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"vita vestra abscondita est cum Christo in Deo"

Colossians 3:3

CONTENTS

For the Faculty of Northwest Theological Seminary:
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Logo Design and Cover Layout:
James T. Dennison, III

Did Paul Really Teach Republication as “Defined” by VanDrunen? Part 3.....	3
Scott F. Sanborn	
Incarnation	35
Giles Fletcher (1586-1623)	
Patristic Commentaries on Revelation: An Update.....	37
Francis X. Gumerlock	
Reviews	
Benjamin W. Swinburnson on Peter Enns, <i>The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins</i>	44
James T. Dennison, Jr. on Gianni Barbiero, <i>Song of Songs: A Close Reading</i>	56
James T. Dennison, Jr. on R. N. Soulen and R. K. Soulen, <i>Handbook of Biblical Criticism</i>	59

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Did Paul Really Teach Republication as “Defined” by VanDrunen? Part 3¹

Scott F. Sanborn

In this installment of our series, we will look at VanDrunen’s approach to Romans 5 as a support from his view that the Mosaic covenant “in some sense” republishes the covenant of works at Sinai. Then we will look briefly at his claim that 1 Corinthians 15 supports the same thesis.

Throughout this article, we will argue that VanDrunen’s claim must be seen within the framework of Dr. M. G. Kline’s claim that the Mosaic covenant contained a works principle in absolute antithesis to grace. Thus, we will begin with an examination of the relationship between VanDrunen and Kline on Romans 5 and then answer objections to our understanding of Kline’s views before moving on to Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15 themselves.

Kline and VanDrunen on Romans 5

Dr. VanDrunen seeks to promote his thesis that the Mosaic covenant is “in some sense” the republication of the covenant of works from Romans 5. As we have suggested before, his thesis is intentionally broad enough to include all senses of republications supported in *The Law is not of Faith* (hereafter referred to as *LNF*). This primarily includes the views of Dr. Meredith G. Kline, which stand in the background of the views expressed in *LNF*. For the most obvious extreme representation of this view, we have noted those of Dr. David T. Gordon, whose chapter in *LNF* was accepted by VanDrunen (as one of its editors) under the broad umbrella of *some sense*. At the same time, Dr. Kline’s views stand as the background to most of the contributors of this volume. These two facts together with Dr. VanDrunen’s similarities to Dr. Kline (noted in our two previous articles in this series) suggest to us two similarities between Kline and VanDrunen notable for this installment of our series. That is, Dr. Kline’s influence on VanDrunen with respect to the nature of the works principle (already noted) and Kline’s influence on VanDrunen with respect to Romans 5. That is, Dr. Kline used Romans 5 to support his view of the works principle in the Mosaic covenant. And Dr. VanDrunen is following in his footsteps.

First, we note Dr. VanDrunen’s interpretation of Romans 5 (especially v. 14) in support of Kline’s view of a meritorious works principle. Then we will observe Kline’s similar line of reasoning, which VanDrunen has followed.

VanDrunen focuses attention on Romans 5: 14, “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of him who was to come”. In the history of the church, there have been at least two interpretations of the phrase “even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam”. The first of these views translates the Greek word “kai” as “even” and thus views the group that follows as a subgroup of what preceded. That is, on this view, those who failed to sin

¹ This article is in part a response to David VanDrunen’s article “Israel’s Recapitulation of Adam’s Probation under the Law of Moses,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 73 (2011): 303-24.

in the likeness of Adam is not a description of all those from Adam to Moses described earlier, but only a subgroup of them. This subgroup is usually considered to be infants and possibly the seriously mentally retarded. This view was taken by numerous Reformed exegetes along with Jonathan Edwards in *The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* and Charles Hodge in his commentary on Romans. The second view takes the Greek word “kai” as practically the equivalent of “namely” and views the group that follows as the same group as those that preceded it. That is, those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam are all those from Adam to Moses. This suggests that all those under Moses did sin in the likeness of Adam. This view was advocated by John Calvin and John Murray in their commentaries on Romans and by Herman Ridderbos. This later view is taken by Meredith G. Kline with the qualification that those in both clauses (even those from Adam to Moses) only include members of the covenant community.

Dr. VanDrunen, following Kline, prefers the second position. But what is most striking here, in our view, is that he then assumes that this proves the Klinean approach to republication. He does not present any solid arguments to this effect, but primarily assumes it. However, if his thesis is to stand up, he must not only present an exegetical view but must also prove that his exegetical conclusions prove his systematic conclusions (which he does not do). In reality, this fits with his general approach to the subject. He has made his thesis so broad that his interpretation of Romans 5 appears to prove it *prima facie*. But not so fast. For among the interpreters of Romans 5:14 who take it as a reference to all from Adam to Moses (and not simply to infants and the mentally retarded) are John Calvin, Herman Ridderbos and John Murray, all of whom would disagree with VanDrunen’s conclusions. Since Murray is an obvious example of one that *LNF* criticizes on the Mosaic covenant, VanDrunen can at best suggest that Murray did not recognize the implications of his exegesis. However, as we will note, VanDrunen must then conclude that most of these men failed to see the implications of their exegesis insofar as they held views at odds with Kline.

While I also favor the latter exegetical position espoused by Calvin, Ridderbos and Murray, it is not my purpose here to prove the viability of one of these interpretations over against the other, but only to show that on either view the Klinean construction does not follow.

As a preliminary move in that direction, let us make some observations on these interpretations. First, on the interpretation that Romans 5: 14 refers to infants and the mentally retarded it is clear that Dr. Kline’s approach does not follow. For if this is the case, then only infants and the mentally retarded fail to sin in the likeness of Adam. This is because they do not commit personal sin even though they are under original sin. This suggests that the rest of the adult world from Adam to Moses did sin in the likeness of Adam. As a result, the text does not affirm that Israel uniquely sinned in the likeness of Adam. Since this is the case it is interesting to note that Charles Hodge took this interpretation of the passage. For some followers of Kline suggest that Hodge’s view of the Mosaic covenant is similar to that of Kline. If this is the case (and we think it is clearly not the case based on Hodge’s other writings in his *Systematic Theology*), then at the very least Hodge missed an opportunity to defend his supposedly proto-Klinean view from this passage.

Second, Calvin and Ridderbos do not expand their exegesis of Romans 5:14 in such a way as to defend the Klinean exegesis. In fact, their more systematic treatments of the Mosaic covenant

(Calvin) and the law (Calvin and Ridderbos) are fundamentally at odds with the conclusions Kline draws from this passage respecting a unique meritorious works principle in the Mosaic covenant. Admittedly, neither do Calvin and Ridderbos expand their exegesis of the passage in the light of other material in Romans as I will do later on in the body of this article. However, at the very least we contend that they would have rejected any view that used their interpretation as a defense of Kline's meritorious works principle. Their systematic treatments of the covenant and/or law prove this. As for John Murray, he explicitly rejected Dr. Kline's view and nonetheless interpreted Romans 5:14 the way he did.

This indicates that several theologians who held to this interpretation of Romans 5:14 did not believe that it proved a system similar to that of Dr. Kline. And we hope to show that there is no such necessary connection between this interpretation and Kline's meritorious works principle in the body of this article. Instead, the contrary is the case. In light of the fact that there have been other interpreters of this passage that have interpreted it as a reference to all of Israel but have not adopted a meritorious works principle in the Mosaic covenant, VanDrunen is under an added burden that he has not fulfilled. For Dr. VanDrunen to make his case, he must also give us solid arguments why this interpretation of Romans 5:14 proves Dr. Kline's construction of the meritorious works principle. And he does not do this. Thus, he proves nothing.

Dr. VanDrunen's approach to Romans 5:14 and his claim that it supports Kline's view of republication mirrors Kline's own approach to this passage. M. G. Kline, in an article entitled "Gospel until the Law,"² argued that Romans 5:14 supports his view of a meritorious works principle in the law that is the absolute antithesis to justifying grace.

Dr. Kline interprets "sin is not imputed when there is no law" as a reference to the justification of the covenant community from Adam to Moses (a point that VanDrunen does not seem to argue). Following this, Kline takes the view that "even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam" (Rom. 5: 14b) refers to all people from Adam to Moses, with the result that all under Moses sinned in the likeness of Adam. On this later point, we have no dispute to the degree that this follows the interpretation of Calvin, Ridderbos and Murray. However, from this point, Kline asserts that Paul finds a meritorious works principle in the law. It is with this that we take issue. And it is here that VanDrunen follows Kline.

Before leaving these introductory comments on Romans 5:14, we need to note some areas where Kline describes the nature of this claim. That is, we will look at Kline's proposal that this meritorious works principle is in absolute contrast to grace.

In the "Gospel until the Law," Kline writes: "According to Rom 7:8-9 the difference between the Abrahamic covenant and the law is emphatically not relative but radical. It is the difference between life and death."³ The footnote attached to this later sentence reads, "the same absolute contrast confronted Israel in the dual sanctions of the law covenant."⁴ Kline clearly believed that

² "Gospel until the Law: Rom 5:13-14 and the Old Covenant," *JETS* 34/4 (December 1991): 433-46.

³ *Ibid.*, 444.

⁴ *Ibid.*, n32.

the administration of the law to Israel was in absolute contrast to the Abrahamic covenant. As a result, he rejects any “relativizing of the radical life death antithesis found in this passage.”⁵ By implication, Kline also rejects any notion of a relative contrast between the new covenant and the old. This supports our view that Kline sees a works principle in the law that is in absolute antithesis to grace. By implication, he believes this is what is taught in Romans 5. Further, he suggests that Romans 5 cannot be understood on the basis of a view that argues that there is only a relative contrast between the new covenant and the old. In the course of this article, we hope to show that this relative contrast is precisely the view taken by Paul and that this alone provides the basis for a proper understanding of Romans 5.

Answering Some Initial Objections

Our criticisms are often dismissed by Klineans who claim that we have *not* understood Meredith G. Kline properly. If they are right, we have misunderstood one of the main senses (of “some sense”) that VanDrunen and his colleagues sought to defend in *LNF*. It is contended that we have misrepresented M. G. Kline. We have critiqued his view as if he taught that Israel’s merit in the land was real merit. But Dr. Kline *denied* that it was real merit. He only taught that it was typological merit—that is, they maintain that Israel’s good works were a type of Christ’s works.

I acknowledge that this seemed to be Dr. Kline’s claim about his system, at least as I understood it as a student. However, we believe that Dr. Kline’s own teachings about the nature of the works principle contradict his claim to teach only typological “merit” (so defined) and not real merit. Dr. Kline taught that the works principle under Moses was in *absolute antithesis* to the grace principle. We contend that this teaching is inconsistent with the claim not to believe in real merit. Thus, we suggest that Dr. Kline’s claims are self-contradictory and that his teachings amount to real merit in spite of his claims to the contrary. We do not think that his followers have sufficiently considered this. Thus many of them continue to believe that they and Dr. Kline do not teach real merit, whereas in fact they do.

This is what we implicitly argued in the first part of this series when we presented the quotes from Dr. Kline to the effect that the works principle was in *absolute contrast* to the principle of grace in the Mosaic era. We will not repeat those quotes *en toto* here. We will simply include one of them here as a reminder to our readers together with a supporting reason to believe that this represents Dr. Kline’s view. Then we will attempt to show why this belief essentially amounts to belief in real merit.

Dr. Kline writes:

the identification of God's *old covenant* with Israel as one of *works* points to the works nature of the creational covenant... the significant point is that the old covenant with Israel, though it was something more, was also a re-enactment (with necessary adjustments) of mankind's primal probation — and fall...the covenant with the first Adam, like the typological Israelite reenactment of it, would have been a *covenant of*

⁵ Ibid., n31.

law in the sense of *works*, the *antithesis of the grace-promise-faith principle* (emphases mine).⁶

Here Kline asserts that the old covenant was a covenant of “works, the antithesis of grace-promise-faith”. Such an antithesis suggests an absolute contrast between the works principle and justifying grace.

We prefer here to reflect on Dr. Kline’s published (and thereby most public) works. But since some Klineans give the impression that only they understand Dr. Kline because they studied with him, I will present one supporting reason for my point from the class lectures I heard as a student. It was Dr. Kline’s contention in class that the Judaizers in Galatia had misapplied the works principle at the typological level to individual salvation to create a doctrine of salvation by works. Dr. Kline’s understanding was not that Israel absolutized the law’s essentially gracious promise “do this and you shall live” and made it into a meritorious works arrangement for eternal salvation. Instead, his point was simply that Israel had taken a works/merit principle from the law (intended only for the typological level of the land) and had misappropriated it to eternal salvation. Whatever Dr. Kline believed the Judaizers taught with respect to merit, they must have gotten this notion of merit from the typological sphere and misapplied it to eternal salvation. Thus, if the Judaizers believed that justification was by merit in absolute antithesis to grace they must have gotten this notion from the typological level, for which merit was in absolute antithesis to grace. Only if the typological level taught a merit (for its sphere) which was in absolute contrast to grace could the Judaizers have misapplied it to eternal justification, creating a doctrine in which merit was in absolute antithesis to grace (for that sphere).

If Dr. Kline had made other qualifications in class, such as pointing out that the Judaizers did more than misapply something from one sphere to another, but also in the process absolutized something that was essentially gracious to make it essentially meritorious, our point here would not stand. But he did not. This may have been an oversight. But the result was that for Dr. Kline, all the Judaizers did was misapply a notion of merit from one sphere to another. Thus, while relating to two different spheres, the impression given is that this merit had the same nature in each. Both were merit in absolute antithesis to grace.

This view had significant implications for Dr. Kline’s system. As a result of it, he created a system of absolute antitheses between the upper and lower register and for some of his disciples between law and gospel.

Now we hope to show that this view is at odds with the claim that Dr. Kline did not teach real merit, but only that Israel’s obedience was a type of Christ’s. We contend that Dr. Kline’s belief that the works principle under Moses was in absolute antithesis to grace is in conflict with his claim that it is not real merit, but only typological of Christ’s merit. Why is this the case?

The best attempt to understand Kline’s view within an orthodox Reformed framework in *LNF* was the claim that the Mosaic covenant is essentially gracious while the works principle was an

⁶ Meredith G. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue, Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview* (Overland Park, KS: Two Age Press, 2000) 110.

accidental quality of that covenant. This would place Dr. Kline's view broadly within the framework espoused by such lights as Turretin, who taught that the bondage of the Mosaic covenant was only an accidental feature of that covenant. This uses the language of Aristotelian philosophy as a way of explaining the Mosaic covenant. We will expand on this perspective to show that Dr. Kline's view of a works principle in absolute antithesis to grace cannot fit within it.

Essential and Accidental

Aristotle makes a distinction between essence and accidents. According to Aristotle, beings such as ourselves have both essential natures and accidental qualities. For instance, a particular human being such as Socrates is a human being. His essence makes him a human being. But he also has accidental qualities such as his beard. His beard is an accidental quality because if he shaves it off he is still a human being. It can exist or not exist and he still remains essentially a human being. The same is true of a horse and its mane. If we shave off its mane it is still a horse. It still possesses the essence "horseness". And if it grows its mane back it is no more essentially a horse than it was without it.

When we ask about something's nature we are most fundamentally asking about its essence. However, some wrongly believe this means we never have to ask, "What is the nature of an accidental quality?" Yet this is not the case. Philosophers have often inquired about the nature of accidental qualities in general. That is: is the color red an expression of a universal transcendent form of red or an instance of the form of red or is it (in the language of modern philosophy) an individual trope of red? Even after asking this question, we might ask what characteristics distinguish red from purple. Thus, to a lesser extent, we also need to ask: "What is the nature of an accidental quality?" Some philosophers have even described this in terms of essences, as if we primarily inquire into the essential nature of substances but secondarily into the essential nature of accidents. For instance, they might say we need to ask, what is the essential nature of the horse's mane? It is essentially hair. The nature of this accidental quality (whether considered a secondary use of essential or not) cannot be in absolute antithesis to the nature of the substance "horseness". If it is, it cannot be an accidental quality of the horse in the same way that a horse's mane is. Clearly, hair is not in absolute antithesis to the substance of the horse. But a flesh eating bacteria or virus that can attack a horse and potentially kill it would be in absolute antithesis to the essence of the horse. Such a flesh eating bacteria or virus cannot be attached to a horse and be considered an accidental quality of the horse, at least not for long. Yes, technically we may be able to call the virus an accidental quality of the horse while it remains alive. But this type of accidental quality must necessarily be at odds with the substance of the horse and eventually destroy it. It is not proper to say, using this Aristotelian framework, that the virus is only at work in the accidental sphere and thus does not affect the substance of the horse. Only an accidental feature, such as a horse's mane, whose essence is not in absolute antithesis with the essence of the horse, can be an accidental feature that allows the integrity of the horse's substance to remain untarnished.

If Dr. Kline's works principle is an accidental quality of the Mosaic covenant, it can only be comparable to the virus that is in absolute antithesis to the horse. It is not analogous to an accidental quality suitable to a horse, such as its mane. The nature of this works principle is that

of “absolute antithesis to grace”. We must ask what its nature is even if we call it an accidental quality. And we find that its nature is in absolute antithesis to the essential nature of the substance of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of redeeming grace. As a result, if it is viewed according to the Aristotelian model, it is comparable to the virus which attacks the horse rather than the horse’s mane. For the Klinean to say that no, the works principle only works in a separate sphere (and does not attack the substance of the Mosaic covenant) is to admit that their works principle cannot be comparable to an accidental quality which attaches itself to a substance. If it were, then the antithetical nature of this accidental feature would attack the substance and be at odds with its essential nature. Since they are claiming that it does not attack the essential nature of the covenant, it cannot be an accidental quality of it, but only a separate substance that operates within an entirely different sphere. This results in Kline’s bifurcated system of the upper and lower register together with his other bifurcations.

Dr. Kline may claim that his works principle (defined as absolutely antithetical to grace) is merely typological, not real. But seen within this context, we believe this is an unjustified claim. Since we must inquire into the nature of accidents, we do so here. If I see something that looks like an owl, sounds like an owl, and when dissected it has the organs of an owl, it is an owl. Someone can tell me all day that it is a cat, but this does not make it a cat. So Dr. Kline and his followers may say that they do not believe in real merit, instead it only looks like real merit. However, when we dissect it, it has all the characteristics of real merit. Thus, we must conclude that it is real merit, despite the claims to the contrary.

We conclude that Kline’s system cannot be reformulated within the Aristotelian distinction between essence and accidents, and it is not comparable to the Reformed scholastic systems that did formulate the Mosaic covenant in these categories. Those who attempt to show that Kline’s system is orthodox by proving that Reformed scholastics have formulated the Mosaic covenant in terms of the categories of substance and accidents (as they have) thus fails to prove anything. For Kline’s system cannot be formulated properly in these categories. Historical theology that begins with incorrect presuppositions fails in its task.

Kline’s Typological Paradigm

Finally, we contend that the claim that Kline’s works principle is simply typological falls apart. For his notion that the works principle is in absolute antithesis to the principle of grace is at odds with the fundamental nature of typology after the fall. In other words, Dr. Kline’s claim that Israel’s obedience is a type of Christ’s obedience is at odds with his view that the works principle is in absolute antithesis to the grace principle.

Here we present two considerations: first the nature of post-fall typology; and second, our claim that a works principle in absolute antithesis to grace can only reveal what was revealed to Adam before the fall. First, we note Geerhardus Vos’s claim that for something to be a type it must first be a symbol. That is, for something after the fall to be a type of the Christ’s work and kingdom it must be an essential foretaste of his work and kingdom. The only reason the temple is a type of Christ is that he was present there through his glory-cloud before the time. The only reason the sacrifices were types of Christ is that they were old covenant sacraments. That is, as worshippers partook in these sacraments by faith, they laid hold of the grace of Christ to come. Only because

the fruits of Christ's death were administered by them through faith, were they fit to be types of his atoning work.

This can also be said for all human types of Christ throughout Scripture. They were only types of Christ because they participated in his life before the time. That is, Joseph was a type of Christ when he went down into the pit and dungeon and was raised to the right hand of power to give gifts to the nations only because he was united to Christ to come whose work was the ground of Joseph's life in him. This is also true of types of Christ who were not themselves vitally united to Christ. Unregenerate priests who served in the tabernacle were nonetheless types of Christ because they were *externally* united to Christ to come. That is, they partook in the external blessings of the covenant even though they were not vitally united to him. The external blessings of the covenant only come to people as borrowed capital (so to speak) of the vital and real blessings of the covenant arising from Christ's future work. That is they are dependent on the fact that through the Mosaic covenant God genuinely justified and sanctified his people in Christ to come. Thus this external union was also grounded in the work of Christ to come. Only as such could these priests be types of Christ.

As a result of this covenant union (whether vital or merely external), old covenant characters were suited to be types of Christ in various offices and activities. This approach to typology does not fit with a works principle that is in absolute antithesis to grace. For the essential nature of the works principle itself is devoid of grace. Thus, the works principle qua works principle cannot be an intrusion of the grace resulting from Christ's work. To try to make it fit within the notion of an intrusion, one would have to claim that it was a substantial intrusion of Christ's own righteousness in its absolute perfection embodied in the life of the Old Testament types. This would involve a denial of the uniqueness of Christ's work, arguing instead for the adequacy of Old Testament priests and kings as perfect embodiments of his righteousness. As a result there would be no need for Christ to come and these kings, priests and prophets would not be types of Christ to come, but the real thing. It would amount to a substantial view of merit as we find in Rome, if not worse.

If corporate Israel was a type of Christ, this typology must also have functioned in the same way as that of individual characters in Scripture. One cannot say that it operated in a different way simply because it involved Israel's historical obedience. For each of the individuals who were types in Scripture were not simply static types. They were types in their historical activity. And they were types of Christ insofar as their activities were in obedience to God's commands, even if only externally complied with. Thus, if corporate Israel's obedience was a type of Christ's obedience then it only was so because it was grounded in her covenant union with God. It only was so because it was grounded in the life, death and resurrection of Christ to come. This is at odds with the belief that it was governed by a works principle that was the absolute antithesis of grace. For such a principle qua principle is devoid of grace, as we have pointed out. As a result, it can only be viewed as an intrusion of Christ's work to come if it is a perfect embodiment of his merit in the life of corporate Israel. As such, Israel would embody perfect merit and there would be no need of Christ to come. Such a view undermines (rather than supports) the notion that Israel's obedience indicates that Christ the true meritor is yet to come. Kline's view of the works principle actually undermines the notion that Israel's obedience is a type of Christ. The two are

not compatible. Thus, if it could be proven that Israel's obedience is a type of Christ's this would thereby undermine Kline's understanding of the works principle rather than support it.

That the corporate character of Israel's obedience cannot be of a different nature than that of individual types is also indicated by the fact that when Israel is judged as a nation she is so judged under her leaders. Their obedience or sinful actions are those of individuals with corporate significance for the nation. If Klineans should respond that the works principle (as defined by Kline) also applies to individuals (as Kline relates it to Abraham) this only shows that Kline did not do justice to the symbol/type relationship even with respect to individuals. And thus we refer the reader back to our argument that such an application of the works principle to individuals undermines typology.

There is only one way we see for the Klineans to avoid the conclusion that their view involves the intrusion of the perfect merit of Christ substantially embodied in the characters of the Old Testament. They could claim that the works principle is not an intrusion of Christ's work to come. They would thereby deny the symbol/type relationship of all post-fall typology. However, we believe that by breaking this symbol/type bond they would have no ground for Old Testament typology. They would have no basis for believing that any post-fall history is a type of Christ's work. If they simply assert by mere fiat that the works principle is typological, we must inquire again into the essential nature of this works principle. And we must ask whether this essential nature allows it to be a type of Christ.

This leads us to another reason why Kline's works principle cannot be a type of Christ's obedience. If its essential nature is that of works in absolute antithesis to grace, then it only reveals what we find in natural revelation. For in natural revelation, only the requirement of perfect obedience is revealed, not the promise that it will be fulfilled by the God-man. If the works principle is works in absolute antithesis to grace it does not embody grace. As such it cannot prophesy about grace. This logically follows from the difference between natural and post-fall special revelation apart from further considerations.

Further consideration into the nature of special revelation also supports this. For we find that all prophetic anticipations of the future are grounded in the supernatural acts and deeds of God in redemptive history. The very nature of typology is grounded in intrusions of eschatology in the present. As a result every type must first be a symbol, as noted earlier. But let us return to the nature of natural revelation qua natural revelation.

I formally agree with VanDrunen on the point that natural revelation reveals both the requirement of perfect obedience and the possibility of eternal life for perfect obedience. (For the reader who is not convinced of this, I only ask that she consider what follows from this assumption.) However, this implies that if (on Dr. VanDrunen's assumptions) the works principle under Moses simply reveals that obedience brings blessing, it does not teach anything more than natural revelation. And if the works principle is in absolute contrast to the grace principle then the works principle qua works principle contains nothing more than the promise of *natural revelation*, that if sinless man is perfectly obedient he will receive eternal life.

However, Reformed theologians have taught (following Romans 1:18-32) that natural revelation does not preach the gospel. Thus, Kline's works principle, which teaches nothing more than natural revelation, cannot preach the gospel. It cannot be a type of Christ.

Obedience to God can only be a type of Christ's work to come insofar as that obedience is imperfectly found in sinners by God's grace (whether vitally or merely externally). And it can only imperfectly be found in them because they are perfectly justified by Christ's grace (or among the external covenant community whose real recipients are perfectly justified in Christ). As such, it can only be a type of Christ's work as *obedience to Christ* the redeemer and in conformity to him. This obedience is therefore not in its essential nature works in absolute contrast to grace. Instead, it arises from justification in Christ and the sanctification that follows, both as an intrusion of the grace of Christ to come. Natural revelation (to which Kline's works principle is comparable) does not itself teach these things.

In addition, as such an intrusion of the coming Christ, this typological relation relates *only* to Old Testament figures, not to those of the New Testament period. If however, a works principle which teaches nothing more than natural revelation is a type of Christ, are we not left with the absurd conclusion that natural revelation itself is a type of Christ? And as such it would continue to be a type of Christ even after he has come. Thankfully, no one is making this suggestion. But if this is the case, how can a works principle which teaches nothing more than natural revelation be a type of Christ?

Further, other OT saints prior to the giving of the law were a type of Christ in their historical activity. However, they were not under the unique legal administration of the Mosaic covenant. Thus, something that was essentially the same in God's covenants must have been the foundational basis of their typological relationship to Christ. And this is the case even though the relationship of those under the Mosaic covenant to the law bore a unique typological relationship to Christ. For even though they were types of Christ in terms of the unique blessings and curses of the land, this was grounded in their union with Christ by justifying and sanctifying grace.

Only a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered can do justice to typology. Kline's view, in which there is a meritorious works principle at work in absolute antithesis to grace, cannot do justice to this. For the supposed works principle, being the absolute antithesis of grace, cannot be grounded in it. Thus, the typology it purports cannot be grounded in grace. It cannot be an intrusion of future grace, whether justifying or sanctifying. And thus, it cannot be typological.

Therefore, only the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered does justice to the substance/accidents distinction or to the typological relationship of Old Testament characters under the law to Christ.

Possible Objection

Before leaving this issue, we need to deal with one possible objection. We have claimed that all post-fall typology involves an intrusion of the grace to come. Yet it may be objected that Adam was a type of Christ before the fall. And certainly before his fall he did not possess the grace of Christ, but was still a type of him. Thus (it may be argued), it is not necessary for types to be

intrusions of Christ to come. And if it was not necessary before the fall, why after the fall? Further, the fact that Adam was a type of Christ in a works arrangement (that was devoid of redeeming grace) should *prima facie* not exclude a purely works arrangement (qua works arrangement) from being a type of Christ. And thus the argument that we have used above (comparing the “works principle” to natural revelation) does not hold force.

Our response is twofold. First, it is appropriate for an unfallen person (without the redeeming grace of God) to be a type of Christ in our Savior’s works arrangement. For Adam was of such a character that redeeming grace was not necessary to make him a fit instrument for revealing the Savior to come. This is not the case after the fall. Now after the fall, only those who have been justified and sanctified in Christ to come can be fit instruments for revealing his saving work. Thus, they cannot be types of Christ under a purely works arrangement that is the absolute antithesis of grace.

Second, no intrusion of the life of Christ in Adam was necessary for him to be a type of Christ because he was (in our view) only a type of Christ after the fall, in light of redemptive revelation. That is, while his typological significance is grounded in his actual historical character as the sinless head of the race, this nature does not take on the character of being a type of Christ till after the fall. Our reasons for this are the following. If Adam was properly a type of Christ at that time before the fall, then he was a type of Christ to himself and his wife. That is, if he functioned as a type at that point, then the revelation of his typological nature was given to himself and Eve. In seeing himself, Adam would have seen a typological revelation of Christ the redeemer to come. In seeing her husband, Eve would have seen a revelation proclaiming that Christ would come to redeem fallen humanity. In other words, if Adam were properly a type of Christ before the fall, the gospel would have been revealed to Adam and Eve before the fall. This was not the case.

Infralapsarian Decree

Second, we believe the infralapsarian view of the decrees supports this position. Our readers that are not familiar with the fine points of the supralapsarian and infralapsarian positions may safely skip the next few paragraphs on the subject without losing anything substantial in this article. Following the infralapsarian view, God decreed the creation of the world logically prior to decreeing the fall, which decree was logically prior to decreeing redemption. We do not here have the space to argue the cogency of this view based on Romans 9. Nonetheless, for those who believe it, we offer this consideration. In the traditional infralapsarian view, God decreed the creation of the world and in this decree he decreed an end for which he created the world. That is, he had an end for creating the world apart from the fall and redemption. We believe Jonathan Edwards had this in mind when he wrote his work *The End for Which God Created the World*. For this work does not deal with the fall, the problem of evil or redemption. In other words, following Francis Turretin, Edwards argues that God’s end for creating the world (apart from his decrees of the fall and redemption) was to create creatures to have communion with himself and so manifest his glory. From this point of view, God’s decree of creation involves within itself an end for creation apart from the fall and redemption. And it is this end alone that is revealed in creation, not the end of the fall and redemption.

This is one reason Edwards wrote the above volume as a companion to his *The Nature of True Virtue*. For this later book argued for the nature of virtue as it was revealed in nature alone apart from Scripture (in partial response to the Deists). And such virtue was (since Aristotle) thought to involve teleology, the end or goal found in the nature of things. Thus, Edwards wished to describe to us the nature of things as revealed in their ends. He wished to describe to us the end for which God created the world and thus the ends revealed in creation. And from this, he could argue the nature of virtue as revealed in the creation.

This simply underscores the point that only the end of creation was revealed in creation, not the end of the fall and redemption. Thus, the end of redemption was not revealed in the person of Adam at that time. He was not a type of Christ at that time.

We believe this infralapsarian point can be pushed farther. For it might be thought that Adam was created by God (in the intention of God) for the purpose of being a type of Christ after the fall. Now we admit that the mind of God is infinite, his decree is really one in himself, and that the order of the decrees has to do with our manner of conception. At the same time, as it deals with our manner of conception, it also governs our manner of assertions. It governs what we can properly assert or not assert about the divine will. As such, the infralapsarian position suggests that we cannot assert that God even intended to create Adam in such a way as to be a type of Christ later. For infralapsarianism asserts that the divine will terminates on the creation apart from the consideration of the fall and redemption. Thus, the divine will terminates upon the creation of Adam as our federal head apart from the consideration of the fall and redemption. In this respect, we cannot assert that the divine will terminated on the creation of Adam, creating him as our federal head, with the intention that he might be a type of Christ after the fall. For we can only assert that the divine will terminates on the creation and its history prior to the fall with respect to the end of creation alone and not in respect to the ends of the fall and redemption.

Thus, it seems to us, that the natural constitution of Adam as the federal head of humanity (which was implicitly revealed to Adam and Eve) became the presupposition for redemption when redemption was revealed after the fall. Redemption was revealed as the seed of the woman overcoming the seed of the serpent. The man-child would overcome the serpent reminding us of the contest in the garden between Adam and Satan, in which Adam was overcome. This is the initial revelation of the similarity between Adam and Christ. But it is only after the fall that this similarity is revealed. And thus only after the fall that Adam can be seen as the precondition for Christ. And now that Christ is revealed, Adam can be seen in that light as a type of Christ. So Moses wrote down the story of the creation and so by his pen (in the light of redemptive revelation) Adam is revealed to us as a type of Christ. And this is most fully unfolded by the apostle Paul in Romans 5.

Thus, no purely meritorious works covenant of itself can be typological of Christ and his redemptive work. However, Kline's system demands that this is possible. For in his system, the meritorious works principle (in absolute antithesis to justifying grace) is a self-contained level which of itself is typological of Christ. This is the case even when Kline claims that God's grace provided the saints with the ability to perform these works. For Kline still believes that the works so performed function as types of Christ only insofar as they demonstrate this meritorious works principle and not insofar as they are intrusions of the grace of Christ to come.

If our readers have not been persuaded by us on this later point (with respect to infralapsarianism), we remind them of our earlier point. Only a sinless man is suitable to be a type of Christ apart from redeeming grace. Thus, all types of Christ after the fall can only be such because their life and actions are intrusions of the life of Christ to come. After the fall, for something to be a type of Christ, it must first be an intrusion of his grace and life. And it is precisely this positive intrusion of life that produces the nature of the typological relationship. Thus, a meritorious works principle (as the absolute antithesis to grace) cannot provide the ground for typology. Only the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace can do this. Thus, we will argue that it is precisely the grace of the Mosaic covenant that is the direct ground for the uniquely legal features of the Mosaic covenant as those are revealed in Romans.

Kline's System vs. Grace Legally Administered

Some among the Klineans may object that we are being nitpicky. They might say that they believe that the Mosaic covenant is a covenant of grace and the meritorious works principle is simply an administration of that covenant. So what is the big deal? However, they neglect to recognize the implications of Kline's claim that the works principle is in absolute contrast to the grace of the covenant. First, if the works principle is in absolute contrast to grace, then the grace of the Mosaic covenant (having an antithetical nature to the merit principle) cannot be the ground of the unique legal aspect (in spite of claims to the contrary). Some entity "a" that is in absolute antithesis to "b" cannot be the ground of "b". That is, one entity cannot be the ground of its absolute antithesis, unless of course you are operating in the dialectical world of Hegel. Light cannot be the ground of darkness. They are polar opposites. Death is not the ground of life (its polar opposite). Neither is truth the ground of lies. That is, truth is not the cause that produces lies.

Three objections to this may be forthcoming. First, some may object that death is the ground of life (its polar opposite) in that Christ died for our life. However, it is not death (qua death) that is the ground of life in Christ. Rather, it is the righteous life of Christ that is the ground of our life. An exchange is simply made in his death and resurrection by which he takes on our death and we receive his life. Admittedly, it is Christ's eternal life justified in resurrection that we receive, not simply his life on earth. But even this life is his possession in his human nature of the eternal/eschatological life he possessed from all eternity as God. He possessed this life insofar as a creature may participate in it without becoming divine and thus without becoming omnipresent. Nonetheless, the eschatological *nature* of his reward for faithful service on earth was based on his eternal life as God. Even in this way, the eschatological life he gives us is based on his life *in toto*, in terms of both his natures. It is not as though death (qua death) is the ground of our life. And thus neither can grace (qua grace) be the ground of meritorious works. But this is exactly what the Klineans must assume to square their view with the view that the Mosaic covenant is a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered. That is, if the Klineans say that they also believe that grace is the ground of the legal administration under Moses they are assuming that grace (qua grace) is the ground of Kline's meritorious works principle (its absolute antithesis). But as we have seen, even in the case of Christ's death bringing life, it is impossible to conceive of one thing being the ground of its absolute antithesis.

Second, it may be objected that God (who is absolute being) may cause his absolute opposite (non-being) if he so chooses. It is true that an infinite power can bridge the infinite gap between non-being and being. Thus, God can create something out of nothing. (But it is not this nothing that creates everything, but God. Nor is this being made out of non-being.) Still, it is true that God (the great Being) could by an infinite act of power turn all being into non-being, thus producing the opposite of himself. Yet, this requires infinite power. Further it should be noted that the same exercise of infinite power that might turn being into nothing cannot simultaneously produce being. On the analogy of the divine fiat in Genesis 1, that would presumably require a different act of God. Nor does God produce something that causes its opposite. But this is what one must say if one claims that God causes grace in Israel and then this grace is the ground of its absolute antithesis—i.e., merit. Not even God's act of creation at the beginning simultaneously caused its opposite—i.e., non-being. And he did not create beings that were then the ground of non-being. Thus, we cannot say that his grace to Israel was the cause of its absolute opposite—i.e., merit. As a result, if we can prove that saving grace was the ground of the unique legal administration in Israel, then we have proved that this administration is not the absolute antithesis of this grace. That is, Kline's system falls apart.

Third, it may be objected that the grace of God in loving the world is the ground of Christ's merit. Thus, in this respect grace is the ground of absolute merit. We respond that this is not analogous to the Klinean way in which they might claim that grace is the ground of merit (if they formulate a view claiming that the grace of the Mosaic covenant is the ground of an absolutely meritorious arrangement with Israel). For the love of the Father in giving the Son is grace *to us*. It was not grace given to the Father. And it was not grace given to Christ whereby he could merit. No, the Son merited our salvation (not as a recipient of the Father's grace) but as one who inherently deserved the Father's love for his meritorious works. However, on a Klinean view which might ground the meritorious works principle in the grace of the Mosaic covenant, we have a different construction. On such a construction, the ones who merit do so because God is gracious *to them*, enabling them to merit. If the Father's gracious love was similar to this, it would mean that the Father was gracious to Christ, thereby enabling Christ to merit. But this was not the case. Thus, the Father's gracious love as the eternal impetus for sending the Son (who merited our salvation) does not prove that grace is the causal ground for Christ's own merit (as the absolute antithesis to grace). Christ was not given our salvation. He had to merit it.

Thus, we reject any Klinean claim to believe that the grace of the Mosaic covenant was the ground of its unique legal administration. We also are not convinced that such a construction is consistent with Kline's claims that the meritorious works principle was in absolute antithesis to the grace principle. Such a view suggests that the grace principle was not the ground of the works principle, but its absolute antithesis. At the same time, in our first article we have sought to show how Kline might try to reconcile grace with meritorious works under Moses (as he views it). However, if some try to interpret his approach in such a way as to make grace the ground of merit (its absolute antithesis), then we would say that such an approach (at best) only fits with a dialectical approach to metaphysics similar to that of Hegel. Thus, it falls prey to the same criticisms as that approach.

Therefore, if Romans teaches that the unique legal administration of the Mosaic covenant is the causal result of the grace of the Mosaic covenant, this undermines Kline's position. It does not support it. Instead, it proves that this unique legal administration (being the causal effect of grace) was not in absolute antithesis to grace. But Kline's system throughout requires that the merit principle be the absolute antithesis to grace.

In fact, we would argue that Kline's assumption on this point is the basis for many of the antinomies in his system. This is another way in which we do not think our criticism is nitpicky. For it is Kline's belief in this absolute antithesis that undergirds his absolute antitheses between the upper register and the lower register, between cult and culture and between law and gospel. This is indicated by the way in which he separates the two levels of the typological works principle and the underlying gracious substratum. For Dr. Kline, there is a bifurcation between these two levels throughout Israel's history in the land. It is this tendency to see bifurcations that sets Dr. Kline up for making similar bifurcations between the upper and lower register and between cult and culture.

Here we are not denying that there is an absolute contrast between law and gospel in terms of justification. But we believe that there is also a relative contrast between the legal administration of the old covenant and that of the new. Thus, there is a synthetic relationship between them (think organic relationship). And we do not believe Kline does justice to this. In addition, we are not criticizing Kline for simply making a *distinction* between upper register and the lower register or between cult and culture. We believe that such distinctions can be understood properly. That is, there is a distinction between the heavenly world and the earthly and there is a distinction between the cultic consecration of life in the land of Israel and the consecration of our lives *in toto* to God in an alien world. However, in our view, Kline not only distinguishes these things; he separates them. He fails to recognize real synthetic relationships between them, relationships that do not undermine the distinction between them. We believe that Kline's absolute antithesis between the meritorious works principle and grace (as operative in the life of Israel) sets him up for these other antitheses. Just as he fails to recognize a relative contrast between the old and new covenants, so he also fails to recognize a synthetic relationship between these distinctions. Thus, in many ways (though with qualifications I will note below) his system practically presupposes that they are similar to absolute contrasts.

The qualification is that Kline may not be viewing the upper and lower register or the cult/culture bifurcation as absolute antitheses in the same way that merit is the absolute antithesis to grace. However, in failing to see the synthetic relationships (or relative contrast) between law and gospel considered historically, he fails to recognize the synthetic relationships between upper and lower register and between cult and culture. That is, he bifurcates them.

We do not have place to expand upon this here in more concrete detail, but leave it to the reader to consider one of Kline's deductions from the cult/culture bifurcation. This is his view of the Sabbath. In practice, Kline reasons that since the work of Israelites (from which they rested) involved consecrating the theocracy unto God, we no longer need to rest from this labor since we do not engage in it. However, this view fails to recognize that there is a synthetic relationship between work (qua work) in general and the special use God made of it in Israel in consecrating the land of Canaan unto himself. That is, man's nature in a provisional state (here in this world)

involves work looking ahead to the rest of the final eschaton. From this work (qua work) we are called to rest on a weekly basis just as we are called to look forward to the eschatological glorification of God. This informs the work itself. We are called to do all we do for the eschatological glory of God and then to rest from that labor one in seven with an eye to arrival of the eschaton. In the course of redemptive history, God took this situation and gave this work a special significance in Israel insofar as their work involved a consecration unto God of a land that was his special habitation. But this was synthetically related to the general eschatological pattern of work and rest. It was not a totally separate category that was self-contained. Only by making it a self-contained category does Kline make his argument that the Sabbath ceases with Israel's unique purpose in the land. If on the other hand, Israel's unique work in the land was only to be distinguished from our general work in the world, this conclusion would not follow. For since this general work continues (on which Israel's unique function was also founded), the pattern of work and rest continues in this semi-eschatological time. It is Kline's bifurcation of cult and culture (rather than a simple distinction between the two) that leads him to reject the present work/rest aspect of the Sabbath that is central to it.

We believe this bifurcated way of thinking is represented in Dr. VanDrunen's response to Dr. Cornel Venema. Dr. Venema rightly critiqued Dr. VanDrunen for saying that the Christian is no longer under natural law. (For this discussion we do not need to adopt a particular view of natural law, such as that found in Cicero in which natural law is a sense of right and wrong found in man prior to sense experience. We will be using the term to describe the moral character of natural revelation, that is, what it requires of human beings.) Following Calvin and the Reformed tradition, Dr. Venema assumed that the moral law is the republication of natural law. That is, behind the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai stands the law as revealed in nature. On this view, if one denies that we are obligated to natural law, one is denying that we are obligated to the Sinaitic moral law which is synthetically dependent upon it. That is, since God has created us with a certain nature (made in his image), we are called to live in accord with that nature. This is why he commands us to live in accord with that nature (renewed in the image of God) at Mt. Sinai. On this view, if you deny that we are obligated to live under natural law, you are claiming that we are not obligated to live according to our nature in the image of God. And if we are not obligated to live according to the image of God, then we are not called to live according to that image renewed and made eschatologically complete in Christ. Thus, you are saying we are not obligated to the law from Mt. Sinai, which tells us how to live recreated in the image of God in Christ Jesus. That is, on this Reformed assumption the denial of the Christian's obligation to natural law entails the denial of his obligation to the Mosaic law. This is because the two are synthetically related.

However, in *LNF*, when Dr. VanDrunen denies that the Christian is under natural law (while assuming that he is still obligated to the moral law), he can only do this because he (like Kline) makes bifurcations where the previous Reformed tradition saw synthetic relationships. That is, he assumes the bifurcation between cult and culture. The Christian (Dr. VanDrunen teaches) is obligated to the moral law in terms of her relationship to Christ (her new covenant cultic relationship). On the other hand, the Christian is obligated to natural law in terms of her cultural relationships to people in the world. But there is little synthetic relationship between these two

self-contained categories. As a result, Christians are not obligated to live according to natural law in their cultic relationship to Christ. No, natural law is simply for the sphere of culture.

As a result, Dr. VanDrunen responded to Dr. Venema's critique by saying that he (Dr. VanDrunen) claimed that Christians were not under natural law in their relation to God, not that they were not under the moral law. For Dr. VanDrunen, his claim that Christians are no longer under natural law was not a denial of their obligation to the moral law only because he does not see a synthetic relationship between the two as Dr. Venema does.

By cutting these synthetic connections between natural law and the moral law, Dr. VanDrunen has assumed Dr. Kline's system of bifurcations. And in the process (in spite of his supposed expertise on the subject), he has modified the Reformed doctrine of natural law. For his view of natural law assumes either: (1) that we have a completely different nature renewed in Christ from the one we first had created in Adam; or (2) that natural law does not relate to our *nature* created in God's image but is simply a set of divine commands arbitrarily given for our provisional social life. While we think it is more likely the later, either position is a revision of the classic Reformed view of natural law that Dr. VanDrunen claims to uphold. And we believe that it is at odds with any Reformed view that acknowledges that God presents moral obligations to us in natural revelation based on our nature, made in the image of God—a nature now renewed and completed in Christ Jesus.

As a result, in this instance, we can see another significant implication that Dr. Kline's system of bifurcations has had on Reformed formulations. And we also see how Dr. VanDrunen has followed his mentor. Therefore, even in this case, his defense of *LNF* and the conception of republication it promotes is the defense of Dr. Kline's particular system of bifurcations. And this system of bifurcations is related to Dr. Kline's own conception of a meritorious works principle in absolute antithesis to grace. Such bifurcations have significant theological implications, both in Dr. Kline and in Dr. VanDrunen.

Thus, we do not believe our claim is nitpicky, that is, our claim that Kline's view cannot be squared with the view that the Mosaic covenant was a covenant of grace with a unique legal administration. Instead, his view that there was a meritorious works principle in the law that was in absolute contrast to the grace principle is fundamentally at odds with the view that the Mosaic covenant was a covenant of grace with a unique legal administration. For on this view, this unique legal administration was not in absolute contrast to the covenant's gracious essence but dependent upon it. And Kline's view of absolute antithesis cannot be squared with this except (at best) on the presuppositions of dialectical metaphysics.

Romans 5 in Context

Our argument in this article with respect to Romans 5 is that the statements in that chapter and verse 14 specifically need to be understood in the broader context of Romans. That is, in seeking to understand the broader structures of Paul's thought lying behind his statements in Romans 5:14, we must consider those structures in the light of Romans as a whole. It is our contention that within the book these statements are best understood within the paradigm of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace with a unique legal administration that is not in absolute contrast

to the gracious essential nature of that covenant. And thus Kline's system, which posits a works principle in the Mosaic covenant which is in absolute contrast to gracious nature of the Mosaic covenant, does not do justice to facts considered as a whole. In fact, it is at odds with those facts. That is, it is at odds with the teaching of Romans as a whole.

We think we have shown that the interpretation of Romans 5:14 as a reference to infants and the mentally retarded does not support Kline's approach. And we are not aware of any of his followers who claim the contrary. Thus, we will focus on the interpretation of Romans 5:14 which implies that all during the Mosaic period (but not those prior to it) sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Christ.

We have already argued that all post-fall typology derives its nature as typology from being an intrusion of the grace and life of Christ to come (whether merely externally or really). Thus, if Romans 5:14 teaches that Israel was a type of Christ, Israel's typological relation to Christ cannot be grounded in a works principle that is the absolute antithesis of grace (a la Kline). It can only be grounded in a covenant of grace with a legal administration that is not the absolute antithesis of grace—a covenant whose own administrative and typological nature is grounded in redemption and eternal life. Again, the interpretation that sees an analogy between Israel and Adam (as a type of Christ) and that finds in it a typological relation between Israel and Christ cannot ground that typology in Israel's merit. In fact, the claim that Israel merited the land—that she followed a meritorious works principle in absolute antithesis to grace—undermines any claim to the effect that Israel was a type of Christ.

This accords with the fact that Israel was judged as a people in light of her rulers. Thus, the gracious grounding of Israel's typological relation to Christ should be grounded in grace just as the typological relation of her rulers was to Christ. This is evident in the case of David who was a type of Christ as a man after God's own heart. Undoubtedly the heart that he possessed (that allowed him to be a type of Christ in this way) was a heart of grace. This was the case even though when he took the census the results of his sin involved the curses of the Mosaic covenant (2 Sam. 24). Should he have obeyed God by not taking the census, the results of his obedience would have had a positive typological relation to Christ. Thus, his positive obedience to the law and the blessings that would have followed would have been grounded in the grace of Christ manifested in him as a man after God's own heart. We say this hypothetically since at this point in the narrative David was the man who he was and his character at that instance determined his choice. Nonetheless, had he chosen properly, he would have done so as a man after God's own heart. The grace of Christ would have been the ground of his obedience and the ground of the blessings that followed from the Mosaic covenant. Thus, we believe that if Romans 5: 14 teaches a typological relation between Israel and Christ, then it undermines Kline's meritorious works principle in absolute antithesis to grace.

At the same time, we hope to show that this is supported by the rest of Romans. For chapters 3 and 7 of Romans ground the unique legal administration under Moses directly in the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of redeeming grace. That is, they imply that the eternal salvation administered to believing Israel was given her through the Mosaic covenant. And they further imply that redeeming grace itself, manifested in the eternal salvation of Israel, was the direct cause of the unique legal administration under Moses. As we have suggested earlier, a cause is

not the ground of its absolute opposite. Grace is not the ground of its contradiction. Thus, if the eternal saving grace given in the Mosaic covenant is the ground of the unique legal administration of the law, that legal administration cannot be the contradiction of grace. It cannot be its absolute antithesis. If eternal grace is the ground of that legal administration, Kline's view that this legal administration is the absolute antithesis of justifying grace is false.

Romans 3 and 7 help us to interpret statements in Romans 4 and 6 in the same way, grounding the unique legal administration under Moses in the eternal salvation given through that covenant. And these together help us to see Romans 5 in this light. As a result, we are left with the conclusion that Romans 5:14 must be understood within the context of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered. It cannot be interpreted as support for Dr. Kline's view that the Mosaic covenant contains a works principle that is in absolute antithesis to grace, the central view implicitly defended in *LNF* and thus also in Dr. VanDrunen's article dealing with Romans 5.

Romans 7 Sheds Light on Romans 5

Let us briefly summarize our argument on Romans 7 to set us up for discussing Romans 5. We agree with VanDrunen that Romans 7 describes the person under the law. However, the focus of this passage is on *regenerate* old covenant saints. That is, it shows that the *grace of sanctification* arose from the administration of the law. The law administered sanctification. It administered grace. As such, it was a redemptive covenant of grace.

We will not repeat here our arguments for the position that Romans 7:14-25 deals with the period of the old covenant. However, we remind our readers of the primary reason for believing that Romans 7 considers the old covenant as a covenant of grace. The fact that Paul is here referring to the saints of the old covenant is especially apparent in Romans 7:22: "For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man". This reminds us of the Old Testament Psalmist. No unregenerate person can truly rejoice in the law of God. It is nothing but a curse to him or her. Further, Paul states that this rejoicing takes place in the inner man, a phrase that Paul elsewhere uses to describe the true person, the inner person of the heart. This does not describe a hypocrite.

A summary of our basic argument respecting Romans 7 is as follows: (1) the OT saint rejoices in the law; (2) these saints cannot rejoice in something that is a covenant of works to them, for a covenant of works simply condemns them—it is not a means of life to them; (3) thus, this law must essentially be a covenant of grace to Israel; (4) it thereby defines the nature of what it means to be married to the law (Rom. 7:2); Paul hereby presupposes that the marriage of God to Israel at Mt. Sinai was a covenant of grace; (5) thus, this tells us the nature of what it means to be under the jurisdiction of the law in Romans 7:1; Israel was under the law as a covenant of redemptive grace; (6) thus, this text does not argue for the Mosaic law as a strict covenant of works (VanDrunen's understanding of the works principle). Instead, Paul's discussion in Romans 7 suggests that he believed that the Mosaic covenant was a covenant of redeeming grace uniquely legally administered.

This understanding of the Mosaic covenant sheds its light back on the previous chapters of Romans. That is, all of this helps us to understand what Paul means earlier in Romans when he

speaks of being *under the law* insofar as this reflects on Israel being under the Mosaic covenant. Thus, we now hope to show how our interpretation of Romans 7 leads to an interpretation of Romans 5 that is at odds with VanDrunen's use of Romans 5 in which he supports Meredith G. Kline's contention that Israel was under a meritorious works covenant. To do this we will move progressively back to the earlier sections of Romans in order to focus on Romans 5. We begin by looking at Romans 6 which sets up Paul's argument in Romans 7. As a result, Romans 6 must be interpreted in a way that is consistent with Romans 7.

Romans 6:14 states: "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace." Based on the fact that Romans 6 looks ahead to Romans 7, we must interpret being "under law" in Romans 6 in a way that is consistent with its usage in Romans 7. Thus, we should say of Romans 6:14 that insofar as Paul is here looking back to the Mosaic covenant considered in its full relationship to Israel (and the greater liberation of new covenant saints to old covenant saints), he presupposes that being under law is not the absolute opposite of grace. For this sets up what we find in Romans 7 where he describes this way of being under the law and its jurisdiction (7:1) as being married (7:2) to the spiritual law (7:14). That is, it describes Israel's being under law as a covenant of grace whereby she rejoices: "I rejoice in the law of God in the inner man" (7:22). Thus, in Romans 6:14, when Paul reflects on being under the law in terms of being under the Mosaic covenant, he presupposes that the Mosaic covenant is essentially a covenant of grace.

If this is the case in Romans 6:14, it has implications for our interpretation of Romans 5. For Romans 6:14 is connected to a previous statement about the law in Romans 5:20-21: "And the law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The connection between these two passages is indicated not only by their reference to the law, but also by the fact that they both conclude back-to-back sections in Romans. The fact that Romans 5:20-21 ends one section of Romans is indicated by the question in Romans 6:1 which begins another rhetorical section. Romans 6:14 then concludes the section begun in Romans 6:1, for Romans 6:15 begins with another rhetorical question. This parallel structure suggests that Romans 5:20-21 should be interpreted in a way that is consistent with Romans 6:14.

This is further indicated by the fact that these two sections of Romans do not simply lie next to one another, but that their arguments are integrally related. This is apparent in the rhetorical question of Romans 6:1: "what shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound." This is a direct response to Romans 5:20-21: "where sin increased grace abounded all the more" (5:20). Thus, the nature of Paul's response (concluding in 6:14) must accord with the nature of the claim in 5:20-21. If it does not, then his argument in 6:1-14 is not valid.

Thus, if Paul's conclusion in 6:14 considers being under the law as a covenant of grace (insofar as it reflects on Israel under the Mosaic covenant) then 5:20-21 must also be consistent with the fact that the law is a direct administration of God's grace to Israel. Romans 5:20-21 cannot only allow for the fact that the law was an indirect means of God's grace to Israel insofar as it indirectly provided the opportunity for grace by convicting people of sin. No, it must also allow

for the fact that God directly administered that grace to Israel just as in Romans 7 where Israel rejoices in the law as direct administration of God's grace.

That is, just as in Romans 6:14 (following our understanding of Romans 7), the law as Paul presents it in Romans 5:20-21 must be consistent with the fact that the law directly administers grace to Israel. This does not mean that Romans 5:20-21 must itself clearly be emphasizing the fact that the law directly provided grace to Israel. But Paul's understanding of the law as presented in Romans 5:20-21 must be consistent with this fact, later articulated in Romans 7. That is, Paul must be presupposing in Romans 5:20-21 a view of the law that coherently allows for the fact that through it God both directly and indirectly administered grace to Israel. Thus, when Paul indicates in Romans 5:20-21 that the law came in to increase the transgression and thereby provide the context for grace, he is doing so out of a paradigm of the Mosaic covenant that allows it to directly administer redeeming grace to Israel and convict her of her sin in order to flee to that grace.

This is consistent with 5:20-21 in which the new age abounds in grace—"grace abounded all the more." If the present age abounds with grace all the more, then clearly the previous age administered grace. And Romans 7 indicates that this grace was administered to Israel by the law and was the ground of the unique legal administration of the law.

If Romans 5:20-21 is to set up Romans 6:14, leading to Romans 7, it must assume this same relationship between the grace of the Mosaic covenant and its unique legal administration. If on the other hand, we interpret Romans 5 as a claim that the Mosaic covenant was in some sense a strict works covenant, this promotes a different view of the relationship between the grace of the Mosaic covenant and its unique legal administration than we find in Romans 7.

However, we should not understand the administration of the law Romans 5:20-21 in a radically different way than that in Romans 6:14 and Romans 7. The law that came in that the transgression might increase was nonetheless in this function essentially the covenant of grace. This gracious coming of the law was the ground of its unique legal administration.

And this unique legal administration alone is necessary to account for its relative contrast to the greater grace in the new age in Christ. That legal administration lead to the transgression increasing.

Here we find a further connection between this passage and Romans 7. In Romans 7, Paul expands on how the law brings about the increase of transgression, but he does so there by showing this in the context of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace. The transgression increases as the one who joyfully concurs in the law of God in the inner man nonetheless transgresses the law, leading to death and exile. Romans 7 is expanding on what is stated in Romans 5:20-21. Romans 7 is the interpreter of Romans 5:20-21. Therefore, we cannot interpret Romans 5:20-21 as an indication that the Mosaic covenant is a republication of the covenant of works, as defined by VanDrunen.

Romans 5:20-21 concludes Romans 5:12-21. Thus, it picks up and concludes the discussion of Romans 5:12-14, which (as we have seen) VanDrunen uses as a major proof text that Paul taught

the republication of the covenant of works at Mt. Sinai. However, as we have also seen, Romans 5:20-21 presupposes (as Paul will develop it) that the Mosaic covenant was a redemptive covenant of grace.

Thus, Paul's discussion in Romans 5:12-14 presupposes the same thing that we find in Romans 5:20-21. The Mosaic covenant is a redemptive covenant of grace with a unique legal administration. This unique legal administration alone is necessary to account for the particular and more pronounced imputation of sin that occurs in the period under the law. That is, Israel is given special curses for her disobedience to the law. This may serve as a *reminder* of the covenant of works given to Adam with its strict imputation of eternal judgment, but it is not itself the republication of that covenant. Therefore, the language of Romans 5:12-14 can be fully accounted for by recognizing that the Mosaic covenant was a redemptive covenant of grace with a unique legal administration. It does not require the assertion that the Mosaic covenant was a republication of the covenant of works. And if we can account for Paul's statements in this way, we have no proof from this passage that he meant anything else besides this. In fact, we have the confirmatory evidence of Romans 7 (which clarifies Romans 5-6) that Paul understands the Mosaic covenant as a redemptive covenant of grace with a unique legal administration and does not view it as a republication of the covenant of works in absolute antithesis to grace.

Romans 3:29

This essentially gracious character of both the old and new covenants is implied and anticipated in Romans 3:29: "Is God *the God* of Jews only? Is he not also *the God* of Gentiles also? Yes of Gentiles also." Our claim will be that with this language Paul is presenting a relative contrast between the old and new covenants. Further, the language indicates that the old covenant was essentially one of redemptive grace in Christ just as we find in the new covenant. Finally, this text is a presupposition for Paul's discussion in Romans 5. Thus, it requires that we interpret the administration of the law through Moses in Romans 5 as the administration of a redemptive covenant of grace.

We begin by considering how Romans 3:29 refers to the new covenant in relative contrast to the old. This can be seen in the redemptive-historical focus of Romans 3:21-31. Romans 3:21 states: "But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." The "now" of this verse is the "now" of the present time, the time inaugurated by Christ's death and resurrection. It is the time of the semi-realized arrival of Christ's righteous kingdom. The same language of "now" is also used to describe the transition from the old to the new age in Romans 8:1: "therefore there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." This is the now of the present time of salvation. That Paul has in mind the present time of salvation in Romans 3:21-31 is further confirmed by his use of the "present time" in 3:26 ("For the demonstration of his righteousness at the present time").

The use of "now" (3:21) and the "present time" (3:26) provide parameters for Paul's discussion in 3:21-26. This becomes especially apparent in verses 25-26 where we have the repeated theme of God now demonstrating his righteousness "to demonstrate his righteousness" or "to *the* demonstration of his righteousness" (v. 25) and "for the demonstration of his righteousness" (v. 26). The phrases are identical in the Greek apart from the different prepositions which introduce

them and the definite article (“the”) in verse 26. This is a demonstration of the righteousness of God at the present time of redemptive history—the period of the new covenant.

This is further indicated by what follows each “demonstration of his righteous” phrase. We have seen that this phrase in verse 26 is followed by the words “at the present time,” i.e., “for the demonstration of his righteousness at the present time.” This appears to correspond to the phrase that follows “demonstration of his righteousness” in verse 25, “because in the forbearance of God he passed over the sins previously committed.” Whatever precise interpretation we give to “passed over,” it is clear that God did this passing over in the previous era of the history of redemption, but that he now no longer passes over sins in this way in the new era of salvation. This transition from the old to the new is implied if we take this “forbearance of God” in a way similar to Paul’s statements in Acts 17: 30: “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent.” In this case it would refer to God’s non-redemptive forbearance of the Gentiles in the previous era (as we think more probable). If on the other hand, we take Romans 3:25 as a reference to the way God passed over the sins of his people in anticipation of the work of Christ, we are still left with a transition from the previous era to the present. Either way the transition is from the older era to the new era of redemption.

Thus, according to Romans 3:25-26, in the present era of the history of redemption, God demonstrates his righteousness in a new way—a way that surpasses the way he had not done so in the previous era. This transition in redemptive history sets us up for the rhetorical question of verse 27 and verse 29: “Is God *the God* of Jews only? Is he not also *the God* of Gentiles also?”

Through the old covenant (the law) God was the “God of” the Jews only. In the new covenant God is the “God... of” the Gentiles also. I have quoted the words as found in the text, separated in the second case by other words that come between them. However, the sentence construction of verse 29 suggests that “God” is also implicitly connected with “of Gentiles” in both instances, though separate from it by several words. This is suggested by translations that add “*the God*” in italics before “of Gentiles”. Of the present time in the history of redemption, Paul asks, “Is God *the God* of Jews only? Is he not also *the God* of Gentiles also?” That is, is God now the God of the Jews only? This implies that he was previously the “God of Jews” only in the previous era of redemption. That this is implied is strengthened by what we noticed in verses 21-26—that when Paul speaks of something relatively new in the present time he is contrasting it to the previous era of redemption under the law. (Notice “law” in vv. 21, 27, 28, 31.) Thus Paul here contrasts the present time in which God is the God of Jews and Gentiles to the time when he was God of Jews only. The important thing to notice here for our purposes is that Paul implies that the administration of the law constituted the relationship whereby God was the “God of the Jews”.

The language “God of” reminds us of that alluded to by Jesus when he pointed out that God is called the “God of” Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. “But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living” (Matt. 22:31-32). From the fact that God is the “God of” Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Jesus proved that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob live to God. The fact that God is their God implies that they are united to him. That is, through their union with God they have eternal life. If God is life, those in union

with him cannot be dead. The text to which Jesus is referring (Ex. 3:6) presupposes the book of Genesis in which God is the “God of” Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because he has entered into covenant with them. As Genesis 17:7 states, “I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.” That is, by means of the covenant God will be the “God of” Abraham and his descendants. This is presupposed by Jesus when he makes his argument based on God being called the “God of” Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. By their union with God through the covenant, they possess eternal life. This covenant relationship is none other than that grounded in redeeming grace. It is a covenant union of saving grace. There is no other way for God to be the “God of” a sinful people except through a covenant that is essentially of pure and unmerited redemptive grace. Thus, such covenant unions by which God becomes the “God of” a sinful people are essentially of grace, through grace and to grace (unto resurrection life).

Thus, when Paul implies in Romans 3:29 that through the law God was the God of Israel, he is suggesting that the old covenant was essentially a covenant of redeeming grace. It is the old covenant that constituted God the “God of” Israel, bringing eternal life to all who are truly of Israel by faith. This is Paul’s testimony that the Mosaic covenant was essentially a covenant of redeeming grace that administered eternal life to those who believed in Christ through it. At the same time, Paul testifies that the new covenant brings to fullness that grace, extending it to the Gentiles. As a result, the new covenant is grace upon grace. In this way, Paul suggests a relative contrast between the two covenants in which they possess an essential identity—that of eternal redeeming grace.

The point we would like to make here is that in Romans 3:27-29 the unique legal aspect of the Mosaic covenant is the direct result of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace. That is, the covenantal grace by which God is the God of Israel is the ground of the unique legal aspect of the Mosaic covenant.

This fits with the view that the Mosaic covenant was a covenant of eternal saving grace with a unique legal administration—specifically a legal administration that is not in absolute contrast to the grace of that covenant. For Paul, the legal aspect of the covenant is not a works principle that is in absolute antithesis to grace, but one that results directly from that grace.

We believe this is found when we: (1) recognize that the legal administration alluded to in Romans 3:27-28 directly results from the administration of grace to Israel in Romans 3:29; and (2) interpret Romans 3:27-28 in the light of the redemptive historical thrust of its context (Rom. 3:21-31).

Thus, when Paul states in Romans 5:21 that where sin increased grace increased all the more (contrasting the old and new covenants), he has anticipated this contrast in Romans 3. Therefore, the contrast in Romans 5 is of the same nature. It is not an absolute contrast between the old covenant as a covenant of works with the new covenant as a covenant of grace. Instead, it is a relative contrast between the grace administered through the old covenant (the law) and the greater grace administered through the new covenant—“that grace might reign through righteousness through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Since Romans 5:21 is a continuation of the discussion in Romans 5:12-14 (insofar as these verses consider Israel under the law), they are only making a relative contrast between the administration of the law given to her and the greater grace given since the resurrection of Christ.

Thus, our interpretation of “God of Jews” supports what we have seen about the implications of Romans 7 for Romans 5, namely that it presupposes that the law (the Mosaic covenant) is essentially a covenant of redeeming grace. Thus, there is no implication that the law as administered to Israel was in any respect essentially meritorious. That is, Romans 7 and 3:29 suggest a relationship between God’s old covenant people and the law that excludes any essentially meritorious elements in the law such as Kline’s works principle.

Even though we have demonstrated the redemptive-historical nature of Romans 3:21-31, an objection may still arise to our interpretation of Romans 3:29. That is, it may be objected that when Paul is referring to “God of Jews only,” he is merely stating that in the new covenant God is not the God of Jews only without implying that through the law God was in fact the “God of Jews” only. This argument may seem to be supported by the fact that if we take “God of Jews only” to refer to the old covenant then the other statements respecting the law in this context were also true of the old covenant. This would imply for instance that “he would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Christ” (3:26) has special reference to the new covenant era.

In response, we believe that this follows the pattern of relative newness in the new covenant. That is, God demonstrates his righteousness in a new way (relatively speaking) in the new age. With the death and resurrection of Christ, God gave a fuller demonstration of his righteousness, but one that was essentially the same in kind with the demonstrations he gave of his righteousness under the old covenant. However, this greater demonstration of his righteousness in the new involves a greater vindication of his name in the new. As a result, he has manifested his justice in a fuller way. He has been declared just in a new way. As his people are united to him, this means that they have been justified in a new way as well. I have called this semi-eschatological justification and have tried to show how this is possible while maintaining the essential unity of justification by grace alone through faith alone throughout redemptive history. It seems to us that this can account for the implication that Paul’s statements on justification have their fullest significance in the new covenant without denying its essential unity with justification administered by the old covenant. If so, then we have in Romans 3:21-31 a discussion of the relative contrast between the old and new administrations of grace, which when understood in this way unveils the fact that Romans 3:29 teaches the essential unity of the old and new covenants.

The newness of the new era is connected to God being the God of Gentiles also. That is, the semi-eschatological justification of the new era releases us from the curse of the law, even insofar as it tied Israel to an earthly inheritance with its covenantal blessings and curses. As a result, in the new era, semi-eschatological justification results in God’s people transcending the land, being possessors exclusively of an eternal inheritance in the heavenly places. Since this inheritance is transcendent, it is not tied to a particular geographical location in this world. Thus, it can be the possession of both Jews and Gentiles alike. God can be equally the God of Jews and Gentiles as a result of the semi-eschatological justification of God’s name and his people in him. As Paul states in Romans 8:31-39, now that Christ has been raised and justified, this justification

for us suggests that none of what used to be the curses of the covenant will separate us from God's covenant love, as they did relatively speaking in the days of Hosea. "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword" (Rom. 8:35)?

If this interpretation of Romans 3:29 is valid, then it follows that the unique legal administration (which distinguished Jew from Gentile) was grounded in his being the God of the Jews only. That is, this unique legal administration was grounded in the Mosaic covenant's covenantal grace, binding God to Israel. That is, *the Mosaic covenant in its administration of eternal salvation to believing Israel was the direct (not simply the indirect) ground of the unique legal administration of the law in Israel*. As such, this unique legal administration could not be in absolute antithesis to the grace that administered it. This is presupposed in what follows in Paul's discussion of the law (and Israel's unique place in it) in Romans 4 and 5. Thus, we must interpret Paul's statements concerning the unique place of the law in Romans 4 and 5 in light of the fact that Paul taught that the unique legal administration of the law was directly grounded in the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered.

The fact that Romans 3:29 is presupposed in what follows is further underscored by the fact that it is presupposed in Paul's question in Romans 3:31: "Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the law." This term "establish" is found in Romans 1:11 and 16:25 and suggests something like "bring to further completion". That is, it does not simply mean to maintain something as it already is, but to develop it or bring it to maturity. We suggest that this is the way Paul uses it in Romans 3:31. He has just discussed the newness of the new era in Romans 3:21-30 in a way that suggests something new about the new era. Now he asks if this nullifies the law. And he says, "May it never be!" Instead, it brings the law to its fullness; it brings the true nature of the law to its complete expression. This suggests an organic relationship (not an absolute antithesis) between the law and gospel along the line of redemptive history. That is, when we look at Romans 4 and 5, we must look at their statements which contrast the law and gospel (when these contrasts are considered along the line of redemptive history) not as absolute contrasts, but as relative contrasts. That is, they must follow the pattern Paul has set out for us in Romans 3:21-30, in which there is an organic (not absolute antithetical) relationship between God being the "God of Israel" and God being the "God of Gentiles also". This organic relationship helps us to understand how it is that the new era establishes the law or brings it to fullness. This organic continuum is thus Paul's presupposition when he contrasts the law to the new era in Romans 4 and 5.

Romans 4

Thus he shows us in Romans 4 how the justification of Abraham is brought to its full expression in the resurrection of Christ (4:25). That is, the resurrection of Christ is the full organic unfolding of the narrative of redemptive history found in the law (4:16-25). But in light of Romans 3:21-31, when he contrasts this fulfillment to the legal administration ("not through the law," 4:13) we must *not* see this as an absolute contrast to the administration of the law in Israel. It is only in relative contrast to that administration, just as it is its fullness. Instead, it is only in absolute contrast to the legal arrangement under Adam, of which the legal administration under Moses is merely a reminder.

The fact that there is only an absolute contrast between the new era and Adam helps us understand why Paul's other affirmations need not be understood absolutely with respect to the actual administration of the law in Israel. If we were to make Romans 4:14 absolute with respect to the administration of the law in Israel, it would imply that no one under Moses was saved. "For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified." Along this line it would suggest that all under the older administration were under the absolute wrath of God—"for the law brings wrath" (Rom. 4:15). These absurdities help us to see why we should take the expression "where there is no law, there is no violation" relatively. That is, outside the land of Israel, there was not the same degree of legal violation as there was in the land by Israel. Therefore, this statement does not need to be taken absolutely when viewed in light of the actual administration of the law to Israel. Kline was so sure that he must take such statements absolutely in interpreting Romans 5:13, that he interpreted the phrase "sin is not imputed when there is no law" as a reference to the covenant people from Adam to Moses, to whom God did not impute sin absolutely speaking. Thus, he rejected the view (*a la* C. E. B. Cranfield) that Paul expressed himself relatively speaking. That is, Paul was suggesting relatively speaking that outside the land sin was not imputed to sinners in the way it was imputed to Israel insofar as they experienced the curses of the covenant. However, if we are to see this verse in light of Romans 4:13-15, it is reasonable to conclude that Paul was only using this language relatively speaking, insofar as he was speaking about the administration of the law to Israel.

However, it may be objected to our interpretation of Romans 4:13-15 that Paul is essentially saying, "If those of the law *exclusively* are heirs then the promise is made null." This would seem to be supported by verse 16: "that the promise might be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only of those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all." We would agree that this is the meaning of the apostle in the fullness of the times. That is, Paul is following out the same line of argument that he used in Romans 3:29. God is not simply the God of the Jews only now; he is the God of Jews and Gentiles. And God being the God of Jews and Gentiles now is the necessary unfolding of him being the God of the Jews only in the older era. Thus, if God had not come into covenant relationship with Jews and Gentiles at some point of redemptive history (as he promised Abraham), then this would have absolutized the old covenant. That is, it would have made it an end in itself without fulfillment in Christ. But this was impossible. And it was not the case under the old covenant itself which administered the grace of God only because Christ was sure to come and bring salvation to the world. Thus, it stands that we cannot interpret the phrase "if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified" in an absolute sense in terms of the actual administration of the law to Israel. For that administration anticipated the new era in which Jew and Gentile alike would be saved in Christ.

If this is the case with Romans 4:13-15, then should this not be the case with what follows, insofar as it reflects on the history of Israel. That is, the wrath that results from the law (4:15) insofar as it refers to the curses of the covenant placed on Israel do not involve the absolute death of that whole people. Instead, for the saints among them who were taken into captivity, it involved death relatively speaking. This death may be alluded to in Romans 4:17 insofar as it is reversed in semi-eschatological hope (Rom. 5:1, 11) anticipated in the hope of Abraham (Rom. 4:18-25). The discussion of semi-eschatological hope and its contrast to the wrath administered

by the law would fit (and further support) Paul's assumption of a relative (rather than absolute) contrast between the legal administration of the law to Israel and the grace of the new era.

Paul grounds Abraham's hope in his faith in the promises of God (Rom. 4:18-21). And this faith is the instrumental means of his justification (Rom. 4:22), which anticipates the resurrection of Christ and our justification in him (Rom. 4:23-25). This suggests that Paul discusses the story of Abraham as an anticipation of semi-eschatological justification. Here we have the continuation of the relative contrast between the law administered to Israel and the new era. In this way, the gospel establishes the law.

This connection between the story of Abraham and our semi-eschatological justification is reinforced by the semi-eschatological nature of justification and reconciliation discussed in Romans 5:1-11, which brings us to the brink of our primary text—Romans 5:12-14. Romans 5:1-2 speaks about our semi-eschatological justification by which we “exalt in hope of the glory of God.” And this is paralleled by Romans 5:11 in which our semi-eschatological reconciliation causes us to “exalt in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Thus, when we come to Romans 5:14, Paul has been assuming in his argument that there is only a relative contrast between the law (insofar as it was administered to Israel) and the new era of semi-eschatological justification. Thus, we must interpret Romans 5:12-21 in this light insofar as it reflects upon the actual administration of the law given to Israel in contrast to semi-eschatological justification. At the same time, insofar as that administration reminds us of the situation under Adam, we are brought to recognize an absolute contrast between Adam and Christ. That is, Adam failed to bring righteousness by his works while Christ brought justification by his righteousness. Thus, Adam brought absolute wrath while Christ brought complete and perfect justification, now given to us in its full semi-eschatological manifestation.

If we interpret Romans 5:14 as a reference to all of Israel, who sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, we must interpret this passage in the light of Romans 5:1-11. That is, we must interpret it as the organic unfolding of what was found in the law itself, not as the absolute antithesis of the law. In other words, the type of the law is established by the gospel because there is an organic relationship between the law and the gospel along the line of redemptive history. Further, since Paul's understanding of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace was the ground of the unique legal administration of that covenant (Rom. 3:29), so it must be here. Paul has been assuming this understanding of the Mosaic covenant throughout Romans 4 and 5:1-11. That is, these chapters are dependent on Romans 3:29, in which the unique legal administration of the law is grounded directly in its gracious nature. On this assumption, he claimed that the new era establishes the law. And he showed in Romans 4 how the new era establishes this understanding of the law. For this understanding of the Mosaic covenant allows it to be organically unfolded in the new era. Thus, the contrasts between the older administration to Israel and the new era in Romans 4 are simply relative. Insofar as these are still in the background in Romans 5:1-11, this must also be the case. And it sets up the fact that we must so understand them here in Romans 5:12-21, insofar as the Mosaic administration is reflected here.

This supports our contention that if Romans 5:14 suggests a typological relationship between Israel and Christ, it does so only within the framework of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of

grace uniquely legally administered. Our interpretation may also suggest that Israel's failure and sin should not be interpreted in absolute contrast to her union with Adam (insofar as she is identified with the rest of his sinful race). That is, we suggested earlier, with a comparison to Romans 4:13-15, that we are not to take the contrasts of Romans 5:13 between Israel and the rest of the world in an absolute way (as Kline does). So then, does not this principle also apply to Romans 5:14? Are we to take its statements in an absolute way insofar as it contrasts Israel to the rest of the world? That is, when Paul says: "even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam," are we to take this as an absolute statement concerning Israel in contrast to the rest of the nations. In other words, if Paul is implying in this passage that all those outside Israel did not sin according to the pattern of Adam, does he mean this absolutely? Or is he only expressing the idea that Israel uniquely sinned according to the pattern of Adam insofar as she broke the explicit commandments of God given her through special revelation and bore the curses of the covenant that resulted? Admittedly, in this they only would have a typological relationship to Christ and not the nations. Nonetheless, this would seem to suggest that their most fundamental relationship with Adam is the relationship they continued to have with Adam as a result of the remnants of their sin and not some special status of new Adam granted to them under the Mosaic covenant. That is, if Paul is granting a typological relationship here, he is attributing their Adamic nature and fall fundamentally to their union with the rest of the world in Adam. For the rest of the world, relatively speaking, also sin in the likeness of Adam.

Whatever we might say about these precise issues, we believe it is clear that if Paul is referring to Israel as a type of Christ he is doing so only out of the context of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered—an administration that is not in absolute contrast to the grace that is its ground. This follows in the line of argumentation that Paul gives in Romans 5:21, Romans 6:14 and Romans 7, as we have discussed already, all of which only make sense in the context of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace. We believe that 1 Corinthians 15 must also be interpreted in this manner.

1 Corinthians 15

While VanDrunen has some insight here in recognizing that the law (1 Cor. 15:56) carries over the discussion of Adam (1 Cor. 15: 45-49), there is no reason to believe that Paul is here dealing with anything more than the notion that the law is a *reminder* of the covenant of works. We would add to this connection that Paul discusses the distinction between the perishable and the imperishable both before his discussion of Adam (v. 42) and before his comments on the law (v. 54). But again there is nothing said here that is any more than a reminder of the covenant of works and the curse it inflicts. That is, there is no reason to believe that Paul's statements concerning the law reveal any other foundational structures in his thought than we have found in Romans, namely that the unique legal administration of the law is directly grounded in its administration of eternal salvation. In fact, since Paul is consistent with himself, we have every reason to believe that this is his presupposition here. This view is diametrically at odds with Kline's view that the works principle is in absolute antithesis to grace.

Paul's words (1 Cor. 15:54-55) are an interpretation of the prophets with likely allusions to both Isaiah 25:8 and Hosea 13:14. There will be an interrelationship between the way we interpret

these prophets and the way we interpret Paul and vice versa. Thus, we must look for the most satisfying interpretation that does justice to both Paul and the OT texts he quotes. As we have said, we find no compelling argument in 1 Cor. 15: 56 to suggest the republication of the covenant of works as defended by VanDrunen. What about Hosea?

The allusion to Hosea is brief. But if we consider it in context, we find Hosea dealing with the covenant curses on Israel. Does Hosea compel us to the conclusion that the curses of the Mosaic covenant are essentially the curses of the covenant of works, republished to Moses? Or are the curses inflicted on Israel essentially the curses of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace? We certainly find the later. Hosea 13:4 states: “Yet I have been the Lord your God since the land of Egypt; and you were not to know any god except Me; For there is no savior besides Me.” Israel became the people of God by grace. Thus he refers to the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of redeeming grace. And it is this covenant which is the basis of the curses that will come upon them. That is, “they forgot Me” (Hosea 13: 6); they forgot the husband of their youth who bound them to himself by grace, “so I will be like a lion to them” (v. 7). This begins the description of the curses to follow. They are cursed because they violate that covenant which is essentially a covenant of grace, not a covenant of works.

This is completely in keeping with the whole tenor of the book in which God has Hosea marry a woman who will become a harlot, pointing to the fact that the Lord married Israel in the Mosaic covenant, though she would later become a harlot (Hos. 1:2; 3:1-3). Israel is thus called “My people” (Hos. 4: 6, 8, 12, etc.). And how are they made his people? According to Hosea, it is by the covenant. “Because they have transgressed my covenant, and rebelled against my law” (Hos. 8:1). This is clearly a reference to the Mosaic covenant. And how are they (a sinful people) made his people except by grace? Obviously, by grace alone. Thus, clearly, the Mosaic covenant which makes Israel God’s people is essentially a covenant of redeeming grace. And again in this context, they are cursed because they have rejected the covenant of grace. “Like an eagle *the enemy comes* against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant” (Hos. 8:1). With Paul in Romans 7, Hosea sees the law associated with the covenant, which is the “good”. Thus, “Israel has rejected the good” (Hos. 8:3)—the law, the covenant of grace—and has herself been rejected.

For the sake of space, we will not deal here with Isaiah. However, we challenge the reader to find anything else but this same type of relative contrast between the covenants in that prophet.

Thus, returning to Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:56-57 presents us with a relative contrast between the era of the law and the new era in Christ Jesus. “The sting of death is sin” certainly reminds us of the death inflicted on Israel for her disobedience to the law, her rejection of the Mosaic covenant of grace. “The power of sin is the law” is later explained by Paul in more detail in Romans 7. Once again, he explains this not as a result of the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of works, but in terms of the inadequacies of the administration of grace in the older era. This accords with the assessment of Hosea. Finally, 1 Corinthians 15:57 speaks of the greater victory that has arrived in the new era. An absolute contrast with the older era as administered to Israel is neither necessitated nor implied. Instead, Paul once again expands this same theme in Romans 7-8 when he interjects a word of praise anticipating the new age: “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 7:25). He then elaborates this in Romans 8:1ff. And by this language, Romans

7:25 and Romans 8 does not argue for an absolute contrast to the Mosaic covenant. For it presupposes that the Mosaic covenant is a covenant of redeeming grace, as taught in Romans 7. Thus this language in 1 Corinthians 15:57 does not indicate that it is in absolute contrast to the language of v. 56, with reference to the Mosaic covenant and its curses. If there is no absolute contrast in this respect, then the actual administration of the Mosaic covenant to Israel was not a republication of the covenant of works as VanDrunen defines it.

If these comments are correct, it may be asked, where is the absolute contrast between death and life that is here presupposed in Paul's argument? Since it cannot be between the Mosaic covenant as administered to Israel and the new covenant, we believe it is between the covenant of works given to Adam and the covenant of grace. That is, the Mosaic covenant is simultaneously a reminder of the covenant of works even though it is not a strict republication of it. *Thus, while Paul expounds the Mosaic covenant, he simultaneously reminds the church of the covenant of works given to Adam. But it is that covenant of works given to Adam that is in absolute contrast to the new covenant. It is not some operative principle of works administered in the Mosaic covenant itself that is in absolute contrast to the new covenant.*

This fits with Paul's perspective in his other letter to the Corinthians. For in 2 Corinthians 3, he expounds the difference between the old and new covenants as a relative (not an absolute contrast). This is especially evident in 2 Corinthians 3:7-11. Verse 11 reads: "For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory." Verses 7-8 provide a similar claim: "If...the letters...came with glory, how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory." That is, both ends of 2 Corinthians 3:7-11 suggest an organic relationship between the covenants. The old had glory and the new had more of the same thing—glory. Thus, there is only a relative contrast between that which possesses greater glory to that which possessed less glory. This is the same as a relative contrast between a full grown organism and its immature state. It is not an absolute contrast. 2 Corinthians 3:9-10 express this same thought: "For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it." Whether we take the latter phrase as a claim that the old covenant no longer has any glory or that it simply does not possess glory now compared to the glory that surpasses it, both interpretations do not affect our overall point. For both acknowledge that the old covenant once had glory, which glory was surpassed by the glory of the new covenant. Thus, both (in their own administration) are fundamentally covenants that embody essentially the same thing—glory. This again suggests a relative and not an absolute contrast.

It is in this light that we should interpret Paul's language of the old covenant as a covenant of condemnation and the new covenant as one of righteousness. That is, the old covenant administered a condemnation that has been reversed in the new. And yet this reversal must be seen within an organically unfolding paradigm. We suggest that semi-eschatological justification accounts for this. That is, it is the curses of the law that were administered upon Israel relatively speaking that are now removed from the new covenant people of God in semi-eschatological righteousness. This represents a relative contrast between the covenants and not an absolute one.

Even for our readers that are not convinced of our proposed solution, it should be noted that Paul is here (2 Cor. 3:9) placing this condemnation in relative contrast to the ministry of

righteousness. Insofar as Paul is contrasting the actual administration of the law to Israel, this is not an absolute contrast. Therefore, it is not the administration of absolute wrath. As such it is not a works principle in absolute contrast to justifying grace. If this is the case in 2 Corinthians 3, this provides further support for our contention that it is true also in 1 Corinthians 15. Both make more sense (and cohere together) when we recognize that Paul is dealing with the Mosaic covenant as a covenant of grace uniquely legally administered. That is, this legal administration is not in absolute contrast to the grace which grounds it, contra Kline.

Conclusion

Thus, we do not believe that VanDrunen has proven that Romans 5 or 1 Corinthians 15 teach the works principle which *LNF* defends. Instead, they only make sense within a paradigm that is at odds with that of Kline. VanDrunen cannot simply claim that we have misunderstood him or Kline. He must prove that a works principle in absolute contrast to a grace principle does not imply real merit. What if he claims to accept our contention that Paul grounds unique legal administration under Moses directly (and not simply indirectly) in the grace it administers? If so, we believe he must publically abandon Kline's system, abandoning the view that the law as administered to Israel contains a works principle that is in absolute antithesis to grace. He cannot claim that this is all he is talking about (i.e., that he is satisfied with our claim that the Mosaic covenant is a covenant of grace with a unique legal administration). Should he not also abandon those unique constructions that are based on Kline's system of bifurcation? Must he not also renounce numerous claims in *LNF*—for instance, the claim that Israel merited her blessings? For this is more than a claim of typology. Who would say that the typical animal sacrifices forgive sins? Neither can one say that Israel's obedience merited anything. At this point, this ceases to be typology and becomes reality.

When the philosopher Edmund Husserl was convinced of one of his errors, he publically abandoned it. If this was true of a secular philosopher, should it not be more so with us? We can only ask Dr. VanDrunen and his followers to consider the arguments we have presented and ask if it is time to abandon the unique Klinean distinctives that they have promoted. As for the church universal, Jew and Gentile alike, she is built up with the knowledge of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ—a grace and knowledge administered and revealed in both the old and new covenants. By this grace, God has become our God—the God of a people who were alienated from the life of God, now brought near by the blood of Christ. The glory that we possess in Christ now shines brighter than the glory of the former era. We have received the fullness of God's glory in the face of Christ. In faith, lay hold of that glory—the wealth and beauty of the living Christ. He will strengthen you. He will uphold you. For by his merits alone, he has secured for you eternal life in the presence of God. And that life will never end. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

Incarnation¹

Giles Fletcher (1586-1623)

What hath man done, that man shall not undo,

Since God to him is grown so near a kin?

Did his foe slay him? He shall slay his foe.

Hath he lost all? He all again shall win.

Is sin his master? He shall master sin.

Too hardy soul, with sin the field to try;

The only way to conquer was to fly.

But thus long death hath lived, and now death's self shall die.

He is a path, if any be misled;

He is a robe, if any naked be;

If any chance to hunger, he is bread;

If any be a bondman, he is free;

If any be but weak, how strong is he!

To dead men life is he, to sick men health;

To blind men sight, and to the needy wealth—

A pleasure without loss, a treasure without stealth.

¹ These lines are taken from Fletcher's larger work *Christ's Victory and Triumph* (1610). The title above is our own.

Who can forget—never to be forgot—
The time when all the world in slumber lies,
When, like the stars, the singing Angels shot
To earth, and heaven awaked all his eyes,
To see another Sun at midnight rise

 On earth? Was never sight of pareil fame:
 For God before man like himself did frame,
But God himself now like a mortal man became.

A child he was, and had not learn'd to speak,
That with his word the world before did make;
His mother's arms him bore, he was so weak,
That with one hand the vaults of heaven could shake.
See how small room my infant Lord doth take,
 Whom all the world is not enough to hold!
 Who of his years, or of his age, hath told?
Never such age so young, never a child so old.

Patristic Commentaries on Revelation: An Update

Francis X. Gumerlock

The Need for an Update

In March of 2003, I delivered a paper entitled “Ancient Commentaries on the Book of Revelation: A Bibliographical Guide” in which I provided bibliographical information on thirty commentaries on the Apocalypse written between the third and tenth centuries.¹ At that time, only two of those thirty texts had been translated into English. A revision of that paper published as “Patristic Commentaries on Revelation” in the September 2008 issue of *Kerux* showed that of the twenty-one commentaries on Revelation written between the third and eighth centuries only three at the time had been translated into English.² In that paper and article, I challenged readers to undertake a translation project focusing on these commentaries. “If just one of these commentaries were translated and published each year,” I wrote, “this entire patristic treasury of Revelation commentaries could be available to English-speaking scholars within twenty years.”³

Wonderful to relate, within just one decade only three of the seventeen commentaries from the third through early eighth century remain *without* English translation. They are: the fragments of Hippolytus (c. 235) on the Apocalypse, scattered about in a variety of texts and languages; the large Latin commentary of Primasius of Hadrumetum (540); and the short *Brief Explanations on the Apocalypse* by Cassiodorus (c. 580) in Latin.

In this update, I shall review the status of entries #1-17 of the article “Patristic Commentaries on Revelation,” provide locations for new editions and translations, and discuss more recent scholarship on the commentaries. This update is meant as a supplement not a replacement for the aforementioned article. Entries #18-21 in the that article, which treat commentaries from the late eighth century, will be updated in a forthcoming paper/article entitled “Carolingian Apocalypse Commentaries” which will cover those from 750-987 A.D.

¹ Francis X. Gumerlock, “Ancient Commentaries on the Book of Revelation: A Bibliographical Guide.” Paper delivered at the Southeastern Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Dayton, Tennessee, March 2003.

² Gumerlock, “Patristic Commentaries on Revelation.” *Kerux* 23/2 (Sept 2008): 49-67.
<http://www.kerux.com/documents/KeruxV23N2A5.htm>.

³ *Ibid.*, 65.

Abbreviations

- ANF *Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Church*. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885-1986 with numerous reprints by a variety of publishing companies including T & T Clark, Eerdmans, and Hendrickson. It is also widely available in electronic form on the internet.
- CCCM *Corpus christianorum, continuatio medievalis*. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1953-present.
- CCSL *Corpus christianorum, series latina*. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1953-present.
- EMAC *Early Medieval Apocalypse Commentaries*. Francis X. Gumerlock, ed. forthcoming.
- FC *Fathers of the Church*. New York: Cima Publ. Co., 1947-1949; New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1949-1960; Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1960-present.
- GCR *Greek Commentaries on Revelation*. William C. Weinrich, trans. Ancient Christian Texts series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.
- LCR *Latin Commentaries on Revelation*. William C. Weinrich, trans. Ancient Christian Texts series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.
- OTO *Origen, Tyconius and Others. On the Apocalypse*. Thomas Schmidt, David C. Robinson, Francis X. Gumerlock, trans. forthcoming.
- PL *Patrologia cursus completes, series latina*, 221 vols. J. P. Migne, ed. Paris: Petit-Montrouge, 1844-1864. Available in reprint from Brepols, and on compact disk as Chadwyk-Healey Patrologia Latin Database. Bell & Howell Information and Learning Co., 1996-2000.
- SSA *The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse: Medieval Texts in Translation*. Francis X. Gumerlock, trans. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2009.

1. Hippolytus of Rome (c. 235)

Recent scholarship tends to doubt the existence of two separate lost works on the Apocalypse (*Apology for the Apocalypse and Gospel of John the Apostle and Evangelist* and *Chapters against Gaius*) and tends to think they were one and the same work.

Fragments of it were found in later Greek, Syriac, and Arabic commentaries on the Apocalypse. Some scholars think that these later commentaries may not necessarily have had the text of Hippolytus on the Apocalypse before them, but rather a *florilegia* of Hippolytus' comments on the Apocalypse gathered from that work and his other works, such as *On Christ and Antichrist*.

Also, there is some question about the degree to which the fragments of Hippolytus on the Apocalypse accurately represent the original lost work. For example, the citations may be paraphrases or summaries of Hippolytus or even attributions of their own opinions to Hippolytus.

An article that provides the most recent scholarship on the status of the fragments of Hippolytus on the Apocalypse is Bernard McGinn, "Turning Points in Early Christian Apocalypse Exegesis," in Robert J. Daly, ed., *Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009), 81-105, esp. 91. According to McGinn, fragments of Hippolytus on the Apocalypse have also been found in Coptic and Old Slavonic texts, and are still being discovered.

Two Arabic commentaries that include citations from Hippolytus on the Apocalypse are those of Paul of Bush and Ibn Katib Qaysar from thirteenth-century Egypt. The former is translated in Shawqi Najib Talia, "Bulus al-Busi's Arabic Commentary on the Apocalypse of John: An English Translation and a Commentary," Ph.D. diss (Catholic University of America, 1987) available from Proquest Information and Learning. Paul of Bush's citations of Hippolytus on Rev 12 are on pp. 183 and 189.

The commentary by Qaysar was published in Arabic in Girgis [Jirjis] Filutha'us 'Awad, *Tafsir Sifr al-Ru'ya li-l-Qadis Yuhanna al-Lahuti l-Ibn Katib Qaysar* (Cairo, Egypt: al-Qummus Armaniyus Habashi Shatta al-Birmawi, 1939; Reprint: Cairo: Maktabat al-Mahabbah, 1994). Joseph Shehata of Denver, Colorado, a native of Egypt and fluent in Arabic, is planning to translate the commentary beginning in January 2013 with the goal of publishing it in a medieval series of an academic press. Stephen J. Davis of Yale University has done some work with the Qaysar commentary and wrote an informative article "Introducing an Arabic Commentary on the Apocalypse: Ibn Katib Qaysar on Revelation," *Harvard Theological Review* 101/1 (2008): 77-96.

In the summer of 2012, I began a compilation of the extant fragments of Hippolytus on the Apocalypse from the various texts with hope of providing English translations of all of them in a future article.

2. Origen (d. 253) and Others

Thomas Schmidt, formerly of Utica, New York but now a graduate student at the divinity school at Yale University, translated these *Scholia on the Apocalypse* from Greek to English. He

considered the various corrections that had been written after Harnack's edition, and wrote a scholarly introduction. Plans are to publish his introduction and translation in OTO in a patristic commentary series.

3. Victorinus of Pettau (260)

A new translation of the original commentary of Victorinus, not Jerome's recension of it, is translated into English in LCR.

4. Tyconius of Carthage (380)

A reconstruction of Tyconius' Latin *Exposition of the Apocalypse* was completed by Roger Gryson and published in 2011 in CCSL 107A. I have translated Tyconius' comments on Chapters 1-5 of Revelation and sent them to an academic publishing company with an introduction by David Robinson of Toronto. We hope to have the translation finished by the summer of 2013.

David Robinson translated into English the Turin fragments of Tyconius' *Exposition*, which cover Rev 2:18-4:1 and 7:17-12:6 in his doctoral dissertation *The Mystic Rules of Scripture: Tyconius of Carthage's Keys and Windows to the Apocalypse* (Toronto: University of Saint Michael's, 2010) available from Proquest Information and Learning. An updated English translation of the Turin fragments by Robinson will also appear in the forthcoming OTO.

5. Didymus the Blind (d. 398)

The small fragment of his Apocalypse commentary that appeared as Scholium 1 in *Scholia on the Apocalypse* by Origen and others was translated by Thomas Schmidt and is slated for publication in OTO.

6. Jerome (398)

Jerome's recension of Victorinus' commentary on the Apocalypse was not translated into English and published in LCR, as projected in my article "Patristic Commentaries on Revelation." But the translated commentary under the name of Victorinus in ANF 7:344-360 is essentially Jerome's recension.

7. Eucumenius (or Oecumenius) of Isauria in Asia Minor

Two new English translations of Eucumenius' Greek commentary appeared recently. First in 2006 in FC 112 translated by John N. Suggit under the title *Oecumenius. Commentary on the Apocalypse*; and then by William C. Weinrich in 2011 in GCR who also used the spelling Oecumenius. Almost no one holds that he is to be confused with the bishop of Tricca who shared the same name. Both translators reviewed the scholarly arguments about the date of the commentary and seem to hold that it was written in the first half of the sixth century. Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou, on the other hand, in her recent dissertation entitled "Andrew of Caesarea and the Apocalypse in the Ancient Church of the East: Studies and Translation,"

(Québec: Université Laval, 2008), holds that “Oikoumenios” wrote his commentary at the *end* of the sixth century (pp. 15-17).

8. Caesarius of Arles (d. 542)

Homilies 4-6 were published in English in 2009 in SSA, pp. 41-48. All of Caesarius’ homilies on the Apocalypse were translated into English by Weinrich in 2011 in LCR. Unfortunately, in Weinrich’s translation the biblical references in Revelation, on which Caesarius is commenting, are not marked by chapter and verse (only by quotation marks), which makes it difficult when looking for Caesarius’ comments on specific passages.

Roger Gryson, in his introduction in *Tyconii Afri Expositio Apocalypseos* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2011), mentioned that Caesarius wrote the homilies “probablement dans les années 510” or “probably in the year 510” (p. 42).

9. Primasius of Hadrumetum (540)

Primasius’ commentary is one of the few patristic texts on the Apocalypse in Latin which is still unavailable in English translation. It leans heavily on Tyconius and was influential on many early Latin medieval commentaries.

10. Apringius of Béja (548)

Apringius’ exposition of Rev 5:1-17 was published in English translation in 2009 in SSA, pp. 27-29. The first English translation of the entire extant commentary (which treats only Rev 1:1-5:7 and 18:6-22:20) appeared in LCR.

11. Cassiodorus (580)

This very short summary of the Apocalypse in Latin is also without a published English translation, with the exception of its comments on Rev 5-8 published in SSA, pp. 49-51.

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

Two English translations of Andrew’s Greek commentary on Revelation were published in 2011. The first was by Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou in FC 123, the second by Weinrich in GCR.

13. Pseudo-Jerome (7th-8th c.)

The comments on Rev 5 and 6 in this short handbook on the Apocalypse were published in English in SSA, pp. 51-52. The entire handbook was translated into English by me and is scheduled to appear in the forthcoming EMAC.

14. Pseudo-Alcuin, *On the Seven Seals*

English translations of the two versions of this short text interpreting the seven seals were published in SSA, pp. 30-32.

15. Gregory the Great (d. 604), *Testimonies on the Apocalypse*

Paterius, one of Pope Gregory the Great's disciples, compiled Gregory's comments on the Apocalypse from his other writings. That compilation was known to Ambrose Autpert in the eighth century (CCCM 27:5), but it is believed to have been lost. The compilation in PL 79:1107-22 is believed to have been written not by Paterius but by Alufus of Tornaco (d. 1141). Mark DelCogliano of the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota has translated into English the *Testimonies on the Apocalypse* of Gregory the Great. It is scheduled for publication in EMAC.

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

This commentary on Rev 7-12 (although it briefly comments on Rev 4 in the introduction and on Rev 13-15 in the conclusion) in the Coptic language was translated into Italian by Tito Orlandi in 1981. In 2011 Francesca Lecci of Milan, Italy translated Orlandi's Italian version into English; this was edited by Braeden Fallet of Westminster, Colorado and me. Lecci's English translation is scheduled for publication in EMAC.

17. Bede (710)

A new translation of Bede's Apocalypse commentary was published in 2011 by Weinrich in LCR. Faith Wallis' translation entitled *Bede. Commentary on Revelation*, already advertised in a catalogue, is scheduled for publication by Liverpool University Press in November 2012 (ISBN: 978 18463 18450).

Related Works

A Latin fragment entitled *De Enoc et Helia [On Enoch and Elijah]* from the fifth or sixth century says that when Enoch and Elijah come, they are going to preach the coming of the Lord and the Day of Judgment for forty-two months and that each of the twelve tribes of Israel with the exception of Dan will be sealed and martyred for Christ.⁴ Thus it interprets Rev 7:1-7 and Rev 11 in a literal and futurist manner.

Several recent authors who study patristic and early medieval Apocalypse commentaries mention that there was an Apocalypse commentary, dated to the first half of the eighth century or between 700 and 750 AD, that is now lost.⁵ However, it was a source for material in later

⁴ In *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctorum Antiquissimorum*, Vol 9 (Berlin: Weidmannos, 1892), 63 where it is attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine. On the date of the fragment, see Martine Dulaey, *Victorin de Poetovio premier exegete latin*, Vol. 2 (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1993), 42.

⁵Roger Gryson, ed., *Commentaria minora in Apocalypsin Johannis*. CCSL 107 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2003), 142, 238, 239 (in which Gryson says that it used Tyconius abundantly), 242, 300 (in which he says that it is from the first half of the eighth century); Martin McNamara, "The newly-identified Cambridge Apocalypse Commentary and the Reference Bible: A Preliminary Enquiry," *Peritia* 15 (2001): 208-56 at 219-220 in which he says: "The commentary gloss on the Apocalypse on which both the *Reference bible* and the Cambridge text depend must be older still—from the first half of the eighth century at the latest."

commentaries including the Apocalypse commentary in the *Reference Bible* (c. 750) and an anonymous Apocalypse commentary in a tenth century manuscript at Cambridge. The commentary in the *Reference Bible* has already been critically edited in CCSL 107:231-295; and the Cambridge commentary will be edited in the forthcoming volume of Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, Volume 108G. Once this appears, it is very likely that large portions of the lost commentary from the early eighth century can be reconstructed.

English translations of comments of Filastrius of Brixia (4th c.) on the author of the Apocalypse; of Ambrosiaster (c. 385) on Rev 2 and 10; Jerome on Rev 17 from one of his letters; Eucherius of Lyons (d. 449) on the seven spirits of God (Rev 1:4); and Quodvultdeus (c. 450) on the two witnesses (Rev 11) and the resurrection (Rev 20) are set for publication in OTO. Also included in that volume will be English translations of a sermon by Chromatius of Aquileia (d. 407) on Saint John the Evangelist and Apostle which comments on Rev 10, and an ancient preface to the Apocalypse pseudonymously attributed to Jerome. English translations of a few paragraphs harmonizing the last trumpet with the seven trumpets, attributed to Gregory the Great, and a preface to the Apocalypse by Isidore of Seville (d. 636) are scheduled for publication in EMAC.

The Status of Translations and a Suggestion for Further Study

Of the seventeen commentaries on Revelation written between the third and first half of the eighth century, only three remain without English translation. Of these, the most important is probably the large commentary of Primasius of Hadrumetum which relied heavily on Tyconius and which was very influential on many Apocalypse commentaries of the early Middle Ages.

Now that most of the patristic commentaries on Revelation are in English, one fruitful study would be to search for and isolate any commonalities between the Eastern and Western exegetical traditions on Revelation, and then to investigate the sources of these commonalities, which may most likely be traced back to writers of the earliest centuries of Christianity such as Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Origen.

Reviews

K:JNWTS 27/3 (2012): 44-56

Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2012. 172pp. Paper. ISBN: 978-1-58743-315-3. \$17.99

Peter Enns' latest book represents a significant systematic and biblical-theological challenge to traditional Christian orthodoxy. The fact that it comes from the hand of a former professor of a conservative Reformed seminary makes it even more dangerous and alarming. Readers should be careful of being exclusively focused on Enns' denial of the historicity of Adam and Eve. As important as that doctrine is, it is but one piece of the Christian system of doctrine and philosophy of revelation that is holistically undermined in this book. Readers should also resist Enns' repeated characterization of his detractors as simply "American fundamentalists." At stake is the consistency and integrity of the Biblical witness to the orthodox Christian faith.¹

In this review, our summary and engagement of Enns' position will be necessarily selective. We propose to review Enns' position in three main areas: (1) hermeneutics and biblical theology; (2) systematic theology (particularly hamartiology); (3) ancient Jewish interpretations of Adam.

Hermeneutics and Biblical Theology

The first two chapters lay much of the hermeneutical groundwork for the rest of the book. Chapter one is largely an extended apology for the results of source criticism with respect to the formation of the Pentateuch. Enns begins by identifying three forces that challenged the historical reliability of Genesis: (1) natural science (geology, Darwinian evolution); (2) source criticism (Wellhausen); (3) biblical archeology (especially the discoveries of other Ancient Near Eastern [ANE] creation and flood myths). The study of ANE myths took the form of "comparative religions criticism." These three forces, Enns argues, "converged to produce powerfully coherent and persuasive explanations for what Genesis is and how it should be understood" (7). Darwinian evolution challenged the biblical idea of common descent from a single human pair; higher criticism challenged the idea that the Pentateuch as we know it is the product of the Mosaic period; and biblical archaeology showed that Genesis contained stories that were very similar to the non-historical creation myths of Israel's ANE neighbors. Rather than the "separatist" reaction and "deep conflict" that characterized conservative reaction to these forces, the challenge they posed actually "demanded a fresh *synthesis* of old and new" (7). He laments the fact that "neutrality is rare" among fundamentalists and evangelicals (ibid).

¹ Enns maintains that his faith is "summed up in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, which are expressions of broad Christian orthodoxy" (x-xi). While this may indicate a commitment to Christian Trinitarianism, his later assertion that the Bible acknowledges the existence of more than one god significantly compromises that claim.

It seems that it is this kind of sober, objective, neutral, and scientific synthesis of these issues that Enns seems prepared to provide. This points us to a glaring weakness in Enns' presentation. Simply put, the critical axe with which he chops down "American fundamentalism" is not applied with anywhere near equal rigor to either himself or the program of modern science. He is quick and brash in his dismissal of conservative defenses of the historic Christian view of Scripture as reactionary and insular. Very little time is spent actually engaging the formative responses of orthodox Christian scholars to higher criticism.² His interaction is largely limited to a weak attempt at "sociologizing" these "many Christians" who oppose higher criticism and Darwinian evolution. Their opposition, according to Enns, is merely the manifestation of their angst and fear over the loss of their particular "group identity" (145-46) contextualized in a uniquely "American" context (x). However, very little emphasis is given to sociological ("group identity") forces that may affect the guild of higher criticism.

The irony here is that Enns seems eager to explain both "American fundamentalism" *and* the content of OT revelation in terms of the same sociological paradigm. Just as OT Israel faced a crisis that led to the need for self-redefinition, so does "American fundamentalism." For Israel, the crisis was the exile. Prior to the exile, Israel thought of itself as "God's chosen people" in perpetual possession of all the attendant benefits of such a status (27). This was their collective "group identity." The loss of this self-consciousness in the exile led to the necessity of a national self-redefinition (28). This redefinition came in the *creation* (not merely organic expansion) of what we presently know as the Hebrew Bible. Older records of Israel's history (not previously regarded as canonical Scripture) are creatively rewritten in light of the exile, and some new documents are added.

Ironically, Enns sees a parallel phenomena at work in what he prefers to call "American fundamentalism," but equally includes elements of Patristic, Medieval, and Protestant Christian orthodoxy. Prior to the nineteenth century, "American fundamentalism" (together with Christian orthodoxy) believed that their faith was in essential harmony with the evidence of science. This group identity reached a crisis point with the gradual rise of natural science, source criticism, and biblical archeology. Rather than embrace the necessity for a creative self-redefinition, "American Fundamentalism" tended to resist such an exercise. This has left it reactionary, insular, intolerant, lacking neutrality and academic integrity. Just as Ezra the scribe pursued a redefinition of Scripture through the rewriting of Israel's history and self-definition in response to the exile, so Peter Enns would lead "American fundamentalism" down a parallel path.

Interestingly, Enns tends to present his own position as if it hovered far above these forces,

² Many of these names will be familiar to Reformed readers: William Henry Green, Geerhardus Vos, O. T. Allis, E. J. Young, not to mention evangelicals such as Gleason Archer and R. K. Harrison. Green (together with Umberto Cassuto) is only briefly referenced on p. 153 (note 22). Interestingly, Cassuto's views do not appear to have been forged in the context of American fundamentalism, but that of Italian fascism. Enns is certainly free to dismiss these arguments in whatever fashion he pleases. But if his aim is to present an argument that is remotely persuasive to those still committed to the defense of an orthodox Christian view of Scripture, he would have done well to engage their presentations more thoroughly.

relatively immune from the effects of historic contextualization. He is objective, neutral, embracing a posture of conservation rather than confrontation, etc. His approach to the philosophy of modern science is similar. Its conclusions are to be taken at face value and the Bible is to be re-interpreted in the light of them. Throughout this work, Enns invests what he calls “the consensus of modern scholars” (23, 24, 26, 29, 32, 38, 159 [note 6]) with an authority equivalent to the Romanist *magisterium*. If we are to address the place of sociological forces in theology and biblical interpretation, it seems fair to ask that these be addressed as they affect all sides in the debate.

Beyond these (rather predictable) accusations against conservative scholarship, Enns also points to ways modern critical scholars have more consistently carried forward the previous Christian tradition (note the rewriting and re-definition of the church’s history!). He writes: “...modern biblical scholars, beginning especially in the eighteenth century, did not create a problem where there had been none. They were heirs to a long-standing history for probing the meaning of Genesis, because Genesis itself demands close inspection. Genesis generates his own questions” (13). Thus Enns and his higher critical forbears believe themselves to be carrying forward a key aspect of a *traditional* approach to Scripture by asking such “tough questions.” More than that, Genesis *itself* leads one, even *beckons* one to subject it to questionable critical analysis. Ignorant conservative fundamentalists, however, do not seem to have been faithful stewards of this aspect of the interpretation of Scripture.

The next three chapters are taken up expanding upon the last two forces allied against the historical reliability of Genesis: source criticism and comparative religions criticism. As to source criticism, Enns argues that although pre-modern interpreters raised questions about apparent inconsistencies in Genesis, it was only in the modern period these were used to address questions of authorship and date. Enns applies this to the question of the authorship of Deuteronomy. Citing the third person character of the first five verses, as well as the use of the phrase “beyond the Jordan,” he concludes that Deut. 1:1-5 “are indisputably written by someone who made it into the Promised Land after Moses died,” i.e., not by Moses.

Leaving aside the question of whether or not Enns’ epistemology allows him to affirm anything “indisputably” (14), we must note that we are struck with the paucity of Enns’ presentation of the evidence for his position. The formal use of the third person hardly excludes first person authorship. While in *some* modern contexts, this may sound out of place, it can hardly be said that the third person is never utilized by first person narrators. Even if this use of the third person sounds “odd” (14) to modern ears, Enns provides no conclusive evidence that it must necessarily sound that way to older ones.

He then turns to the account of Moses’ death in Deuteronomy 34. Enns cites verses 6 and 10 as proof that a lengthy time must have transpired between Moses’ death and the authorship of the passages (thus excluding Moses as a candidate). But even if we grant (for the sake of argument) that these particular verses, or the introduction and conclusion as a whole are post-Mosaic, this hardly provides proof that “the book of Deuteronomy [as a whole—BWS] comes to us from someone who lived a long time after Moses” (15). The question is well-stated by Enns himself on page 17: “is the Pentateuch an essentially Mosaic document that as merely updated here and there, or do these examples indicate when Genesis and the Pentateuch as a whole were written

(no earlier than the time of David)?” The former is hardly a threat to a “traditional” view of the organic unity and inspiration of Scripture. Enns, in fact, cites Jerome and Ibn Ezra who wrestled with such questions. The latter, however, is a categorically different alternative.

While non-committal about the precise details (again, does Enns’ epistemology allow him to be “committal” about much of anything?), he believes that the best explanation of the data is that “the Pentateuch as we know it was shaped in the post-exilic period” (26). Enns does not deny the possibility of pre-exilic sources for the Pentateuch (or the rest of the OT, for that matter), but does assert that it is “unlikely” that “these early records of ancient deeds, court politics, and temple liturgies were thought of as sacred Scripture at the time” (26).

But we must note here an oddity in Enns’ presentation. For him, the exile was a “traumatic event in Israel’s ancient national history,” as the knowledge that they were “promised the perpetual possession of the land, the glorious temple as a house of worship, and a son of David perpetually sitting on the throne”—all of which came to an apparent end in the exile. But if the OT is wholly the product of post-exilic Israel, on what basis do we conclude that they were disappointed at the failure of God’s promise? Without access to the original sources that underlay the creatively written or rewritten post-exilic Pentateuch, how do we know for certain what their original hopes were? The question is hardly a superfluous one. When applying a very similar method to the NT, source and form critics have come to a variety of explanations as to the original theology that lie beneath the current text of the NT. Without a clear consensus on the theology of the source material, it is difficult to say anything confidently about the original thought-conceptions of the original community or individual in which it originated.

The same can be said about Enns’ comments about the addition of Chronicles to the canon in the post-exilic period. If the exile brought about a process by which the biblical text was “collected and edited...with additions and thorough updating,” why add another book that supposedly “tells Israel’s story quite differently” in the books of Chronicles (28)? If the point was to rewrite Israel’s story to address contemporary circumstances, why not just rewrite Samuel and/or Kings and leave it at that (as was done with Deuteronomy)?

Conservatives who embrace a traditional view of the authorship of the Pentateuch have no problem *in principle* with the idea that Ezra or a later exilic figure, under the inspirational guidance of the Holy Spirit, made some final editorial additions or explanatory comments that put the Pentateuch in its final form. However, without access to this hypothetical “Ur-Pentateuch,” it is impossible to determine with certainty how the final form differs from the original Mosaic document (if one so existed). In other words, it is certainly possible that a later author (even an exilic author) made a few explanatory comments in order to allow some portions to be more intelligible to a later audience.

Such an editorial event could also be integrated into a traditional biblical-theological conception of revelation and redemption, which views both of these activities as proceeding in epochal and organic fashion. It is only at the great transitional moments of redemptive history that revelation is brought forth to God’s people. It is certainly possible to integrate a Holy Spirit-guided editorial activity into this paradigm.

But this is something wholly and categorically different from what Enns proposes (or at least permits). In his view, the Pentateuch is not just in a few isolated editorial comments a post-exilic product, but is in both the whole and the parts a creatively re-written account of Israel's history. Israel's "historical moment" of exile "drove their theologians to engage their past creatively" (33). The "Old Testament *as a whole*" "was fundamentally a postexilic document" (32). While the OT does have a literary prehistory, it is doubtful whether those pre-exilic documents were actually considered to be Scripture by the earlier Israelites. As he puts it:

There is little serious question that Israel documented, recorded, told, and retold its own story— orally and in writing—long before the exile. Few would dispute this. It is unlikely, however, that these early records of ancient deeds, court politics, and temple liturgies were thought of as sacred Scripture at the time. That is a later development, and the motivation for it was Israel's national crisis (26).

Enns' position, therefore, is not simply that Scripture *in its final form* comes to us from the period of the exile. Rather, he maintains that it is very likely that the idea of *sacred Scripture itself* does not originate until after the exile.

At this point, it should be clear that Enns embraces a doctrine of Scripture and philosophy of revelation that stands fundamentally at odds with historic Christianity, let alone Reformed biblical theology. This will become clearer when we examine the systematic-theological implications drawn out elsewhere in his book.

Systematic Theology

Enns' book constitutes an all-out assault on the pillars of an orthodox doctrine of Scripture and an orthodox (Augustinian) system of doctrine in particular. Nearly every *locus* of theology is dramatically affected in Enns' presentation. In terms of theology proper, Enns informs us that the OT actually teaches Monolatry rather than Monotheism (although not uniformly so!) (45). In other words, the Israelites "worshipped only one God, Yahweh, but without denying the existence of other gods" (43). In the field of anthropology, the assault is self-evident. The book as a whole is occupied primarily with arguing against an historical Adam. We could also add his holistic redefinition of the doctrine of the image of God as purely functional as opposed to ontological (xiv-xv). In the area of hamartiology (the doctrine of sin), this book raises serious questions of the consistency of the Bible regarding the question of Augustinianism and Pelagianism. This in turn has obvious and serious implications for soteriology. We quickly find that a rejection of the Augustinian principle of biblical interpretation ("what is latent in the old is patent in the new") somehow also leads to rejection of the Augustinian principle of original sin.

To be clear, we must point out that Enns formally denies he is arguing for a Pelagian reading of Genesis 3 (91). However, in our estimation, those denials are of little comfort in view of his substantive exegetical positions on the passage. Enns' attempted escape from the charge is through an insistence on the fact that questions about whether all mankind "are born in a state of sinfulness" or "born in a state of sin and condemnation" "go beyond the parameters of the story" (85). In our judgment, this evasion is exegetically and theologically unsatisfactory. As far as what Genesis itself teaches, Enns clearly and substantially defends a Pelagian reading of the

passage (in spite of his assertion to the contrary). Consider the following quotation:

Cain's choice seems to be that either he can take hold of ("master") his anger or follow in his parents' footsteps...The picture drawn for us is that *Cain is fully capable of making a different choice*, not that his sin is due to an inescapable inheritance (85)

Assumed in this line of reasoning is the classic Pelagian principle that "ought" implies "can." Because it is stated that Cain ought to *resist* ("master") sin, it is assumed that he is therefore *able* to avoid it. Enns doesn't even temper Cain's supposed ability with semi-Pelagian dross—he is depicted as being "*fully capable*" of avoiding sin. Furthermore, not only does he positively affirm the Pelagian reading, he explicitly rejects the Augustinian one: "...not that his sin is due to an inescapable inheritance." Putting these together, we are inescapably left with the substance of full-blown Pelagianism with regard to sinful man's ability.³ The mere assertion of Enns to the contrary is simply that—mere assertion.

Enns later returns to the Pelagian objection and attempts to distinguish his position from that of Pelagius.

Pelagius (354-420/440) argued that Adam was literally the *first human* but was nevertheless only responsible for his own sin. Adam was simply a bad example, which humans may or may not choose to follow, and so humans can theoretically live sinless lives. I, however, read the Adam story not as a universal story to explain human sinfulness at all but as a proto-Israel story. A wisdom reading of the garden story does not address, and in no way negates, the universal and inescapable *reality* of sin and death and the *need* for a Savior to die and rise (91).

Enns seems to make three basic points in this quotation as to how his position differs from Pelagius. First, Pelagius viewed Adam as the literal first human, while Enns does not. Second, Pelagius viewed the Adam story as a universal story to explain human sinfulness, while Enns views it as a proto-Israel story. Third, while Pelagius felt that humans could live theoretically sinless lives, Enns denies that contention.

It is true that the first two points distinguish Enns and Pelagius. But they have the net effect of making Pelagius more orthodox than Enns on these counts. The third point regarding the universal *reality* of sin and death, however, is not one that Pelagius necessarily denied. The *crux* of the issue with Pelagius was not merely whether a human being was capable of theoretically living a sinless life. One might deny that point, and still be a Pelagian. The *crux* of the debate concerned the link between Adam's sin and that of his descendants: was it causal or merely exemplary? How is the universality of sin *to be explained*? Is it by the fact that all men inherit a corrupt nature making them fully incapable of practicing true righteousness, or only because they are universally surrounded by an environment of bad examples? Augustinians maintain the former and deny the latter. Both Enns and Pelagius emphatically deny the former and vigorously

³ It must be remembered that wherever it is argued that post-Adamic man has *any* ability to obey God from his own natural powers, or when it is asserted that he is able to merit or earn a reward on the ground of his obedience, the root principle of Pelagianism is at work.

affirm the latter. As Enns states: “The picture drawn for us is that Cain is *fully capable* of making a different choice, *not that his sin is due to an inescapable sinful inheritance*” (85).

This point is especially relevant to the current debate on the republication of the covenant of works in the Mosaic covenant. In addition to these parallels between Adam and the Cain and Abel story, Enns also sees strong parallels between Adam and Israel (65ff.). In the most recent literature on the subject, the doctrine of republication is articulated in terms of the fact that both Adam and Israel undergo a fundamentally analogous works-merit probation, albeit on different “levels.” Just as Adam had to obey God to merit eternal life, so Israel has to obey God to merit temporal life in Canaan.

Bryan D. Estelle, a modern proponent of this “Klinean” version of the doctrine of republication has noted the similarities between his position and that of Enns. He writes: “I applaud[s] Enns for noticing significant connections between Adam and Israel and between the Garden of Eden and Canaan.” However, he views as “problematic” Enns denial of Adam’s historicity and intertextual reversal of Israel and Adam.⁴ Estelle also goes on to critique Enns’ rejection of the historical Adam as leading to viewing God as the cause and author of sin, as well as requiring serious modifications of the doctrine of original sin. We applaud Estelle for noting these problematic connections. We would also encourage him to consider more seriously other ways the doctrine of republication might be inconsistent with the doctrine of original sin. One might also compromise it by formulating an Adam-Israel parallel in a way that violates the fundamental principle of Augustinianism on the typological level. A key element of the Augustinian doctrine of original sin is the universally disqualification of sinful man from any possible meritorious accomplishment. God’s justice demands that a work be perfect and spotless. Therefore, no deed of any sinner or group of sinners can function as the meritorious ground of reward before God.

Indeed, one cannot abstract Enns’ essential Pelagianism from his view of Israel as a reenactment of Adam. On his view, sinners after the fall (like Cain and Israel) are presented in Scripture as being “fully able” to avoid sin and perform works of righteousness. They are in a fundamentally analogous situation as Adam figures. Estelle clearly (and laudably) rejects soteriological Pelagianism. But *we cannot refuse to ask* whether a formulation of the parallel between Adam and Israel, in which both are capable of performing works that can be accepted by God as a meritorious ground of (typological) blessing, does not yield to it to some degree. Simply reiterating soteriological Augustinianism does not answer this concern.

The result is an unstable fusion of a consistent Augustinianism on the soteriological level, and an inconsistent Augustinianism on the typological level. Much better (in our judgment) is the view of John Murray, who insisted that any formulation of the Mosaic covenant must do justice to “the uniqueness of the Adamic administration.”⁵ Murray’s view clearly preserves the Augustinian emphasis on the categorical differences between the states of nature, sin, and grace. Whatever legitimate parallels we might find between the Adamic and Mosaic situations, they

⁴ http://www.opc.org/nh.html?article_id=740

⁵ John Murray, “The Adamic Administration,” available online at: http://www.the-highway.com/adamic-admin_Murray.html

must be theologically formulated in such a way as to reflect a pure and consistent Augustinianism on *every level* of human activity in relationship to the God who is so holy that his eyes cannot even look upon iniquity (Hab. 1:13).

Enns' point, however, is even more subtle than this. Rather than openly siding with Pelagius or Augustine, his stated attempt is simply to transcend this old debate—much like he desires to transcend the modernist-fundamentalist, liberal-conservative divide in theology. His key argument resides in the alleged silence of the Genesis 3-4 narrative with regard to the transmission of inherent corruption through mankind. With regard to such a question, Enns asserts that the text is “entirely silent on this important matter” (85). This, of course, is a serious overstatement. While it is true that while the doctrine is present largely only in “seed” form, that does not mean it fails to appear. Or shall the full bloom say to the theological seed, “I have no need of you?” The organic process of revelation in an orthodox biblical-theological paradigm easily explains the relative clarity and emphasis early revelation provides for the doctrine.

Enns' arguments compel us to review the biblical theology of the early chapters of Genesis on the doctrine of sin. One of the traditional “proof-texts” for the transmission of the corruption of original sin is Genesis 5:3. Enns admits that this passage is “the closest Genesis comes to the idea of Adam's handing down something to his offspring.” Rather than a statement on “Seth's inherited sinfulness,” Enns argues that it “stresses Seth's privileged role as continuing Adam's line in view of Abel's death and Cain's banishment” (92).⁶ However, read as a single narrative unit, the genealogy of Genesis 5 gives only one reason for the reality of death over Adam's children, namely, their descent from his loins. The sentence of death is the refrain that punctuates the end of every son of Adam's life: “and he died...and he died...and he died” (5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 24, 27, 31). No reference is made to the personal actions (actual sins) of any individual as the cause of his personal death. The source of death is tied to one person—Adam—and descent from him by ordinary generation: person “x” fathered person “y”...and had other sons and daughters, etc.). Surely Paul had a strong exegetical basis (no creative rereading of the OT here!) when he stated quite succinctly: “death reigned from Adam to Moses” (Rom. 5:14). Along with inheriting Adam's status as “image of God” (however marred by the fall), mankind also inherits death from their first father—which Genesis has already presented as the punishment for sin. There can be no stronger inductive argument for the fact that all men are born under the condemnation of sin than the fact that all men die. Granted, this is not presented in its Pauline fullness (*a la* Romans 5:12ff, and 1 Cor. 15), but surely it is present, albeit in seed form. In other words, Paul's reading of Genesis brings forth an underlying assumption latent in the Genesis narrative—that all men are born under the guilt of Adam's first sin. They are all liable to death merely through the fact that they are descended from him. This is the unspoken assumption apart from which the death of all from Adam to Noah cannot be explained.

Very few, if any, Augustinian interpreters have argued that a fully formed doctrine of imputed

⁶ This seems inconsistent with Enns earlier attempt to interpret the “Image of God” concept in purely functional (as opposed to ontological) terms. If physical-ontological generation from Adam entails the transmission of the image of God to Seth, then it appears that one cannot wholly abstract the meaning of the image of God from ontological considerations.

guilt and inherited depravity is present in Genesis. They have argued, rather, that later biblical writers have given us an authoritative interpretation of these passages. The organic strands of the doctrine may not yet be fully mature, yet they are all there in the text. The only difference is that whereas Enns believes they were reading their views onto the text of Genesis which otherwise does not address the subject, traditional Augustinians believed that they were giving an authoritative interpretation and explanation of what was organically latent in the text. The doctrine may be relatively less clear in earlier phases of revelation, but it is nevertheless present, albeit in seed form. It should be patently evident that the issue here is not just the relative clarity of Scripture in its embryonic stages as to the precise nature of human sin and death in relationship to Adam, but the organic unity of Scripture itself. Ironically, here the hermeneutic of Augustine (“What is latent in the old is patent in the new”) and the soteriology of Augustine stand and fall together!

Indeed, the fact of the reign of death is immediately followed in Genesis 6:5 with the statement that “every intention of the thoughts of men’s heart was only evil continually.” Genesis 8:21 adds that “the intention of man’s heart is evil from childhood.” This only makes patent what is latent in the previous verse. What we have, then, is a gradual revelation of the nature and effects of sin from Genesis 3-8. While the fact that both the legal guilt and transformative corruption of Adam’s sin are imputed/conferred upon his descendants remains in the background, this is in keeping with Moses’ narrative strategy⁷: first present the development of the effects of sin in the history of mankind, then make a definitive pronouncement about its nature, origins, and the extent of its effect upon mankind.⁸

But this overview of the biblical theology of sin presupposes the traditional Christian principle of interpretation that “Scripture interprets Scripture,” as enriched through an orthodox biblical-theological philosophy of revelation. It would have been bad enough for Enns simply to state that the Bible does not teach original sin. The situation, however, is even worse. On Enns’ paradigm, Scripture does not manifest the beauty and splendor of a blossoming flower’s organic growth. Rather, the Bible is more like a disorganized garden full of theological weeds and dead plants half-consumed by worms. Thus, it is possible that one book of the Bible teaches Pelagianism, another semi-Pelagianism, and yet another Augustinianism. On his view, we do not have one coherent, organically unfolding revelation of God in Scripture, but several competing theologies which can only be meaningful for the church on the basis of Enns’ paradigm.

Enns’ presentation must therefore be read as a wholesale rejection of traditional Christian, Augustinian, and Reformed orthodoxy with respect to man’s sinfulness. The fact that Enns

⁷ Yes, we still believe (with the Lord Jesus) that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.

⁸ I am dependent on Geerhardus Vos for this general observation. He argues that this part of the narrative “was intended to bring out the consequences of sin when left so far as possible to itself” (*Biblical Theology*, 45). “We here have a story of rapid degeneration, so guided by God as to bring out the inherent tendency of sin to lead to ruin, and its power to corrupt and debase whatever of good might still develop” (46). Had God permitted grace freely to flow out into the world and to gather great strength within a short period, then the true nature and consequences of sin would have been very imperfectly disclosed.

believes the Scriptures (or at least some of them) to be disinterested in this question is irrelevant. It is a fact of history (not creatively rewritten in terms of our contemporary self-definition) that Augustine's view that men are sinners due to an innate depravity inherited from their first parents is a staple of Christian orthodoxy since the Second Council of Orange (529). Note especially its second canon:

If anyone asserts that Adam's sin affected him alone and not his descendants also, or at least if he declares that it is only the death of the body which is the punishment for sin, and not also that sin, which is the death of the soul, passed through one man to the whole human race, he does injustice to God and contradicts the Apostle, who says, "Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

His quibble here is not just with what he decries as a contextualized "American fundamentalism" facing an identity crisis, rather his quibble is with historic Christian orthodoxy.

Paul in his First Century Context: Jewish Understandings of Adam

Part of Enns' argument regarding Paul's understanding of Adam involves his attempt to contextualize him among other various Jewish interpretations. His basic point seems to be that "just as we calibrate [read: comparative religions criticism, BWS] the genre of Genesis by looking to the surrounding religious cultures, we can calibrate the interpretive approach of Paul and any New Testament writer by paying close attention to the *interpretive culture* surrounding them" (98). When this is done, Enns believes that "the handling of Scripture by the New Testament authors fits nicely into the Jewish world of the time" (ibid). More specifically, when viewed in this context, Paul's interpretation has "nothing to commend to it as being necessarily more faithful to the original" (99). Again: "Paul's handling of Adam is *hermeneutically* no different from what others were doing at the time: appropriating an ancient story to address pressing concerns of the moment" (102). As he concludes on p. 103: "What makes Paul stand out is not his exegetical fidelity to the Old Testament..."

But his attempt to pigeonhole a number of Jewish interpretations of Adam as disinterested in the doctrine of original sin is unconvincing. We are not surprised, of course, to find among first century BC-AD interpreters what amounts to a Pelagian or semi-Pelagian reading of the Adam story. Nor are we surprised to find a great diversity of interpretation in non-inspired apocryphal works. But we are surprised to find Enns' resisting so strongly the teaching found among some apocryphal Jewish texts that Adam is the source of mankind's corruption.

For example, Enns argues that "what is clear" about 2 Esdras is that "Adam's transgression does not result in a 'sinful state' handed down to his offspring," that there is a "causal link from Adam to his descendants," or that "the sinful behavior of subsequent humans was inherited from Adam" (101-02). This does not do justice to the primary documents. Not only does 2 Esdras affirm that Adam's sin leads to death for all his descendants (2 Esdras 3:7, 7:48), but it also argues that this death was appointed "immediately" (*statim*) upon his transgression. The legal sentence of death—the punishment for sin—is thus presented as being pronounced upon Adam and all his descendants (*in eum mortem et nationibus eius*) simultaneously. While the legal

ground of this punishment is not spelled out in terms of precise nature of the relationship between Adam and his descendants, this passage hardly rules out the idea that Adam is the source of both their guilt and corruption.

Such a conception is, in fact, strongly confirmed in 2 Esdras 3:20-22. This passage presents Adam's sin as stemming from "an evil heart" (*cor malignum*). No Augustinian has ever denied that Adam produced "a pattern of conduct that later subsequent generations followed" (101), and 2 Esdras clearly presents this idea. But he also affirms (as did later Augustinians) that Adam's sinful heart was "the evil root" (*malignitate radicis*) which infected all of his descendants.

This is the way 2 Esdras 4:30 presents the reality of sin in mankind. Adam and his descendants are presented as being in an organic relationship of solidarity:

For a grain of evil seed was sown in Adam's heart from the beginning, and how much ungodliness it has produced until now, and will produce until the time of threshing comes!

This presentation is not one that can be explained in terms of the principle of imitation alone. 2 Esdras presents the rise of sin among mankind in history using an organic-agricultural metaphor. It is a single force that has begun in Adam and has grown throughout history through his descendants as is manifested in their ungodliness. The concern of 2 Esdras lies not only in the origin, but also the gradual sowing and growth of sin from Adam to the final judgment-harvest at the end of the age. Enns' assertion that this statement "does not suggest a causal link from Adam to his descendants" (102) ignores the obvious biological causality inherent in the process of organic growth, and thus bears the marks of special pleading.

Conclusion

In his concluding chapter, Enns argues that "The root of the conflict for many Christians is not scientific or even theological, but group identity and fear of losing what it offers" (145). In this Enns has touched upon the heart of the matter, only not in the way Enns suggests. Of course, Enns intended this statement to apply to the dilemma of "Protestant evangelical and fundamentalist consciousness," especially as evolutionary theory has been forcing it to rewrite its own narrative. What is truly at stake is our group-identity as orthodox Christians—blessed possessors of the faith "once for all delivered to the saints" and faithfully maintained in the Patristic, Medieval, and Protestant eras.

We might further ask whether this angst over the loss of a particular "group identity" applies equally to Enns. Will he deny that the allure of the academy with all its prestige beckons a scholar like Enns to reject "fundamentalism" in order to be better accepted into its guild? Will he reject the notion that after years of labor within the academy of higher critical scholarship, it might seem like a waste to receive no commendation or recognition from them for his labors? Or even more pointedly: will he contest that potentially playing the martyr for higher criticism in the context of "fundamentalism" will not make him a kind of hero in these progressive circles? Is there not an equal "fear of losing" what this "group identity...offers" to him?

This book is a sober reminder of the utter incompatibility of the principles of evolutionary

philosophy and traditional Biblical Christianity. As Geerhardus Vos put it over 110 years ago: “the principles of supernatural redemption and natural evolution are mutually exclusive” (*Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation*, 16). Enns has clearly abandoned any attempt to harmonize the biblical teaching regarding the historicity of Adam with modern evolutionary science. In this, he is being consistent with his embrace of the latter. However, he still believes he can retain the “husk” of ancient Pauline Christianity while retaining the essential “kernels” of “the Gospel.” Enns’ 21st century avant-garde evangelical attempt at this will be no more successful than the late 19th century liberal one (see Albert Schweitzer).

Yet Enns still clings to his faith in this stripped down “Gospel.” Why? If the modern scientific consensus in evolutionary biology and biblical scholarship compel us to modify Christianity in the way he has suggested, why not the “consensus” of other scientific fields like psychology, which explains all human activity in terms of natural factors? Even religious faith is so explained by merely natural (as opposed to supernatural) factors. Enns’ answer falls flat:

Likewise, abandoning all faith in view of our current state of knowledge is hardly an attractive—or compelling—option. Despite the New Atheist protestations of the bankruptcy of any faith in God in the face of science, most world citizens are not ready to toss away what has been the central element of the human drama since the beginning of recorded civilization. Neither am I, not because I refuse to see the light, but because the light of science does not shine with equal brightness in every corner. There is mystery, there is transcendence. By faith I believe that the Christian story has deep access to a reality that materialism cannot provide and cannot be expected to know. That is a confession of faith, I readily admit, but when it comes to accessing ultimate reality, we are all in the same boat, materialistic atheists included: at some point we must trust in something or someone beyond logic and evidence, even if it is to declare that there is nothing beyond what we see (148)

Enns will not reject “all faith” because “most world citizens” are not yet ready to toss it away. But is this not a point acknowledged by the New Atheists, yet one that still fails to compel them to belief in God? What happens when/if most world citizens do toss all faith in any deity away, and “religious believers” are in a minority? Does epistemic certainty disappear with majority opinion? Enns insists that the “light of science does not shine with equal brightness in every corner.” Who is to decide which corners are enlightened and which ones “endarkened” by the shining face of science? Enns insists there is “deep access to a reality” beyond materialism, and an “ultimate reality” to which everyone must appeal that is “beyond logic and evidence.” But is this deep and ultimate reality really anything different than a person of nearly any religious profession might maintain, let alone the distinctives of the biblical “Gospel?” These statements might equally compel one (albeit barely) to be a Muslim, Jew, or a Buddhist. In fact, given that (in Enns’ view) there is so much wrong with American fundamentalism (even traditional Christian orthodoxy), why wouldn’t those religions present a better option for the expression of belief in this transcendent mystery in the universe?

Enns wants to reject American fundamentalism (even Paul’s Adam) and its “failed” attempt to keep the kernel of the mythical ANE worldview, yet retain the “kernel” of the “Gospel.” But after surveying Enns’ work, it is hard to see what kind of “Gospel” we are left with. Enns’ is a

“Gospel” that theoretically acknowledges the existence of other gods, denies that Genesis 1 teaches creation *ex nihilo*, rejects man’s status as bearer of the ontological image of God, affirms the full ability of sinners to perform works of righteousness, denies the total depravity of man by virtue of original sin, not to mention the historicity of Adam and Eve. This is not just a rejection of what Enns derisively dubs “American fundamentalism,” but a rejection of orthodox Christianity. We either stand with Moses, Jesus, Paul, and Augustine, or we stand with Peter Enns, Charles Darwin, Julius Wellhausen, and Pelagius. Their view of the “plight” of man significantly changes the “solution” graciously provided by God through the death and resurrection of Christ, received by grace through faith alone. Enns clearly understands that we cannot accept the Adam that Paul preached. But it is hard to see how the “Gospel” he leaves us with is any Gospel at all. Even as Enns’ “Adam” is not Paul’s Adam, so neither is Enns’ “Gospel” Paul’s Gospel—not the one Paul preached, which we also have received, wherein we stand, and by which we are saved (1 Cor. 15:1-2).

—Benjamin W. Swinburnson

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Gianni Barbiero, *Song of Songs: A Close Reading*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011. 542pp. Cloth. ISBN: 978-90-04-20325-9. \$212.

This commentary is an English translation of a work published in 2004 in Italian (*Il Cantico dei Cantici*). It has been revised in this version so as to be more accessible to a broader audience. Sadly, that audience will not include many pastors or students since the cost of the volume is prohibitively expensive. However, the book is part of the *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* series and thus will be found on the shelf of university and seminary libraries who have standing orders to the journal and its supplements. The use of inter-library loan will readily bring the volume to the pastor’s study. Obtaining a copy in order to work through Solomon’s magnificent poetic song will be worth the effort. Barbiero’s commentary takes its place alongside those who have patiently and sensitively explored the beautiful love imagery in this divinely-inspired book of male-female love. Our author eschews the crude, even pornographic reading of Solomon’s Song (Marvin Pope, Othmar Keel, etc.) and leads us through each pericope of the text in a refreshing exaltation of sexual love which glorifies God (he notes that the Song does not “glorify extra-marital relations,” 72). Only once does he slip and forget the theme of the Song—when his Roman Catholic celibacy trumps Edenic anti-celibacy and he writes: “the sexual act, viewed elsewhere in the Bible with suspicion or tolerated as a ‘lesser evil’ . . .” (242). He seems utterly unaware that he has just condemned what his entire commentary is attempting to justify as the divinely sanctioned “very good”. Still, we expect no less from those who insist on sacramental invention trumping divine revelation. The ‘higher life’ elitism of cenobite Catholicism is all too obvious here.

At the outset, our author sets forth his hermeneutical approach to the Canticle of Canticles: “my conviction [is] that the poem should be interpreted literally, as a poem about human love” (xi). Note that he regards the Song as a poem (!), about human male-female love (!) and that the

imagery is to be understood literally or in reference to real-life human experience (!). Acknowledging the attraction of the allegorical interpretation of the Song, nonetheless Barbiero distances himself from such non-existential abstraction.⁹ These are real bodies, yearning, caressing, uniting in the apostle Paul's great "mystery". Why should there not be a poem from God to man and woman on the subject? A poem as beautiful as the love of God uniting men and women to the heavenly Bride of the heavenly Bridegroom? This is no allegory; rather it is human ecstasy mirroring divine ecstasy in the human.

In addition to this hermeneutic of sanity (or better, "common sense"), Barbiero regards Solomon's love song as a literary unit. Note: no redactional pericopes or layers scissor-and-pasted in from later Hebrew (even extra-Hebrew) traditions. Also note: as a wholistic literary unit, the book contains a seamless structure. Break up the structure and one destroys the unity of the poem. All this suggests the poetic hand of a single author, a point which Barbiero endorses: "the Song is not the work of a redactor but of an author" (18). Furthermore, he extends this to the cohesiveness of the Hebrew text as received. In fact, he accepts the MT without emendation and suggested "conjectures" (5, 505). Thus, he accords high respect to the reliability of the text in the Hebrew and Christian canon (a matter supported by the fragments of the Song discovered at Qumran).

His bibliography is full and up-to-date. The only significant omissions I noted are: S. Craig Glickman, *Song for Lovers* (1976) and Richard S. Hess, *Song of Songs* (2005). Hess is arguably the most kindred spirit to Barbiero (though Timothea Elliott precedes both in this regard), also reading the text sensitively and poignantly as he explores the male-female imagery without crude descent into Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) erotica (the iconography of the ANE erotica is as gross and ugly as the academic voyeurism which pursues it with lust and abandon). In the most recent discussion, Barbiero distinguishes his reading from the dramatic approach of the massive and meticulous work of P. W. T. Stoop-Van Paridon (*The Song of Songs: A Philological Analysis of the Hebrew Book . . .*, 2005). Though well researched, Van Paridon's book is an idiosyncratic 21st century reprise of a popular 19th century theory of the Song as a melodramatic narrative 'love triangle'. Alleging Greek dramatic style, Van Paridon maintains that the Song portrays a female character trapped between her passion for an anonymous shepherd lover and King Solomon. Solomon draws her into his harem from which she yearns for her first love in the pastoral and rural paradise of the verdant and fecund countryside. Barbiero rightly rejects this 'narrative' approach while perhaps overemphasizing the absence of any narrative paradigm in the Song at all.¹⁰ Barbiero also cites the broader treatment of Biblical sexuality in Richard M.

⁹ He is aware of the recent allegorical treatment by Edmée Kingsmill (*The Song of Songs and the Eros of God*, 2010), though he admits he had not had time to work through the book. Kingsmill's thesis is that the Song is the product of late Jewish mysticism—even asceticism (?a Qumran-like monastic community)—longing for an end-of-the-world intimacy with God in the 'navel' of the cosmos. In other words, she reduces the bodily imagery in the Song to geography—the Jerusalem geography of a global utopia (ancient Jewish tradition esteemed Jerusalem the 'navel' of the universe). One reviewer calls the work "sheer audacity"! Tragically, this is allegorical audacity which cannot be supported from any ordinary and straightforward reading of the text.

¹⁰ For an alternate narrative reading, see this author's series of audio lectures on the Song of Solomon, available with handouts and outlines here: <http://www.nwts.edu/audio/JTD/SongOfSolomon.htm>.

Davidson, *The Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (2007)—a book which also reflects on the topic in the Song (as the title, alluding to 8:6, indicates).

Still, Barbiero cannot escape higher critical presuppositions entirely. Consonant with this lobby, he repudiates Solomonic authorship of the poem (3). He regards the self-attestation of the book, “The Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1) as a “fictional attribution” (45) and “clearly apocryphal” (3). He is even unable to abide the notion of the poem originating in the Solomonic age (970-930 B.C.). Again, tipping his hat to the higher critical guild, he dates the work to the Ptolemaic age of post-exilic Judaism (i.e., ca. 300-30 B.C.). He seems utterly insouciant about the implications of his suggestion. Having insisted vigorously on the unique literary character of this lovely unitary poem, he embarrasses himself by denying the brilliant poetic idiom to the uniquely brilliant prince of the idiom. Only Solomon, in canonical context, qualifies for such a poem of poems—a qualification heightened by the work of the divine Holy Spirit inspiring the OT King of Wisdom, Shalom and Love.

Acknowledging his debt to Timothea Elliott, he structures the book as follows:

Prologue 1:2-2:7

Part I 2:8-5:1

Part II 5:2-8:4

Epilogue 8:5-14

While aware of David Dorsey’s chiasm (“Literary Structuring in the Song of Songs.” *Journal for the Study of the OT* 46 [1990]: 81-96), Barbiero nonetheless eschews this more literary and artistic paradigmatic outline for the reduction above. While expanding his simple fourfold elements in the pages of the commentary, in this reviewer’s opinion he neglects elements essential to a more elaborate and seamless outline, e.g., dialogic patterning, scene shift drama and narrative interface (my own lectures [note 2 above] and outline recount the narrative story of Solomon’s love for his Shulamite and hers for him, thereby establishing a redemptive-historical paradigm of protological Bridegroom/eschatological Bridegroom reciprocally mirrored in protological Solomon and his bride with the eschatological Solomon and his Bride). Barbiero approaches this ‘incarnational’ vector of the Song (“[the Song] belongs to the logic of the Incarnation,” 41), but then rejects a pan-canonical consideration of the book: “A Christian reading of the book would require the extension of the intertextual inquiry into the NT too, but this is, unfortunately, outside the scope of the present work... “ (43). This failure of nerve (even a failure to make the obvious connections, in this reviewer’s view) removes the Christological from the Solomonic—and that means we lose the eschatological wedding drama from our pan-canonical hermeneutic. Before Solomon and his bride is the eschatological Bridegroom and his Bride (an eternal heavenly wedding poem and marriage supper). Solomon and his beloved are a redemptive-historical reflection of that transcendent reality—a figure now reprised in the incarnate Christ and his church.

The commentary explores patterns, structure, imagery in a generally helpful manner—all directed to the rich, even ecstatic, imagery of love in which the Song abounds. If Barbiero

occasionally strains the metaphors and forces the patterns to fit his outline,¹¹ he may be indulged on the basis of his enthusiasm for the text and the physical, spiritual and theological significance of the material. This is a work to be used carefully alongside the Hebrew text, Elliott's remarkable study of the Hebrew and Dorsey's pace-setting article. It will repay the patient reader with penetrating insights and appreciation for the inspired writer's poetry (whom we believe to be Solomon, as announced in verse 1 of the book).

The whole of the commentary is summed up judiciously in eight theses (505-508) which invite the reader to drench himself in the detailed exposition of this poetic epithalamium.

We note a typo on p. 66 (Tamar does not seduce Jacob, but Judah; cf. Gen. 38:15). And we caution the reader not to grant too much to the ANE comparative love poetry that Barbiero cites for comparison and analogy. Nothing in these amorous lays is equal to the inspired text of Solomon's 'most excellent of Songs'. The distinctiveness of the Biblical idiom surpasses the pagan idiom as heaven exceeds earth, the incarnation exceeds ordinary generation, and the mystery of Christ and his Bride exceeds every earthly union.

—James T. Dennison, Jr.

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R. N. Soulen and R. K. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011. Paper. 258pp. ISBN: 978-0-664-23534-5. \$30.00.

A decade ago, the third edition of this handbook was released by our publisher and received a brief review by this author in the May 2002 issue of *Kerux* <http://www.kerux.com/documents/keruxv17n1r3.htm>. This current "fourth edition" adds twenty-two entries (by my count), while removing eight of the previous ones. Among the additions are summaries of: African American Biblical Interpretation, Asian American Biblical Interpretation, Mikhail Baktuin, Biblia Hebraica, B. S. Childs, Contextual Biblical Interpretation, Hans Gadamer, Gospel of Judas, (Eastern) Orthodox Biblical Interpretation, Landscape Criticism, Rhetorical Periods, Paul Ricoeur, Yehud/Yehudite. The reader will note that some of the critical fads are represented in the above list as are the names of figures who have dominated Biblical hermeneutics into our century. Names which appeared in the third edition, but which have now disappeared include: Albrecht Alt, Richard Reizenstein, Roland de Vaux and Bernhard Weiss. Most of the remaining entries are largely unchanged with bibliographies being updated on occasion.

¹¹ For instance, he alleges that 2:4 ("he has brought me in") "repeats 1:4 to the letter" (88). But it does not; it omits "king" (*melek*) in the Hebrew text of the latter. This qualifies his argument that the initial literary unit is an inclusio bracketing 1:4 and 2:4. In fact, the literary structure of the opening unit in this Song spans 1:2-2:7 and is a perfect dialogic mirror chiasm of 'she speaks'/'he speaks' in (perfect) sevenfold interchange (see my lectures and outline for details).

While Alt is omitted, the entry for “Apodictic Law” (13) has his name in all-caps, indicating an article by him elsewhere in the volume. Alas, the reader searches in vain! The same is the case with the entry on “Casuistic Law” (34). Hence, the reader, directed by the cross reference to Alt, will roll his/her eyes. In addition, the article on apodictic law has no cross reference to the entry for casuistic law. More of this sloppy editing appears in the entry *A minore ad majus* (7) which contains the Hebrew equivalent phrase, *Qal wahomer*. However, there is no entry under “Qal wahomer” in this volume. The uninitiated reader must find “Kal wahomer” (105) or “Kol wahomer” (108) by accident, for the entry at *A minore ad majus* contains no cross reference to either of the other three options noted above. We note also the misalignment of the entry “Commentary” (40) which is out of alphabetical order and should precede “Common English Bible”. “Deep Structure” is unnecessarily duplicated on page 52 (second time, out of order to boot).

These careless slips should have been remedied in the editorial process (even targeted by the authorial compilers in the galley-edit phase) and sadly mar what remains an otherwise useful volume in this on-going series. Particularly helpful are the crisp definitions of technical literary terms, i.e., colon, inclusio, morpheme, onomatopoeia, protasis, synecdoche, vorlage and many more. These entries are a model of precision and education (though we note the omission of Lamentations from “Acrostic”¹²). As a ready reference tool close at hand (as it is in my study), the book remains useful for pastor and student alike.

Several of the entries show the dated premises of earlier editions of this work. Much fresh scholarly study has altered the presuppositions and conclusions of a number of these articles. We provide an illustrative sample by way of “Alexandria, School of” (4). The entry perpetuates the misleading and passé polarization between allegorical (allegedly Alexandrian) and literal (allegedly Antiochan) schools of Biblical interpretation. The most important reflections on this matter come from the pen of John David Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity* (2002).¹³ Dawson has noted that ‘allegory’ is more properly labeled “figural” or typological interpretation. And both Alexandria and Antioch regard the typological sense of the OT to be essential to a Christian hermeneutic (the NT fulfills and completes the types of the OT as Christ Jesus himself fulfills and completes the history of redemption). Allegory (a la Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* or Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*) has nothing whatsoever to do with the meaning of the OT, either for Alexandria or Antioch. On-going exploration of the primary documents of the scions of these schools (Origen of Alexandria, Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrus) is providing a more accurate picture of the hermeneutical principles of both *scholae*. “Observe Origen at work” (Henri de Lubac), may be urged with regard to each member above, as well as the schools as a whole. Old unsubstantiated canards about literal versus spiritual exegesis in Antioch versus Alexandria are rapidly fading as scholars pour over the texts of the fathers.

¹² Cf. the present author’s article <http://www.kerux.com/documents/keruxv12n3a2.asp> and review <http://www.kerux.com/documents/keruxv11n2a4.asp>.

¹³ Dawson’s name does appear in bibliography for the entry “Allegory” (6).

Using Theodoret of Cyrrus as an example of the Antiochan School (based on the review by Jean-Noel Guinot in P. M. Blowers, ed., *The Bible in Greek Antiquity* [1977] 163-93), we note that he distinguished three levels of interpretation: literal sense, figurative meaning, typological aspect. The literal sense (προχειρος) or *sensus literalis* is the “plain sense” of the text. The figurative meaning (προπικως or πνευματικως, from Paul’s contrast in 2 Cor. 3:6), he also labels εκ μεταφορας (“metaphorical”). This is the richer meaning (NB: not allegorical) which is contained in the text alongside the “plain sense”. Together, the literal and figurative sense cohere (ακολουθια) in a unity of meaning mutually reflective of one another. For Theodoret, the typological sense of the OT text is the specifically Messianic or Christological meaning. He explains it in a τελος-τυπος reciprocity. Τελος (“end”/“goal”) is the antitype of τυπος (“type”). The reciprocity is not only joined historically, it is enriched by the organic connection: the lesser (partial and imperfect OT type) enriched (fully and completely) by the Christological and NT antitype.

The hermeneutic of the Alexandrian School is generally summarized by its leading exegete, Origen. This prolific author (only 16 of his reputed 291 volumes of commentary on Scripture survive) examines the inspired text in the literal and the spiritual/figural sense. We may label this *historia* (literal sense) and *theoria* (figural sense). That is, Origen is conscious of a higher meaning (or deeper sense) of the OT text. This richer aspect is usually the Christ-centered element in the text; hence, Origen routinely Christologizes the OT as a typological projection of the Lord Jesus. This Christian reading of the OT necessitates no allegorization, since *theoria* is a figural (not allegorical) reading of *historia*. NB: history is essential to the hermeneutic of both schools, whereas allegory requires no history (only imaginative abstraction).

It would appear from a careful reading of primary documents that any antithesis between Alexandria and Antioch is manufactured by old stereotypes and misconceptions. Both schools agree on an ordinary or plain reading of the text of the Word of God (historical, literal); and both schools agree on a deeper or richer aspect of the text (figural, typological, spiritual). The tensions between the two are related more to the nature of the union of the two natures in Christ, not to the hermeneutical task per se.

The *Handbook’s* entry on “Biblical theology” (26-28) is not about the organic unfolding of the history of redemption. Rather it is a dreary repetition of neo-orthodox higher critical reductionism in application (or coercion) of the Biblical text to prevailing philosophical fads (existentialism *re* neo-orthodoxy; German idealism *re* classic liberalism; Enlightenment rationalism *re* Gabler; Deism *re* the skeptic and anti-supernatural precursors of the 17th century). The result of all this is chaos (as some have noted—*tohu wabohu*) and no consensus about Biblical theology at all. There is no surprise here since for critical ‘Biblical theology’, the Bible is not revelation at all. No (divine) revelation, no (divine) matter. It’s all anthropocentric and relative to the prevailing cultural mood (be it 17th century or 21st century or any *weltanschauung* in between).

We note the glaring omission of Hans Josef-Klauck and Edwin Yamauchi from the bibliography on “Gnosticism” (77)—both of whom have challenged the unsubstantiated assumption of pre-

Christian Gnosticism.¹⁴ Like the whimsy-contrived ghost of Q (169-172), the theory of pre-Christian gnosis is substantiated by no primary document(s).¹⁵

Finally, we note the flimsy (and increasingly abandoned) *rib* theory (184-85) which maintains the existence of a so-called “covenant lawsuit” in the prophetic canon. Even in an example listed by the *Handbook* (Jer. 2:4-13), there is no mention of one essential element of the fourfold *rib* paradigm (cited in the entry itself), i.e., the “earth” is *not* called to witness by Jeremiah. So egregious is the attempt to force this text into the paradigm that Delbert Hillers (eager promoter of the *rib* pattern) emended the text of Jeremiah 2 to INSERT “dry land” so the paradigm would work.¹⁶ And this is scholarship???? As Jack Lundbom observes: “Jeremiah 2 is therefore not a ‘covenant lawsuit,’ either in full or in part”.¹⁷ He agrees with others who suggest “that we abandon the terms ‘prophetic lawsuit’ and ‘covenant lawsuit’ altogether” (ibid).

With these caveats, the *Handbook* remains useful even to alert us to the need to constantly review and update information based on primary sources. Otherwise our so-called scholarship is in danger of becoming agenda, propaganda and outright falsehood.

—James T. Dennison, Jr.

¹⁴ Cf. the review of Klauck’s *The Religious Context of Early Christianity* (2003)
<http://www.kerux.com/documents/keruxv11n2a4.asp>.

¹⁵ Cf. the review of *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* (2004)
<http://www.kerux.com/documents/KeruxV20N2R4.htm>.

¹⁶ Delbert Hillers, *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea* (1969) 127, where he flagrantly admits that he is “simply guessing”.

¹⁷ Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1-20* (Anchor Bible Commentary, 1999) 258.