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EDITORIAL:
The Center for Ancient Christianity and Ancient Christian Studies

The past thirty years of Patristic scholarship has surely seen a revival among broader critical scholarship and among prominent Evangelical thinkers. In 1990, Charles Kannengiesser delivered the North American Patristics Society presidential address entitled “Bye, Bye Patristics” in which he stirred waters for a potential name change for the academic society.¹ Just a year earlier, Kannengiesser offered a prophetic voice of renewed interest and retrieval of classical Christianity through means of the “Fathers.”² As Elizabeth Clark details, Patristic studies was a dwindling discipline in European scholarship shortly after the Second World War,³ but has since emerged as a broader discipline encompassed within early Christianity and is making new strides in cross-disciplinary conversations.

¹Elizabeth A. Clark, “From Patristics to Early Christian Studies,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, ed. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), 7.

²Charles Kannengiesser, “Fifty Years of Patristics,” *Theological Studies* 50, no. 4 (1989): 656.

³Clark, “Early Christian Studies,” 7.

Patristics vs. Ancient Christian Studies

Although early Christian fathers were read and engaged by Medieval and Reformation theologians, the term “Patristics” was coined relatively late. Isaac Taylor (1787–1865) is credited as the first to use this term in the nineteenth century.⁴ Shortly thereafter, the Benedictines of St. Maur and J.-P. Minge helped provide stability for this emerging scientific discipline by producing the *Patrologia Latina* and *Patrologia Graeca*. Obviously, those involved in the discipline have seen other sources rivaling Minge and offering better critical editions (e.g., *Source Chrétiennes*, *Corpus Christianorum*, and others).

This brief background to the origins of Patristics as a scientific discipline and the standardization of texts leads us, then, to ask, why “Ancient Christianity” instead of the term “Patristics”? With the rise of institutional and social factors, “Patristics” has slowly undergone a disciplinary change. Stating “Patristics”, according to Elizabeth Clark, from the outset, affirms certain presuppositions, as recognized by those broadly associated with the discipline.⁵ If this is so, then Patristic terminology may no longer satisfy the interests of early Christian scholars when engaging Jewish literature, female contributors, and broader heterodox literature.

The Center for Ancient Christian Studies seeks to be sensitive to the changes in the academy and institutional influences while

⁴Barbara Brandon Schnorrenberg, “Taylor, Isaac,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004), 53:912. Also found in Clark, “Early Christian Studies,” 8.

⁵Frances Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth, Editors' preface to in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, eds. Frances Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), xi; Clark, “Early Christian Studies,” 14.

maintaining evangelical convictions. Rather than speaking solely of “Patristics” as a discipline, we are concerned with early Christianity or ancient Christian studies.⁶ In this way, we will not focus upon one discipline, per se, but on a general era—AD 80–700.

The move from “Patristics” to ancient Christian studies is purposeful and will allow broader study of the ancient world. Rather than focusing upon the perceived male orientation of Patristics, early Christian female authors, such as Perpetua, will also find a voice.⁷ Rather than focusing solely on ecclesial orthodoxy, scholars will be able to engage heterodox writings and ideological opponents to Christian orthodoxy. Moreover, this shift also permits scholars to interact with social history and Roman and Jewish backgrounds.

Foci of the Center for Ancient Christian Studies

The Center for Ancient Christian Studies will devote attention to multiple fields of study. Early Christian, New Testament, and some Jewish scholarship will be afforded a voice. Drawing from the numerous insights of various historiographical perspectives, the Center for Ancient Christian studies seeks to affirm the best of the best

⁶Note the names of two publications in similar fields: Frances Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth, eds., *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004) and Angelo Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, 3 vols. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014).

⁷Matristics seems to be a valid title to demarcate female authors in early literature. The problem, however, is the time period this term refers. According to Børresen, “Matristics” rightly demarcates male and female authors. However, it is a term mainly used to reference the medieval church mothers (12th–15th c.). So, if this is true, then we cannot use this term. K.E. Børresen, “Matristics,” in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, ed. Angelo Di Berardino, vol. 2 F–O (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 730–35.

while adhering to confessional Christian orthodoxy. As we follow along the postmodern shift and the linguistic turn, which sheds light on the myth of objectivity within historical inquiry, we affirm our confessional Christian presuppositions when approaching the texts of early Christianity.⁸

We affirm with Douglas Sweeny the vocational nature of the Christian scholar—"to engage in acts of sacrificial service to our students, colleagues, and others who come in contact with our work."⁹ He adds, "This sense of vocation...requires nurture in community if it is ever going to flourish."¹⁰ Scholarship should be viewed as a form of ministry, promoting both peace and justice and the desire to bless those around us. We affirm our place as servants to the church and ambassadors of Christian virtue to those around us. In this task, we seek to build up the church by yielding our scholarly contributions to the benefit of the church and as an expression of loving God and loving others.

The primary focus of the Center will be early Christianity and late antiquity. In this way, topics of social history, early theology and creeds, and patristic exegesis and hermeneutics will absorb the vast

⁸The linguistic turn describes a development in understanding the relationship between philosophy and language, that is, the reality of an objective apprehension of the past is difficult at best. Such a turn also recognizes the reality of ideological presuppositions that historians bring to the text. For more on the linguistic turn and its benefits in reading pre-modern texts see Elizabeth Clark, *History, Text, Theory: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁹Douglas Sweeny, "On the Vocation of Historians to the Priesthood of Believers" in *Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation*, ed. John Fea, Jay Green, and Eric Miller (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 306.

¹⁰Sweeny, "On the Vocation of Historians," 307.

amount of our attention. Because we will not solely focus upon Patristics, heterodox literature, early female Christian writers, and social history will all contribute to our understanding of ancient Christianity. Consider such works as *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*,¹¹ which provides an introductory guide to a fixed period that includes both orthodox and heterodox literature. Also, consider the formidable work of Lewis Ayres' *Nicaea and Its Legacy*,¹² which attempts to provide a paradigmatic change to Trinitarian conversations. Rather than tracing the “orthodox” and “heretical,” Ayres instead engages the “theological culture” of early Christianity.¹³

A secondary focus of the Center will allow for some New Testament scholarship. Within the past decade or two, New Testament Scholarship has seen a renewed interest and attention to ancient Christianity. Take for example, *Paul and the Second Century*,¹⁴ which seeks to see the early reception of Pauline literature, or *The Early Text of the New Testament*,¹⁵ which devotes an entire section to the value of early Christian literature to textual criticism. Both of these see value in the intersection of New Testament scholarship and early Christian literature. Our center, moreover, will include topics like these as well

¹¹Frances M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and Its Background*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010).

¹²Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹³Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 1.

¹⁴Michael F. Bird and Joseph R. Dodson, eds. *Paul the Second Century*, Library of New Testament Studies 412 (New York: T&T Clark International, 2011).

¹⁵Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger, eds., *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012).

as canon development, early reception, *Wirkungsgeschichte*, Theological Interpretation of Scripture, and patristic hermeneutics.

Last, but surely not limited to these three, the Center will have some focus upon Second Temple Literature, Pseudepigraphal, and Septuagintal studies. Although vast amounts of Jewish literature may be outside scope of the Center of Ancient Christian Studies, we are devoted to an era and not a discipline. In this way, some Jewish texts find their way in the quagmire of early Christian literature and the parting of the ways with Judaism.¹⁶ For example, consider *The Story of Melchizedek*.¹⁷ This is a 3rd–4th c. document attempting to reread the Melchizedek and Abram narrative, most likely, in light of the book of Hebrews. Also, the LXX is part of Origen’s Hexapla and used with relative frequency in other early literature.¹⁸

So, the Center for Ancient Christian studies will broaden from a particular focus on Patristics to the study of ancient Christianity—AD 80–700—allowing for multiple disciplines to speak into and shape these conversations.

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Editors-in-Chief

¹⁶Young, Ayres, and Louth, Editors’ preface, xi.

¹⁷C.f. Pierluigi Piovanelli, “The Story of Melchizedek with Melchizedek Legend from the *Chonicon Paschale*: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, ed. Richard Baukham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), 1:64–84.

¹⁸For other works on the Greek Bible in ancient Christianity, consult Paul Blowers, ed. and trans., *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*, vol. 1 of *The Bible Through the Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997).

*Figural Reading in the Book of the Cave of Treasures:
Recovering an Interpretive Tradition*

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Abstract: The purpose of this essay is to recover the interpretive tradition of figural reading depicted in the Syriac *Book of the Cave of Treasures* (c. late 6th–early 7th century). Throughout his extended fifty four chapter narrative that recounts the story of biblical history from creation to Pentecost, the author uses the interpretive approach of figural reading as a means to unite the biblical story and provide cohesion. This essay will be divided into two sections. First, the textual history, literary character, and theological message of The Cave of Treasures (CT) will be introduced. Second, a taxonomy representative of the author’s figural interpretations will be presented under five headings: 1) Adam-Christ Readings; 2) Soteriological Readings; 3) Christological Readings; 4) Ecclesiological Readings; and, 5) Cessation-Replacement Readings.

Introduction

In recent decades a number of biblical scholars have proposed that pre-critical approaches of reading the Bible ought to be recovered as hermeneutically beneficial for present day interpreters. This post-

critical movement, broadly categorized as *Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, suggests that pre-Enlightenment interpretative traditions (especially the traditions of the church fathers) ought not only to be considered for their historical significance in the history of interpretation, but also integrated into the wheelhouse of interpretive practices of contemporary scholars.¹ In light of this biblical studies milieu, I propose that the interpretive approach of figural readings depicted in the Syriac *Book of the Cave of Treasures* (CT)—c. late 6th–early 7th century—serves as an instructive example of one such pre-critical interpretive tradition that ought to be recovered by present day readers of biblical literature.

Basic Terminology

For the purpose of this essay, I define *figural reading* as an interpretive attitude toward the biblical story that seeks to establish an

¹For an introduction to this diverse movement see the series of essays edited by Stephen E. Fowl, *Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997). Particularly influential is an essay from the same volume by David C. Steinmetz, “The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis,” 26–38 (reprint, *Theology Today* 37:1 [1980], 27–38). See also the article by Daniel J. Treier, “The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis? Sic et Non,” *Trinity Journal* 24 (2003): 77–103, who interacts with Steinmetz’s proposal. Treier has also written a helpful introduction, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). Other works could be cited in this growing and diverse movement, but I have found the following works to be of particular interest: Richard A. Mueller and John L. Thompson, “The Significance of Pre-Critical Exegesis: Retrospect and Prospect,” in *Biblical Interpretation in the End of the Modern Era: Essays Presented to David C. Steinmetz in Honor of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Richard A. Mueller and John L. Thompson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 335–45; Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds., *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003); John J. O’Keefe and R.R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 2005; David Paul Parris, *Reading the Bible with the Giants: How 2000 Years of Biblical Interpretation Can Shed New Light on Old Texts* (Atlanta: Paternoster, 2006).

interdependent connection between two distinct historical events so that the latter is understood as a fulfillment of the former.² Figural reading has a long history in the Christian tradition and is one of the primary reading strategies of all pre-Enlightenment interpreters.³

This particular interpretive tendency occurs repeatedly in CT, yet up to this point in time no effort has been made to classify the various figural moves contained in this document. Hence, the goal of this paper is to present a taxonomy of the various figural readings that the author himself makes, and to suggest that although the validity of any (or perhaps even all) of these readings may be considered suspect by some, it is nevertheless the case that this general posture toward the biblical story ought to be regarded as hermeneutically commendable—even to

²This definition loosely follows the definition provided by Eric Aurebach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Task (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), 73, 555, as well as the description of figural interpretation articulated by Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale, 1974), 18–37. John David Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 83–113, has demonstrated that although different at certain points, both Aurebach and Frei articulate a similar understanding of figural interpretation that is representative of the pre-critical Christian tradition.

³Eric Aurebach, “Figura,” in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), 11–76. I am intentionally using the term *figural* as opposed to *allegorical* or *typological* as a way to describe the interpretive disposition of CT. The term *figural* is more comprehensive since it can include various components of exegesis that include both allegory and typology. Interpreters may debate whether this or that interpretation is typological or allegorical, but for the purpose of this paper I avoid this distinction for the sake of developing a taxonomy that accounts for both types of readings. Hence, the umbrella term *figural* is preferred. One should also note that pre-critical interpreters, especially the Fathers, did not draw a sharp distinction between typology and allegory in their exegesis. For more on this see the discussion by O’Keeffe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision*, 19–21, 90–93. CT does not distinguish between typological and allegorical readings; the taxonomy developed here does not either.

such an extent that this posture is one that ought to be recovered by present day biblical scholars.⁴ To accomplish this purpose I will first briefly introduce CT and then proceed to a presentation of the taxonomy of the author's figural readings.

Introducing the Cave of Treasures

As a part of the OT Pseudepigrapha, the *Book of the Cave of Treasures* (CT) belongs to the genre of the rewritten Bible texts, with the majority of scholars dating its final composition to the late sixth or early seventh century.⁵ It was originally composed in Syriac and is extant in Arabic, Ethiopian, Coptic, and Georgian versions.⁶ Su-Mi Ri has argued that the Syriac text is extant in two recensions, West-Syriac and East-Syriac, derived from a single source.⁷ Most scholars find this theory persuasive, yet there is debate regarding how to account for the sources in view.⁸ A solution is offered by Leonard, who suggests that

⁴It is regrettable that CT maintains an anti-Jewish polemic. However, this shortcoming need not detract modern readers from attempting to glean interpretive insights from this creative document.

⁵The translation adopted for this study is the recently published work by Alexander Toepel, "The Cave of Treasures: A New Translation and Introduction," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Non-Canonical Scriptures*, vol. 1, ed. Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 531–84. All Scriptural quotations are from Toepel. Toepel's work replaces the first English translation of CT offered by Ernest Alfred W. Budge in 1927. See Ernest Alfred W. Budge, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1927; reprint, New York: Cosimo, 2005).

⁶Toepel, "The Cave of Treasures," 532–34. As Toepel notes in *Die Adam- Und Seth-Legenden In Syrischen Buch Der Schatzhöhle: Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung*, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, vol. 581, Subsidia 103 (Louvain: Peeters, 2006), 1, CT was one of the most influential works in all of Syrian literature.

⁷Toepel, "The Cave of Treasures," 532.

⁸For a summary of various proposals see the concise presentations of Toepel,

even though CT appeals to traditions found in Judaism and Christianity, both the literary elements of the text and the presence of key motifs, indicate that CT should be regarded as a composition of one author rather than a compilation of older sources.⁹ Despite this dispute concerning the document's textual history, one is nevertheless on sure footing to follow the recommendation of Davila, who argues that in instances where the textual history of a particular Pseudepigraphical document is in question, it is appropriate to "concentrate on general themes and repeated ideas" as a means of investigation.¹⁰ In light of this consideration, my own approach will be to explore the broad themes and patterns resident in CT to understand one example of the theological content and hermeneutical trajectories present within early Syriac Christianity.

CT is a Christian retelling of the story of redemption from Creation to Pentecost, with particular focus on the relationship between Adam and Christ. The title of the work comes from the supposed "Cave of Treasures"—a cave located on the fringes of

"The Cave of Treasures," 535–36, and Su-Min Ri, "La Caverne Des Trésors: Problèmes D'Analyse Littéraire," in *IV Symposium Syriacum 1984: Literary Genres in Syriac Literature*, ed. Hans J.W. Drijvers, René Lavenant, Corrie Molenberg, and Gerrit Reinik (Rome: Pontifical Institutum Studium Orientalium, 1987), 183–84.

⁹Clemens Leonhard, "Observations on the Date of the Syriac Cave of Treasures," in *The World of the Arameans III: Studies in Honour of Paul-Eugene Dion*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 326, ed. P.M. Michele Daviau, John W. Wevers, and Michael Weigl (Sheffield, England: Sheffield, 2001), 255–293.

Following Leonhard, Toepel, "The Cave of Treasures," 535–36, concludes that the final form was written in an Eastern Syriac setting during the Sasanin empire of Xurso II Parvez, whose reign dates from 590–628 C.E.

¹⁰James R. Davila, "The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha as Background to the New Testament," *Expository Times* 117:2 (2005), 57.

paradise where Adam and Eve deposited gold, myrrh, and incense, shortly after their expulsion from Eden (5:14–20). These “treasures” are later presented to Christ by the magi when Jesus is born in Bethlehem (45:12–15). Thus, the “treasures” are used by the author to develop the narrative by serving as a theme that ties the biblical story together.¹¹ The story follows the Genesis creation account by retelling the seven days of creation (1:1–25), the creation of Adam and Eve (2:1–25), as well as his subsequent fall and expulsion from Eden (3:1–5:17). In stark contrast to the Genesis account, the brunt of their expulsion is quickly relieved by God, who permits the couple to dwell on a mountain just outside paradise (5:17). It is here in this second paradise that the couple deposits gold, myrrh, and incense into the supposed “Cave of Treasures,” and also the place where Adam establishes the perpetuation of priestly activity that results in salvific efficacy for all his progeny who dwell near the Cave (5:17–18, 25 6:11; 7:1–14).¹²

Cain is expelled from the holy mountain after murdering Abel and forced to live in the plain below, while Seth and his progeny continue for several generations to live in close proximity to the Cave of Treasures (6:19–7:14). The cave continues to play an important role in the early chapters of the narrative, serving as the burial place of Adam and his immediate descendants (6:11, 20; 7:22; 8:17; 9:10; 10:10; 13:8–10;

¹¹Toepel, “The Cave of Treasures,” 531, 536–38. The cave also plays an important role in the early chapters of the narrative, serving as the burial place of Adam and his immediate descendants (6:11, 20; 7:22; 8:17; 9:10; 10:10; 13:8–10; 14:16–17), as well as the locale where the priestly vocation of Adam’s seed is exercised (7:13–14, 19–22; 9:7; 10:1, 12; 13:11).

¹²See Serge Ruzer, “The Cave of Treasures on Swearing by Abel’s Blood and Expulsion from Paradise: Two Exegetical Motifs in Context,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9:2 (2001): 251–71, who argues that the priestly ministry performed by Adam and his seed prior to their expulsion from the holy mountain was salvific.

14:16–17), as well as the locale where the priestly vocation of Adam’s seed continues to be exercised (7:13–14, 19–22; 9:7; 10:1, 12; 13:11). Ultimately, the descendants of Seth are expelled from the holy mountain as a result of committing fornication with the daughters of Cain (12:1–20), while only Noah and his children remain behind (16:1–5). Noah leaves the mountain to build the Ark in preparation for the flood, but not before retrieving Adam’s body, as well as the gold, myrrh, and incense, and taking them with him for safe keeping (16:6–27). For the author of CT, this bitter departure from this second paradise elicits the need for Christ, who will come in the line of Adam and return humanity to paradise once again (17:1–20).¹³

After Noah’s death, Shem takes the body of Adam and buries it “in the middle of the earth,” in anticipation for the coming redemption of Christ (22:1–23:25). It is here, “in the middle of the earth,” that salvation is finally accomplished for Adam’s seed (22:7–9).¹⁴ The narrative advances steadily through the main events of the OT, including the building of the Tower of Babel (24:1–27), the Patriarchal era (28:1–32:18), and the history of Israel (33:1–43:25). Finally, the author concludes his work by detailing the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (44:1–54:10), as well as the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost (54:11–15).

As for the theological purpose of the work, the author’s intention is to demonstrate the direct link between Adam and Christ in order to

¹³Ruzer, “The Cave of Treasures on Swearing by Abel’s Blood and Expulsion from Paradise,” 257–60.

¹⁴The motif of salvation being accomplished for Adam’s offspring “in the middle of the earth” is repeated throughout the narrative (2:15; 5:10–13; 6:12; 16:22–27; 22:7–9; 23:15; 29:6; 49:3–7). Leonard, “Observations on the Date of the Syriac Cave of Treasures,” 262, suggests that the phrase functions as a framing device.

prove that Adam's expulsion from Eden is resolved only by the work of Christ. This is verified in the transmission of the treasures and Adam's body from the Ark to the middle of the earth—the very place where Christ is later crucified and atones for the sins of the world (5:17–18; 23:15–18; 49:1–10).¹⁵ This also demonstrates the purpose of the extensive and dogmatically asserted genealogies that occur repeatedly throughout (33:1–15; 43:13–25; 44:1–57; 52:1–19).¹⁶ In fact, the author concludes his work by designating it as the “book concerning the sequence of the generations' descent from Adam to Christ, which is called *The Cave of Treasures*” (54:16). The author understood his work to be a presentation of the genealogical history of Christ that serves as the necessary apologetic for his theological agenda.

Figural Reading in the Cave of Treasures

Having briefly introduced the literary character, content, and theological message of CT, we are now in a position to examine the author's figural interpretations. To accomplish this task I will present a taxonomy representative of the author's figural readings under five headings: 1) Adam-Christ Readings; 2) Soteriological Readings; 3) Christological Readings; 4) Ecclesiological Readings; and, 5) Cessation-Replacement Readings. Although the umbrella categories presented here are not exhaustive and are open to modification, they do reflect the broad interpretive tendencies that characterize the author's hermeneutical approach to the biblical story, thereby serving as a basis

¹⁵Toepel, “The Cave of Treasures,” 536–37.

¹⁶Leonard, “Observations on the Date of the Syriac Cave of Treasures,” 268, 272–73, argues that the *rison d'être* of the whole book is to present an apology for Christ's genealogy, but he does not mention that the function of establishing Christ's direct link with Adam is to prove that Christ is the savior of humanity.

for interpretive reflection.¹⁷

Adam-Christ Readings

As previously mentioned the primary purpose of CT is to demonstrate a direct link between Adam and Christ to prove that salvation will be accomplished for Adam and his seed only through the work of Christ. This overarching agenda leads the author to propose a variety of creative interpretations aimed at accomplishing this goal. At one point the author is so explicit regarding the certainty of this correspondence that he states: “Know that Christ resembled Adam in everything, as it is written” (49:1). This statement does not mean that Christ resembled Adam in every way possible, but that the death and resurrection of

¹⁷Before presenting these categories it is helpful to point out that the author’s interpretive method is justified (at least in his eyes) in large part due to the fact that the information made available to OT characters by God, at least in a number of cases, goes well beyond the information that was made available to them in the biblical account. In other words, at various points the author reads interpretive significance into OT persons, events, and institutions, because God had already revealed to them what Christ would come and accomplish in the future. Since specific knowledge of how God would accomplish his redemptive purpose in Christ was available, it is not difficult to see how the author justifies his highly charged Christian readings of the OT. For example, according to CT God revealed to Adam that he would send his son, dwell within a virgin, put on a body, and suffer to accomplish salvation on his behalf (5:6–13). God also revealed to Moses that Christ would drink bitter wine while hanging on the cross at the hands of Caiaphas (51:9–13). During the sacrifice of Isaac, it was revealed to Abraham that Christ would die on a cross and suffer in Adam’s behalf (29:8–14). By expanding upon the content of the biblical material in this way the author allowed himself a great measure of interpretive flexibility. In other words, because the author was willing to expand upon the biblical material, it created a culture of interpretive creativity that allowed him to read redemptive historical significance into persons, institutions, and events that may not seem apparent to contemporary readers. Within the creative framework of the author such moves are entirely logical. Understanding this interpretive tendency to expand upon the biblical material allows present day interpreters the ability to more readily comprehend the hermeneutical worldview of the author and appreciate the interpretive moves he makes on his own terms.

Jesus correspond to events in Adam's life.¹⁸ This Adam-Christ correspondence is generated to demonstrate that the return to paradise is accomplished only through Christ.

One of the starkest attempts at establishing this correspondence between the Passion of Christ and Adam is portrayed in 48:12–30 (Cf. 6:18). In this passage the author draws a number parallels between Christ and Adam by appealing to supposed correspondences between the Friday of Christ's crucifixion and the Friday of the first week of creation. See below:

Temporal Correspondence	Adam	Christ
In the first hour on Friday	God made Adam from the dust	Christ received spittle from Adam's children (48:12)
In the second hour on Friday	Adam named the creatures and they bowed before him	The Jews encircled Christ as David was encircled by bulls (48:13–14) Cf. Ps 22:12
In the third hour on Friday	The crown of honor was placed on Adams head	The crown of thorns was placed on the head of Christ (48:15)
For three hours	Adam remained in paradise shining with glory	Christ stayed in the law court being scourged by those born of dust (48:16)
In the sixth hour on Friday	Eve climbed the tree transgressing the commandment	Christ climbed the cross, the tree of life (48:17)

¹⁸Andreas Su-Min Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne de Trésors: Étude Sur L'Histoire Du Texte Et De Ses Sources*, CSCO 581, Subsidia 103 (Louvian: Peeters, 200), 467–87, correctly limits the correspondence between Christ and Adam to the Passion.

In the sixth hour on Friday	Eve gave Adam the bitter fruit of death	The accursed synagogue gave vinegar and gall to Christ (48:18)
For three hours	Adam was stripped bare under the tree	Christ stayed naked on the cross of wood (48:19)
On a Friday	Adam and Eve sinned	Their sin was removed (48:21)
On a Friday	Adam and Eve died	They were made alive (48:22)
On a Friday	Death began to rule over them	They were freed from its rule (48:23)
On a Friday	Adam and Eve left paradise	Our Lord went into a tomb (48:24)
On a Friday	Adam and Eve were stripped naked	Christ bared himself in order to clothe them (48:25)
On a Friday	Satan stripped them bare	Christ stripped bare Satan and all his hosts and openly put them to shame (48:26)
On a Friday	Adam left paradise and its door was closed	It was opened for a multitude to go in (48:27)
On a Friday	The sharp sword was given to the Cherub	Christ was struck and broke the sword's blade (48:28)
On a Friday	Priesthood, prophesy, and kingship were given to Adam	Kingship, Priesthood, and prophesy were taken away from the Jews (48:29)

In the ninth hour on Friday	Adam went down from paradise to the lower earth	Christ went down from the height of the cross to the lower parts of the earth, to those who sleep in the dust (48:30)
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Another example of the type of correspondence between Adam and Christ is established on the basis of shared geographical location. This similarity is employed as early as 2:15–24, where the details of Adam’s creation and installation as God’s vice-regent are linked to the cross of Christ. According to the author, Adam’s creation took place at the same location in Jerusalem where the cross of the savior was to be erected (2:15–16).¹⁹ It was here that Adam wore the gown of kingship and was made prophet, priest, and king (2:17–18). In Jerusalem Adam was given dominion over creation (2:19–25). That the author refers to the geographical similarity between Adam and Christ in his retelling of the creation story signals how important the concept is for his theological argument. Indeed, the author goes so far as to assert that at creation God made Golgotha the center of the earth, the very place where the four corners of the world converge (49:3). This also explains why the body of Adam had to be buried in Jerusalem in the middle of the earth. When the sons of Seth were exiled from the holy mountain, Shem and Melchizedek took the body of Adam, along with the gold, myrrh, and incense, and buried them in the center of the earth. When they did so, the four corners of the earth opened in the shape of the cross (23:16). Later, when Christ is crucified at the same locale, the four

¹⁹“When he stretched himself and rose in the middle of the earth he put his feet on that place where the cross of our savior would be erected, because Adam was created in Jerusalem” (2:15–16).

corners of the earth opened again, allowing the blood and water from Christ's side to flow down into Adam's mouth, thereby providing salvation (49:3-10; 51:22).²⁰ Thus, the shared geography of Adam and Christ serves as a significant interpretive foil for tying these two key persons together.

This figural reading based on the geographical correspondence of Adam and Christ motivates the author to place other key events as though having occurred at the same location. Since Golgotha is the center of the earth, the very place where redemption will be achieved for Adam's race, it is only logical to identify this as the site where other significant redemptive historical happenings transpired. For example, Shem commands Melchizedek to serve as a priest at the very place where Adam's body was buried. It is here, in the middle of the earth, at the place of the skull, that the head of the cruel snake will be broken and the head of all mankind will be redeemed (23:13-23). Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac was also performed at the very place where Christ was sacrificed (29:4-4). In fact, the author states that when Abraham ascended the altar he saw the cross of the Lord (29:8). This was the same location where David saw the Lord standing with a sword of fire (29:7; Cf. 1 Chron 21:16). By postulating an unbroken geographical chain of key historical events the author is able to further emphasize the close link between Adam and Christ.²¹

²⁰This also accounts for the repeated frame that salvation will be wrought for Adam's offspring in a specific location (22:19; 29:8, 14; 31:19; 49:9). For the author of CT, the geographical location is loaded with theological significance.

²¹Sebastian Brock, "Genesis 22 in the Syriac Tradition," in *Mélanges Dominique Barthélemy: Étude Bibliques Offertes A L'Occasion De Son 60^e Anniversaire*, Orbis Biblicus Et Orientalis 38, ed. Pierre Casetti, Othmar Keel, et Adrian Schenker (Suisse: L'Institut Biblique de l'Université de Fribourg, 1981), 7-8, indicates that CT is the only

Soteriological Readings

Another key area of figural reading within CT concerns instances where OT persons, events, and institutions either foreshadow or explicitly point ahead to Christ's sacrifice on the cross. As is the case with other early Christian interpreters of the OT, the author is neither subtle nor lacking in creativity in his treatment of this theme, but liberally rewrites the OT at key points to suit his interpretive intention. For example, the author rewrites the creation story in such a way as to incorporate this motif. At his creation, Adam plants his foot at the location of the cross, indicating that God designed the world with a soteriological intention in mind (2:15). When God created the earth, the four directions of the earth converged together, pointing ahead to the four corners of the cross (43:4-5; Cf. 23:16). Furthermore, at creation God planted the tree of life in the middle of paradise, signifying the savior's cross, fastened to the middle of the earth (4:3).²² By integrating the cross explicitly into the creation story, the author indicates its importance in the history of redemption.

CT also indicates that key events in the life of Noah, Abraham, and Jacob point ahead to the cross. According to the author, during the flood the ark was carried on the wings of the wind and traveled north, south, east, and west, tracing the cross upon the water (19:5). Interpreting Ps 78:65 as textual proof, CT argues that Noah's

document in Syriac literature that has each of these events occurring at the same location.

²²Cf. Just. *Dial.* 86,1, who makes a similar connection between the tree in the garden and the tree of the cross: "Understand now how he whom the Scriptures announce as about to return in glory after his crucifixion was symbolized both by the tree of life (which is said to have been planted in Paradise) and by what was about to happen to all the just."

intoxicated state typified the cross of Christ. He rose and cursed Cain in the same manner that Christ rose from the dead and cursed the Jews, scattering them among the nations (21:18–28).²³ Likewise Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac pointed ahead to the cross. Isaac’s ascent toward the altar signified Christ’s ascent toward the crucifixion (29:12).²⁴ Jacob’s ladder also depicts the cross of salvation (31:18). The angels ascending and descending are the ministers of the gospel toward Zechariah, Mary, the Magi, and the shepherds, while the Lord standing at the upper end is to be understood as Christ, who stood at the upper end of the cross before descending to Sheol to save us (31:18). Each of these stimulating readings demonstrates the importance of the cross in the author’s narrative.

Christological Readings

The early church was regularly engaged in controversy concerning how to account for the deity and humanity of Christ. Written near the conclusion of such early church discussions—c. late 6th–early 7th century, CT provides its own contribution to this contentious issue by proposing a number of creative figural interpretations as a way to explain Christ’s nature. For example, following other East Syriac writers on Gen 22, CT argues that the ram caught in the branches signifies the undivided human nature of the Word (29:9).²⁵ Immediately

²³“The Lord has risen from sleep like a man overwhelmed by wine” (Ps 78:65).

²⁴CT asserts that when Isaac ascended the altar Abraham saw a cross (29:12). John 8:56 is quoted as evidence: “your Father Abraham wished to see my days, he saw (them) and rejoiced.”

²⁵Although Brock, “Genesis 22 in Syriac Tradition,” 18–19, identifies the association of the ram with the human nature of the Word as an East Syriac interpretation, he does observe that CT strays from the tradition by not associating Isaac with Christ’s divinity.

after this reading the author asserts a polemic against the Monophysites by arguing that it was Christ's human nature, rather than his divine nature, that suffered on the cross (29:10–11).²⁶ Appealing to the gospel accounts of Matthew and Mark, CT asserts that the purple and red garments used to clothe Christ at the crucifixion are instructive concerning his two natures (Cf. Matt 27:28; Mk 15:17). The scarlet signifies blood, symbolizing Christ's immortal nature, while the purple signifies water, symbolizing Christ's mortal nature (49:16–20).

CT also interprets the flow of blood and water from Jesus' side as possessing Christological significance. Appealing to John 19:34, the author states that when the blood and water both flowed from Christ's side, neither mingled with the other (51:18–19). Why did the blood flow before the water? For CT the answer is clear: through the blood he shows that he is immortal and through the water he shows that he is mortal and capable of suffering (51:21).²⁷ Each of these figural readings demonstrates that CT was not averse to using creative hermeneutical methods to advocate its unique approach to Christology.

Ecclesiological Readings

An important category of figural interpretation in CT can be observed in the author's ecclesiological readings. The first ecclesiological reading concerns the authors' interpretation of Gen 2:8 and 2:15, both key verses that describe Adam and his function in the garden at the

²⁶Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne de Trésors*, 364, considers 29:10–11 to be a late insertion. Leonard, "Observations on the Date of the Syriac Cave of Treasures," 263–64, in convincing manner, considers 29:10–11 to be an abbreviation of the eastern text, rather than an expansion of a common source with the western text.

²⁷Here the Nestorian influence in CT is pronounced.

time of creation (3:16–21). As for Gen 2:8, CT states that Eden is to be identified as the holy Church (3:17a), the Church is God’s mercy that will be given to all mankind (3:17b), and paradise within Eden signifies the place of rest and inheritance for God’s people (3:21). The author defends his interpretation by appealing Ps 90:1 and Ps 74:2—both of which are taken to prefigure the Church.²⁸ The author interprets the concept of *rest* found in Psalm 90:1 to refer to resting in the Church, while Ps 74:2 speaks of the promise of God to make this rest a reality.²⁹ The author extends this reading to Adam and his responsibility for tending and keeping the garden by offering his interpretation of Gen 2:15. In the same way a priest is brought in to minister in the Church, so was Adam brought in to tend and keep the Garden of Eden (4:1). Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to delve more deeply into this particular interpretation, it is clear that the author understands the Garden of Eden, as well as Adam’s function within it, in an ecclesiological fashion.

A second ecclesiological reading concerns the ark as a symbol of the Church. CT 18:3 states the general principle: “Adam’s body was put down in the middle of the ark, for all the mysteries of the Church are foreshadowed in it.” His depiction of the church is symbolized by the positioning of four elements in the ark, each of which corresponds to four elements found in the primitive church: 1) women were on the eastern side of the ark and men were on the western side,

²⁸“Lord, you are a place of rest for us from generation to generation” (Ps 90:1); “Remember your Church which you ransomed from old” (Ps 74:2).

²⁹Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne de Trésors*, 161, suggests that these interpretations of Psalm 90:1 and 74:2 are analogous to the type of exegesis found in the NT or in rabbinic literature. Unfortunately Ri does not list any examples. He does note that the Eden/Church typology is very similar to the exegesis of Mar Éphrem.

corresponding to the separation of men and women during worship; 2) Adam's body was placed in the middle, corresponding to the central placement of the lectern; 3) Various types of animals were at peace, corresponding to the peace shared between God's people; 4) Strong animals dwelt with weak animals, symbolizing the equality shared between God's people. CT follows a consistent stream of early Christian tradition that viewed the ark symbolically, but adapts and modifies this tradition to create its own unique interpretation.³⁰

One final ecclesiological example concerns the patriarch Jacob and his first encounter with Rachel as a symbol of Christian baptism. CT points out that when Jacob saw Rachel he did not embrace and kiss her until the stone was first rolled away and the sheep were allowed to drink. This corresponds to the requirement of the church that those who have not been baptized are not able to receive an embrace and a kiss from God's people (31:25). Early Christians would often practice a liturgical kiss as a part of Eucharistic celebrations, baptisms, and at funerals. The baptismal liturgy followed a standard procedure that consisted first of baptism, and then was followed by the first kiss of fellowship initiated by the bishop. This first kiss was the initial symbol of welcome into God's people and was subsequently followed by similar expressions of welcome from other fellow saints.³¹ The author, noticing the order of events that occurred in the episode with Jacob and Rachel, seizes upon this feature and corroborates it with his own baptismal practice. Indeed, the author has created his own ecclesiological interpretation as a result of a flexible hermeneutic.

³⁰It was common for both the Greek and Latin Fathers to interpret the ark in figural manner. See Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne de Trésors*, 242, for examples.

³¹As described by Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne de Trésors*, 377.

Cessation-Replacement Readings

CT is unique in a number of respects, especially considering that it does not discuss the giving of the law at Sinai in its recitation of biblical history. However, it does offer several figural interpretations pertaining to the ministry and words of Moses to indicate how the Jewish ordinances and Israel's place in redemptive history have been eclipsed as a result of the cross of Christ.³² For example, the author repeatedly points out that the wood used to crucify Christ was taken from the same wood used to carry the Ark of the Covenant (50:20–21; 53:6, 11, 13). This is entirely fitting, for the same wood that was used to carry one covenant was used to carry the covenant of the Lord (50:21). In his next statement, the author suggests that the Apostle Paul makes a direct reference to the cross when he describes the height, depth, length, and breadth of the love of Christ (50:22–23). This shift from the wood of the old covenant to the wood of the new covenant indicates how the later has surpassed the former.³³

CT affords another figural interpretation related to Moses by arguing that the prophecy of Deut 32:32–33 is fulfilled in how the Jews treated Christ on the cross, ultimately signaling the end of Jewish ordinances and the end of Israel as God's chosen people (51:9–17).³⁴ The

³²Toepel, "The Cave of Treasures," 537, argues that this sets CT apart from Jewish writings such as *Jubilees* that make much of the giving of the law at Sinai and the sacrificial service. In CT the act of Christ to restore Adam to paradise completely supersedes the role of the Mosaic Law.

³³See Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne de Trésors*, 476–77 for other examples in early Christian literature where wood in the OT was interpreted as typological of the cross.

³⁴"Their grapes are bitter grapes, and their clusters vinegar for them, their venom is the venom of dragons and their chief mover is the evil asp. This you are giving back to the Lord" (Deut 32:33–34).

bitter grapes and the sour clusters refer to the sons and daughters of the synagogue who crucified Christ, while the chief asp is Caiaphas and the venom belongs to the evil snakes of Israel (51:9–13).³⁵ The author also understands the vinegar of verse 32 to be the bitter wine that Christ was forced to drink with a sponge (51:14–15). In the same way that a sponge is used to clean out an empty cup, Christ drank from a sponge to indicate the ancestors' blessings no longer belong to Israel (51:16). Kingship, priesthood, prophecy, and anointing were taken away from Israel and given back to Christ (51:17; Cf. 50:13–17). By reading Deut 32:32–33 in this highly figural way, the author attempts to demonstrate how the details of Christ's suffering on the cross prove that the Jewish ordinances, as well as Israel's unique place in redemptive history, have been eclipsed due to prophetic fulfillment. Indeed, by linking themes and ideas connected with Moses to Christ's redemptive work, CT endeavors to prove that both the ministry and the words of Moses are fulfilled in the cross.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to categorize the various types of figural readings in CT in hopes of proposing them as interpretive possibilities for present day scholars. After introducing the literary character, content, and theological message of CT, a taxonomy representative of the various types of figural interpretations was presented under five headings: 1) Adam-Christ Readings; 2) Soteriological Readings; 3) Christological Readings; 4) Ecclesiological Readings; and 5) Cessation-Replacement Readings. Although the

³⁵For other examples of how Caiaphas was negatively perceived by early Christians see Helen Bond, *Caiaphas: Friend of Rome and Judge of Jesus?* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 10–11.

veracity of any number of these interpretations may be questioned, the author nevertheless presents modern day scholars with a commendable interpretive approach to the biblical story that might be integrated into their current arsenal of hermeneutical strategies. At the very least one finds a rich storehouse of interpretive possibilities that may serve as gateways for further investigation.

*Facing Our Giants?
Getting the Moral Sense Right in 1 Samuel 17*

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Abstract: The recent history of interpretation for 1 Samuel 17 includes both scholarly and lay interpreters advocating for readers to “face their giants.” This reading sees David as the moral exemplar, who trusts in God no matter the obstacle. While this reading is certainly inspiring, this article argues, through use of a modified version of the fourfold sense, that a Christological interpretation of the passage’s spiritual sense leads to a more robust understanding of the tropological sense.

Introduction

The story of David's confrontation with Goliath in 1 Sam 17 has been interpreted by many, from lay people to biblical commentators, as an invitation for readers to "face the giants in their life." For these readers, this text apparently gives impetus, motivation, and ability for Christians to face their problems in everyday life with confidence and in the expectation that God will give them victory.

This essay will explore 1 Sam 17 using a modified version of the fourfold method of interpretation and ask whether or not the above

tropological¹ interpretation is reflected in and warranted by the text. Drawing on de Lubac's work on the interrelation of the senses, the essay seeks to demonstrate that a close reflection on the literal, spiritual, and anagogical senses of this passage does not warrant the application given above.

Not only does the above interpretation take 1 Sam 17 out of its literary and historical context in the history of Israel, but it also pays little to no attention to the literal, allegorical, or anagogical senses of the passage. I will argue here that a more appropriate theological interpretation, and specifically a better tropological reading, is derived through close attention to the first three senses.² In the first part of the essay, I demonstrate the differences in pre-modern and modern interpretive conclusions, while in the second part I give a brief explanation of the fourfold sense. The third part of the essay attempts to apply the *quadriga*³ to the interpretation of 1 Sam 17.

¹The term tropological refers to the ethical or moral sense of the text. See Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 127–78.

²This article finds much conceptual and some structural affinity with Peter Leithart's essay, "The Quadriga or Something Like It: A Biblical and Pastoral Defense," in *Ancient Faith for the Church's Future*, eds., Mark Husbands and Jeffrey P. Greenman (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2008), 110–25. Two important differences will become apparent, though. The first is that this essay intends to root the relationship between the literal and allegorical senses in an intertextual and canonical methodology that pays close attention to textual quotations, inner biblical allusions, and narrative recapitulation. The second is that while Leithart and I both intend to defend the fourfold method and use 1 Sam 17 as a test case, his articulation of the interpretation of 1 Sam 17 is different from mine in a number of places, especially in the literary and historical details emphasized. This is not to say that I disagree with Leithart's interpretation, only that mine is complimentary, not identical.

³I am using "*quadriga*" synonymously with "fourfold sense." See Leithart, "The Quadriga or Something Like It," 112.

Facing Our Giants: A Brief Interpretive Overview

1 Samuel 17 in Early Christian Interpretation. The early Christian interpreters exhibit a consistent Christological interpretation of 1 Samuel 17, seeing Christ and Satan prefigured in the persons of David and Goliath. Particular details of the story are seen as types of details of Christ's life and work, particularly his death. The most important parallel is between David's defeat of Goliath and Christ's victory over Satan, which has implications not only for the cosmic battle waged between God and his enemy but also for the redeemed and their sanctification. While there are not many examples of an interpreter working through the text in a way that separates the four senses, the underlying methodological and theoretical principles of the fourfold sense are easily discerned in their interpretive conclusions.

Particularly important in this regard is the consistent Christological *telos* of their various readings; their articulation of the spiritual sense is regularly centered on Jesus. While a few interpreters do have a more moralistic reading in their articulation of the tropological sense,⁴ especially in their comparison of David's battle against Goliath to their own battles against various heretical

⁴e.g. Ambrose, *On the Duties of the Clergy* 1.35.177 (NPNF² 10:30); Aphrahat, *Demonstration V: Of Wars* 1.3 (NPNF² 13:353); Basil, *Homily 20* (NPNF² 8:lxv); Chrysostom, *Against the Anomoeans* 11.4–5, cited in John R. Franke, ed., *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1–2 Samuel* (ACCS 4; gen. ed., Thomas C. Oden; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005), 267; idem, *Homilies on Genesis* 46.9–10, cited in ACCS 4, 270; John Cassian, *Conferences* 24.8.1–2, cited in ACCS 4, 272. Note, though, that for Ambrose and Chrysostom, they also read the passage as ultimately speaking of Christ and his victory over Satan. Ambrose, *On the Duties of the Clergy* 2.7.32 (NPNF² 10:49); idem, *Exposition of the Christian Faith* 3.15.125 (NPNF² 10:260); Chrysostom, *Against the Anomeoeans* 11.6, cited in ACCS 4, 274. See n. 4 for more Christological interpretations.

theological positions,⁵ even a more moralistic interpreter like Chrysostom ultimately sees the passage as a figuration of Christ and his victory over Satan.⁶

Further, many of these Christocentric articulations of the spiritual sense are followed by tropological interpretations directly dependent on those previous Christ-centered spiritual readings. Caesarius of Arles, after commenting on Christ as the true David and his defeat of Satan, only then goes on to discuss how Christians, through the Christ-given Spirit's power, are able to enter into spiritual battle. In his words, “. . . it would be impossible to conquer, if Christ the true David had not come down with his staff which is the mystery of the cross.”⁷ Likewise, Augustine says, “But our armor is Christ; it is that which the apostle Paul prescribes when, writing to the Ephesians, he says, ‘Take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able

⁵e.g. Gregory of Nyssa, *Answer to Eunomius' Second Book* 1 (NPNF² 5:250); Jerome, *Letter LXX. To Magnus an Orator of Rome* 1.2 (NPNF² 6:149); Paulus Orosius, *Defense Against the Pelagians* 2, cited in ACCS 4, 267–68; and Theodoret, *Letter XVI. To Bishop Irenaeus* (NPNF² 3:255–56). Note that Jerome makes an explicit typological parallel between David and Jesus in his exhortation to defeat heretics. In other words, his tropological point is bolstered by the spiritual and anagogical senses of the passage.

⁶Chrysostom, *Against the Anomeoeans* 11.6, cited in ACCS 4, 274. In addition to the other Christologically typological interpretations noted in footnotes 2, 4, and 5, see also Jerome, *Letter XLVI. Paula and Eustochium to Marcella* 1.2 (NPNF² 6:61); Theodoret, *Letter CLXXX: Letter of Theodoretus, As Some Suppose, to Domnus, Bishop of Antioch, Written on the Death of Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria* (NPNF² 3:346–47); Ephraim the Syrian, *The Nisibene Hymns* 18.6, 36.3, 53.15 (NPNF² 13:188, 197, 208); Bede, *Four Books on 1 Samuel* 3.17, cited in ACCS 4, 268; Ceasearius of Arles, *Sermons* 121.3, cited in ACCS 4, 270; idem, *Sermons* 121.4, cited in ACCS 4, 271–72; and Origen, *Fragments on Jeremiah* 28.1, cited in ACCS 4, 271.

⁷Caesarius of Arles, *Sermons* 121.5, cited in ACCS 4, 268–69. See also Maximus of Turin, *Sermons* 85.3, cited in ACCS 4, 274; Bede, *Four books on 1 Samuel* 3.17, cited in ACCS 4, 275; and Paulinus of Nola, *Poems* 26.150, cited in ACCS 4, 273.

to withstand in the evil day” He goes on to compare this aforementioned armor with David’s armor when facing Goliath, drawing a parallel between David’s victory and Christ’s, and thus between Christians’ spiritual battles and the battles of both David and, more importantly, Jesus.⁸

For the early Christian interpreters, then, while there are some instances of a more moralistic approach, the dominant interpretive strategy is to see the David and Goliath story as having its figural fulfillment in Christ. The pre-modern interpretation of this passage is consistently one which sees the spiritual and anagogical senses as thoroughly Christological, and, furthermore, which thus sees the tropological sense as dependent on Christ’s fulfillment of the typological thrust of the passage in his death and resurrection. Christ, the greater David, secures victory over Satan, prefigured in Goliath, through his death and resurrection, which then gives Christians the ability through their reliance on the Christ-given Spirit to fight their own spiritual battles against temptation, sin, principalities, and powers.

1 Samuel 17 in Popular Commentary. This Christocentric reading of the spiritual, anagogical, and tropological senses is almost non-existent in modern commentary and scholarship. Instead, two approaches dominate the discussion. On the one hand, biblical scholars seek to pay close attention to the details of the text but do not read the passage as spiritually or allegorically referring to Christ. On the other hand, modern popular commentary seems to skip both the literal sense and the Christological spiritual sense and move directly into a moralistic

⁸Augustine, *Letters* 75.2, cited in ACCS 4, 275–76.

reading of the tropological sense. An example of much of modern American culture's take on the story comes from popular author Max Lucado:

What odds do you give David against his giant?

Better odds, perhaps, than you give yourself against yours.

Your Goliath doesn't carry sword or shield; he brandishes blades of unemployment, abandonment, sexual abuse, or depression. Your giant doesn't parade up and down the hills of Elah; he prances through your office, your bedroom, your classroom. He brings bills you can't pay, grades you can't make, people you can't please, whiskey you can't resist, pornography you can't refuse, a career you can't escape, a past you can't shake, and a future you can't face.⁹

In recommending to his readers how to face these giants, Lucado suggests, "Rush your giant with a God-saturated soul. *Giants of divorce, you aren't entering my home!* . . . How long since you loaded your sling and took a swing at your giant? Too long, you say? Then David is your model."¹⁰

Although biblical scholars may be quick to dismiss this as anachronistic allegory, this type of interpretation, where the exemplary David gives believers confidence to face obstacles in light of God's supreme power, is not relegated to populist speakers. Stephen

⁹Max Lucado, *Facing Your Giants: God Still Does the Impossible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 2-3.

¹⁰Lucado, *Facing Your Giants*, 6.

Andrews and Robert Bergen, for example, offer this type of application numerous times in their commentary. One such instance occurs in their discussion of David's supposedly inferior weaponry when they state, "Christian leaders need to learn to trust God when facing difficult enemies. This means trusting God's strategy as well as trusting that God will give us the weapons we need to win."¹¹ Jessica Fitting explains that the proliferation of this interpretation is partially due to the popularity of the David and Goliath story in children's literature and its similarities to "young boys' tales." This relationship between 1 Sam 17 and children's literature has resulted in a tendency to focus on the "underdog" aspect of the story, and has influenced the interpretive conclusions of biblical commentators, secular academics, and popular speakers alike.¹² Even Esther Menn, while not appropriating the prevalent interpretation above, comments that, "No doubt much of the popularity of this narrative stems from David's exemplification of Israel's identity as a small nation surviving under seemingly impossible odds."¹³

1 Samuel 17 in Modern Biblical Scholarship. Nevertheless, even with the predominance of the "underdog" interpretation in popular (and

¹¹Stephen J. Andrews and Robert D. Bergen, *I & II Samuel*, Holman OT Commentary 6, ed., Max Anders (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2009), 122. For similar statements, see *ibid.*, 118–19, 121. See also Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, New American Commentary 7, ed. E. Ray Clendenen (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 186–87.

¹²Jessica Fitting, "Children's Literature and the 'David and Goliath' Story," *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa* 34, no. 2 (2010): 38–53.

¹³Esther M. Menn, "Child Characters in Biblical Narratives: The Young David (1 Samuel 16–17) and the Little Israelite Servant Girl (2 Kings 5:1–19)," in *The Child in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 331.

especially American) culture, many biblical interpreters opt for interpretive conclusions that are more grounded in the text of 1 Sam 17 and its historical and covenantal context. For instance, Mark George argues that, “As a result of the coming battle, a theological statement will be made that all the earth will recognize: YHWH and Israel’s new national identity [as embodied in David] have triumphed.”¹⁴ Similarly, Robert Couffignal, in comparing 1 Sam 17 to folktales, argues that the story is intended to highlight David as YHWH’s warrior and in doing so, demonstrate the power and preeminence of Israel’s God.¹⁵

Numerous other scholars focus on Israel’s declaration of YHWH’s supremacy as part of its missional identity and in the face of Philistine reliance on arms.¹⁶ Some focus on the pericope’s description of

¹⁴Mark K. George, “Constructing Identity in 1 Samuel 17,” *Biblical Interpretation* 7, no. 4 (1999): 410.

¹⁵“Leur but était double: exalter celui qui fut le sauveur de son peuple et le roi le plus glorieux d'Israël, en qui se retrouve la nation tout entière; démontrer ensuite qu'à travers l'homme agit le bras du dieu national: l'acteur principal du récit n'est ni David, ni Goliath, mais YHWH.” Robert Couffignal, “David et Goliath: Un Conte Merveilleux, Étude Littéraire de 1 Samuel 17 et 18, 1–30,” *BLE IC* (1998): 440.

¹⁶In addition to Mark George, “Constructing Identity in 1 Samuel 17,” see also, for instance, Walter Bruegemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation, ed., James Luther Mays (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1990), 132; Mary J. Evans, *The Message of Samuel: Personalities, Potential, Politics, and Power*, The Bible Speaks Today, ed., J. A. Motyer (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), 111; David G. Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary 8, eds., David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 193–94, 203; Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library, eds., Peter Ackroyd (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1964), 146–55; C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I & II Samuel*, trans., James Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 repr.), 183; Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, Word Biblical Commentary, eds., David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 180, 182–83; Kyle P. McCarter, *I Samuel*, Anchor Bible 8 (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 297; Ben F. Philbeck, Jr., “1–2 Samuel,” in *1 Samuel-Nehemiah*, The Broadman Bible Commentary 3, ed., Clifton J. Allen (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970), 56; and David Toshio Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, New International

weaponry and armor,¹⁷ while others look to rhetorical analysis,¹⁸ narrative criticism,¹⁹ and literary structure.²⁰ But while this focus on YHWH's sovereignty over military victory is certainly closer to the theological message of the text than "God will defeat the giants in your life," what is still decisively lacking here is any sense of how the passage can be read Christologically.²¹ While a Christological reading may be foreign to some modern interpreters, as will be shown below,

Commentary of the Old Testament, ed., Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 463.

¹⁷See, for instance, David Bernat, "Biblical *Wasfs* Beyond Song of Songs," *JSOT* 28, no. 3 (2004): 327–49; and Gregory T. K. Wong, "A Farewell to Arms: Goliath's Death as Rhetoric Against Faith in Arms," *BBR* 23, no. 1 (2013): 43–55.

¹⁸Anthony R. Ceresko, "A Rhetorical Analysis of David's 'Boast' (1 Samuel 17:34–37): Some Reflections on Method," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 58–74.

¹⁹Moshe Garsiel, "The Valley of Elah Battle and the Duel of David with Goliath: Between History and Artistic Theological Historiography," in *Homeland and Exile: Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Bustenay Oded* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 419–20. Garsiel actually calls out the underdog interpretation, saying, "It would be a mistake to conclude that this is a story of a courageous young shepherd who defeated a giant well equipped professional warrior with his shepherd's sling. This is not a story of a contest between warriors in which the weak, the underdog, defeats the stronger. This is a story that delivers a theological message that the outcome of the war is in the hands of God, no matter what weapons are used by the warring parties." Garsiel, "Valley of Elah Battle," 420.

²⁰Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 193–94.

²¹Three notable exceptions in contemporary interpretation are Francesca Aran Murphy, Bill Arnold, and Peter Leithart. Francesca Aran Murphy, *1 Samuel*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible, ed., R. R. Reno (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010), 185; Bill T. Arnold, *1 & 2 Samuel*, The NIV Application Commentary, ed., Terry Muck (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 266–67; and Peter Leithart, "The Quadriga or Something Like It." My essay differs Murphy's and Arnold's in considerable ways, most notably in the attempt to provide textual grounding for the move from the literal to the spiritual sense and to read this passage in an explicitly Christological manner. I have already noted the differences with Leithart's essay in n. 1 above.

the fourfold sense and the rule of faith both promote this *telos* of interpretation. Seeking to address both the application related error and Christological deficiency of modern day interpretation, we now turn our discussion back to the fourfold method, as it moves from the literal sense through the Christotelic spiritual sense to the moral sense.²² The argument here is that using the fourfold sense's structure will guide the reader to a better theological reading of 1 Sam 17, and especially, a better reading of the tropological sense.

The Fourfold Sense of Scripture

The Christological Unity of the Senses

Pre-modern interpreters²³ use the four senses of Scripture to capture the multiplicity of meanings.²⁴ While the literal sense—the details of

²²As with all interpretative methods, one can abuse the fourfold method by using it either as a free ranging speculative exercise or as a machine through which to crank the text to obtain “objective” results. I hope to do neither here, although I may not be successful in avoiding that Scylla and Charybdis.

²³There was of course a historical development of the method discussed here as well as variety in how it was employed. The following is not intended to suggest that there was uniformity among interpreters for the first fifteen centuries of church history but that, for many, at a foundational theoretical level, this is how the *quadriga* conceptually works. For the history of the fourfold sense, see Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 3 vols.

²⁴Multiplicity does not mean relativism. Rather, it recognizes that there are multiple purposes in any given text. See, for instance, Kevin Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 272–76; and idem, *Is There a Meaning in this Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 414–21.

the text—is the starting point for exegesis,²⁵ the spiritual sense is intimately connected to the literal and recognizes the details of the literal sense are not the point in and of themselves. Instead, the fathers saw that the details of the text point to a greater meaning.²⁶ The plot of the story, along with the details in it, has a greater point, or *skopos*, and namely a Christological one.

Additionally, the *regula fidei* and an understanding of the unity of the four senses were vital for pre-modern interpreters. Early and medieval Christian exegetes assumed the scriptures to be unified in their narrative, purpose, and content, all of which are Christological,²⁷ and that the fourfold sense captured this Christological unity. More recently, Kevin Vanhoozer has argued for this Christological hypothesis of Scripture based on its pneumatological purpose—to testify to the Son—and its Christological origin—Christ the Word speaking to his people through Scripture.²⁸ This conviction of a biblical narrative, purpose, origin, and theme unified around the person and work of Jesus is mirrored in the pre-modern interpreters’

²⁵For the fathers and medieval theologians, understanding the literal sense was not so much understanding historical background as it was grasping the literary details, whether narrative, poetic, legal or otherwise, of the text. Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 166–69.

²⁶See, for example, de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 2:197–207.

²⁷John Behr, *The Way to Nicaea*, Formation of Christian Theology 1 (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2001), 17–43; Christopher Hall, *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 192–95; Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:234–47; and John O’Keefe and R. R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore, MA: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 22, 25–26, 28.

²⁸Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine*, 219–31.

understanding of the four senses as a unity. They recognized that the Bible reveals God in Christ and transforms his people,²⁹ and this acknowledgment that Scripture is both revealing and transformative was coupled by seeing the latter three senses—allegorical, anagogical, and tropological—as part of the one spiritual sense, or purpose, of each passage.³⁰

Note that I am not blindly appropriating the Fathers' and Medieval interpreters' method, nor am I ignoring the egregious abuses of it. These abuses are not necessitated by the method, however, nor do all articulations of it rely heavily on Platonic dualism or metaphysical speculation, as is often posited. For instance, Frances Young helpfully distinguishes between ikonik and symbolic exegesis, and between figural and symbolic allegory, a distinction that assists in appropriating the fourfold method in a textually careful manner.³¹ The latter “symbolic” categories, according to Young, characterize pre-modern interpreters who wanted to make the details of the text correspond to metaphysics or extra-biblical history without textual warrant. Ikonik exegesis and figural allegory, on the other hand, approached allegory as rooted in textual and narrative markers—rooted in the details of the text, and consistent with the main point of the Bible.³²

²⁹See e.g. de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:226.

³⁰de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 1:225–68; Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 175.

³¹See the helpful distinction between ikonik and symbolic exegesis, and figural and symbolic allegory in Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 161–213.

³²While I appreciate Young's categories for their heuristic value, I depart from her conclusion that they are merely descriptions of the “activities of the exegete.”

Christological Figuration. While this account of premodern interpretation is fairly standard, the assertion that there is a Christocentric spiritual sense to the entire Bible, and especially the entire OT, needs more explanation. Many modern readers shy away from reading the Bible Christocentrically, and, further, some might quibble with the assertion that pre-modern readers saw the spiritual sense as preeminently Christological. Part of the problem here is that, in the history of interpretation beginning with Origen and paralleled in Jewish interpretation in Philo, “allegory” has come to mean forcing the details of the text to refer to some extratextual and usually metaphysical reality disjointed from the author’s intention and the narrative structure of the text. What the Antiochene school reacted against was not seeing that the text has an allegorical sense but “improper” allegory,³³ allegory that pointed beyond the text to metaphysics. Instead, they understood the text’s *theoria* as an intertextual and Christologically focused allegory that tied biblical characters and events together through quotation, allusion, and narrative recapitulation. Contemporary interpreters most often refer to this as figural or typological interpretation.³⁴

Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 175. Instead, it seems to me that ikonic exegesis and figural allegory are activities of the exegete precisely because they are recognizing textual features, namely intertextuality and narrative recapitulation. See the discussion of both of these textual features, and the example of Scott Hahn, below.

³³See Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 161–85.

³⁴But by typological interpretation I do not mean only “coincidental” historical correspondence rooted in divine providence noted by a later author, but a textually connected and prophetically intended literary correspondence between two scriptural persons or events. The latter is still rooted in divine providence, but it is also authorially intended. Here I differ from Vanhoozer, who seems to root typology

Figuration and typologically intensifying inner biblical allusions were key parts of the premodern readers' search for the Christ-centered allegorical sense, and it is for this reason that it was so tied to the anagogical, or eschatological, sense. Beginning with Moses and the Pentateuch, the OT builds an intertextual web of related characters and events. This is the pattern of biblical revelation – later events are interpreted in light of previous Scripture. The entire Old Testament textually and typologically builds on itself to present a unified but diverse narrative, prophetic, and poetic hope, a hope that is summarized as eschatologically Messianic.

Scott Hahn, speaking of the typological character of Chronicles, says,

The Chronicler's history represents a deep reading of the canon of Israel's scripture. Beginning in the Torah and continuing through the historical and prophetic books of the *Nevi'im*, as well as the liturgical and Wisdom literature of the *Ketuvim*, the Hebrew canon is filled with examples of inner-biblical exegesis. Later texts rewrite, comment upon, or reinterpret earlier ones; new situations and people are understood and characterized by analogy to earlier texts.

. . . Like any good historian, the Chronicler provides a record of past figures, places, and events; but his accounting is written in such a way that these figures, places, and events often appear as types – signs, patterns, and precursors – intended to show his

and figures only in an a posteriori recognition of providential correspondence rather than in a authorially intended, prophetically colored textual association between two or more events or characters. See Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine*, 222–23, 231.

readers not only the past but also their present reality from God's perspective.³⁵

This is true not only of Chronicles but of OT narratives in general. This repetition of inner biblical allusions,³⁶ centered primarily around Adam, Joseph, Moses, David, the exodus, and the exile, gives the entire OT narrative an eschatological thrust, one which expects the Messianic Davidic king to bring Israel out of exile through a new exodus.

Hahn's contemporary understanding of typology fits with the Fathers' understanding of the economy of Scripture; Irenaeus argued that the biblical stories are organized into one overarching story,³⁷ and Athanasius relied on the economy of Scripture in his refutation of Arius.³⁸ When the Fathers and medieval theologians spoke of the economy of Scripture, they did not just mean that there was a unified story, but that this story has a climax, which is Christ. In other words, the story is always moving forward anagogically towards Christ's first and second advent. Thus the Christocentric spiritual sense of Scripture is bound up intimately with the anagogical sense.

As Henri de Lubac has argued in his monumental study of medieval exegesis, the four senses are thus a unified whole that seek to articulate the polyvalent but authorially controlled meaning of the

³⁵Hahn, *The Kingdom of God as Liturgical Empire*, 6.

³⁶Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 133, 148–54.

³⁷O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision*, 36–39.

³⁸O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision*, 58; see also Peter Leithart, *Athanasius, Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 40; Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 21.

text.³⁹ Moving from literary detail, the interpreter recognizes a typologically or figurally connected, narratively unified, and progressively eschatological spiritual meaning. Note that the allegorical and anagogical are tied closely together here, as it is usually through intertextual typology—the anagogical sense—that the spiritual, Christological meaning is derived.⁴⁰ After understanding the allegorical sense, the reader is free to understand the tropological sense, or what we might call application. Further, it is vital for the interpreter to proceed in this order, as placing the tropological sense prior to the allegorical produces an a-Christian moralism divorced from gospel-empowered ability to obey.⁴¹ With this framework in mind, in the remaining section of this essay I want to apply this method to a specific text, 1 Sam 17, as a test case and also as a means of arriving at a proper moral application.

Facing Our Giants? The Four Senses of 1 Samuel 17

The Literal Sense

³⁹de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*. He makes the arguments for unity primarily in volumes one and two, although his interpretive history and examples in volume three are intended to bolster that sense of unity given in the first two volumes.

⁴⁰Other closely related, indeed overlapping, ways that the authorially intentional text communicates an anagogical message include narrative recapitulation and direct prophecy. By narrative recapitulation I mean the use of previous scriptural narratives to interpret contemporary events, such as Luke's interpretation of Jesus as the new Elijah/Elisha. See, for instance, Anthony Le Donne, *Historical Jesus: What Can We Know and How Can We Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 38–40; Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 154, 195–202.

⁴¹de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 2:132, 135; and Leithart, “The Quadriga or Something Like It,” 117.

The details of 1 Sam 17 (or more accurately 1 Sam 17:1–18:5) are fairly straightforward.⁴² The immediate context of the passage includes Israel's continued lack of victory in the Promised Land (1 Sam 12),⁴³ Saul's failure as Israel's first king (1 Sam 15), and YHWH's choice of David (1 Sam 16). Discussion of Israel's king widens the reader's vision to the preceding book of Judges in the Hebrew Bible, in which Israel fails to conquer Canaan, repeatedly worships idols, and is portrayed repetitively as lacking any ability to obey YHWH. The solution is for

⁴²Historical background and textual criticism have a role in understanding this passage, but in this essay the focus will be on literary details. For opposing viewpoints and conversation on many of the relevant issues, see McCarter, *I Samuel*, and Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*. For the text critical issues and decisions between the MT and LXX, there is a plethora of articles and monographs. See, for instance and in addition to the technical commentaries, A. Graeme Auld and Craig Y. S. Ho, "The Making of David and Goliath," *JSOT* 56 (1992): 19–39; Dominique Barthélémy, David W. Gooding, Johan Lust, and Emanuel Tov, *The Story of David and Goliath: Textual and Literary Criticism, Papers of a Joint Research Venture*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 73 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986); Simon J. De Vries, "David's Victory Over the Philistines As Saga and As Legend," *JBL* 92, no. 1 (1973): 23–36; Charles David Isbell, "A Biblical Midrash on David and Goliath," *SJOT* 20, no. 2 (2006): 259–63; Frank Polak, "Literary Study and 'Higher Criticism' According to the Tale of David's Beginning," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, August 1985* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1986), 27–32; Hans J. Stoebe, "Die Goliathperikope 1 Sam. XVII 1–XVIII 5 Und Die Textform Der Septuaginta," *VT* 6, no. 4 (1956): 397–413; Emanuel Tov, "The Composition of 1 Samuel 16 – 18 in the Light of the Septuagintal Version," in *Empirical Modes for Biblical Criticism* (ed., Jeffrey H. Tigay; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 97–130; Arie Van Der Kooij, "The Story of David and Goliath: The Early History of Its Text," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 68 (1992): 118–31; and Jan-Wim Wesselius, "A New View on the Relation Between Septuagint and Masoretic Text in the Story of David and Goliath," in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality: Exegetical Studies*, vol. 2, eds., Craig A. Evans and Daniel H. Zacharias (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 5–27. While Tov's position of LXX chronological priority has been highly influential, I concur with Van Der Kooij, David Firth, and others who adopt an MT priority. Space does not permit any engagement with the issue here beyond citing sources.

⁴³See Paul R. House, "Examining the Narratives of Old Testament Narrative: An Exploration in Biblical Theology," *WTJ* 67 (2005): 237.

YHWH to rise up a king for Israel, as hinted at in Judges' refrain of "and there was no king in Israel" and portrayed in Samuel. Reference to Judges further reminds the reader of God's covenant with Abraham and Israel, his solution to Adam's sin in the Garden. God's promises to Abraham to bless others through him, to make his name great, to give him a land, to bring kings through his line, and to give him descendants that will form a great nation reverse the curse brought by Adam's sin. Adam was to be God's vice-regent, ruling over his good land, worshiping and obeying him, being fruitful and multiplying, and being a blessing. He lost the ability to complete these tasks in the fall, and God's covenant with Abraham—and thus with Israel—is intended to restore what was lost in Gen 3.⁴⁴

Preliminarily, what the reader should note from a survey of both the immediate and canonical contexts is that 1 Sam 17 occurs within a narrative of covenant promise on YHWH's part and covenant failure on the part of Israel. Further, this covenant is cosmic in its scope, as the Abrahamic covenant is intended to reverse Adam's fall. The battle that ensues is for the as yet conquered land, a part of this covenant promise.

Textual connections to other significant battles in Israel's history demonstrate this covenantal importance. Phrases used in 1 Sam 17 that are found in other significant OT military contexts include "given into your hand" (1 Sam 17:31, 46; Num 21:34; Deut 3:2), "he fell on his face

⁴⁴James M. Hamilton, "The Seed of Woman and the Blessing of Abraham," *TynBul* 58 (2007): 253–73; idem, "The Skull Crushing Seed of the Woman: Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Genesis 3:15," *SBJT* 10, no. 2 (2006): 30–54; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, Word Biblical Commentary 2, eds., David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1994), 7; N. T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press), 23.

to the ground” (Josh 7:6; Judg 13:20; 1 Sam 17:49), “went out to meet Israel” (Gen 46:29; Num 21:23; Josh 8:14; 1 Sam 4:2; 2 Sam 18:6), and “your father and his house” (Gen 45:14; Josh 6:25; Judg 14:15; 1 Sam 2:28; Jer 37:15).

A few observations can be made from this list. First, these phrases are clustered around a small number of OT battles: the battles with Sihon and Og in Num 21 (and its parallel in Deut 3), the succession of battles in Josh 6–8, the battles with the Philistines in Judg 13 and 14, and the earlier battles with the Philistines in 1 Sam 2 and 4. Notice that these battles have implications for entering the land (Numbers, Joshua) and feature the Philistines (Judges, 1 Samuel). Second, the phrase “your father and his house” appears fairly generic and perhaps idiomatic. Note, though, that this phrase is clustered in the coherent narrative unit of Joshua–Kings, as are the other phrases. The only exceptions to that clustering pattern are the two parallels in Gen 45 and 46, the references to Og and Sihon in Num 21 and Deut 3, and Jer 37:15. One should further note here that the Og and Sihon references are significant land narratives within the Pentateuch. This means that, in terms of significant military battles within Israel’s history, only Genesis 45 and 46, and Jeremiah 37 do not fit the pattern. In other words, the vast majority of these textual connections occur within the narrative of Joshua–Kings and/or the land narrative of Israel.

Additionally, the references within Joshua–Kings occur in very specific places. In Joshua, the references are all in the stories of Jericho and Ai (Josh 6:25; 7:6; 8:14); in Judges, the references are both in the story of Samson (Judg 13:20; 14:15); and in Samuel, the references are to Eli (1 Sam 2:28; 4:2) and David (1 Sam 17:31, 46; 2 Sam 18:6). Notice also that in each of these narratives, and in each of the textual connections between them, there is a pattern of victory followed by

defeat. Further, in at least the cases of the battles with Og and Sihon, Jericho and Ai, and the Philistines under Samson, we are dealing with covenantally significant battles that involve Israel's ability or inability to carry out God's command to inhabit the land. These textual and narrative connections, as well as the overtly Davidic hope of the rest of the Old Testament, bolster the conclusion above that the battle in 1 Sam 17 has obvious covenantal—and therefore cosmic—implications.

Looking at the actual battle itself, a number of details stand out. First, again, this battle is a covenant battle. It is not just any battle, but a geographically and strategically decisive battle⁴⁵ that is covenantally significant. Second, two representatives fight this battle, one for God's enemies and one for God's people.⁴⁶ The representative for God's people, David, has been chosen as king, and, looking at not only the previous canonical context but also the future context within Samuel, is the recipient of the Davidic covenant. While Goliath, representing God's enemies,⁴⁷ is arrayed with the traditional weapons of warfare and

⁴⁵See, for instance, John A. Beck, "David and Goliath, A Story of Place: The Narrative-Geographical Shaping of 1 Samuel 17," *WTJ* 68 (2006): 321–30; Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 195; Garsiel, "The Valley of Elah Battle and the Duel of David with Goliath," 395; and Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 437.

⁴⁶Some scholars, such as Israel Finkelstein and Azzan Yadin, suggest that the battle is reminiscent, and perhaps intertextually echoing, Homeric single combat. See Israel Finkelstein, "The Philistines in the Bible: A Late-Monarchic Perspective," *JSOT* 27, no. 2 (2002): 131–67; and Azzan Yadin, "Goliath's Armor and Israelite Collective Memory," *VT* 54, no. 3 (2004): 373–95. For a counter argument, see Serge Frolov and Allen Wright, "Homeric and Ancient Near Eastern Intertextuality in 1 Samuel 17," *JBL* 130, no. 3 (2011): 451–71. The important point is that these two men represent the hope of their respective nations. It is thus a covenantally, geo-politically, spiritually, and theologically important battle. See George, "Constructing Identity in 1 Samuel 17," 390, 397.

⁴⁷Note Goliath's defiance (*hrp*) and cursing (*qll*) of Israel (cf. Gen 12:3; Lev 24:16). The fate of Goliath is sealed even before David walks onto the field because of his blasphemy. See Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 198–99; and Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, 195.

is, due to his size and experience, seemingly insurmountable, David looks unequipped. He refuses armor, does not fight with traditional weapons, and is diminutive in stature compared to Goliath. Israel, including King Saul,⁴⁸ flees—or at least cowers—in the face of the giant; David, on the other hand, goes to war with a sling and five stones. Further, with these stones David hits Goliath’s head, knocks him down, and then cuts his head off. In other words, we have here a covenantally significant battle fought on the one side by a seemingly insurmountable representative of the enemies of YHWH and on the other side by an anointed but seemingly outmatched representative—and future king—of Israel, who wins by striking and cutting off the enemy’s head.⁴⁹

The Spiritual Sense.

This attention to detail allows the reader to see with more clarity the spiritual sense intended by the author of Samuel. Much importance has been ascribed to 1 Sam 17:45–47, where David contrasts his reliance on God with Goliath’s reliance on his own strength, and rightly so. This is one of the main points of the passage. But in many cases this detail,

⁴⁸One particularly interesting comparison in this passage is between Saul and Goliath. See, for instance, Auld and Ho, “The Making of David and Goliath”; Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 196; and George, “Constructing Identity in 1 Samuel 17,” 401–2. As Firth notes, Saul’s attempt to place his armor on David may indicate an attempt by Saul to force David to rely on what he will not, namely physical protection and weaponry. David, in contrast to both Saul and Goliath, relies not on traditional weaponry but on YHWH. Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, 199; see also Wong, “A Farewell to Arms.”

⁴⁹The careful reader of 1 Sam will notice that Goliath’s death is portrayed in similar fashion to Dagon, the Philistine god in 1 Sam 5:3–4. Specifically, both Goliath and Dagon are “. . . reported to have fallen on his face to the ground . . .” Both characters also have their heads cut off (*crt*). See George, “Constructing Identity in 1 Samuel 17,” 406–407.

which teaches the reader to rely on God and not on their own strength, is improperly allegorized to say that, in *any* “battle” in a believer’s life, he or she must rely on God. But this statement of David’s reliance on God is not made in any generic sense or even in generic warfare language; it is made in the context of a battle with covenantal implications. In other words, this text does not warrant a reading that applies to every “battle” in a believer’s life; rather, it is speaking specifically of a covenant-fulfilling battle. Although this point will be stressed in our discussion of the moral sense, it is important to note it here, both for its negative implications for the tropological sense and its positive implications for the spiritual sense. In regard to the latter, the reader ought to be drawn to think of covenantally significant battles in the rest of the Bible, and especially in the culmination of redemptive history in Christ. The battle that immediately comes to mind is, of course, Christ’s work of atonement in his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost. Colossians 2:15, for example, presents the work of Christ, and especially the cross, as a victorious battle with God’s enemies; likewise, Eph 1:20–21 teaches that Christ’s resurrection defeats those who are opposed to YHWH.

The connection to Christ, and especially to the cross and empty tomb, is made clearer when we remember the other details of the passage. While David is certainly not Jesus, there are ways in which he typifies Christ. Like David, Jesus faces a towering enemy. The Roman Empire and Jewish leadership are in the foreground in the Gospels, but the Accuser, Satan, the Great Dragon, is presented as behind these machinations, both in the Gospels and in Revelation.⁵⁰ He is the

⁵⁰E.g. the temptation narrative in the Gospels (Matt 4:1–11 and parallels); Satan entering Judas (Matt 26:14–16 and parallels); and Rev 12:5.

representative of all the enemies of God, indeed their leader, and is arrayed with powerful weapons – namely the tortuous execution by crucifixion. Jesus, on the other hand, refuses armor, namely Peter's sword and the heavenly host, and instead goes into battle naked and unarmed. Jesus, like David, defeats his enemy through foolish means, and through wounding his head. And finally, like David, Jesus fights the covenant battle on behalf of God's people. Like David, Jesus now leads God's people from the Davidic throne and rules over the kingdom of God – not, this time, a strip of land on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, but the entire cosmos. And like David, Jesus's covenantal battle is rooted in the canonical context of the Abrahamic covenant and reversing Adam's curse. Indeed, Jesus does exactly that. He is not only a better David, but the seed of Abraham, the new Israel, and the new Adam.

Notice that every detail of the story is not pressed into the service of allegory, keeping the text in bondage. For instance, I have not attempted to divvy up the OT or the entire Bible into five parts to correspond to the five smooth stones. Rather, the major literary and narrative details (plot, characters, context, climax) have been related to the canonical context and ultimately to the climax of the scriptural story, Christ.

Anagogical Sense

This brings the reader to the anagogical, or eschatological sense. While the preceding may seem overly theological or devotional, remember that these are distinct details parallel in both accounts. For 1 Sam 17, given the previous articulation of the literal and spiritual senses, the passage looks forward to the fulfillment of the covenant promises

through the Davidic king who defeats Israel's enemies. Further, 1 Samuel and the David narrative in particular are eschatologically charged both by its preceding narrative context⁵¹ and the subsequent prophetic hope for a Davidic king. Each passage in the OT fits into the larger framework of the first testament, as it narratively builds towards YHWH's salvation of Israel and the nations through his Davidic Messiah. Because of the significance of this battle, both in its literary placement and its importance in the life of David, 1 Sam 17 contains this eschatological flavor and contributes heavily to it.

In one sense, then, this eschatological aspect of the meaning of 1 Sam 17 has been fulfilled in Jesus's first coming. But in another, New Testament believers are still waiting for Christ to return and finally and completely destroy Satan and all his followers. The Great Dragon has been cast down to earth and sea (Rev 12), but he has not yet been thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:7–15). The already/not yet tension that pervades the NT here allows the reader to see the anagogical sense as not only pointing to Christ's first coming but also to his second.

The Tropological Sense

And finally we arrive at the tropological sense. What is the correct application of this text? The author is attempting to produce some effect in the reader, but what is it? The tropological sense is dangerous ground in the history of the fourfold method. It is here that many

⁵¹Ruth, for example, ends with the hope of the birth of David, and the mention of Ephrath in 1 Sam 17:12–15 recalls both Ruth 1:2 and Mic 5:1. Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, 150. Tsumura and McCarter also note the eschatological thread that is picked up by Ezekiel, waiting for YHWH to do once again what he does in 1 Samuel 17 – defeat his enemies through his Davidic representative (cf. Ezek 39:23). Tsumura even explicitly, if briefly, notes that this eschatological hope finds its completion in Jesus Christ. See Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 463; and McCarter, *I Samuel* 297.

stumble, most often because they jump straight to it instead of passing properly through the literal, anagogical, and spiritual senses. Peter Leithart argues that the arrangement where moral applications are drawn directly from the literal sense, skipping over the allegorical, “. . . implies that virtue and ethics are prior to faith and thus represents a hermeneutical moralism.”⁵² Here I would add further that not only is it important to pass through the literal, spiritual, and anagogical senses properly, but it is vital to understand just what these senses are about. This is what the Fathers and medieval exegetes used the *regula fidei* for, as well as the economy. They argued that the structure and content of Scripture was inherently Christological. This is how the NT authors read the OT as well, and how Jesus understood the Scriptures’ message.⁵³ The tropological sense must be grounded in this Christological framework in order to understand it properly. Even when the NT authors explicitly derive moral instruction from the OT narratives (1 Cor 10; Rom 15), it is in the midst of a Christologically framed argument. All this is to say that the tropological sense of 1 Sam 17 ought to be grounded in the Christ centered spiritual and anagogical senses, as well as the Christological *skopos* and economy of the Bible.

For this reason it is hard to see how “Face Your Giants” or any such variant is an appropriate moral application of this passage. We are decidedly not fighting a significant covenantal battle as the Davidic king and Adamic seed against the representative enemy of God. All of

⁵²Leithart, “The Quadriga or Something Like It,” 117.

⁵³The point of Richard Hays that the NT authors also read the OT with an ecclesiological focus is well taken, although I am in agreement with Matthew Bates that the Christological and ecclesiological foci should not be too easily separated. See Matthew Bates, *The Hermeneutics of Apostolic Proclamation: The Center of Paul’s Method of Scriptural Interpretation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 344–45.

this is accomplished in Christ Jesus. In fact, the one element of the text that can be figurally comparable to the church is not the one person David but instead Israel's military. And the comparison is not one of imitation but of contrast; unlike the armies of Israel, the church ought to put their confidence (faith) in their covenantal representative to win the battle for them.

This of course does not mean that believers are not engaged in spiritual warfare; far from it. Rather, as the allusions to Isa 59:15ff. in Eph 6:10–20⁵⁴ makes clear, Christians are called to fight spiritual battles in Christ through the power of the Christ-given Spirit. But the battle has been mysteriously transformed, and even turned on its head. Jesus has won through what Paul calls in 1 Cor 1 “foolishness,” and instead of defeating a temporal geo-political enemy he has defeated the ultimate and last enemy, Satan. This in turn impacts the battle that believers face: they too do not battle against flesh and blood but against the spiritual forces of this world (Eph 6:12). To be clear: this means that “facing our giants” does not apply to any trial or uncomfortable circumstance that believers face. Divorce, trials in parenting, loss of employment, and other such examples do not constitute spiritual giants in believers' lives. Similarly, believers do not fight with the weaponry of the world but through putting on the armor of God, which, as the allusions to Is 59 in Eph 6:10–20 make clear, is simply putting on Christ. Spiritual warfare for the Christian is, according to Paul, putting on the victorious reigning Davidic king, who has already won the battle for us.

⁵⁴Brueggemann makes an allusion to this passage in his commentary. See Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, 127.

Conclusion

A careful application of the *quadriga* to 1 Sam 17, then, on the one hand, assists readers in avoiding a timeless and gospel-less moralism. On the other hand, the fourfold method provides space and impetus for a close, textual, contextually sensitive reading of the passage. In other words, the fourfold sense allows modern readers to use contemporary interpretive tools while at the same time giving proper attention to the Christological focus of Scripture. Instead of applying 1 Samuel 17, then, as an energetic call to face spiritual battles with confidence because God will give victory to believers as they face their own giants, Christian interpreters ought to instead urge one another to, through the Christ-given Spirit, put their confidence in Jesus the covenantal king who has already defeated the representative enemy of God in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension and will completely destroy him at his return. As they face the real enemy as God's ambassadors and for the spread of the gospel, they can place their faith in the Crucified and Risen One who has already won victory over the Enemy and will completely vanquish him at the final judgment.

*Homilies and Hobby Horses:
Chrysostom on the Lord's Supper and the Poor in
Homilae in Matthaeum 50.3*

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Abstract: John Chrysostom is widely regarded as the exegete *par excellence* of the Patristic era, a champion of the literal sense of Scripture. But how well does the preacher fit this popular portrait? As a case study in Chrysostom's homiletical method, this essay examines Chrysostom's fiftieth homily on Matthew, paying particular attention to its exhortation to care for the poor as a necessary ethical entailment of the Eucharist. The essay concludes that this sermon—particularly the first half—does evidence some of Chrysostom's celebrated exegetical prowess, but Chrysostom's ethical agenda drives the second half of the sermon down a path only distantly related to the text at hand. Following this, the essay briefly considers the extent to which this sermon is representative of Chrysostom's preaching as a whole, the rationale behind Chrysostom's particular focus on the poor, and the social, material, and ecclesial circumstances which may have influenced Chrysostom's ethical agenda.

Translation of *Homilae in Matthaeum* 50.3

Believe, therefore, that even now this is that Supper at which he also reclined. For that one in no way differs from this. For it is not that a human being makes this, and he himself made that one; but instead, he himself makes both this one and that one. Therefore, whenever you see the priest giving it to you, do not think that the priest is the one doing this, but that the hand of Christ is stretched out . . .

Do you wish to honor the body of Christ? Do not overlook him naked; do not honor him here in silk clothing, yet overlook him outside, being killed by icy cold and nakedness. For the one who said, "This is my body," and confirmed the matter by his word, this one also said, "You saw me hungry, and did not feed me," and, "Inasmuch as you did not do it to one of these, the least, you did not do it to me." For this one does not need coverings, but a pure soul; but that one needs much care. Therefore let us learn to live rationally and virtuously, and to honor Christ as he himself wills; for to the one being honored, that honor is most pleasing which he himself wants, not which we suppose. For Peter also thought he was honoring Christ by preventing him from washing his feet, but what resulted was not honor but its opposite. So you also, honor him with this honor which he himself has ordained, spending your wealth on the poor. For God does not need golden vessels, but golden souls.¹

¹This translates the excerpt in Rodney A. Whitacre, *A Patristic Greek Reader* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 171–72. For the Greek text used by Whitacre, see J. P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Graeca*, vol. 58 (Paris: Imprimerie

Introduction

John Chrysostom is widely regarded as the most disciplined, rigorous exegete among the early church fathers. During his years in Antioch and Constantinople, he preached sequentially through a considerable portion of the Bible, and his vast extant homilies have been cherished throughout church history for their exacting attention to the biblical text. For instance, Thomas Aquinas reportedly said that he would have traded the city of Paris for Chrysostom's commentary on Matthew.²

This essay will expound a portion of Chrysostom's fiftieth homily on Matthew and probe what it reveals of Chrysostom's exegesis, theology, and pastoral agenda. Particular attention will be paid to the extent to which the Chrysostom of this sermon matches the popularly received Chrysostom, Antiochene of Antiochenes, champion of unstinting submission to the literal sense of Scripture.³ I will argue that this sermon—particularly the first half—does evidence some of Chrysostom's celebrated exegetical prowess, but Chrysostom's ethical agenda drives the second half of the sermon down a path only distantly related to the text at hand. To put it colloquially, even Chrysostom had his hobby horses.

Catholique, 1857), col. 507–9; hereafter referred to as Migne, PG. In the rest of this essay, citations of the homily are my own translation from the Greek text in Migne, though I have also consulted the translation in Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, second series, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 310–14; hereafter referred to as Schaff, NPNF.

²The statement appears, though without documentation, in Jerome D. Quinn, "Saint John Chrysostom on History in the Synoptics," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 24 (1962): 140.

³See, e.g., Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), I:783, 786.

Preceding Material in the Homily

The portion of the homily under special consideration is a pair of excerpts from the third section of Chrysostom's fiftieth homily on Matthew. I have singled out these two excerpts for special consideration because of the way the first Eucharistic excerpt grounds the second ethical one. In order to comment on how these sections of the sermon relate to Chrysostom's overall homiletical method, we first need to survey the first half of the homily.

The text on which the homily is based is given by Schaff as Matt 14:23–24.⁴ However, the first half of Chrysostom's homily expounds the entire narrative from v. 23–36, in which Jesus walks on water, calls Peter to do the same, and then, upon disembarking, heals multitudes. Chrysostom's sensitive exposition of the storm sequence focuses especially on Christ's use of the storm to test and strengthen the disciples' faltering faith. For instance, Chrysostom points out that, whereas Christ was previously with his disciples in the boat when a storm arose (Matt 8:23–27), this time he allowed them to weather the storm alone for a time. And Christ did not come to them at once, but allowed them to struggle through the night. Further, he allowed them to be troubled by the very sight of himself walking on water, allowing their fear to peak before allaying it with his "Take heart; it is I." Chrysostom draws the broader lesson, "For, since one cannot be tempted both for a long time and violently, when the righteous have almost escaped from their conflicts, because he wants them to gain more, he intensifies their struggles."

⁴Schaff, *NPNF*, 10:310.

The hinge between this exposition and the liturgical and ethical reflection that follows is the comparison Chrysostom draws between Jesus healing the sick and believers experiencing salvation in Christ through the Lord's Supper. Chrysostom exhorts his hearers, "So, let us also touch the hem of his garment; or rather, if we are willing, we have all of him. For indeed his very body is now set before us, not his garment only, but even his body; not only to touch, but also to eat and be filled." Next, Chrysostom draws attention to the greater benefits possessed by those who have the whole Christ through the gospel message, as opposed to those who merely touched the hem of his garment:

So let us draw near with faith, everyone who has a disease. For if those who touched the hem of his garment drew so much power from him, how much more those who possess him whole? Now to draw near with faith is not only to receive the offering, but also with a pure heart to touch it; to be of the mind that one is approaching Christ himself. What of it, if you do not hear a voice? Instead you see him laid out; or rather you also hear his voice, while he speaks by the evangelists.

According to Chrysostom, Christians not only see Christ laid out in the Lord's Supper, they also hear him speaking in the Gospels, addressing them with a word of salvation.

The Homily's Eucharistic Theology

From this exhortation Chrysostom immediately proceeds to the first excerpt translated above: "Believe, therefore, that even now this is that Supper at which he also reclined. For that one in no way differs from

this.” Here Chrysostom asserts the continuity of the Eucharist with the Lord’s Supper at which Christ himself presided. This continuity consists in precisely the fact that, just as Christ presided at that Supper, so he also presides at this one: “For it is not that a human being makes this, and he himself made that one; but instead, he himself makes both this one and that one. Therefore, whenever you see the priest giving it to you, do not think that the priest is the one doing this, but that the hand of Christ is stretched out.” This brief discussion evidences two important components of Chrysostom’s eucharistic theology: the Lord’s Supper makes present the saving events narrated in the gospel; and Christ himself is present and active in the Supper to confer his benefits upon his people.⁵

Broadly speaking, these two emphases in Chrysostom’s eucharistic thought develop biblical affirmations. Regarding the first, recall that the Passover, which is the old covenant type of the Lord’s Supper, re-presented the Exodus to each succeeding generation of Israelites, such that through their membership in the covenant the event of the Exodus constituted their own identity. Scripture instructs the host of the Passover meal to say to his son in explanation of the

⁵The summary of Chrysostom’s eucharistic theology in Hugh Whybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy: The Development of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite* (London: SPCK, 1989), 63 shows that these are core elements in his eucharistic thought: “The saving acts of Christ are themselves made present in the sacraments, which both enable each generation to appropriate God’s salvation, and point forward to its consummation at the end of time. . . . Chrysostom lays particular stress on the Eucharist as the ‘anamnesis’ of the many things God has done for us, and especially of the sacrifice of the cross. He urges his congregation to realize that at the Eucharist they are truly in the Upper Room. It is Christ who presides, as at the Last Supper; and when the priest gives them Communion, they must understand it to be the hand of Christ himself which reaches out to them. The Eucharist is an imitation of the death of Christ, and a participation in it.”

rite, “It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt” (Exod 13:8; cf. Exod 13:14, Deut 26:5–11).⁶ Regarding Christ’s presence in blessing in the Supper, recall Paul’s questions, “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?” (1 Cor 10:16). Those who rightly partake of the Lord’s Supper share together in the benefits of Christ’s saving work. As one body, they enjoy fellowship with their risen Savior; thus, it is for both Paul and Chrysostom.⁷

The Homily’s Exhortation to Charity

This brief exposition of eucharistic theology leads Chrysostom to expound the ethical entailments of the Eucharist, prominent among which is care for the poor. In the material between our two excerpts, Chrysostom first asserts that just as Christ is the one who offers us his body in the Lord’s Supper, so in baptism God himself, not the priest, is the one who “possesses [our] head with invisible power” and “inscribed [us] among his own children.” Because God has thus given

⁶For insightful exegetical reflections along these lines, see Grant Macaskill, *Union with Christ in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 201–18.

⁷Gordon Fee’s comments on 1 Corinthians 10:16 move along these lines: “The ‘fellowship,’ therefore, was most likely a celebration of their common life in Christ, based on the new covenant in his blood that had previously bound them together in union with Christ by his Spirit. But while their ‘fellowship’ was with one another, its basis and focus were in Christ, his death and resurrection; they were thus together in his presence, where as host at his table he shared anew with them the benefits of the atonement. It is this unique relationship *between believers* and *with their Lord*, celebrated at this meal, that makes impossible similar associations with other ‘believers’ at the tables of demons.” Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 467.

himself to us in the gospel and its sacred mysteries, we have no excuse if we withhold necessary goods from our brothers and sisters in Christ: “For if he did not spare himself for our sake, what must we deserve, who spare our wealth and spend lavishly on a soul (ψυχῆς ἀφειδοῦντες) on behalf of which he did not spare himself?” The phrase ψυχῆς ἀφειδοῦντες could more idiomatically be rendered “live in lavish luxury”; the phrase creates a stark contrast between unsparing human consumption and unsparing divine giving. God has given himself to us in Christ, and those who partake of his goodness must embody that goodness toward others.

From here Chrysostom again reiterates that the gospel is the greatest manifestation of divine benevolence and that this benevolence is held before us daily in the sacred mysteries of the church’s liturgy. He then spirals in toward a more specific ethical exhortation: “Therefore let no Judas approach this table, no Simon; for these two perished through covetousness. So let us flee from this pit; nor should we count it enough for our salvation, if after we have stripped widows and orphans, we offer a gold and jeweled cup for this table.” Chrysostom argues that offering a golden soul is far more important than furnishing the Lord’s table with a golden cup: “For, if you desire to honor the sacrifice, offer your soul, for which it was slain. Gild this with gold; but if it remains worse than lead or potter’s clay, while the vessel is of gold, what is the gain?”

At the conclusion of this exhortation, in our second excerpt, Chrysostom turns his attention to the positive obligation to care for the poor:

Do you wish to honor the body of Christ? Do not overlook him naked; do not honor him here in silk clothing, yet overlook him

outside, being killed by icy cold and nakedness. For the one who said, “This is my body,” and confirmed the matter by his word, this one also said, “You saw me hungry, and did not feed me,” and, “Inasmuch as you did not do it to one of these, the least, you did not do it to me.” For this one does not need coverings, but a pure soul; but that one needs much care.

In this section Chrysostom specifies how it is that one is to gild one’s soul, namely, caring for the poor. Drawing on Matt 25:31–46 as well as the Synoptic Last Supper traditions, Chrysostom juxtaposes Christ’s identification of the Eucharist as his body with his identification with his poor brothers and sisters, and he fuses these two Christological solidarities into one theological and ethical edifice.⁸ The same Christ who pronounced the eucharistic words of institution pronounced his solidarity with those in need. Chrysostom writes, “This one does not need coverings, but a pure soul; but that one needs much care.” “This one” refers to Christ’s eucharistic body, which requires of us not material assistance but spiritual purity; “that one” is Christ present in

⁸For discussion of the impact of Matthew 25:31–46 on Chrysostom’s theology and ethics, see Rudolf Brändle, “This Sweetest Passage: Matthew 25:31–46 and Assistance to the Poor in the Homilies of John Chrysostom,” in *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society*, ed. Susan R. Holman (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) discussed further below. See also Wendy Mayer, “John Chrysostom on Poverty,” in *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Realities*, ed. Pauline Allen, Bronwen Neil, and Wendy Mayer (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009), 103, who writes, “The concept of positive reciprocity that John introduces into his discourse goes hand-in-hand with a more broadly reconstructed role for the economic poor, in which the encounter between the giver and the poor takes on a sacramental, in addition to eschatological, dimension. A large portion of that construction centres on the identification of the poor with the person of Christ (one encounters Christ in the recipient of almsgiving, just as one encounters him in the eucharist), a connection which John builds in large part on the basis of Matthew 25:31–46.”

his suffering, needy people. Chrysostom thus upbraids those who perform acts of religious devotion that are ultimately superfluous and self-serving while neglecting Christ himself in acute need outside the church walls.

Chrysostom continues by contrasting the honor we presume to offer Christ with the honor he himself deems fitting:

Therefore let us learn to live rationally and virtuously, and to honor Christ as he himself wills; for to the one being honored, that honor is most pleasing which he himself wants, not which we suppose. For Peter also thought he was honoring Christ by preventing him from washing his feet, but what resulted was not honor but its opposite. So you also, honor him with this honor which he himself has ordained, spending your wealth on the poor. For God does not need golden vessels, but golden souls.

Again, Chrysostom's point is that religious offerings that God has not required only serve to condemn the offerer who neglects what God has in fact required. Immediately after the excerpt cited here Chrysostom clarifies and qualifies the thrust of his exhortation: "And I say these things, not forbidding such offerings to be provided; but requiring you, with them and before them, to give alms. For he does indeed accept the former, but much more the latter." In the rest of the homily Chrysostom continues in the same vein, meditating on the care Matt 25:31–46 requires us to show to Christ present in his people, extolling the eternal reward laid up for those who serve Christ in this way, and arguing that almsgiving cleanses from sin.

The Exegete in the Pulpit

How does this homily match up to Chrysostom's reputation as an exacting exegete? Concerning those renowned abilities, Johannes Quasten writes,

Always anxious to ascertain the literal sense and opposed to allegory, he combines great facility in discerning the spiritual meaning of the scriptural text with an equal ability for immediate, practical application to the guidance of those committed to his care. The depth of his thought and the soundness of his masterful exposition are unique and attract even modern readers.⁹

As Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen put it, "The literal interpretation of scripture generally favored at this time in Antioch (as opposed to the allegorical method preferred in that other influential eastern city, Alexandria) shines through in the matter-of-fact historical comment, pragmatic theological debate, and observations on the techniques employed by Paul and the gospel writers."¹⁰

One noteworthy feature of Chrysostom's exegetical method is what he called ἀκριβεία, which we might translate as "precision" or

⁹Johannes Quasten, *Patrology, Vol. III: The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Chalcedon* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1960), 433.

¹⁰Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, eds., *John Chrysostom, The Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 2000), 26–27. I am aware that Mayer and Allen's statement perpetuates an unsustainable dichotomy, but critiquing this dichotomy is beyond the scope of this essay. See also Ashish Naidu's discussion of the importance Chrysostom placed on reading passages in context and discerning their overall purpose and aim in Ashish J. Naidu, *Transformed in Christ: Christology and the Christian Life in John Chrysostom*, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 188 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 71–72.

“exactness.”¹¹ Chrysostom argued that God does not waste words in his revelation to men, so interpreters of the sacred word must attend carefully to every detail. As Robert Hill puts it, “His first rule . . . for himself as well as for his listeners, was to respond to the *akribeia* of the Scriptural accounts with a like *akribeia* in our study of them: precision and care must mark the approach of any interpreter of what God has deigned to speak to us.”¹² Chrysostom’s attention to scriptural detail was greatly aided by the deep, comprehensive knowledge of Scripture he gained during his monastic years, which were almost totally given over to the study and memorization of Scripture.¹³

The next question, then, is whether and to what extent this homily exemplifies Chrysostom’s customary exegetical prowess. I would argue that evidence of Chrysostom’s sharp exegetical eye is indeed present, especially in the homily’s first half. As discussed above, Chrysostom astutely compares Christ’s interaction with his disciples in this storm to his treatment of them in a storm earlier in Matthew, noting how in this instance he put their faith to a more difficult test, “leading them to a greater degree of endurance.” And again, Chrysostom notes that Jesus did not come to his disciples at once, but allowed them to languish in fear so that they would be taught to “bear all occurrences bravely.” Both of these observations, I would argue, evidence patient attention to the literal sense of the text and to the spiritual implications of that literal sense. Since these observations arise from careful attention to the smallest details of the text, they

¹¹For discussion see Robert C. Hill, “Akribeia: A Principle of Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” *Colloquium* 14 (1981): 32–36.

¹²Hill, “Akribeia,” 35.

¹³Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 6.

serve as examples of Chrysostom's customary ἀκριβεία. Such examples from the homily's first half could easily be multiplied.¹⁴

What then should we make of the sharp pivot from textual exposition to distantly relevant moral exhortation? The first thing to note is that this pivot was common in Chrysostom's sermons. Mayer and Allen write,

The exegetical homilies are often more distinctive, since in these John tends to pursue a close verse-by-verse exegesis of the pericope or scriptural lection, which he then follows with an ethical discourse on some issue. This second half of the sermon is not always directly related to the subject-matter of the first. Instead it can be occasioned by some concern which happens to be close to John's mind at the time or he may continue a theme which was initially addressed in other sermons preached before the same audience.¹⁵

¹⁴For instance, Chrysostom comments on the greatness of Peter's faith which often lands him in danger because it sets him upon tasks beyond his measure; on Christ's wisdom in inviting Peter to walk on water in order, ultimately, to alert Peter to his own weakness; and again, how Christ's revelation of himself in this storm exceeded that which he revealed in the previous storm, leading the disciples by degrees to greater knowledge of himself. For convenient reference see Schaff, *NPNF*, 10: 311–12.

¹⁵Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 30; See also Thomas R. McKibbens, "The Exegesis of John Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospels," *The Expository Times* 93 (1982): 266; Brändle, "This Sweetest Passage," 132. Commenting on Chrysostom's homilies on Genesis, Hughes Oliphant Old writes, "These sermons, coming early in his career, are often characterized by a threefold arrangement. They begin with a long exordium in which any number of things, more or less connected with the text, might be discussed. Then there is an exposition of the lesson for the day, during which the preacher commented on several verses phrase by phrase. Finally there is a long exhortation to the living of the Christian life. The exhortation usually develops from the exposition, but the connection is sometimes less than obvious. One does not

Given the apparent regularity with which Chrysostom more or less appended an independent ethical discourse to his exposition of Scripture, it seems best to regard this topical disconnect as the result of a pastoral decision rather than an exegetical one. In other words, we should not conclude that Chrysostom intends the latter half of the homily to derive directly from the text at hand. This may be a fine distinction, but it locates the disconnect between text and application not in Chrysostom's exegetical method, so to speak, but in his broader pastoral agenda.

With that in mind, it is not surprising that the topic Chrysostom turns to is the care of the poor. This subject was a major focus of Chrysostom's ministry in Antioch and particularly Constantinople.¹⁶ Rudolf Brändle even goes so far as to say that "the passage Matt. 25:31–46 is the integrative force behind the central thoughts of John Chrysostom's theology. His decisive theological ideas collect and order themselves around the power emanating from this passage as though

always find the sort of introduction, body, and conclusion, all developing a single theme, which today we are taught to expect of well-thought-out public speaking. It is often more like a three-course meal: salad, main course, and dessert. Each course is different, although they all complement each other" (Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church: Volume 2, the Patristic Age* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 174). It is significant for our present purposes that Old says the exhortation "usually" develops from the exposition. It would seem that here in Matthew, as sometimes in Genesis, Chrysostom developed an ethical exhortation with little discernible connection to the homily's text.

¹⁶See John Chrysostom, *On Wealth and Poverty*, trans. Catharine P. Roth (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984); Mayer, "John Chrysostom on Poverty"; Wendy Mayer, "Poverty and Generosity Toward the Poor in the Time of John Chrysostom," in *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society*, ed. Susan R. Holman (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 140–58.

crystallizing around a nucleus.”¹⁷ The present homily may be taken as evidence in favor of Brändle’s thesis, since once Chrysostom draws the analogy between those healed by Jesus and believers’ reception of the eucharist, it is Matt 25:31–46 which theologically grounds the exhortation to follow, and language from that passage courses through the rest of the sermon. In a chain of analogies, Chrysostom reasoned from physical healing, to spiritual healing in the eucharist, to the obligation of those who receive Christ’s body to care for that body as it suffers in the world. If the final destination is rather remote from the starting point, the integrative power of Matt 25:31–46 in Chrysostom’s thought offers an attractive explanation of why the homily traveled in this particular direction.

Regarding the social, material, and ecclesial circumstances which may have influenced Chrysostom’s ethical agenda, it is difficult to speak with certainty. Chrysostom likely preached these homilies on Matthew in Antioch, perhaps around 390.¹⁸ Chrysostom himself estimated that roughly 10% of the city were wealthy, 10% were very poor, and the rest fell somewhere in the middle.¹⁹ Yet it is difficult to know precisely how the material context of Chrysostom’s ministry influenced his frequent appeals to almsgiving. It is possible, as Wendy Mayer suggests, that Chrysostom’s attitude toward the poor amounted

¹⁷Brändle, “This Sweetest Passage,” 136. Evidence supporting Brändle’s claim is found in the frequency with which Chrysostom’s sermons on a variety of texts culminate in exhortations to almsgiving based on Matthew 25:31–46. Brändle discusses the forty-fifth homily on Matthew (NPNF 10:287) and the sixteenth homily on Romans (PG 60:547), among others.

¹⁸See discussion in Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol. III, 437; and Schaff, *NPNF*, 10:ix.

¹⁹Migne, PG 58:630; see discussion of the economic landscape of Syrian Antioch during the time of Chrysostom in Mayer, “John Chrysostom on Poverty,” 71–74.

to a new civic model that subverted cultural conceptions of poverty and, as such, met with ongoing resistance. Thus Mayer, at any rate, ascribes Chrysostom's frequent appeals to the recalcitrance of his audience on this point.²⁰

However, Mayer elsewhere surmises, "John's discourse in respect to economic and voluntary poverty cannot be used as a mirror of socio-economic realities. In some instances an explicit event, individual, or set of individuals sparks off his discourse or is employed to illustrate it. The degree to which reality of this kind is embellished rhetorically varies widely."²¹ This leads Mayer to conclude, similarly to Brändle, that Chrysostom's primary purpose in exhorting his hearers to almsgiving is soteriological: he wants all of his hearers to care for the poor in order that they will be found among Christ's sheep on the last day.²² These two conclusions need not be in tension. It may well have been the case that Chrysostom was motivated to preach frequently on poverty, in part, because of the lack of response he observed among the congregation, and was all the more eager to do so because of the eternal significance he ascribed to almsgiving.

A Gentle Qualification

In light of this study, I would suggest that the present homily gently qualifies the popular perception of Chrysostom as a ruthlessly

²⁰ Mayer, "Poverty and Generosity," 141-42.

²¹ Mayer, "John Chrysostom on Poverty," 109. For confirmation of this conclusion, see Mayer's preceding discussion of the tension between Chrysostom's portrayals of the material conditions of poverty depending on whether he is commending poverty as a way of life or commending the care of the poor.

²² Mayer, "John Chrysostom on Poverty," 110.

disciplined exegete. This sermon clearly demonstrates his customary exegetical care, but fully half of it is devoted to a relatively distant ethical theme. Of course, scholars of Chrysostom are fully apprised of this tendency in Chrysostom's preaching, so the minor adjustment I am suggesting bears on the popular picture of Chrysostom rather than more detailed scholarly portraits. Whatever one makes of the merits of Chrysostom's hortatory habits, it is at least worth pausing to consider the ease with which one of the great exegetes of all time regularly returned to well-worn homiletical grooves.

Review Article:
Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews

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David M. Moffitt. *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Supplements to Novum Testamentum 141. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2011. Pp. xix + 338. ISBN: 978-9-004-20651-9. £129,00/\$172.00 [Hardback].

The Christology in Hebrews is layered with themes of sonship, divinity, humanity, suffering, perfection, and typological Old Testament sacrificial images. As some have noted, Hebrews weds Christology together with soteriology.¹ David Moffitt's 2010 revised dissertation from Duke Divinity School, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, has surely stirred up controversy among evangelical scholarship, and rightly so.² Moffitt gives a new reading of the resurrection and atonement theory in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the volume is surely inviting for thoughtful stimulation among fellow New Testament Scholars and systematicians.

¹David M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 141 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 299; Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 400.

²In November 2013, the Evangelical Theological Society dedicated a study group to discuss the contents of Moffitt's thesis: ETS 2013 Letter to the Hebrews – Atonement and Resurrection, David Moffitt's Thesis. This panel invited Douglas Moo, I. Howard Marshall, and Michael Allen to engage Moffitt's work.

Thesis and Argument

Moffitt's thesis and argument is clear and slowly massaged throughout the entirety of his work. He contends for a "substantive rereading" of Hebrews so as to give a robust proto-creedal sequence: "the heavenly Son came into the world, suffered and died, rose again, ascended into heaven, made his offering for eternal atonement, and sat down at the right hand of God the Father Almighty."³ More succinctly, Moffitt argues for a logical progression of the resurrection of Jesus in Hebrews and how it necessitates an exalted high-priestly atonement event. That is, the atonement is a post-resurrection, high priestly, exalted event.

Moffitt uses three chapters to prove his thesis. Chapter 2 highlights the humanity of Jesus in Heaven (Heb 1-2). The human body of Jesus sets him apart from the angelic hosts and enables him to reign over the *οἰκουμένη* (Heb 1:6; 2:5). Chapter 3 presents Jesus' ascension into heaven with a human body. He presents many Jewish and Second Temple traditions regarding Moses ascending into heaven with a human body. Chapter 4, then, presents an atonement theory as a post-resurrection event in the exalted heavenlies. If Heb 1-2 presents Jesus in bodily form and Heb 5-7 and other Hebrews passages confer High Priestly duties after the resurrection, then the atonement was an event that happened in the exalted heavenlies.

Assessment

This, by far, is a very intriguing and interesting book. With each turn of the page, my interests slowly followed the meticulous and thoughtful argument. Intriguing and interesting, however, are much different

³Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 43.

than plausible. For Pauline theologians, or for that matter, some New Testament theologians, it seems highly suspect to see the act of atonement taking place after the cross in the heavenlies.⁴ The more pressing question, then, is whether or not Moffitt's thesis is exegetically and theologically sustainable. Prior to doing so, the tenability of such thesis about the atonement *must not* overshadow so many other valuable aspects of Moffitt's argument.

The Relationship between Jesus and the Angels. First, one of Moffitt's earlier arguments details the superiority of Jesus over the angels because of his human body. Accordingly, Moffitt claims the human body is a firm declaration of the superior role of Jesus. That is, because Jesus possessed a human body and is now in heaven with a human body, Jesus is, therefore, elevated in status. Hebrews 1, obviously, demarcates a superior status to Jesus on the basis of divine sonship (Heb 1:5, 6, 8) and positional rule (Heb 1:8–9, 13). As Moffitt expresses it, Jesus is distinct from the angels' "spiritual nature" and the Son's invitation to rule over the οἰκουμένη (Heb 1:6; 2:5).⁵ Furthermore, this forthcoming οἰκουμένη was always intended to be ruled by humanity, hence, the authors interpretation of Ps 8 in Heb 2:6–9.⁶

Hebrews 2, then, presents Jesus taking on blood and flesh, enabling him to become human so as to rule the οἰκουμένη. The vague reference of humanity in Ps 8 leaves one to wonder whether or not the

⁴Aubrey Sequeira. 2014. "Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Review)." *Credo Magazine*, January 16, 2014. Accessed July 10, 2014. <http://www.credomag.com/2014/01/16/atonement-and-the-logic-of-resurrection-in-the-epistle-to-the-hebrews-review/>.

⁵Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 118.

⁶Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 119.

author of Hebrews is talking about humanity, in general, or is a reference to Jesus, as incarnate Messiah. Moffitt takes a middle-way approach, easing the tension, and calling it a “false dichotomy” to force one interpretation over the other.⁷

It can seem perplexing why the humanity of Jesus can be used as an argument to elevate the status of Jesus above the angels. Moffitt solves this tension by locating Adamic traditions in Heb 2. Using *The Life of Adam and Eve* and *The Cave of Treasures*—two Second Temple texts—Moffitt depends upon Joel Marcus saying “Hebrews 1–2...is a powerful first-century witness to the legend of Adam’s exaltation above the angels.”⁸ Moffitt rightly locates a possible background tradition to Heb 2. These Second Temple traditions highlight angelic worship of Adam because Adam is in the “likeness” of God.⁹ Therefore, since Jesus is the “radiance” and “exact imprint” of God (Heb 1:3) and crowned with “honor” and “glory” in the incarnation (Heb 2:9), he is emblematic of an Adamic tradition that places him above the angelic hosts.¹⁰

Bodily Ascent into Heaven. Second, Moffitt makes a firm case for the bodily ascent of Jesus into the heavenlies. Unlike the “no resurrection

⁷Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 128.

⁸Joel Marcus, “Son of Man as Son of Adam, Part I,” *Review Biblique* 110 (2003): 55; Cf. Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 133–34.

⁹Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 136.

¹⁰Grant Macaskill may rightly critique Moffitt’s overly dependence upon Jewish traditions that may be more Christian than Jewish. Grant Macaskill, “Review of Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34, no. 5 (Aug 20212): 104.

advocates”¹¹ or the “spiritual ascension advocates,”¹² Moffitt gives a strong, cogent, and logically defensible argument for the physical and bodily resurrection of Jesus in the book of Hebrews. According to Moffitt’s argument in chapter two, Jesus partakes of flesh and blood and is invited to have messianic rule. Such an argument “implies that when the Son was brought again into the heavenly οἰκουμένη, he entered that realm as a *human being*.”¹³ So then, the body that Jesus has in heaven is a physical body, no longer subject to decaying forces.¹⁴ This resurrection as a man, according to Moffitt, rightly stands as the logical-center of Hebrews Christology and high-priest motifs.

Using Second Temple and Jewish texts, Moffitt shows common Jewish traditions permitted humans—in flesh and blood—to ascend into the heavens. These traditions aren’t necessarily influencing Hebrews, per se, but do show common traditional thought within early Christian and Jewish ideals. First, Enoch ascends to heaven in a body (Gen 5:24); Moses’ death is recorded, but he has no recognized burial place which may imply physical ascension (Deut 34:6); Elijah is also physically ascended (2 Kg 2:11). Second, the tradition from *b. Shabbath* 88b–89a conveys Moses ascending into heaven in order to receive the

¹¹Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, ed. Helmut Koester, Hermeneia (Peabody, MA: Fortress Press, 1989), 146–47, 406; Cf. Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 1.2.3.

¹²Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews*, The Anchor Bible 36 (New York: Double Day, 2001), 117–18, 305–6; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 148, 236, 332; Cf. Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 1.2.2.

¹³Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 145 emphasis in original.

¹⁴Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 146.

Law.¹⁵ *The Life of Adam and Eve* 11:15 and 12:1 also hints at a physical ascension of Moses into the heavens. *Antiquitates Judaicae* IV.326 presents a Jewish tradition that Moses wrote his own death narrative (cf. Deut 34) in order to prevent any suspicion that he never died. This text, however, tends to favor that Moses ascended into heaven without dying. Whether or not all these traditions are true, they do provide Jewish traditions of physical bodies ascending into the heavens. The focus of Hebrews on the humanity of Jesus and the exalted state makes it plausible that Jesus is in heaven with his physical body.

Moffitt proceeds to make his convincing case for the resurrection in the book of Hebrews. He makes a textual and logical argument. First, his convincing textual argument uses two scriptural texts. Jesus offered up prayers to the one able (τὸν δυνάμενον) to save him from death (ἐκ θανάτου) in Heb 5:7. The benediction (Heb 13:20) presents Jesus as one who is brought up again from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν). On the basis of these two texts, the resurrection of Jesus is in Hebrews. Second, Moffitt also makes convincing logical inferences.¹⁶ The inferences of “perfection” are between suffering and his high priestly role (Heb 2:9–11; 5:8–10; 7:28)—“perfection” is broader than resurrection motifs—but “perfection” does include resurrection. Moffitt’s strongest argument is explaining Heb 8:4 and Jesus’ tribal lineage. Hebrews 8:4 prohibits Jesus from being a priest if he were on earth. Because Hebrews portrays him as a priest, then Jesus is no longer on earth. Next, Jesus is from the tribe of Judah (Heb 7:13–14),

¹⁵Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 150.

¹⁶Moore rightly notes that Moffitt may be more logical than Hebrews. The current reviewer recognizes this valid contention. Many times, I wondered the same question. Nicholas J. Moore, “Review of Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 64, no. 2 (October 2013): 675.

which should prohibit him from being a priest. High priests are chosen from among men (Heb 5:1–2), yet Jesus learned obedience, suffered, and was made perfect (Heb 5:8–9). His perfection and humanity enables Jesus to have the title of High Priest conferred to him, a High Priest in the likeness of Melchizedek (Heb 5:10; 7:15–17). So, Jesus’ humanity enables him to be one among many to be chosen high priest. Jesus can serve as high priest despite his lineage (Heb 8:4) because he is now exalted into the heavenlies. He is now both Son and High Priest through his humanity.¹⁷ This change from earthly life to exaltation implies a middle step, the resurrection.

A Whole Vision of Atonement. Moffitt’s work really has valuable insights to Jewish backgrounds, common traditions, and Hebrews scholarship. What readers, in my assumption, want to know is this: Is Moffitt’s thesis regarding the post-resurrection atonement tenable? I find Moffitt’s work rather convincing in the majority of places and I find other positions problematic as well. So, I say “Yes...but” to Moffitt’s final assertion about the atonement.

Moffitt’s position about the atonement is highly textual and logical. If, as previously argued, Jesus obtains a human body after the likeness of Adam (Heb 2), suffers, is made perfect, and then conferred the High Priest role (Heb 5–7), then Jesus presents himself to God as an atoning sacrifice in the heavenly temple. Jesus’ presentation of blood before God is comparable to *Yom Kippur* (Lev 16).¹⁸ Thus, affirming the resurrection “unifies and drives the high-priestly Christology and the soteriology of his homily [Hebrews].”¹⁹

¹⁷Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 208.

¹⁸Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 216.

¹⁹Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 299.

I am in general agreement with Moffitt's position. First, Hebrews parallels some of the *Yom Kippur* event in Lev 16. Frequently, the details of the priest are limited and atonement is applied at the slaughtering of the animal (cf. Lev 16:6, 11). However, the more detailed narrative postpones the exacting of atonement until the high priest offers incense, sprinkles blood on the mercy seat, enters the Holy Place, or finishes the entire sacrificial process (cf. Lev 16:12–14, 15–16, 17, 18–19). So, atonement does not always correspond to the death of the animal according to Lev 16, but corresponds either to the manipulation and sprinkling of blood on the mercy seat or the accomplishing of other ceremonial acts. My central contention is: According to Lev 16, atonement is not purely accomplished at the death of the animal, but can be postponed until other actions and duties are finished. Hebrews typifies this Old Testament ritual with Jesus: he secures redemption for people by entering the Holy Places (Heb 9:11); he offers himself as the paschal lamb (Heb 9:13); he enters the Holy Place in heaven (Heb 9:24), and he presents himself “to put away” sin (Heb 9:26; cf. Heb 9:28). If the high priestly ministry is a post-resurrection event, then Hebrews atonement theology has striking parallels with *Yom Kippur* and permits atonement beyond the death of a sacrifice. Atonement is accomplished with the sprinkling and presentation of Christ's blood after the resurrection in heaven.

Moreover, this theory has partial warrant in Pauline theology. First, personal justification is connected to the resurrection. In Rom 4:25, the resurrection secures justification. The implication is that justification needs not only the cross event, but also the resurrection. As Colin Kruse says, “It was the death and resurrection of Jesus as one great salvation event that secured both our forgiveness and our

justification.”²⁰ Next, the gospel creed depends upon the resurrection to secure salvation in 1 Cor 15. *Primia facia*, the death of Jesus is on behalf of sins and secures salvation (cf. 1 Cor 15:3). However, if only the death event is needed to secure salvation, why does Paul insist on the necessity of the resurrection in 1 Cor 15:17?

Admittedly, Pauline theology focuses on the death narratives as the atonement event (Rom 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor 1:30; Gal 2:21; 3:13; Eph 1:7; Col 1:22; cf. Is 53:5; 1 Pet 3:18). This also has warrant in the *Yom Kippur* narrative whereby atonement happens at the slaughtering of an animal (cf. Lev 16:6, 11). However, what do we make of the Hebrews atonement narrative as post-resurrection? Moffitt says, “The logic of sacrifice in the biblical account is not a logic centered on slaughter, but a logic centered on the presentation of blood/life before God.”²¹ I, at least, agree with the logic of sacrifice and atonement in *Hebrews* to be centered on the presentation of blood in the heavenlies, rather than on the crucifixion (cf. Heb 13:12). It’s my contention, then, that Hebrews coheres with Pauline theology and simultaneously with some *Yom Kippur* motifs. It’s not as if they are at odds. Rather, Hebrews provides a more holistic vision of atonement. The cross is not the only place atonement is realized. Atonement is the larger event that begins with

²⁰Colin G. Kruse, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), 223; Also consult James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, vol. 38A, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988), 241; According to Frank Matera, “The distinction that Paul makes between the effects of Christ’s death and resurrection is more rhetorical than real. There would be no justification without Christ’s death, just as there would be no forgiveness of transgressions without Christ’s resurrection. It is the total work of Christ—his death and resurrection—that effects the forgiveness of transgressions and the justification of sinners.” Frank J. Matera, *Romans*, Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 118.

²¹Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 299.

the sacrifice, dependant upon the resurrection, and finalized with the priestly, personal offering of Jesus in the heavenlies. Atonement is an event with sequential actions that are all mutually dependant upon one another.

I do have one major contention with Moffitt's thesis: he affirms that a sacrifice is not the place where atonement is realized. He says, "The argument of this study is that a sacrificial death is not the point at which atonement is obtained."²² This statement overlooks far too much evidence for atonement, redemption, and other soteriological language at the death event of Jesus. For example, Heb 13:12 portrays Jesus being crucified "outside the camp" to sanctify people through his blood. Sanctification is accomplished through the shedding of Jesus' blood at the crucifixion, not in the exalted state. Pauline atonement theology also champions the sacrificial death of Jesus as the foci of atonement and other soteriological themes (Rom 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor 1:30; Gal 2:21; 3:13; Eph 1:7; Col 1:22; cf. Is 53:5; 1 Pet 3:18). Moffitt is correct to point to the entire atonement event, but fails to observe the efficacy at Jesus' death.

So...what's next?

First, I highly recommend scholars and theologians to read this text. New Testament scholars would greatly benefit reading this text and wrestling with its implications. Theologians would do well to read this text in order to bolster current theological expressions of Hebrews Christology, Jesus' relationship to the angels (Heb 1-2), bodily ascension of Jesus and surrounding Jewish traditions, Adamic and Moses typology, atonement theory, and more.

²²Moffitt, *Logic of Resurrection*, 292.

Second, future doctoral students and scholars should continue to test Moffitt's theory through the history of interpretation by asking two questions: (1) Does the history of interpretation reveal that Jesus' High Priestly duties ever extended to his humanity or only to his exalted status, as Moffitt contends? (2) Does the history of theology ever reveal atonement extending beyond the cross event? History of interpretation won't necessarily prove or overturn Moffitt's thesis, but finding historical corroboration will make it more palatable, or assist in dismissing it. For example Theodoret of Cyrus (b. 393) says, "For if He were High Priest as God, He would be so before the Incarnation."²³ Moreover, John Chrysostom (d. 407) says that when the author of Hebrews speaks of the High Priestly roles of Jesus "he is not speaking at all in this passage [Heb 3:1] of His essence or of His divinity, but rather of human honors."²⁴ According to Gregory of Nyssa (b. 335–340), Jesus is High Priest during his incarnation and exaltation.²⁵ Here are three church fathers attributing the High Priestly roles to Jesus' incarnation, not solely to his exaltation. Origen (d. 250), however, offers a tradition more on par with Moffitt's thesis. In his homily on Leviticus 16, Jesus is called High Priest and he makes atonement not at the cross event, but when "he penetrates the heavens and goes to the

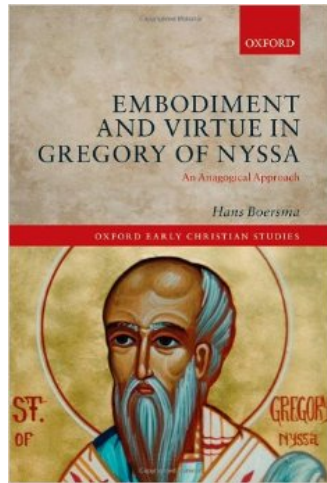
²³Theodoret, *Commentary of Hebrews*, PG82.697. Consult Rowan A. Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews*, Beiträge Zur Geschichte Der Biblischen Exegese 15 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1973), 298–99.

²⁴John Chrysostom, *Hebrews*, PG63.49. Consult Greer, *Captain of Our Salvation*, 284–86.

²⁵Greer, *Captain of Our Salvation*, 120–21. Cf. Nyssa, *4 Theological Orations*, found in Gregor von Nazianz, *Die fund Theologischen Reden*, edited by J. Barbel, (Düsseldorf, 1963).

Father to make atonement for the human race.”²⁶ So, even some in the Patristic tradition offer two different interpretive traditions of Jesus assuming the High Priestly role and when atonement was accomplished.

²⁶Origen, *Homilies on Leviticus*, 9.5.8.



Hans Boersma

Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa: An Anagogical Approach (Oxford Early Christian Studies)

Oxford University Press, 2013

Pp. xviii + 283. ISBN: 978-0-199-64112-3.

\$135.00 [Hardback]. [Purchase](#)

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One of the most recent offerings in contemporary discourse on the theology of Gregory of Nyssa (AD 335–394) is Hans Boersma’s *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa: An Anagogical Approach*, published by Oxford University Press in their Early Christian Studies series. This text represents a critical entry into the ongoing Nyssen discussion on body and gender, as well as broader discussions of the interpretation of Scripture and virtue ethics in a Christian historical perspective.

Boersma approaches Nyssen on his own terms in order to represent the anagogical theology of this fourth century Christian thinker free from notions of a postmodern deconstructionist program. The totality of Gregory’s theology, according to Boersma, is anagogical and the theme of virtue is “pervasive throughout Gregory’s writings” (p.4). Boersma argues against those who take embodiment language too far, admitting that recent treatments “do not do justice to his

overall thought” (p.11). For Gregory, the move from literal to spiritual readings is related “virtuous ascent away from bodily passions to a proper desire for God” (p.14). Additionally, Boersma highlights the idea of participation in the divine. This virtuous life is participation in Christ, and as Boersma demonstrates, this facet of Nyssen’s theology avoids the pitfall of moralism for which recent treatments have argued.

Boersma uses the concept of the body as a lens for his discussion. Chapter one establishes the idea of the “measured body.” The here and now—including a Christian’s anagogical ascent by means of virtue—is part of temporal extension, and for Gregory, “[does] not properly characterize the human destiny” (p.22). Boersma thoughtfully connects Gregory’s understanding of the eschaton as the “eighth day” to the anagogical approach as a foundation for his understanding of growth in virtue. The resurrection of Christ inaugurates the initial participation, and a life of virtue allows one “to ascend so as to participate more fully in this new mode of life” (p.44). Thus, entry into the “eighth day” for Gregory “is predicated upon repentance and a life of virtue” (p.43). In chapter two, Boersma explores the idea of epistemological humility in the exegesis of Nyssen. While interpreting figuratively based on the taxis of the salvific economy, Gregory does not give himself license to neglect the *theologia* of Scripture—figurative interpretation does not mean “open-ended” (p.66). Scripture is vital to a virtuous life, requiring humility in approaching the text. No better place illustrates this fact for Gregory than the Psalter. Boersma explains, “[The] aim of the Psalter is to reshape us by means of virtue into the divine likeness, so that Christ may be formed in us” (p.74). The spiritual *skopos* of the text is key for Gregory and necessary for attuning our lives to virtue like a finely tuned instrument (74, 77).

Chapters three and four provide readers with a necessary corrective regarding the concept of virginity in Gregory's thought. Feminist scholars such as Sarah Coakley, Elizabeth Clark and Virginia Burrhus have led the main discourse on gender in Nyssen. Boersma's interaction is a welcomed addition. Virginity, for Gregory, provides an image of moral purity and "encompasses all human virtues" (p.120). The virginal life of Macrina "gives us an anticipatory glance into the virginal life of the resurrection" (p.87). As such, bodily existence for Gregory is not unimportant. If growth in virtue is the goal of participation in Christ, then having "tunics of hide" aids in growth by presenting opportunities to choose vice instead of virtue (p.134). The goal is not disembodiment—the goal is total embodiment in the likeness of Christ. In chapters five through seven, Boersma highlights Gregory's ethical concerns both inside and outside of the church. Slavery is deplorable based on common humanity and the reality of the *imago dei*. Likewise, Nyssen sharply denounces greed in the face of poverty and homelessness. Concluding the text in chapter seven, Boersma argues against the notion of Gregory as a strict moralist. Responding to the thesis of Werner Jaeger and others, Boersma maintains that a thoroughly theological reading of Gregory rescues him from the charge of moralism. Boersma concludes by affirming the uniqueness of Nyssen as a "thoroughly otherworldly theologian" (p.246).

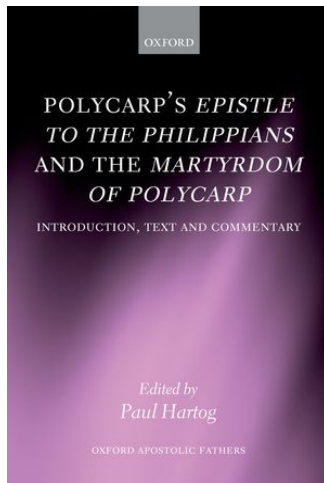
Boersma offers a corrective to the postmodern reading of Gregory that emphasizes embodiment to the neglect of theology. His theological reading of Gregory dissolves misreadings of Nyssen's supposed moralism. That being said, Boersma could have clarified certain points of Nyssen's theology. For example, if Nyssen believes in bodily extension in time and space only in our current state, how can

he logically affirm a bodily resurrection? Doesn't the resurrection assume some sort of extension throughout time and space? Additionally, a tension exists in how growth in virtue is seen as a form of escape from bodily existence. The observation that Gregory is a foremost "otherworldly theologian" helps explain this view of escapism, but Boersma could have done more to explain whether or not this amounts to a kind of dualism in Gregory. Additionally, Boersma could have done more to bring out the "here and now" implications of Nyssen's thought.

In the preface, Boersma offers a refreshing confession—he did not discover in Gregory what he had set out to find. He was surprised at how little Gregory affirms how the "entire created order—including embodied existence—participates sacramentally in eternal realities" (p.vii). Despite this admission, *Embodiment and Virtue* is a welcomed addition to Nyssen scholarship. It is an especially helpful text to students of early Christian anthropology and ethics. It should also serve well as a text for courses in Cappadocian theology in general. On his own admission, Boersma's expectations were only half met, yet his exploration of Gregory, including his anagogical theology and emphasis on virtue, will serve scholarship well for the next generation of Nyssen scholars.

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Paul Hartog.

Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and Commentary (Oxford Apostolic Fathers)

Oxford University Press, 2013

Pp. xi + 402. ISBN: 978-0-19-922839-3. \$275.00
[Hardback]. [Purchase](#)

Rick Brannan

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With essentially two volumes in one, Paul Hartog provides the entry for Polycarp's writings in the *Oxford Apostolic Fathers* Oxford University Press series. For each of Polycarp's writings, Hartog provides substantial introductions, Greek text with English translation, and commentary. This review consists of interaction with the introductory materials of both the *Epistle to the Philippians* and the *Martyrdom*, along with brief notes on the Hartog's text and commentary.

Before the material on each writing, Hartog sets the tone with an overview of Polycarp the person, his genuine and falsely-attributed writings, and other early Christian literature about Polycarp. Much of the surviving literature about Polycarp is hagiographical in nature, and dubious in its preservation of historical fact. Yet the understanding of how the early church viewed Polycarp is within that material, so it has value for the historian and student of the early church. Other

information about Polycarp which is more likely to be valid, such as Polycarp's location—Smyrna, his status as bishop, and what can be ascertained of his relationship with the Apostle John as well as Irenaeus.

Hartog's presentation follows the traditional order of composition, with the *Epistle to the Philippians* first. The introduction is split into 14 sections spanning over 50 pages. He starts with the historical setting and quickly moves into discussions of textual tradition, authenticity, unity of the epistle, and date. The larger questions today revolve around authenticity and unity of the letter. Hartog interacts with all major theories and their development, providing a map to existing literature through discussion in the text and footnotes.

Hartog continues with shorter sections on genre and style, occasion and purpose, and themes of the epistle. Following these is an extensive section on intertextuality. As many readers of Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians* are quick to discover, the epistle's language is infused with the language of the New Testament. Yet discerning and tracing the influence of the Bible on Polycarp's writing is a difficult task. Hartog, well versed in this area due to his previous work on the relationship between Polycarp and the New Testament,¹ provides an expansive overview to the issue of intertextuality in Polycarp's letter.

Hartog rounds out the introduction with sections on Polycarp and Paul, theology, opponents, avarice and heresy, and influence. These sections provide necessary background to themes within the letter and

¹Paul Hartog, *Polycarp and the New Testament: The Occasion, Rhetoric, Theme, and Unity of the Epistle to the Philippians and Its Allusions to New Testament Literature*, WUNT 134. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).

the scholarly discussion on their significance.

Hartog's edition, apparatus, and translation of Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians* is presented next with Greek/Latin and English on facing pages. While the sigla in the apparatus are explained in the introduction, the structure and symbols of the apparatus (e.g. parentheses, angle brackets) are not. Each chapter and verse are given in their own paragraph in both edition and translation, which leaves the reader with no insight from the editor on where discourse-level segmentation such as paragraph breaks may occur.

Hartog's introduction to the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* runs over 70 pages. He covers roughly the same sorts of introductory matters—authorship, recipients, text, authenticity, date, and historicity—as he did in the introduction to Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians*. As with the previous introduction, the section on intertextuality functions as a boundary between historico-critical introductory matters and issues related to content and understanding of the document. This section also highlights the lack of any direct interaction between the *Martyrdom* and canonical Christian texts.

The introduction continues with sections on theology, view of martyrdom, anti-montanism, Jewish-Christian tradition, legal issues, prayer, and influence. As with other sections, this material provides discussion on these issues among current scholarship with several citations for the motivated reader to follow.

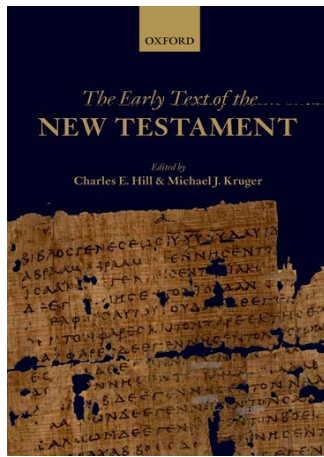
The Greek text and apparatus of the *Martyrdom* is based on Dehandschutter's critical text; the translation is Hartog's. It, as well, has each verse (or section) as its own paragraph, leaving any higher level discourse segmentation such as paragraphing as an exercise to the reader.

Hartog's commentary on both the *Epistle to the Philippians* and the

Martyrdom lead the reader through respective texts, highlighting translation issues and text-critical issues. His interaction with the available literature is significant, providing discussion and reference to further sources through the footnotes at nearly every point possible.

The entire volume is meticulously researched. The bibliography and footnotes as well as the degree of interaction with German literature not readily accessible to most readers are the obvious strengths of this volume. These factors set Hartog's work apart. Yet at several points this reviewer felt as if Hartog was focused more on presenting what each consulted source reported about a particular fact, feature, or problem and less focused on presenting what Hartog himself concluded regarding the same issue.

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Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger, eds.
The Early Text of the New Testament.

Oxford University Press, 2014

Pp. xiv + 483. ISBN: 978-0-19-870969-5. \$50.00
[Paperback]. [Purchase](#)

Jeff Cate

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Charles Hill (Ph.D., Cambridge) and Michael Kruger (Ph.D., Edinburgh) serve as Professors of New Testament for Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando and Charlotte, respectively. Their research and publications are held in high regard in the interrelated fields of manuscripts, canon, and early Christian writings. In *The Early Text of the NT*, Hill and Kruger have brought together nearly two-dozen of the current, leading voices in textual criticism to analyze the available evidence from the earliest period for the transmission of the NT text. The evidence is delimited to pre-fourth century, but most of the patristic evidence is second century while much of the manuscript evidence is third. Evidence from this period has always been crucial to the field, but even more so in recent years as Hill and Kruger explain in the introduction. In the last two decades, NT textual criticism has seen a resurgence in research and the emergence of new debates on subjects such as the concept of an original text, the role of the papyri, the types

of text, scribal habits, the quality of transmission, as well as other related issues. Much of the reason this earliest period has been scrutinized is because the precise nature of the copy process in that time period has yet to be clarified, and opposing claims of reliability and unreliability have been made based on the same elusive data.

Twenty-one essays comprise the book and are arranged in three large sections—four, nine, and seven essays divided respectively. In the first section regarding scribal copying, Harry Gamble describes the book trade of antiquity and its implications towards early Christian texts. Scott Charlesworth next examines the significance of *nomina sacra* and codices as evidence towards the collaboration of early Christian scribes over and against their non-“orthodox” counterparts. Larry Hurtado surveys the evidence for early Christian reading culture and its implications towards how texts were understood. Kruger then concludes the section with an important essay on how texts, which are now in the NT, were considered scripture from the earliest time periods and how this scriptural status precluded overt attempts to alter texts as indicated in a variety of early Christian statements.

All but one of the essays in the second section make a detailed inventory of the extant, early evidence for the various parts of the NT: Matthew (Tommy Wassermann), Mark (Peter Head), Luke (Juan Hernández), John (Juan Chapa), Acts (Christopher Tuckett), Paul (James Royse), Catholic Epistles (Keith Elliott), and Revelation (Tobias Nicklas). For some of these texts, the pre-fourth-century evidence is rather slim—especially Mark, Catholic Epistles, and Revelation. When ample evidence is found, more interpretation of the data is possible. Wassermann, for example, examines fourteen early specimens of Matthew to determine if their textual character was free, normal, or strict. This middle section of the book concludes with an essay by Peter

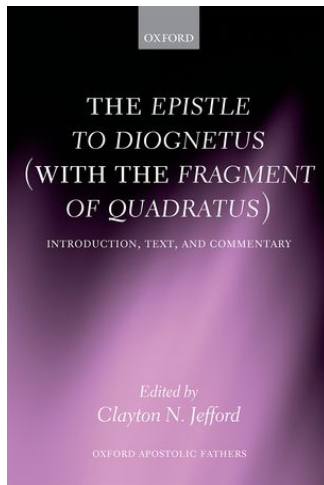
Williams on the use of versional evidence, and specifically the intriguing agreements between the Syriac and Old Latin.

Seven essays in this final section of the book examine specific second-century sources for the NT text: Apostolic Fathers (Paul Foster), Marcion (Dieter Roth), Justin (Joseph Verheyden), Tatian (Tjitze Baarda), non-canonical gospels (Stanley Porter), Irenaeus (Jeffrey Bingham and Billy Todd), and Clement of Alexandria (Carl Cosaert). While all the essays in this third section are important, Hill's opening essay in this section is must reading for anyone working with patristic citations. Hill carefully documents how citations were handled outside of Christian circles, whether of Greek classics (Homer, Herodotus, Plato) or by Jewish writers (Philo, Josephus, *Jubilees*, Pseudo-Philo). Hill is responding to claims by Helmut Koester and William Peterson that the NT text prior to 180 CE was "very unstable" and "textual chaos" based on the looseness of NT citations in patristic sources prior to Irenaeus. Hill agrees with Peterson that Irenaeus represents a watershed moment for the citation of NT text, but "the question is not, 'why do early authors [prior to Irenaeus] cite the NT writings so loosely' but 'why does Irenaeus cite more accurately?'" (p. 278). For this, Hill offers three suggestions: (1) prior to Irenaeus, early Christian writings weren't as exegetical; (2) by Irenaeus' time, Christians scriptures were more widely known and available; and (3) about this same time, the codex overtook the roll which would have facilitated the use of a written text and not merely one's memory for the wording of a citation.

The Early Text of the New Testament is an important and unique contribution to these current debates. The individual NT books are examined separately to prevent homogenizing and blurring textual issues in unfortunate and misleading kinds of ways. The second-

century sources are also examined individually to see the evidence they are able to present collectively. While some of the material in the essays has been discussed elsewhere by these and other scholars, still much of the analysis has been approached in a new and fresh manner. Crucial data regarding textual reliability in the second century is especially to be noted in both essays by the two editors (Hill and Kruger). The twenty-one essays in *The Early Text* are not the final word about the NT text in the first three centuries, but nonetheless it is an important word that must be considered. Those wishing to engage in this debate must examine closely the detailed data provided in this volume.

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Clayton N. Jefford

The Epistle to Diognetus (with the fragment of Quadratus): Introduction, Text, and Commentary
(Oxford Apostolic Fathers)

Oxford University Press, 2013

Pp. ix + 281. ISBN: 978-0-19-921274-3. \$185.00
[Hardback]. [Purchase](#)

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It has been over 60 years since a critical edition of the *Epistle to Diognetus* was published in English. That edition, by Henry Meecham, stood the tests of time well. But with the advent of Oxford University Press' *Oxford Apostolic Fathers* series, Clayton N. Jefford has produced a worthy successor. His volume, as with each volume in the *Oxford Apostolic Fathers* series, consists of three parts: Introduction, Text, and Commentary. The introduction provides the basis and framework for establishing the Greek text as well as the translation and commentary, and as such will be the primary focus of this review.

Jefford sets the context for his discussion well. Today, only one manuscript is known to contain this material, and it was subsequently lost in a fire. Only three early transcriptions of the text were completed and subsequent Greek editions are based on that material. Based on his evaluations of those transcriptions, Jefford concludes the manuscript itself was even harder to read and decipher and more

lacunose than notes in modern editions lead one to believe. The result of this work is immediately apparent in the scope and detail of the apparatus provided for the Greek text. This is valuable information that has not been available in a single edition and is essential knowledge for those doing serious work involving this text.

Jefford next delves into provenance, which is difficult. There is no longer any existing manuscript witness, little is known about where it came from, and only qualified guessing can be done on any of these topics. There have been several possible authors suggested, all of them supposition. Intelligently argued, many of them, but all constrained to the incredibly small pool of names we actually know and settings we actually understand. Jefford does a good job navigating this tension and reviewing the options and the cases for and against them, even including more recent approaches, such as Charles Hill's thesis of authorship which points to Polycarp. Jefford, cautious here as in his other work, mentions the possibilities, weighs in on some of them, but is rightly hesitant to point to a specifically named person as the author of this work.

The majority of scholars of early Christianity see *Diognetus* as two parts. Charles Hill has recently and somewhat persuasively argued that these two sections, despite the lacuna, are of the same author and they should be considered as a whole. Jefford upholds the consensus that the two parts are not directly related, using the more developed forms of arguments Hill has largely anticipated in his work asserting their unity. Regarding integrity, Jefford again hints of his development theory, noting that while the latter portion is an edition, he allows for extensive editorial action to conform the first section with the last section more seamlessly.

Regarding the relationship between *Epistle to Diognetus* and Scripture, Jefford provides an amazing array of intertextual possibilities. He interacts with Michael Bird's recent work on the relationship between *Epistle to Diognetus* and Paul's epistles, and also with the well-known reflection of Johannine language.

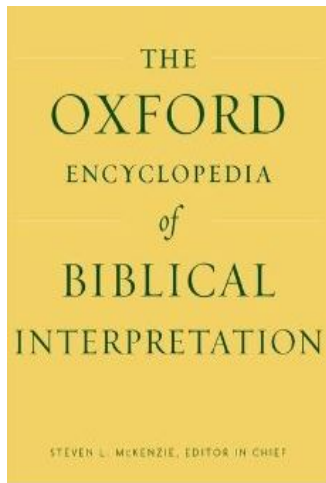
From here, Jefford moves from review of scholarship and development into positing his own ideas on Diognetus. Though his examination of structure, development, integrity, and relation to Scripture in the introduction, Jefford identifies material that he sees as largely secondary and not necessary for the core of the work. He isolates and removes this material, leaving just the core, which he considers "the rough form of what may once have been oral performance" (117).

Jefford has defended his proposal well, but this reviewer thinks suggestions like his prompt more questions than they solve. There are questions about any revisions or edits to the text and who might have made them. If oral, did the original author expand the edition for written publication? When did these editorial expansions happen, and why? What source did they come from? In Jefford's defense, he does frame his discussion well. He notes that his proposal is not a certain and he is more convinced of the generalities of it than any specifics he may elucidate in the discussion.

In sum, Jefford's edition has become the essential reference on all things having to do with the *Epistle to Diognetus*. Scholars working with

it or with texts that may share some intertextual relation with it should take the time to consult and benefit from Jefford's work.

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Steven L. McKenzie, ed.
The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation. (2 vols)

Oxford University Press, 2013

Pp. xxviii + 559 (vol. 1); Pp. x + 566 (vol. 2).

ISBN: 978-0-19-983226-2 (set). \$395.00

[Hardcover]. [Purchase](#)

Matthew Y. Emerson
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The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation (OEBI) is an invaluable resource for scholars, and especially those in biblical studies. Steven McKenzie and his editorial team have produced a volume that combines accessibility, clarity, and eruditeness. The contributors include both well-established and emerging scholars from a variety of fields and from different global and cultural vantage points. Each of the essays, organized alphabetically, is a few thousand words in length and includes a—many times annotated—bibliography. The second volume helpfully includes at the end a list of contributors and their essays, an index, and a topical outline of contents. This last feature is especially beneficial, as it assists the reader in locating essays for which they may be unsure of the title. The topical outline is also useful for potential buyers, since it demonstrates what the dictionary does and does not cover. The topics listed are “The Biblical World,” “The Biblical Text,” “Literary Approaches,” “Cultural Approaches,”

Ideological Approaches,” “Philosophical Approaches,” and “Political Approaches.”

One should notice from this list that the dictionary’s primary aim is to cover the various interpretive approaches in biblical studies, rather than provide comprehensive coverage of other topics like biblical content, theology, and history. The editors chose to use Paul Ricoeur’s “. . . rubric of the worlds behind the text, of the text, and in front of the text,” as a means of choosing topics (p.xix). Also of note is the fact that the *OEBI* is available in both print and electronic format, and McKenzie gives the impression that the electronic version may be updated on occasion with new articles (p.xx).

Readers of this journal will be particularly interested in and benefit from the following essays: “Allegory and Allegorical Interpretation” (Mark W. Elliott), “Authority of the Bible” (William W. Klein), “Canonical Criticism” (Corrine L. Carvalho), “Canon of the Bible” (Hal Taussig), “Evangelical Interpretation” (Walter C. Kaiser Jr.), “Inner-biblical Interpretation” (G. Brooke Lester), “Intertextuality (B. J. Oropeza), “Patristic Interpretation” (Paul M. Blowers), and “Theological Interpretation” (Craig Bartholomew).

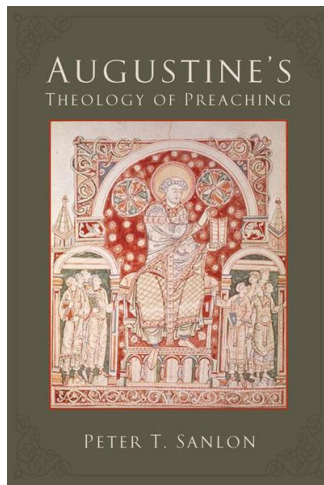
As with any edited volume, some essays are stronger than others. This reviewer found the articles on theological interpretation and patristic interpretation to be particularly well written and beneficial. Each of the others mentioned, as well as all those included in the volume, are careful, scrupulously researched, and helpful for readers. Nevertheless, this reviewer was left with some questions after reading a few of the articles. First, at times Mark Elliott’s essay on allegory seemed to oscillate between organizational methods, namely historical and categorical. While this could be a natural consequence of the ebb and flow of allegorical approaches throughout the history of

interpretation, the shifts from section to section and from one organizational method to another were not always apparent until one was well past the turning point. Second, there are times when the articles can become repetitive, and this is perhaps nowhere more apparent than when one reads the “Inner-biblical Interpretation” and “Intertextuality” articles together. Both of these essays contain large swaths of material that are covered in the other article, and it may have been wiser for the editors to combine these two into one essay.

Third and finally, while not a criticism, readers should remember that much of the *OEBI*’s content is related to particular interpretive approaches used by certain groups of biblical scholars. This necessarily means that scholars who approach biblical interpretation differently and from different, and even opposing, vantage points will not agree with either the presuppositions or the methods used by various approaches. For instance, non-confessional scholars may have some difficulty with Klein’s article on the authority of the Bible. In one instance, for example, Klein argues that the Bible has a grand narrative, one that “. . . points to the *missio Dei*, God’s mission of redemption and restoration . . . “ (55). Although this reviewer agrees with Klein’s position here, other readers who see more disunity in the biblical corpus from both a narrative and theological perspective may not find his essay as beneficial. Other methodologies covered in the dictionary, such as many of the ideological approaches that have proliferated in the midst of the postmodern turn, may not be as palatable to an evangelical reader.

Regardless, though, of one's interpretive stance, the *OEBI* is a premier resource for biblical scholars. It should be owned and consulted for anyone who desires to take seriously the tasks of understanding and undertaking biblical interpretation.

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Peter T. Sanlon

Augustine's Theology of Preaching

Fortress Press, 2014

Pp. xxxii + 211. ISBN 978-1-4514-8278-2.

\$24.00 [Paperback]. [Purchase](#)

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On the cover of the book is a picture of Augustine, sitting on his *cathedra*, Bible in one hand, the other hand raised as he teaches his congregation. It is a picture that would have honored Augustine who saw himself primarily as a preacher. Yet, for all the untold thousands (or millions!) of books, articles, dissertations, and essays that have been written on Augustine since his death, very little work has been dedicated to Augustine's preaching, a surprising oversight to say the least. *Augustine's Theology of Preaching* is a needful step towards correcting this lacuna.

Peter Sanlon, vicar of St. Mark's Church in Royal Tunbridge Wells, has entered this void. This book had its origin as a thesis at Cambridge University. What makes him uniquely qualified to writing this book, besides his credentials in theology and his experience as a pastor, is the time he has spent as a speechwriter to a peer in the House of Lords.

Sanlon studies Augustine as a fellow rhetorician, making him perfectly suited for the task, and this comes across in his writing.

According to Sanlon, the door to understanding Augustine's hermeneutic in preaching opens on two hinges—interiority and temporality. As Sanlon states, “[Augustine’s] hermeneutic of interiority and temporality is the grammar of his preaching and this is due to his use of Scripture” (p.139). Augustine was a man of the Book. In fact, “the reason Augustine was concerned with interiority and temporality in his preaching was that he used Scripture in an attempt to change people” (p.87). And again, “Augustine preached with a particular regard to interiority and temporality because he wished to use Scripture to change listeners” (p.98). Sanlon repeatedly connects Augustine’s themes of interiority and temporality to Scripture, the fount from which all knowledge and change flows.

The book unfolds in this way. Chapter 1 places Augustine in his historical context, rehashing the familiar ground of Augustine’s upbringing and conversion. Sanlon also uses this chapter to compare Augustine to other preachers of his time, namely Ambrose, Cyprian, and Tertullian. In chapter 2 Sanlon traces five important Greek and Latin orators whose lives and writings shaped Augustine’s own rhetoric—Gorgias (483–375 BC), Plato (424–348 BC), Cicero (106–43 BC), Quintillian (AD 35–98), and Apuleius (AD 123–180). Sanlon notes, though later in the book, “In Augustine’s case, the Platonic architecture of his mindset alerted him to issues of importance, but the doctrinal building erected was definitely Christian and Scriptural” (p.61). Augustine may have been greatly influenced by his first-rate classical education, but that he was fundamentally Christian in his teaching. Chapter 3 examines Augustine’s work *De Doctrina Christiana*, which details his hermeneutics and homiletics. For Augustine,

Scripture is paramount, and every interpretation should lead a person to greater love for God and neighbor.

Chapter 4 forms the heart of the book. It is in this chapter that Sanlon defines and fills out Augustine's themes of interiority and temporality. Interiority is "self-reflection" promulgated by Christ the "Inner Teacher" in the hearts of people (p.80); temporality is bound up with created matter and the idea that life is a "journey travelled by the affections" (p.84). Those who have studied Augustine know that time plays an important role in his thinking. To state these motifs in a different way, Augustine sought to touch the inner man with his preaching, and this is possible both because of the temporality of biblical events and because they will be lived out in the course of the individual believer's life. For me, the most important page of the entire book for understanding this book is page 62. Here Sanlon gets at the essence of Augustine's understanding of interiority and temporality, which is grounded in the incarnation. "Christ who enlightens the inner eyes is the wisdom who became incarnate at a particular point in time" (p.62). The incarnation illustrates Augustine's use of interiority and temporality perfectly—Christ's incarnation happened in time and space (temporality), and Christ is the Inner Teacher who changes the hearts of people (interiority).

The final three chapters are case studies that test Sanlon's thesis, touching on the topics of riches and money, death and resurrection, and relationships. In each chapter, Sanlon demonstrates how Augustine weaves together his concept of interiority and temporality. For instance, preaching on death and the resurrection should transform the listener's "interior desires and temporal destinations" (p.126). These chapters are critical for helping the reader see Augustine's homiletical hermeneutic in action.

Sanlon is ambitious in his efforts to summarize the preaching of the great Augustine. Anytime a scholar attempts to reduce a theologian's practice to two words, let alone arguably the most influential preacher in history—outside of the Bible, it is a tall task. Making the matter more complicated is the fact that Augustine never claims that interiority and temporality are his aims in preaching. In giving a grammar to his homiletics, the reader is persuaded that Augustine's aim in preaching can in fact be articulated by interiority and temporality. The real test will come as other scholars interested in Augustine's preaching subject this thesis beyond the *Sermones ad Populum*. Sanlon does interact with the works of three others who have also attempted to pin down Augustine's theology of preaching and demonstrates that interiority and temporality have "validity and value" above these previous efforts (p.91). Scholars need this corrective to probe deeper into Augustine's preaching. Here is the church's most gifted tongue and brightest intellect—his preaching begs more exploration. Sanlon has done a great service to scholarship not only by helping us understand the inimitable Augustine, but also by providing this study in a way that is accessible to many. Though it reads like a dissertation at times, it is not so esoteric that the average seminary students could not read it and benefit.

A few minor critiques might be suggested. First, I was puzzled about the ordering of the book. We are promised a prolonged discussion on interiority and temporality, and there are flashes of it throughout, but it is not until page 71 that we begin to have these terms defined and exegeted. Clearly, Sanlon thinks the entire foundation must be poured before constructing the walls. It would have been preferred to have the argument stated with greater clarity up front before taking us on the tour of the necessary background.

Second, in the introduction to the work, Sanlon offers five important areas of homiletics that this book could touch upon—the role of secular insights to communication, the role of doctrine, freedom and order, relationship to pastoral ministry, and training preachers. Regrettably, these topics are only glanced off of throughout the book. The book would have been much stronger had Sanlon continuously drawn a line from the past to the present. At one point he even mentions Tim Keller’s eulogy of John Stott’s preaching legacy as a way to talk about the modern state of preaching (p.xxv). I was anxious to see how the Bishop from Hippo, separated by land, culture, and time, could help preachers this Sunday. To be fair, in parsing Augustine’s homiletical hermeneutic, the modern preacher does get an idea of the importance of the interior and temporal in preaching, and so the preacher is not left without dividends. Of course, it is easy to take shots at a book for all the things that are not there. It is a very fine study for what Sanlon sets out to accomplish. However, having raised these issues himself, it would have been nice to have seen them fleshed out.

Sanlon is baffled, as we should be, that so little attention has been paid to Augustine’s preaching. Augustine expounded Scripture to his congregation multiple times a week for decades. The man who set the course of theology for the next millennium (and beyond) saw his chief purpose as a preacher of God’s word. Sanlon offers one of the first sustained looks into his sermons. Hopefully more will follow to help color in more of the picture so that we might once more sit under the preaching of Augustine.

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Pastor, Smithland First Baptist Church

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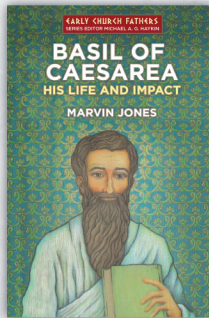
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