as the lesser brother or servant). There is no mention of that here. Instead, this letter and the first letter to the Thessalonians begin with all appearing as equals in an apostleship; as if *Paul, Silvanus and Timothy* are in union with one another as a trinity of apostleship serving the Lord.

This is also reflected in the second part of chapter 1:1. The letter is "*written to the church of the Thessalonians who are in God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ."* Again we have a trinity of names that identifies the union of the church with God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are in union with one another, so are the church of the Thessalonians and the church of Christ in union with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The church of the Thessalonians is on earth; God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are in heaven, but they are in union with one another. Even though God the Father is in heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven, as the church waits for his return even now it is in union with them.

Hence, in chapter 1:2, the apostle is expressing to them by way of his apostolic office, "*grace and peace."* And although both the first and second letters begin with "*grace and peace*", the second letter differs in that it tells where grace and peace come from—"*from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1:2). God the Father is in heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven; the apostle Paul has been sent by the Lord Jesus Christ and he is writing to the church of Jesus Christ. By way of his apostolic office, he is expressing to them *grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ* who are in heaven.

As we come to the benediction of the letter, we recognize from what the apostle Paul has established in the beginning of the letter that he is again expressing peace and grace. He ends the letter in chapter 3:16 with, "*now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way;"* and in verse 18, "*the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."* Now lest you think when you read Paul's letters that this is simply his typical way of ending; lest you think to yourself, "let's not make a big deal out of this because this is just the way Paul concludes his letters," pause and think about this! As Reformed Christians, we have adopted the salutation and the benediction for our worship services. When you go to church on Sunday, the pastor may hold up his hands and say "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." At the end of the service, he doesn't end by simply saying "goodbye" or "farewell" or "we are done now." He raises his hands and he expresses the benediction, "Grace and Peace to you, as you depart from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Beginning and Ending Difference

We see therefore a similar connection between the beginning of this letter and the end of this letter. But we must also take note that there is one huge difference. In the beginning of the letter, we have a trinity of names in verse 1—*Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy*. In the next phrase of verse 1, another trinity of names—*to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*. In chapter 1:2, grace and peace is expressed from *God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.* But when we come to the end of the letter, the grace and peace comes from a singular—*from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of peace*. Again, as we compare the benediction of 2 Thessalonians to 1 Thessalonians, we see this is intentional. Paul concludes the first letter in v. 23, "*may the God of peace"* and in v. 28, "*the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all;"* two names of the Godhead are used. But in the benediction to the second letter, the focus is on the single name of our Lord Jesus Christ—"*the Lord of peace* (v. 16); *the grace of the Lord Christ be with you all"* (v. 18). Here the apostle has gone to a singular person in the Godhead, and in his focus on the singular person he is expressing something very specific with which the readers of this letter were dealing.

In the first letter, the key question is: "When is the Lord coming?" You are all familiar with 1 Thessalonians 4 where Paul describes that coming day of the Lord when the dead will be raised and they will meet him in the clouds. In 1 Thessalonians 5, the apostle writes of the day of the Lord including the question of what time the Lord will come. The key question in the second letter is: "Has the day of the Lord already come; have we missed it; and where is the Lord? We have been suffering from difficulties and persecutions in our lives, why doesn't he come? Why is it taking so long?" Doubts are creeping into the minds of the Thessalonians as unbelievers around them are saying: "You see he is not coming; you have believed something which is not true; you need to go back to your idols and ungodliness and the worship of false gods." But remember, in his benediction the apostle concludes with the repetitious phrase: "*the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way, the Lord be with you all"* (3:16). This is not as the beginning of the letter where the apostle makes it clear that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are in heaven and the apostle now (as his ordained servant) is expressing to them grace and peace from above. Instead, the apostle concludes in this particular way so that they know their Lord (singular) is with them at all times, even now. May the Lord of peace, in this ungodly culture which rejects the truth, be with you *now*. May the Lord, in this ungodly culture which has persecuted you and has turned against him, the King of all creation, give you his peace and may it be with you now. The Lord is with you now, his peace is with you now. The same thing is in verse 18: "*the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."* Paul's point is that even though our Lord is still in heaven and has still not returned, his grace and peace be with you, amongst you, even now in his word.

Christ in Paul's Word

What then of verse 17? We notice the repetitious phrase found in v. 16 and v. 18. How do we understand the meaning of v. 17? How does it fit in? The connection to the salutation and the repetitious phrase are the keys for understanding this verse. *" I Paul write this greeting in my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way that I write."* Is Paul writing this or is someone else writing this so that we should be suspi-

cious as to whether Paul wrote the letter? No! No! No! Is Paul simply writing this to prove that he wrote the letter? Certainly that is part of it. However, when the apostle Paul concludes with these words, and he sandwiches them between the Lord *of peace* who is with them and *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* who is with them, he writes in the singular. Just as the apostle moved from the trinity of names in the Godhead to the singular name Jesus Christ, so has he moved from the triune apostolic names (Paul, Silvanus Timothy) to the singular name, Paul.

In the first letter, the key issue for the Thessalonians is not only when the Lord is coming back or what will it be like on that day, but another concern is what about Paul? What about the apostle Paul? He came into our city and he preached the gospel and there are some who believe, even some wealthy people who, according to Acts 17:1-4, left the synagogue and began to follow Christ. But then Paul was escorted out of the city, persecution came upon them: and, as stated by Acts 17:5-6, Jason was forcibly dragged out of his house and brought before the city authorities because he hosted the apostle and Silvanus and Timothy in his home. They are saying to him, Paul doesn't care about you. He is not going to come back (1 Thessalonians 2). If he cared about you, he would return! And Paul is so concerned about them in 1 Thessalonians 3 that he sends Timothy to find out about their faith. And he expresses to them that he wishes he could come to them himself (3:11).

Nevertheless, at the writing of the second letter, he still has not been able to return to them and the same questions are there. But he concludes this second letter, the inspired Word of God, by saying "*I Paul write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign."* When we think of a biblical sign, we think of the sacraments. We think of the sign that the Lord left us, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We believe that when you come and partake of the supper, the Lord is spiritually present in the sacrament. The sacrament authenticates his death and resurrection for you and seals your faith as real. The apostle here uses the word "sign", denoting his presence in the words of this letter. "No, I have not come back to you and I do long to come back to you. But I am with you in the words of this letter. These are my words. These are the letters and words that God has inspired me to write." Note that this verse is sandwiched between the Lord of peace and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ <u>who is with them all</u>. And when Paul tells them in v. 17 that he writes this greeting with

his own hand, he is telling them that although he is not with them right now in the flesh, he is with them in the words of the letter.

This means that Paul the apostle has been sent and commissioned by our Lord in heaven to do such things as pronounce a salutation of grace and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ and bestow a benediction of grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He has also been commissioned by the Lord and inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the very words of God and of Christ. And thus to see v. 17 sandwiched between vv. 16 and 18 is indicative not only of the apostle writing his own words, but of also writing the words of Christ. Therefore, not only is the apostle in these words, but Christ is in these words.

Christ in His Word Today

When Benji decided to do his internship in Oak Harbor, I asked him: "Why did you pick Northwest Theological Seminary? We don't have great facilities like other seminaries you've visited. We do not have a large student body. We don't have a reputation where you can show your diploma and say I went to this seminary!" Benji answered. "I picked Northwest because I put all the curricula from each of the seminaries I visited next to each other and concluded that Northwest had the best curriculum." Benji picked a seminary for the most important reason. He picked one that would train him to preach the Word of God and one that would teach him faithfully to preach the Christ that is found in that Word.

You see, someday, Lord willing, God will call Benji to a church and he will accept that call. He will then be given the privilege and honor to put his hands up at the beginning of the service and to say to God's people, "Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ;" and at the end of the service to pronounce the benediction "May the God of peace, may the God of grace be with you all." And in between the salutation and benediction, as the ordained servant of God, he will preach to them the Word which are Benji's words and sermon; but God's people must find Christ in that sermon and in that Word.

You see, we live in the same period as the Thessalonians. We live between

two worlds and ask the same questions they did. God's people are asking, "It has been two thousand years since the Lord came; why hasn't he returned?" God's people are asking, "Why is the culture around us so ungodly and hostile to the gospel? Why am I suffering? Why am I experiencing difficulty in my work and in my job? Why am I undergoing pain and illness?" So when they come to church on Sunday and hear the Word, they need to hear Christ in that Word. Though they are still on earth and he is in heaven, Christ is present with them in the words of Scripture and Christ is present with them in the preaching of his servant. As they hear Christ proclaimed, what greater motivation could they have to come to church than to be with Christ? What greater motivation could a minister have in studying God's Word, than that he can be with Christ? As the service concludes, the people are reminded that they have been with the Lord of peace, and he is with them; that they may know they have been with the Lord of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is with them. Benji, may this peace, may this grace, be yours as Christ's servant as you preach to God's people, so they may know the Lord of peace, the Lord of grace, is with them now and forevermore.

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Patristic Commentaries on Revelation

Francis X. Gumerlock

The Problem of Accessibility

This article is designed to help scholars locate twenty-one commentaries on the Book of Revelation from the third through eighth centuries, which to a large extent are inaccessible to American biblical scholars.[1] Respect for the opinions of our Christian forefathers and their opinions regarding the Scriptures have contributed to the publication of on-going series like *Ancient Christian Writers* and *Fathers of the Church*, and to the sustained popularity of the Ante-Nicene and Post-Nicene Father*s* series, first published over a century ago.[2]

Although the writers of the early church are by no means infallible in their interpretations of Scripture, their opinions often lend weight in theological controversies. For example, in matters of Bible prophecy, contemporary

1 An early version of this article was delivered as a paper entitled "Ancient Commentaries on the Book of Revelation: A Bibliographical Guide" at the Southeastern Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Dayton, Tennessee in March 2003.

2 Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Church*, 10 vols. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885-1896); Philip Schaff, ed., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2 series of 14 volumes each (New York: Christian Literature, 1887-1894). These sets were reprinted by T & T Clark, Eerdmans, and Hendrickson publishers, and are available in several digital software programs. *Fathers of the Church*, published by Catholic University of America Press in Washington, D.C. currently contains 116 volumes, and *Ancient Christian Writers*, published by Paulist Press contains 60 volumes.

scholars continually bring the church fathers into their debates. This has been the case in the most recent discussions between futurists and preterists, between premillennialists and amillennialists, and between pretribulationists and posttribulationists.[3] In these debates patristic texts are most often drawn from the aforementioned series that provide patristic literature in English translation. However, these translated texts represent a mere fraction of what ancient Christian writers have left behind. Most of the patristic literary monuments, especially ancient Biblical commentaries, are still in Greek and Latin.[4] Commentaries on the Book of Revelation vividly illustrate this point. Portions of at least twenty-one on the Book of Revelation exist from the third[5] through eighth centuries, but only three have been published in English: those of Victorinus (c. 260), Ecumenius (518), and Bede (c. 716); and two of these are problematic. The translation of Victorinus' commentary, having been completed in the nineteenth-century, was not based on a critical edition of the text. Because of this, the translation contains some statements that are not Victorinus's at all, but have proven to be recensions of Jerome dated about 398.[6] Bede's commentary,

3 Paul L. King, "Premillennialism and the Early Church," in K. Neill Foster and David E. Fessenden, eds., *Essays on Premillennialism: A Modern Reaffirmation of an Ancient Doctrine* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 2002), 1-12; Charles E. Hill, *Regnum Caelorum: Patterns of Millennial Thought in Early Christianity*, 2nd ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001); Grant R. Jeffrey, "What Did the Early Church Believe About the Second Coming?" in his *Triumphal Return* (Toronto: Frontier Research Publications, 2001), 55-74; Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation*, Revised (Atlanta, GA: American Vision, 1998), 39-109; Larry Crutchfield, "Millennial Views of the Church Fathers," in Mal Couch, ed., *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1996), 255-9; Crutchfield, "Ages and Dispensations in the Ante-Nicene Fathers," in Roy B. Zuck, ed., *Vital Prophetic Issues: Examining Promises and Problems in Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1995), 44-60; Crutchfield, "The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation in the Apostolic Fathers," in Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy, eds., *When the Trumpet Sounds* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1995), 85-103; Jeffrey, "Prophetic Views Held by the Early Church," in his *The Apocalypse* (New York: Bantam, 1994), 383-402; Crutchfield, "Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Ante-Nicene Period—Part I: Israel and the Church in the Ante-Nicene Fathers," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 144 (1987):254-76.

4 Patristic biblical commentaries also exist in Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic. Series in the original languages include *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* over 500 volumes, *Sources chrétienne* (with French translations) over 400 volumes, *Patrologiae, cursus completus, series Latina*, 221 volumes, *Corpus Christianorum series Latina* over 175 volumes, *Patrologiae, cursus completus, series Graeca*, 161 volumes, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* over 90 volumes, and *Patrologia Orientalis*, over 40 volumes. Bibliographical information for most of these series is in the "Abbreviations" list.

5 No Revelation commentaries are extant from the second century.

6 The translation of the Apocalypse commentary of Victorinus of Pettua in ANF 7:344-60 was done by Robert E. Wallis before 1886. The critical edition by Iohannes Haussleiter, published

translated into English by Edward Marshall and published in London in 1878, has not been reprinted. Very few libraries in the United States own it, so it is virtually inaccessible to scholars in North America.[7]

The need for translations of these ancient commentaries on Revelation is great. By providing bibliographical information on twenty-one commentaries on the Book of Revelation from the third through eighth centuries, this article hopes to serve as an aid for prospective translators, a research tool for theologians and expositors, and a guide for librarians and bibliophiles seeking to acquire ancient Apocalypse commentaries.

The commentaries are listed chronologically by their Latin titles, with the corresponding English title in brackets. Where an English translation of a commentary exists, it is listed first, followed by critical editions indicated by the word "edition." Other printed editions are also listed, followed by the language in which they were published. Where a printed edition does not exist, the library that possesses a manuscript (MS) containing the commentary is listed, followed by the manuscript number.

List of Commentaries

1. Hippolytus of Rome (d. 235)

Apologia pro apocalypsi et evangelio Joannis apostoli et evangelistae [*Apology for the Apocalypse and Gospel of John the Apostle and Evangelist*]. Fragments of this treatise have been preserved in the Greek Apocalypse commentary of Andrew of Caesarea, an anonymous thirteenth-century Arab Apocalypse commentary edited by H. Achelis, and a twelfth-century Syriac Apocalypse commentary by Dionysius Bar Salibi edited by I. Sedlacek. These fragments of Hippolytus's commentary have been isolated and translated into French in Pierre Prigent, "Hippolyte, commentateur de l'Apocalypse," *Theologische*

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in CSEL 49 in 1916, distinguished Victorinus's commentary from Jerome's recension of it.

7 Bede's commentary has been critically edited recently by Roger Gryson in CCSL 121A. In 2006, Faith Wallis of McGill University was preparing a new translation forthcoming in the Translated Texts for Historians series from Liverpool University Press. In January 2008, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia informed me of his agreement to translate Bede's Apocalypse commentary for InterVarsity Press.

Zeitschrift 28 (1972): 391-412, and in Prigent and R. Stehly, "Les fragments du De Apocalypsi d'Hippolyte," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 29 (1973): 313-33. Hippolytus also wrote another defense of the Book of Revelation, entitled *Capitula contra Gaium* [Chapters Against Gaius]. Fragments from this treatise, also preserved in the commentary of Dionysius Bar Salibi, are translated into English in John Gwynn, "Hippolytus and his 'Heads against Caius'," *Hermathena: A Series of Papers on Literature, Science, and Philosophy* by Members of Trinity College, Dublin. No. XIV (1888):397-418. A French translation is in Prigent, "Hippolyte, commentateur de l'Apocalypse," 407-412. German translations of the fragments are in Adolf Harnack, *Die Gwynnschen Caius-und Hippolytus-Fragmente.* Texte und Untersuchungen 6:3. Leipzig, 1890,121-33; and H. Achelis, *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 1:2. Leipzig, 1897, 239-47.

2. Origen (d. 253) and Others

Scholia in Apocalypsin [*Annotations on the Apocalypse*]. In Constantin Diobouniotis and Adolf Harnack, eds. *Der Scholien-kommentar des Origenes zur Apokalypse Johannis*. Texte und Untersuchungen 38:3. Leipzig, 1911. Greek edition. This contains citations from patristic works on the Apocalypse that have not been preserved, and has been attributed to Origen. However, not all of the scholia are his. It contains two citations from Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5, 28.2-30.2 (Scholia 38 & 39). Scholium 1 is a fragment of Didymus; and Scholium 25 contains a fragment from Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata*. Scholia 22 and 26, containing material related to the Trinitarian and Christological controversies, are believed to have been written after the year 300. A comprehensive study on its authorship has been written that by Eric Junod. "À propos des soi-disant scolies sur l'Apocalypse d'Origène." *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 20 (1984):112-21. Emmendations to the edition are in J. Armitage Robinson, "Origen's Comments on the Apocalypse," *Journal of Theological Studies* 13 (1912): 295-297. The edited text of Origen's scholia continues in C. H. Turner, "Document. Origen Scholia in Apocalypsin," *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1923):1-16. Greek edition; Joel Courreau, trans. *L'Apocalypse expliquee par Cesaire d'Arles. Scholies attribuée à Origène*. Paris: Desclée de Brower, 1989. French. *Twelve Homilies on the Apocalypse* by Origen, a lost work distinguished from the scholia, is discussed in Joseph F. T. Kelly, "Early Medieval Evidence for Twelve Homilies by Origen on the

Apocalypse," *Vigiliae Christianae* 39 (1985):273-9.

3. Victorinus of Pettau (260)

Commentarii in Apocalypsin [Commentaries on the Apocalypse]. This commentary was written about 260 by Victorinus of Pettau (Ptuj, Yugoslavia), who died in the Diocletian persecution around 304. ANF 7:344-60. English; Iohannes Haussleiter, ed. *Victorini episcopi Petavionensis opera*. CSEL 49. Leipzig, 1916. Latin edition that includes Victorinus's commentary and Jerome's recension in parallel; Reprinted in PLS I:102-72; Martine Dulaey, ed. *Victorin de Poetovio. Sur l'Apocalypse.* SC 423. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1997. Latin with French translation; PL 5:317-44. Latin. In 1994, Dulaey was working on a new critical edition of the commentary for the Corpus Christianorum series. Notice of it is in the booklet "Corpus Christianorum: Volumes in Progress." Turnhout: Brepols, 1994, 11. By January 2008, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia had completed and submitted an English translation of Victorinus' Apocalypse commentary to InterVarsity Press for a new series of patristic biblical commentaries in translation. This new series will differ from their *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* in that it will provide translations of entire commentaries, not simply excerpts.

4. Tyconius (380)

Fragmenta Commentarii in Apocalypsim [Fragments of the Commentary on the *Apocalypse*]. Tyconius was a North African Donatist of the late fourth century. Francesco LoBue and G. G. Willis, eds. *The Turin Fragments of Tyconius' Commentary on Revelation*. Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature, new series, no. 7. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1963. The Turin fragments. Latin; Reprinted in PLS 1:621-52. Fragments from Tyconius's commentary in a manuscript in Budapest, that are different from the Turin fragments, are edited in Roger Gryson. "Fragments inédits du commentaire de Tyconius sur l'Apocalypse." *Revue Bénédictine* 107 (1997):189-226. In 1994, E. Romero-Pose was working on a critical edition of Tyconius for Corpus Christianorum. Notice in "Corpus Christianorum: Volumes in Progress," 11. Much of Tyconius's commentary on Revelation survived in early medieval Latin commentaries on Revelation, especially that of Beatus of Leibana. A tabulation of passages from Tyconius's commentary in the Revelation commentary of Beatus of Liebana is in Traugott

Hahn. *Tyconius-Studien. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte des 4. Jahrhunderts.* Leipzig, 1900. Reprinted. Aalen, 1971. A tabulation of passages of Tyconius's commentary in the Revelation commentary of Bede is in an appendix to Gerald Bonner's, "Saint Bede in the Tradition of Western Apocalyptic Commentary" in his *Church and Faith in the Patristic Tradition*. Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1996. Kenneth B. Steinhauser's *The Apocalypse Commentary of Tyconius: A History of Its Reception and Influence*. New York: Peter Lang, 1987, 266-316, provides the basis for a chapter and verse reconstruction of Tyconius's entire commentary.

5. Didymus the Blind (d. 398)

Fragmentum in Apocalypsim [*Fragment on the Apocalypse*]. In his commentary on Zechariah [SC 83:123; 84:654-5], Didymus of Alexandria in Egypt mentioned that he had written a commentary on Revelation. A fragment of it survives in Scholium 1 of Diobouniotis and Harnack, *Der Scholien-kommentar des Origenes zur Apocalypse Iohannis*. Greek.

6. Jerome (398)

Commentarii in Apocalypsin [*Commentaries on the Apocalypse*]. This is a recension of Victorinus's commentary on the Apocalypse. Jerome (d. 420) composed a short prologue and significantly changed Victorinus's comments on Revelation 21 and 22 to reflect his own anti-millenarian sentiments. Iohannes Haussleiter, ed. *Victorini episcopi Petavionensis opera*. CSEL 49. Leipzig, 1916. Latin edition; Reprinted in PLS 1:102-72; Dulaey, *Victorin de Poetovio. Sur l'Apocalypse*. SC 423:124-131. Latin with French translation of Jerome's prologue and ending to Victorinus's commentary. By January 2008, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia had completed and submitted an English translation of Jerome's Apocalypse commentary to InterVarsity Press.

7. Ecumenius (518)

Commentarius in Apocalypsin [*Commentary on the Apocalypse*]. Ecumenius was either a lay rhetor of Isauria in Asia Minor, or bishop of Tricca (Thassaly). John C. Lamoreux, "The Provenance of Ecumenius' Commentary on the Apoclaypse," *Vigiliae Christianae* 52 (1998):88-108, argued that Ecumenius wrote his Greek commentary on the Apocalypse between 508 and 518, but

others place it later in the sixth century. FC 112. English; Marc De Groote, ed. *Oecvmenii Commentarivs in Apocalypsin*. Traditio Exegetica Graeca 8. Louvain: Peeters, 1999. Greek edition; H.C. Hoskier, ed. *The Complete Commentary of Oecumenius on the Apocalypse.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1928. Greek edition. Scholia from the commentary were edited in De Groote, "Die Scholien aus dem Oecumenius-Kommentar zur Apokalypse," *Sacris Erudiri* 37 (1997): 111-31. By 2007, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia had completed and submitted to InterVarsity Press an English translation of Ecumenius' Apocalypse commentary.

8. Caesarius of Arles (537)

Explanatio in Apocalypsin [*Explanation of the Apocalypse*]. This series of homilies on the Book of Revelation by Caesarius, bishop of Arles in Gaul (d. 542), were composed between 510 and 537, but were probably never preached. They circulated for a long time under the name of Augustine (d. 430). Germani Morin, ed. *Sancti Caesarii episcopi Arelatensis opera omnia nunc primum in unum collecta*, Vol. 2. Maredsous, 1942, 210-Latin edition; PL 35: 2415-52 (under the name of Augustine). Latin; Joel Courreau, trans. *L'Apocalypse expliquee par Cesaire d'Arles. Scholies attribuée à Origène*. Paris: Desclée de Brower, 1989. French; E. Romero-Pose, ed. *Cesareo de Arles. Comentario al Apocalipsis.* Madrid: Ciudad Nueva, 1994. Spanish translation that includes extensive footnotes showing parallel passages from commentaries of Tyconius, Primasius, Bede, Beatus, and others. By 2007, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia had completed and submitted to InterVarsity Press an English translation of Caesarius's homilies on the Apocalypse. Homilies 4-6 of Caesarius on the Apocalypse, treating Rev 5:1-8:1, are translated in Francis X. Gumerlock, *The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse: Medieval Texts in Translation*, forthcoming by Medieval Institute Publications, Kalamazoo, MI in the TEAMS Commentary series.

9. Primasius of Hadrumetum (540)

Commentarius in Apocalypsin [*Commentary on the Apocalypse*]. Primasius of Hadrumetum in North Africa (Sousse, Tunisia) composed his Apocalypse commentary about 540. A.W. Adams, ed. *Primasius episcopus Hadrumentinus. Commentarius in Apocalypsin.* CCSL 92. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1985. Latin edition; PL 68:793-936. Latin.

10. Apringius of Béja (548)

Tractatus in Apocalypsin [*Tract on the Apocalypse*]. Apringius, a Spanish bishop, composed this tract on the Apocalypse between 531 and 548. Roger Gryson, ed. "Apringi Pacensis Episcopi Tractatus in Apocalypsin Fragmenta quae supersunt." CCSL 107: 33-97. Latin edition; Marius Férotin, ed., *Apringius de Béja: son commentaire de l'apocalypse écrit sous Theudis, roi des Wisigoths (531-48)*. Paris: A. Pricard, 1900. Latin and Spanish; PLS 4:1221-48. Latin; A. C. Vega, ed. "Apringii Pacensis Episcopi tractatus in Apocalypsin" in *Scriptores Ecclesiastici Hispano-Latini Veteris et Medii Aevi*, Fasc. X-XII. Madrid: Typis Augustinianis monasterii escurialensis, 1941; Alberto del Campo Hernandez, ed. *Comentario al apocalipsis de Apringio de Beja: introduccion, texto latino y traduccion*. Navarra, Spain: Editorial Verbo Divino, 1991. Latin and Spanish; PL 68:795-936. Latin. In January 2008, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia was revising his English translation of Apringius's Apocalypse commentary for publication by InterVarsity Press.

11. Cassiodorus (580)

Complexiones in Apocalypsin [*Brief Explanations on the Apocalypse*]. Cassiodorus (d. 580) wrote this abstract or summary of Revelation shortly before his death. It survives in only one manuscript. Roger Gryson, ed. CCSL 107:99-129. Latin edition; PL 70:1405-1418. Latin.

12. Andrew of Caesarea in Cappadocia (d. 614)

Commentarius in Apocalypsin [*Commentary on the Apocalypse*]. Andrew is believed to have written this Apocalypse commentary in the late sixth century definitely after the commentary of Ecumenius. Josef Schmid, ed. *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes, 1. Teil: Der Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia*. Munich, 1955. Greek edition; PG 106:199-486. Greek with Latin translation. An 18th century illuminated manuscript of the commentary, written in the Slavonic language, entitled *Interpretation of the Apocalypse by our Holy Father Andrew of Caesarea*, is housed at the Church of the Nativity, Erie, Pennsylvania. An abridgment of Andrew's commentary, preserved as an anonymous catena and incorrectly attributed to Ecumenius and Arethas of Caesarea in Cappadocia (d. 940), is in J.A. Cramer, ed., *Catenae Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum*, Vol. 8: Catena

in episotolas catholicas, accesserunt Oecumenii et Arethae commentarii in Apocalypsin. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967. Greek edition. By 2007, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia had completed and submitted to InterVarsity Press an English translation of Andrew's Apocalypse commentary. Many English quotations from Andrew's commentary are in Averky Taushev, *The Apocalypse in the Teachings of Ancient Christianity*. Seraphim Rose, trans. Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1985, 1995.

13. Pseudo-Jerome, Pseudo-Isidore (c. 600)

Commemoratorium de Apocalypsi Johannis Apostoli [*Handbook on the Apocalypse of the Apostle John*]. This handbook on the Apocalypse circulated under the names of Jerome and Isidore of Seville. Kenneth Steinhauser, in "Bemerkungen zum pseudo-heironymischen *Commemoratorium in Apocalypsin*," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 26 (1979):220-42 at 232-6, argued that it was written by a student of Cassiodorus at Viviarum around 600. Others believe it is Irish and date it in the seventh or early eighth century. Roger Gryson, ed., "Incerti auctoris commemoratorium de Apocalypsi Johannis Apostoli" CCSL 107: 159-229. Latin edition; Grazia Lo Menzo Rapisarda, ed. *Incerti Auctoris: Commentarius in Apocalypsin*. Catania, 1966. Latin. Reprinted in PLS 4:1850-63; K. Hartung, *Ein Traktat zur Apokalypse des Apostels Johannes*. Bamberg: Gustav Duckstein, 1904. Latin. Descriptions of it are in Joseph T. F. Kelly, "A Catalogue of Early Medieval Hiberno-Latin Biblical Commentaries," *Traditio* 45 (1989-1990):394-434 at 432-433; and Martin McNamara. *Biblical Studies: The Medieval Irish Contribution*. Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association 1. Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1976, 143.

14. Unknown (6th-7th c.)

De septem sigillis [*On the seven seals*]. This short text interpreting the seven seals of Revelation was probably written in Spain between 500 and 633, but was for a long time was attributed to Alcuin of York (d. 804). E. Ann Matter, "The Pseudo-Alcuinian 'De Septem Sigillis': An Early Latin Apocalypse Exegesis" *Traditio* 36 (1980):111-37. Latin edition; PL 101:1169-70. Latin. An English translation is in Francis X. Gumerlock, *The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse: Medieval Texts in Translation* forthcoming from Medieval Institute Publications, Kalamazoo, Michigan, TEAMS Commentary series.

15. Paterius (7th c.)

De Testimoniis in Apocalypsin S. Joannis Apostoli [*Concerning Testimonies on the Apocalypse of Saint John the Apostle*]. This is a compilation of Pope Gregory the Great's (d. 603) comments on Revelation by one of his disciples named Paterius. Gathered from writings of Gregory such as the *Moralia* on Job, homilies on Ezekiel, and the *Pastoral Rule*, it is arranged as a chapter and verse commentary on the Book of Revelation. PL 79:1107-22. Latin.

16. Pseudo-Cyril of Alexandria (7th c.)

Apocalypse Commentary. This Coptic commentary is contained in a manuscript in the J.P. Morgan Library in New York City. It claims to have been written by Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), but was composed after the Arab conquest of Egypt. Tito Orlandi, *Omelie copte*. Corona Patrum 7. Turin: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1981, 124-44. Italian; MS: Morgan 591. Coptic. Leslie S.B. MacCoull dates the commentary to the late sixth century or first half of the seventh century. Descriptions of the manuscript are in Leo Depuydt, *Catalogue of Coptic Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library*, Vol. 1 Louvain: Peeters, 1993, 302; and MacCoull, "MS. Morgan 591: The Apocalypse Commentary of Pseudo-Cyril of Alexandria," *Studia Patristica* 20 (1989): 33-9.

17. Bede (710)

Expositio Apocalypseos [*Exposition of the Apocalypse*]. Bede the Venerable (d. 735) of Jarrow, England wrote this Apocalypse commentary between 703 and 710. Edward Marshall, trans. *The Explanation of the Apocalypse by Venerable Bede*. Oxford and London: James Parker and Co., 1878. English; Roger Gryson, ed. *Bedae Presbyteri. Expositio Apocalypseos.* CCSL 121A. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2001. Latin edition; J.A. Giles (d. 1884), ed. *Venerabilis Bedae Opera quae supersunt omnia*, Vol. 12. London, 1944, 337-452. Latin; PL 93:129-206. Latin. Different from his commentary on Revelation, Bede is believed to have also written *Capitula in Apocalypsin* [*Chapter Headings on the Apocalypse*], thirty-eight chapter headings for the book of Revelation. Gryson*, Bedae Presbyteri. Expositio Apocalypseos*. CCSL 121A:136-151. Latin edition. Faith Wallis of McGill University has prepared a new English translation of Bede's commentary and the chapter headings, to be published in a forthcoming volume of the "Translated Texts for Historians" series from

Liverpool University Press. In 2008, William Weinrich of the Luther Academy in Latvia informed me that he is also preparing an English translation of Bede's Apocalypse commentary for InterVarsity Press.

18. Ambrose Autpert (778)

Expositio in Apocalypsin [*Exposition of the Apocalypse*]. Ambrose Autpert (d. 781) lived in a monastery in Gaul. Robert Weber, ed. *Ambrosii Autperti opera. Expositionis in Apocalypsin Libri I-V*. CCCM 27. *Libri VI-X*. CCSL 27A. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1975. Latin edition.

19. Beatus of Liebana (786)

Commentarius in Apocalypsin [*Commentary on the Apocalypse*]. Beatus (d. 798), from Liebana in northern Spain, is believed to have written three editions of this commentary—in 776, in 784, and a final version in 786. E. Romero-Pose, ed. *Sancti Beati a Lieban commentarivs in Apocalypsin*, 2 vols. Scriptores Graeci et Latini consilio Academiae Lynceorum editi. Rome: Typis Officinae Polygraphicae, 1985. Latin edition; Henry A. Sanders, ed. *Beati in Apocalypsi libri duodecim.* Papers and Mongraphs of the American Academy in Rome, Vol. 7. Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1930. Latin edition; Joaquin Gonzalez Echegaray, Alberto Del Campo y Leslie G. Freeman, eds. *Obras Completas de Beato de Liebana*. Madrid: Estudio Teologico de San Ildefonso, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1995. Latin edition with Spanish translation.

20. Unknown (8th c.)

De enigmatibus ex Apocalypsi Johannis [*On the Mysteries of the Apocalypse of John*]. This commentary is contained in the so-called *Irish Reference Bible* or *Das Bibelwerk*, a one-volume commentary on the whole Bible from the late eighth century. Roger Gryson, ed., "De enigmatibus ex Apocalypsi Johannis," CCSL 107: 231-295. Latin edition. Descriptions of the commentary are in Joseph F. Kelly, "A Catalog of Early Medieval Hiberno-Latin Biblical Commentaries," *Traditio* 44 (1988): 538-571 at 552; and Kelly, "Bede and the Irish Exegetical Tradition on the Apocalypse," *Revue Bénédictine* 92 (1982):393-406 at 394-6.

Unknown (6th-8th c.?)

Commentary on the Apocalypse. In MS: Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek,

Clm 17780. Latin manuscript. This manuscript, dated 1439, contains Caesarius of Arles's homilies on the Apocalypse, the pseudo-Jerome handbook on the Apocalypse, Bede's exposition of the Apocalypse, and another commentary on the Apocalypse whose attribution is uncertain. Since the manuscript contains Apocalypse commentaries, all of which are from the sixth through eighth centuries, perhaps the unidentified Apocalypse commentary is also from the same period. A description is in Roger Gryson, *Commenataria minora in Apocalypsin Johannis.* CCSL 107:167.

Related Works

There were several commentaries on Revelation written between the second and seventh centuries of which not even a fragment has survived. These include a commentary of Melito of Sardis in the second century, a fourth-century interpretation of Revelation by Nepos entitled *Refutation of the Allegorists*, fifth-century treatises on the Apocalypse by Gennadius of Marseilles and Vigilius of Thapsus, a commentary by Cominus Scotus of seventh-century Ireland, and an anonymous commentary from the first half of the eighth century.[8] In addition, in the second century Theophilus of Antioch in a book against a certain Hermogenis, and Apollonius in an anti-Montanist literary work made use of testimonies from the Book of Revelation. These treatises, however, described by Eusebius in the early fourth century, are no longer extant. [9]

There are many works from the early church that are not commentaries on the Book of Revelation per se, but contain interpretations of its passages.

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8 Notices of Melito's commentary is in Eusebius of Caesarea, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4. 26. Christian Frederick Cruse, trans., *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilius* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 162. Nepos's commentary is mentioned by Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 7.24. Cruse, 295. Gennadius's commentary is mentioned in his other work *On Illustrious Men* 99. NPNF, 2nd series, 3:402. The commentary of Vigilius of Thapsus is mentioned in Cassiodorus's *Institutiones* 9. Cominus Scotus's commentary is mentioned in Joseph F. Kelly, "Bede and the Irish Exegetical Tradition on the Apocalypse" *Revue Bénédictine* 92 (1982):393-406 at 394. The lost commentary from the first half of the eighth century is mentioned in Roger Gryson, ed., *Commentaria minora in Apocalypsin Johannis*. CCSL 107:300.

9 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.24; 5.18. Cruse, 161, 202. For these observations in Eusebius I am indebted to William C. Weinrich, ed., *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. New Testament XII. Revelation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), xix-xxi.

For example, Dionysius of Alexandria's *Two Books on the Promises* is not a commentary but its whole focus was on the book of Revelation. Only fragments of it survived.[10] The late second century *Letter to the Lyons Martyrs* cites the Book of Revelation five times.[11] Interpreting chapter twenty on the millennium are Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* 80-81, Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*, Book 5, Tertullian's *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 25 and *Against Marcion*, 3.24,[12] Commodianus's *Instructions* 43, and Lactantius's *Divine Institutes*, Book 7. Cyprian of Carthage, in *Three Books Against the Jews*, Testimonies 36, used the description of the harlot of Babylon in Revelation 17 to teach that women should not adorn themselves in a worldly fashion. In addition, thirty different citations from the Book of Revelation in Cyprian's treatises and letters can be found.[13] These are all in English translation in the Ante-Nicene Fathers series.

In the third century Cyprian also interpreted Revelation 21 about the New Jerusalem descending from heaven in his treatise *On Mounts Sinai and Zion*.[14] In the fourth century, Methodius of Olympus (d. 311) wrote a lengthy interpretation of Revelation 12 in Logos 8.4-13 of his *Symposium*, Hilary of Poitiers (d. 368) commented on Revelation 3:7 and 5:1 in an introduction to his tract on the Psalms, Ephraim the Syrian (d. 373) made mention of the seven seals, and Ambrosiaster (c. 384) refuted the Novatians with several pages of commentary on Revelation 2. In another place he answered a question related to Revelation 10:8-9.[15] Filastrius of Brixia (4th c.) and Epiphanius of Salamis

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10 These fragments of Dionysius's *Two Books on the Promises* are translated in English in ANF 6:81-84 and C.L. Feltoe, *St. Dionysius of Alexandria* (London, 1918), 82-91. A Greek edition is in Feltoe's, *The Letters and Other Remains of Dionysius of Alexandria* (Cambridge, 1904), 106-26.

11 The letter is preserved in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.1-2. Cruse, 169-182. Notice in Weinrich, *Revelation*, xix.

12 Comments on Revelation 6 can be found in Tertullian's *On the Soul*, 55.4 and *On Monogamy*, 10.4.

13 A partial listing of citations from Revelation in Cyprian's letters is in Paul B. Harvey, Jr., "Approaching the Apocalypse: Augustine, Tyconius, and John's Revelation," *Augustinian Studies* 30:2 (1999):133-51 at 141 no. 27, 29.

14 Cyprian, *De montibus Sina and Sion* 10. Guilelmus Hartel, ed. CSEL 3, Part 3: 116.

15 Herbert Musurillo, trans., *St. Methodius. The Symposium A Treatise on Chastity*. ACW 27 (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1958), 109-21; Hilary of Poitiers, *Tractatus super psalmos*.

(d. 403) wrote about how the book of Revelation should be interpreted, and about a sect in the early church that did not accept its canonicity.[16]

In the early fifth century, the Christian poet Prudentius incorporated themes from Revelation 4-5 into one of his poems, and Paul Orosius commented on Revelation 5 in his *Defense Against the Pelagians*.[17] Augustine (d. 430) interpreted Revelation 20 in book twenty of *The City of God*. John Cassian (d. 435) interpreted passages from Revelation 3 and 4 in his *Conferences*.[18] About 445, Quodvultdeus interpreted many passages of the book of Revelation in his *Book on the Promises and Predictions of God*.[19] In a question and answer manual on Biblical difficulties, Eucherius of Lyons (d. 450) interpreted the "seven spirits of God" in Revelation 1:4.[20] An anonymous treatise from Vandal North Africa defending the Trinity cited twelve passages from the Book of Revelation to show the equality of the Father and the Son.[21]

There is a Greek fragment of commentary on Revelation 22:3 edited in the works of Dionysius of Alexandria, but it is more likely to have been written by pseudo-Dionysius the Aeropagite about the year 500.[22] In the second half of the sixth century or in the seventh century, an anonymous author wrote *De monogramma*, an explanation of the number of the beast in Revelation

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Antonius Zingerle, ed*., S. Hilarii episcopi Pictaviensis. Tractatus super psalmos*. CSEL 22. (Leipzig: G. Freytag, 1891), 7-8. Ephraem's comment is in John Gwynn, *The Apocalypse of St. John in a Syriac Version Hitherto Unknown* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1897), ciii. Ambrosiaster's comments are in Alexander Souter, ed., *Pseudo-Augustini. Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti cxxvii*. CSEL 50. (Leipzig: G. Freytag, 1908), 129-30, 213-5.

16 Filastrius of Brixia, *Diversarum Hereseon Liber* 60. F. Heylen, ed. CCSL 60:242-3; Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* 51 & 77. Philip R. Amidon, trans., *The Panarion of St. Epiphanius of Salamis: Selected Passages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 177, 187-8, 346-7.

17 Prudentius, *Carmina* 7: Tituli Historiarum. Joannes Bergman, ed. CSEL 61:447; Paul Orosius, *Defense Against the Pelagians*, 15. FC 99:133-4.

18 John Cassian, *Conferences* 3, 4, & 24. NPNF, 2nd series, 11.

19 Quodvultdeus, *Liber promissionum et praedictorum Dei*. René Braun, ed. CCSL 60.

20 Eucherius of Lyons, *Instructionum libri duo*. Carolus Wotke, ed. CSEL 31:139.

21 Pseudo-Fulgentius, *Pro Fide Catholica*. PL 65:712.

22 Charles Lett Feltoe, *The Letters and Other Remains of Dionysius of Alexandria* (Cambrige, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 253. On its attribution to pseudo-Dionysius, Mauritius Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, Vol. 1 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1983), 196.

13:18.[23] A work attributed to Gregory the Great (d. 604) raised and answered a question about the relationship between the trumpet of 1 Thess. 4:15 and the seven trumpets of Rev. 8:6.[24] At least seven different prefaces to the Book of Revelation from early Latin Bibles have been preserved, and one is identified as coming from Isidore of Seville (d. 636).[25] Julian of Toledo (d. 690) expounded upon the seventh trumpet of Revelation in his *Prognostications of the End of the Age*, and answered an apparent contradiction between 1 Thess. 4:15-16 and Revelation 20:4 on the eternality of the kingdom of Christ.[26] And an anonymous work called *The Escorial Fragment on the Heavenly Jerusalem* (c. 750) contains a series of questions and answers on the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem mentioned in Revelation 21.[27]

Much of the apocalyptic literature of the early church also contains interpretation of Revelation. These include texts like the apocryphal *Revelation of Saint John the Theologian*, the *Apocalypse of Elijah*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the *Revelations* of Pseudo-Methodius, the *Apocalypse of Daniel*, and the *Andreas Salos Apocalypse*.[28] Hippolytus, Pseudo-Ephraem, Pseudo-Epiphanius, Isidore of Seville (d. 635), and Bede all interpreted Revelation 11-13 in their

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23 *De Monogramma.* Roger Gryson, ed. CCSL 107:146-57.

24 Gregory the Great (dubious), *Concordia quorumdam testimoniorum s. scripturae* 27. PL 79:674.

25 The prefaces are edited in Donatien de Bruyne, *Préfaces de la Bible latine* (Namur, Belgium: A. Godenne, 1920), 261-4. A bound photocopy of this hard to locate book is housed in the stacks of Butler Library at Columbia University in New York City.

26 Julian of Toledo, *Prognosticorum futuri saeculi libri tres* III.15. J.N. Hillgarth, ed. CCSL 115: 91; *Antikeimenon*. Question 69. PL 96:697.

27 A. Hilhorst, "The Escorial Fragment on the Heavenly Jerusalem," in R.I.A. Nip, H. van Dijk, E.M.C. van Houts, C.H. Kneepkens, and G.A.A. Kortekaas, eds., *Media Latinitas: A Collection of essays to mark the occasion of the retirement of L.J. Engels* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), 223-228.

28 *Revelation of Saint John the Theologian* in ANF 8:582-6; *Apocalypse of Elijah* in David Frankfurter, *Elijah in Upper Egypt: The Apocalypse of Elijah and Early Egyptian Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993); *Apocalypse of Peter* in A. Mingana, trans., *Woodbrooke Studies*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge, England: Heffer and Sons, 1931); Syriac Pseudo-Methodius and Slavonic Daniel in Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985); Matthias Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel: Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2001).

writings about Antichrist.[29]

Sermons are another valuable resource on interpretation of Revelation in the early church. For example, Sermon 21 of Chromatius of Aquileia (d. 407) is on Revelation 10:9-11, and the prologue to his sermons on Matthew's Gospel contain an explanation of Revelation 4:7.[30] Passages from the Apocalypse were read in churches between Easter and Pentecost in Spain and Rome in the seventh and eighth centuries.[31] Since many collections of ancient and medieval sermons have been organized around the church calendar, there may be Lenten homilies in these collections that include commentary on the passages from Revelation that were read in the liturgy.

A Challenge for Prospective Translators

This article provided a location guide for twenty-one commentaries on the book of Revelation that had been written between the third and eighth centuries of the Christian era. I believe that English-speaking Christians would be greatly enriched if able to tap this vast reservoir of patristic Apocalypse commentary. At present, only three of the twenty-one commentaries are available in English translation. Although making them accessible in English translation will require that prospective translators possess facility in patristic Greek or

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29 Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and the Antichrist*. ANF 5:204-219; Pseudo-Epiphanius, *Sermon de Antichristo*. Giuseppe Frasson, ed., Bibliotheca Armeniaca Textus et Studia 2. (Venezia: S. Lazzaro, 1976); Pseudo-Ephraem in Cameron Rhoades, trans., "On the Last Times, the Antichrist, and the End of the World" (Washington, D.C: Pre-Trib Research Center, 1995); Isidore of Seville, *Sententiae* 1.26. Pierre Cazier, ed. CCSL 111: 79-81; Bede, *De tempore ratione* 69: "De Temporibus Antichristi." T. Mommsen, ed. CCSL 123B: 538-9.

30 Chromatius of Aquileia, *Sermo de sancto Iohanne evangelista et apostolo*. R. Étaix and J. Lemarié, eds. CCSL 9A: 97-99; *Sermons on the Gospel of Matthew*, Prologue. Stephen C. Carlson, trans. (2005) www.tertullian.org/fathers/chromatius.

31 Kenneth B. Steinhauser, *The Apocalypse Commentary of Tyconius: A History of Its Reception and Influence* (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), 156; John H. Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 275; Marcia C. Cohn Growdon, "The Narrative Sequence in the Preface to the Gerona Commentaries of Beatus on the Apocalypse," Ph.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 1976), 3; David C. Fowler, *The Bible in Early English Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), 21-2.; Massey Hamilton Shepherd, *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse*. Ecumenical Studies in Worship 6 (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1960); Lucetta Mowry, "Revelation 4-5 and Early Christian Liturgical Usage," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 71 (1952):75-84.

ecclesiastical Latin, I do not believe such a goal is unrealistic. If just one of these commentaries were translated and published each year, this entire patristic treasury of Revelation commentaries could be available to English-speaking scholars within twenty years. Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

Abbreviations

ACW	*Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation*. J. Quasten, J. C. Plumpe, W. J. Burghart, J. Dillon, and D. D. McManus, eds. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1946-present.
ANF	*Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Church.* Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885-1896. Numerous reprints by T & T Clark, Eerdmans, and Hendrickson.
CCCM	*Corpus christianorum, continuatio medievalis*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1953-present.
CCSL	*Corpus christianorum, series latina*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1953-present.
CSCO	*Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium*. I. B. Chabot, ed. Paris: Reipublicae, 1903-present.
CSEL	*Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*. Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1866-present.
FC	*Fathers of the Church*. New York: Cima Publishing Co., 1947-1949; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1949-1960; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1960-present.
NPNF	*A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Philip Schaff, ed. 2 series of 14 volumes each. New York: Christian Literature, 1887-1894. Numerous reprints by T & T Clark, Eerdmans, and Hendrickson publishers.

PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*. J. P. Migne, ed. Paris: Petit-Montrouge, 1857-1866. Available in reprint from Brepols.
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina*. J. P. Migne, ed. Paris: Petit-Montrouge, 1844-1864. Available in reprint from Brepols. Available on CD as Chadwyk-Healey Patrologia Latina Database. Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company, 1996-2000.
PLS	*Patrologiae latinae, supplementum*. 5 vols. Adalbert. Hamman, ed. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1958-1974.
SC	*Sources chrétiennes*. Henry de Lubac & J. Daniélou, eds. Paris: Cerf, 1941-present.

Acknowledgements

Besides the secondary works listed in the body and footnotes of this article, the following sources were used and deserve acknowledgment: Douglas W. Lumsden, *And Then the End Will Come: Early Latin Christian Interpretations of the Opening of the Seven Seals* (New York: Garland, 2001); Wilhelm Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend* (1896; reprint, Altanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1999); Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Steve Gregg, ed., *Revelation: Four Views* (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1997); Roger Gryson, "Les commentaires patristiques latins de l'Apocalypse," *Revue théologique de Louvain* 28 (1997): 305-37; José Antonio Riestra and Amalia Riestra, "Bibliografía Sobre el Adopcionismo Español del Siglo VIII: 1951-1990," *Scripta Theologica* 26:3 (1994):1093-1152; Martine Dulaey, *Victorin de Poetovio premier exégète latin* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1993); E. Ann Matter, "The Apocalypse in Early Medieval Exegesis," and John Williams, "The Apocalypse Commentary of Beatus of Liébana," in Emmerson and McGinn, eds., *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 38-50, 217-33; Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (New York: Cambridge University Press,

1991); Thomas W. Mackay, "Early Christian Millenarianist Interpretation of the Two Witnesses in John's Apocalypse 11:3-13," in *By Study and Also By Faith*, 2 vols. John M. Lundquist, Stephen D. Ricks, eds. (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret, 1990), 222-331; Richard K. Emmerson and Suzanne Lewis, "Census and Bibliography of Medieval Manuscripts Containing Apocalypse Illustrations, ca. 800-1500," *Traditio* 40 (1984):337-79; Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); Barbara Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977); Fridericus Stegmüller, ed., *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi*, 3 vols. (Matriti: Instituto Francisco Suárez, 1951); Henry Johnston, "The History of the Interpretation of Revelation 20:1-8," Th.D. dissertation (Gordon College of Theology and Missions, 1944); Montague R. James, *The Apocalypse in Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931); and E.B. Allo, *L'Apocalypse* (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, J. Gabalda, editeur, 1921), ccxvi-ccxl; Daniel Taylor, *The Reign of Christ on Earth, or the Voice of the Church in All Ages Concerning the Coming and Kingdom of the Redeemer* (Boston, MA: Hastings, 1893).

Reviews

[*K:NWTS* 23/2 (Sep 2008) 68-72]

Bryan M. Litfin, *Getting to Know the Church Fathers: An Evangelical Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2007. 301 pp. Paper. ISBN: 978-1-58743-196-8. $22.99.

This book is church fathers (and one mother) lite. It is not a book for seminarians, students, scholars or others versed in the current discussions in patristics. It is a popular treatment for evangelical laymen which attempts to introduce the ancient fathers to this broader audience. Litfin's thesis is that evangelicals need to acquaint themselves with these early Christians. This rather gratuitous assumption—i.e., that there were genuine Christians before the Protestant Reformation—is not so much directed against the ignorance of evangelicals, as their narcissism—a trait Litfin, sadly, feeds with his trivial attempts to make the church fathers objects of the 'wowie zowie old-time Christian dudes' approach. In fact, this volume could be subtitled "The Seeker-Sensitive Handbook to the Church Fathers".

At the risk of being both banal and obvious, Litfin's summaries are adequate, but neither penetrating nor memorable. They are overviews, but not precise cameos. This is the most unfortunate aspect of the book. Litfin's conclusions are predictable condensations of traditional popular secondary textbook treatments; they are not informed summaries of the most recent primary document patristic research. Hence his portraits are frequently misleading and outright misinformed in a number of cases (Origen and Nestorianism, to note just two).

While Litfin appears to be a disciple of Robert Wilken, the accomplished student of the early church at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, nonetheless he has none of Wilken's gifts for weaving patristic and Greco-Roman cultural elements in a synthetic, even antithetic, manner. This volume does not appear to show that Litfin has learned from Wilken any more than the 'patristics for dummies' reductionism. The result is to make the fathers trite and folksy, but without real substance—a superficial overview by which the reader concludes they are important without getting to the heart of the issue. Litfin's penchant for the 'relevance' of the fathers is all too reminiscent of the popular relevance-theology movements in evangelical and mainline liberal Christianity over the past half-century. The reader would be better off with a solid patristic handbook like McGuckin (*The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology*) or the new Drobner (*The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*). They are both more reliable, more responsible and better grounded in current research.

As one example of his trite 'seeker sensitive', 'let's get relevant' introductions to each of the fathers, we note his appeal to Campus Crusade for Christ's own Bill Bright and his famous (or infamous) Four Spiritual Laws (53-55). This simplistic evangelical reductionism (Bill Bright) is applied to Justin Martyr. Now *there* is a quantum leap if there ever was one. Compounding this absurdity is Litfin's suggestion that Justin embraced Christianity as the safest "philosophy" (58). Anyone familiar with the work of arguably the contemporary world's leading expert on Justin Martyr, namely Oskar Skarsaune, would realize how facile and misleading is this characterization of Justin's conversion to Christianity (cf. Skarsaune, "The Conversion of Justin Martyr." *Studia Theologica* 30 [1976]: 53-73; also my own article "Justin Martyr." *Kerux: The Journal of Northwest Theological Seminary* 21/3 [December 2006]: 53-61). Justin did not exchange an inferior "philosophy" (Hellenism, etc.) for a superior one (Christianity). In Christ Jesus, he found an entire life-changing, mind-altering, spirit-transforming lifestyle, and food for his hungering and thirsting soul. Justin encountered a living and eternal Person—the ontological Son of God: that was what transformed his life, not a 'higher life' philosophy.

In addition to neglecting the remarkable work of Skarsaune on Justin, Litfin appears to be unaware of the incisive research of: Allen Brent on Ignatius of Antioch (his basic thesis is that for Ignatius "bishops" and "elders" are *primus*

inter pares; "the apostolic order of ministers is to be found in the council of the prebyterate"); Mark J. Edwards on Origen (the Alexandrian genius was most certainly *not* a Platonist); Alvyn Pettersen on Irenaeus; W. H. C. Frend on Tertullian (T. D. Barnes is an "aggressive" Tertullian revisionist); Gerald Bonner and Rebecca Weaver on Augustine. On Athanasius, Litfin is aware of Alvyn Pettersen (185), but demonstrates that he has gained no benefit from the latter's masterful interweaving of biographical and theological material into a seamless garment.

All too often, his bibliographical lists ("*Good* Books to Dig Deeper"—emphasis added) commend books which are slanted against the orthodoxy of the particular father (e.g., Barnes on Tertullian and Athanasius) or the orthodoxy of the early (particularly Nicene) church (R. P. C. Hanson's revisionist *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*) or Walter Bauer's *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (whose 'trajectories' approach has demonstrated the following august asininities—the heretics in the early church were actually orthodox; it was the 'orthodox' who were really the heretics, but like the 'golden rule' ["those who have the gold make the rules"], these heretics triumphed because they had the swords, knives and armies. How's that for real, objective unbiased 'scholarship'. But our author ingenuously commends Bauer's book. Ugh!!). Litfin could benefit from a strong dose of Van Tillian antitheses, i.e., check out the presuppositions! Barnes, Hanson and Bauer have presuppositional biases. Reveal them as you 'commend' them or you are an uncritical and a misleading amateur. All of this is disastrous to the uninitiated reader. These recommended works are drafted from premises hostile to orthodox Christianity and the orthodoxy of the fathers who promoted it. They are controversial, biased and even flat-out wrong at many points. The general reader will not be helped by reading them without an extensive exposure to primary sources as well as less 'agenda' oriented (i.e., presuppositionally biased) secondary works.

Liftin repeats the age-old canard about the allegorical Platonism of Origen. He seems totally unaware of the decisive critique and rejection of this slander from the work of Mark J. Edwards and John D. Dawson. Ironically, even Litfin's mentor, Robert Wilken, wrote an appreciative review of Dawson's work on allegory in general (with reference to Origen) in which he concluded, anent Dawson's brilliant book, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of*

Identity: "Christian figural interpretation" is not allegorizing; it is the standard patristic method of reading the Old Testament in the light of the New. Historical accomplishment brings the fullness and realization of historico-spiritual existence in union with the historico-glorified (in the Spirit) Christ. Or as Wilken expresses it: "the spiritual sense *was* the historical sense."

But then Litfin continues to labor with many of the myths of the past about Origen (and other fathers in this volume). He rolls out the self-castration myth ignoring John McGuckin's statements (in a book he cites, pp. 160 and 287). The latter has written: "only an idiot would consider" Origen's reference as a literal self-mutilation (p. 6 of McGuckin). Notice Litfin's remarks on this topic (156).

When we come to Augustine, we find Litfin suggesting an "unhealthy codependency" (217) between Augustine and his mother, Monica? What is he alluding to with this comment? Is he just borrowing a contemporary relevant buzz word—'codependency'? And where are his primary document references to back it up? Or is he just re-imaging the bishop of Hippo for a post-Britney Spears world? Perhaps this comment is just another 'attention grabber' like his banal 'real world' story introductions to the career of each figure in the book.

With Litfin on Chrysostom, we get a paean on monasticism, even though in note 12 on page 293, he admits that the Biblical proof-texts he cites have nothing to do with monastic asceticism or it would have flourished in the first century apostolic church (from which it is totally, utterly and entirely absent). We rejoice that the Protestant Reformation delivered us from this madness of renouncing the world to indulge the lusts *intra muros*. But why focus on Chrysostom's monasticism to the neglect of his bold rebuke: of monks who kept private virgins for their libidinous pleasure; of royal and aristocratic female 'fashion plates' who dressed to the nines, decked themselves with bobbles and gems so that they could parade their luxury before the poor in the church at Constantinople. There is the heart of Chrysostom—puncturing the vanity and hypocrisy of the hoi polloi of snob Constantinople and its over-dressed, over-sexed church. Truly prophetic stuff in the best tradition of the OT seers and the eschatological Prophet himself—that is what emerges from the heroic career of Chrysostom, not the drivel Litfin recounts.

Litfin is a typical evangelical—not a scholar, just a popularizer or 'make 'em relevant' to the evangelical mass audience writer. While this book is not exactly pulp fiction, it is not scintillating or even accurate (in many places) scholarship. The erstwhile "evangelical introduction" to the early fathers still awaits a competent author.

—James T. Dennison, Jr.

[*K:NWTS* 23/2 (Sep 2008) 72-74]

Nicolaas H. Gootjes, *The Belgic Confession: Its History And Sources*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007. 240pp. Paper. ISBN: 978-0-8010-3235-6. $29.99.

At last we have a book in English about the origins of the Belgic Confession. There have always been brief summaries about its origin, but nothing of substantial scholarship. Finally, we have such a book and a good one at that. Furthermore, you don't have to read a thousand pages of technical data to glean a few ideas. Here are only 177 pages of text packed with the basic information.

The first chapter begins with an early history of the Confession. "Printed copies of the confession surfaced in Doornik on four different occasions during the fall and winter of 1561-62. The circumstances were rather unusual. On the occasion of the fair held on September 14, 1561, some Reformed believers from Valenciennes came to Doornik to discuss their common cause with fellow Reformed believers there. Together they decided to stage public demonstrations in their cities. On September 29, about one hundred people began singing the Psalms in French on the streets of Doornik. They soon attracted a following of about six hundred people. The next day, the number of demonstrators grew to three or four thousand" (14-15). This, of course, got the attention of the government, which took action to subdue the Reformed movement. So, on November 2, 1561, a package containing the confession was found inside the outer wall of the castle in Doornik—thrown there by those who were Reformed. "They publicly wanted to make known to the authorities what they believed on the basis of God's Word" (15). This was accompanied by a letter explaining that they were willing to give up their lives for their faith.

King Philip II of Spain, who ruled this territory at the time, appointed a committee of three commissioners to go to Doornik to investigate what was happening. As a result of their investigations, persecution broke out as the committee attempted to discover the source of the confession. Most of our information about the confession's beginnings comes from the reports of the interrogations of this committee. The first chapter continues with this information and a discussion of the various early extant copies of 1561.

In chapter 2, the question of who authored the confession is discussed. Guido de Bres is usually given as the author in modern documents. Was it really he? Or was it someone else? Or was it a group of men? Again, with meticulous detail, Dr. Gootjes examines the evidence. He also examines historical studies of this question. The consensus is on the side of Guido de Bres. A study of his life also supports this conclusion.

Chapter 3 discusses the relationship of Calvin's Gallican Confession (1559) to the Belgic Confession, while chapter 4 discusses the relationship of Beza's Confession (1560) to it. The conclusion drawn by comparing the contents is that de Bres must have had both of these documents before him while he wrote his own. These two chapters make interesting read as Gootjes makes detailed comparisons of the wording of all three confessions.

Chapter 5 discusses the authority the confession had in the churches before the Synod of Dort (1618-19). Again, through a meticulous study of the original documents, Gootjes concludes that the local synods did accept its authority and used it as the standard for their teaching.

Chapter 6 discusses the revision of the confession in 1566 by the Synod of Antwerp in order to make the Dutch edition accord with the French edition. This revision: (1) corrected numerous misprints which occurred in the first printing; (2) replaced Latin sentence structures with more common sentences; (3) abbreviated long sections; (4) added phrases; (5) also added substantial new sections. However, none of these changes substantially altered the original meaning of the confession, but only clarified it.

Chapter 7 deals with the Synod of Dort which was the first national synod held since the synod of 1586. All the other synods were regional. At this Synod, which was held to deal with the Remonstant movement, the Belgic Confession

was adopted as the official teaching of the church. At the same time, the Synod also took steps to make one authoritative edition, since there were so many different versions circulating. In this chapter, there is a discussion of the Remonstrant's attitude to the confession and the revisions that were adopted.

Chapter 8, the final chapter, discusses the various translations that have been made of the confession into many other languages. The original language was French and the first translation was into Dutch. From then on, it has been translated into many tongues down to this present age.

At the conclusion of the book is an Appendix with nine documents that were very important in the understanding of the development of the creed. My only regret is that these documents are printed in their original French, Latin and Dutch and are not translated. Dr. Gootjes is obviously a scholar of the first rank and has a wide knowledge of many languages (he has written books in English, Dutch and Korean). However, most of us who use this book are confined to English. What a pity we can't read the Appendix.

This book is highly recommended.

—J. Peter Vosteen

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Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul*. New York, NY: T & T Clark International, 2004. 196pp. Paper. ISBN 0-567-02630-2. $48.95.

In this book, Dr. Stanley seeks to examine the rhetorical effectiveness of Paul's quotations from the Old Testament. As rhetoricians tailored their writing to their audiences, Dr. Stanley believes that a study of Paul's possible audiences and their possible responses to his quotations will help us understand Paul's rhetorical purposes.

One thing that must be said in favor of this book at the outset is that it delivers what it promises. It promises not to give us theological insights into Paul's quotations and it scores almost 100% on this promise. However, some readers (when they first read this promise) might hope that it only indicates

the emphasis of the book. The reason: it promises to deal with the rhetorical dimension of the text. And one might think that to deal with the rhetorical dimension of the text one would have to present some insights into what the text actually says (which is theological). Without dealing with what the text actually says in some richness, it is difficult to deal with the subtleties of its rhetorical arguments. And that's exactly the result—Dr. Stanley fails to deal with Paul's rhetorical subtleties.

Instead, the book (as promised) sets out to answer how three different groups of people in the church might have responded to Paul's quotations. Stanley calls these three groups the "informed audience," the "competent audience," and the "minimal audience" (67-68). Following research that suggests the low rate of literacy in the Roman Empire, only one of the three groups (the "informed audience") was both literate and knowledgeable of the Old Testament. And this first group had only a limited knowledge of the Hebrew Bible, since ancient scroll manuscripts were expensive. (This was before codices.) The second group (the "competent audience") was knowledgeable of the Hebrew Bible because they had been taught it in the synagogue even though they were not literate. The third group (the "minimal audience") consisted of people with a pagan background who had little knowledge of the Old Testament. Although Dr. Stanley acknowledges that Paul might have taught these new believers some things about the Old Testament, he suggests that their knowledge remained limited.

Dr. Stanley then analyzes some of Paul's quotations in 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans in terms of this framework. In every case, he asks how each of these three audiences might have responded to Paul's comments on an Old Testament text. In this respect, Dr. Stanley seems to be engaging in a type of Reader Response Criticism. However, the "insights" he gives us on the readers' possible responses are of such a general nature that they contain very little penetration into the readers and the specific responses that might have been generated in them by these specific texts. With the exception of some contextual markers for the different quotations, some of the insights on various quotations are almost identical. Frequently we hear that the "informed audience" who knows the Old Testament would not find cogency in Paul's argument because Paul did not do justice to his quotation in its original context. On the other hand, Stanley suggests that Paul used Old Testament quotations

with Gentiles who were ignorant of the text to persuade them of his positions simply by the sheer impressiveness of his knowledge of the Old Testament and by his appeal to its authority. At one point, he suggests that they might have been so ignorant of the text that they might not have known who Moses was. They might have thought he was a contemporary opponent of Paul. This is stretching their ignorance beyond belief.

Dr. Stanley's underlying assumptions are grounded in modern rhetorical theories, not simply those of the ancient world. Much modern rhetorical theory is grounded in the philosophy of Nietzsche, arguing that speakers are engaged in power relationships. Speakers argue, not to discover truth and persuade others of it. Instead, they argue to gain power over others. These assumptions guide this research. As a result, Stanley argues (following one modern rhetorician) that any time someone uses a quotation, they change it from what it was before to something different. We might say, they change its truth-value—or more accurately, they change its meaning, since it had no truth-value to begin with. They automatically transform it into something not envisioned in the original text.

In our opinion, this position assumes an invalid either/or position. It goes like this: When someone quotes another passage, either it means the same identical thing it meant in the quoted text or it means something not envisioned in the original text. Since it obviously doesn't mean the identical thing it meant in the original text (since our author doesn't quote the entire original work and adds words to make a new argument with other words not found in the original text), then it means something not envisioned in the original text. Obviously (according to this line of argument), anyone who quotes from others is using their material for his own power purposes. He is not unearthing the meaning of the previous text and developing it.

But this either/or dilemma is a false one. There is another option, a *tertium quid*, a middle way. And we believe Paul is following it. That is, Paul is organically unfolding and developing the meaning of the Old Testament texts that he quotes. Geerhardus Vos (following his teachers Charles Hodge and William Henry Green along with scholars like C. F. Oehler) recognized and expounded this organic view of revelation. And it is at work in Paul as he quotes the Old Testament. An organism undergoes a development that is not

self-contradictory. For instance, a bud envisions a flower even though it is not a flower. So the Old Testament texts envision the full revelation of the New Covenant although they are not that full revelation. In each Pauline quotation, this organic principle is at work. When Paul quotes an Old Testament text, he finds the meaning inherent in that text in its original context. Then he shows how the history of redemption and revelation brings the inherent meaning of that text to full flower in Christ.

Dr. Stanley implies that someone quoting another text is automatically turning it into something it was not. The organic principle admits that it becomes something it was not fully before, but only insofar as it organically develops something already in the organism of revelation into something new. It does this through its own inherent internal development and nature. Stanley's view suggests that when authors quote another text in their writings, they must add something entirely new to it from without in such a way that the product is not something found inherently and organically in the original quotation. For Paul, that which is new in Christ is inherently an unfolding of previous revelation. For all special revelation is a progressive revelation of the same unified God and his heavenly arena. It is the progressive unveiling and penetration of the same reality. Therefore that which comes after must be organically related to that which came before. And all the redemption that it reveals is found in Christ, the same unified God-man and his unified work of redemption culminating in his life, death, and resurrection. It is this redemptive reality that penetrated the Old Testament and was the substance of its redemption. Stanley inherently denies this reality. For him, Paul must develop his quotes by non-organic, chock-a-block methods of reinvention. But if this were the only way things could develop, Stanley would not have had the available energy to write his book.

Stanley knows that many New Testament scholars try to discover the connection between the Old Testament *context* of Paul's quotations and the arguments he presents to the church. Apparently Stanley does not find this appeal to context convincing in many cases. It may be that his book is a subtle attempt to undermine these studies. If so, the evidence he cites is of such a flimsy nature that many readers will be unconvinced. What might this evidence be? Perhaps Stanley's attempt to lay out the three possible audiences has this purpose. If so, it cannot bear the weight of this argument. For even if

there were numerous members of the congregation that did not have a literate understanding of the Old Testament, this does not mean that Paul's text does not have layers of meaning. And for those who had greater knowledge of the Old Testament, it would have yielded a greater fruit of understanding. That is, Paul could have intended to properly interpret the Old Testament even though all of his audience would not have understood the rich ways in which he interpreted various passages.

Even so, Dr. Stanley claims that the most "informed audience" would have often disagreed with Paul's interpretations of Scripture because these interpretations were not sound. However, Stanley's understanding of the "informed audience" is limited by his reductive scholarship. He does not seriously consider the possibility that the "informed audience" might have been more informed than himself. Instead of suggesting that he himself may be shortsighted (and that Paul's audience may have properly recognized his interpretations as sound), our author becomes the standard of the informed audience. This is especially unfortunate since his understanding of how Paul used his quotations tends to be superficial. He does not deal with the various suggestions made for how Paul interpreted specific Scriptural citations. And he does not assess their validity with cogent arguments.

For instance, in his analysis of Paul's quotations in Galatians 3:10-14, he again claims that Paul did not interpret Scripture in its original context (123). His proof—the Old Testament texts say the exact opposite of what Paul is trying to prove. According to Stanley, neither Habakkuk 2:4 nor Leviticus 18:5 pits obedience to the law against faith; but this is how Paul used them. However, in both cases Dr. Stanley fails to consider the larger argument of Habakkuk and Leviticus respectively. For the law functions in Leviticus in a way that it does not do in the present age of fulfillment. Habakkuk 2:4 recognized this and spoke of the eschatological righteousness to come in the eschaton. Within the book itself, Habakkuk 2:4 does this by glimpsing the end of the book (Hab. 3:17-19) in which the theocratic blessings of the law (received through Israel's obedience to the law) are transcended by the greater fulfillment to come in the Messianic age.

Considering Leviticus, Stanley is correct when he says that Leviticus 18:5 does not exclude faith from obedience to the law. But the point Paul is

making is that it *includes* obedience to the law as a means of alleviating the curse. The call to obedience of Leviticus 18:5 requires Israel to keep all the ceremonial laws in the book of Leviticus. In context, Leviticus requires many rituals in order to avoid specific forms of uncleanness. These are to keep the people from being defiled so that they will not be cut off like the nations (Lev. 18:24-30). This cutting off is parallel to the curses of Deuteronomy. Thus, in one respect Leviticus 18:5 was written to those under the law. God promised them that to the degree they trusted him and obeyed the law they would evade his covenant curses and have life in the inheritance in Canaan. In accordance with the Torah's eschatological thrust, in this promise God also offered eternal life in the inheritance above to those who would keep the law perfectly.

However, as Paul saw it, both resulted in failure, for none kept the law as required. And the covenant curses brought death to those in the land and eternal death to the cosmos (Rom. 3:19). But now in Christ Jesus, the situation is reversed on both accounts—for both have been fulfilled in him and made one. Now the inheritance is above in all respects; it is semi-eschatological. Now God promises justified life in the inheritance above (Gal. 3:18) through faith alone—faith grounded in the source of this justification—Christ's death and resurrection alone. Paul's point is that God has *reversed* the situation of Leviticus 18:5. He did so by placing the curse upon Christ (Gal. 3:13) and raising him from the dead by the Spirit (which lies behind his gift of the Spirit in 3:14).

Thus, God does not call his people to obey the law as a means of removing the curse and bringing righteousness to the inheritance. That has already been accomplished in Christ—for he has been justified in his resurrection. As such he has entered the curseless inheritance above, the inheritance in which righteousness has been inscribed on everything (as the prophets foretold). And the justifying righteousness by which we have access to that inheritance is received by faith alone.

This is where sensitivity to Paul's organic view of revelation becomes helpful once again. While Paul contrasts the present situation with that under the law, his claim is *not* ultimately at odds with Leviticus 18:5. Paul knows he is revealing something new, but something that progresses beyond Leviticus 18:5 by fulfilling it and in that sense reverses it. Thus, Paul's argument incorporates

Leviticus 18:5 in order to progress further. For if Christ's suffering the curse is to be efficacious for others, he must be an innocent sufferer. He must have fulfilled the call of Leviticus 18:5 for perfect obedience to the law. Only then can he bear the curse for those who break Leviticus 18:5—and only then can its promise of eschatological life be fulfilled in his resurrection.

In this respect, the fulfillment of Leviticus 18:5 involves an eschatological reversal for God's covenant people—those united to Christ. They are not called to obey the law in order to reverse the curse. Christ has accomplished this by bearing the curse and rising from the dead. Thus his people are promised a new word—the word of promise in Leviticus 18:5 is theirs in Christ, received through faith alone. As we have noted, this is precisely Paul's point. Stanley's criticisms of Paul on this point are therefore without foundation. His failure to understand the broader structures of the law and their relation to Paul's organic view of revelation has blinded him. Paul is indeed properly interpreting the Old Testament here as elsewhere. Here he reveals his skill as an interpreter, partially molded in his Pharisaic training, but now renewed in Christ. Undoubtedly some of the highly trained in Paul's audience would have recognized the cogency of his arguments and his skillful use of Scripture.

Stanley does have a few helpful comments on rhetoric in Galatians and Romans, but overall he wears the blinders of modern rhetoricians. As noted, these natural men assume that all rhetoric stems from the speaker's desire to control others. It stems from the speaker's own personal power maneuvers. These modern interpreters derive these conclusions from looking at the way fallen human beings use their speech to control one another. Like Nietzsche, they assume that this is the natural state of affairs. They suppress the fact that this is the fallen state and that we are called to a higher ideal, one in which we identify with the supreme source of all power. And thus they cannot (consciously) imagine another form of rhetorical motivation, one in which the author draws his audience, not into himself, but into God, the source of all power.

If the issue surrounding Paul's rhetoric has something to do with power relations, it is of a wholly different sort than that imagined by modern rhetoricians. Paul is not making personal power maneuvers. He is seeking to draw his readers into the source of all power (God himself) and into the great manifestation of his power (the history of redemption). Paul's use of his quotations

is not to draw readers into his own personal power. It draws them into the organic unfolding of that supernatural power that intruded into history apart from Paul. Paul is unfolding the previous supernatural acts and revelation that occurred in the Old Testament period before he was alive. And he is seeking to identify his readers with those acts and that revelation, not himself. He is seeking to enrich their identity with the one who is the source of those acts and their culmination, Jesus Christ. Thus he displays how they unfold in him, in his supernatural acts and deeds; in him, the suffering and risen Lord of Glory, the everlasting God, the source of all power, now seated in eschatological power above. Only in light of this prior reality (and Paul's own union with Christ) is Paul seeking to draw his readers into union with himself—that in so doing they may be united with Christ as their only Lord.

This is the only appropriate way for a *creature* to be related to the source of all power. It is the only appropriate way for a *sinner* to be related to the source of eternal redemption—the eternal power of the risen Christ. For in him they possess the arena of God's very own life in heaven—the arena where he is Lord. This is not oppressive power, the exaltation of mere human power, but it is proper liberty, for it is freedom from creaturely power and tyranny to identification with the only one in whom there can be liberty, the everlasting God who created and sustains his people—and who is their very life. You have liberty when the source of your sustaining power (which is your Lord) is your only true Lord, and when you dwell with him as such eternally—eschatologically. This is something that the powers of this age (and its rhetorical analysts) cannot comprehend. And thus they must reduce Paul to their horizontal vector, making him a powerbroker of this age.

In our opinion, Stanley's treatment of Paul's quotations is not penetrating either in content or rhetorical analysis. As a result he can present a view of Paul's quotation process that is at odds with the organic nature of revelation and the progressive movement of redemptive history. Perhaps others can find some usefulness in this work in spite of these flaws, but we have found little. Save your money and look up the quotations yourself. And if you want rhetorical insights, read Paul along with some classical rhetorical handbooks and Greco-Roman speeches. That would even help your preaching, but this book will not.

—Scott F. Sanborn