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LETTERS

ARTICLES

BOOK REVIEWS

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About the *BTJ*

The *Birmingham Theological Journal* (*BTJ*) is the open access, annual, peer-reviewed journal published by Birmingham Theological Seminary (BTS). The journal provides a venue for BTS students, faculty, and alumni to publish articles and book reviews in the following fields of study: biblical theology, Old and New Testament studies, church history, systematic theology, and related disciplines. The journal seeks to further scholarship by focusing on areas of academic study related to the Bible and its application primarily within the Reformed tradition and a broadly historic Reformed community.

BTS is a Reformed, multi-denominational seminary, but the views expressed by the authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the theological positions of the *BTJ* editors or the BTS faculty, staff, or board. Contributors may find the guidelines for submission at the website for the Birmingham Theological Seminary Writing Center: https://www.btswritingcenter.net/. Manuscript submissions and correspondence should be emailed to the general editor as directed on the website.

From the President

Dear *Birmingham Theological Journal* Readers,

It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the inaugural edition of the *Birmingham Theological Journal*! This journal is the product of many months of labor from the BTS Research and Writing Center. I'm so excited that you finally have the opportunity to hold this journal in your hands or read it online! At BTS, our goal is to provide faithful and accessible theological education for students everywhere so that they might serve the Kingdom through the local church. Therefore, our program is uniquely suited to train men and women to serve God in appropriate callings where the Lord has planted them. We are often looking for ways in which we can bring our dispersed students together, so that, while all our students are not residentially gathered, they might be spiritually and intellectually gathered. This journal represents one of those opportunities.

In addition, we hope that the journal will also reflect the unique composition of BTS students and faculty. The vast majority of our students and faculty are deeply engaged in local ministry through the church or nonprofit organizations or through lay leadership in the local church. At BTS, we strive to maintain the academic distinctions that belong to graduate education, and particularly, the biblical standards of confessional, Reformed, and orthodox theology. Many seminaries and divinity schools have their own journals that do an excellent job of reflecting the core identity and distinctives of their educational programs, and we hope this journal will do the same, while also integrating ministry concerns and issues. Why? The vast majority of BTS students and faculty are learning, while deeply engaged in ministry. In that sense, we hope this journal demonstrates orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathos.

My father, who passed away earlier this year, had the opportunity to learn while deeply engaged in ministry, as the supply pastor at Pineland's Presbyterian Church. I heard him repeatedly tell young men training for ministry that, while they needed to complete seminary in a timely fashion, the more deeply they could be involved in working and in serving in the local church, the more significant the learning from the classroom would be to them. I hope the *BTJ* will be a place where our students and faculty can explore significant theological ideas while also being grounded in the practicality of ministry. If they can do so—and do so well—then I deeply believe that this journal will be a blessing to others both inside and outside the seminary.

I would like to take a brief moment to give thanks for Dr. Pat Sanders, the Director of the Research and Writing Center, for championing and leading this project. She is an extraordinary professor, a fine friend, and a blessing to all who know and can learn from her. Thanks also to her team: Ryan Brady, MDiv student, and Dr. Jay Haley, BTS Chief of Staff and Systematic Theology professor. Thanks also to all the students and faculty readers who helped work through submissions and editing. To all of you—this represents a job well done. I'm thankful for your work! Blessings to you, dear reader. Our prayer is that in studying and reading we might be drawn closer to our Savior Jesus Christ and walk in the power of the Spirit in His footsteps.

Godspeed,
Ike Reeder, President
Birmingham Theological Seminary

From the Editors

Dear Readers,

After much planning and review, we are pleased to share our inaugural issue of the *BTJ*! This journal fulfills our vision to provide a platform for BTS students, faculty, and alumni to publish academic articles and book reviews related to their various fields of study at BTS. Many people helped bring this vision to fruition. First, we would like to thank President Ike Reeder for his support of this new endeavor. We also want to thank Dr. Thad James, who has served as a liaison for our contributors and reviewers associated with BTS' prison ministry. In addition, we have received gracious support from other members of the BTS staff, including Irene Hays, Emily Hays, and Deb Quenelle. Finally, Dr. Geoffrey Wright at Samford University provided helpful advice from his experience with starting a journal. While we wanted to recognize these individuals especially, we offer profuse thanks to everyone who made the journal a reality - the faculty editorial board, student reviewers, and contributing authors! Please see the copyright page for a list of the student reviewers and the editorial board.

From about 25 submissions, we chose two articles and four book reviews to represent the scholarship of BTS. Submissions for our first issue went through an internal, double-blind review process. We hope to incorporate external reviewers for future issues. Likewise, while submissions were received from current faculty and students for our first issue, submissions from alumni will be welcome in future issues. Also, we are pleased to include our students from the BTS Prison Initiative ministry as contributing authors and reviewers. Our goal is for this issue to inspire future contributions and engagement with the *BTJ*. Thank you to our readers for being a part of this community and joining us on this journey.

Warm regards,
Jay Hayley, PhD
Associate Editor

Ryan Brady
Associate Editor

Pat Sanders, PhD
General Editor

In Memoriam

In Memoriam for Dr. Harry Reeder

Derrick Brite

On May 18, 2023, after spending a lifetime devoted to serving Christ and His church, Dr. Harry Reeder was called to receive his eternal reward. The impact of his sudden home-going is still being felt all across the evangelical landscape. Harry was a uniquely gifted man who poured his whole self into everything that he did. He was a man who, following after the example set by the Apostle Paul, worked harder than everyone, yet did so by the grace of God working in him (1 Cor. 15:10).

Though he was a sought-after conference speaker, Harry cared most about serving his local congregation, Briarwood Presbyterian Church. For over twenty years, Lord's Day after Lord's Day, he modeled faithful Bible expositions and passionate calls for discipleship. His preaching was memorable, and the love and passion that he had for biblical and theological truth was contagious. His ability to alliterate or turn a phrase was legendary, coining many "Harry-isms" that would be become mantras to many. In fact, I believe I have quoted "on mission, on message, and in ministry" a few dozen times myself since his passing.

Perhaps the only rival gift to his preaching was his natural ability at being a disciple-maker. Harry spent countless hours investing in men at every stage of their ministry career, pouring out every ounce of wisdom he had. I was fortunate enough to experience this first-hand, as I sat in his office on the edge of my seat, while he seamlessly transitioned from alliterated point to alliterated point, answering all the questions I had, and some I did not have.

More than being an effective minister, Harry was a kind and gracious Christian man. I remember the first time I met him, and I addressed him as "Dr. Reeder." He quickly corrected me, saying, "Please don't call me doctor. I'm not even good enough to be a nurse!" But he *was* a doctor – a doctor of souls – skillfully working on the men and women that the great heavenly Physician had placed in his care, from his own sheep at Briarwood, to students, men and women in the denomination, and even men incarcerated at Bibb County Correctional Facility.

It is in light of this that the first edition of the *Birmingham Theological Journal* is dedicated to Dr. Harry Reeder. Within the pages of this journal, you will find articles written by men and women who were shaped by his ministry in one way or another. This includes students, pastors, and even inmates. Much like Harry, the *Birmingham Theological Journal* is devoted to the glory of God and to help Christ's church be "on mission, on message, and in ministry."

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A Call to Repentance: Anne Steele's Hymns in Response to War

Joseph V. Carmichael

Abstract: Long before William Tecumseh Sherman brought "war is hell" into everyday vocabulary at the time of the American Civil War, the confusion, pain, agony, and death of warfare were felt by ordinary people. At the time of war, citizens of one country are brought into deadly conflict with the citizens of another country, folks who have never met and, often, have nothing against one another. For those with faith to believe it, all this occurs under the superintendence of the one true living God.

How is the most accomplished hymn-writer in the Particular Baptist tradition, writing during the golden age of the English hymn—how is she to respond to war in her own midst? Well, she writes. She writes her war hymns. Following the lead of her hymn-writing model, Isaac Watts, Anne Steele wrote hymns on matters of national importance. Seven of these hymns were written during, or just after, the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) between England and France in response to special days of prayer and fasting, as proclaimed by the king as he received news from the battlefront.

Steele wrote her hymns before, during, and after the war, processing the evils of war through the lens of Holy Scripture, her pastor and father's Particular Baptist theological tradition, and her experience as the daughter of one who sold timber to the Royal Navy for ships. How does she make sense of war in verses of song? In a time of social decay and the declension of religion, the evangelical revival notwithstanding, Steele wrote hymns declaring the glory of God, the plight of sinful man before Him, and the only hope of her beloved Britain in such a situation: faith and repentance in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on behalf of His people.

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A Call to Repentance: Anne Steele's Hymns in Response to War

Joseph V. Carmichael

Introduction

The prospect of war has long animated clans and communities. It has created allies and enemies, as well as heroes and villains. History books, novels, and even tactical textbooks have been produced in response to wars. War has also generated folklore and songs. For Anne Steele (1717-1778), the most accomplished female hymn-writer of the eighteenth century, it became the opportunity to write her war hymns. Drawing on the convictions of her English Particular Baptist faith, Steele produced poetic verse in response to the circumstances surrounding the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). In doing so, she offered encouragement to her own church family, but also offered a sustained biblical and theological critique of the culture, people, government, and religious institutions of her day. These hymns remain instructive and compelling for twenty-first century citizens. Before considering the hymns, an introduction to their author is needed.

Anne Steele and the English Hymn

If Isaac Watts is rightfully known as the "father" of the English hymn, then Anne Steele could be referred to as the English hymn's "mother."[1] Composing her hymns in the midst of the evangelical revival in England at the same time as such famous hymn-writers as Charles Wesley (1707–1788), William Cowper (1731–1800), and John Newton (1725–1807), she and this group followed their exemplar Isaac Watts (1674–1748) into the "Golden Age of Hymnody."[2] Steele

[1]See J. R. Watson, ed., *An Annotated Anthology of Hymns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 121. Also, Erik Routley, *Hymns and Human Life* (London, John Murray, 1952), 206.

[2]See *Christian History* 10, no. 3 (1991), which is dedicated to the topic of the hymns of the eighteenth century. The title of the issue is "The Golden Age of Hymns."

was in fact once celebrated as "the female 'Poet of the Sanctuary.'"[3] Writing along with other Dissenters and Nonconformists in her hymn-writing endeavors, Steele's pen additionally placed her at the head of a group of Particular Baptist pastor hymn-writers whose evangelical and theologically compelling hymns—once warmly received—have been mostly forgotten.[4] The daughter of a minister, Steele initially wrote her hymns not only for personal devotional purposes but also to supplement the collection of Watts' hymns sung in her father's congregation. Steele finally allowed them to be published in 1760, though under a pseudonym, Theodosia. Hymnologist Louis F. Benson says that the publication of Steele's volumes launched Baptist hymnody into its own golden age.[5] History has shown that Steele, who has been called the "all-time champion Baptist hymn-writer of either sex," is "in fact the only woman of that period whose hymns have stood the test of time."[6]

Steele, who chose to remain unmarried, was the daughter of Particular Baptist pastor William Steele (1689–1769).[7] A successful timber merchant, William had taken over the

[3]Edwin F. Hatfield, *Poets of the Church*, 570, quoted in Henry S. Burrage, *Baptist Hymn Writers and Their Hymns* (Portland, Maine: Brown Thurston and Co., 1888), 46.

[4]Other notable Particular Baptist hymn-writers of the era include Joseph Stennett I (1663–1713), Benjamin Wallin (1711–1782), Benjamin Beddome (1717–1795), Samuel Stennett (1727–1795), Benjamin Francis (1734–1799), John Fawcett (1739–1817), and John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825). W. R. Stevenson regards Steele as "by far the most gifted Baptist hymn-writer of this period." Stevenson, "Baptist Hymnody, English," 1:111–112. Baptist authors collectively wrote 263 of the 588 hymns in John Rippon's *A Selection of Hymns, from the Best Authors, including a Great Number of Originals; Intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns* of 1787 and have a substantial number of hymns in *The Baptist Hymnal* of 1883, but have much fewer hymns in *The Baptist Hymnal* published in 1991. Anne Steele has none in this last-named hymnal.

[5]Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn: Its Development and Use in Worship* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1915), 213.

[6]Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *Religious Trends in English Poetry* (New York, 1942), II: 111 quoted in Richard Arnold, ed., *English Hymns of the Eighteenth Century: An Anthology*, with introductions by Richard Arnold, American University Studies, Series IV, vol. 137 (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 318; J. R. Broome, *A Bruised Reed: The Life and Times of Anne Steele, Together with Anne Steele's Hymns, Psalms, and a Selection of Her Prose Works* (Harpenden: Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 2007), 151.

[7]Broome discusses at least one suitor of Steele and her conscious decision to remain unmarried for life. See Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 110–14.

pastorate of the Baptist chapel at Broughton from his uncle, Henry Steele (1655–1739), who died in 1739 after serving that church for forty years. From an early age, Anne was involved in the life of this Baptist congregation. J. R. Broome says of her father to whom Anne was very close all his life: "Doctrinally, in his preaching he followed the 1689 Confession of Faith," which has been called "the classic expression of Calvinistic Baptist doctrine."[8] Interestingly, the framers of the *Second London Confession* made a subtle but significant change to the *Westminster Confession of Faith.* Regarding the religious worship of God, the *Second London Confession* adds that not only "Psalms," but also "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" are appropriate in the religious worship of God.[9] The composition of theologically robust and experientially rich hymns, endorsed by this reissued confession of faith, became a treasured resource for expressions of "the doctrines of our faith and practice," just as the framers declared of the confession.[10]

Writing her hymns self-consciously as a Particular Baptist, Steele also sought to pattern her compositions after Isaac Watts. She both valued his example and longed to write like him.[11] However, in considering the lyrical content, the theology, and the experiential elements in Anne Steele's hymns, one must acknowledge that Steele's own physical and emotional suffering, as well as sober concern for her family, community, and nation, was the context within which she composed many of her hymns. While the popularizing of "hymn stories" over time has caused a

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[8]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 194. Broome lists excerpts from one of his sermons, showing it to be Evangelical, Calvinistic, and gospel-driven. See pages 194-198; Michael A. G. Haykin, *Kiffin, Knollys and Keach—Rediscovering Our English Baptist Heritage* (Leeds, Eng.: Reformation Trust Today, 1996), 62.

[9]*Second London Confession* (1677, 1688/89) XXII:5 in William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, rev. ed. (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1969), 281.

[10]Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 239.

[11]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 163.

certain sentimentalizing and inaccurate reporting of the range of Steele's sufferings, there is no doubt that she lived through much physical and emotional pain in her life.[12] From her childhood she endured high fever and fits caused by malaria (eventually leading to a nervous disorder), as well as severe toothaches, stomachaches, and other bodily afflictions.[13] She wrote hymns from the experience of faith in God as it was tested through the difficult providences of life. Broome posits, "Her ill-health over many years had been sanctified to her and out of it she had learnt that faith in the Son of God was the only source of help, happiness and hope."[14] Cynthia Aalders finds in Steele's writings a "persisting sensitivity to God's response to the suffering she witnessed and experienced in the world."[15] Further, as it was for many in her day, "death was a very near threat which claimed [many of] those nearest and dearest" to Anne throughout her life.[16] Additionally, Steele lived through decades of British involvement in war and its harsh conditions within a family who sold timber to the Navy for the making of warships. Such "a lived experience" led to Steele's writing about these historic events, which the following pages highlight.

Steele's War Hymns

Following the lead of her hymn-writing model, Isaac Watts, "Anne wrote hymns on

[12]For example, surviving letters regarding the story of the drowning incident of her fiancé before their wedding show this story to be of questionable veracity. In fact, not only did her potential suitor not drown the day of or before a scheduled wedding, it does not appear the couple was even engaged. See especially J. R. Watson and Nancy Cho, "Anne Steele's Drowned Fiancé," *British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32 (2005): 117–121.

[13]Sharon James, *In Trouble and in Joy: Four Women Who Lived for God* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2003), 140.

[14]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 165.

[15]Cynthia Y. Aalders, *To Express the Ineffable: The Hymns and Spirituality of Anne Steele*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought, vol. 40 (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2008), 112.

[16]Aalders, *To Express the Ineffable*, 111.

matters of national importance."[17] Seven of these hymns were written just before, during, or immediately after the Seven Years' War between England and France. Steele wrote them in response to special days of prayer and fasting as proclaimed by the king as he received news from the battlefront.[18] This global conflict between the colonial empires of England and France included the battle for "supremacy of the seas" and also concerned "the jealousy between Prussia and Austria regarding the control of Germany."[19] Prussia eventually allied itself with England while Austria joined forces with France. Steele's stepmother's journals indicate a steady stream of news of the war making its way to Broughton through both newspapers and the business travels of the Steele men. Steele's war hymns offer a direct illustration of how a skilled and thoughtful Particular Baptist poet and hymn-writer reflected upon this war for the purpose of prayerful congregational singing. In so doing, Steele exemplifies the robust strain of evangelical Calvinistic belief and practice found in her theological tradition.[20]

Hymns in Preparation for War

On November 28, 1755, shocking news came to Broughton. There had been a large earthquake in Portugal to go along with news of impending war with France. Therefore, on

[17]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 173. Steele in fact wrote nine hymns concerning national days of fasting and prayer as well as days of thanksgiving for national deliverance and the peace that followed war. She wrote a hymn commemorating the coronation of George III in 1760.

[18]See Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 131–175.

[19]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 133.

[20]John Rippon (1751-1836) included three of Steele's war hymns in his wildly successful *A Selection of Hymns, from the Best Authors, including a Great Number of Originals; Intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns*, first published in 1787. Through his *Selection of Hymns* John Rippon disseminated the sung theology and piety of the golden age of Baptist and evangelical hymnody. Rippon's hymnal, a central vehicle of sung piety in the Baptist context, especially within the revival and expansion of Particular Baptist faith and piety from the 1780s to the 1830s, met specific theological, pastoral, and devotional needs among the Baptist community. Steele's hymns concerning the Seven Years' War appeared in Rippon's hymnal in the section entitled "Times and Seasons."

December 11 of that year, the Broughton Baptists, as was their custom, set apart a day for prayer for the nation. Anne would often write hymns to be sung on these occasions.[21] Less than two months later, prior to making the official declaration of war, which would come in May, King George II set apart February 6 "for a day of public fasting, humiliation and prayer to God on account of the dangers we are in from our encroaching enemies, the French, and the judgments that are abroad in the earth."[22] Though Steele's health did not allow her to attend the meeting, she composed a hymn to be sung at the service.[23] She called the hymn "On the Public Fast."[24] Notice both the rhetorical structure and the prayerful flow of the hymn's text:

1 See, gracious God! before thy throne
  Thy mourning people bend!
 'Tis on thy sovereign grace alone,
  Our humble hopes depend.

2 Tremendous judgments[25] from thy hand
  Thy dreadful power display,
 Yet mercy spares this guilty land,
  And still we live to pray.

3 Great God! and why is Britain spar'd,
  Ungrateful as we are?
 O make thy awful warnings heard,
  While mercy cries, *Forbear!*

4 What num'rous crimes increasing rise

[21]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 131–132.

[22]Cited in Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 132.

[23]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 132.

[24]Anne Steele, "For a Public Fast," hymn number 525 quoted in John Rippon, ed., *Selection of Hymns* (London, 1830), 678–679. Steele typically named her hymns and often included a date or a biblical reference. Rippon sometimes modified her chosen title as well making minor changes in the lyrics and punctuation for his own purposes. For this paper, Steele's original hymns are listed without edits.

[25]Though not noted in the *Selection of Hymns*, Steele notes that theses "judgments" are referring in particular to the earthquake at Lisbon, not to mention the battles at hand around the globe.

O'er all this wretched isle![26]
What land so favour'd of the skies,
And yet what land so vile!

5 How chang'd, alas! are truths divine
For error, guilt, and shame!
What impious numbers, bold in sin,
Disgrace the Christian name![27]

6 O bid us turn, almighty Lord!
By thy resistless grace;
Then shall our hearts obey thy word,
And humbly seek thy face.

7 Then should insulting foes invade,
We shall not sink in fear;
Secure of never-failing aid,
If God, our God, is near.[28]

This hymn introduces all the major themes that will be revisited from different angles and with varying poetic devices in each of Steele's war hymns. The first stanza begins from a posture of humility. From the human perspective nations are corporately dependent upon God and His providence. Composing and singing such verses also demonstrates Nonconformist piety as they follow their confessional forbears' instructions: "We ought to make supplications and prayers for Kings, and all that are in Authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."[29] Having humbly approached her heavenly King in the opening lines, the second verse turns to God's power, especially as displayed in His judgments, yet acknowledging

[26]Rippon edited this line to read: "Thro' this apostate isle!"

[27]Rippon includes a further stanza (his own?) between Steele's fifth and sixth verses: "Regardless of thy smile or frown, / Their pleasures they require; / And sink with gay indiff'rence down / To everlasting fire." He also begins the next line: "O turn us, turn us."

[28]Steele, "For a Public Fast," hymn number 525 quoted in John Rippon, ed., *Selection of Hymns* (London, 1830), 678–679.

[29]Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 284. Each of Steele's "war hymns" affirms this.

His mercy. An evangelical trait was the belief that "judgment was expected on nations as well as individuals if they persisted in corporate sins."[30] The next three verses build the case for the sinfulness of the nation from the collective aspect down to individual sinners committing individual sins. She asks, "Why is Britain spared?" admitting herself as among the citizens of a land in need of God's mercy. In the sixth verse, Steele's theologically informed spirituality emerges as she calls on God's "resistless grace" to move their hearts to "obey thy word" and seek God's face. Evoking the images from David Bebbington's quadrilateral, she calls on the Lord to bring her fellow citizens to repentance, conversion, and thus obedience to the Word of God.[31] Finally, she closes with an expression of confidence in the face of invaders because of God's being near to aid Britain in their desperate time of need.

"On the Public Fast" is characterized by an acknowledgment of the character of God as holy and gracious alongside an honest realism regarding the standing of sinful humanity, and indeed the nation of Britain, before Him. Here is a land that has been blessed with the gospel now filled with "error, guilt, and shame." It appears that both Steele and King George II view the earthquake in Lisbon as a judgment from God. Is the war itself a judgment against Britain, or will the results of the war be that judgment or reprieve? The answer to such questions remains to be seen. Thus, the hymn ends with a supplication made in faith. Steele expresses the optimism, even on the eve of war, of the evangelical doctrine of God's providence: "[God] is in active control of the world."[32]

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[30]Bebbington, David W., *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1989), 61.

[31]Bebbington's well-known fourfold description of Evangelicalism includes conversionism, biblicism, activism, and crucicentrism. Steele's hymns reveal these qualities. For a detailed explanation of these characteristics, see Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 2-17.

[32]Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 61.

Hymns in the Midst of War

A fruitful harvest, and also the continued sale of timber, enabled the Steele family to help feed needy families in Broughton during a time of high prices and a shortage of food due to the war in late 1756 and early 1757.[33] During this time, the king appointed February 11, 1757, as "a day of humiliation and fasting."[34] Steele wrote two hymns for the occasion: "National Judgments Deprecated" and "Pleading for Mercy."[35] Though she continues to use the rhetorical devices of acknowledging the justice and mercy of God's confronting the sinfulness and lack of Christian piety of the citizens of Great Britain, she raises the stakes in these two hymns in certain ways. In the first of these, "National Judgments Deprecated," Steele mines the resources of her Particular Baptist belief in a sovereign God, both powerful and merciful, as she cries out to Him verse-by-verse as the only hope for her sinful nation. Notably, Steele begins this hymn with contrasting images as she prays. She begins in the first verse worshiping God "with fear and trembling" and continues in verse two spiritually in heaven praying, "Our only refuge is thy seat; . . . where potent mercy pleads."[36] Stanzas four, six, and eight of this nine-stanza hymn illustrate new themes she considers:

4 Pale famine now, and wasting war,
With threat'ning frown thy wrath declare;
But war and famine are thy slaves,
Nor can destroy when mercy saves.

[33]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 135.

[34]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 135.

[35]Steele, "National Judgments Deprecated," February 11, 1757, *The Works of Mrs. Anne Steele, Complete in Two Volumes, Comprehending Poems on Subjects Chiefly Devotional and Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose and Verse: Heretofore Published under the Title of Theodosia* (Boston: Munroe, Francis and Parker, 1808), 1:226–227; "On the Same. Pleading for Mercy," *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 1:227–228.

[36]See Eph. 1:3 KJV.

6 Encourag'd by thy sacred word,
May we not plead the blest record,
That when a humble nation mourns,
Thy rising wrath to pity turns.

8 Our arms, O God of armies, bless,
Thy hand alone can give success,
And make our haughty neighbors own
That heav'n protects the British throne.[37]

In stanza four, rather than lashing out at God for such grim circumstances, Steele simply suggests with firm conviction that both so-called natural disasters as well as humanity's conflicts are nothing more than slaves doing service to God. She seems to be engaging the prophetic calls to disobedient Israel in the Old Testament in stanza six, pleading God's promises to restore the repentant, even entire nations, through His divine pity. Finally, in stanza eight, Steele's understanding of her nation's standing before God, as opposed to that of her enemies, comes into view. Steele sees Britain as having been entrusted with the gospel, and though it is failing to live up to its responsibilities in light of this, she still expects God to protect Protestant Britain against their "haughty" enemies who are under the sway of the Roman Catholic Church.[38]

Steele's second hymn, "Pleading for Mercy," written on this occasion brings out another aspect of her Particular Baptist spirituality: an understanding of the kingly, prophetic, and priestly roles of Christ on behalf of His people.[39] In the following excerpts, observe the notes of prophetic judgment, priestly mediation, and kingly authority:

[37]Steele, "National Judgments Deprecated," February 11, 1757, *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 1:226–227.

[38]The *Second London Confession* does directly and bluntly contradict Roman Catholic teaching concerning the pope and the Mass in its chapters "Of the Church" and "Of the Lord's Supper." Cho concludes, "The interpretation reflects the contemporary view that God had graciously saved Britain from error and superstition." Nancy Jiwon Cho, "'The Ministry of Song': Unmarried British Women's Hymn Writing, 1760–1936" (PhD diss., Durham University, 2007), 81.

[39]*Second London Confession* VIII:9 in Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 263.

1 Come, let our souls adore the Lord,
Whose judgments yet delay,
Who yet suspends the lifted sword,
And gives us leave to pray.

4 Kind Intercessor, to thy love
This blessed hope we owe;
O let thy merits plead above,
While we implore below.

6 Though justice near thy awful throne
Attends thy dread command,
Lord, hear thy servants, hear thy Son,
And save a guilty land.[40]

Here, Steele acknowledges that the judgment of the Son on behalf of the Father is imminent. So, she pleads for His continued intercessory work on behalf of those whom He calls His own. She knows God's mercy in delaying final judgment is for the purpose of leading people to repentance.[41] Steele appeals to Christ's character and role as one who "ever liveth to make intercession for" God's people.[42] She closes with a flourish—a theologically informed prayer to her Priest-King, one with the power, mercy, and merit to save. Steele applies her theology, and in this case, Christology, in prayerful verse.

On November 24, 1757, news reached Broughton of a great Prussian victory over the French at Rossbach, a battle that Broome notes "marked a major turning point in the Seven Years' War and in the future history of Europe."[43] In response Steele wrote "National Judgment

[40]Steele, "Pleading for Mercy," *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 1:227–228.

[41]2 Pet. 3:9.

[42]See Heb. 7:25.

[43]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 137. Broome notes that 1858 opened with the sad loss of Anne's brother William Steele junior's merchant ship, "The Willing Mind." Broome suggests it was "almost certainly captured by the French." Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 138.

and Mercies A Call to Repentance."[44] In this hymn, like the psalmists before her, she addresses both her fellow citizens and the Lord. Two stanzas demonstrate this:

2 At length, ye Britons, lift your eyes,
Your crimes no more pursue;
Behold the gath'ring tempest rise,
And tremble at the view!

7 Almighty God, thy powerful grace
Can change us, and forgive;
Can save a guilty rebel race,
And say, Repent, and live.[45]

The title along with every stanza of this hymn summarizes Steele's purpose in these compositions: to acknowledge God's just judgment and Britain's guilt and to call its citizens to sincere biblical repentance.

"On a Day of Prayer for Success in War" was written to commemorate the day appointed by King George II as "a day to be kept for thanksgiving for great mercies of our God."[46] These mercies included at least the British victories at Lagos and then at Quiberon Bay in 1759, following the loss of some battles to the French in previous months. Broome calls 1759 "a momentous year for Britain and her Allies in the Seven Years' War."[47] Having been just recently weak and ill during the midst of an outbreak of smallpox in Broughton, and fearful of catching it, Steele penned this war hymn. The first two stanzas review earlier material as they reflect Steele's

[44]Steele, "National Judgments and Mercies A Call to Repentance," Nov. 1757, *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 1:229–230.

[45] Steele, "National Judgments and Mercies A Call to Repentance," Nov. 1757, *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 1:229–230.

[46]Steele, "On A Day of Prayer for Success in War," hymn number 527 quoted in Rippon, ed., *Selection of Hymns*, 680–681; Cited in Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 145.

[47]Broome, *Bruised Reed*, 143.

humble view of "wretched sinners" before the "bright terrors" and "dazzling glories" where there is yet "mercy" calling at the "throne of grace." In the third verse she again cries out to her Prophet, Priest, and King: "O may our souls thy grace adore, / May Jesus plead our humble claim, / While thy protection we implore, / In his prevailing glorious name."[48] With the fourth stanza, Steele calls upon "the Lord" as the one upon whose "arm" Britain depends. Steele's ability to apply her theology and piety to the craft of poetry in the midst of national need continues to mature and develop in this hymn. Having followed her basic outline through the first four stanzas, the final four break new ground:

> 5 Let past experience of thy care
> Support our hope, our trust invite!
> Again attend our humble prayer!
> Again be mercy thy delight!
>
> 6 Our arms succeed, our councils guide,
> Let thy right hand our cause maintain;
> Till war's destructive rage subside,
> And peace resume her gentle reign.
>
> 7 O when shall time the period bring
> When raging war shall waste no more:
> When peace shall stretch her balmy wing
> From Europe's coast to India's shore?
>
> 8 When shall the Gospel's healing ray
> (Kind source of amity divine)
> Spread o're the world celestial day?
> When shall the nations, Lord! be thine?[49]

To begin the second half of this hymn, she pleads God's gracious heart, imploring Him to

[48]See Second London Confession, Chapter VIII, "Of Christ the Mediator" in Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 263.

[49]Steele, "On A Day of Prayer for Success in War," hymn number 527 quoted in Rippon, ed., *Selection of Hymns*, 680–681.

remember His care of Britain in the past. Then she alludes to the everyday realities of war and says that its "destructive rage" can only be transformed into a reign of peace through the work of God's "right hand"—"from Europe's coast to India's shore." She finishes with an evangelistic tone reminiscent of Psalms 67 and 117, asking when the gospel will transform the nations, so making them the Lord's.

Hymns Reflecting on the War at Its Conclusion

Following the Seven Years' War, in which England and Prussia defeated France, Austria, Russia, Sweden, and Saxony, Steele wrote two further hymns of thanksgiving for peace. The first was "Praise for National Peace, Psalm xlvi.9."[50]

1 Great Ruler of the earth and skies,
A word of thy Almighty breath
Can sink the world, or bid it rise;
Thy smile is life, thy frown is death.

2 When angry nations rush to arms,
And rage, and noise, and tumult reigns,
And war resounds its dire alarms,
And slaughter spreads the hostile plains;

3 Thy sov'reign eye looks calmly down,
And marks their course, and bounds their pow'r;
Thy words the angry nations own,
And noise and war are heard no more;

4 Then peace returns with balmy wing,
(Sweet peace, with her what blessings fled!)
Glad plenty laughs, the valleys sing,
Reviving commerce lifts her head.

5 Thou good, and wise, and righteous Lord!
All move subservient to thy will;
And peace and war await thy word,

[50]*Random House College Dictionary*, rev. ed., s.v. "Seven Years' War," (1988), 1205; Steele, "Praise for National Peace, Psalm xlvi. 9," hymn number 531 quoted in Rippon, ed., *Selection of Hymns*, 684, 686.

And thy sublime decrees fulfill.

6 To thee we pay our grateful songs,
Thy kind protection still implore;
O may our hearts, and lives, and tongues,
Confess thy goodness and adore.[51]

Of particular interest in this hymn are a sustained note of thanksgiving and joy and a lack of the petitions of the previous hymns. It simply consists of praise, adoration, and thanksgiving, using the prophetic images of nature singing and the Calvinistic emphasis of God's fulfilling His "sublime decrees." Further, as the evangelical believed in the divine judgment upon nations, "likewise mercies could be individual or national."[52] So it displays the prophetic images of not only spiritual deliverance, but also national and physical deliverance, even to the point of buying and selling while laughing and singing. She longs for a whole redemption from the ravages of war.

Steele wrote a final hymn of thanksgiving that brings to a fitting conclusion her meditations from a Christian perspective on the Seven Years' War. In her "Hymn for a Day of Public Thanksgiving and Peace," Steele surveys the previous years of war and includes for the first time a refrain at the end of each of the seven stanzas. The refrain, with slight variations, is: "To God, ye favour'd Britons raise / Your sweetest notes of thankful praise."[53] Believing Britain was favored by God in this mercy and other deliverances, Steele displays that "evangelicals were sometimes more forward than their contemporaries in detecting the hand of God in particular events."[54] This refrain follows verses that testify not only to God's protection, but also to the

[51]Steele, "Praise for National Peace, Psalm xlvi. 9," hymn number 531 quoted in Rippon, ed., *Selection of Hymns*, 684, 686.

[52]Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 61.

[53]Steele, "Hymn for a Day of Public Thanksgiving for Peace," *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 2:219–221.

[54]Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 61.

horrors of war and the personal loss it brings:

> 3 Abroad, protection and success
> Proclaim'd that Britain's God was there;
> At home, he bade fair plenty bless;
> The fruitful fields confessed his care.
>
> 4 But yet beneath the hostile sword
> Has many a worthy patriot bled,
> And many a mourning heart deplor'd
> A friend, a son, a brother dead![55]

She concludes her final war hymn with a prayer of petition: "Make Britain more entirely thine." Steele has no hesitation in praying to God from a standpoint of His sovereign claim over Great Britain. She even notes the valor in serving one's country.

Conclusion

The war hymns of Anne Steele, the pre-eminent Particular Baptist hymn-writer of her own time (and perhaps of all time!), provide a case study in the theology and piety of her generation. Further, her hymns written in the midst of war offer at least a glimpse into the question, "How does one make sense of war in verses of song?" Processing the evil aspects of war through the lens of Holy Scripture, her father and pastor's Particular Baptist theological tradition, and her experience as the daughter of one who sold timber to the Navy for ships, Steele submits an answer. She does not blame God. If anything, she blames sinful humanity for such evils. Where is God in all this? Steele says He is on His throne. She knows that "our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."[56] However, she also acknowledges that

[55]Steele, "Hymn for a Day of Public Thanksgiving for Peace," *Works of Mrs. Anne Steele*, 2:219–221.

[56]Ps. 115:3.

the LORD God is "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."[57] And so, like her Savior when He confronted similar questions, she seems to be saying to her fellow citizens, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."[58] Like the Apostle Peter, she exhorts in so many verses through song, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."[59]

In a time of social decay and the declension of religion, the evangelical revival notwithstanding, Steele wrote hymns declaring the glory of God, the plight of sinful man before Him, and the only hope of her beloved Britain in such a situation: faith and repentance in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on behalf of His people. These hymns have a profoundly prayerful tone. Like the psalmists before her, she builds her case based on the character of God as revealed in His Word—boldly asking Him to act mercifully toward a nation she views as entrusted with the gospel and yet falling short of its call upon her. Though Steele's nationalistic tone might be uncomfortable for postmodern ears, she ardently pleads for, and then praises God for, Britain's deliverance in the Seven Years' War.

[57]Exod. 34:6-7.

[58]Luke 13:3.

[59]Acts 3:19.

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Christology and Trinitarianism in John 1:1 via Grammatico-Historical Exegesis Updated with Tools from Linguistics

Russell T. Booth

Abstract: Biblical exegesis conducted via the principles of the grammatico-historical hermeneutic has a long tradition in North American Evangelicalism. This approach focuses on understanding the meaning of a text within its historical setting. Since the establishment of this particular method in the nineteenth-century, linguistic science has contributed many advances to the study of texts. While not disregarding the insights from Greek grammarians and lexicographers of the era before linguistic science, the following study will appropriate insights from grammatical prominence, grammatical aspect, lexical aspect, and discourse grammar for a detailed analysis of John 1:1. The study will also consider the Old Testament and intertestamental developments that made space for the high Christology within the early church by Jewish writers of Scripture such as the Apostle John. After justifying John 1:1 as a propositional unit of thought and delineating the three clauses within it, a linguistically-influenced analysis of each clause that integrates the relevant historical considerations follows. The study concludes with a synthesis of the findings related to orthodox Christology and Trinitarianism.

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Christology and Trinitarianism in John 1:1 via Grammatico-Historical Exegesis Updated with Tools from Linguistics

Russell T. Booth

Introduction

Christological heresies are not new. There are the warnings to the first-century church by the Apostles Paul (2 Cor. 11:4) and John (1 John 1:1–3; 4:2; 2 John 7). The various permutations of the heresies of Arianism and Sabellianism have appeared from the fourth-century to the present day.[1] In addition to apologetic and evangelistic purposes, perhaps the chief reason for the Christian to form a more detailed, biblical Christology is out of love for the Savior. In keeping with the Reformation principle of *Sola Scriptura*, Christology must be defined by the Bible. The three terse clauses of John 1:1 contain a wealth of exegetical gems of immense theological value, and linguistic science has provided several precise tools for their mining.

Methodology

The hermeneutical framework of the study is grammatico-historical exegesis. This methodology, as it appears in North American evangelical scholarship, is shaped by the work of

† All Hebrew Scripture quotations are taken from Rudolph Kittel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997). All Septuagint quotations are taken from Alfred Ralfs, ed., *Septuaginta with Logos Morphology* (1979; repr., Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2019). All Greek Scripture quotations are taken from Kurt Aland, Barbara Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger. *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012). All English Scripture quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Standard Bible Society, 2016). All parenthetical original language translations are by the author.

[1]Arius's (AD 256–336) teaching that the Son was neither consubstantial nor coeternal with the Father sparked the Council of Nicaea (AD 325). M. Ovey, "Nicaea, Council of," in *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic,* ed. Martin Davie *et al*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 618–619. Sabellianism is named after Sabellius (in Rome ca. 198–220) who taught the Son and Spirit are only temporary modes of the Father. This heresy was based in Monarchianism, an overreaction to polytheism that stressed unity at the expense of the distinctions within the Godhead. H. D. McDonald, "Monarchianism," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, 588–589.

Milton S. Terry (1840–1940). He sought to interpret Scripture as "required by the laws of grammar and the facts of history."[2] Terry's discussion of the grammatico-historical method, along with many subsequent treatments within evangelicalism, features two main foci of inquiry: (1) the written text of Scripture and (2) the setting of the original writer/recipient(s). For the contemporary exegete, some of the tools of comparative philology from Terry's day are outmoded. The present study seeks to retain the ethos of Terry's grammatico-historical interpretation through the use of traditional Greek grammar along with the incorporation of advances informed by linguistic science such as grammatical aspect, lexical aspect, and discourse grammar to study the written text. In keeping with the "historical" component of the hermeneutical framework, there also will be substantial investigation into a background study of John 1:1.

Definitions

The two concepts most important for understanding the Greek verb within the scope of the present study are (1) tense and (2) aspect. Tense refers to how a speaker/writer portrays an event as being "past, present, or future time."[3] Since the work of Constantine Lascaris (AD 1434–1501), the Greek verbal paradigm has been arranged in a way that seems to identify tense as the primary feature.[4] However, grammarians now understand the importance of grammatical aspect in the Greek verb. Grammatical aspect, or "viewpoint aspect," is "a speaker's adoption of

[2]Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments: New Ed., Thoroughly Revised*, ed. George R. Crooks and John F. Hurst, Library of Biblical and Theological Literature 2 (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1890), 101.

[3]Keith Brown and Jim Miller, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 436.

[4]S. M. Kraeger, "Whence and Whither Greek Verbal Lexicography and Pedagogy: A Diachronic Review," *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics* 3 (2014): 104.

a viewpoint in relation to situations."[5] In New Testament (NT) Greek, grammatical aspect is the portrayal of "a situation's *internal structure*"[6] morphologically encoded in the verb via what have been traditionally called tense stems. Two aspects are relevant to the present study: perfective and imperfective. The perfective aspect portrays an event as self-contained, or bounded, whereas the imperfective aspect portrays the event as open-ended, or unbounded.[7] Put another way, the perfective aspect includes the endpoints of the action; the imperfective does not. The major views on Greek grammatical aspect exclude or minimize tense outside of the indicative mood. The point of debate concerns whether or not the indicative mood includes tense.[8]

Grammatical prominence is a theory employed by recent proposals to understand whether or not Greek verbs grammaticalize time. This theory posits that "languages tend to emphasize . . . tense, aspect, or mood."[9] It is important to note that the emphasized feature is not to the exclusion of the others. Michael G. Aubrey, Nicholas J. Ellis, and Mark Dubis argue that Greek

[5]Brown and Miller, *Cambridge Dictionary of Linguistics*, 437.

[6]Nicholas J. Ellis, "Aspect-Prominence, Morpho-Syntax, and a Cognitive-Linguistic Framework for the Greek Verb," in *The Greek Verb Revisited: A Fresh Approach for Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Steven E. Runge and Christopher J. Fresch (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), 125. This edited volume is subsequently abbreviated *GVR*.

[7]Ellis, "Aspect-Prominence, Morpho-Syntax, and a Cognitive-Linguistic Framework for the Greek Verb," in *GVR*, 126. Cf., Vyvyan Evans*, Cognitive Linguistics: A Complete Guide*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 250.

[8]The seminal English works are the published doctoral dissertations: Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament with Reference to Tense and Mood*, Studies in Biblical Greek 1 (1989; repr., New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2010); Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* (1990; repr., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002). More accessible surveys include Constantine R. Campbell, *Advances in the Study of Greek: New Insights for Reading the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 29–50, 105–133; Constantine R. Campbell, "Aspect and Tense in the New Testament," in *Linguistics and New Testament Greek: Key Issues in the Current Debate*, ed. David A. Black and Benjamin Merkle (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 37–53. For a technical critique of the issues involved see: Christopher J. Thomson, "What is Aspect?: Contrasting Definitions in General Linguistics and New Testament Studies," in *GVR*, 13–80.

[9]Ellis, "Aspect-Prominence," in *GVR*, 124.

is an aspect-prominent language.[10] Viewed this way, it is not that nonindicative verbs lose their tense but that tense is *gained* in the indicative.[11]

Lexical aspect also plays a critical role in the meaning of a text.[12] Where grammatical aspect has to do with an author's choice of how to portray a certain situation, lexical aspect concerns the inherent nature of certain verbs to be bounded or unbounded. This is also discussed in terms of telicity. Telic verbs include the idea of an end point, whereas atelic verbs do not.[13] The study will make use of Buist Fanning's contribution to NT Greek that considers how lexical aspect and other contextual features work together to form meaning in a given context.[14]

Background Study

Connections in the Prologue to the Old Testament

Why did John use ὁ λόγος (the word) and not simply *Jesus* or some other name/title? The major positions on John's intended referent for ὁ λόγος in the Prologue are a Hellenistic or Semitic background with a definite preference for either a Semitic source or, less frequently, some synthesis of the two.[15] Given the strong support for a Semitic background related to ὁ

[10]Michael G. Aubrey, Nicholas J. Ellis, and Mark Dubis, "The Greek Verbal System and Aspectual Prominence: Revising Our Taxonomy and Nomenclature," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 59, no. 1 (March 2016): 31–62; Ellis, "Aspect-Prominence," in *GVR*, 122–160.

[11]Ibid., 144.

[12]Benjamin Merkle critiques Stanley Porter for failing to adequately consider lexical semantics. Benjamin L. Merkle, "The Abused Aspect: Neglecting the Influence of a Verb's Lexical Meaning on Tense-Form Choice," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 26, no. 1 (2016): 57–74. Thomson, supporting Fanning's use of procedural character as contributing to meaning in a given text in interaction with aspect and tense, also critiques Porter on this same issue. Thomson, "What is Aspect?," in *GVR*, 41, 69.

[13]Evans, *Cognitive Linguistics: A Complete Guide*, 251; Brown and Miller, *Cambridge Dictionary of Linguistics*, 40.

[14]Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 126–196.

[15]Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (*I–XII*): *Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, Anchor Yale Bible 29 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 519–525. While the sub-classifications of views vary,

λόγος in John 1:1, it is this source that will be of primary focus.[16]

The first Old Testament (OT) connection in the Prologue concerns the creation account of Genesis 1–2, as seen by the opening prepositional phrase ἐν ἀρχῇ (in [the] beginning) in John1:1 that is identical to that of Genesis 1:1 (LXX). The prepositional phrase ἐν ἀρχῇ may seem to be a thin link between John and Genesis. However, lexical priming recognizes that units as small as "single words are likely employed to target larger bodies of literature, notable passages unified by a single theme, or other more general referents."[17] Kyle Dunham argues that for the authors of the NT, the OT "provided an authoritative linguistic map or 'canonical primer.'"[18] Thus, many of the criteria used to identify lexical priming are satisfied for Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1.[19]

John 1:2–5 provides additional connections to the creation account in Genesis. Themes common to both portions of Scripture include creation by God, God as the source of life, and the

several scholars identify the debate between a Semitic or Greek background. E.g.: Stephen S. Kim, "The Literary and Theological Significance of the Johannine Prologue," *BibSac* 166, no. 664 (October–December 2009): 425–427; I. Howard Marshall, "Johannine Theology," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia,* ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 2:1085–1086; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John,* rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 102–111; Benjamin E. Reynolds, "Logos," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels,* ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 523–526. One major exception is Ed Miller, who sees the Fourth Gospel as its own background for λόγος in the Prologue. However, he is not simply asserting that context determines meaning; his approach requires 1 John to be written before the Gospel with Ὃ ἦν ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς (1 John 1:1) as a sort of preliminary form of the more eloquent, later-written Prologue. He also requires the Prologue to be written after the body of the Fourth Gospel. Ed L. Miller, "The Johannine Origins of the Johannine Logos," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 112, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 445–457. It is not that such conditions are impossible, but that Miller fails to prove these facts so vital to his thesis.

[16]In this section credit is given to the works cited in the preceding note for delineating the major issues involved. When the points discussed are those expressed by the authors in virtual unanimity, no further citation is given. The Targumim circumlocution מימרא for יהוה is not addressed since the dating of its original oral content is not accurately known. Philo's use of λόγος is not engaged since his occurrences, 1381, are far too diverse. Additionally, John's familiarity with Philo seems less likely than other concepts from the period.

[17]Gregory P. Fewster, "Testing the Intertextuality of Ματαιότης in the New Testament," *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics* 1 (2012): 43.

[18]Kyle Dunham, "Challenges to Intertextuality and Christotelism: A New Model of Canonical-Linguistic Priming," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 64, no. 2 (June 2021): 296.

[19]Fewster, "Testing the Intertextuality of Ματαιότης in the New Testament," *BAGL*, 43–44.

opposition of light to darkness. Another clear OT link involves John's testimony that the Incarnation included the seeing of "His glory . . . full of grace and truth" (v. 14 cf. Exod. 34:29–34) and how this "grace and truth [that] came through Jesus Christ" is contrasted with "the law given through Moses" (v. 18 cf. Exod. 20:1; 2 Chron. 33:8, 14; Neh. 10:29). The Prologue's statement about no one having seen God (v. 18) also connects to the OT (Gen. 33:20; Exod. 33:20; Deut. 5:24) and the hidden God who reveals Himself.

The Hebrew Testament and Intertestamental Developments in Divine Plurality

From the monotheism of OT Judaism, important theological developments during the OT and intertestamental periods pave the way toward an understanding of plurality within the one Hebrew Deity. A much more direct link between John 1:1 and the OT seems to be in the lexeme λόγος (word) itself. The noun λόγος does not appear in the creation account of Genesis, but its verbal cognate does appear as the means of creating.[20] Moreover, Psalm 33:6 says the heavens were made τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ κυρίου / יְהוָה דְּבָר (by the word of the LORD). This is one of many occurrences of דָּבָר (word) that "contain only certain beginnings of hypostatization" found especially in the Psalms and prophets of the OT.[21] Leon Morris comments that "while nothing was said to compromise the basic monotheism of Judaism, attention was increasingly directed to passages where such entities are given an almost independent existence. Thus, throughout the

[20]Εἶπεν is used within the formula "καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός (and God said)" in Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 29 (LXX). It is the third person singular aorist active indicative form of εἶπον, which is used as the second aorist of λέγω—the verbal cognate of λόγος.

[21]W. H. Schmidt, "דָּבָר," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis and Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 3:121.

Old Testament the Word of the Lord is thought of as an effective agent for accomplishing the divine will."[22]

Another important OT development is the theology of the name of יהוה. Its use in many texts seems "in favor of some sort of divine hypostasis referred to as the Name of YHWH, something that was approximately YHWH, but not actually YHWH"[23] (e.g., 2 Sam. 6:1–2; 1 Kings 8:27–29). Next is מלך יהוה (Angel of YHWH) who first appears in Genesis 16 and later to Abraham (Gen. 22), as well as within the burning bush to Moses (Exod. 3:2), and to others in the OT. The Exodus 3:2 example is important because the figure seems to be identified as יהוה Himself (v. 4). This is quite a complex issue, but the argument can be made for this individual to share in the identity of יהוה yet also remain distinct in some respects.[24] Perhaps one of the best examples of some sort of hypostasis in the OT is the "Son of Man" in Daniel 7:9–14. Scholars such as Markus Zehnder note that this figure is distinct from human beings, angels, and any other possible members of the heavenly court.[25]

Along these lines, some see possible allusions in the Prologue to the personifications of wisdom in Proverbs (e.g., 8:1–30) that were further developed in the intertestamental period (e.g., Wis. 7:22; 9:2; Sir. 24:3–22). However, Andreas Köstenberger points out that Judaism (pre-

[22]Morris, *John*, NICNT, 104.

[23]Michael S. Heiser, "Co-Regency in Ancient Israel's Divine Council as the Conceptual Backdrop to Ancient Jewish Binitarian Monotheism," *BBR* 26, no. 2 (2016): 210.

[24]René López argues מלך יהוה is not a theophany. René A. López, "Identifying the 'Angel of the Lord' in the Book of Judges: A Model for Reconsidering the Referent in Other Old Testament Loci," *BBR* 20, no. 1 (2010): 1–18. Andrew Malone critiques López's position suggesting the Angel is God. Andrew S. Malone, "Distinguishing the Angel of the Lord," *BBR* 21, no. 3 (2011): 297–314. John Walvoord gives a traditional argument for the angel as a Christophany. John F. Walvoord, "The Preincarnate Son of God," *BibSac* 104, no. 413 (January–March 1947): 415–425.

[25]Markus Zehnder, "Why the Danielic 'Son of Man' Is a Divine Being," *BBR* 24, no. 3 (2014): 336.

and post-exilic) was monotheistic and did not accept degrees of divinity.[26] His assessment may be correct that the various Jewish wisdom traditions' personifications of divine attributes "never . . . took on divine hypostases separate from God. Rather, those enabled Second Temple Jews to speak of God's activity in the world without sacrificing the notion of His transcendence."[27] This practice could also have been for evangelistic purposes to the Gentiles who were unreceptive to OT anthropomorphisms so "Hellenistic Jews explained them using the Greek idea that God used collaborators as instruments of creation."[28] It is important to keep in mind that these non-canonical writings are not θεόπνευστος (God-breathed) (2 Tim. 3:16). Also, some of these non-canonical writings antedate the writing of John, and while they may represent thoughts in circulation at the time of John's writing available to serve as background for the Prologue, such cannot be definitively known. Yet, the developments from the OT and intertestamental periods seem to be a part of the providential means to prepare Jewish believers to accept the high Christology and Trinitarianism of the early church exhibited in John and the NT, if they accepted Jesus's identity as He presented Himself.

Divisions within the Opening of John

Concerning the beginning of the Gospel of John, J. Ramsey Michaels understands 1:1–5 as a "preamble" because the verses have "no narrative context" as do those that follow.[29] His

[26]Andreas J. Köstenberger and Scott R. Swain, *Father, Son, and Spirit: The Trinity and John's Gospel*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 24 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 34.

[27]Ibid., 39.

[28]Robert M. Grant, *After the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) referenced in Stuart E. Parsons, "Very Early Trinitarian Expressions," *Tyndale Bulletin* 65, no. 1 (2014): 149.

[29]J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 31.

comments are similar to a view that dates back to John Chrysostom (AD 347–407). The ancient expositor begins his comments on John 1:6 by calling 1:1–5 "τὰ κατεπείγοντα (the introduction)."[30] More contemporary scholars identify a Prologue ranging from 1:1–18.[31] The textual unit to be studied is John 1:1, which, by either view, stands within a pericope preceding the body of the Fourth Gospel. The identification of John 1:1 as a propositional unit of thought, as well as the relationship of the clauses within it, is attained via discourse grammar.[32] The two pertinent discourse features of John 1:1 are asyndeton and καί (and). Asyndeton "refers to the linking of clauses or clause components without the use of a conjunction."[33] Daniel Wallace observes that "asyndeton is a vivid stylistic feature that occurs often for emphasis, solemnity, or rhetorical value (staccato effect), or when there is an abrupt change in topic."[34] However, Steven Levinsohn and Steven Runge see asyndeton as the default way Koine Greek connects clauses in

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[30]John Chrysostom, "Homily VI," in *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Gospel of St. John*, Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church 1A (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1848), 59.

[31]D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 110–111; Ernst Haenchen, *John 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of John, Chapters 1–6*, ed. and trans. Robert W. Funk, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 101–102; Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 4 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 59–63; Morris, *John,* NICNT, 63–64. Raymond Brown sees the Prologue as ending at verse 17. Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (*I–XII*), AB, 4.

[32]Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010). Abbrev. *DGram*. A variety of Greek New Testaments punctuate John 1:1 the same e.g., *Nestle-Aland 28*, Constantin von Tischendorf, Caspar René Gregory, and Ezra Abbot, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Lipsiae: Giesecke & Devrient, 1869–1894); Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (1881; repr., Bellingham: WA: Logos Bible Software, 2009); Zane Clark Hodges, Arthur L. Farstad, and William C. Dunkin, *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985). However, punctuation within the Greek New Testament did not begin to be systematically employed until the eighth–ninth centuries. Bruce M. Metzger, "Persistent Problems Confronting Bible Translators," *BibSac* 150, no. 599 (July–September 1993): 278. The purpose of using discourse grammar is to do the exegetical work and employ an accepted but not yet commonly used approach to identify clausal relationships within the Greek New Testament.

[33]Runge, *DGram*, 20.

[34]Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 658.

speeches within narratives—especially in John's Gospel.[35] The clause beginning verse two is connected to those before it by asyndeton. This simply means that there is nothing marking the relationship between the clause beginning verse 2 and what precedes it. By contrast, John 1:1b is marked for close connection to 1:1a, and 1:1c is marked for close connection with 1:1b. The two occurrences of καί within verse one mark these three clauses within it for close association with one another.[36] This means that the clauses of verse 1 are coordinate and of equal status. Also, although still related to verse 1, verse 2 is a thought not as closely connected to those within verse 1. Therefore, verse 1 is both a complete thought, as well as discrete enough for analysis.

John 1:1a: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος (In the Beginning Was the Word)

Although not first in word order, as an articular noun in the nominative case, ὁ λόγος (the word) in 1:1a is the subject of the clause drawing attention for first analysis. The close context identifies ὁ λόγος as the same ὁ λόγος who "became flesh and dwelt among us" (v. 14). By this connection, the reference to "Jesus Christ" (v. 17), and John's narrative that follows, the λόγος of John 1:1 is identified as Jesus of Nazareth.

Grammatical and Syntactical Considerations in John 1:1a

Discourse grammar offers some insight into the phenomenon of how initial placement in a clause with something other than a verb is generally intentional. In John 1:1a the prepositional

[35]Runge clarifies that "default does not mean that it is the most commonly occurring option, but that it is the most basic ('unmarked') option." Runge, 20. While Steven Levinsohn sees asyndeton as the unmarked linkage in John's Gospel, he acknowledges that in the Fourth Gospel "it is found at both points of discontinuity . . . and when no discontinuity is indicated." Steven H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: SIL International, 2000), 82. There are some slightly different ways that asyndeton is used for "thematic development in non-narrative text." Ibid., 118–123.

[36]Ibid., 82.

phrase ἐν ἀρχή is a "temporal frame," setting the scene for the pericope "establishing an explicit frame of reference for the clause that follows."[37]

Further support for ἐν ἀρχῇ in John 1:1 relating to a definite event, a specific beginning—'the beginning'—is found in the work of Jan Van der Watt and Chrys Caragounis who engage prominent Greek grammarians who, for various reasons, agree that the phrase is definite despite being anarthrous.[38] Their own research into the use of ἐν ἀρχῇ / ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ "forced [them] to conclude that the Greeks had a predilection for using the anarthrous expression," yet the two were for semantic purposes interchangeable.[39] Their findings are diachronically consistent from the Classical through the Byzantine periods of Greek.[40] The most convincing of their arguments is the use of the articular expression in references to John 1:1 by early church writers.[41]

As a reference to Genesis 1:1, ἐν ἀρχῇ in John 1:1 is definite—"in *the* beginning." The beginning to which John refers is *the* creation. Yet, John's use of λόγος "would be widely recognized among the Greeks."[42] It should be kept in mind that John was a church elder (2 John 1:1; 3 John 1) aware of the ideas impacting the churches with which he had contact (e.g. the polemics in 1–3 John). Also, many of the narrative asides in his Gospel explain Jewish customs

[37]Runge, *DGram*, 216. The Johannine collocation of ἀρχή with propositions does not shed any significant light on identifying the 'beginning' to which John refers in the Prologue. This is because, in spite of all occurrences of ἀρχή in a prepositional phrase being temporal markers, its only occurrence with ἐν in the dative case is within the Prologue. All other Johannine uses of ἀρχή as the object of a preposition are genitive case with the prepositions ἐκ (John 6:64; 16:4) and ἀπό (8:44; 15:27; 1 John 1:1; 2:7, 13, 14, 24; 3:8, 11; 2 John 5).

[38]Jan Van der Watt and Chrys Caragounis, "A Grammatical Analysis of John 1:1," *Filología Neotestamentaria* 21, no. 41 (2008): 95–97.

[39]Ibid., 97.

[40]Ibid., 97–100.

[41]Ibid., 99.

[42]Morris, *John,* NICNT, 103.

such as ceremonial washings (2:6), the disdain of the Samaritans by Jews (4:9), timing of the Feast of Dedication (10:22), issues related to ceremonial uncleanliness (18:28), and burial rites (19:40) that seem to be for the benefit of a Gentile readership.[43]

The genius of John seems to be to choose λόγος as a point of contact with both Jews and Greeks. He arrests their attention, piques their interest, and draws them into the Prologue. Also, as is the case with many NT writers and speakers, John associates new semantic content with this pre-existing Word.[44] For Jews, the OT ideas of דָּבָר / λόγος (word) are expanded and clarified, especially with "ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (and the word became flesh and dwelt among us)" (v. 14). However, this concept, as well as others associated with λόγος in the Prologue and portrayed in the ministry of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, would have radically challenged many of the Greek concepts related to λόγος in the first-century AD.

Having identified John's intended meaning of ὁ λόγος and discovered the referent of ἐν ἀρχῇ (in [the] beginning), the activity or state of being of ὁ λόγος is considered via the clause's verb: ἦν. It is the third person singular imperfect tense-form indicative of εἰμί, the Greek verb to "be" or "exist."[45] Fanning identifies εἰμί within the verbal class of states.[46] When combined with the imperfective aspect, verbs of this class "denote the *continuing existence* of the subject in the condition indicated by the verb."[47]

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[43]These examples are from Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John: The Gospel in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Baker Academic, 2013), 232.

[44]Cf. Larry R. Helyer, *The Witness of Jesus, Paul and John: An Exploration in Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 338; Van der Watt and Caragounis, "John 1:1," *FN*, 130.

[45]Walter Bauer, ed., trans. and rev. by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 282.

[46]Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 135–136.

[47]Ibid., 137, 137n26. Emphasis original.

While it was demonstrated above that the prepositional phrase ἐν ἀρχῇ (in [the] beginning) is a temporal marker, the verb ἦν (was) is as well. As noted in the brief introduction to the theory of grammatical prominence above, Greek verbs in the indicative mood do include time. In the case of John 1:1, the imperfect tense-form in the indicative mood is marked for past time. But, in keeping with grammatical prominence as outlined above, the feature of aspect still plays a role. Regarding ἦν in the text, this means that the imperfective aspect still factors into the semantics of the verb. The Prologue takes the reader back even further than Genesis 1:1—into eternity past. The text does not teach simple pre-existence, as Arianism would allow. "In the beginning" the λόγος in past time was in a state of *continual* existence. The Second Person of the Trinity is *eternally* pre-existent.[48]

John 1:1b: καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν

(And the Word Was with God)

As noted above, the conjunction beginning this clause identifies the first and second clauses as "two items of equal status."[49] This places John 1:1b ἐν ἀρχῇ (in [the] beginning) as well, and so the verb ἦν (was) again describes not just pre-temporally of a continuing past state of existence, but *eternally*. The location of the subject ὁ λόγος (the word) marks its discourse function as a "topical frame" and marks the comment about the λόγος as "what is newly asserted and hence most important."[50] The new contribution of this clause is that ὁ λόγος is πρὸς τὸν θεόν (with God). The prepositional phrase features an accusative case articular θεός (God), which

[48]Köstenberger and Swain, *Trinity and John*, 39; Morris, *John*, NICNT, 65; Van der Watt and Caragounis, "John 1:1," *FN*, 138.

[49]Runge, *DGram*, 24.

[50]Ibid., 210.

marks it as distinct from the nominative case articular subject ὁ λόγος (the word). The language presents the λόγος (word) in company with the θεός (God).[51] Πρός with a personal accusative is a construction exclusive to the NT simply depicting the existence of interpersonal relationships. The theological importance of the expression is that it indicates a relationship between *distinct* Persons.[52] Given the context of the Prologue (esp. v. 14) and the Jewish monotheism from which Christianity sprang, the θεός is God the Father. This clause presents an *eternal* existence of, and distinction between, the First and Second Persons of the Trinity.

John 1:1c: καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος (And the Word Was God)

Once again John chooses καὶ (and) to signal the close connection of the third clause with the two preceding it. Is the articular λόγος (Word) the subject? What of the anarthrous θεός (God) that is also in the nominative case and prior in word order? Greek grammarians' understanding of this kind of construction and its application for exegesis has developed for almost two centuries.[53] Within the standard Greek grammars, Archibald Robertson notes the tendency of Greek predicate nouns to be anarthrous, and in cases where there is both an articular

[51]The preposition "πρός with accusative . . . appears often also with 'to be' and the like instead of παρά τινι 'with, in the company of.'" BDF, 124. John 1:1 is listed as an example of this usage.

[52]Van der Watt and Caragounis, "John 1:1," *FN*, 105–110; 130–132.

[53]Aernie and Hartley identify "the essential works" on this issue as: Ernest C. Colwell, "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament," *JBL* 52 (1933); Philip B. Harner, "Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15:39 and John 1:1," *JBL* 92 (1973); Paul S. Dixon, "The Significance of the Anarthrous Predicate Nominative in John" (ThM thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1975); Donald E. Hartley, "Criteria for Determining Qualitative Nouns with a Special View to Understanding the Colwell Construction" (ThM thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1996); Donald E. Hartley, "Revisiting the Colwell Construction in Light of Mass/Count Nouns," Foundation for Biblical Studies, 1998, https://bible.org/article/revisiting-colwell-construction-light-masscountnouns; Donald E. Hartley, "John 1:1, Colwell, and Mass/Count Nouns in Recent Discussion" (Danvers, MA: paper presented at the 51st Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, 1999). Matthew D. Aernie and Donald E. Hartley, *Essentials of Biblical Interpretation: From the Principles of Exegesis to the Practices of Exposition*, ed., June Gibbons (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, forthcoming), n.p.n68.

and anarthrous noun, the former is the subject regardless of word order.[54] Furthermore, he gives John 1:1c as an example of λόγος (Word) and θεός (God) not being convertible terms due to θεός (God) not being definite (not to imply it is *indefinite*—'a god').[55] BDF, invoking Colwell's Rule, sees definite nouns preceding the verb as anarthrous, which would seem to identify θεός (God) as definite in John 1:1c.[56] However, this is an instance of applying the *reverse* of Colwell's Rule, a common error identified by Wallace.[57]

Informed by developments on this topic since Wallace's discussion, Matthew Aernie and Donald Hartley give four steps for investigating the semantic possibilities of anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives in the Colwell construction.[58] The first two involve the lexical semantics of nouns with respect to their mass/count distinction and number.[59] Mass entities are perceived as a whole without boundaries between any constituent part and cannot be indefinite.[60] They include nouns like dirt, rain, and air. By contrast, count entities are perceived as individual things with boundaries separating and distinguishing the things and can be either definite or indefinite.[61] Examples include nouns such as cat, car, and brick. There is one caveat to the ability

[54]Archibald T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 4th ed. (1923; repr., Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2006), 767–768.

[55]Ibid.

[56]BDF, 143.

[57]Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 257–259.

[58]Aernie and Hartley, *Essentials of Biblical Interpretation*, n.p.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Vyvyan Evans, *The Crucible of Language: How Language and Mind Create Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 77. Cf. the terminology "continuous matter" and "mass." Evans, *Cognitive Linguistics: A Complete Guide*, 245.

[61]Evans, *The Crucible of Language*, 77. C.f. the terminology "discrete matter" and "objects." Evans, *Cognitive Linguistics: A Complete Guide*, 245.

of count nouns to be indefinite—plurality. Concerning number, plural count nouns cannot be indefinite.[62] The third step, the identification of adjuncts, specifically genitives, does not apply to John 1:1c. These first three steps conclude that, as a singular count noun absent of genitive adjuncts, θεὸς in John 1:1c is unmarked as definite or indefinite. The fourth factor considers the Johannine use of pre- and post-copulative anarthrous predicate nominatives. Of the Gospel of John's eighteen pre-copulative anarthrous predicate nominatives in the Colwell construction, more than half are qualitative.[63] The preceding factors do not present an air-tight case on the basis of grammar but show a preference in the Fourth Gospel for the qualitative nature of pre-copulative anarthrous predicate nominatives in the Colwell construction.[64] The purely qualitative view best fits the semantic situation and agrees with the content of 1:1a–b, the Prologue, Johannine, and biblical thought.

In John 1:1c the placement of θεός (God) is emphatic. Discourse grammar understands the location of θεὸς in the clause to mark it as "a nonestablished clause component."[65] θεός provides new information about the "topical frame" which is ὁ λόγος. This also confirms the purely qualitative view regarding the relationship of θεὸς (God) to ὁ λόγος (the Word) discussed above. The verb ἦν (was) again depicts a *continual* past existence set in the frame of ἐν ἀρχῇ (in [the] beginning). John 1:1c emphatically asserts that the Second Person eternally possessed the qualities of deity.

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[62]Aernie and Hartley, *Essentials of Biblical Interpretation*, n.p.

[63]Aernie and Hartley report the following statistics: "For the Colwell construction, the highest frequency based on 18 cases was 56% Q, 17% I-Q, 17% I, and 11% D." Ibid.

[64]"We would not argue that the translation, 'a god' is impossible from a grammatical point of view. We would suggest, however, that it is an unlikely nuance given Johannine usage of clear examples." Ibid.

[65]Runge, *DGram*, 191.

Conclusion

John 1:1 is a very important text for developing Christology with significant implications for theology proper as well. It guards against the ancient heresies of Arianism and Sabellianism, as well as their contemporary permutations. The text clearly supports the deity of Christ along with orthodox Trinitarianism by depicting the eternal pre-existence of the Second Person, while distinguishing Him from the First Person and simultaneously attributing qualitative equivalence between the two within the framework of biblical monotheism. Some updated exegetical tools provided by linguistic science have paved the path toward this interpretation. No one method can accomplish the task alone, and the journey is hardly complete.

The preceding study takes into consideration the likely background for John's use of λόγος in John 1:1. It has not, however, given a detailed accounting of how it connects with John's use of λόγος, especially in connection with θεός. Cognitive semantics has the potential to provide additional means to explore the intention of John in the Prologue by explaining how selective information from the biblical author's rich background knowledge of both θεός and λόγος is understood by context. Further research in this area could provide additional clarification that is helpful in making a cumulative case for the semantic situation of the text, supporting the theological conclusions of the present study.

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Review of Jason Cherry, *The Making of Evangelical Spirituality*

Gage Crowder

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Jason Cherry. *The Making of Evangelical Spirituality*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2023. 178 pages. Paperback, $27.00.

Pastoral Historiography: A New Look at the Old History of Evangelical Spirituality

"The Lord told me. . . . I heard the Spirit say. . . . God led me to"—few phrases are more ubiquitous in the American evangelical milieu. Many of the Reformed evangelical persuasion lament—and even lambast!—such language, while the majority of more broadly evangelical pastors and teachers disciple their congregations by speaking to them in just this way. Yet, no matter toward which evangelical ilk one tilts, the origin of such language is rarely, if ever, considered or critiqued. Often, the knee-jerk reaction of critics is to chalk it up to that ever-assailable monster of (post)modernity—namely, subjectivism. One must wonder if there is more to this story. Here is where Jason Cherry's *The Making of Evangelical Spirituality* fills that gap in the literature. Cherry, whose historical oeuvre also boasts a book with an Ian Murray-like critique of revivalism entitled *The Culture of Conversionism and the History of the Alter Call* (2016), probes three essential questions in his quest to discover the historical root and the practical rot of this quintessential hallmark of contemporary American evangelicalism. First, when did the idea of immediate communication with God enter the evangelical vocabulary? Second, how did the idea of immediate communication with God develop in the broader Christian tradition? Third, what is the harm and the hope of the idea of immediate communication with God in evangelical spirituality? Along the way, Cherry helpfully charts key developments (for example, the "head versus heart" dichotomy; 33ff), notes key figures, and provides key biblical assessments that will be discussed in more detail below.

Preeminently, *The Making of Evangelical Spirituality* is diagnostically lucid. There seems to be an ever-evolving quest to nail down precisely the meaning of the term *evangelical*. Yet

while most of these proposed definitions center around the Reformation, political persuasion, or doctrinal distinction, Cherry has presented a hitherto ignored thread that runs through not merely a strand, but the entire fabric, of evangelicalism. The tapestry of American evangelicalism is woven together not merely by a denominational, political, or doctrinal affinity to the *euangelion*, though he appropriately acknowledges these threads (3-5), but by what Cherry terms "mysterialism" or "evangelical esotericism" (8).[1] Mysterialism is "the expectation that God will reveal himself [*sic*] to a person apart from Scripture" (8), and one may summarize his view on the relationship between the two as such: as being is basic to doing, he presents mysterialism as an essential rather than accidental element of evangelicalism *insofar as* mysterialism is the objective presentation of the internal consciousness of an average American evangelical, all the while masterfully avoiding the tautology of suggesting that mysterialism is the *sine qua non* of evangelicalism.

Yet, Cherry's diagnosis is anything but anecdotal. *Au contraire*, after spending some time differentiating between mysterialism and its ugly cousin's mysticism and outright heresy (13-23) and outlining the philosophical-theological background necessary to understand the concept (24-49), one quickly discovers that his is a work of historical theology. Though not simplistic, the historical survey that takes a tidy third of the book is simple: *from the Desert East to the New West, from Pachomius to Protestant Pietists, Christianity has always had a mysterialistic branch* (53-80). For some, in fact, Cherry's history may be too simple. Indeed, those looking for the direct, detailed, and documented connection from Alexandria to America will be only slightly disappointed. However, as discussed below, this critical observation may not be as unflattering as it sounds. All things considered, Cherry *still* ably takes a ponderous dose of thirty pages of

[1]*Nota bene*: This review will only make use of the term *mysterialism* for expedience, though the author notes that the words are used interchangeably throughout the book (8).

history and makes it feel like a brisk walk through the corridors of time, the gift of any true historian.

Above all, what makes *The Making of Evangelical Spirituality* a truly great work is its pastoral fecundity and biblical fidelity. The entire final third of the book is Cherry's exposure of the damaging disease that is the opacity and inscrutability of mysterialism. As an expert surgeon, he wields the scalpel of Scripture steadily, theologically surveying the Bible's own account of its proper place in the Christian life—namely, at the absolute center, given that "the words of Scripture are boundaries *setting forth the relationship between Creator and creature* (136, emphasis original)—and the Bible's account of the Spirit's role in the life of the believer—namely, as the One who transforms the believer into the image of Christ *by His Word* rather than new prophetic revelations (149). Most helpfully, the chapter entitled "Enablement: The Spirit's Sovereign Sway" seeks to clearly delineate and champion the biblical concept of the Spirit's swaying, which is ultimately Word-based wisdom (158), over and against mysterialism's unbiblical concept of the Spirit's speaking, which He does not do apart from His Word, by surveying every major purportedly mysterialist passage on God's supposed speaking; in a concluding reflection, Cherry says, "The New Covenant represents not the privileging of subjectivism, but the promise of Spirit-empowered divine enablement that works internally to transform the new creation into conformity to the external and objective law of God" (155). Buttressed by thoughtful close readings of Edwards' magisterial *Freedom of the Will,* Owen's *The Work of the Spirit*, and Lloyd-Jones' *Knowing the Times* among other substantial works of theology and beyond, Cherry's work enables him to conclude five biblically based and pastorally alarming manifestations of mysterialism that are damaging to the health of the evangelical church in America (160-169). Though—to stick with the ongoing metaphor—he recognizes that

mysterialism is a blight in the biology of American evangelicalism, amidst the cuttingly critical work, Cherry also takes more than one small section to deal gently with his patients, showing that the mysterialists are right to react against both the secular materialists and the Church's widespread acedia (160-161), demonstrating by his treatment and tone that he "plies the steel. . . . resolving the enigma of the fever of chart" ("East Coker," 4.137-141);[2] that is, he cuts to heal rather than to kill. Moreover, the book even ends with three reasons why mysterialism, like a good cell gone bad, has even *aided* the evangelical church in the short term but will kill her in the long term (167-169).

Thus, history and practicality meet; orthodoxy and orthopraxy kiss. In fact, so interdependent is this work of history on its telos of ecclesiastical application that it is almost in a genre all its own. Of course, in an age where novelty is prized for its own sake, it is nevertheless true that Cherry's style is new in that it attempts to retrieve, or rather resurrect, a historical, theological, and pastoral pastiche long buried beneath the post-Enlightenment ideal of so-called objective or amoral history. His may be called a *pastoral historiography*; that is, a work of history that does not merely tell but exhorts, a history not only *of* the Church but *for* the Church. It is a historiography that eschews the diffident "church history" of modern scholarship in favor of something broaching the doughty ecclesiastical histories of Eusebius and Cassiodorus, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum,* and Beza's *Icones*.

If anything, this reviewer desires for Cherry's and other historians' future work to own this style, to be pastoral all the more—never mind Noll and Marsden. In an era bent on theological retrieval, *The Making of Evangelical Spirituality* has paved a way, not only for the course of American evangelicalism to pull back from the brink of self-destructive subjectivity,

[2]T. S. Eliot, *The Four Quartets*, in *T. S. Eliot: Collected Poems, 1900-1962* (New York, NY: Harcourt Inc., 1963), 187.

but to pull back from that brink by means of a pastoral historiography that will—once again!—form rather than merely inform, a history that will not only instruct the academy but disciple the nations, a history that will teach, a history that will preach. As such, it should be a necessary addition to every shelf.

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Review of John Piper, *What Is Saving Faith? Reflections on Receiving Christ as a Treasure*

Derrick Brite

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John Piper. *What Is Saving Faith? Reflections on Receiving Christ as a Treasure*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022. 300 pages. Hardcover, $34.99.

What is the true nature of saving faith? Are emotions or affection necessary elements to the essence of saving faith? According to John Piper in his recent book, *What Is Saving Faith? Reflections on Receiving Christ as a Treasure*, the answer is yes. In this work, Piper seeks to defend the argument that "saving faith does indeed have in its very nature affectional elements, dimensions, or aspects" (14). Therefore, a faith that does not have these affectional elements is not a saving faith, but a false faith (15). Knowing that his thesis will prove to be controversial, Piper sets out to assure his readers that he stands firmly within the tradition of the Westminster Confession, 11.2 (32). Therefore, it is upon this basis that the reviewer will judge the central thesis of Piper's work. The review will seek to answer this question: does this view of saving faith stay within orthodox, Reformed standards, or does it stray into the area of heterodoxy? Unfortunately, the answer will be proven to be the latter.

The book contains five distinct sections, beginning with the historical debates and personal experiences which occasion this work. Beginning with a brief survey of the Lordship controversy of earlier decades, Piper lays forth his concern that many in the broad evangelical church have fallen prey to this "looming calamity" and succumbed to the "deadly disease of churchgoing unbelief" (30). Untold numbers have given a profession of faith but have failed to have the root of the matter in them. Seeking to avoid the twin pitfalls of Roman Catholicism, which subsumes sanctification into justification, and of Sandemanianism, which makes faith a mere assent to theological truth, Piper aims to bring the category of affections into the essence of saving faith to show what true justifying faith really looks like.

The concern here is well noted. False professions have been an issue since the beginning. Jesus Himself drives the concern home when he proclaims that many who have done good works, prophesied, and cast out demons all in His name will hear the utterly terrifying words, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:23b, KJV). Piper is right to sound the alarm and to warn believers that their faith may be invalid. Unfortunately, Piper's cure is worse than the disease. The cure he offers is not to just revisit the historic Reformed doctrine that has lasted throughout the ages and has served as a comfort for believers through the centuries, but to redefine the three central elements that have defined saving faith: knowledge, assent, and trust. Piper does not want to add affections as a fourth category, but to show that "for *knowing* to be saving, it must be a knowing of Christ as a treasure, and for *assenting* to be saving, it must be assenting to Christ as a treasure, and for *trust* to be saving, it must be a treasuring trust" (59n4; italics original).

Piper employs well-known Reformed theologians of the past that appear to agree with him. One such notable theologian is Francis Turretin. As Piper sees it, Turretin's choice to treat the acts of faith more distinctly only serves to confirm his views (61-63). At first glance, the quotes from Turretin that are used seem to only bolster Piper's argument, especially when he notes that Turretin uses affectional words, such as "embrace," and "inestimable treasure." However, this does not paint the whole picture. Turretin, arguing against the Roman Catholic view (which Piper himself rejects), makes a key distinction between faith and love: "The former is concerned with the promises of the gospel; the latter with the precepts of the law (which on this account is said to be the end or "fulfilling of the law," Rom. 13:10). The former is the cause, the latter the effect. . . . That is the instrument of justification, while this is its consequent fruit."[1]

[1]Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., trans. George Musgrave Ginger, vol. 2 (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1992-1997), 582.

There is no doubt that faith and love are in close relationship, but we need not bleed one into the other. Rather, they need to remain distinguished. Love is the "proper and immediate effect of faith, which cannot be separated from its cause."[2]

Following Turretin's lead, we know that love is a vital part of the Christian life, and is connected with faith in such a way that they cannot be separated. In order to truly follow Christ, we must be a people of love. Likewise, the Scriptures are clear about the necessity of love. Jesus taught that the whole law can be summed up by loving the Lord and loving our neighbor (Matt. 22:40). The Apostle Paul concurs, stating that love "worketh no ill to his neighbor" and that love is a fulfillment of the law (Rom 13:10). Yet, a question arises: if love is the fulfillment of the law, and love is also of the essence of faith (as Piper says), then is saving faith keeping the law?

No doubt, if someone were able to keep the law perfectly, they would be saved, but they are not able to do so, which is why we need Christ's imputed righteousness (which Piper affirms). Reformed theologians like Thomas Goodwin would readily recognize that Christ lived by faith and that even this faithful obedience is imputed to us.[3] Yet, is this not also the case with the love of Christ who always loved His Father and neighbor perfectly? Remarkably, Piper opts not to address Matthew 22:40 or its parallel passages. What of the doubting believer who struggles to wonder if they love enough? Piper puts that question to the reader: "Do you have enough treasure in me to move you to let other treasures go? If you have not yet found your supreme treasure in me, you are not ready to be my disciple" (233). How does one know if that is really the case, especially considering the fact that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and

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[2]Ibid.

[3]"First; in some sense he had a faith for justification Luke unto ours, though not a justification through faith, as we have." Thomas Goodwin, *Christ Set Forth: As the Cause of Justification and as the Source of Justifying Faith* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, repr. 2015), 4.

desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9a, KJV)? The believer, struggling with assurance, is now drawn to look at his own deceitful heart in the war against idols and to ask if Jesus is his supreme treasure, instead of looking towards the promises of God and the finished work of Christ which includes an imputed perfect love. Stated another way, Piper's book unwittingly points people to look at the effects of faith and not the source of faith.

Ultimately, this reviewer appreciates a lot of Piper's works and resonates with some of his concerns. Had he simply argued that love, like all good works, are necessary for final glorification, I doubt there would be much cause for concern. However, this is not what is argued, and therefore, this book cannot be commended. Redefining what the Reformed church has always understood saving faith to be is not the cure for false professions. Rather, the solution is the principal acts of saving faith: accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by the virtue of the covenant of grace (Westminster Confession, 11:2).

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Review of Christopher Watkin, *Thinking through Creation: Genesis 1 and 2 as Tools of Cultural Critique*

Erik McDaniel

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Christopher Watkin. *Thinking through Creation: Genesis 1 and 2 as Tools of Cultural Critique.* Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2017. 169 pages. Paperback, $17.99.

In his book, *Thinking Through Creation: Genesis 1 and 2 as Tools of Cultural Critique*, author Christopher Watkin gives a grid in which to explain the current Western culture through biblical principles, as well as offers a mechanism to deal with cultural dichotomies. This work is a beautiful merger of philosophy and biblical theology. Dr. Watkin is an Australian Research Council Future Fellow in the Arts Faculty at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, and the author of *Phenomenology or Deconstruction* (2009) and *Biblical Critical Theory* (2022).

Watkin's grid is founded upon the creation story in the first two chapters of Genesis. His mechanism is "diagonalization" (his term). Watkin's explanation and mechanism help to aid critical Christian thinkers to engage in today's cultural debates sensitively, intellectually, and biblically. As he does so, he also offers a proper reorientation of the trinitarian God, creation, and humanity, even as these terms are deconstructed by today's postmodern assumptions.

In the preface and chapter 1, Watkin argues that it is not enough to tell the culture that the Bible defines reality (2). One must also show the culture that reality only makes sense through the Bible (2). Furthermore, he claims that "if Christians do not articulate how the Bible explains all other stories in terms of its own story and how it provides a positive vision for society, then other stories will step in to explain the Bible in their own terms and provide that vision in its place" (11). In support of this thesis, he offers C. S. Lewis's often-quoted statement: "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."[1] Through Genesis 1 and 2 and the doctrine of the Trinity, reality makes proper

[1]C. S. Lewis, "They Asked for a Paper," in *Is Theology Poetry*? (London: Geoffrey Bless, 1962), 165, quoted in Watkin, 11.

sense, and living in the world is "more sophisticated and more beautiful than extrabiblical alternatives" (xiv).

In chapter 2, Watkin begins addressing contemporary criticisms of Christianity and the Bible's claims by explaining how a proper understanding of the Trinity resolves a basic Western philosophical conundrum, that of "the one and the many. Is reality fundamentally a unity, or fundamentally many things?" (33). Here, Watkin applies his term "diagonalization." The doctrine of the Trinity claims that the Creator God is one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is both one and many simultaneously. Where Western, Enlightenment philosophy declares reality an "either-or" dichotomy, either one or many, Watkin argues the Bible exposes this as a false dichotomy and offers a diagonalization (27). The Trinity is the diagonalization of the one and the many false dichotomy (34). Applied to reality, diagonalizing the one and the many allows philosophers to see both as equally basic and existing in peaceful relation to one another, rather than competing with and excluding one another (35).

Throughout chapters 3 and 4, Watkin gives several examples of false dichotomies in today's postmodern Western culture—functionality and beauty, facts and values, nature and culture, intellectual work and manual labor, and nature as sacred or bare fact. With each of the false dichotomies he presents, Watkin skillfully shows that specific statements in the creation account found in Genesis 1 and 2 diagonalize all of them. One example of Watkin's diagonalizing a false dichotomy with a concept from Genesis 1 and 2 is in the arena of facts and values. The West's conception is that facts and values are an "either-or" dynamic—either something is objectively true or false, or it has subjective, personal value (70-77). However, Watkin points out that Genesis 1 exposes and diagonalizes that false dichotomy with the construct, "and there was (objective fact), . . . and it was good (subjective value)" (76). Creation

has material texture (fact), and that texture is good (value). After writing about the Creator-creation distinction, Watkin claims the *fact* has *value* because the Creator has declared its value (76). Watkin asserts that "in the world of the Bible, the impersonal can always be traced back to the personal" (71). Therefore, contrary to postmodern Western thought, the cold, hard facts do have value. Through the diagonalization of the "fact-value" false dichotomy found in Genesis 1, today's postmodern Western culture can seek the value of facts, rather than choose one over the other.

In the conclusion, Watkin restates his thesis and urges the following:

> It follows from this that if Christians merely explain the Bible to the culture, then the culture will seek to fit the Bible within the framework of understanding and assumptions that it already possesses. Not only is this impossible, but it also absolutizes our culture in its present state, refusing it the chance to develop and be challenged, while at the same time butchering the Bible beyond all recognition, neutering its strangeness to our generation and shaving off what are currently perceived to be its sharp corners. If we do this, then we lose the gospel and fail to serve the culture (138-39).

Watkin is undoubtedly insightful. Diagonalization is a fresh way to express the truths of the "both-and" instances in the Bible. Furthermore, Watkin skillfully applies diagonalization to the philosophical and cultural battles in the West and does so with Scripture. If he is correct in his articulation and application, he absolutely shows both the sophistication and beauty of God's created world. Watkin's section entitled, "The Creation is Unnecessarily Diverse and Abundant," exemplifies this as he discusses the gratuity of God hardwired into the fabric of His creation (64-66).

However, there are two glaring difficulties with this book. (Granted, Watkin admits in the preface that this book is a reworked and augmented version of a larger tome on which he is working.) First, diagonalization needs to be explained better. To begin, it is a difficult concept on which to latch. At times, diagonalization can seem like a Bible verse veneer draped over the dichotomy that is not helpful in answering the philosophical puzzle—as in the case of nature as

sacred or bare fact. This is not the case, of course, but it can appear this way, especially to a non-Christian. Second, Watkin does not offer the limits of diagonalization—meaning, are there "either-or" dynamics in philosophy and the Bible that cannot be diagonalized? Asked differently, are all dichotomies false and therefore, should be diagonalized? It would be helpful for Watkin to show some of diagonalization's limits or else one would be tempted with the diagonalization hammer to see all philosophical dichotomies as nails to hit.

Ultimately, though, this book can be helpful personally and professionally. Sometimes the good news of the Bible can become old news. Watkin has an engaging way of presenting old news in fresh ways that rekindles love for the good news. This book can be useful for Christians desiring to renew their love for God and His Word and their love for the defense of His gospel. Furthermore, his diagonalization method can be utilized by pastors in sermons to equip congregants to caringly, critically, and biblically engage the cultural debates that insist on an "either-or" resolution. Additionally, his articulation of "para-creation" can be beneficial in any vocation as a helpful rubric in which to understand hallowing God's name, furthering His kingdom, and doing His will here on earth as it is in heaven.

Watkin accomplishes his goal. Not only does he offer a doctrinally sound, fresh way for Christians to think critically about what the Bible teaches, he also equips Christians to engage thoughtfully with non-Christians—especially those with Western, postmodern, and deconstructionist philosophical commitments—about what the Bible teaches. In doing so, he does, in fact, offer a correct and more beautiful option to extrabiblical alternatives.

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Review of David C. Innes, *Christ and the Kingdoms of Men: Foundations of Political Life*

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David C. Innes. *Christ and the Kingdoms of Men: Foundations of Political Life*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2019. 264 pages. Paperback, $19.99.

David C. Innes is a leading voice for the twenty-first century in the ongoing debate surrounding whether Christians should engage in the world of politics and to what extent, as well as the role of the church in promoting civic responsibility. As an established author, Innes calls for politically informed Christians in his previous book, *The Voting Christian: Seeking Wisdom for the Ballot Box* (Lindenhurst NY: Great Christian Books, 2016). Innes holds a Master of Divinity from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary and serves as a professor at The King's College. He argues for the theological and biblical framework for God's establishment of a "two kingdoms" governmental structure. That is to say, God's sovereignty is over both kingdoms through His relationship and subsequent interactions with His created humanity. The centuries-old debate surrounding a two kingdoms governmental structure is not a new theological question; however, it is given contemporary insight by Innes.

Innes is versed in the theological and political constructs that challenge both Christians and non-Christians alike regarding God's use of the framework of government in His sovereign plan for the church. In *Christ and the Kingdoms of Men*, Innes' thesis is that "God uses the blessings of good government to provide a helpful setting of peace and order in which he advances his kingdom work in this fallen world" (20). This declaration is the foundation upon which Innes develops his discourse, while acknowledging that God is sovereign over all governments, whether they be good or bad. Innes goes even further in his theological belief regarding the two kingdoms to say, "God expresses his redemptive work in political terms" (xiii). Although strong in his view of these competing kingdoms, the natural world and the spiritual world, Innes emphasizes that the roles of politics and the church may differ in the eschatological

plan of God but are not mutually exclusive of one another (xiii). Through a systematic unfolding of the interconnectedness of politics and the church, Innes' book dismantles the myopic paradigm that politics is only secular and therefore should not be addressed by the church. As Christians engage in the culture, Innes does not shy away from stating that "a Christian understanding of politics begins with the biblical account of creation from nothing, fall into sin, and redemption in Christ" (198).

Noted scholar David Van Drunen has argued elsewhere, "The Two Kingdoms doctrine has a rich historical precedent in the Reformed tradition, that its basic tenets are built on a compelling biblical foundation."[1] This idea is fundamental to Innes' case for the necessity of informed believers. The omniscient God uses men and women made in His image, living in a fallen world, redeemed from a fallen state through the redemptive work of Christ, to govern other men and women for the well-being and edification of humanity.

From the Old Testament to the New Testament, God issues divine royal decrees and establishes the nation of Israel that ushers in a natural world and a spiritual world. Innes makes it clear that God is sovereign over both kingdoms, and Scripture confirms God's intentional plan to establish the two kingdoms to carry out His plan for humanity, both in the natural kingdom and the spiritual kingdom (29).

In sum, *Christ and the Kingdoms of Men* by Innes presents a sound study of politics within the context of the biblical account of the creation, fall, and redemption of humanity (198). The coexistence of God's sovereignty in both heaven and earth is what Innes proposes must be acknowledged as a political theory with the recognition of God, man, and the universe. The

[1]David VanDrunen, "Two Kingdoms and Reformed Christianity: Why Recovering an Old Paradigm Is Historically Sound, Biblically Grounded, and Practically Useful," *Pro Rege* 40, no. 3 (March 2012): 32, https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1158&context=pro_rege.

Scriptures herald that God shall reign forever, government serves His will, and He permits individuals to govern and removes them. Daniel 2:21 confirms that God has the sovereignty to remove rulers and establish rulers. Innes' book is a bold admonishment that ministry leaders should be open to the idea of teaching their congregants a solid biblical understanding of how the church and politics serve the will of God so that they are equipped to discern from among the many political ideologies emerging in the culture.