JBTS

ARAMAIC AND THE BIBLE

Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies

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JBTS 7.1 Aramaic and the Bible

Aramaic and the Bible
Introduction

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While the Aramaic portions of Scripture may be minimal, Aramaic studies proves to be fertile ground for understanding biblical linguistics, history, and interpretation. With only 269 verses (Gen 31:47 [partially], Jer 10:11; Dan 2:4b–7:28; Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26) of the Tanakh written in Aramaic, one may question the attention given here to the topic of "Aramaic and the Bible." However, as with any topic in biblical studies, deeper investigation into these matters will reveal more and more context into which we place the biblical narratives.

Aramaic particularly becomes helpful in this regard due to its long history as a written and spoken language in the ancient Near East. According to Franz Rosenthal, the earliest Aramaic inscriptions date to the ninth century BC.[1] Beginning as the spoken language of Aramean tribes, the language moved into Assyria and Babylon, eventually supplanting Akkadian as the *lingua franca* of the region.[2] By the time of King Hezekiah in Judah (2 Kgs 18:26), Aramaic was apparently an international language and continued to be so into the Persian period. Aramaic developed into several dialects both in Palestine and in Mesopotamia. Some of the most notable are Palestinian Jewish Aramaic (Targumic) in the West and Syriac in the East.

This long-standing history of the Aramaic language demonstrates that biblical scholars have much to glean from these topics. Whether one is interested in linguistic development among the Semitic languages or the translation techniques of first century targumists in the ancient synagogue, Aramaic studies, at least in some respect, set the stage for understanding both the Old and New Testaments.

In this journal issue, the reader will find articles that span this history of the Aramaic language. These few articles are by no means exhaustive of the areas of Aramaic study, but I hope that they will prove helpful to those interested in the topic(s). Articles include topics on transliteration and translation technique of the Aramaic Targums, interpretations and readings of the Aramaic portions of Daniel, Egyptian Aramaic, and also more theologically informed studies on how Aramaic informs

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1. Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 7th rev. ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 9.

2. Alger F. Johns, *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1972), 1.

John's paraclete title and how the Pentateuchal Targums of Genesis 3:15 are possibly picked up in the New Testament. These articles represent excellent scholarship in these areas of Aramaic studies, and they all can help to shape our understanding of the biblical landscape in the areas of linguistics and historical studies.

It is with great pleasure that I have been able to work with such capable authors on this project and to collaborate on such a wonderful journal topic. Just because a particular topic is small in the larger world of biblical studies does not mean it is insignificant. Since Aramaic is an often-neglected area of study in relation to the Bible, it is nigh time that we invest our time and attention to these matters. I pray that these articles and topics will prove helpful as we seek to understand God's revelation in Scripture at a deeper level.

The Value of Egyptian Aramaic for Biblical Studies

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Abstract: Biblical Aramaic accounts for a small fraction within the two-testament Christian Bible. Studying it would seem therefore to present a modest value for biblical studies, and Egyptian Aramaic, a nonbiblical counterpart from the same historical era, even more so. The present article argues, however, that comparing Egyptian Aramaic with biblical texts sharpens understanding of the Bible's distinctive theological profile. It demonstrates the value of Egyptian Aramaic through two comparative case studies: the first is lexically-focused and traces the contrast between "former" (as in, "former times"; Hebrew ראשון//Aramaic √קדם) and "latter" in Haggai and in several Aramaic letters from the Egyptian island of Elephantine. The second is more genre-focused and engages with the transmission of royal traditions, especially promissory oracles to the king, in post-monarchic texts: namely, biblical royal psalms and the Egyptian Aramaic Papyrus Amherst 63.

Keywords: Egyptian Aramaic; early Judaism; Persian Period; Achaemenid; Elephantine; Haggai; royal psalms; Papyrus Amherst 63

Introduction

For many seminarians, students, and researchers, Aramaic is the "other" biblical language. Within the two-testament Christian Bible, the first testament accounts for roughly two-thirds of the whole; it is written almost entirely in Hebrew. The remaining third, the New Testament, is written in Greek. Only a handful of letters in the book of Ezra (4:8–6:18; 7:12–26) and some stories in Daniel (albeit well-known stories: 2:4b–7:28) are written in Aramaic. Together with one zestful sentence in Jeremiah— "The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish!" (10:11)—these passages amount to a tiny fraction of the Bible. Given this distribution, it is already question enough why students would benefit from adding biblical Aramaic to their repertoire. Gaining some knowledge of *Egyptian* Aramaic—a subspecies? a cousin?

to biblical Aramaic—would seem to present an even more marginal value. And yet, as the present article will argue, Aramaic texts from Egypt have much to offer biblical studies. Comparing Egyptian Aramaic with biblical texts sharpens understanding of the Bible's profile; looking synoptically at features shared across these corpora deepens appreciation for the Bible's distinctive offer.[1]

Instead of arguing this proposition at forty-thousand feet, the present article pursues two more detailed demonstrations or case studies. Both juxtapose a biblical text (or texts) with an Egyptian Aramaic comparand. Both examples also focus on key differences that the biblical materials show relative to their Aramaic counterparts, and, as space allows, they interrogate the reasons for such divergence. The first study examines the programmatic uses of the concept "former" (as in, "former times"; Hebrew ראשון//Aramaic קדם√), as it appears in Haggai and in several Aramaic documents from the Egyptian island of Elephantine.[2] The second study below engages with the reception of royal traditions, especially promissory oracles to the king, in post-monarchic texts: namely, biblical royal psalms and the Egyptian Aramaic Papyrus Amherst 63. The first case study is more lexically-focused, though it opens onto historical and theological considerations of *apocalypse*; the second is more genre-focused and tradition-historical.

Egyptian Aramaic

Before delving into these case studies, a brief introduction is in order. "Egyptian Aramaic" is, as a designation, geographical, referring to the Aramaic data in terms of their *provenance*. In terms of their *chronological* location, however, the relevant

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1.   On the comparative enterprise, see Brent A. Strawn, "Comparative Approaches: History, Theory, and the Image of God," in *Method Matters: Essays on the Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David L. Peterson*, ed. Joel M. LeMon and Kent Harold Richards, Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study 56 (Atlanta: SBL, 2009), 117–42; also Shemaryahu Talmon, "The 'Comparative' Method in Biblical Interpretation—Principles and Problems," in *Essential Papers on Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Frederick E. Greenspahn (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 381–419. Compare Jon D. Levenson's insightful comments on searching for uniqueness: "There is no logical necessity that something be unprecedented or unparalleled when it is revealed; God can work through history as well as in spite of it." Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*, New Voices in Biblical Studies (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1985), 11.

2.   These are, of course, different lemmata. Egyptian Aramaic does use the cognate of Biblical Hebrew, ראשון: Bezalel Porten and Jerome A. Lund's *Aramaic Documents from Egypt: A Key-Word-in-Context Concordance* lists twelve occurrences of ראש under the heading "head, capital, principal" ([Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002], 280); also compare *Lexicon Syriacum*, 729–30. However, the far commoner Aramaic translation of BH ראשון is formed from the root meaning "east" or "before" (קדם√); see Porten and Lund, *Concordance*, 274. Footnotes below provide more detailed examples showing that where Biblical Hebrew has ראשון, Syriac and Targumic Aramaic use קדם√, but overall, I cannot find an instance within the 182 occurrences of ראשון in the Hebrew Bible that is translated by something other than קדם√ in these later, Aramaic versions.

Aramaic texts belong to a larger category: they are Achaemenid. They date, that is, to the period when the Persian Empire, ruled over by a dynasty supposedly tracing back to the eponymous Achaemenes, dominated the Near East (538–333 BCE), including, for much of that time, Egypt. Because Aramaic was the official administrative language of this empire, scholars also call the Aramaic language of this period "Imperial Aramaic" (in German, *Reichsaramäisch*), "Official Aramaic," or "Standard Aramaic."[3]

"Egyptian Aramaic" is thus a geographical subset of the Aramaic spoken chronologically during the Achaemenid period, and which enjoyed official status. It deserves saying that "biblical Aramaic" is also, in large part at least, a subset of this same Achaemenid Aramaic.[4] Differences notwithstanding, the jump for students from Ezra and Daniel to the Aramaic literature and letters of the Achaemenid Period is a manageable one. Finally, too, documents from Egypt account for the majority of Aramaic material from the Achaemenid period.[5] As often as not, therefore, when scholars refer to Official or Standard Aramaic, they have Egyptian texts in mind.[6]

The first European discovery, not to mention theft, of an Egyptian Aramaic text occurred in 1704: a French marine commissioner named Jean-Pierre Rigord published an Aramaic funerary inscription that he had apparently found nearby to a mummy; dating to the third or fourth century BCE, the bas-relief depicts a judgment scene before the god Osiris, to whom the deceased had been a devotee (TAD D20.5).[7] Other Egyptian Aramaic texts were published only a few years ago,[8] and a number of

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3. For a judicious discussion of these terms and their relative merits, see Margaretha L. Folmer, *The Aramaic Language in the Achaemenid Period: A Study in Linguistic Variation*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 68 (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 9–13; also the handy introduction by Takamitsu Muraoka, *An Introduction to Egyptian Aramaic*, Lehrbücher orientalischer Sprachen 3.1 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 15–18.

4. In Folmer's considered judgment, the Aramaic of Daniel shares some features with Hellenistic Aramaic, whereas Ezra's accords more fully with Persian-period exemplars (*Aramaic Language*, 753–55). For one recent affirmation of the authenticity of the official documents embedded within Ezra, see H. G. M. Williamson, "The Aramaic Documents in Ezra Revisited," *Journal of Theological Studies* 59 (2008): 41–62; but compare Dirk Schwiderski, *Handbuch des nordwestsemitischen Briefformulars: ein Beitrag zur Echtheitsfrage der aramäischen Briefe des Esrabuches*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 295 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000).

5. Folmer, *Aramaic Language*, 13.

6. On non-Egyptian Aramaic texts from the Persian period, see Folmer, *Aramaic Language*, 21. Note that "the provinces more to the East have not yielded Aramaic texts from the Achaemenid period" (ibid.).

7. Rudolf Jaggi, "Der 'Stein von Carpentras,'" *Kemet* 1 (2012): 58–60. References to TAD throughout the present article abbreviate Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt*, 4 vols. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Department of the History of the Jewish People, 1986–1999). For an account of "discoveries" in Egypt in the context of European colonial rivalries, see Neil A. Silberman, *Between Past and Present: Archaeology, Ideology, and Nationalism in the Modern Middle East* (New York: Holt, 1989); on Elephantine, "Egypt: Whose Elephantine?" in Silberman, *Between Past and Present*, 169–85.

8. Jan Dušek and Jana Mynářová, "Phoenician and Aramaic Inscriptions from Abusir," in *In the Shadow of Bezalel: Aramaic, Biblical, and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Bezalel*

volumes of previously unpublished material are still forthcoming.[9] In spite of these developments, the edition by Bezelel Porten and Ada Yardeni remains indispensable to the field; one scholar, Gard Granerød, called it his "Bible" for studying Persian-Period Judaism.[10] Porten and Yardeni classify the Egyptian Aramaic documents into several genres. [11]

- volume 1: Letters (numbering 50, with an appendix containing eight Aramaic letters excerpted from the Bible)
- volume 2: Contracts (numbering 57)
- volume 3: Literature, Accounts, Lists (numbering 41)
- volume 4: Ostraca and Assorted Inscriptions (numbering 478)

The first case study of the present article will consider several letters from the Yedoniah archive, which Porten and Yardeni published in their first volume (TAD A4.7/8); the second will refer to an unprovenanced papyrus, which they did not include.

Mobilizing "Former" Times

A number of passages in Hebrew Scripture mobilize a contrast between "former" and "latter" times. Always this contrast reflects a rupture between the two. A decisive event separates them; so, for example, the programmatic juxtaposition in Psalm 89. This psalm is the theological perigee of the canonical Psalter. Psalm 88, its immediate literary antecedent, ends with the claim that "darkness is my only companion" (v. 18, CEV)—but Psalm 89 is yet worse. Whereas the first part of Psalm 89 praises God's primordial action of establishing the cosmos and the Davidic dynasty, the second part accuses God of reversing course and overthrowing his anointed. It says to God: "you have renounced the covenant with your servant" (MT v. 40, ET v. 39). A harsher breakage could hardly be articulated; the language is so stark that one medieval Spanish rabbi considered it blasphemous.[12] MT v. 50 (ET v. 49) then plaintively asks:

Porten, ed. Alejandro F. Botta, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 60 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 53–69.

9.   The "Studies on Elephantine" series is an open-source series designed in conjunction with the Berlin Egyptian Museum's papyrus collection with Brill as the publisher. It will host the findings of the European Research Council's grant for Verena Lepper entitled "Localizing 4000 Years of Cultural History: Texts and Scripts from Elephantine Island in Egypt."

10.   Gard Granerød, *Dimensions of Yahwism in the Persian Period: Studies in the Religion and Society of the Judaean Community at Elephantine*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 488 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), vii.

11.   An excellent overview of Aramaic literature at large, and the Egyptian data within it, is Ingo Kottsieper, "Aramaic Literature," in *From an Antique Land: An Introduction to Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, ed. Carl S. Ehrlich (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 393–444.

12.   Hayyim Angel, "Biblical Prayers and Rabbinic Responses: Balancing Truthfulness and Respect before God," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 38 (2010): 3–9, here 7.

> Lord, where is your steadfast love of old [חסדיך הראשנים],
>> which by your faithfulness you swore to David?[13]

The rhetorical effect of the contrast is to spur the Lord to *remember* (זכר√; MT v. 51, ET v. 50), to give over attention to the era prior to this new moment of divine disruption in hope of bringing back that former time.

Another well-developed biblical example of the contrast between "former" and "latter" occurs in Isaiah. Sometimes in the canonical book of Isaiah, Yнwн directs attention to the former things, since, like "what is to come hereafter" (41:23), these constitute an enigmatic domain into which Yнwн has unique divine insight. He alone can "tell of them" (42:9; see also 43:9; 46:8–9; 48:3).[14] Elsewhere in Isaiah, however, Yнwн urges *forgetfulness* of this beforetime, and this in order to exalt the new and discontinuous divine work he will accomplish. So, for example, Isa 43:18–19:

> Do not remember the former things [ראשנות],
>> or consider the things of old [קדמניות].[15]
> I am about to do a new thing;
>> now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

Isaiah 65:17b takes up this theme of forgetfulness: "the former things [הראשנות] shall not be remembered."[16] In this case, the novel event that separates the past from the time that follows is scaled immensely: new heavens and new earth. In so many words, the contrast points up *apocalypse*: divine action that radically interrupts the course of known and familiar world history.[17]

The same contrast, employing the same Hebrew lemma for "former" (ראשׁן) also appears in the book of the prophet Haggai. The book initially identifies a historical and this-worldly rupture: the destruction of the first temple in 587 BCE. In Haggai's first chapter, dated to the second year of Darius the king (520 BCE), Yнwн commands the people to rebuild his house (1:8).[18] As motivation, Yнwн appeals to the recent,

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13. The Peshitta—the Bible in Syriac translation, itself a form of Aramaic—reads here *qdmyt' (√qdm)*.

14. Katie M. Heffelfinger lists "Memory/Former Things" as a rhetorical resource of Second Isaiah that includes "dissonant" occurrences. Heffelfinger, *I Am Large, I Contain Multitudes: Lyric Cohesion and Conflict in Second Isaiah*, Biblical Interpretation Series 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 286n18.

15. Peshitta translates with cognates, but in reverse order: *qdmyt' // ryšyt'*; Targum Isaiah: קדמייתא // דמן אולא ("from of old").

16. Peshitta: *qdmyt'*; TgIsa: קדמיתא.

17. The secondary literature seeking to define "apocalypse" and "apocalyptic" and to trace their historical lineage is oceanic; for one influential account, see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature, Third Edition*, Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

18. For this dating of Haggai, see Lester L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period*, Library of Second Temple Studies 47 (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 87.

negative consequences of their neglect (vv. 9–11). When the leaders and the remnant respond and begin rebuilding (v. 12), Yhwh then adds a positive impetus, assuring them through the prophet that "I am with you" (v. 13). The second chapter of Haggai expands on that promise of divine presence. The contrast between "former" and "now" amplifies the effect. Yhwh asks (2:3–4, NRSV):

> Who is left among you that saw this house in its *former* glory? [בכבודו הראשׁן]
>
> How does it look to you now [עתה]?
>
> Is it not in your sight as nothing?
>
> Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you.[19]

But then in v. 6, Yhwh announces a further reassurance: he will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land, as well as all the nations. Yhwh will prosecute an event of destruction that will undo all human power (compare with v. 22: "overthrow the throne of kingdoms"). The wealth of the whole world, which belongs primordially to Yhwh, will be loosed from human arrogation and returned to Yhwh's direct proprietorship, transferring to Yhwh's house in Jerusalem. After this shaking of all creation, Yhwh pledges in closing that "the latter [האחרון] splendor of this house shall be greater than the former [הראשׁון]" (v. 9). Here at the end of the second chapter, the contrast of "former" and "latter" alludes, as in Isaiah 65, to *apocalypse*. Haggai fitly anticipates the apocalyptic themes of world-destruction and re-creation that Zechariah develops more fully (see esp. Zech 14).

The scope and radicality of Haggai's apocalyptic contrast can be illuminated through comparison with another project of Judean temple rebuilding attested in several Egyptian Aramaic letters and memoranda.[20] Where Haggai emphasizes the difference and superiority of the latter temple relative to the former, the rhetoric of these documents upholds *continuity*: the latter temple will operate just as its predecessor did formerly. And where Haggai mediates divine promise, assuring a human audience of Yhwh's power and initiative, these documents exclusively target

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19.   Peshitta translates בכבודו הראשׁן in Haggai 2:3 with *qdmy'*, using the Aramaic adjective derived from √*qdm*, the same in v. 9; also compare Targum Haggai: ביקריה קדמאה in v. 3, same adjective in v. 9.

20.   For a comparison of the Yedoniah correspondence from Elephantine with biblical writing about temple destruction, especially Lamentations, see Gard Granerød, "Temple Destruction, Mourning, and Curse in Elephantine, with a View to Lamentations," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 132 (2020): 84–107. For another comparison of the temple rebuilding projects in Elephantine and in Jerusalem, see Reinhard G. Kratz, "The Second Temple of Jeb and of Jerusalem," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschitz and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 247–64; Kratz, "Judean Ambassadors and the Making of Jewish Identity: The Case of Hananiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 421–44.

human and mundane agency. As will be seen, Yнwн is not the *addressee* but the *guarantor*—of reward to human actors, should they comply with the letter's request.

In the late fifth century BCE, little more than a century after Haggai, another Judean community faced the challenge of trying to rebuild their destroyed temple. These Judeans were members of a military garrison; stationed at the very southernmost border of Egypt, they guarded the Nile River as it flowed northwards down from Nubia. Their outpost was dyadic: a town called Syene (modern Aswan) occupied the eastern bank of the river, and a fortress sat across from it on a river island called Elephantine. The Judeans lived in the island fortress (though some owned property across the river in the town), and they worshipped the god Yhw in their own temple there.[21] The date of their arrival is unknown: they claim that their ancestors had built the temple "during the days of the king(s) of Egypt," which is to say, in the Saite Period (664–525 BC), such that when the Persian Cambyses conquered Egypt in 525 BCE, "he found that temple built" (TAD A4.7/8, ll. 14/13). Together with the Arameans who populated the town of Syene, the Judeans appear to have acted as *cleruchs*: the men were not all or only soldiers earning a wage for mercenary service, but rather, standing reservists who leased land in usufruct.[22] Though they had served the native Egyptian Pharaohs, when the Persians overtook Egypt, they switched lienholders and loyalties.[23]

This political turnover meant that the Judeans' relationship to the local Egyptians changed as well. The Judeans and Arameans had been cleruchs subject to the Egyptian ruler, foreign, but playing for the "home team," as it were. Tensions may already have arisen: as Anne Fitzpatrick-McKinley reminds, "where land usufruct was granted to foreign soldiers, this land must have been confiscated from the local populations."[24] But once the Persians assumed control of Egypt, tensions dramatically escalated: the

21.   The divine name Yнwн, the Tetragrammaton, was a "Tritogram" at Elephantine, spelled either Yhw or, in ostraca, Yhh. See Bob Becking, "Die Gottheiten der Juden in Elephantine," in *Der eine Gott und die Götter: Polytheismus und Monotheismus im antiken Israel*, ed. Manfred Oeming and Konrad Schmid, Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments 82 (Zurich: TVZ, 2003), 203–26, here 209; also Martin Rose, *Jahwe: zum Streit um den alttestamentlichen Gottesnamen*, Theologische Studien 122 (Zürich: TVZ, 1978), 16–22.

22.   Karel van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews: Behind the Story of Elephantine*, Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 90–95; contra Gard Granerød, *Dimensions of Yahwism,* 74–75. See also Christopher Tuplin, "Persian Garrisons in Xenophon and Other Sources," in *Method and Theory: Proceedings of the London 1985 Achaemenid History Workshop*, ed. Amélie Kuhrt and Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg, Achaemenid History 3 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1988), 67–70; and Anne Fitzpatrick-McKinley, "Preserving the Cult of Yhwh in Judean Garrisons: Continuity from Pharaonic to Ptolemaic Times," in *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, ed. Joel Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert Tigchelaar, Supplements to Journal for the Study of Judaism 175 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 375–408, here 377–82.

23.   Fitpatrick-McKinley suggests that perhaps the reason the Egyptians had stationed expatriate cleruchs at Elephantine was the desertion of an original Egyptian unit ("Preserving the Cult," 399, also n106).

24.   Fitpatrick-McKinley, "Preserving the Cult," 402.

expatriate Judeans and Arameans had become deputies of the occupying force, ready not only to ward off incursion from Nubia but to put down native uprisings against the new Persian overlords.

And it seems that just such uprisings did take place. In the fourteenth year of Darius (the second of that name; so: 410 BCE), the satrap tasked with oversight of Egypt, a Persian prince named Arsames, departed from Egypt to return to the royal court in Susa. In Arsames's absence, there were "riots and disorders."[25] (When the cat's away, the mice will play!) Two Egyptian Aramaic letters written from the satrap back to his stand-in in Egypt mention revolts in the Nile Delta.[26] A draft letter from the Judean community at Elephantine also identifies an act of destruction undertaken by native Egyptians while the satrap was absent. The Egyptians of Elephantine did not directly attack the Persians. Instead they directed their aggression towards their proxies, the Judean cleruchs. And they did not assault the military men. Rather, they stopped up the Judeans' well, damaged their granary, and, perhaps as a coup de grâce, arranged for their temple to be razed to the ground.

The draft letter in question dates to 407 BCE, three years after the destruction of the Yhw temple on Elephantine. Its addressee is Bagohi, the governor of the Persian province of Yehud, and its sender is Yedoniah and his colleagues the priests (TAD A4.7/8, ll. 1/1).[27] Yedoniah narrates in detail the temple's destruction at the hands of the regional Persian commander—whom the local Egyptians had suborned. He also tells of the Judeans' grief and self-denial in the wake of losing their temple (ll. 20/19): "From [that time] until today, we have been wearing sackcloth and fasting, making our wives as widows, not anointing ourselves with oil or drinking wine." In addition to these appeals to Bagohi's sympathy, Yedoniah also gives a positive reason for Bagohi to act: the Judeans will make offerings in Bagohi's name and "pray for [him] continuously," so that he will "have honor before Yhw more than a man who offers him burnt-offerings and sacrifices worth a thousand talents of silver and gold" (ll. 27–28/26–27). What all these ploys seek to persuade Bagohi to do is this: to send a letter to his clients and friends in Egypt in support of rebuilding (ll. 24/23).

> Let a letter be sent from you to them about the Temple of Yhw the God to (re)
> build it in Elephantine the fortress *just as it was formerly* [קדמין] built.

25. G. R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 9–10; Edda Bresciani, "The Persian Occupation of Egypt," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. Ilya Gershovitch, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 2:502–28, here 512; more recently, see van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 136–42.

26. Driver, *Aramaic Documents,* 26 and 28, letters V.6 and VI.1 (see also 9n8). See van der Toorn's account, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 136–142.

27. In point of fact, it is *two* editions of the draft letter. For an early tabulation of the differences between the two drafts, see Marie-Joseph Lagrange, "Les nouveaux papyrus d'Eléphantine," *Revue Biblique* 17 (1908): 330–33; also Bezalel Porten, "The Revised Draft of the Letter of Jedaniah to Bagavahya (TAD A4. 8= Cowley 31)," in *Boundaries of the Ancient Near Eastern World: A Tribute to Cyrus H. Gordon*, ed. Meir Lubetski, Claire Gottlieb, Sharon Keller, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 273 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 230–42.

The petition from Yedoniah to Bagohi seems to have worked, because the archives from Elephantine also contained a short memorandum from Bagohi (TAD A4.9). It authorizes the recipient, presumably Yedoniah, to "say before Arsames" concerning the house of Yhw the God of Heaven (ll. 8–10):

> (re)build it on its site as it was *formerly* [לקדמן] and they shall offer the meal-offering and the incense upon that altar just as *formerly* [לקדמין] was done.

Gard Granerød has written in depth about the force of this descriptor קדמין in the Egyptian Aramaic materials from Elephantine. The repeated emphasis on restoring the temple to its "former" status reflects an ambient esteem for antiquity; Granerød cites a number of near-contemporary Persian documents, including some from Egypt (Udjahorresnet), which leverage comparable concepts of restoration and antiquarianism.[28] Elsewhere Granerød writes of the Aramaic root קדם that "the Elephantine Judean rhetoric spun around [this word] says something about the Judeans' concept of time." Like other ancient Near Eastern peoples,

> the default perspective of the Elephantine Judeans was oriented towards the past. The chronological past was at the same time that which was in front of the spectators…in order to find templates for their future, one looked to the past, to the things of old, which conceptually and terminologically was that which was in one's front.[29]

Granerød draws out the theological dimension of this orientation: "continuity must probably [sic] have been an ideal and a characteristic of the conception of YHW in Elephantine."[30]

The divergence of this theological outlook from that of Haggai is stark. The Judeans of Elephantine sought and, rhetorically at any rate, received a total restoration. If the crisis of temple destruction interrupted their worship for a time, they continued to face wholly towards that past regimen. The past was their template for future hope; it remained fundamentally recuperable. Over against that, Haggai prophesies that the past is, or will be, *lost*: the earth and heavens will be shaken, and hope lies on the far side of a cosmic caesura. Haggai layers the second temple, not onto the primordial past, but onto this novel, divinely-wrought future. Theologically, God is for him not at all the upholder of continuity but the instigator of upheaval and disruption. Yhwh does a new thing (compare, again, Isa 43:19). The difference is, in

28. Gard Granerød, "The Former and Future Temple of YHW in Elephantine: A Traditio-Historical Case Study of Ancient Near Eastern Antiquarianism," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 127 (2015): 63–77, here 73–76; also Granerød, *Dimensions of Yahwism*, 214–27.

29. Gard Granerød, "What Were the Elephantine Judaeans' Conceptions of YHW? Aspects of the Elephantine Judaean Temple Theology" (paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting, August 2017), 15. I thank Gard for sending me a copy.

30. Granerød, "Conceptions of YHW?" 15.

a word, *apocalypse*. Comparison with the Egyptian Aramaic documents underlines and emboldens this distinctive offer of the biblical texts.[31]

The first case study of the present article shows the value of Egyptian Aramaic for biblical studies in a lexical key: by tracking the terminological contrast between "former" and "latter" in certain biblical texts and then comparing it with the same contrast in some Egyptian Aramaic letters, it silhouettes a historical and theological particularity of Hebrew Scripture. In Haggai, Isaiah, and elsewhere, defeat and loss, including even of the most valued and divinely-given institutions like temple worship, have developed a far more radical and encompassing significance. Though grievous, the loss of temple worship to the Judeans of Elephantine was an event whose redress was quite imaginable, and in fact their draft letter does exactly that imagining.[32] By comparison, the loss in Haggai is total, and because of that, his vision of restoration also utterly sets aside and transcends the usual mundane and historically-traceable coordinates of divine blessing and favor. Certainly there had been no historical precedent for all nations streaming to Jerusalem to cede their wealth to Israel's God, just as little as there had been precedent for Yʜᴡʜ's own luminescence replacing the light of sun and moon (Isa 60:19).

Transmitting Royal Traditions

The biblical Psalter features a number of "royal psalms," so called because of their shared thematic focus on the king. Formally, these psalms are quite dissimilar from one another. Some are hymns, others are prayers. One is, apparently, a royal wedding song—a שִׁיר ידידת or "song of loves" (Ps 45:1). With a few exceptions that speak of "David" (Pss 18, 132), these biblical royal psalms do not name the king whom they celebrate or address. So, for example, Psalm 2 lacks a superscription connecting it to David, and yet it appears to contain an oracle addressing a single individual. In the face of a coalition of enemy kings, vv. 7b–8 record a voice speaking in first person and remembering the reassuring word that Yʜᴡʜ said "to me."

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31. Not all biblical texts exemplify this strong difference; Malachi 3:4, for example, prophesies a return to the past: the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be כימי עולם וכשנים קדמנית, "as in days of old and as in former years." The Peshitta here uses the same Aramaic (Syriac) word as in the Elephantine texts. Compare Targum Malachi: וכשנין דמלקדמין.

32. Even and perhaps also imagining the downfall of the earthly actors responsible for the temple's destruction! See James M. Lindenberger, "What Ever Happened to Vidranga? A Jewish Liturgy of Cursing from Elephantine," in *World of the Aramaeans III: Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion*, ed. P. M. Michèle Daviau, John William Wever, and Michael Weigl, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 326 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 134–57.

> Yнwн said to me, [33] "You are my son / today I have begotten you.
> Ask of me, and I will give nations as your inheritance / and as your possession,
> ends of the earth."

Unless one takes this oracular utterance as a literary artifice, it would first have targeted a real, individual king. But the king's identity is now excised. Psalm 110 is similar: its v. 1b reflects the voice of a third party, neither Yнwн nor the king, but subordinate to the latter since it calls the king "my lord." This voice reports a promissory word from the deity to the king concerning the king's enemies.

> The oracle of Yнwн [נאם יהוה] to my lord [לאדני]:
>
> "Sit at my right hand
>
> Until I make your enemies a stool for your feet."

The imperative (שֵׁב, "sit!") is masculine singular. It has one individual in view, as do the 2ms suffixes on "enemies" and "feet." But the king's name is now missing (unless one reads the superscription rather more strongly than many scholars feel is warranted). This same phenomenon of namelessness applies to Psalm 45. If it once celebrated the wedding of a specific king, the text has been loosened from this initial scenario to serve a wider readership.

The anonymity of these biblical royal psalms distinguishes them rather sharply from other royal texts of the Iron Age Levant, whose very point is to identify a particular, named king and to commemorate his legacy. A case in point is the Zakkur Inscription.[34] Written in Old Aramaic, this text presents the first-person voice of Zakkur, king of Hamath and Lu'ash. The first line on the stele indicates that the king set it up for the deity Iluwer, apparently in the town of Aphis. But the second line then goes on to narrate an episode of divine deliverance effected by a different god, Baalšamen, and in a different town, Hadrach. A coalition of enemy kings besieged king Zakkur in Hadrach. In lines 11–15 he recalls:

> I lifted up my hands to Baalšamen: and Baalšamen answered me, and Baalšamen spoke to me by means of seers and by means of messengers, and Baalšamen said to me, "Fear not [*'l tzḥl*], for I have made you king [*ky 'nh hmlktk*] and I will stand with you [*w'nh 'qm*] and I will save you [*w'nh ḥṣlk*] from all these kings who have laid siege to you."[35]

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33. The ancient versions (Old Greek, Vulgate, Peshitta) unanimously take *Yнwн* as the subject of אמר rather than as the complement of אל or חק.

34. On the discovery of Zakkur by Henri Pognon, see René Dussaud, "La stèle araméenne de Zakir au Musée du Louvre," *Syria* 3 (1922): 175–76; Stefania Mazzoni, "TELL AFIS: History and Excavations," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 76 (2013): 204–12.

35. The translation is mine; a complete translation can be found in Collin Cornell, *Divine Aggression in Psalms and Inscriptions: Vengeful Gods and Loyal Kings*, Society for Old Testament Study Monographs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 57–67.)

The king's purpose in dedicating this stele and remembering this past event is to demonstrate his piety to the god(s)—and so to ensure continued divine favor towards him, especially to guard this physical record of his reign from vandalism. To be sure, an interesting transference has occurred: an oracle addressed to a king in one, specific circumstance has been judged as having a more lasting application, even in a different place, and perhaps to a different god. But the principal point of continuity between the first use of the oracle and its subsequent reuse is exactly the king's name. Zakkur is the link between the siege in Hadrach and the monument in Aphis. His identity is integral to the inscription's rhetorical purpose.

The namelessness of most biblical royal psalms raises intriguing questions about their transmission. How did oracles that once mediated a divine message to an individual royal person become community texts as we find them in the biblical canon? In a 2004 festschrift chapter, Scott Starbuck proposed a three-stage movement from the first use to the last: "a strategic hermeneutical shift…from [the royal psalms'] (postulated) functions in specific historical royal courts of Israel to their theologically nuance-rich claims in the Hebrew Psalter." In stage 1, the psalm was composed "for a court-sponsored event. At this stage the Royal Psalm was historically and verbally anchored to a specific king."[36] In stage 2, "editorial processes…excised specific references to monarchical protagonists within the Royal Psalms." Although the names of individual kings dropped out, "monarchic imagery and metaphor within the Royal Psalms were preserved in order to be reappropriated by the general populace for worship and study."[37] Stage 3 refers to the programmatic placement of royal psalms within the Hebrew Psalter.

Starbuck's account is helpful—but still shows some gaps. The process by which compositions crafted for specific court events were preserved for later occasions remains mysterious, as does the group who would have taken responsibility, early on, for their transmission and transformation. Starbuck admits that "there are no 'fingerprints' to be found among the Royal Psalms that point definitively to Stage 2 redaction."[38] But it may be that one Egyptian Aramaic document provides a "missing link" of sorts: a snapshot, as of a bird in flight, of a royal tradition in transformation; an exemplar of an intermediate stage between a one-time oracle addressed to a single, named king and a community text like the biblical psalms. That document is Papyrus Amherst 63.

This twelve-foot long papyrus, allegedly found in a jar in Thebes, was purchased in Egypt during the 1890s by Lord Amherst of Hackney.[39] Until 1947, the text

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36.   Scott R. A. Starbuck, "Theological Anthropology at a Fulcrum: Isaiah 55:1–5, Psalm 89, and Second Stage *Traditio* in the Royal Psalms," in *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J. J. M. Roberts*, ed. Bernard F. Batto and Kathryn L. Roberts (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 247–65, here 254.

37.   Starbuck, "Theological Anthropology," 254.

38.   Starbuck, "Theological Anthropology," 255.

39.   P. E. Newberry, *The Amherst Papyri, being an account of the Egyptian Papyri in the*

languished in storage in the British Museum. In addition to its physical inaccessibility to scholars, the text itself resisted access: though clearly written in Demotic (Egyptian) script, its content appeared to be gibberish. In the early 1940s, two Egyptologists at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago were looking at photographs of the papyrus that had been taken in 1901. They consulted their colleague, the Semitist Raymond Bowman, who first identified the papyrus's language as Aramaic.[40] Because of the difficulties posed by this anomalous orthographic situation, further sections of the papyrus were not edited or translated until the 1980s. Two teams working independently discovered that column xii of the papyrus contained a version of the royal biblical Psalm 20.[41] This finding generated massive interest in the text among biblical scholars.

As intriguing as column xii is, however, another, less-explored column is more useful to the present article's section on the transmission of royal psalms. This is column vi. The latter begins with a protestation of innocence addressed to "Mar," the "god of Rash": "no evil is in my hands…no slander in my mouth" (l. 3; repeated again in l. 9).[42] It continues with a complaint about enemy conspirators, who say, "let us eat his flesh and become fat; let us drink his blood and become sated" (l. 6).[43] After these appeals from the speaker to the god Mar, the god answers. The translator Richard Steiner labels what follows "The Heilsorakel: a reassuring reply."[44]

Collection of the Right Hon. Lord Amherst of Hackney F.S.A., at Didlington Hall, Norfolk (London, 1899), 55; also van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 63–64; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 448 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2018), 3–5.

40.   The Egyptologists were George R. Hughes and Charles F. Nims. Bowman published an article translating a small section in 1944: "An Aramaic Religious Text in Demotic Script," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3 (1944): 219–31.

41.   The teams were: Sven P. Vleeming and Jan W. Wesselius in the Netherlands and Richard C. Steiner and Charles F. Nims in the United States. See Vleeming and Wesselius, "An Aramaic Hymn from the Fourth Century B.C.," *Bibliotheca Orientalia* 39 (1982): 501–9; Vleeming and Wesselius, "Betel the Saviour," *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Gezelschap* (*Genootschap*) *Ex oriente lux* 28 (1983–1984): 110–40; Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Juda Palache Instituut, 1985). For Nims and Steiner, see their "A Paganized Version of Ps 20:2–6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," *Journal of the Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 261–74. See also Mathias Delcor, "Remarques sur la datation du Ps 20 comparée à celle du psaume araméen apparenté dans le papyrus Amherst 63," in *Mesopotamica, Ugaritica, Biblica: Festschrift für Kurt Bergerhof zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres am 7. Mai 1992,* ed. Manfred Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 323 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1993), 25–43.

42.   This translation is from Richard C. Steiner, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script: Text, Translation, and Notes," https://www.academia.edu/31662776/The_Aramaic_Text_in_Demotic_Script_Text_Translation_and_Notes, 19; also Steiner, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," in *Context of Scripture,* vol. 1, *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World* : 309–27, here 313. I will refer to the latter as *COS* to avoid confusion with the aforementioned, nearly-identical title.

43.   Steiner, "Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 20; Steiner, *COS*, 1:313.

44.   Steiner, "Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 21; compare van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 158; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 121. This is a substantial revision from the earlier interpretation given by Richard C. Steiner and Charles F. Nims, in which there is no oracle of reassurance and instead the god Mar instructs that "Food for me should be burned in fire." Steiner

> Mar speaks up and says to me:
> Be strong, my servant, fear not ['l tdḥl]
>
> I will save you [w'nh 'ṣyl 'tk]; if you will bow down to Marah;
> to Mar, from your shrine and Rash.
>
> I shall destroy your enemy in your days,
> and during years, your foe will be smitten.
>
> I shall bring an end to your adversaries in front of you;
> You will place your foot on their necks.
>
> I shall support your right hand;
> I shall crown you with peace.[45]
> [...] Your house

The papyrus does not overtly indicate whose voice issues the initial complaint, or who the personage is that receives this divine reassurance.[46] But the few scholars who have commented on this passage are united in the view that it is a king, probably the king of Rash, the same place-name associated with the god Mar.[47] The first line of column vi in Steiner's edition—though not in van der Toorn's, nor in Steiner's earlier translation for *COS*—reads out the command: "proclaim [ṭybwhy] the king's good deeds among your people." But even apart from this introductory line, numerous features of the oracle from Mar suggest a kingly recipient. Grammatically, the verbs are all 2ms; the god's words have an individual target. There is also the noun "your house" (bytk) at the end of the oracle in l. 16; its context is disrupted, but the word betokens a royal household, a dynasty. Other details are not unique to royal texts, but taken together, they support a royal addressee: the destruction of enemies, the foot on their neck, the reference to the right hand (ymynk, l. 16; compare with Ps 110:5), the peace that ensues from the god's intervention. All these are stock pieces from royal inscriptions.[48]

and Nims, "You Can't Offer Your Sacrifice and Eat it Too: A Polemical Poem from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43 (1984): 89–114; translation of l.12 at 95–96, outline of the column with headings at 112.

45.   Steiner, "Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 21; Van der Toorn reads, though questioningly: "[You shall rule (?)] your house in peace." van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 158; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 121).

46.   This is to follow Steiner's judgment, who reads an injunction "be strong," whereas van der Toorn reconstructs a personal name, "Rakib-Bol!!" (*Papyrus Amherst 63*, 123). Also compare Vleeming and Wesselius, "Betel the Saviour," 116–117: "People of Tabil!"

47.   Jan Wesselius's chapter, "Gebete aus dem demotisch-aramäischen Papyrus Amherst 63," in *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments* 2.6: 930–35, was regrettably unavailable to me at the time of writing.

48.   Douglas J. Green, *"I Undertook Great Works": The Ideology of Domestic Achievements in West Semitic Royal Inscriptions*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2.41 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Matthew J. Suriano, "The Apology of Hazael: A Literary and Historical Analysis of the Tel Dan Inscription," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 66 (2007): 163–76; Thomas L. Thompson, "A Testimony of the Good King: Reading the Mesha Stele," in *Ahab Agonistes: The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 421/European Seminar in Historical Studies 6 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 236–92. See also the first chapter of

As Karel van der Toorn observes, "both the structure of [column vi] and the content of the oracle are strongly reminiscent of the Zakkur inscription."[49] Indeed the same negative prohibition—"fear not!"—using the same verb (√*dḥl*/*zḥl*), in an identical conjugation, centers both oracles. Different verbs (√*ḥṣl* versus √*ʾṣyl*) communicating the action of divine saving then follow in both messages. But the most significant difference between the Zakkur inscription and column vi of the papyrus consists in the namelessness of the king.

For pap Amh 63, Starbuck's stage 2 has taken place: the oracle that once braced a real king has been scrubbed of his name; a group or community of aftercomers has reappropriated the Heilsorakel, because they saw themselves as somehow participating in the god's word to the king. As van der Toorn writes, the papyrus has turned the past oracle "into a promise for the future. What the god said in the past is still valid."[50] But who were these tradents who clung to Mar's promise made to their king?

The circumstances of pap Amh 63's production and the identity of the community that used it remain disputed. But clues internal to the text itself help to establish their profile. Column v presents a lament: after addressing the god Mar at the start—"you, Mar"—it describes in some detail the destruction of a city, presumably Rash. Line 3 of the composition evokes the suffering of the whole community: "the entire assembly [*kl ʿdt*]"—perhaps, if van der Toorn is correct, "of your consecrated ones," which is to say, temple personnel.[51] The text proceeds to enumerate the afflictions of cooks and bakers, butchers and priests, musicians and butlers, all offices belonging to the royal household or, maybe moreso, to the royal temple. Some among these staff people would have been involved in any original, Stage 1 event of reciting an oracle from the god to the king. And, as dependents of the royal house, they might also then have seen themselves as beneficiaries, at second hand, of the god's patronage of the king.

Or again: column xvi 2 refers to a "troop" (*gês*, also compare xxi 17), "people of a band of Samarians," who approached "my lord the king." After the spokesman of this troop indicates their places of origin—Samaria, Judea, and Jerusalem—the king invites them inside the city and offers them provisions. The king here could be either the king of Egypt or of Rash.[52] On the latter interpretation, some contributors to the

Cornell, *Divine Aggression in Psalms and Inscriptions*.

49.   van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 67; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 123. Vleeming and Wesselius first drew this comparison: "Betel the Saviour," 131.

50.   van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 67.

51.   van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 53; commentary on 1.16. Van der Toorn's reading, *nsyky*, "anointed ones," might have an intriguing connection to an abiding crux in Psalm 2: the interpretation of נסכתי in v. 6, alternately translated "I set," (NRSV), "I anointed" (Symmachus), "I have woven" (Aquila, Quinta), "I poured out" (Jeffrey H. Tigay, "Divine Creation in Psalms 2:6," *Eretz Israel* 27 [2003]: 246–51; also and quite differently, Gard Granerød, "A Forgotten Reference to Divine Procreation? Psalm 2:6 in Light of Egyptian Royal Ideology," *Vetus Testamentum* 60 [2010]: 323–36, here 336).

52.   Richard C. Steiner's brief note allows both possibilities: the "second historical dialogue

papyrus's hymns would have been wards and protégés of the king. These refugees, too, as dependents of the king, would have stood to benefit from divine promises made to him. Even after the downfall of the king, such persons could well have held onto those oracles, since they had formerly received blessing through them. Indeed the promise of the god to the king proved more lasting than the king's own identity: the former is what made it into both pap Amh 63 and the royal biblical psalms, even when the king's name had ceased to be remembered.

The comparison that this second case study stages does not explain everything. But it does suggest that pap Amh 63 provides data for understanding the transmission of royal oracles that biblical psalms do not. The psalms are entirely opaque about the persons responsible for preserving divine oracles made to a specific king. Because this information would inhibit their usage as a community prayer text, it has been removed. Pap Amh 63, on the other hand, though it does not directly state the identity of its tradents, does feature several passages that reflect special interest in officials and clients of the royal household. A reasonable inference is that these persons, whose fate was tied so closely with the king's, would have heard divine promises made to the king as affecting, and even including, them also. On account of their indirect participation in the king's own relationship to the patron god, they would have "overheard" and passed on royal oracles. That a similar process occurred with the royal biblical psalms is an attractive, even a likely, scenario. If so, it would contain the seed of the later "collectivization" of the royal persona that the biblical Psalter effects: of divine promises undergoing an expansion of their addressee to include not just the king, and not just his literal retinue, but a whole people, considered as his (virtual) subjects.

The second case study demonstrates the value of Egyptian Aramaic to biblical studies in a tradition-historical mode. A similar genre appears in biblical texts and their nonbiblical, Egyptian Aramaic counterpart: oracles made from a patron god to an anonymous client king. The anonymity of both stands out when set against the background of emphatically naméd royal memorial inscriptions of the ancient Levant. By then comparing the anonymous and communalized royal psalms with an anonymous royal column of pap Amh 63, the study identified one characteristic of the papyrus that the biblical materials lack: an interest in the royal entourage, who seem like prime candidates to have transmitted oracles spoken originally to their king.

[in xvi 1–6] purports to be a conversation between the (Egyptian or Rashan) king and the young spokesman of a newly arrived troop … of Samaritans" ("The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script: The Liturgy of a New Year's Festival Imported from Bethel to Syene by Exiles from Rash," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111 [1991]: 362–63, here 63). Van der Toorn argues that an Egyptian location of the city "is unlikely. Elsewhere in the papyrus, there is not a single reference to an Egyptian context" *(Papyrus Amherst 63*, 205). Time will tell if his observation holds up. Tawny Holm is preparing an edition in *Aramaic Literary Texts*, Society of Biblical Literature Writings of the Ancient World (Atlanta: SBL, forthcoming).

Conclusions

Aramaic represents but a sliver within the two-testament Christian Bible, but the present article began by pointing out that biblical Aramaic is a subset within a larger species of Aramaic whose natural habitat was the Achaemenid or Persian Period. As it happens, the majority of Aramaic documents that have survived from this era originated in Egypt, meaning that Egyptian Aramaic is, by reason of propinquity, a fitting comparand with biblical passages written in Aramaic—and not only with those but also with other biblical text-units to which Egyptian Aramaic documents bear a close resemblance. The article singled out two of these: first, biblical passages that appeal to a strong difference between "former" and "latter" in connection with the temple of YHWH, and second, biblical psalms in which YHWH makes promises to a nameless king. The two comparisons that it pursued above help to reveal distinctive theological features of biblical literature: in the first case, that some portions of the Bible develop a vision, not of divine restoration but of divine destruction and re-creation that is truly apocalyptic in scale; and in the second, that biblical psalms "corporatize" the king, leaving behind no trace of the actual, historical community that would have seen themselves as "extended members" of the king's own person and as inheritors of the divine promises given to him. Notwithstanding that (self-)erasure, pap Amh 63 seems to supply a "missing link" for understanding the transmission of royal biblical psalms. In these ways among others, the study of Egyptian Aramaic demonstrates its value to biblical studies.

"All Manner of Music:" The Author of Daniel 3 as Master Storyteller

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Abstract: Amidst the exciting narratives of the book of Daniel, chapter 3 contains extra elements of drama, displaying the best in historic narratives. The author's techniques are some of the most basic among a storyteller's methods: a well-structured plot, good form, poetic expression, and memorable characters. His use of these simple (though not necessarily easy) methods to craft the narrative of this event distinguishes him as a great teacher and a master of literary art. By creating a compelling account from the perspective of a chronicler, the author achieved a two-fold end: 1) to preserve the history of those Jewish leaders that remained faithful to their God during the Babylonian captivity and 2) to reveal to Jew and Gentile alike the nature of God and his care for his faithful servants.[1]

Keywords: Daniel, three Hebrew children, fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar, storytelling

Introduction

Daniel 3 is outstanding in the Aramaic portion of the Bible for its storytelling technique.[2] Amidst the exciting narratives of the book of Daniel, chapter 3 contains extra elements of drama, displaying the best in historic narratives. By creating a compelling account from the perspective of a chronicler, the author achieved a two-fold end: 1) to preserve the history of those Jewish leaders that remained faithful to their God during the Babylonian captivity and 2) to reveal to Jew and Gentile alike the nature of God and his care for his faithful servants.[3]

The author of Daniel 3 structured his history in order to focus the reader's attention on the elements of an event that subtly communicate the desired message without mundane or distracting additions. The author's techniques are some of the most basic among a storyteller's methods: a well-structured plot, good form,

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1. Martin Luther, "Preface to Daniel," in *Interpretation of Scripture*, ed. Euan K. Cameron (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 386; also J. N. Schofield, *Law, Prophets, and Writings: The Religion of the Books of the Old Testament* (London: SPCK, 1969), 341–42.

2. David M. Gunn and Danna Nolan Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 174.

3. Luther, "Preface to Daniel," 386; also Schofield, *Law, Prophets, and Writings*, 341–42.

poetic expression, and memorable characters. His use of these simple (though not necessarily easy) methods to craft the narrative of this event distinguishes him as a great teacher and a master of literary art.

Plot

Setting

As part of a larger work, the account in Daniel 3 relies on the earlier sections of the book to provide much of the background history.[4] However the introduction of this incident offers enough setting for the story to stand alone.

The story begins with the erection of a giant golden image. The construction of this statue immediately follows Nebuchadnezzar's dream in which he was the head of gold (Daniel 2). The exact date of the construction of the image is not provided in the Aramaic text. Whether or not this event immediately followed that of the preceding chapter chronologically, its inclusion at this juncture offers hints as to the author's interpretation or opinion of the origin of Nebuchadnezzar's action.[5] With this setting the author neatly combines both introducing the story and setting it in motion.

Structure

Chronological

Daniel 3 exhibits excellent plot structure. A long, dramatic beginning is followed by a brief crisis and terminates with a swift conclusion. The author spends approximately one-third of the narrative in setting the stage for the main event he intends to relate. As stated above, the exposition overlaps with the setting from verse 1 continuing through verse 7. The erection of the golden image and the royal summons to all the government officials is described in verses 1-2. The narrator then relates the proceedings of the dedication ceremony including the participants' compliance with the monarch's mandate (vv. 3-7). The announcement of the possible punishment foreshadows the coming contest between the proud king and God's faithful worshippers.

The official accusation of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego by some of the Chaldeans (vv. 8-12) is the inciting moment. No motive is stated for this accusation. While the preceding chapters offer possible reasons, the cause of the accusation is not as important here as its results. The rising action creates increasing suspense and provides the greatest amount of foreshadowing (vv. 13-23). The enraged Nebuchadnezzar summons Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who are in effect arrested and brought to the king. Their appearance in court leads to an

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4. Gerald Kennedy, "Daniel," in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 6, *Lamentations . . . Malachi,* ed. George A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 392.

5. Kennedy, "Daniel," 395.

intense exchange between the king and the three Hebrew children, resulting in a royal order for the cruelest performance possible of the threatened execution by fire. The carrying out of this order might appear to herald the *dénouement*, but the true crisis suddenly emerges in verses 24-25. Nebuchadnezzar perceives four men walking about in the furnace unaffected by the fire. In one of the most mysterious statements of the Old Testament, the king declares that "the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."[6] The king's recall of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego from the furnace and the officials' observation of the perfect preservation of those three men comprises the falling action (vv. 26-27). Nebuchadnezzar proceeds to praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego and issues a royal decree forbidding anyone to "speak anything amiss" against this God. Following this final moment of suspense, Nebuchadnezzar's promotion of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego together with the king's psalm to the high God form the real *dénouement*.

Chiastic

With superb artistry the author structured the thought both chronologically and symmetrically (chiastically) at the same time.

King's action – promotes himself

    Royal proclamation – dedication of the golden image

        Gathering of the government officials – to view the image and hear the king's word ordering worship of the image

            The king summons Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego on the basis of the accusation

                The king defies God

                    Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego resist the king

                        The king orders the furnace overheated

                            Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are bound complete with their clothes

                        The overheated furnace kills the soldiers

                    Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego fall alive into the furnace

                The king sees the Son of God in action

            The king calls Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego out of the furnace

        Gathering of the government officials – to view the complete miracle and hear the king's word praising God and his servants[7]

    Royal proclamation – no blasphemy against this God

The king's action – promotes Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego and their God[8]

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6. All translations are by the author.

7. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 185.

8. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 187.

Narrative elements

Repetition

As the chiastic structure evidences, Daniel 3 contains substantial repetition. In fact, repetition is the key storytelling technique employed in this narrative. This technique intensifies suspense, while maintaining story continuity and overall poetic rhythm.[9] Lists are the most repeated elements of the story, providing detail and serving as a mnemonic device. Three lists in particular are repeated: the types of government officials summoned to the dedication ceremony (two times); the musical instruments that signaled and accompanied the worship (four times); and the names of the three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (eleven times).

The repeated list of government officials provides background and creates suspense at the site of the dedication ceremony. Together with the herald's proclamation of the king's decree, the list format underscores that the presence of these officials at the ceremony was not voluntary or merely the result of great public curiosity. The dedication was an occasion of state to be dignified by the presence of the amassed forces of the aristocracy and bureaucracy. The second complete relation of this list (v. 3) directly following the first enumeration (v. 2) indicates the complete obedience that Nebuchadnezzar was accustomed to receiving.[10] When the assembled officials heard the herald's proclamation followed by the music, they "all … fell down and worshipped the golden image." "And all the officials of the provinces probably covers all the officials of lesser rank. This detail so reminiscent of legal phraseology is characteristic of royal inscriptions from Sumerian to Seleucid days . . . Perhaps in these lists the writer is making sly mockery of this, though a love of lists seems to be characteristic of his own style."[11] The use of "all" to mean "every sort," or "most, the vast majority" is well attested in the Old Testament. In this account its use makes the next scene more startling due to the unexpected turn of events. In verse 27 after the three Hebrew children have come out of the furnace, only four categories of political leaders are listed, whereas seven (or eight) had been counted before. At least three of the former positions that are not referenced here ("captains, the judges, the treasurers") are responsible for more technical law enforcement rather than policy-making, which may have made them less interested in citing religious non-conformity before the king. On the other hand, the abbreviated list may incorporate all the types of government officials mentioned now in summary fashion. The exact ranking and positions are no longer important to the message.

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9.   Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 148.

10.   Hector I. Avalos, "The Comedic Function of the Enumerations of Officials and Instruments in Daniel 3," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (October, 1991): 585, accessed: 03-12-2019, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43718347.

11.   Kennedy, "Daniel," 396.

That is, this latter partial list suggests that the significance of the vast number of government positions listed before was the tremendous pressure their presence and obedience placed on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to compromise. Against the extensive preparation and amassed audience, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego's action stands out in sharp relief. Their courage would not have been as vividly highlighted otherwise.

> . . . [T]he lengthy lists of officials and musical instruments are neither peripheral nor minor components. Instead, Daniel 3 demonstrates the complex and artistic manner in which lengthy and repeated enumerations could be integrated in a socioreligious critique of pagan social institutions such as the Babylonian government bureaucracy.[12]

Another possibility is that the shorter list may indicate solely the accusers from verse 8, underscoring the complete defeat of their scheme.

The implications of the musical instrument lists will be examined under the poetic elements of the narrative. These lists also provide vivid detail. The names of the three Hebrew children, always given in the same order, likewise form a repeated list in contrast with the lists of the officers and the instruments. All of these lists and their dramatic usage are outstanding in the Old Testament.[13] Aside from genealogies, the Old Testament rarely employs lists without annotation; typically lists of items are interspersed with narrative or explanatory sections of text.

However, a few repeated elements of this story are not in a list. "In vs. 5 the heralds proclaim the command; in vs. 10 the accusers repeat it word for word, and in vs. 15 the king again repeats it word for word. To this threefold repetition with rising emphasis there are numerous literary parallels."[14] The phrase "that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up" (with its variations based on the speaker) occurs seven times. This phrase in particular lends poetic rhythm and continuity to the account. In addition the expression subtly points to the true source of the trouble in this situation: Nebuchadnezzar and his swelling pride.

> Rather than explaining what the image represents, the narrator spends time repeatedly listing officials and musical instruments. The pomp of the event is given more emphasis than the meaning of the event. And, lest we should forget for even a second, the narrator constantly reminds us that the image is something that 'Nebuchadnezzar the king has erected', thus mocking the king's attempt to be regarded and remembered as a head of gold. Royal insecurity is exposed to all who have eyes to see.[15]

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12. Avalos, "Comedic Function," 587.
13. Avalos, "Comedic Function," 588.
14. Kennedy, "Daniel," 399–400.
15. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 177.

Detail

At first reading the details given in this story may appear extravagant: the size of the golden image, the fury of the king, the heat of the furnace, the strength of the soldiers. Nevertheless, a multitude of eye-witnesses were present (a fact emphasized in verse 27). The author's choice of details emphasizes the staggering circumstances that predominate the narrative. The omission of lesser details, drawing the picture with larger, bolder strokes, not only speeds the account along but also renders the story more vivid on the memory. In addition, historic evidence substantiates some of these detailed observations. For example, the staggering size of the image is in keeping with Nebuchadnezzar's many other monumental building projects.[16] Also the records of the temperaments of the Oriental despots from this period agree perfectly with the description of Nebuchadnezzar and his actions.

However the author is not presenting a scientific report or a technical history.[17] He is not merely relating an inspiring incident or a magnificent story. He is in part doing all of the above, but above all he is teaching a lesson. Ironically the author's genius is revealed in his subtle and inseparable didacticism. It is subtle in that the excitement of the narrative carries the reader from point to point without pause. The didacticism is inseparable from the story in that, wherever the adventure is repeated or remembered, the truth it teaches will be clearly represented to the mind of the receiver.

Not only does the author give detailed descriptions of people and material matters, he also gives complete descriptions of the various stages of the narrative. The author was not content with stating that the king ordered the three men to be brought before him. The story element demands that the actual action fulfilling the command be stated. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego did not (probably could not) flee.

> The use in v 13 of the haphel infin. (להיתיה = "to bring") and the haphel pass. pf. 3d masc. pl. (היתיו = "they were brought") of the verb אתה ("to come") to describe the summoning of the three young men by Nebuchadnezzar emphasizes the involuntary nature of the Jews' actions. Unlike the obsequious officials of vv 2 and 3, and despite their own high rank, the three young Jews are not overly impressed by human authority.[18]

Yet they had to appear before the king. This detail further suggests the steady march of the circumstances: a progression soon clarified as being the providential work of God. As part of communicating this theme, the narrator carefully specifies the circumstances of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego's entering the furnace,

16. Raymond J. Hammer, *The Book of Daniel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 39.

17. E. C. Lucas, "Book of Daniel," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets*, ed. Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville (Downers Grove, Il.: IVP Academic, 2012), 111.

18. Avalos, "Comedic Function," 586.

making their release more outstanding. The author is never forceful with his details. He painstakingly fills them in, not only to complete the picture but also to allow the reader to discover the depth of the truth presented as the account progresses. Throughout the narrative the details shape the story, create a mental picture, and lead the reader on to the next scene without ever encumbering the action. The author is not verbose; neither does he succumb to terseness for the sake of brevity. The account is compact yet unhurried. The details are necessary for the reader's understanding of the history. The author's use of them is evidence of his rhetorical skill. This concise dignity is part of the poetic elements of the storyteller's art. Other poetic elements also appear, notably, symbolism, sound, and special syntax.

Poetic elements

Symbolism and irony

Few of the imaginative comparisons are directly stated throughout the passage; usually the comparisons are inferred. One direct imaginative comparison employed in describing the dedication ceremony is metonymy. As a notable or characteristic part of a group of people, the term "languages" is used to represent the whole group.[19] However the author primarily creates comparisons through the use of symbols and irony. The first of these symbols occurs in the first verse of the chapter. The measurements of the golden image have symbolic significance: six is the number of man (Rev 13.18). Here the number represents the complete lack of deity on the part of both the image and the king. The golden image is obviously a manifestation of the king's pride, regardless of whether it was actually a statue of himself.

The measurements of the image are not the only numeric symbolism in this account.[20] Seven types of officials are listed (eight if "all the rulers of the provinces" are considered as comprising a separate category). Both the number seven and the number eight are used in the Bible to represent fullness or completeness. The whole of Babylon's political power structure and all the glory of its nobility were present at this occasion.[21] In a similar manner the detailed listing of the three men's garments, which remain on them when they are bound, serves three functions: 1) to illustrate the king's boundless rage and hatred, 2) to foreshadow their amazing deliverance, and 3) to suggest that God's protection covered them throughout all they underwent.

Foreshadowing, which occurs throughout the chapter (as already mentioned), offers the greatest amount of poetic irony. The chiastic structure relies heavily on

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19. Hammar, *Book of Daniel*, 40.

20. Steven Barabas, "Numbers," in *Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1967), 590.

21. Hammar, *Book of Daniel*, 40.

foreshadowing and unexpected opposites.[22] For example, the account begins with King Nebuchadnezzar promoting himself and his religion. It ends with Nebuchadnezzar promoting Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego and their God. At the beginning of the story, the herald gives the king's decree regarding worshipping to the accompanying music, which decree is repeated two other times during the rising action. At the end, the king is singing praise to the God of Heaven. Notwithstanding, the greatest single instance of irony is that the extra hot furnace slays the mightiest men in the army but not the three Hebrew children or even the king. This contrast between natural and supernatural effects of the fire greatly aids in communicating the intended message.

Sound and syntax

In addition to symbolism and irony, the author uses an unusually large vocabulary selection for biblical Aramaic. Although most of the rare terms are in the repeated lists of officials and instruments, others are not. Verses 8 and 12 are the first chronological occurrence of the Aramaic term "Jews" (יהודיא) from the time of the exile. Apparently originating as a foreign or Gentile designation among the Arameans (2 Kgs 16.6), this nomenclature came to be standard among the Hebrews themselves.[23]

Another example of unusual syntax is the simultaneous use of the related terms "burning fiery furnace." This duplication of related terms is even less common in Aramaic than in Hebrew. Each time the Chaldeans refer to the furnace they use all three words (אתון נורא יקדתא), apparently an idiomatic expression. The narrator used the complete phrase as well as the term "furnace" (אתון) by itself, pointing to the strong possibility that the narrator was not a Chaldean or native speaker of Aramaic. Hebrew does not require these terms to be combined. That the expression "burning fiery furnace" is one of the phrases repeated throughout the account indicates its importance to the story, as noted above. The "burning fiery furnace" reflects the inner life of the king almost as much as his words and actions do. The author uses physical descriptions of Nebuchadnezzar to poetically connect the king's rage with the symbolic nature of the deadly torture he has chosen. Thus the conclusion points beyond the isolated occurrence of the miracle to a universal truth: God is more powerful than human anger and pride can ever be.

Two other instances of symbolic syntax both revolve around the king's response to the three Hebrews' courtroom reply. In describing the physical effects of rage on the king's face, the narrator states that Nebuchadnezzar's countenance or ''image'' was changed toward the three Hebrew children. This term "image" (צלם) is the same as is employed for the golden statue.[24] This verbal connection is a type of serious pun, underscoring the real power and powerlessness of the statue. Later, when the

22. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 183–84.

23. See Ezra 5:1; Neh 1:2; Est 4:13–14; Jer 32:12; Matt 28:15.

24. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 182.

three Hebrews emerge from the furnace, no change had occurred in their clothing while they had been in the fire. The word "changed" is another form of the verb "used of the monarch's face being distorted by rage."[25] This repetition emphasizes whose character is impacted by the course of events. In attempting to force his will on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, King Nebuchadnezzar places himself under great pressure. Refusing to submit to God as supreme sovereign, Nebuchadnezzar succumbs to his own weakness in failing to control himself. The ironic employment of these symbolic terms conveys the author's message with potent immediacy.

Repetition, theme, irony, unusual syntax, and exceptional use of sound all come together in the relation of music and musical instruments. These are little heard-of instruments. In fact the word for trumpet (קרנא) is only in the book of Daniel; while flute (משרוקיתא), harp (קיתרוס), lyre (סבכא), psaltery (פסנתרין), and bagpipes (סומפניה)[26] are the only occurrences in the Bible. In the first half of the narrative, all the musical instruments are inseparably linked to the idolatrous worship (vv. 5, 7, and 15). Within the context of the entire Old Testament, this connection is quite ironic since the Babylonians referred to the Jewish sacred music as exceptional (Ps 137.1-3). This connection of music and worship provides the backdrop for two of Nebuchadnezzar's sacred poems in praise of the high God of Heaven. These poems form the crowning point of the account both narratively and literarily. As king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar was a highly educated man; but more than that he was a gifted poet. A comparison of this royal writing with the Aramaic royal decrees in the book of Ezra and the other official decrees in the book of Daniel demonstrates that Nebuchadnezzar was writing in a different genre in these sections than the usual decrees. His decree in verse 29, enclosed between the two poetic sections, is given in typical (perhaps legally technical) language until the last phrase where the king returns to the poetic theme and form of his psalm. The two short psalms of King Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 28 and 32-33 [English 4.2-3]) contain alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme, and heavy rhythm. The most fascinating device Nebuchadnezzar uses is word plays on the Chaldean names of the three Hebrews: שדרך "Shadrach" and שלח "sent"; מישך "Meshach" and מלאכה "his angel"; עבד נגו "Abed-nego" and עבדוהי "his servants". Verses 31-33 (English 4.1-3) belong poetically with 3.28-30 and thematically with chapter 4, forming a seamless transition between the two accounts.[27]

25. Kennedy, "Daniel," 404.

26. Or, "*singing.* Chald. *symphony*"—AV alternate translation in *The Westminster Reference Bible* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, n.d.).

27. Marvin A. Sweeney, *Tanak: A Theological and Critical Introduction to the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 452.

Character Development

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego together form the protagonist, and their unchanging character creates the backbone of the story.[28] Verse 12 gives the official titles or positions of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, which explains why they were present at the dedication ceremony. They had been specifically summoned. The author uses direct speech as the main means of developing his characters and outlining the conflict between them. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego's only recorded words in this account are their official response to the accusation when they are haled before the king for refusing to worship the image.[29] The noble courage of the three Hebrew children is skillfully represented through their bold reply that matches the king's audacious threat, as noted before. The author pictures for the reader the calm of the three Hebrews in the presence of a king overflowing with fury. "The quiet determination of their reply is very striking and beautiful."[30] Respectful but direct, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego omit the standard courtly address, "O king, live forever" (v. 9). The structure of the courtroom exchange of challenges is noteworthy. The Hebrews' answer (vv. 16-17) is the exact inverse of order from the king's outburst. He began with the image and music, proceeded to the furnace, and concluded with a direct challenge against their (or any) God. They begin by answering the challenge against their God, relate that answer to the furnace and conclude by refusing to worship the image. This miniature chiasm forms the crux of the story although the crisis continues to build.

While the three Hebrew children are the obvious heroes of the story, the antagonist King Nebuchadnezzar is the most dynamic character, undergoing a life-changing experience in the crisis of the story.[31] Just as God had warned the Jews about the Chaldeans' hasty dispositions (Hab. 1.6), Nebuchadnezzar's emotions predominate his decisions.

Nebuchadnezzar's vehement address to the three culprits is very characteristic and instructive. Fixed determination to enforce his mandate, anger which breaks into threats that were by no means idle, and a certain wish to build a bridge for the escape of servants who had done their work well, are curiously mingled in it.[32]

His words (he has the most lines of direct speech) and his actions alike trace his personal development from proud and arrogant to awestruck and worshipful. Pivotal to this change is the king's direct encounter with the person of God. Apparently Nebuchadnezzar is the only Chaldean to perceive the fourth man in the furnace. No courtier notices him or readily understands the king's shock. "The story shifts its

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28. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 185.

29. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 185.

30. Alexander Maclaren, *The Books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets* (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1909), 58.

31. Gunn and Fewell, *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*, 185–86.

32. Maclaren, *Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets,* 56.

point of view with very picturesque abruptness after verse 27. The vaunting king shall tell what he saw, and thereby convict himself of insolent folly in challenging 'any god' to deliver out of his hand. He alone seems to have seen the sight, which he tells to his courtiers."[33] This spiritual revelation is one of several instances where God revealed himself to King Nebuchadnezzar as to few pagan monarchs. Nebuchadnezzar received more direct communication from God than any other non-Jewish king recorded in Scripture. In fact the phrase "Son of God" does not appear anywhere else in the Old Testament. The interpretation of this appearance has been the subject of much debate. However the term "angel" later used to describe the fourth figure in the furnace does not necessarily make the spiritual being less than God.[34]

Although the three Hebrew children and Nebuchadnezzar are the most obvious characters developed in this story, God's rare, physically observable appearance obviates his participation in, as well as control of, the events involving his servants. Overcoming the antagonist is the central feature or desire in the greatest majority of stories. Overcoming a bitter antagonist by converting him into an adoring subject is the surprise ending of this remarkable tale. King Nebuchadnezzar's personal interaction with God is part of the larger history in the book of Daniel. Each encounter with God continues to change Nebuchadnezzar slightly, eventually developing a working relationship between the king of Babylon and the King of Heaven. But that is another story.

Conclusion

Throughout his account the author of Daniel 3 chose classic storytelling techniques to communicate an extraordinary message. Literary devices such as vivid detail, poetic irony, and word plays create memorable characters that interact in a swift but carefully structured plot. All of these elements support and propel the narrative without drawing undue attention to themselves or the author. In presenting a record of God's miraculous deliverance of those that trusted in him unwaveringly, the author of Daniel 3 presents a piece of great literary art that continues to delight as well as instruct his readers today.

33. Maclaren, *Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets,* 61.
34. Exod 23:20–22 enigmatically depicts an angel as the same as God; arguments concerning the term "the angel of the Lord" would apply here.

How *Targum Onqelos* Can Help Discern Between the Biblical Hebrew Frequentative and Preterital Imperfects

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Abstract: The biblical Hebrew past Imperfect can be a difficult verb form to translate. The Hebrew grammars available to the reader do not provide many tips to determine whether a particular BH past Imperfect is functioning as a frequentative or a preterital. In fact, one grammarian contends that it is often left up to the intellect of the reader. However, the reader has another tool—not simply his or her intellect—to utilize in order to understand the BH past Imperfect. This paper argues that Targum Onqelos of the Pentateuch serves as a reliable guide in discerning the function of the BH frequentative and preterital Imperfects in the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. The Hebrew and the Aramaic texts of Numbers 9:15-23 and Exodus 15:1-18 are analyzed to demonstrate that Onqelos consistently renders the BH frequentative with a Participle, and the BH preterital Imperfect with a Perfect. The concepts gleaned from Numbers 9:15-23 and Exodus 15:1-18 are then applied to other passages in the Pentateuch confirming that the targumist is consistent in rendering the various functions of the BH Imperfect.

Key Words: Targum Onqelos, frequentative Imperfect, preterital Imperfect, vav-consecutive Perfect, Participle, Perfect

Introduction

For readers of Biblical Hebrew (BH) the BH verbal system can be difficult to grasp. The situation seems even more dire when the reader observes that for the past two centuries BH scholars have written volumes on the BH verbal system. From the vav-conversive theories of Jewish grammarians, to the influential works of S. R. Driver and G. H. Ewald, and to the latest trends in modern BH linguistic studies, scholars have wrestled with explanations of the BH verbal system. Leslie McFall sums up the situation well with his aptly named book, *The Enigma of the Hebrew Verbal System*.[1]

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1. Leslie McFall, *The Enigma of the Hebrew Verbal System: Solutions from Ewald to the Present Day*, Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship 2 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982). For a brief survey of the history of scholarship on the Biblical Hebrew verbal system see John A. Cook,

The BH Imperfect in particular can frustrate readers of BH.[2] In beginning Hebrew grammars, students are taught that the Imperfect can indicate a future action (Exod. 4:1; 6:1), present action (Gen. 24:50; 37:15), or a modal (Gen. 1:9; Lev. 19:2).[3] To make matters more difficult, students are taught that the BH Imperfect can communicate actions in the past.[4] Some Imperfects are used to indicate incomplete, continuous actions in the past (Gen. 2:6; 1 Sam. 1:7), or the 'frequentative Imperfect.'[5] Other Imperfects indicate a one time action in the past and provides vividness to the action (Jdg. 2:1; 1 Sam. 13:17; 1 King 7:8), or the 'preterital Imperfect.'[6]

Context and various particles (בְּטֶרֶם, טֶרֶם, עַד, אָז) often help to discern if the BH Imperfect is functioning as a future, past, or modal. However, it can be difficult to determine if the biblical author is using the Imperfect to indicate frequentative action or a preterital. For example, the English translations of Genesis 37:7 render the Imperfects of Joseph's dream as a simple past, indicating that Joseph is using preterital Imperfects:

"The Finite Verbal Forms Do Express Aspect," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 30 (2006): 21–22; John A. Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 77–175; Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 458–78.

2. The long-standing terminology of Perfect and Imperfect will be retained in this paper.

3. Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001): 165; Duane A. Garrett and Jason S. DeRouchie, *A Modern Grammar for Biblical Hebrew* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009): 35–40; C. L. Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987): 142–43; Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 100.

4. Pratico and Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, 165; Seow, *Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, 142; Garrett and DeRouchie, *Modern Grammar*, 36; Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 502–4; S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, Ancient Language Resources (1892; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 30–35; Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. T. Muraoka, Subsidia Biblica 14 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), §113e–k; Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 147–48; Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Invitation to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, Invitation to Theological Studies Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017), §4d, g–h; G. H. Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. James Kennedy, Ancient Language Resources (1891; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 8–10; E. Kautzsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 28th ed., trans. A. E. Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), §107b–e.

5. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4d; Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 9–10; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §107b; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §113f, g.

6. Waltke and O'Connor label the Preterital Imperfect the "incipient past non-perfective" (Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 503). According to Driver, the Preterital Imperfect is labeled "nascent," Driver, *Treatise*, 29–31. See also Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, § 113h; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 149–50; Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 8. For the sake of simplicity Joüon's term "preterital" is adopted in this paper primarily to set it apart from the frequentative Imperfect.

וְהִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ מְאַלְּמִים אֲלֻמִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה קָמָה אֲלֻמָּתִי וְגַם־נִצָּבָה וְהִנֵּה תְסֻבֶּינָה

אֲלֻמֹּתֵיכֶם וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶיןָ לַאֲלֻמָּתִי:

> "For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up
> and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves **gathered around** and **bowed
> down** to my sheaf." (NASB)[7]

While the translation of the English versions are valid, it is possible that Joseph is describing his family in a continuous action, which requires the frequentative Imperfect. Moreover, Hebrew grammarians often differ in their analysis of various past Imperfects. For example, S. R. Driver and Gesenius-Kautzsch differ in their opinions of the Imperfect in Exodus 8:20b, which reads:

וּבְכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם תִּשָּׁחֵת הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵי הֶעָרֹב:

> And in all the land of Egypt, the land **was destroyed** from before the swarm. -*or*-

> And in all the land of Egypt, the land **was being destroyed** from
> before the swarm.

Gesenius-Kautzsch describes the Imperfect תִּשָּׁחֵת as a frequentative Imperfect; the action "*continued* throughout a longer or shorter period."[8] Gesenius-Kautzsch's description would then require the second translation. On the other hand, Driver analyzes the Imperfect תִּשָּׁחֵת as preterital—or 'nascent,' according to Driver— requiring the first translation.[9] According to Driver, the act of destroying the land by the swarm is pictured "with vividness to the mental eye" by the nascent—or preterital—Imperfect.[10]

Driver maintains that the reader is often left to his or her own intellect in discerning the correct function of the BH Imperfect in verses like Genesis 37:7 and Exodus 8:20b. He writes, "In which of these senses [a preterital or frequentative Imperfect] it is on each occasion to be understood is left to the intelligence of the reader to determine; and this will not generally lead him astray."[11] However, contrary

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7. See also the KJV, ASV, ESV, NIV, CSB, and NLT.

8. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §107b. Italics are original.

9. Driver, *Treatise*, 32–33. The "nascent" Imperfect, according to Driver, focuses on the action while the action is "in movement rather than while at rest, to picture it with peculiar vividness to the mental eye" (30).

10. Driver, *Treatise,* 30.

11. Driver, *Treatise,* 30. Driver observes that the difference between the frequentative Imperfect and the preterital Imperfect may at times be "immaterial." While determining the difference between a nascent—or preterital—or frequentative Imperfect may not affect the meaning of a passage, the goal of translating any passage is to strive for accuracy. Onqelos demonstrates accuracy in rendering the nascent and frequentative Imperfect.

to Driver, the reader is not left with intellect alone; there is another guide to help discern the function of the BH Imperfect.

This paper seeks to demonstrate that Targum Onqelos serves as a reliable guide to correctly render the BH Imperfect. Two passages in particular—Exodus 15:1-18 and Numbers 9:15-23—illustrate how Onqelos renders the BH frequentative and preterital Imperfect. In *Tg. Onq.* Numbers 9 Onqelos renders the BH frequentative Imperfect with a Participle, indicating that the targumist views the BH Imperfect as a frequentative. In *Tg. Onq.* Exodus 15 Onqelos renders the BH preterital Imperfect with the Perfect. Outside of *Tg. Onq.* Exodus 15 and *Tg. Onq.* Numbers 9, Onqelos demonstrates a consistency in using the Perfect and Participle to render the BH Imperfect in past time.

The Targums and the Hebrew Bible

Scholars of the Targums have focused much of their attention on how the targumists translate and interpret the Hebrew Bible. Many scholars focus on issues such as the avoidance of anthropomorphisms, the use of two Aramaic words to translate one Hebrew word, the tendency to expand or paraphrase rather than literally translate the poetical and prophetical books, the nature of the Targums as translation, and the influence of the Targums on New Testament studies.[12] While these studies are valuable in understanding the Targums and Scripture, the reader of BH can strengthen his or her understanding of the BH verbal system by studying how the targumists render BH verbs. As Dmytro Tsolin—in his study of how the targumists' render BH verbs in BH poetry—rightly observes, the targumists demonstrate an "awareness" of the BH verbal system.[13]

Targum Onqelos of the Pentateuch—the focus of this study—is particularly beneficial to the reader of BH because it is primarily a literal translation of the Hebrew

12. See for example, Philip S. Alexander, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin Jan Mulder, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 225–28; Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011), 39–54; Bernard Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible 6 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 12–14; Martin McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible 1A (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 24–39; Simon G. D. A. Lasair, "Targum and Translation: A New Approach to a Classic Problem," *AJS Review* 34, no. 2 (2010): 265–87; Martin McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited: Aramaic Paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdman's, 2010); John Ronning, *The Jewish Targums and John's Logos Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).

13. Dmytro Tsolin, "Archaic Verbal Conjugations in Exod 15:2–18, 21 and Deut 32:1–43: Their Renderings in the Targums," *Aramaic Studies* 15 (2017): 76. The author of this paper discovered Tsolin's paper late in research. Many conclusions reached by the author of this paper was reached independently of Tsolin's work. Tsolin's paper focused primarily on the poetical sections of Hebrew narrative; however, he provides helpful categories for understanding how the targumists rendered Biblical Hebrew verbs in all portions of the Hebrew Bible.

text. Due to the literal nature of Onqelos, the reader of BH can easily recognize how the targumist apprehends a given BH verb.[14] To understand the literal nature of Onqelos, Onqelos and the other Targums could be compared to the wide range of English Bible translations.[15]

Targum Onqelos and Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings) could be compared to the KJV and NASB. The translators of the KJV and NASB generally follow the grammar and syntax of the original Hebrew Bible. There are instances in which the translators expand their translation in order to interpret difficult passages, but essentially, they are literal translations of the original Hebrew. Likewise, difficult phrases and words in the Hebrew text are interpreted and explained in Targums Onqelos and Jonathan, but on the whole the Aramaic of Onqelos and Jonathan follow closely the grammar and syntax of the Hebrew Bible. Other Targums—Neofiti and the Targums on the prophets and poetical books—are similar to the NIV or The Amplified Bible. These English translations interpret the difficult phrases and passages for the reader, smoothing out the difficult syntax of the original languages into easy-to-read English. Likewise, Neofiti and the Targums on the prophets and poetical books are more interpretive in their translations; they generally do not provide a literal translation of the Hebrew Bible.[16]

The benefit of Onqelos lies not only in the literal translation of the narrative portions of the Pentateuch, but also in its close adherence to the BH grammar and syntax in the poetical sections of the Pentateuch. In two major poetical sections—the Song of the Sea in *Tg. Onq.* Exodus 15 and the Song of Moses in *Tg. Onq.* Deuteronomy 32—Onqelos manifests a tendency to conform to BH grammar and syntax.[17] In particular, the targumist proficiently employs the Aramaic Perfect, Imperfect, and Participle to reflect the various functions of the BH verbal system.

How Onqelos translates the poetical sections of the Pentateuch is a key reason Onqelos was selected for this study. In the targums on the prophetical and poetical

14. For the term "literal translation" Lasair contends that a better term is "one-to-one interlinguistic rendering." Lasair terms the expansive translations of the Targums "narrative expansion"; Lasair, "Targum and Translation," 275–76. Dmytro Tsolin uses the terms "grammatically equivalent translation" for a literal translation, and "grammatically inequivalent translation" for expanded translations; Tsolin, "Archaic Verbal Conjugations," 76–77.

15. The author of this paper credits Russell T. Fuller for this illustration. The illustration was given in a class on targumic Aramaic in the Spring of 2012. The author of this paper, however, is completely responsible for the wording and the conveying of the illustration in this paper.

16. Of course, the comparison of the Targums to the English translations is not a one-to-one correlation. Factors often influenced the targumists' decisions to expand their translation that did not influence the translators of the English Bibles. See McNamara, *Targum and Testament*, 111–18; Alexander Sperber, *The Targum and the Hebrew Bible*, vol. 4b of *The Bible in Aramaic* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1973), 37–61, 144–47, 193–210. However, both the translators of the Targums and the English Bibles were motivated by the desire to make their translations understandable to their target audiences. See Lasair, "Targum and Translation," 269–70.

17. See Lasair, "Targum and Translation," 270–71.

books (Isaiah, Ezekiel, Psalms, etc.), the targumists are looser in their translations, often explaining and interpreting the BH text rather than providing a literal translation. While these Targums may provide some assistance in understanding the BH verbal system, the interpretative translation of the prophetical and poetical books adds a layer of difficulty. However, Onqelos, in the narrative and poetical sections of the Pentateuch, provides great insight into how the targumist understands the function of the BH Imperfect.

Onqelos and the Frequentative Imperfect

The BH Imperfect often is used to express actions that occurred habitually or repeatedly in the past; this use of the Imperfect is called the 'frequentative Imperfect.'[18] The Imperfect is ideally suited to express frequentative action in the past because the aspect of the Imperfect indicates incomplete action.[19] Genesis 2:6a provides an example of the frequentative Imperfect:

וְאֵד יַעֲלֶה מִן־הָאָרֶץ

> And a mist ***would come up*** from the ground.

The context of Genesis 2:6a indicates that the tense of the verb is in the past. The frequentative Imperfect יַעֲלֶה communicates that the mist would continually rise from the ground over a period of time. Consider also Exodus 1:12a:

וְכַאֲשֶׁר יְעַנּוּ אֹתוֹ כֵּן יִרְבֶּה וְכֵן יִפְרֹץ

> And as they ***would afflict them***, thus they ***would increase***, and thus they ***would break forth***.

In this verse, Moses describes the situation of the Israelites under the rule of the new Pharaoh. Moses uses three Imperfects to describe the continual activity of the slave

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18. Joüon employs the terms "repeated" and "durative" to explain the frequentative Imperfect; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §113e, f. Duane Garrett labels the frequentative Imperfect "imperfective"; Garrett and DeRouchie, *A Modern Grammar*, 40. According to Waltke and O'Connor the frequentative Imperfect is the "customary non-perfective"; Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 502–02. Driver, and the author of this paper, use the term "frequentative"; Driver, *Tenses*, 30; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4d. Lambdin, and Pratico and van Pelt labels the frequentative Imperfect "habitual or customary action"; Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 100; Pratico and van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, 165; Martin, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar*, 74. See also, Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Langauge*, 9–10; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 148; Seow, *Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, 142.

19. Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 7; Driver, *Treatise*, 29; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4c; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §107a; van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 146.

masters and the continual results on the Israelites: as the Egyptians continued to oppress the Israelites, the Israelites would continue to increase in numbers.

In Onqelos, the BH frequentative Imperfect is often rendered by a Participle. Like the Imperfect, the Participle is ideally suited to communicate ongoing action because the aspect of the Participle—in BH and in Aramaic—is incomplete action.[20] This is not to say that the Imperfect and the Participle are the same. The Imperfect signifies the beginning of an action and its "constant renewal or repetition."[21] The Participle, on the other hand, signifies a fixed "habitual and abiding state."[22] In the Imperfect an action happened; the participle is descriptive.[23] Despite the difference between the Imperfect and Participle, the targumist takes advantage of the fact that they express incomplete aspect. Therefore, because the targumist exhibits a desire to accurately render the BH frequentative Imperfect, the targumist chose the Participle.[24]

Tg. Onq. Numbers 9:15-23 provides an example of how Onqelos renders the BH frequentative Imperfect with the Participle. Throughout the passage twenty BH Imperfect verbs are used. Moses employs the BH Imperfects to describe the habitual actions of the Israelites when they set up camp and when they set out to journey. In each of the twenty instances Onqelos renders the BH Imperfect with the Participle. Take for example Numbers 9:18 in the Hebrew:

עַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־פִּי יְהוָה יַחֲנוּ כָּל־יְמֵי אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכֹּן הֶעָנָן עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן יַחֲנוּ:

Upon the command of the LORD the sons of Israel *would set out*, and upon the command of the LORD they *would camp*. All the days which the cloud *would dwell* upon the tabernacle, they *would camp*.

20. Franz Rosenthal, A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic, 7th ed., Porta Linguarum Orientalium 5 (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 59; Kautzsch, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, §116a; Driver, Treatise, 165; Joüon, Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, §121c; Fuller and Choi, Biblical Hebrew Syntax, §16a. Because of its incomplete aspect, the Participle is often used for occupations or for "abiding states" (Fuller and Choi, Biblical Hebrew Syntax, §16). For example, סֹפֵר secretary, scribe is the Qal Participle masc. sing. from the verb root ספר to count, to number. Therefore, the participle of ספר denotes a person who is regularly or continually counting or taking record: a secretary or scribe. Consider also רֹאֶה seer, which is the Qal Participle masc. sing. form of the verb ראה to see. The participle יֹשֵׁב inhabitant, from the verb ישב to dwell, indicates a person who is in the continual state of dwelling in a place. With regard to the similarity of the Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic participle, Aramaic and Biblical Hebrew grammar and syntax share many similar feature because they are Semitic languages. The study of the one is beneficial to the study of the other. The same is true with the study of Arabic. For centuries Jewish and Christian Hebraists availed themselves with the knowledge of Arabic and Aramaic grammar in their study of Biblical Hebrew. See Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §3f; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, x; Driver, *Treatise*, 219–45.

21. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

22. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a; Rosenthal, *Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 59; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §116a; Driver, *Treatise*, 165; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §121c.

23. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16a.

24. See Lasair, "Targum and Translation," 270–71.

עַל מֵימְרָא דַייי נָטְלִין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל מֵימְרָא דַייי שָׁרַן כֹּל יוֹמִין דְּשָׁרֵי עֲנָנָא עַל מַשְׁכְּ־נָא שָׁרַן:

> Upon the memra of the LORD the sons of Israel *would travel*, and upon the
> memra of LORD they *would dwell*. All the days which the cloud *would dwell*
> upon the tabernacle, they *would dwell*.

In Onqelos the targumist signifies that the BH Imperfects are communicating
frequentative action. Since the Participle also indicates incomplete aspect, the
targumist utilizes the Participle to describe the Israelites habitual action in the
wilderness.[25] As seen in the Table 1 below, all twenty BH Imperfects are rendered in
Onqelos as Participles.

Table 1. Onqelos and the BH frequentative Imperfect in Num. 19:15-23

	Hebrew Text	Onqelos
Num 9:15	יִהְיֶה Qal Imperfect 3ms '*it would be*'	הֲוֵי Peal Part. ms '*it would be*'[26]
Num 9:16	יִהְיֶה Qal Imperfect 3ms '*it would be*'	הֲוֵי Peal Part. ms '*it would be*'
	יְכַסֶּנּוּ Piel Imperfect 3ms + 3ms energic '*it would cover it*'	חָפֵי Peal Part. ms '*it would cover*'
Num 9:17	יִסְעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp '*they would journey*'	נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp '*they would travel*'
	יִשְׁכָּן Qal Imperfect 3ms '*it would dwell*'	שָׁרֵי Peal Part ms '*it would dwell*'
	יַחֲנוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp '*they would camp*'	שָׁרַן Peal Part mp '*they would dwell*'
Num 9:18	יִסְעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp '*they would journey*'	נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp '*they would travel*'
	יַחֲנוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp '*they would camp*'	שָׁרַן Peal Part mp '*they would dwell*'
	יִשְׁכֹּן Qal Imperfect 3ms '*it would dwell*'	שָׁרֵי Peal Part ms '*it would dwell*'
	יַחֲנוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp '*they would camp*'	שָׁרַן Peal Part mp '*they would dwell*'
Num 9:19	יִסְעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp '*they would journey*'	נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp '*they would travel*'

25.   The participle, as a verbal noun, does not have tense. Participles derive their tense from the
context; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §116d.

26.   The Peal in Aramaic is the base verb form like the Qal in Biblical Hebrew.

Num 9:20	יְהְיֶה Qal Imperfect 3ms 'and it would be' יַחֲנוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would camp'* יִסָּעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would journey'*	הֲוֵי Peal Part. ms '*it would be*' שָׁרַן Peal Part mp *'they would dwell'* נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp *'they would travel'*
Num 9:21	יְהְיֶה Qal Imperfect 3ms 'and it would be'	הֲוֵי Peal Part. ms '*it would be*'
Num 9:22	יַחֲנוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would camp'* יִסָּעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would journey'* יִסָּעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would journey'*	שָׁרַן Peal Part mp *'they would dwell'* נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp *'they would travel'* נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp *'they would travel'*
Num 9:23	יַחֲנוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would camp'* יִסָּעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp *'they would journey'*	שָׁרַן Peal Part mp *'they would dwell'* נָטְלִין Peal Part. mp *'they would travel'*

Furthermore, what is telling about this passage is how Onqelos renders the vav+Perfect. The vav+Perfect occurs three times in the Hebrew text of Numbers 9:15-23: once in verse 19 and twice in verse 21. The vav+Perfect can prove difficult to readers of BH because the form could either be a Perfect with a vav-consecutive or a Perfect with a conjunction.[27] The Perfect with a vav-consecutive mirrors the function of the preceding Imperfect (future, modal, etc.); the Perfect with a conjunction would still be rendered in the past tense. In many instances, context must determine which rendering fits the context; in the case of Numbers 9:19, 21 it is clear that the vav+Perfect is the Perfect with a vav-consecutive and continues the previous frequentative Imperfect. As with the BH frequentative Imperfect, Onqelos renders the vav+Perfect according to its proper function.

In *Tg. Onq.* Numbers 9:19, 21 Onqelos renders each vav-consecutive Perfect with a Participle. In verse 19 וְשָׁמְרוּ *and they would keep* is rendered in Onqelos with the Participle וְנָטְרִין *and they would keep*. In verse 21 the verbs וְנַעֲלָה *and it would lift* and וְנָסָעוּ *and they would set out* are rendered in Onqelos with the Participles וּמסתלק *and it would be taken up* and וְנָטְלִין *and they would travel*, respectively.[28] In rendering the BH vav-consecutive Perfect with the Participle Onqelos reflects the proper function of the BH vav-consecutive Perfect. The vav-consecutive

27.   See for example Gesenius's list of difficult occurrences of vav+Perfect. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §112qq.

28.   The verbs וְנַעֲלָה and וְנָסָעוּ occur twice in Num 9:21. Onqelos renders the verbs with Participles in both occurrences.

Perfects—following frequentative Imperfects—are rendered as frequentative actions; therefore, the targumist reflects the frequentative action with the Participle.[29]

Tg. Onq. Numbers 9:19, 21 illustrate that the targumist was mindful of how the BH verbal system functioned and that the targumist sought to precisely render the function of each BH verb. Onqelos consistently renders the BH frequentative Imperfect and the BH vav-consecutive Perfect with a Participle. A number of other examples throughout Onqelos illustrate the consistency of Onqelos in rendering the frequentative Imperfect.[30] For example, Onqelos renders the BH frequentative Imperfect in Genesis 2:6a (cited above) with a Participle:

<div dir="rtl">

וַעֲנָנָא הֲוָה סָלֵיק עַל אַרעָא

</div>

> And a mist *would continually go up* upon the earth.

In this example the Participle סָלֵיק occurs in conjunction with the verb הֲוָה (equivalent to the BH הָיָה). In *Tg. Onq.* Numbers 9:15-23 context indicates that the Participle is in the past tense; in *Tg. Onq.* Genesis 2:6a the verb הֲוָה sets the participle in the past tense. The frequentative action of the mist going up is communicated by the Participle סָלֵיק.[31] Consider also *Tg. Onq.* Exodus 1:12a (BH cited above):

<div dir="rtl">

וּכמָא דְמעַנַן לְהוֹן כֵּין סָגַן וְכֵין תָּקְפִין

</div>

> And as they *would oppress* them, thus they *would multiply*, and thus they *would grow strong*

Onqelos mirrors the BH frequentative Imperfect with Participles, highlighting the ongoing action of the Israelites and Egyptians. The next section will demonstrate how Onqelos renders the BH preterital Imperfect.

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29.   Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §49h, §112a; Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §119a.

30.   Other examples include Gen 2:25; 30:38, 42; 37:7; Exod 13:22; 19:19; 40:36, 38; Deut 32:3, 6. Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets also renders the Biblical Hebrew frequentative Imperfect with participles. Examples include Jdg 2:18; 6:5; 1 Sam 3:2; 13:17, 18; 19; 1 Kgs 7:8.

31.   Many grammarians of Aramaic categorize the conjunction of the verb הֲוָה with a participle as a "compound verbal form" or "compound tense"; David M. Golomb, *A Grammar of Targum Neofiti, Harvard Semitic Monographs 34 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985)*, 188; William B. Stevenson, *A Grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924)*, §22; Frederick E. Greenspahn, *An Introduction to Aramaic, Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study 38 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999)*, 124. While this construction may be prevalent in Aramaic, a more accurate assessment is that the Participle is in the accusative to הֲוָה describing the "habitual or abiding state" of the mist (Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §16l). See also William Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Three So-Called Poetical Books of the Old Testament, (1970; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010)*, 51.

Onqelos and the BH Preterital Imperfect

When translating the BH Imperfect some Imperfects seem to require a simple past, an indication that the Imperfect is preterital. While various terms have been offered for this function of the Imperfect, most grammarians explain that the function of the preterital Imperfect is to heighten the language.[32] Grammarians explain that the author views the action of the preterital Imperfect as in process; therefore, the preterital Imperfect is descriptive.[33] Ewald contends that the speaker or author views a definite event in the past and transports the reader to the moment the action actually happens.[34] While the preterital Imperfect is descriptive, the preterital Imperfect is different from the frequentative Imperfect. Joüon rightly points out that the preterital Imperfect, unlike the frequentative Imperfect, is "punctiliar in force, not habitual, repetitive, etc."[35]

Preterital Imperfects are primarily found in poetry or direct speech, which should make identifying them relatively simple. However, not all Imperfects in poetry are preterital. For example, in the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:1-43) some Imperfects are frequentative (Deut. 32:3, 6) and others express the will of the speaker (Deut. 32:1, 2). As with the frequentative Imperfect, Onqelos is consistent in how the BH preterital Imperfect is rendered, aiding the reader in discerning the various functions of the BH Imperfect.[36] Onqelos renders the BH preterital Imperfect with the Perfect, indicating that the action is not repetitive or habitual.

The Perfect is the ideal verbal form to render the preterital Imperfect, as the Perfect conveys completed action.[37] Consider *Tg. Onq.* Genesis 6:1:

וַהֲוָה כַד שָׁרִיאוּ בְּנֵי אֱנָשָׁא לְמִסגֵי עַל אַפֵּי אַרעָא וּבנָתָא **אִתיְלִידָא** לְהוֹן

> And it happened when the sons of man began to increase upon the face of the
> earth, and the daughters ***bore children*** to them.

In *Tg. Onq.* Genesis 6:1, the targumist employs the Perfect אִתיְלִידָא because the focus is on the completion of the act of bearing children; the action happened and now it is complete. Had the targumist used the Imperfect or Participle, the focus would have been on the incompleteness of the action or that it was ongoing. But, as it stands the act of bearing children in *Tg. Onq.* Genesis 6:1 is completed, as signified by the

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32. For examples of the various terms given to the preterital Imperfect, see footnote 6 above.

33.   Waltke and O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 503; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4c, d, h; Driver, *Treatise*, 30; Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 8.

34. Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 8.

35. Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §113h.

36. In the Song of Moses, Onqelos renders the frequentative Imperfects in verses 3 and 6 with participles, and the Imperfects that express the will of the speaker (vv. 1 and 2) with Imperfects.

37. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §106a; Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §3b; Driver, *Treatise*, 13; Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 3–4.

Perfect.[38] While the biblical author may heighten the action with the descriptive BH preterital Imperfect, the targumist sets the focus on the completion of the action with the Perfect.

Exodus 15:1-18, the Song of the Sea, illustrates how Onqelos renders the BH preterital Imperfect with Perfects. Throughout the song a total of twenty-four Imperfect forms are used; however, eight Imperfects function as a preterital Imperfect and the remaining sixteen express other functions of the Imperfect. In *Tg. Onq.* Exodus 15:1-18 Onqelos consistently renders the BH preterital Imperfect with the Perfect, aiding the reader to discern between the BH preterital Imperfect and other functions of the BH Imperfect.[39] Take for example Exodus 15:7:

$$\text{וּבְרֹב גְּאוֹנְךָ תַּהֲרֹס קָמֶיךָ תְּשַׁלַּח חֲרֹנְךָ יֹאכְלֵמוֹ כַּקַּשׁ׃}$$

> And in the greatness of Your majesty You ***destroyed*** those who rose up against You You ***sent*** Your fury, You ***consumed*** them as chaff.

All three Imperfects in the verse are rendered by Onqelos with Perfects:

$$\text{וּבְסַגֵּי תוּקְפָּךְ תַבַרְתָּנוּן לְדִקָמוּ עַל עַמָּךְ שַׁלַחת רוּגְזָךְ שֵׁיצֵינוּן כְּנוּרָא לְקַשָּׁא׃}$$

> And in the abundance of Your strength You ***broke*** them, to those who rose up against Your people. You ***sent*** Your anger. You ***destroyed*** them as fire to chaff.

By employing the Perfect in verse 7, Onqelos indicates that Moses does not view the action as frequentative; rather, he views the action as complete. Moses employs the BH preterital Imperfect in the Song of the Sea to heighten the language, or—as Ewald describes—to transport the reader to the moment the action occurs. Onqelos, however, sets the focus on the completion of the action rather than on the vividness of the language. Table 2 below lists all the BH preterital Imperfects rendered by Onqelos with Perfects.

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38. In the Masoretic Text of Gen 6:1, Moses also utilizes the perfect: יֻלְּדוּ.

39. The purpose of this paper is not to communicate to the reader that a knowledge of Aramaic is required to understand the Biblical Hebrew imperfect. In the Hebrew text of Exod 15:1–18 the reader has clues within the passage to help determine between the various functions of the Biblical Hebrew imperfect. For example, Joüon notes that the preterital imperfect—often in poetry—often follows the perfect. He writes, "Thus in an alternance of qatal [perfect] and yiqtol [imperfect] . . . , the qatal places in the past the action expressed by the following yiqtol" (Joüon, *Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, §113o; Driver, *Tenses*, 33. See Exod 15:12 for an example. The Aramaic Targums are just another tool to help the reader of Biblical Hebrew understand the Biblical Hebrew verbal system.

Table 2. Onqelos and the BH Preterital Imperfect

	Hebrew Text	Onqelos
Exod 15:5	יְכַסְיֻמוּ Piel Imperfect 3mp + 3mp '*they covered them*'	חֲפוֹ Peal Perfect 3mp '*they covered*'
Exod 15:6	תִּרְעַץ Qal Imperfect 3fs '*it shattered*'	תְּבַרַת Peal Perfect 3fs '*it defeated*'
Exod 15:7	תַּהֲרֹס Qal Imperfect 2ms '*You destroyed*'	תְּבַרְתָּנוּן Pael Perfect 2ms + 3mp '*You shattered them*'[40]
	תְּשַׁלַּח Piel Imperfect 2ms '*You sent*'	שַׁלַּחַת Pael Perfect 2ms '*You sent*'
	יֹאכְלֵמוֹ Qal Imperfect 3ms + 3mp '*and it consumed them*'	שֵׁיצִינוּן Shaphel Perfect 3ms + 3mp '*It destroyed them*'[41]
Exod 15:12	תִּבְלָעֵמוֹ Qal Imperfect 3fs + 3mp '*and it swallowed them*'	בְּלַעַתְנוּן Peal Perfect 3fs + 3mp '*it swallowed them*'
Exod 15:14	יִרְגָּזוּן Qal Imperfect 3mp '*and they trembled*'	וְזָעוּ Peal Perfect 3mp '*they trembled*'
Exod 15:15	יֹאחֲזֵמוֹ Qal Imperfect 3ms + 3mp '*it seized them*'[42]	אֲחַדִינוּן Pael Perfect 3ms + 3mp '*it seized them*'

As mentioned above, there are sixteen other Imperfects in the Hebrew text of Exodus 15:1-18. Fifteen of the remaining BH Imperfects are rendered by Onqelos with Imperfects. In each case, Onqelos' use of the Imperfect reflects the function of the BH Imperfect in the Hebrew text. In verses 2 and 9 Onqelos renders the BH Imperfect with an Imperfect to express the will of the speaker (eight Imperfects total).[43] For example, in Exodus 15:2 the Israelites express their will to praise the Lord:

עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה זֶה אֵלִי וְאַנְוֵהוּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וַאֲרֹמְמֶנְהוּ׃

My strength and song is the Lord, and He has become my salvation. This is my God, and ***I will praise*** Him; the God of my fathers and ***I will exalt*** Him.

Onqelos renders the two BH Imperfects as Imperfects to indicate the will of the speaker in Onqelos:

40. The Pael is the intensive stem like the Piel in Biblical Hebrew.

41. The Shaphel is the causative stem like the Hiphil in Biblical Hebrew.

42. The NASB, ESV, and ASV render the Biblical Hebrew Imperfect in Exod 15:14, 15 with the English Present. The context is set in the past by the first verb in both sentences. The use of the English present makes the action more lively, similar to the use of the Imperfect in the Hebrew text. The KJV, NIV, and CSB, however, render the Biblical Hebrew Imperfects in Exod 15:14, 15 with the future.

43. Fuller and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §4f; Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §107m, n.

תּוּקְפִי וְתוּשְׁבַּחְתִּי דְחִילָא יוי אָמַר בְּמֵימְרֵיה וַהֲוָה לִי לְפָרִיק דֵין אֱלָהִי וְ**אַבְנֵי** לֵיה מַקְדַּשׁ אֱלָהָא דַּאֲבָהָתִי וְ**אַפְלַח** קְדָמוֹהִי:

'My strength and My praise are fearsome,' the Lord said by His Memra. He has become to me a redeemer. This is my God, and *I will build* to Him a sanctuary; the God of my fathers, and *I will serve* before Him.[44]

In verses 16 and 17 Onqelos renders the BH Imperfects (six total) with the Imperfect to indicate future action. For example, Exodus 15:17 declares what the Lord will do for His people Israel:

תְּבִאֵמוֹ וְתִטָּעֵמוֹ בְּהַר נַחֲלָתְךָ

You will bring them and *You will plant* them in the mountain of Your inheritance.

Consider the same verse in Onqelos:

תַּעֵילִינוּן וְתַשְׁרֵינוּן בְּטוּרָא דְּאַחְסָנְתָּךְ

You will cause to bring in and *You will plant* them in the mountain of Your inheritance.[45]

Onqelos renders the two BH future Imperfects in Exodus 15:17 with Imperfects to indicate future action.

Exodus 15:1-18 presents the reader with a number of BH Imperfects with various functions. Just as in Numbers 9:15-23, Onqelos is careful to discern the function of each BH Imperfect and purposely renders each function of BH Imperfect. While context and particles provide clues to the function of the BH Imperfect in Exodus 15:1-18, Onqelos demonstrates that it is a valuable tool in helping the reader discern the proper function of the BH Imperfect.

Onqelos and the BH Imperfect in the Pentateuch

In Numbers 9:15-23 and Exodus 15:1-18 Targum Onqelos demonstrates that the targumist renders the BH Imperfect according to its function. The targumist renders

44.   Onqelos and the KJV render the verb אַנְוֵהוּ "I will build"; the NASB, NIV, ESV, ASV, and CSB render the verb "I will praise." The difference centers on how the translators understand the verbal root נוה. See BDB, 627a. Despite the difference in translating the Hebrew verb, all translations reflect the will and intention expressed by the Biblical Hebrew Imperfect.

45.   The two remaining Biblical Hebrew Imperfects are found in verses 1 and 18. In verse 1, the Biblical Hebrew Imperfect יָשִׁיר is preterital. However, this Imperfect is found in the narrative introduction to the Song of the Sea; therefore, the preterital Imperfect is preceded by the particle אָז. Most preterital Imperfects are preceded by a particle in narrative sections. See Driver, *Treatise*, 32. Onqelos renders the first Biblical Hebrew Imperfect in Exod 15:1 with a Perfect: שַׁבַּח. In verse 18, Onqelos does not render the Biblical Hebrew Imperfect; rather, the targumist provides an interpretation of the verse. In verse 1 Moses and the Israelites use a Cohortative to express their will and intention to sing to the Lord: אָשִׁירָה. Onqelos renders the Biblical Hebrew Cohortative with an Imperfect, expressing the will of the people: נְשַׁבַּח. See Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §107n.

the BH frequentative Imperfect with the Participle, the BH preterital Imperfect with a Perfect, and the BH Imperfect expressing the will of the speaker or future action with the Imperfect. With these insights gleaned from Onqelos, the issues raised above regarding the BH Imperfect in Genesis 37:7 and Exodus 8:20 will be addressed.

It was noted above that BH grammarians often disagree on how to analyze the BH past Imperfect. In Exodus 8:20b, Driver classifies the BH Imperfect תִּשָּׁחֵת as preterital—or 'nascent' according to his terminology.[46] Gesenius, on the other hand, designates the verb as frequentative.[47] Onqelos, however, renders the BH Imperfect as a Perfect, indicating that the targumist analyzes the verb as a preterital Imperfect:

וּבְכָל ארעא דמצרים **אִתְחַבַּלַת** ארעא מִן־קֳדָם עָרוֹבָא:

And in all the land of Egypt, the land ***was destroyed*** from before the swarm.

According to Onqelos, the action in the BH Imperfect תִּשָּׁחֵת happened once and is not frequentative or habitual. The BH Imperfect in Exodus 8:20b expresses lively language, 'transporting' the reader back to the moment the action took place.[48] Onqelos, however, focuses on the occurrence and completion of the action.

Onqelos is particularly helpful in Exodus 8:20b because the preterital Imperfect in Hebrew narrative is usually preceded by a particle (בְּטֶרֶם, טֶרֶם, עַד, אָז).[49] There are instances, however, in which the BH preterital Imperfect in narrative is not preceded by a particle, making the identification of the preterital Imperfect more difficult. Just as Onqelos serves as a reliable guide in understanding the BH Imperfect in poetical sections like Exodus 15:1-18, Onqelos guides the reader in identifying preterital BH Imperfects in Hebrew narrative.[50]

In Genesis 37:7, it was noted above that it is often difficult to discern when the BH Imperfect is preterital or frequentative. Most English translations render the BH Imperfects in Genesis 37:7 as a simple past, indicating that the translators analyzed the BH Imperfect as preterital. This use of the Imperfect views the simple occurrence of the action described in a lively manner, similar to the historic Present in Greek.[51] However, Onqelos paints a much more lively picture:

וְהָא אֲנַחְנָא מְאַסְרִין אֵיסָרָן בְּגוֹ חַקְלָא וְהָא קַמַת אֵיסָרְתִי וְאַף אִזְדְקֵיפַת

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46. Driver, *Treatise*, 32–33.

47. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §107b.

48. Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language*, 8.

49. See for example Gen 2:5; 19:4; 24:45; Exod 15:1; Deut 4:41. In each of these verses, Onqelos renders the Biblical Hebrew Imperfect with the Perfect.

50. Other examples of the preterital Imperfect in narrative—without a preceding particle—are found outside of the Pentateuch: Judg 2:1; 2 Sam 2:28; 23:10. In each case Targum Jonathan renders the Biblical Hebrew preterital Imperfect with a Perfect.

51. Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev. Gordon Messing (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), §1883; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 526.

וְהָא מְסַתַּחֲרָן אֱסָרַתכוּן וְסָגְדָן לְאֱיסָרְתִי:

> And behold, we were busy binding bundles in the field, and behold! my
> bundle stood up and arose. And behold! your bundles were ***continually going
> around*** and ***continually bowing*** to my bundle!

Unlike the English versions, Onqelos renders the BH Imperfects in Genesis 37:7 as
frequentative, as indicated by Onqelos' use of the Participle. The preterital Imperfect
reflected in the English versions describe Joseph's brothers surrounding Joseph
and bowing down once. According to Onqelos' reading, the brothers' sheaves were
continually moving around and continually bowing to Joseph's sheaf. The brothers
were in continual motion, going in circles around Joseph and bowing repeatedly.

While the difference between rendering the BH Imperfect in Genesis 37:7 and
Exodus 8:20 as a frequentative or a preterital may seem immaterial, the reader of BH
should strive for accuracy in translation.[52] Onqelos exhibits an intentionality in how
the BH Imperfect is rendered. Moreover, since Onqelos demonstrates a reliability in
rendering the BH frequentative and preterital Imperfect, Onqelos will likely prove
reliable in other areas of the BH verbal system. One only needs to consider how
Onqelos handles the BH vav-consecutive Perfect in Numbers 9:15-23 and the other
functions of the BH Imperfect in Exodus 15:1-18.

Conclusion

In Numbers 9:15-23 and Exodus 15:1-18, Targum Onqelos demonstrates a remarkable
consistency in rendering the various functions of the BH Imperfect and other features
of the BH verbal system. In Numbers 9:15-23, Onqelos consistently uses the Participle
to render the BH frequentative Imperfect, describing a continual action in the past.
Moreover, Onqelos renders the BH vav-consecutive Perfects that follow the BH
frequentative Imperfects with the Participle. In Exodus 15:1-18 Onqelos proves to be a
reliable guide in discerning how the various BH Imperfects are functioning. Onqelos
renders the BH preterital Imperfect with a Perfect, and the BH future Imperfect, and
the BH Imperfects expressing the will of the speaker, with an Imperfect. With the
reliability of Onqelos established in Exodus 15:1-18 and Numbers 9:15-23, Onqelos
sheds light on the proper understanding of the BH Imperfect in Genesis 37:7 and
Exodus 8:20. In Genesis 37:7 Onqelos renders the BH Imperfect with a Participle,
painting a livelier picture of Joseph's dream than most English versions. In Exodus
8:20, Onqelos renders the BH Imperfect with a Perfect, indicating that Moses is using
heightened language—and not a continual or habitual action— to describe the action
of the swarm in Egypt.

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52. See Driver, *Treatise*, 30.

Onqelos exhibits an awareness of how the BH verbal system functions.[53] Contrary to Driver, then, the reader of BH is not simply left to intellect alone to determine the correct function of the BH Imperfect. Onqelos proves to be a valuable tool for the reader of BH to handle the BH Imperfect.[54]

53. See Tsolin, "Archaic Verbal Conjugations," 76.

54. A study of how Targum Jonathan renders the Biblical Hebrew Imperfect in the Former Prophets could also prove valuable. Like Onqelos, Jonathan tends to follow Biblical Hebrew grammar and syntax in its translation. As noted in footnote 30 above, Jonathan demonstrates a reliability in rendering the Biblical Hebrew frequentative Imperfect. Jonathan also consistently renders the Biblical Hebrew preterital Imperfect with a Perfect (see footnote 49).

Aramaic to Greek Transliterations in Western Middle Aramaic[1]

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Introduction

For those scholars and laymen interested in the Aramaic language around the time of Jesus, there are several interesting questions to pursue, some of which are: How was Aramaic pronounced during the time of Jesus? What tools do we have to clarify ambiguities in the Aramaic language? What was the state of Aramaic–Greek bilingualism in Judea and its surrounding environs? There are various tools that researchers use to answer these questions,[2] and one of them is studying transliterations from Aramaic into Greek from the corpus of texts known as Western Middle Aramaic (hereafter WMA). Generally speaking, this division of the Aramaic language spans the time period of 200 BC–AD 200 and covers the geographical region of Judea and its surrounding environs.[3] This article tabulates the instances

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1. This article is a reworking of part of my doctoral dissertation; "Maranatha (1 Corinthians 16:22): Linguistic, Historical, and Literary-Contextual Issues" (PhD thesis, Evangelical Theological Faculty, 2017), 58–81, 264–293. The Appendix (264–93) contains some additional information not included here, but this article has the advantage of correcting some minor mistakes, as well as presenting the transliteration data in a more user-friendly format.

2. For examples from an Aramaic perspective, see. Jonathan Watt, "Of Gutturals and Galileans: The Two Slurs of Matthew 26:73," in Stanley Porter (ed.), *Diglossia and Other Topics in New Testament Linguistics*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 193; (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 107–20; David Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia in Late Antique Syria and Mesopotamia," in J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (eds.), *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 298–331. For examples from a Hebrew perspective, see Alexander Sperber, "Hebrew based upon Greek and Latin transliterations," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 12–13 (1937–1938): 103–274. Sperber's work covers roughly the same time period as the one under consideration here, and still has value for today, not only for its quality, but also for the wide range of topics it covers.

3. WMA comprises the following dialects and texts: Nabatean, Qumran, Murabba'at, inscriptions on Palestinian ossuaries and tombstones, Aramaic words from the NT, and some texts from early Palestinian rabbinic literature (see Joseph Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* [Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979], 57–84, especially 61–62). A still-helpful collection of WMA texts with accompanying English translation may be found in Joseph Fitzmyer, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts (Second Century B. C.—Second Century A. D.)* (Rome:

of WMA transliterations into Greek across four corpora in order to determine the frequency and trends regarding which Greek characters were used to transliterate Aramaic ones during this period.

Some studies have been done on transliterations from Hebrew into Greek,[4] and others have focused on transliterations from Aramaic into Greek for isolated WMA corpora (for example, the New Testament),[5] but there has been no systematic study of transliterations from WMA into Greek.[6] This article attempts to address this *lacuna* in current Aramaic studies, and thus contribute to answering questions such as the ones posed above.

The words and phrases which have been evaluated are those which belong to the following four WMA corpora, which comprise the substantial majority of texts from which transliterations from WMA into Greek are found:[7] the Septuagint, the New Testament, archaeological inscriptions from Jerusalem, and the Greek papyri from the Bar Kokhba period discovered in the cave of letters. The data are presented in the form of tables in order to allow the reader to see clearly the individual transliterations. The tables follow the Aramaic alphabet and are arranged as follows: the first column contains the Aramaic alphabet, the second column contains the various Greek transliterations for each Aramaic letter, the third column presents the reference within its respective corpus as well as the Aramaic and Greek words under question, and the fourth column presents the numerical total of each transliterational phenomenon. Each table is preceded by introductory remarks regarding methodology and important issues to note, and a final table at the end presents the summative data from the four individual corpora. The paper ends with a summary of WMA transliteration into Greek.

Biblical Institute Press, 1978).

4. For example, Sperber, "Hebrew based upon Greek and Latin Transliterations," 103–274; Alexey (Eliyahu) Yuditsky, "Transcription into Greek and Latin Script: Pre-Masoretic Period," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics,* vol. 3, *P–Z,* 803–822.

5. For example, Hans Peter Rüger, "Aramäisch II," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1978), 3:602–610; Bernard-Marie, *La langue de Jésus: l'araméen dans le Nouveau Testament* (3rd ed.; Paris: Téqui, 2002), 29–44.

6. The general lack of study regarding Aramaic to Greek transliteration was noticed by Jean-Baptiste Yon in 2007; see "De l'araméen en grec," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 60 (2007): 381–429, here 381.

7. Exceptions would be isolated words found, for example, in the Qumran scrolls such as *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* 2:224: Σ]ωφηρα (but reconstruction is involved here), isolated words found in Philo's and Josephus's works, and the Bryennios canon list, the original language of which is disputed—for Aramaic, cf. Jean-Paul Audet, "A Hebrew-Aramaic List of Books of the Old Testament in Greek Transcription," *Journal of Theological Studies* 1, no. 2 (1950): 135–54; for Hebrew, see. David Goodblatt, "Audet's 'Hebrew-Aramaic' List of the Books of the OT Revisited," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101, no. 1 (1982): 75–84. To be more specific, the Aramaic portions of Genesis, Ezra, Jeremiah, and Daniel are not WMA, but they were transliterated into Greek during the WMA time period.

2.1. The Septuagint

As for the Septuagint, only the Aramaic portions are evaluated: Genesis 31.47; Jeremiah 10.11; Daniel 2.4-7.28; Ezra 4.8-6.18; 7.12-26. Three methodological decisions have been made which affect the interpretation and presentation of the data in the corresponding charts below. First, when the same Aramaic word or expression has been transliterated into the same Greek word or expression multiple times, the individual phonemic transliterations are counted together as one transliteration instance instead of multiple transliteration instances. For example, the Aramaic proper name שִׁמְשַׁי appears four times in the Aramaic portions of the Old Testament (Ezra 4.8, 9, 17, 23), and it is always transliterated into Greek as Σαμσαι. Thus, in the charts below the Aramaic מ has been counted as being transliterated into the Greek μ as equalling one transliteration instance instead of four. The justification for this decision arises from the fact that once a word has been transliterated within a corpus, it normally retains the same transliterated spelling throughout said corpus.[8] This decision also allows each transliteration to be represented equally in the numerical totals of the data. For example, the proper name נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר//Ναβουχοδονοσορ occurs twenty-seven times in Adolf Rahlfs's edition of the Septuagint. Counting the כ–χ transliteration as twenty-seven individual transliteration instances would affect the numerical totals of the data, potentially leading some to conclude that כ was "usually" or "normally" transliterated into χ. However, counting each example as one transliteration instance no matter its number of occurrences within a corpus helps to avoid this misinterpretation. On the other hand, Greek transliterations which reflect two distinct spellings of the same Aramaic word (ex., σαμβύκης) have been counted as two transliteration instances in the data below.

Second, for the book of Daniel the Greek Theodotian recension has been evaluated as a distinct corpus. Although the Theodotian recension never disagrees with the Septuagint text in its transliterations, it does demonstrate at specific instances independent transliteration decisions (ex., ιρ: Dan. 4.13, 17, 23), and thus even when Theodotian agrees with the Septuagint, it is not merely a passive copying of the Septuagint, but rather an active confirmation of it. Therefore, if the same Aramaic word is transliterated into the same Greek word in both Rahlfs's Septuagint and the Theodotian recension, they are counted as two transliteration instances. This has been marked in the tables below as "LXX/Th." The biblical citations can refer either to Rahlfs's Septuagint, Theodotian recension, or the LXX versification as opposed to the Masoretic one. This decision was made in order to keep the tables as "clutter-free" as possible, although admittedly the interested reader may have to do a bit more work to chase down the reference. The sign "2x" means that the same Aramaic-Greek

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8. This is not always the case, especially in, for example, the Greek papyri from the Bar Kokhba period, but there are multiple scribes within this corpus with each transliterating words idiosyncratically (see below for discussion). Generally speaking, however, authors remain constant with their transliterations within a corpus.

transliteration occurs twice in the same word, and thus has been counted twice. The sign "etc" means that the same transliteration occurs in other places, with only the first appearance being listed.

Third, there are several words which, while appearing in the Aramaic sections cited above, are nevertheless uncertain as to their origin. For example, the proper name דָּנִיֵּאל appears numerous times in both Hebrew and Aramaic portions of the Old Testament, and it is always transliterated as Δανιηλ. It is uncertain whether the Aramaic-Greek has been carried over from its Hebrew-Greek transliteration, or whether the Aramaic-Greek transliteration is an independent transliteration that happens to agree exactly the Hebrew-Greek one. Therefore, it seems best to divide the evidence from the Septuagint into two charts, one which tabulates certain Aramaic-Greek transliterations and one which tabulates uncertain Aramaic-Greek transliterations. These results also have been kept separate in the final table below.

Finally, two pervasive difficulties present themselves, not only in the Septuagint but also in other corpora contained in this study. First, at times it is difficult to know if a Greek ending is a legitimate part of the transliteration, or rather a case ending that has been added so that it "makes sense" in Greek. On the whole, I have favored the Greek case ending option, and thus those final Greek letters which suggest themselves as case endings have not been included in the transliteration data.[9] Second, it is extremely difficult to determine the correct transliteration of certain Aramaic letters such as the gutturals (*aleph, he, het, 'ayin*) and some vowels (*waw, yod*). The difficulty lies in knowing which of the Aramaic letters correspond to which of the Greek ones, especially when there are several of these difficult Aramaic letters in a row. I admit that there may be other legitimate ways to interpret the evidence than has been done so here, and I invite readers to be discerning and to think independently about this issue.[10]

9.   The major examples are words that end in the following: *alpha, alpha-sigma, eta-sigma, omicron-iota, omicron-nu, omicron-sigma, omicron-upsilon,* and *sigma.*

10.   This article reflects the second time I have wrestled with the issue of how to interpret the transliteration evidence. In my dissertation, I took a "minimalist" approach in which I was more likely to see certain vowels as accompanying consonants, and thus the corresponding Greek transliterations did not factor into the data; here I take a "maximalist" approach in which I have attempted to include as many Greek letters into the transliteration data as possible. This has had the effect of broadening the Greek transliteration possibilities of their underlying Aramaic letters (such as the Aramaic *yod*).

Table 1: Septuagint Transliterations: Certain

Aramaic	Greek	References and Transliterations	Total
א	α	Ezra 6.15: Αδαρ — אֲדָר	9
		Dan 2.14 etc (LXX/Th): Αριωχ — אַרְיוֹךְ	
		Ezra 4.9: Αρχυαῖοι — אַרְכְּוָי	
		Dan 4.10: Ασενναφαρ — אָסְנַפַּר	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.6 etc: Αφαρσαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαῖοι — אֲפָרְסָיֵא	
		Dan 3.1 (Th): Δεῖρα — דּוּרָא	
	η	Dan 5.0 LXX etc (LXX/Th): μανη — מְנֵא	2
ב	β	Dan 2.49 etc (LXX/Th): Αβδεναγω — עֲבֵד נְגוֹ	8
		Ezra 4.8 etc: βααλταμ — בְּעֵל־טְעֵם	
		Ezra 7.22: βάδων — בַּתִּין	
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	
		Dan 3.5 (LXX/Th): σαμβύκης-1 — סַבְּכָא	
		Dan 3.7 etc (Th): σαμβύκης-2 — שַׂבְּכָא	
ג	γ	Dan 2.49 etc (LXX/Th): Αβδεναγω — עֲבֵד נְגוֹ	2
ד	δ	Dan 2.49 etc (LXX/Th): Αβδεναγω — עֲבֵד נְגוֹ	5
		Ezra 6.15: Αδαρ — אֲדָר	
		Dan 3.1 (Th): Δεῖρα — דּוּרָא	
		Ezra 4.9: Διναῖοι — דִּינָיֵא	
ה	--	--	--
ו	ω	Dan 2.49 etc (LXX/Th): Αβδεναγω — עֲבֵד נְגוֹ	4
		Dan 2.14 etc (LXX/Th): Αριωχ — אַרְיוֹךְ	
	ει	Dan 3.1 (Th): Δεῖρα — דּוּרָא	1
	υ	Ezra 4.9: Αρχυαῖοι — אַרְכְּוָי	1
	ου	Ezra 4.8 etc: Ραουμ — רְחוּם	3
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	
		Ezra 4.9: Σουσαναχαῖοι — שׁוּשַׁנְכָיֵא	
ז	ζ	Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	1

ח	α	Ezra 4.8 etc: Ραουμ — רְחוּם	1
ט	τ	Ezra 4.8 etc: βααλταμ — בְּעֵל־טְעֵם	2
		Ezra 4.9: Ταρφαλλαῖοι — טַרְפְּלָיֵא	
י	ι	Dan 2.14 etc (LXX/Th): Αριωχ — אַרְיוֹךְ	3
		Dan 4.13 etc (Th): ιρ — עִיר	
	α	Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα[11] — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	1
	αι	Ezra 4.9: Αρχυαῖοι — אַרְכְּוָי	11
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.6, etc: Αφαρσαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסָכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαῖοι — אֲפָרְסָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9 (2x): Διναῖοι — דִּינָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Ηλαμαῖοι — עֵלְמָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Θανθαναι — תַּתְּנַי	
		Ezra 4.8 etc: Σαμσαι — שִׁמְשַׁי	
		Ezra 4.9: Σουσαναχαῖοι — שׁוּשַׁנְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Ταρφαλλαῖοι — טַרְפְּלָיֵא	
כ	χ	Dan 2.14 etc (LXX/Th): Αριωχ — אַרְיוֹךְ	6
		Ezra 4.9: Αρχυαῖοι — אַרְכְּוָי	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.6 etc: Αφαρσαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסָכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Σουσαναχαῖοι — שׁוּשַׁנְכָיֵא	
	κ	Dan 3.5 (LXX/Th): σαμβύκης-1 — סַבְּכָא	3
		Dan 3.7 etc (Th): σαμβύκης-2 — שַׂבְּכָא	
ל	λ	Ezra 4.8 etc: βααλταμ — בְּעֵל־טְעֵם	4
		Ezra 4.9: Ηλαμαῖοι — עֵלְמָיֵא	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): θεκελ — תְּקֵל	
	λλ	Ezra 4.9: Ταρφαλλαῖοι — טַרְפְּלָיֵא	1

11. Ezra 5.3 and so on: it should be noted that according to the Masoretic Text (MT), the final vowel is a *pathak yod*, which could help account for this "anomaly."

מ	μ	Ezra 4.8 etc: βααλταμ — בְּעֵל־טְעֵם	6
		Ezra 4.9: Ηλαμαῖοι — עֵלְמָיֵא	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): μανη — מְנֵא	
		Ezra 4.8 etc: Ραουμ — רְחוּם	
		Ezra 4.8 etc: Σαμσαι — שִׁמְשַׁי	
נ	ν	Dan 2.49 etc (LXX/Th): Αβδεναγω — עֲבֵד נְגוֹ	8
		Ezra 4.9: Διναῖοι — דִּינָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Θανθαναι — תַּתְּנַי	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): μανη — מְנֵא	
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	
		Ezra 4.9: Σουσαναχαῖοι — שׁוּשַׁנְכָיֵא	
	νν	Ezra 4.10: Ασεννναφαρ — אָסְנַפַּר	1
ס	σ	Ezra 4.10: Ασεννναφαρ — אָסְנַפַּר	8
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.6 etc: Αφαρσαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαῖοι — אֲפָרְסָיֵא	
		Dan 3.5 (LXX/Th): σαμβύκης-1 — סַבְּכָא	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): φαρες — פְּרֵס	
ע	α	Dan 2.49 etc (LXX/Th): Αβδεναγω — עֲבֵד נְגוֹ	3
		Ezra 4.8 etc: βααλταμ — בְּעֵל־טְעֵם	
	αα	Ezra 4.8 etc: βααλταμ — בְּעֵל־טְעֵם	1
	η	Ezra 4.9: Ηλαμαῖοι — עֵלְמָיֵא	1
	untransl.	Dan 4.13 etc (Th): ιρ — עִיר	1
פ	φ	Ezra 4.10: Ασεννναφαρ — אָסְנַפַּר	7
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.6 etc: Αφαρσαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαῖοι — אֲפָרְסָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Ταρφαλλαῖοι — טַרְפְּלָיֵא	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): φαρες — פְּרֵס	
צ	--	--	--

ק	κ	Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): θεκελ — תְּקֵל	2
ר	ρ	Ezra 6.15: Αδαρ — אֲדָר	15
		Dan 2.14 etc (LXX/Th): Αριωχ — אַרְיוֹךְ	
		Ezra 4.9: Αρχυαῖοι — אַרְכְּוָי	
		Ezra 4.10: Ασενναφαρ — אָסְנַפַּר	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.6 etc: Αφαρσαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסְכָיֵא	
		Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαῖοι — אֲפָרְסָיֵא	
		Dan 3.1 (Th): Δεῖρα — דוּרָא	
		Dan 4.13 etc (Th) ιρ — עִיר	
		Ezra 4.8 etc: Ραουμ — רְחוּם	
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	
		Ezra 4.9: Ταρφαλλαῖοι — טַרְפְּלָיֵא	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): φαρες — פְּרֵס	
שׁ	σ	Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	6
		Ezra 4.8 etc (2x): Σαμσαι — שִׁמְשַׁי	
		Ezra 4.9 (2x): Σουσαναχαῖοι — שׁוּשַׁנְכָיֵא	
		Dan 3.7 etc (Th): σαμβύκης-2 — שַׂבְּכָא	
ת	θ	Ezra 4.9: Αφαρσαθαχαῖοι — אֲפַרְסַתְכָיֵא	6
		Ezra 5.3 etc (2x): Θανθαναι — תַּתְּנַי	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): θεκελ — תְּקֵל	
		Ezra 5.3 etc: Σαθαρβουζανα — שְׁתַר בּוֹזְנַי	
	δ	Ezra 7.22 βάδων — בַּתִּין	1
Added letters	μ	Dan 3.5: σαμβύκης-1 — סַבְּכָא	2
		Dan 3.7 etc (Th) σαμβύκης-2 — שַׂבְּכָא	
	ν	Ezra 5.3 etc: Θανθαναι — תַּתְּנַי	1

Table 2: Septuagint Transliterations: Uncertain

Aramaic	Greek	References and Transliterations	Total
א	α	Ezra 4.8 etc (2x): Αρθασασθα — אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא [12]	6
		Ezra 7.12 etc: Εσδρα — עֶזְרָא	
		Dan 3.12 (LXX/Th): Ιουδαῖοι — יְהוּדָאיִן	
		Ezra 5.2: Σαλαθιηλ — שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל	
	η	Dan 2.13 etc (LXX/Th): Δανιηλ — דָּנִיֵּאל	6
		Ezra 5.1: Ισραηλ — יִשְׂרָאֵל	
		Dan 2.17: (LXX/Th): Μισαηλ — מִישָׁאֵל	
		Ezra 5.2: Σαλαθιηλ — שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל	
	untransl.	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αδδω — עִדּוֹא [13]	5
		Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-2 — בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר [14]	
ב	β	Ezra 5.2 (2x): Ζοροβαβελ — זְרֻבָּבֶל	9
		Dan 2.28 etc (LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר [15]	
		Ezra 5.14 etc: Σασαβασαρ — שֵׁשְׁבַּצַּר	
		Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-2 — בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר	
ג	γγ	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αγγαιος — חַגַּי	1

12. This name has three different spellings in the MT: אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא, אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא, and אַרְתַּחְשַׂסְתְּא. All have been counted as one spelling, except for אַרְתַּחְשַׂסְתְּא which has been counted separately only for *samekh*.

13. Spelled the same way in Hebrew, except for the variant in Zech 1:1: עִדּוֹ.

14. This name has two different spellings: בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר and בֵּלְאשַׁצַּר. Only the first has been included in the data.

15. This name has both *plene* and defective spelling. The *plene* spelling is the one that has been included in the data.

ד	δ	Dan 2.13 etc (LXX/Th): Δανιηλ — דָּנִיֵּאל	15
		Dan 3.12 (LXX/Th): Ιουδαῖοι — יְהוּדָאיִן	
		Dan 6.14 etc. (LXX/Th): Ἰουδαία — יְהוּד	
		Dan 3.8 etc (LXX/Th): Ιουδαίοι — יְהוּדָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.2: Ιωσεδεκ — יוֹצָדָק	
		Dan 5.28 etc (LXX/Th): Μῆδος — מָדַי	
		Dan 2.28 etc (LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Σεδραχ — שַׁדְרַךְ	
	δδ	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αδδω — עִדּוֹא	1
ה	α	Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Αζαρια — עֲזַרְיָה	5
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Ανανια — חֲנַנְיָה	
		Ezra 5.1: Ζαχαριας — זְכַרְיָה	
	η	Ezra 6.18: Μωυσῆ — מֹשֶׁה	1
	untransl.	Dan 3.12 (LXX/Th): Ιουδαῖοι — יְהוּדָאיִן	6
		Dan 6.14 etc (LXX/Th): Ἰουδαία — יְהוּד	
		Dan 3.8 etc (LXX/Th): Ιουδαίοι — יְהוּדָיֵא	
ו	υ	Dan 6.29 etc (LXX/Th): Κῦρος — כּוֹרֶשׁ	2
	ω	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αδδω — עִדּוֹא	2
		Ezra 5.2: Ιωσεδεκ — יוֹצָדָק	
	ου	Ezra 5.2: Ἰησοῦς — יֵשׁוּעַ	11
		Dan 3.12 (LXX/Th): Ιουδαῖοι — יְהוּדָאיִן	
		Dan 6.14 etc (LXX/Th): Ἰουδαία — יְהוּד	
		Dan 3.8 etc (LXX/Th): Ιουδαίοι — יְהוּדָיֵא	
		Dan 2.28 etc (LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	
		Dan 5.2 etc (LXX/Th): Ιερουσαλημ — יְרוּשְׁלֶם	
ז	ζ	Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Αζαρια — עֲזַרְיָה	4
		Ezra 5.1: Ζαχαριας — זְכַרְיָה	
		Ezra 5.2: Ζοροβαβελ — זְרֻבָּבֶל	
	σ	Ezra 7.12 etc: Εσδρα — עֶזְרָא	1

ח	α	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αγγαιος — חַגַּי	4
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Ανανια — חֲנַנְיָה	
		Ezra 4.8 etc: Αρθασασθα — אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא	
ט	untransl.	Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר [16]	2
י	ι	Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Αζαρια — עֲזַרְיָה	24
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Ανανια — חֲנַנְיָה	
		Dan 2.13 etc (LXX/Th): Δανιηλ — דָּנִיֵּאל	
		Ezra 5.1: Ζαχαριας — זְכַרְיָה	
		Dan 3.12 (2x; LXX/Th): Ιουδαῖοι — יְהוּדָאִין	
		Dan 6.14 etc. (LXX/Th): Ἰουδαία — יְהוּד	
		Dan 3.8 etc (LXX/Th): Ιουδαίοι — יְהוּדָיֵא	
		Ezra 5.1: Ισραηλ — יִשְׂרָאֵל	
		Ezra 5.2: Ιωσεδεκ — יוֹצָדָק	
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Μισαηλ — מִישָׁאֵל	
		Ezra 5.2: Σαλαθιηλ — שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל	
		Dan 5.2 etc (LXX/Th): Ιερουσαλημ — יְרוּשְׁלֶם	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Μισαχ — מֵישַׁ	
	ιη	Ezra 5.2: Ἰησοῦς — יֵשׁוּעַ	1
	ει	Ezra 4.17: Σαμαρεία — שָׁמְרָיִן	1
	αι	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αγγαιος — חַגַּי	3
		Dan 3.8 etc (LXX/Th): Ιουδαίοι — יְהוּדָיֵא	
כ	κ	Ezra 7.22: κόρων — כֹּרִין	3
		Dan 6.29 etc (LXX/Th): Κῦρος — כּוֹרֶשׁ	
	χ	Ezra 5.1: Ζαχαριας — זְכַרְיָה	7
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Μισαχ — מֵישַׁ	
		Dan 2.28 etc (LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Σεδραχ — שַׁדְרַ	

16.   One could make the argument that it is the *shin* that is not transliterated but based on the transliteration of Βαλτασαρ-2—בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר, it suggests that the *shin*, indeed, is transliterated here.

ל	λ	Dan 2.13 etc (LXX/Th): Δανιηλ — דָּנִיֵּאל	14
		Ezra 5.2: Ζοροβαβελ — זְרֻבָּבֶל	
		Ezra 5.1: Ισραηλ — יִשְׂרָאֵל	
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Μισαηλ — מִישָׁאֵל	
		Ezra 5.2 (2x): Σαλαθιηλ — שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל	
		Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-2 — בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.2 etc (LXX/Th): Ιερουσαλημ — יְרוּשְׁלֶם	
מ	μ	Dan 5.28 etc (LXX/Th): Μῆδος — מָדַי	10
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Μισαηλ — מִישָׁאֵל	
		Ezra 6.18: Μωυσῆ — מֹשֶׁה	
		Ezra 4.17: Σαμαρεία — שָׁמְרָיִן	
		Dan 5.2 etc (LXX/Th): Ιερουσαλημ — יְרוּשְׁלֶם	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Μισαχ — מֵישַׁךְ	
נ	ν	Dan 2.17 (2x; LXX/Th): Ανανια — חֲנַנְיָה	10
		Dan 2.13 etc (LXX/Th): Δανιηλ — דָּנִיֵּאל	
		Dan 2.28 etc (2x; LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	
ס	σ	Ezra 7.12 etc: Αρθασασθα[17] — אַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא	3
		Dan 5.28 (LXX/Th): Πέρσης — פָּרַס	
ע	α	Ezra 5.1 etc: Αδδω — עִדּוֹא	3
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Αζαρια — עֲזַרְיָה	
	ε	Ezra 7.12 etc: Εσδρα — עֶזְרָא	1
	untransl.	Ezra 5.2: Ἰησοῦς — יֵשׁוּעַ	1
פ	π	Dan 5.28: (LXX/Th): Πέρσης — פָּרַס	2
צ	σ	Ezra 5.2: Ιωσεδεκ — יוֹצָדָק	8
		Dan 2.28 etc (LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	
		Ezra 5.14 etc: Σασαβασαρ — שֵׁשְׁבַּצַּר	
		Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-2 — בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר	

17. This is a variant spelling introduced in chapter 7 (vv. 12, 21).

ק	κ	Ezra 5.2: Ιωσεδεκ — יוֹצָדָק	1
ר	ρ	Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Αζαρια — עֲזַרְיָה	24
		Ezra 4.8 etc: Αρθασασθα — אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׁתְּא	
		Ezra 7.12 etc: Εσδρα — עֶזְרָא	
		Ezra 5.1: Ζαχαριας — זְכַרְיָה	
		Ezra 5.2: Ζοροβαβελ — זְרֻבָּבֶל	
		Ezra 5.1: Ισραηλ — יִשְׂרָאֵל	
		Ezra 7.22: κόρων — כֹּרִין	
		Dan 6.29 etc (LXX/Th): Κῦρος — כּוֹרֶשׁ	
		Dan 2.28 etc (LXX/Th): Ναβουχοδονοσορ — נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	
		Dan 5.28 (LXX/Th): Πέρσης — פָּרַס	
		Ezra 4.17: Σαμαρείᾳ — שָׁמְרָיִן	
		Ezra 5.14 etc: Σασαβασαρ — שֵׁשְׁבַּצַּר	
		Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-2 — בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר	
		Dan 5.2 etc (LXX/Th): Ιερουσαλημ — יְרוּשְׁלֶם	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Σεδραχ — שַׁדְרַךְ	

ש	σ	Ezra 4.8 etc (2x): Αρθασασθα — אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא	19
		Ezra 5.2: Ἰησοῦς — יֵשׁוּעַ	
		Ezra 5.1: Ισραηλ — יִשְׂרָאֵל	
		Dan 6.29 (LXX/Th): Κῦρος — כּוֹרֶשׁ	
		Dan 2.17 (LXX/Th): Μισαηλ — מִישָׁאֵל	
		Ezra 6.18: Μωυσῆ — מֹשֶׁה	
		Ezra 5.2: Σαλαθιηλ — שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל	
		Ezra 4.17: Σαμαρεία — שָׁמְרָיִן	
		Ezra 5.14 etc (2x): Σασαβασαρ — שֵׁשְׁבַּצַּר	
		Dan 5.2 etc (LXX/Th): Ιερουσαλημ — יְרוּשְׁלֶם	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Μισαχ — מֵישַׁךְ	
		Dan 2.49 (LXX/Th): Σεδραχ — שַׁדְרַךְ	
	τ	Dan 2.26 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-1 — בֵּלְטְשַׁאצַּר	4
		Dan 5.0 etc (LXX/Th): Βαλτασαρ-2 — בֵּלְשַׁאצַּר	
ת	θ	Ezra 4.8 etc (2x): Αρθασασθα — אַרְתַּחְשַׁשְׂתְּא	3
		Ezra 5.2: Σαλαθιηλ — שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל	
Added letters	αι	Dan 6.14 etc. (LXX/Th): Ἰουδαία — יְהוּד	2
	δ	Ezra 7.12 etc: Εσδρα — עֶזְרָא	1

2.2. The New Testament

As for the New Testament, we are at a disadvantage since we only have the Greek transliterations and not the underlying Aramaic words themselves. The only recourse we have, therefore, is reconstruction. To assist us in this process, three modern works have been chosen on which the Aramaic reconstructions are based, namely, Hans Peter Rüger's encyclopedia entry "Aramäisch II: Im Neuen Testament," Fr. Bernard-Marie's chapter on Aramaic words in the New Testament in his *La langue de Jésus*, and the Greek-English dictionary *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*.[18] Additionally, due to the fact that WMA showed

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18. Rüger, "Aramäisch II," 3:602–610; Bernard-Marie, *La langue*, 29–44; Fredrick William Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd rev. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

great freedom in the interchange between final *aleph* and final *he*,[19] in the absence of the actual underlying Aramaic source one must decide how to reconstruct this portion of the word, and for the sake of consistency, and I have opted systematically for final *aleph*.[20]

Finally, it should be noted that while in other contexts it is completely legitimate to group the New Testament writings together as a single corpus, in this case it is not: since the individual writings were written by multiple authors, this must be taken into account when tabulating the translation instances. Therefore, each individual author has been counted as a separate witness to a transliterated word.[21] Aramaic words are found in the following books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, Hebrews, James, Revelation. From these sixteen books, eight separate authors have been identified in secondary literature:[22] Matthew (Matt.), Mark (Mark), Luke (Luke, Acts), John-1 (John), Paul (Rom, 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Gal, Col, 1 Thess, 2 Thess, 1 Tim), anonymous author of Hebrews (Hebrews), James (James), and John-2 (Rev).[23]

Thus, for example, the word αββα appears three times in the New Testament: Mark 14.36; Romans 8.15; Galatians 4.6. Its individual phonemic transliterations have not been counted as three transliteration instances (number of times it appears in the corpus), nor as one transliteration instance (as if the NT had been written by one author), but as two transliteration instances since two authors (Mark and Paul) individually have transliterated this word from Aramaic to Greek. This has been marked below by the sign "2 aut," "3 aut," and so forth.

The sign "2x" means that the same Aramaic-Greek transliteration occurs twice in the same word, and thus has been counted twice. The sign "etc" means that the same transliteration occurs in other places, with only the first appearance being listed.

19.   For example, cf. *Genesis Apocryphon* 20.9, 27, 34, where final *aleph* and final *he* are used interchangeably for the same word, אנתה//אנתא.

20.   While it may be argued that this decision skews the data against the transliteration data regarding *he*s, it must be noted that this study is looking for patterns of transliteration, and is not as interested in calculating the exact number of times a certain letter is transliterated from Aramaic into Greek. The *he* transliteration instances are well-represented in the data without the evidence from possible final *he*s. Notice, however, that I have included the final *he* variant in the Bar Kokhba letters for the word βαβαθα.

21.   This differs from how the LXX and Bar Kochba papyri have been handled because it is more certain how to distinguish between the various authors of the NT than it is between the other two sources.

22.   For general discussion, see. D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).

23.   On the debatable examples of grouping 1 Tim with Paul and of separating Rev from the Johannine literature, the data are not significantly affected either way, since only the word σατανας appears in these texts. If the reader were to disagree with both positions taken by the author, the numerical results would be exactly the same since the addition of another author for 1 Tim would be negated by the removal of another author for Rev. Similarly, if the reader were to disagree with only one position taken by the author, then the numerical results would differ by one.

Table 3: New Testament Transliterations

Aramaic	Greek	References and Transliterations	Total
א	α	Mark 14.36 etc (2x; 2 aut): αββα — אבא	45
		Matt 27.16 etc (2x): Βαραββᾶς — בר אבא	
		Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	
		Matt 27.33 etc (3 aut): Γολγοθᾶ — גלגלתא	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): λεμα — למא	
		John 1.42 etc (2 aut): Κηφᾶς — כיפא	
		Matt 27.6: κορβανᾶς — קרבנא	
		Matt 6.24 etc (2 aut): μαμωνᾶς — ממונא	
		Luke 10.38 etc (2 aut): Μάρθα — מרתא	
		Matt 26.2 etc (6 aut): πάσχα — פסחא	
		Matt 5.22: ῥακά — ריקא	
		Acts 5.1: Σάπφιρα — שפירא	
		Matt 13.33 etc (2x; 2 aut): σάτα — סאתא	
		Matt 4.10 etc (6 aut): σατανᾶς — סטנא	
		Luke 1.15: *σίκερα* — שכרא	
		Acts 9.36 etc: Ταβιθά — טביתא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	
		1 Cor 16:22 (2x): μαραναθα — מרנא אתא	
	ε	Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	2
		Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	
	η	Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	2
		Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	
	χ	Acts 1.19: Ἀκελδαμάχ — חקל דמא [24]	1
	untransl.	Matt 10.4 etc (2 aut): Καναναῖος — קנאן	4
		John 1.41: Μεσσίας — משיחא	
		1 Cor 16:22: μαραναθα — מרנא אתא [25]	

24. This is a very unexpected transliteration, yet even the textual variant (Αχελδαμαχ) ends the word with a Greek *chi*.

25. The two side-by-side Aramaic *alephs* were probably transliterated by one Greek *alpha*. For a defense of this transliteration, see my "Maranatha," 99–112.

ב	β	Matt 27.16 etc: Βαραββᾶς — בר אבא	25
		Matt 10.3 etc (3 aut): Βαρθολομαῖος — בר תלמי	
		Acts 13.6: Βαριησοῦς — בר ישוע	
		Matt 16.17: Βαριωνᾶ — בר יונה	
		Acts 4.36 etc (2x): Βαρναβᾶς — בר נבו	
		Mark 10.46: Βαρτιμαῖος — בר טמי	
		Matt 10.25 etc (2x; 3 aut): Βεελζεβούλ — בעל זבול [26]	
		Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	
		Mark 3.17: βοανηργές — בני רגש	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): σαβαχθανι — שבקתני	
		Mark 7.11: κορβᾶν — קרבן	
		Matt 27.6: κορβανᾶς — קרבנא	
		Acts 9.36 etc: Ταβιθά — טביתא	
	ββ	Mark 14.36 etc (2 aut): αββα — אבא	10
		Matt 27.16 etc Βαραββᾶς — בר אבא	
		Mark 10.51 (2 aut): ῥαββουνί — רבוני	
		Matt 12.1 etc (5 aut): σάββατον — שבתא	
ג	γ	Mark 3.17: βοανηργές — בני רגש	7
		Matt 27.33 etc (2x; 3 aut): Γολγοθᾶ — גלגלתא	
ד	δ	Acts 1.19: Ἀκελδαμάχ — חקל דמא	5
		Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	
ה	α	Matt 16.17: Βαριωνᾶ — בר יונה	1
	ω	Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	2
		Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	
	untransl.	Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	2
		Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	

26. There are Greek as well as potential Aramaic variants to this phase; the Greek variants are: Βεελζεβούβ and Βεεζεβούλ. The most likely Hebrew variant is בַּעַל זְבוּב (2 Kgs 1:2–3, 6, 16).

ו	ου	Acts 13.6: Βαριησοῦς — בר ישוע	7
		Matt 10.25 etc (3 aut): Βεελζεβούλ — בעל זבול	
		Mark 10.51 (2 aut): ῥαββουνί — רבוני	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	
	ω	Matt 16.17: Βαριωνᾶ — בר יונה	3
		Matt 6.24 etc (2 aut): μαμωνᾶς — ממונא	
ז	ζ	Matt 10.25 etc (3 aut): Βεελζεβούλ — בעל זבול	3
ח	α	Acts 1.19: Ἁκελδαμάχ — דמא חקל	2
		John 1.41 etc: Μεσσίας — משיחא	
	χ	Matt 26.2 etc (6 aut): πάσχα — פסחא	6
ט	τ	Mark 10.46: Βαρτιμαῖος — בר טמי	9
		Matt 4.10 etc (6 aut): σατανᾶς — סטנא	
		Acts 9.36 etc: Ταβιθά — טביתא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	

י	α	Matt 5.22: ῥακά — ריקא	1
	ι	Matt 16.17: Βαριωνᾶ — בר יונה	13
		Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	
		Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	
		Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	
		Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	
		Matt 27.46 (2 aut): σαβαχθανι — שבקתני	
		John 1.41 etc: Μεσσίας — משיחא	
		Mark 10.51 (2 aut): ῥαββουνί — רבוני	
		Acts 5.1: Σάπφιρα — שפירא	
		Acts 9.36 etc: Ταβιθά — טביתא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום [27]	
	ιη	Acts 13.6: Βαριησοῦς — בר ישוע	1
	αι	Matt 10.3 etc (3 aut): Βαρθολομαῖος — בר תלמי	8
		Mark 10.46: Βαρτιμαῖος — בר טמי	
		Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	
	η	Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	7
		Mark 3.17: βοανηργές — בני רגש	
		John 1.42 etc (2 aut): Κηφᾶς — כיפא	
כ	κ	John 1.42 etc (2 aut): Κηφᾶς — כיפא	3
		Luke 1.15: σίκερα — שכרא	

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27. If the second *yod* is accepted as the correct Aramaic ending for the fem. sg. impv., then there would be two transliteration examples here.

ל	λ	Acts 1.19: Ἀκελδαμάχ — חקל דמא	20
		Matt 10.3 etc (3 aut): Βαρθολομαῖος — בר תלמי	
		Matt 10.25 etc (2x; 3 aut): Βεελζεβούλ — בעל זבול	
		Matt 27.33 etc (3 aut): Γολγοθᾶ — גלגלתא	
		Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	
		Matt 27.46: ηλι — אלהי	
		Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	
		Mark 15.34: ελωι — אלהי	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): λεμα — למא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	
	untransl.	Matt 27.33 etc (3 aut): Γολγοθᾶ — גלגלתא	3
מ	μ	Acts 1.19: Ἀκελδαμάχ — חקל דמא	16
		Matt 10.3 etc (3 aut): Βαρθολομαῖος — בר תלמי	
		Mark 10.46: Βαρτιμαῖος — בר טמי	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): λεμα — למא	
		Matt 6.24 etc (2x; 2 aut): μαμωνᾶς — ממונא	
		Luke 10.38 etc (2 aut): Μάρθα — מרתא	
		John 1.41 etc: Μεσσίας — משיחא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	
		1 Cor 16:22: μαραναθα — מרנא אתא	
נ	ν	Matt 16.17: Βαριωνᾶ — בר יונה	22
		Acts 4:36 etc: Βαρναβᾶς — בר נבו	
		Mark 3.17: βοανηργές — בני רגש	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): σαβαχθανι — שבקתני	
		Matt 10.4 etc (2x; 2 aut): Καναναῖος — קנאן	
		Mark 7.11: κορβᾶν — קרבן	
		Matt 27.6: κορβανᾶς — קרבנא	
		Matt 6.24 etc (2 aut): μαμωνᾶς — ממונא	
		Mark 10.51 (2 aut): ῥαββουνί — רבוני	
		Matt 4.10 etc (6 aut): σατανᾶς — סטנא	
		1 Cor 16:22: μαραναθα — מרנא אתא	

ס	σ	Matt 26.2 etc (6 aut): πάσχα — פסחא	14
		Matt 4.10 etc (6 aut): σατανᾶς — סטנא	
		Matt 13.33 etc (2 aut): σάτα — סאתא	
ע	εε	Matt 10.25 etc (3 aut): Βεελζεβούλ — זבול בעל	3
	untransl.	Acts 13.6: Βαριησοῦς — בר ישוע	1
פ	π	Matt 26.2 etc (6 aut): πάσχα — פסחא	6
	φ	John 1.42 etc (2 aut): Κηφᾶς — כיפא	2
	πφ	Acts 5.1: Σάπφιρα — שפירא	1
צ	σ	Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	4
ק	κ	Acts 1.19: Ἀκελδαμάχ — חקל דמא [28]	7
		Matt 10.4 etc (2 aut): Καναναῖος — קנאן	
		Mark 7.11: κορβᾶν — קרבן	
		Matt 27.6: κορβανᾶς — קרבנא	
		Matt 5.22: ῥακά — ריקא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	
	χ	Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): σαβαχθανι — שבקתני	2
ר	ρ	Matt 27.16 etc: Βαραββᾶς — בר אבא	19
		Matt 10.3 etc (3 aut): Βαρθολομαῖος — בר תלמי	
		Acts 13.6: Βαριησοῦς — בר ישוע	
		Matt 16.17: Βαριωνᾶ — בר יונה	
		Acts 4.36 etc: Βαρναβᾶς — בר נבו	
		Mark 10.46: Βαρτιμαῖος — בר טמי	
		Mark 3.17: βοανηργές — בני רגש	
		Mark 7.11: κορβᾶν — קרבן	
		Matt 27.6: κορβανᾶς — קרבנא	
		Luke 10.38 etc (2 aut): Μάρθα — מרתא	
		Mark 10.51 (2 aut): ῥαββουνί — רבוני	
		Matt 5.22: ῥακά — ריקא	
		Acts 5.1: Σάπφιρα — שפירא	
		Luke 1.15: σίκερα — שכרא	
		1 Cor 16:22: μαραναθα — מרנא אתא	

28.   It should be noted that there are variants in this section, namely, Αχελδαμαχ and ραχα, which would change from *ki* to *chi*. These variants, however, have not been included in the data.

ש	σ	Acts 13.6: Βαριησοῦς — בר ישוע	11
		Mark 3.17: βοανηργές — בני רגש	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): σαβαχθανι — שבקתני	
		Matt 12.1 etc (5 aut): σάββατον — שבתא	
		Acts 5.1: Σάπφιρα — שפירא	
		Luke 1.15: σίκερα — שכרא	
	σσ	John 1.41 etc: Μεσσίας — משיחא	1
ת	θ	Matt 10.3 etc (3 aut): Βαρθολομαῖος — בר תלמי	19
		Matt 11.21 etc (4 aut): Βηθσαϊδά — בית צידא	
		Matt 27.33 etc (3 aut): Γολγοθᾶ — גלגלתא	
		Matt 27.46 etc (2 aut): σαβαχθανι — שבקתני	
		Luke 10.38 etc (2 aut): Μάρθα — מרתא	
		Matt 13.33 etc (2 aut): σάτα — סאתא	
		Acts 9.36 etc: Ταβιθά — טביתא	
		Mark 5.41: ταλιθα κουμ — טליתא קום	
		1 Cor 16:22: μαραναθα — מרנא אתא	
	τ	Matt 12.1 etc (5 aut): σάββατον — שבתא	5
Added letters	--	--	--

2.3. Archaeological Inscriptions from Jerusalem

As for the archaeological inscriptions from Jerusalem, all data have come from the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae. Volume 1: Jerusalem. Part 1: 1-704.*[29] The primary difficulty in assessing the data from this corpus comes from the fact that in many places a word could be either Hebrew or Aramaic.[30] This is true especially of the ossuaries, where frequently only the individual's name has been written without further clues which could help identify its original language. Thus as was done with the Septuagint above, two tables are presented below, one representing those words

29. Hannah Cotton et al., eds., *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae,* vol. 1, *Jerusalem: Part 1, 1–704* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

30. Although speaking of the Talmudic time period, one is reminded of M. H. Goshen-Gottstein's complaint, "I can only say from bitter experience as a lexicographer that it is often impossible to decide whether a certain word is intended to be Hebrew or Aramaic." Goshen-Gottstein, "The Language of Targum Onqelos and the Model of Literary Diglossia in Aramaic," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 37, no. 2 (1978): 169–79, here 175n28.

thought to be Aramaic with reasonable certainty, and another representing those considered uncertain as to their original language.[31]

Table 4: Archaeological Inscriptions from Jerusalem Transliterations: Certain

Aramaic	Greek	References and Transliterations	Total
א	ε	348: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	3
		348: Ελιεζρος — אליעזר	
		349: Ελισαβη — אלישבע	
ב	β	349: Ελισαβη — אלישבע	1
ג	--	--	--
ד	--	--	--
ה	untransl.	318: Ιοσ[ηφ] — יהוסף [32]	4
		493: Ιωναθης — יהותן	
		500: Ιωναθης — יהונתן	
		366: Ιωσηπος — יהוסף	
ו	o	318: Ιοσ[ηφ] — יהוסף	1
	ω	493: Ιωναθης — יהותן	3
		500: Ιωναθης — יהונתן	
		366: Ιωσηπος — יהוסף	
ז	ζ	348: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	2
		348: Ελιεζρος — אליעזר	
ח	α	411: Ανιν — חנין	1
ט	--	--	--
י	ι	411: Ανιν — חנין	7
		348: Ελιεζρος — אליעזר	
		349: Ελισαβη — אלישבע	
		318: Ιοσ[ηφ] — יהוסף	
		493: Ιωναθης — יהותן	
		500: Ιωναθης — יהונתן	
		366: Ιωσηπος — יהוסף	
	ια	356: Μαριαμη — מרים	1

31. Even with this caveat, however, it must be admitted that complete certainty as to someone's name is impossible. For example, even names found in clearly Aramaic texts may be Hebrew names given to an Aramaic-speaking person. It seems more likely that in such cases the name would be pronounced according to Aramaic pronunciation as opposed to Hebrew (that is, if such a difference were to be perceptible).

32. The Greek *eta-phi* ending has not been preserved in the original inscription and has been emended to the transliteration; they have not been included in the data.

כ	--	--	--
ל	λ	348: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר 348: Ελιεζρος — אליעזר 349: Ελισαβη — אלישבע	3
מ	μ	356 (2x): Μαριαμη — מרים	2
נ	ν	411 (2x): Ανιν — חנין 493: Ιωναθης — יהותן [33] 500: Ιωναθης — יהונתן	4
	untransl.	493: Ιωναθης — יהותן 500: Ιωναθης — יהונתן	2
ס	σ	318: Ιοσ[ηφ] — יהוסף 366: Ιωσηπος — יהוסף	2
ע	εα	348: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	1
	ε	348: Ελιεζρος — אליעזר	1
	η	349: Ελισαβη — אלישבע	1
פ	π	366: Ιωσηπος — יהוסף	1
צ	--	--	--
ק	--	--	--
ר	ρ	348: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר 348: Ελιεζρος — אליעזר 356: Μαριαμη — מרים	3
ש	σ	349: Ελισαβη — אלישבע	1
ת	θ	493: Ιωναθης — יהותן 500: Ιωναθης — יהונתן	2
Added letters	η	356: Μαριαμη — מרים	1

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33.   There is no underlying Aramaic *nun*, but its presence here is almost certainly assured by its presence elsewhere in *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae* (see no. 500) and its otherwise inexplicable absence. In other words, the absent Aramaic *nun* appears to be a scribal error.

Table 5: Archaeological Inscriptions from Jerusalem Transliterations: Uncertain

Aramaic	Greek	References and Transliterations	Total
א	α	266: Εζρας — עזרא 74 etc: Μαρθα — מרתא 110: Σαουλος — שאול 398: Σαφειρα — שפירא	4
	η	267: Ιωανηου — יוחנא	1
ב	β	330: Σαβατις — שבתית	1
ג	--	--	--
ד	--	--	--
ה	α	295: Ιεσουα — ישועה 21 etc: Μαρια — מריה	2
ו	ευ	354: Λευεις — לוי	1
	ω	267: Ιωανηου — יוחנא 307 etc: Σαλωμη — שלום [34] 279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון	3
	ου	295: Ιεσουα — ישועה 110: Σαουλος — שאול	2
ז	ζ	266: Εζρας — עזרא 199: Ζαχαριου — זכריה [35]	2
ח	α	267: Ιωανηου — יוחנא	1
	η	318: Μαναημ — מנחם [36]	1
ט	--	--	--

34. The Aramaic inscription ends with a medial *mem*, which has been preserved here.

35. The Aramaic final *he* has not been included in the data because its original corresponding Greek transliteration is unknown (the *omicron-upsilon* is the case ending).

36. The Aramaic *het* could have been transliterated by the Greek *alpha*, *eta*, or both. However, it seems most likely that the *alpha* represents the accompanying vocalic sound to the Aramaic *nun*. The same Aramaic and Greek transliteration occurs below in the Bar Kokhba documents, where the same decision has been made regarding its transliteration values.

י	ι	199: Ζαχαριου — זכריה 295: Ιεσουα — ישועה 267: Ιωανηου — יוחנא 21 etc: Μαρια — מריה 133 etc: Μαριαμη — מרים [37] 330: Σαβατις — שבתית 279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון 500: Σελασιων — שלמצין	8
	ει	354: Λευεις — לוי 398: Σαφειρα — שפירא	2
כ	χ	199: Ζαχαριου — זכריה	1
ל	λ	354: Λευεις — לוי 307 etc: Σαλωμη — שלום 110: Σαουλος — שאול 279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון 500: Σελασιων — שלמצין	5
מ	μ	318 (2x): Μαναημ — מנחם 74 etc: Μαρθα — מרתא 21 etc: Μαρια — מריה 133 etc (2x): Μαριαμη — מרים 307 etc: Σαλωμη — שלום 279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון	8
	untransl.	500: Σελασιων — שלמצין	1
נ	ν	267: Ιωανηου — יוחנא 318: Μαναημ — מנחם 279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון 500: Σελασιων — שלמצין	4
ס	--	--	--
ע	ε	266: Εζρας — עזרא	1
	untransl.	295: Ιεσουα — ישועה [38]	1
פ	φ	398: Σαφειρα — שפירא	1

37. The Aramaic inscription begins with a final *mem*, which has been preserved here.
38. The final *he* seems more likely to have been transliterated than the *'ayin*.

צ	σ	279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון	2
		500: Σελασιων — שלמצין	
ק	--	--	--
ר	ρ	266: Εζρας — עזרא	6
		199: Ζαχαριου — זכריה	
		74 etc: Μαρθα — מרתא	
		21 etc: Μαρια — מריה	
		133 etc: Μαριαμη — מרים	
		398: Σαφειρα — שפירא	
שׁ	σ	295: Ιεσουα — ישועה	7
		330: Σαβατις — שבתית	
		307 etc: Σαλωμη — שלום	
		110: Σαουλος — שאול	
		398: Σαφειρα — שפירא	
		279: Σελαμασιων — שלמציון	
		500: Σελασιων — שלמצין	
ת	θ	74 etc: Μαρθα — מרתא	1
	σ	330: Σαβατις — שבתית	1
	τ	330: Σαβατις — שבתית	1
Added letters	η	133 etc (2x): Μαριαμη — מרים	1

2.4. Greek documents from the Bar Kokhba period from the cave of letters

As for the Greek documents from the Bar Kokhba period found in the cave of letters, all data have come from Naphtali Lewis's work, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri*.[39] From this edition of the documents, four considerations have been taken into account. First, there are some names which were written interchangeably with either final *aleph* or final *he*. As with the New Testament above, I have chosen systematically to include the final *aleph* form. Second, due to the difficulties involved in the reconstruction of Aramaic words from Greek transliterations, as well as the fact that there is no known modern work which attempts to do so, only words which contain both the Greek and its corresponding

39. Naphtali Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989).

Aramaic equivalent have been included.[40] Third, both Greek and Aramaic spelling in this corpus is inconsistent, at times even within the same document.[41] This makes it difficult to determine which Greek word is transliterating which Aramaic word. Some of these variants have been noted in the footnotes, but the reader is directed to Naphtali Lewis's work for further information.[42] Fourth, whereas with other sources it has been possible to identify different authors and therefore adjust the numerical totals accordingly, there is no known comprehensive discussion of the various authors of these letters,[43] and therefore the corpus has been treated as a single unit.

Table 6: Bar Kokhba Transliterations

Aramaic	Greek	References and Transliterations	Total
א	α	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא 13.2 etc: βαβαθα — בבתא [44] 20.4 etc: Βησας — בסא 15.33 etc: Εγλας — עגלא 13.21 etc: Ελλουθα — אילותא 22.29: Μαχχουθας — מכותא [45] 18.5 etc: Σωμαλα — שמלא	7
	ε	17.3 etc: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	1
	η	14.36 etc: Ιωανης — יוחנא	1
	untransl.	13.21 etc: Ελλουθα — אילותא [46]	1

40.   That is, either present in the documents themselves or provided in a reconstructed form by Lewis. For example, while the Aramaic behind the word Αλγιφιαμμα (letter 16.18, 22) does not appear in the documents themselves, Lewis provides על גיף ימא on p. 136n1 as a reconstruction. This form has been included in the data. Thus only some of the words from section "VI. Geographical Names" in Lewis's index have been included in the data.

41.   For example, in letter 18, two Aramaic spellings (שלמצין, שלמציון) and two Greek transliterations (Σελαμψιωνη, Σελαμψιους) are found. It is impossible to know with certainty which Greek word is transliterating which Aramaic variant. For this reason, this specific example has not been included in the data.

42.   Another resource would be the Appendix in my dissertation: "Maranatha," 286–93.

43.   Lewis notes that letters 20–27, 34 are written by Germanos son of Judah (88), and letters 13–15, 17–18 were written by the same scribe (51, 54). But this is far from a comprehensive discussion of all the letters and authors from this corpus.

44.   There are both Greek and Aramaic variants of this word. The Greek variant has not been included in the data, but the Aramaic variant, which includes a final *he* as opposed to a final *aleph*, has been included in the appropriate place.

45.   There are Greek variants of this name: Μαχυθα and Μακουθα.

46.   This could also be seen as an untransliterated *yod*, but the characteristic weakness of the *aleph* leads me to believe that it does not contribute much to producing the *epsilon* sound at the beginning of the word.

ב	β	15.4 etc (2x): Αβδοοβδα — עבדעבדת	10
		13.2 etc (2x): βαβαθα — בבתא	
		27.5 etc (2x): Βαβελις — בבלי	
		20.4 etc: Βησας — בסא	
		17.5 etc: Ιακωβος — יעקוב	
		18.11 etc: Κιμβερ — קמבר	
		20.6 etc: Κινβερ — קמבר	
ג	γ	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	5
		16.25 (2x): Βαγαλγαλα — גלגל [47]	
		21.9 etc: γανναθ — גנת	
		15.33 etc: Εγλας — עגלא	
ד	δ	15.4 etc (2x): Αβδοοβδα — עבדעבדת	4
		15.32 etc: Ιουδας — יהודה	
		16.15 etc: Ιουδανης — יודן	
ה	α	14.39 etc: Ανανιας — חניה	3
		13.2 etc: βαβαθα — בבתה [48]	
		15.32 etc: Ιουδας — יהודה	
	untransl.	15.32 etc: Ιουδας — יהודה	2
		14.39 etc: Ιωσηπος — יוהסף	

47. The Greek *beta-alpha* beginning appears to reflect an Aramaic prefix and has not been included in the data.

48. The final *he* is a variant spelling found only at 15.37 (2x).

ו	ου	13.21 etc: Ελλουθα — אילותא	7
		5ai.16 etc: Ιησους — ישוע [49]	
		15.32 etc: Ιουδας — יהודה	
		16.15 etc: Ιουδανης — יודן	
		22.29: Μαχχουθας — מכותא	
		14.37 etc: Σαμμουος — שמוע	
		11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	
	ω	17.5 etc: Ιακωβος — יעקוב	5
		14.36 etc: Ιωανης — יוחנא	
		14.39 etc: Ιωσηπος — יוהסף	
		21.6 etc: Σιμων — שמעון	
		11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	
ז	ζ	17.3 etc: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	1
ח	α	14.39 etc: Ανανιας — חניה	2
		14.36 etc: Ιωανης — יוחנא	
	η	14.5 etc: Μαναημος — מנחם	1
ט	--	--	--

49. There are variants—real and potential—of this name: Ιησουου, Ιησουτος, Ιασσουου, and Ησους. They have not been included in the data, except for Ησους which has been included only as *yod–eta* transliteration.

י	ι	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	9
		14.39 etc: Ανανιας — חניה	
		27.5 etc: Βαβελις — בבלי	
		17.5 etc: Ιακωβος — יעקוב	
		15.32 etc: Ιουδας — יהודה	
		16.15 etc: Ιουδανης — יודן	
		14.36 etc: Ιωανης — יוחנא	
		14.39 etc: Ιωσηπος — יוהסף	
		11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	
	ια	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	2
		20.41 etc: ιαθμεις — יתמא [50]	
	ιη	5ai.16 etc: Ιησους — ישוע	1
	η	15.33: Ησους — ישוע	1
	ε	13.21 etc: Ελλουθα — אילותא	1
כ	κ	16.17 etc: κορος — כר	1
	χ	11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	1
	χχ	22.29: Μαχχουθας — מכותא [51]	1
ל	λ	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	7
		27.5 etc: Βαβελις — בבלי	
		16.25 (2x): Βαγαλγαλα — גלגל	
		15.33 etc: Εγλας — עגלא	
		17.3 etc: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	
		18.5 etc: Σωμαλα — שמלא	
	λλ	13.21 etc: Ελλουθα — אילותא	1

50. The Greek *epsilon-iota-sigma* ending is debatable with relationship to the Aramaic *aleph* ending. Neither the Greek nor Aramaic endings have been included in the data.

51. The second *chi* may be a scribal error (see. Lewis, *Document*s, 101).

מ	μ	20.41 etc: ιαθμεις — יתמא	8
		18.11 etc: Κιμβερ — קמבר	
		14.5 etc (2x): Μαναημος — מנחם	
		16.29 etc: Μανθανθου — מנתנתא	
		22.29: Μαχχουθας — מכותא	
		21.6 etc: Σιμων — שמעון	
		18.5 etc: Σωμαλα — שמלא	
	μμ	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	2
		14.37 etc: Σαμμουος — שמוע	
	ν	20.6 etc: Κινβερ — קמבר	1
נ	ν	14.39, etc (2x): Ανανιας — חנניה	9
		16.15 etc: Ιουδανης — יודן	
		14.36 etc: Ιωανης — יוחנא	
		14.5 etc: Μαναημος — מנחם	
		16.29 etc (2x): Μανθανθου — מנתנתא	
		21.6 etc: Σιμων — שמעון	
		11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	
	νν	21.9 etc: γανναθ — גנת	1
ס	σ	20.4 etc: Βησας — בסא	2
		14.39 etc: Ιωσηπος — יוהסף	
ע	α	15.4 etc: Αβδοοβδα — עבדעבדת	3
		16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	
		17.5 etc: Ιακωβος — יעקוב	
	ε	15.33 etc: Εγλας — עגלא	1
	εα	17.3 etc: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	1
	ο	14.37 etc: Σαμμουος — שמוע	1
	οο	15.4 etc: Αβδοοβδα — עבדעבדת [52]	1
	untransl.	5ai.16 etc: Ιησους — ישוע	2
		21.6 etc: Σιμων — שמעון	
פ	π	14.39 etc: Ιωσηπος — יוהסף	1
	φ	16.18 etc: Αλγιφιαμμα — על גיף ימא	1
צ	--	--	--

52. The variant spelling in 15.33 of Αβδαοβδα yields a translated value *alpha-omicron* for the *'ayin*.

ק	κ	17.5 etc: Ιακωβος — יעקוב	3
		18.11 etc: Κιμβερ — קמבר	
		20.6 etc: Κινβερ — קמבר	
ר	ρ	17.3 etc: Ελεαζαρου — אלעזר	4
		18.11 etc: Κιμβερ — קמבר	
		20.6 etc: Κινβερ — קמבר	
		16.17 etc: κορος — כר	
ש	σ	5ai.16 etc: Ιησους — ישוע	5
		14.37 etc: Σαμμουος — שמוע	
		21.6 etc: Σιμων — שמעון	
		18.5 etc: Σωμαλα — שמלא	
		11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	
ת	θ	13.2 etc: Βαβαθα — בבתא	8
		21.9 etc: γανναθ — גנת	
		13.21 etc: Ελλουθα — אילותא	
		20.41 etc: ιαθμεις — יתמא	
		16.29 etc (2x): Μανθανθου — מנתנתא	
		22.29: Μαχχουθας — מכותא	
		11.2 etc: Χθουσιων — כתושיון	
	untransl.	15.4 etc: Αβδοοβδα — עבדעבדת [53]	1
Added letters	--	--	--

2.5. Totals from the four corpora

When combining the totals from the four corpora presented above, the transliteration totals from WMA into Greek is as follows.

Table 7: Master Transliteration Chart

53.   This may have been left untransliterated because it was the last letter of the name and was dropped in order to convert the Semitic name into a "Greek" form that ends in *alpha*.

2.5. Totals from the four corpora

When combining the totals from the four corpora presented above, the transliteration totals from WMA into Greek is as follows.

Table 7: Master Transliteration Chart

Aramaic	Greek	LXX cert.	LXX uncert.	NT	Jerusa-lem cert.	Jeru-salem uncert.	Bar Kokhba	Total[54]
א	α	9	6	45	--	4	7	71/61
	ε	--	--	2	3	--	1	6
	η	2	6	2	--	1	1	12/5
	χ	--	--	1	--	--	--	1
	untransl.	--	5	4	--	--	1	10/5
ב	β	8	9	25	1	1	10	54/44
	ββ	--	--	10	--	--	--	10
ג	γ	2	--	7	--	--	5	14
	γγ	--	1	--	--	--	--	1/0
ד	δ	5	15	5	--	--	4	29/14
	δδ	--	1	--	--	--	--	1/0
ה	α	--	5	1	--	2	3	11/4
	η	--	1	--	--	--	--	1/0
	ω	--	--	2	--	--	--	2
	untransl.	--	6	2	4	--	2	14/8
ו	ει	1	--	--	--	--	--	1
	ευ	--	--	--	--	1	--	1/0
	ο	--	--	--	1	--	--	1
	ου	3	11	7	--	2	7	30/17
	υ	1	2	--	--	--	--	3/1
	ω	4	2	3	3	3	5	20/15
ז	ζ	1	4	3	2	2	1	13/7
	σ	--	1	--	--	--	--	1/0
ח	α	1	4	2	1	1	2	11/6
	η	--	--	--	--	1	1	2/1
	χ	--	--	6	--	--	--	6
ט	τ	2	--	9	--	--	--	11
	untransl.	--	2	--	--	--	--	2/0

54.   The first figure includes the totals from the two "uncertain" charts, while the second figure (if there is one) excludes them.

י	α	1	--	1	--	--	--	2
	αι	11	3	8	--	--	--	22/19
	ε	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
	ει	--	1	--	--	2	--	3/0
	η	--	--	7	--	--	1	8
	ι	3	24	13	7	8	9	64/32
	ια	--	--	--	1	--	2	3
	ιη	--	1	1	--	--	1	3/2
כ	κ	3	3	3	--	--	1	10/7
	χ	6	7	--	--	1	1	15/7
	χχ	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
ל	λ	4	14	20	3	5	7	53/34
	λλ	1	--	--	--	--	1	2
	untransl.	--	--	3	--	--	--	3
מ	μ	6	10	16	2	8	8	50/32
	μμ	--	--	--	--	--	2	2
	ν	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
	untransl.	--	--	--	--	1	--	1/0
נ	ν	8	10	22	4	4	9	57/43
	νν	1	--	--	--	--	1	2
	untransl.	--	--	--	2	--	--	2
ס	σ	8	3	14	2	--	2	29/26
ע	α	3	3	--	--	--	3	9/6
	αα	1	--	--	--	--	--	1
	ε	--	1	--	1	1	1	4/2
	εα	--	--	--	1	--	1	2
	εε	--	--	3	--	--	--	3
	η	1	--	--	1	--	--	2
	ο	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
	οο	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
	untransl.	1	1	1	--	1	2	6/4
פ	π	--	2	6	1	--	1	10/8
	πφ	--	--	1	--	--	--	1
	φ	7	--	2	--	1	1	11/10
צ	σ	--	8	4	--	2	--	14/4
ק	κ	2	1	7	--	--	3	13/12
	χ	--	--	2	--	--	--	2
ר	ρ	15	24	19	3	6	4	71/41
ש	σ	6	19	11	1	7	5	49/23
	σσ	--	--	1	--	--	--	1
	τ	--	4	--	--	--	--	4/0

ת	δ	1	--	--	--	--	--	1
	θ	6	3	19	2	1	8	39/35
	σ	--	--	--	--	1	--	1/0
	τ	--	--	5	--	1	--	6/5
	untransl.	--	--	--	--	--	1	1
Added letters	αι	--	2	--	--	--	--	2/0
	δ	--	1	--	--	--	--	1/0
	η	--	--	--	1	1	--	2/1
	μ	2	--	--	--	--	--	2
	ν	1	--	--	--	--	--	1

3. Summary and Example Application

With the survey of Aramaic to Greek transliterations completed, we can now evaluate the transliteration patterns. For many Aramaic letters, especially for those which are neither gutturals nor frequently identified with vowels, there is a one-to-one correspondence with Greek ones. Thus, except for a very few isolated instances: ב = β, ג = γ, ד = δ, ז = ζ, ט = τ, ל = λ, מ = μ, נ = ν, ס = σ, צ = σ, ק = κ, ר = ρ, שׁ = σ.[55] There is another set of Aramaic letters that has not one, but two, consistent transliteration possibilities into Greek: כ = κ or χ, פ = π or φ, ת = τ or θ.[56] Finally, the Aramaic gutturals and consonants frequently identified with vowels display the widest variety of Greek transliterations: א is typically associated with *a*- or *e*-class Greek vowels, and it is often left untransliterated; ה is most often associated with *a*-class vowels, but even more often is left untransliterated altogether; ו is often associated with *o*-class vowels, but has a total of six transliteration possibilities; ח is typically associated with *a*-class vowels, but also is associated with *e*-class vowels and even gutturals; י is associated with *a*- and *e*-class vowels, as well as with dipthongs; and ע shows the greatest variety of transliterational possibilities, being associated with *a*-, *e*-, and *o*-class vowels, dipthongs, and is left untransliterated at times.

Allow me to close with an example of how the transliterational data studied in this essay can be applied to other fields of study.[57] Currently, the majority interpretation of the expression μαραναθα (*maranatha*; cf. 1 Cor 16:22) is that the underlying Aramaic verb אתא (*atha*; to come) is an imperative, thereby yielding the translation "Our Lord, come!" However, it is well-known that III-*aleph*/*he* verbs, to which *atha*

55. One notices immediately from this list that the Greeks had difficulty in transliterating the Aramaic sibilants, and systematically utilized the *sigma* for all three.

56. These three Aramaic letters correspond to three of the *begadkephat* letters of the Hebrew/Aramaic alphabet and presumably reflect the differences between the hard and soft pronunciations. For some observations from a Hebrew perspective regarding the pronunciation of *begadkephat* letters (and others), see Sperber, "Hebrew," 127–132.

57. The following is a summary of my article entitled "*Maranatha* (1 Corinthians 16:22): Reconstruction and Translation Based on Western Middle Aramaic," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 139, no. 2 (2020): 361-383.

belongs, end in a final *yod* in the 2 ms imperative form, thus yielding the form אתי (*athi/e*; come!). The transliterational data helps us see that the final Greek *alpha* in μαραναθα is a very unlikely (although not impossible) transliterational equivalent for the Aramaic *yod*. Rather, Greek *alphas* are much more likely to have transliterated Aramaic gutturals, especially *alephs* and *hes*. Therefore, a much more likely scenario is that the verb *atha* is not in the imperative, but rather in the 3 ms perfect form, which ends in a final *aleph*/*he*. This supports interpreting *maranatha*, not as a prayer (impv.), but rather as a declaration (perf.), meaning "Our Lord has come."

Targumic Forerunners:
How Codex Colbertinus-Sarravianus (G)
Demonstrates Targumic Tendencies

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Before Targumic texts existed, the Septuagint (LXX) was translated in Alexandria. This translation of the Pentateuch from Hebrew to Greek was the first of its kind and literally the stuff of legend.[1] It is a well-known problem in Old Testament textual studies that the LXX translation does not align exactly with the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT) standard today.[2] The differences between the LXX and MT raise several questions: 1) are the differences due to different idioms? 2) is there a theological motivation behind the differences? 3) was the LXX translated from a Hebrew *Vorlage* that is different from the MT?

Since most in the Early Church did not know Hebrew, they assumed the priority of the LXX over the Hebrew Scriptures, believing that God had given the LXX to the Early Church in his providence.[3] These problems were not unknown in the Early Church, however. They were not fully documented until Origen's work on the Hexapla. Origen was distressed by the lack of agreement he noticed between the church's Bible and the Hebrew text of his day.[4] He took it upon himself to create a columned Bible—the Hexapla—to provide the material to produce a new recension.[5] He used an asterisk (※) to mark Greek text not originally in the ecclesiastical Greek

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1.   For discussions of the *Letter to Aristeas*, see common LXX introductions such as Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, ed. Henry St. John Thackeray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Natalio Fernandez Marco, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* (Boston: Brill, 2000); Jennifer Dines, *The Septuagint*, Understanding the Bible in Its World (New York: T & T Clark, 2004).

2.   The question of Old Testament textual criticism would take this article too far afield. The literature for these questions is vast. Standard introductions are Emmanuel Tov (*Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd Edition [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012]) and Ellis Brotzman (*Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994]). For a recent treatment of these questions from the LXX perspective, see Matthew Miller, "The Aristarchian Signs in Codex Colbertinus-Sarravianus" (PhD Diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019).

3.   Origen, *Sur les Ecritures: Philocalie, 1–20 et La Lettre à Africanus, ed., trans.,* N. R. M. de Lange, Sources Chrétiennes 302 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1983).

4.   Origen, *Origenes Matthäuserklärung I: die griechisch erhaltenen Tomoi. Band 10 of Origenes Werke,* ed., Erich Klostermannj, Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 40 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 13.14.

5.   For a defense of this understanding of Origen's work, see Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs.*

text but corresponding to the Hebrew *Vorlage*, and he used the *obelus* (÷) to mark Greek text without correspondence to the Hebrew *Vorlage*.[6]

The passages marked with an *obelus* are the present focus, since these usually note text that was added in translation. The obelized material demonstrates interpretive tendencies that are common with the Aramaic Targums. The source for the present study is Codex Colbertinus-Sarravianus (G).[7] Documenting all of the *obeli* is outside the scope of the present study. I will focus on three passages that demonstrate Targumic patterns most clearly: Numbers 14, Numbers 17 (16), and Deuteronomy 15:2.

Before exploring these three passages in detail, it is necessary to show the benefits of limiting the present study to one Greek manuscript. Also, an overview of the general Targumic tendencies will help orient the reader to the patterns in the passages.

The Value of Codex Colbertinus-Sarravianus[8]

Codex Colbertinus-Sarravianus is a fourth to fifth century AD Greek manuscript of Genesis through Ruth with *lacunae*. This Greek manuscript preserves a greater number of Origen's Hexaplaric signs than any other Greek manuscript. It preserves the signs with a high degree of accuracy vìs-a-vìs the Hebrew *Vorlage*. When the signs are taken into account, this manuscript serves as a witness to the original LXX translation. Since this manuscript serves as a witness to the original LXX, the translation tendencies shed light on the early interpretive practices of Second Temple Judaism. These practices later appear in the Targums.

Targumic Patterns

Before moving to the specific passages, it will be helpful to gain some background about what the different targumic tendencies are. The following characteristics come from McNamara's *Targum and Testament Revisited*.[9]

- The paraphrase must adhere to the biblical text
- Close attention to the details of the Hebrew text
- Interpretation and concern for the unlearned
- Explanation of difficulties and contradictions

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6. Origen, *Commentary on Matthew*, 13.14; Origen, *Sur les Ecritures,* 532.

7. Henry Omont, ed., *Vetus Testamentus Graece Codicis Sarraviani-Colbertini quae supersunt in Bibliothecis Leidensi Pariesiensi Petropolitana phototypice edita* (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1897); Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs.*

8. This section relies on Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs*, 23–5.

9. McNamara, *Targum and Testament*, 101–20. The following bullets are the headings under which more specific examples are given in the chapter.

- Converse translation
- Reverential manner in speaking of God and anti-anthropomorphisms
- Respect for the Elders of Israel: Euphemistic Translation
- Derogatory Translation
- Later doctrine read into the interpretation
- Homiletic nature of certain passages
- Updating of geographical and patronymic terms
- Updating of biblical coins and weights

These patterns range from simple explanation to broad, canonical interpretation. They are unified by concern for the Hebrew text and a desire to explain both the surface and the spiritual significance of the text.

Many of these tendencies are present in the Septuagint text. Most commonly, the translator drew conclusions from the details of the Hebrew text and read later doctrine into earlier passages. For an example of the latter in Codex G, it is common to find the *obelus* before και ααρων when the Hebrew text mentions Moses alone.[10] This addition in translation fits with the ascendancy of the priesthood evident in Chronicles (see 1 Chron 6). The role of the priest became more prominent in the Second Temple period, especially following the Maccabean revolt. The translator consistently placed Aaron at the same level as Moses, subtly interpreting the authority of the priesthood for his readers. According to this slight modification, the priesthood stood at the same level as Moses, since the translator included Aaron in each of the major disputes during the wilderness wanderings. This is but one modest example of a Targumic tendency in the LXX.

The examples before us contain not just simple updating, but significant interpretation of the passages. The additions to the Greek text provide a window into the interpretive practices of the Septuagint translators. These practices show us how certain passages were interpreted and understood. These interpretations bring out details of the text that shed light on the specific problems present in these passages.

A Brief Table of Signs

Throughout this article, I will use several signs to simplify discussions. I am including this section to interpret these signs for the reader.
- The overline ($\overline{\iota\eta\lambda}$) is used in the text to signify a *nomen sacrum* (sacred name). Words such as Joshua (), God (), Spirit (), and Israel would be abbreviated. This practice was common in early Christian texts.
- The underline signifies the reading that I discuss in the subsequent commentary.
- The Aristarchian signs have been mentioned before. These are the asterisk (÷), the *obelus* (÷), and the *metobelus* (↙). I refer the reader to the earlier discussion

10. This paragraph is indebted to Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs*, 298.

of the significance of the asterisk and *obelus*. The *metobelus* often closes a reading, though it can have a wider range of uses as well.[11]

Numbers 14 and Exodus 16; 34

Numbers 14 contains the account of Israel's refusal to enter Canaan. In Codex G, obelized readings in this passage make connections to passages in Exodus. Through these connections, the translator adduces the theological significance of Israel's refusal to enter Canaan. I list the relevant passages for the reader's reference, followed by commentary on each passage and a summary of the whole interpretation.[12]

Numbers 14:10

και ειπεν πασα η συναγωγη καταλιθοβολησαι αυτους εν λιθοις και η δοξα κυ ωφθη ÷ εν νεφελη ∠ επι της σκηνης του μαρτυριου εν πασιν τοις υιοις ιηλ

The phrase εν νεφελη stands under the obelus, meaning that these words are not native to the translator's Hebrew text. The sentence η δοξα κυριου ωφθη εν νεφελη is not common in the Old Testament, found only in Exodus 16:10, when Israel complained about lacking food. In that passage the Israelites were at the point of killing Moses when Yahweh intervened. In Numbers 14:10 they are ready to stone him. The translator paid close attention to the Hebrew text, noting that in both passages Israel grumbled and threatened the life of Moses. And the translator inserted a phrase (εν νεφελη) to draw the connection between the two passages.

Additionally, the δοξα κυριου would connect the present passage with Exodus 33—34 when the glory of Yahweh was revealed to Moses. This phrase, native to the Hebrew text, provides the textual detail that allows the translator to link the Exodus 16, Exodus 33—34, and Numbers 14 textually and theologically. The connection between grumbling and idolatry is suggested by the common theme of the glory of Yahweh. The translator makes this suggestion explicit. These kinds of translations, based on details and close associations, appear to fall under the heading of associative translation.[13]

Numbers 14:18

κς μακροθυμος και πολυελεος ÷ και αληθινος ∠ αφαιρων ανομιας και αδικιας ÷ και αμαρτιας ∠ και καθαρισμω ου καθαριει ÷ τον ενοχον ∠ αποδιδους αμαρτιας πατερων επι τεκνα εως τριτης και τεταρτης

11. Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs*, 419–23.

12. The following passages with marks are found in Codex Colbertinus-Sarravianus. The brief commentary on each passage is paraphrased from Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs*.

13. McNamara, *Targum and Testament*, 107.

Numbers 14:18 contains three obelized phrases: και αληθινος, και αμαρτιας, and τον ενοχον. These phrases are not native to the Hebrew text of Numbers 14:18. With these phrases inserted, the verse reads more closely to Exodus 34:6–7 in the LXX. The translator noticed that this verse cited the Exodus passage and inserted the additional words to clarify and explain the connection between the two passages, making explicit what was implied by the abbreviated citation. As in the previous passage, the translator pays attention to the details of the Hebrew text and applies an associative translation.

Numbers 14:21

αλλα ζω εγω ÷ και ζων το ονομα μου ∠ και εμπλησει η δοξα κ̅υ̅ πασαν την γην

The phrase και ζων το ονομα μου is obelized in Numbers 14:21. This phrase does not occur anywhere else in the LXX.[14] One may wonder why it was inserted. However, if we understand the Targumic principle of paying close attention to the details of the text, the mystery unravels. In Numbers 14:21, the phrase δοξα κυριου appears again, linking this verse with Yahweh's revelation of His glory in Exodus 34:6–7. Exodus 33:19 states that Yahweh will declare His name and make His glory pass before Moses. In Exodus 34:6–7 He does so. Yahweh declares His name as He also declares His attributes. His name is linked with His attributes.

It is not surprising then to see the translator insert the phrase και ζων το ονομα μου in the text. This addition adheres to the biblical text of Numbers 14:21 and arises from the translator paying close attention to the details of the text.

The passages listed above are not the only obelized passages in Numbers 14. However, their proximity and tendency points to the translator's central theological conclusion: Israel grumbled against Yahweh like they did in Exodus 16. Yahweh planned to them out as He did after the Golden Calf incident in Exodus. Although this passage does not cite idolatry, the translator was sensitive to the presence of language from Exodus and drew the conclusion that the Exodus generation grumbled because they had already forsaken their allegiance to Yahweh. The previous chapter (Num 13) demonstrates that Israel did not believe God and therefore refused to enter the land. The translator joins grumbling against Yahweh and unbelief with idolatry.

The theological tendency of these passages in Numbers falls under the headings of paying close attention to the details of the text and associative translation. The translator noticed that the language in the Hebrew text was native to certain passages only, and therefore drew theological conclusions. These theological conclusions about Numbers 14 appear to be common in the Intertestamental Period, since the New Testament picks them up in 1 Corinthians 10 and Hebrews 3—4.

14. Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs*, 272.

Numbers 16 (17) and Leviticus 10

Numbers 16—17 recounts Korah's rebellion against Moses and Aaron with the resulting aftermath. Korah and his followers complained that they had the same status as did Moses and Aaron (Num 16:3). They specifically complain about their exclusion from the priesthood (Num 16:10). Yahweh imposes a test, requiring all the involved parties bring censers before Him (Num 16:6–7). Korah and his followers appear before the Tent of Meeting (Num 16:19 and the earth swallowed the families of the rebels (16:31–32) and fire went out from the Tent of Meeting to consume those who were offering incense (16:35).

The circumstances of this judgment prompted the translator to connect this episode to a similar incident in Leviticus 10. In Leviticus 10, Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before Yahweh. By doing so they forfeited their lives, being consumed with fire that came out of the sanctuary. The following passage contained material that makes these connections clear and shows that the translator paid close attention to the details of the text. The connections made by the translator illuminate difficulties in both Leviticus 10 and Numbers 17 (16).

Numbers 16:37 (17:2)

και προς ελεαζαρ ααρων τον ιερεαν ανελεσθε τα πυρια ÷ τα χαλκα ∠ εκ μεσου των κατακεκαυμενων και το πυρ ÷ το αλλοτριον τουτο ∠ σπειρον εκει οτι ηγιασαν

The key obelized phrase is το αλλοτριον τουτο, modifying το πυρ. Since this phrase occurs under the obelus, it has no correspondence to the Hebrew text. The translator added it by way of explanation. In Numbers, αλλοτριον occurs with πυρ when the text refers to Nadab and Abihu (Num 3:4; 26:61). In both occurrences, Numbers connects back to Leviticus 10. When Nadab and Abihu offered "strange fire" before Yahweh they were consumed. In this passage, the fire (πυρ) was a detail in the text that suggested the previous illicit offering. The translator was explicitly connecting the rebellion of Korah with the illicit offering of Nadab and Abihu.

In this passage the translator connects the sin of Korah with the sin of Nadab and Abihu. The connection illuminates both episodes. Korah and his followers sought to usurp authority that was not theirs, and therefore they had no right to offer incense in worship. Yahweh judged them outside of the Tent of Meeting. They complained that they were not permitted to exercise the same functions as Aaron. Since they were not authorized to perform priestly functions, their offering was rejected and they met the same fate as Nadab and Abihu.

Regarding Nadab and Abihu, little is said in Leviticus concerning their error. The text merely states that they offered "strange fire" before Yahweh. Given the connection the translator makes to Korah, it can be deduced that, at a minimum, Nadab and Abihu were not authorized to offer what they were offering at that time.

The Targumic principles of paying close attention to the details of the text and explaining difficulties are at work, connecting two obscure passages that contain a common judgment.

Deuteronomy 15:2

The previous focal passages showed similar Targumic patterns. The additions linked passages in Numbers to passages in Exodus and Leviticus. The passages in Numbers contained phrases that suggested theological connections to the translator. The next focal passage, Deut 15:2, illustrates a more complex Targumic principle: that of converse translation. A converse translation says the opposite of what the Hebrew text says.[15] As with all Targumic tendencies, converse translation can range from rather extreme changes to slight variations.[16] In this example, the full Hebrew text is reproduced to aid the discussion.

Deuteronomy 15:2

και ουτως το προσταγμα της αφεσεως αφησεις παν χρεος ιδιον ο οφειλει σοι ÷ ο πλησιον ※ σου ∠ ουκ απαιτησεις ※ τον πλησιον σου ∠ και τον αδελφον σου οτι επικεκληται αφεσις κ͞ω ÷ τω σου ∠

וזה דבר השמטה שמוט כל בעל משה ידו אשר ישה ברעהו לא יגש את רעהו ואת אחיו כי קרא שמטה ליהוה

The translator inserted the final obelized phrase, τω θεω σου, to synthesize the translation of Deuteronomy. The phrase κυριος ο θεος σου is a common phrase in Deuteronomy. When the full phrase did not occur, the translator inserted what was missing so that the different occurrences would read similarly.[17] This pattern fits the Targumic patterns we have already observed.

The interesting *obelus* occurs at the beginning of the verse. Strictly speaking, the reading ÷ ο πλησιον is not native to the Hebrew text. The corresponding Hebrew text reads ברעהו, which is a prepositional phrase. The reading in the Greek text does not occur in a prepositional phrase. Since Origen sought to mark formal equivalence in his text critical work, this reading was obelized.[18] This reading disambiguates the subject of the Greek text, making clear that the subject of the verb is not the relative pronoun ο.

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15. McNamara, *Targum and Testament*, 110.

16. McNamara, *Targum and Testament*, 111.

17. Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs*, 300.

18. Miller, *The Aristarchian Signs,* 44. Miller discusses Origen's criterion of formal equivalence. A formally equivalent translation represents every detail of a text in the translation. This philosophy of translation does not require slavish adherence to the idiom of the source language.

What makes this reading interesting is that the Greek text gains an ambiguity because the translator changed the person in the translation. The Hebrew text at the point of the *obelus* is אֲשֶׁר יִשֶּׁה בְרֵעֵהוּ. In this sentence, רעה is the object of the preposition בּ. The pronominal suffix is 3ms in Hebrew, while the Greek translation the second person pronoun is used. In Greek, ο πλησιον does not occur in a prepositional phrase. The Greek translator altered the translation so that the neighbor was no longer receiving the help; in Greek, he was the agent. The Hebrew text does not show any ambiguity about the subject of the verb יִשֶּׁה. It also views one's neighbor as the recipient of one's beneficence. The Greek translation, while taking its cues from the Hebrew text, provides a converse translation.

The *obelus* before ο πλησιον clues the reader in that the Greek translation does not correspond to the Hebrew text. Assuming that the reader did not have the Hebrew text for quick comparison, the subsequent asterisks demonstrate that the translation has departed from the Hebrew parent text. Immediately following ο πλησιον, we read ⸬ σου. This pronoun has a corresponding element in the Hebrew text. However, its corresponding element is a 3ms pronominal suffix. So although the asterisked reading corresponds to an element in the Hebrew text, the converse translation still holds.

The problems continue to multiply at this point. The reading ο πλησιον is obelized, marking that it does not correspond to the Hebrew text. The reading σου occurs under the asterisk, marking that it is native to the Hebrew text. However, if one reads the text without the obelized reading, the grammar becomes nonsensical. The converse translation reads against the Hebrew text, making the job of establishing a Greek text that is formally equivalent to the Hebrew text nearly impossible at this point. It is important to note, though, that even this converse translation takes its cues from the Hebrew text.

Conclusion

The LXX translation was both a translation and a commentary. In this way it was a forerunner of the interpretive tradition that is now preserved in the Aramaic Targums. Insofar as Codex G testifies to the original LXX text, the material that Origen obelized illuminates the original translator's theological and interpretive tendencies. The kinds of interpretive patterns range from simple theological tendencies (such as placing Aaron alongside Moses throughout the controversies) to more canonical readings (connecting the refusal to enter the land to the idolatry of the golden calf). The examples set forth in this paper illustrate a few key elements of Targumic translation.

These findings are significant due to the date of the LXX text relative to the dates of our Targumic texts. The LXX text predates the Targumic texts by at least half a millennium. The LXX therefore serves as a witness to an interpretive tradition that was later codified in Aramaic. While the particular interpretations treated in this

paper do not occur in any extant Aramaic text, the tendencies do. These tendencies predate the New Testament by about 200 years. It seems to be a logical conclusion, therefore, that the interpretive patterns attested by the later Aramaic texts were already current in the synagogue at the time of Jesus Christ.[19]

Therefore, it behooves students of the New Testament to take seriously the Aramaic Targums. The exegetical and hermeneutical methods employed there were current in the time of the New Testament. If we are committed to employing a hermeneutic consistent with that used by Jesus and the Apostles, the Targums would be an excellent place to being to learn how to interpret the Scriptures.

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19. Howell examines key phrases in the Aramaic Targums, the Greek translations of which find their way into key Christological passages in the New Testament. For a full treatment, see Adam Howell, "Finding Christ in the Old Testament through the Aramaic Memra, Shekinah, and Yeqara of the Targums" (PhD Diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).

Understanding the Paraclete Title:
Any Help from the Targums?[1]

John Ronning

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"Helper" is one suggested meaning of the fairly rare Greek word παράκλητος, found in the NT only in John's writings.[2] In a previous study I suggested the possibility that when Jesus promised "another Paraclete, that he may be with you forever" (John 14:16), he may have been using targumic language, since in the extant Targums the divine promise to be with his people is frequently paraphrased with the idea of the divine Word (Aramaic מֵימְרָא) being their "Helper."[3] The present paper explores further this possibility.

The term (παράκλητος) is used of the Holy Spirit by Jesus in his upper room discourse (John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:7). Additionally, it is used by John (1 John 2:1) to describe Jesus after his ascension. Implications for the doctrine of the deity of the Holy Spirit would seem to come not from the definition and possible OT background of the word, but from the fact that the same term is used for both the Son and the Spirit, who carries on the work of the Son after his ascension to the right hand of the Father. This paper suggests that the title παράκλητος should be understood as a divine title equivalent to the OT (Hebrew) depiction of God as the Helper of his people. This thesis, therefore, suggests that "Helper" is a reasonable, perhaps the best translation of the term, and does indeed support the view that the Holy Spirit is the divine Helper sent to be with the Church of Jesus after his ascension.

I have suggested, based on *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Numbers 7:89, that Jesus was identified as the divine Word, in targumic terms, at his baptism in the Jordan. Note the following:

> And when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; so he spoke with him. (MT)

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1. This article is adapted from a paper by this title read at the Eastern Region meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, April 6, 2019.

2. See for example, NASB, ESV.

3. John Ronning, "The Targum of Isaiah and the Johannine Literature," *Westminster Theological Journal* 69, no. 2 (2007), 247–78, particularly 257. Available online: https://www.academia.edu/7847884/The_Targum_of_Isaiah_and_the_Johannine_Literature (Accessed: April 2, 2019). See also the Ronning, *The Jewish Targums and John's Logos Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 39n86.

> And when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with him, he heard the voice of the Spirit as he descended from the heaven of heavens over the mercy seat, which was upon the ark of testimony between the two cherubim, and from there was the Word (דבירא) speaking to him. (*Tg. Ps.-J.*)[4]

> I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and he remained upon him . . . "He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit" (John 1:32-33)

Since (1) John begins his Gospel by identifying Jesus as the divine Word; (2) notwithstanding 100 years of scholarly resistance to the idea, the Gospel and indeed the Johannine literature as a whole support the idea that this title is best explained as being based on the concept of the divine Word in the Targums;[5] (3) Jesus in the upper room promises to the disciples "another Paraclete who will be with you" after his ascension, the "other" Paraclete being Jesus himself, based on 1 John 2:1; (4) the Targums sometimes use the concept of the divine Word in passages which, on a Christian interpretation, refer to the Holy Spirit, the question seems natural, whether the Paraclete title is based on the targumic concept of the divine Word as Helper. Such a conclusion would (1) support the translation of Paraclete as "Helper," and (2) would support the doctrine of the distinct personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.

1. Passages Where the Term Paraclete Occurs

> If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may be with you forever; that is, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold him or know him. But you know him because he abides with you and will be in you. (John 14:15-17)

> These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:25-26)

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4. דבירא is used mostly in the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch, and functions similarly to the term מימרא, but seems to be more specifically focused on the idea of revelation. For discussion, see Ronning, *Jewish Targums*, 34-37. Further items of interest: (1) the site of John's testimony, Bethany beyond the Jordan, is the area from which Israel, led by Joshua and the ark (thus also, "the Word," in targumic thought), prepared to cross the Jordan to begin the conquest of Canaan (Josh 3:16); (2) John's emphasis on the Spirt "descending and remaining" on Jesus answers to the dual nature of Jesus, since the Spirit was predicted to rest on the Messiah from "the stem of Jesse" (Isa 11:1–2; "descending" points to the divine Word, "remaining" points to the [human] son of David).

5. In addition to the article and book cited above, see the author's online paper: "When YHWH Became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us: John 1:14 as Programmatic for John's Gospel": https://www.academia.edu/7921022/When_YHWH_Became_Flesh_and_Dwelt_Among_Us_John_1_14_as_Programmatic_for_Johns_Gospel.

> When the Paraclete comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me. (John 15:26)

> But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment. Concerning sin, because they do not believe in me. And concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold me. And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own initiative, but whatever he hears, he will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify me, for he shall take of mine, and will disclose it to you. (John 16:7-14)

> If anyone sins, we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he himself is the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:1-2)

Interpreters seek to understand the term παράκλητος based on related words such as the verb παρακαλέω (to comfort, encourage)[6] or the noun παράκλησις (consolation, comfort), etymology ("one called alongside to help"), and its usage outside the NT, especially in Philo and as a loan word in rabbinic writings. Παράκλητος is not used in the LXX, but this paper will focus on possible OT illumination of the title, looking at MT and the Targums, based on the often suggested meaning of "Helper."

2. Παράκλητος in Philo and Rabbinic Texts

Philo uses the term a number of times in the sense of advocate or mediator, comparable to 1 John 2:1–2. He speaks of the symbolic meaning of the garments and accessories of the high priest which enable him to represent the whole world before God. "For it was indispensable that the man who was consecrated [the high priest] to the Father of the world, should have as a *paraclete*, his son [i.e. the Logos], the being most perfect in all virtue, to procure forgiveness of sins, and a supply of unlimited blessings" (*Vita Moses* 2.134). Philo also used the term a number of times with respect to intercession or mediation on a human level. For example, when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, he gave them "complete forgiveness for all the things which you have done to me. Do not think that you need anyone else as a *paraclete*" (*De Josepho* 1:239). In a passage which talks about an offender bringing a ram for sacrifice to the

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6. One could find support for the translation "Comforter" (as in KJV and some others) from Luke's statement that the church was proceeding "in the comfort of the Holy Spirit" (τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος; Acts 9:31).

temple, he says that it is actually "the conviction of the soul" that acts for him as "an irreproachable *paraclete*" (*De Specialibus Legibus* 1.237)

"Paraclete" was also a loan word which appears in rabbinical writings: "He who performs a single commandment acquires for himself a single advocate (פרקליט), and he who commits a single transgression acquires for himself a single accuser" (קטגור; another Greek loan word which corresponds to the meaning of the name "Satan") (*Pirq. Abot* iv. 11).[7]

The use of παράκλητος in 1 John 2:1 is consistent with some of these examples from Philo and the rabbinic usage, where the idea of a believer having an advocate before God with respect to his sins is in view. In fact, it is easy to see that John is countering other views of what the believer has as an advocate in such scenarios; not his own good works or conscience, important as they may be, or a sin offering (the temple no longer stands), but "Jesus Christ the righteous." The usages in the upper room discourse do not fit in this category, however. What does Paraclete mean in the upper room discourse? John wrote his epistles in Greek, and Jesus presumably spoke to his disciples in Aramaic. Could paraclete already have been a loan-word in use at the time, and spoken by Jesus? Could it have been in use in some of the Targums, replaced later by Aramaic words? In our extant Targums, the term is used just twice; in Tg. Job 33:23 for MT מֵלִיץ, an angelic "mediator." It is also used in Tg. Job 16:20 where the word "my scoffers" (מְלִיצָי) was apparently mistaken for מֵלִיץ.

The usages of παράκλητος in the upper room discourse are much broader than the idea of "Advocate." As many interpreters have noted, the range of usage in the upper room discourse suggests that the παράκλητος is an all-around successor to Jesus in the spiritual life of the apostles and the church after the departure of Jesus.[8]

Sometimes an objection is made to the citation of Targums, based on the fact that we do not have texts of 1st century Targums. Such a situation is indeed a tragedy, but it should not become an excuse to close our eyes to what we do have. We will examine the extant Targums under the assumption that there is potential relevance in them for answering questions from the first century. This should not be controversial: scholars look at the Mishnah, the Talmud, other rabbinic writings, the Corpus Hermeticum, etc., all 2nd century and later, for their potential insight into previous times. Why only with respect to the Targums should scholars take a "nothing to see

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7. See, for example, Kaufmann Kohler, "Paraclete (פרקליט or פרקליטא),)," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York and London: Funk and Wagnells, 1905–15), 9.514b–515a. Kohler also points to another loan word of similar meaning used of the Holy Spirit as Israel's defender, or advocate (סניגוריא, συνήγορος) in *Lev. Rab.* 6:1. It is also used of Moses interceding for the people after the golden calf incident, *Deut. Rab.* 3:11.

8. Raymond Brown has a very helpful summary of what Jesus says about the Paraclete, and the reader can easily see how each item of his description can also be applied to Jesus, with or without some modification; see Brown, "Appendix V: The Paraclete," in *The Gospel According to John (XIII–XXI)* (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 1135–44: 1135, summarized in an Appendix to this paper.

here, look away" approach to potential light on the NT, especially the Logos title in the Johannine literature?[9]

3. The Two-Part Targumic Explanation for the Concept of God being with His People

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may be with you forever" (John 14:16). As stated above, Jesus may have been mixing targumic language with the literal language of the MT, based on the possible meaning "Helper" for *Paraclete*, and the fact that the Targums often use the idea of the divine Word as Helper of his people when rendering the idea of God being "with" (and sometimes "for") his people. Jesus the Word has been with the disciples as their Helper; after his departure, the Father will send the Holy Spirit, another (divine) Helper, to be with them.

The various Targums passed down to us employ sometimes differing strategies to go beyond literal translations to interpretive explanations, presumably to help the hearers in the Synagogue understand their Scriptures when the literal sense had the potential to be misleading.[10] When a man or group of men is said to be "with" another man or group of men in a spatial sense, the Targums do not have a problem translating "with" literally. But a literal translation for the concept of God being "with" his people could be understood to imply that the God of Israel is limited spatially, so we find in the Targums a fairly consistent two part explanation instead of a literal translation (exceptions to be noted below).

One part of the explanation is to employ the concept of the divine Word (מֵימְרָא) where MT refers to the God of Israel. The second part is to render the phrase "with"

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9. To cite just one example, "All our extant targumic evidence is too late to allow us to be certain that *Memra* [the divine Word] was used in a particular manner in the first century" (Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* 2 vols. [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003]), 349–50. I discuss this and other arguments in "The Superiority of the Targum View," chap. 12 of *Jewish Targums*, 252–70. Two major factors suggest the likelihood (even if certainty is impossible at this point) that targumic Word theology dates from the intertestamental period. (1) Fairly close analogies can be found in the intertestamental period, with Philo's Logos, and intertestamental wisdom literature, as will be noted below; (2) the Word theology does not appear in post second temple rabbinic discussions; it would be strange to think therefore that that would be the period in which it originated. Further, discussions of the date of usage of Memra and Dibber/Dibbura tend to overlook the very numerous passages and themes in the Johannine literature that seem to be enlightened by assuming that our extant Targums reflect a good deal of what would have been in use during New Testament times. Scholars simply ignoring this evidence, rather than discussing it, is not convincing.

10. In many such cases, the potentially misleading word(s) would be labeled an anthropomorphism or anthropopathism. Andrew Chester noted that not all anthropomorphisms are avoided in the Targums, only those that could be misleading to the synagogue worshiper. "The main point is their concern for the most appropriate way to speak of God in the synagogue setting." Andrew Chester, *Divine Revelation and Divine Titles in the Pentateuchal Targums*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 14 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1986), 383.

you/him/us/them" as "for your/his/our/their help." A passage where both the human and divine concept of "with" occurs is 2 Chron 32:7, where Hezekiah encourages his people: "For <u>with us</u> [is One] greater than [those] <u>with him</u> [i.e. Sennacherib] (עִמָּנוּ רַב מֵעִמּוֹ)." The extant Targum distinguishes between divine and human "with": "Because <u>for our help</u> (בסעדנא) [is One] greater than the people who [are] <u>with him</u> [מן עמא די עמיה]." So for human help, Aramaic "with" (עם) corresponds to Hebrew "with" (עִם), but for divine help, the explanation that God helps his people is used instead of a literal translation that he is "with" them.

Hezekiah goes on to say, "With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles" (2 Chron 32:8). The corresponding Targum in this case uses the paraphrastic "help" for both the human and divine assistance. One can also find cases where עִם is used instead of the paraphrase for divine assistance as well (e.g. Tg. 2 Chron 13:12, "The Lord is with us"), so there is no hard and fast rule about how to translate/interpret human or divine assistance, but the rendering of Hezekiah's words are of further interest in that they show the use of Aramaic סעד for Hebrew עזר. This in turn shows the appropriateness of translating Aramaic סעד with English "help/helper":

> <u>With him</u> (עִמּוֹ) is an arm of flesh, but <u>with us</u> (עִמָּנוּ) is the Lord our God <u>to help us</u> (לְעָזְרֵנוּ), and to fight our battles. (MT)

> <u>For his help</u> (בסעדיה) is an arm of flesh, but <u>for our help</u> (בסעדנא) is the Word of the Lord our God (מימרא דיי אלהנא), <u>to help us</u> (inf. const.; למסעד), and to fight our orders of battle.

Although one might rightly use the term "paraphrase" to describe the rendering of language about God being with someone by using language describing God's help for his people, the example above shows the essential equivalence of "God is with us" and "God helps us." For Hezekiah says, "God is with us . . . to help us." So the targumic "paraphrase" is conservative in the sense that it is a careful use of literal language found elsewhere in Scripture. This is often the case with targumic paraphrasis.[11]

In the case of Jerusalem's deliverance from Sennacherib in the time of Hezekiah, the people's trust in the deliverance long promised through Isaiah was vindicated in one of the most remarkable of OT miracles, the destruction of Sennacherib's army in a single night, "not by bow, sword, battle, horses, or horsemen" (Hos 1:7), when

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11. A nice example is Deut 1:32–33, where Moses says of the previous generation, "You did not believe in the Lord your God, who goes before you on your way, to spy out a place for you," which becomes in the Targums, "You did not believe in the name of the Word of the Lord your God, who leads before you on the way, to prepare a place for your encampments," borrowing the expression from Exod 23:20, "the place which I have prepared." The relevance of this paraphrase to John 14:1–3 was noted long ago by Martin McNamara. The frequent substitute "the Word (מימרא) of the Lord" for "the Lord" and so on could similarly be justified by MT of Ps 105:19; "The word of the Lord (אִמְרַת יהוה) tested him [Joseph]." McNamara, *Palestinian Judaism and the New Testament*, Good News Studies 4 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 239–40.

Jerusalem and the nation of Judah were at the point of perishing. Jewish tradition at some point said that this deliverance took place at Passover (presumably based on the divine promise to "pass over" Jerusalem, Isa 31:5).[12] It is often overlooked that one of the places where this deliverance was promised is Isa 33:10; "<u>Now</u> I will arise, says the Lord, <u>now</u> I will be exalted, <u>now I will be lifted up</u>." When the divine Word became flesh, he used the words of Isa 33:10 right before another Passover to promise the defeat of the devil in his lifting up on the cross: "<u>Now</u> judgment is upon this world; <u>now</u> the ruler of this world shall be cast out. And I, <u>if I be lifted up</u> from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:31-32).[13]

4. God with Man in the Targums.

As noted above, the two-part paraphrase is not always carried out. In this section, we look at the usage in the various Targums.

a. God with man in the Pentateuchal Targums

In addition to the three Targums that cover the entire Pentateuch (*Onqelos*, *Neofiti*, and *Pseudo-Jonathan*), we have two types of *Fragment Targums* (*P* and *V*), marginal glosses in *Tg. Neofiti*, and fragments of Targums found in the Cairo Geniza. *Targums Onqelos* and *Pseudo-Jonathan* quite consistently employ the two-part paraphrase mentioned above. The *Fragment Targums* and *Tg. Neofiti* marginal glosses, where extant, almost always agree with them. *Targum Neofiti* (main text) is the outlier. The relevant passages are Gen 21:20, 22; 26:3, 24, 28; 28:15, 20; 31:3, 5; 35:3; 39:2, 3, 21, 23; 46:4; 48:21; 49:25; Exod 3:12; 10:10; Num 14:9, 43; 23:21; Deut 2:7; 20:1; 31:8, 23. In these 26 passages, *Tg. Neofiti* only uses the two-part paraphrase four times: in Gen 31:5 ("the Word of the God of my father has been my help"); Gen 35:3 ("God, . . . whose Word has been for my help"); Gen 49:25 ("the Word of the God of your father will be for your help"); and Deut 31:8 ("the Word of the Lord your God . . . he will be for your help"). *Tg. Neofiti* employs the concept of the divine Word while translating "with" literally in Gen 26:3 ("I will be, in my Word, with you"); also Gen 28:15; 31:3; 35:3; Exod 3:12; 10:10; Num 14:9, 43; 23:21; and Deut 31:23 (nine of the remaining 22 cases), and, conversely, in Deut 2:7, *Tg. Neofiti* does not use the concept of the divine Word but does paraphrase "with" using the idea of God as helper; "These 40 years the Lord your God has been for your help."

 Targums Onqelos and *Pseudo-Jonathan* use the two-part paraphrase in almost all 26 cases. Genesis 46:4 is unique in that instead of a divine promise to "be with" Jacob, it is a promise to "go down with" him to Egypt. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*

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12. *Targum 2 Chronicles* 32:21; "The Word of the Lord sent the angel Gabriel and he destroyed, on Passover eve . . . every mighty man."

13. See my discussion in *Jewish Targums*, 121–32.

renders this "I am he who in my Word will go down with you," while *Tgs. Onqelos* and *Neofiti* are literal here. *Tg. Neofiti* marginal glosses preserve readings agreeing with *Tgs. Onqelos* and *Pseudo-Jonathan* in one or both parts in Gen 21:20; 26:24; 31:3; 39:21; 48:21; Exod 3:12; 10:10; Num 14:9, 43; and Deut 20:1. *Fragment Tgs. P* and *V* are extant in two of these passages, which, interestingly, are cases where all of the Targums agree (Gen 49:25; Num 23:21).

b. God with Man in Targum Jonathan of the Former and Latter Prophets

Of 43 passages, only a few fail to use the two-part paraphrase. In *Tg. Judg* 6:12 the angel of the Lord says to Gideon, "The Word of the Lord is for your help," which is standard for *Targum Jonathan*, but when Gideon asks back, "If the Lord is with us . . . " the Targum has "if the Shekinah of the Lord is for our help," with variants "if the Word of the Lord is with / among us . . ." "With" is also translated literally in a variant of 2 Sam 5:10. Immanuel is rendered as a name in Isa 7:14, but in Isa 8:10 "God is with us" is translated "God is for our help."[14]

c. God with Man in the Rest of the Targums

Another 25 cases are found in the *Targums* of *Ruth* (1), *Job* (1), *Psalms* (7), and *1 and 2 Chronicles* (16), and these almost always follow the two part paraphrase.[15] An interesting case is 2 Chr 15:2; for "The Lord is with you when you are with him," the *Targum* has "The Word of the Lord is for your help when you follow the law." A similar sentiment is expressed in the upper room as the divine Word promises the disciples that if they keep his commandments, another (divine) Helper will be with them (John 14:15).

5. Targumic Ways of Translating References to the Spirit of God

In a number of passages, the Targums add a reference to God's Spirit where there is no such reference in MT. And sometimes references to the Spirit of God are interpreted as a spirit of prophecy or wisdom. And there are a few cases where the divine Word is employed for MT references to the Spirit of God.

14. In *Tg. Jonathan* of the Prophets, see: Josh 1:5 (2X), 9, 17; 3:7 (2X); 6:27; 14:12; Judg 1:19; 2:18; 6:12, 13, 16; 1 Sam 3:19;10:7; 16:18; 17:37; 18:12, 14, 28; 2 Sam 5:10; 7:3, 9; 14:17; 1 Kgs 1:37; 8:57; 11:38; 2 Kgs 18:7; Isa 7:14; 8:10; 41:10; 43:2, 5; Jer 1:8, 19; 15:20; 20:11; 30:11; 42:11; 46:28; Ezek 34:30; Hag 1:13; 2:4; Zech 8:23; 10:5.

15. See the Targums of the following: Ruth 2:4; 1 Chr 9:20; 17:2, 8; 22:16, 18; 28:20; 2 Chr 1:1; 15:2, 9; 17:3; 19:6 ("You judge before the Word of the Lord and his Shekinah dwells with you in the rendering of judgment" [compare. Matt 18:20], 11; 20:17; 25:7; 36:23; Job 29:5; Ps 23:4; 46:7, 11. The "with me/us etc." language is translated literally in *Tg. Ps.* 91:15 and *Tg. 2 Chr.* 13:12. In Ps 44:9, 60:10, and 108:11 the psalmist speaks of God going out (or not going out) "with (ב) our armies." This language is translated literally in *Tg. Ps.* 60:10 (using the preposition עם), while the other cases speak of the Shekinah dwelling among the armies.

a. Targumic Usage of the Divine Word (מֵימְרָא, Memra) in Translating References to God's Spirit

Since Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as "another (divine) Helper" (besides himself), it is of some interest that the concept of the divine Word, adapted by John to apply specifically to the divine Son, is also used in the Targums (at least, *Targum Jonathan* to the Prophets) in passages where, on a Christian interpretation, the Holy Spirit is referred to. Isaiah 48:16 says; "And now, the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit," which is in *Tg. Isa.*, "The prophet said: 'And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Word (ומימרה)." Isaiah 63:14 says of the Israelites who passed through the Red Sea, "The Spirit of the Lord gave them rest," while the Targum says "The Word of the Lord gave them rest."[16] Micah 2:7 quotes God's people as asking, "Is the Spirit of the Lord impatient," which the Targum renders, "Is a word (מֵימַר) from before the Lord impatient?" "Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit" (Zech 4:6) is in *Tg. Jonathan* as well as a *Tosefta* (additional) *Targum*, "but by my Word." Zechariah 7:12 refers to the "words which the Lord of Hosts sent by his Spirit through the former prophets" and the wrath that came upon his people for not listening; the Targum refers to "the words which the Lord of Hosts sent by his Word through the former prophets."

John does not use the term "the Word" of the Holy Spirit, reserving that title for the Son, but, if "Paraclete" is to be understood as "Helper," associated with the targumic concept of the divine Word as the divine Helper of Israel, then the Lord's use of this title for the Holy Spirit can be seen as carrying the same implications for the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.

Since all of our extant Targums post-date NT times, it is helpful, in evaluating whether or not a particular translation or concept can be viewed as going back to the times of the apostles, how widespread a particular targumic usage is. The more widespread is the usage across the various Targums, the more likely it is not to be of recent (i.e. post-apostolic) origin. Since the use of divine "Word" for the Spirit of God in translation is found only in *Targum Jonathan* of the Latter Prophets, does it become less likely that this usage was current when John wrote than if the practice were more widespread in the extant Targums? In my previously mentioned article focusing specifically on the *Isaiah Targum*, I made the point, negatively, that we have no evidence for any "divine Word" theology in rabbinical discussions of post AD 70 Judaism, and positively, that the targumic "Word theology" has conceptual parallels

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16. For Isa 63:10, "They grieved his Holy Spirit," the *Tg.* has "They rebelled and incited against the word of (מימר) his holy prophets." Chilton translates "*the Memra*," (*The Isaiah Targum* [ArBib 11; Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1987], 121). This could be another case where the Holy Spirit in Hebrew corresponds to Aramaic divine Word. Isa 63:11 has a similar translation and interpretive issue: ("Where is he who put his Holy Spirit in their midst" is rendered "Where is he who made the word of his holy prophets dwell among them"?). But on the basis of *Tg. Hag.* 2:5, which renders MT "My Spirit is abiding in your midst" with "My prophets are teaching among you," I would be inclined to take "word" in *Tg. Isa.* 63:10–11 literally.

in intertestamental Wisdom literature, in the Tragedy of Ezekiel's depiction of the burning bush scene, and the Logos of Philo.[17] And with respect to the *Isaiah Targum*, there are numerous places where the reading of the Targum would make excellent sense of what we read in John's Gospel, his Epistles, and the Book of Revelation, including, but not limited to, the Logos title John uses for Jesus.[18] Thus it is certainly plausible, though unprovable (at this point), that the Targum's employment of the divine Word concept in translating MT's references to God's Spirit was current in the first century. And since calling Jesus "the Word" based on a Targum background would be tantamount to calling him YHWH, associating the Holy Spirit with the same title given to the Son carries the same implication for the deity of the Holy Spirit.

The Targums present the God of Israel, in interaction with his people, as the divine Word who helps them in all kinds of trouble. When the divine Word became flesh and dwelt among his people, he continued as their Helper, whether physically present or not (e.g. John 4:46-53), and finally to give us the supreme help we needed for eternal life with him. And when he is about to depart to the Father, he promises the church "another (divine) Helper" who "will be with you forever" (John 14:16).

b. "A spirit of might (גבורא) from before the Lord"

This expression is used in *Tg. Jonathan* of Judges and 1 Samuel: *Tg. Jon.* Judg 6:34; 14:19; 15:14; 1 Sam 16:14. It is also found as a variant of "a spirit of prophecy from before the Lord," in the following (thus overlapping with passages listed in the next point): Judg 3:10; 11:29; 1 Sam 11:6; 16:13.

c. "A spirit of prophecy [from before the Lord.]"

This expression is found (usually including the words in brackets) in the Pentateuchal *Targums Onqelos* and *Pseudo-Jonathan*, one case of *Tg. Neofiti* marginal readings, *Targum Jonathan* of the Former and Latter Prophets, and *Tg. Chronicles*: *Tgs. Onq.* and *Neof. (mg.)* Exod 31:3 (MT, "Spirit of God"); *Tgs. Onq.* and *Ps.-J.* Exod 35:31; Num 11:26, 29; 24:2; 27:18; *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num 11:17, 25, 28; and in the prophets, *Tg. Jon.* Judg 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6; 1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6; 16:13; 19:20, 23; 2 Sam 23:2;

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17. In the Greek Tragedy "Exagoge," by a man named Ezekiel, a play about the Exodus, Moses is told at the burning bush (line 99), "God's word shines forth to you from the bush" (ὁ δ' ἐκ βάτου σοι θεῖος ἐκλάμπει λόγος). Howard Jacobson translates ἐκλάμπει as "rings out," noting that the verb can be used also in this sense (*The Exagoge of Ezekiel* [New York: Cambridge University, 2009], 99–100). Until recently the play was known only from quotes by Eusebius from Polyhistor, but recently it has come to light that portions of the play are among the many thousands of papyri found in 1897 at Oxyrynchus (see https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3472392/The-original-Ten-Commandments-Ancient-papyrus-reveals-play-Moses-performed-2-000-years-Charlton-Heston-s-classic-movie.html; accessed 8/9/2019.

18. See "The Targum of Isaiah and the Johannine Literature," 274–78, and chap. 12 of *Jewish Targums*, 252–70 for discussions of dating.

1 Kgs 22:24; 2 Kgs 2:9; Isa 11:2; 61:1; Ezek 11:5, 24; 37:1; Mic 3:8; 1 Chr 12:19; 2 Chr 15:5; 18:23; 20:14; 24:20.

d. "A spirit of holiness [from before the Lord]."

This expression (again, usually with the bracketed words) is found only in the Pentateuchal Targums, mostly *Neofiti*: *Tgs. Ps.-J.* and *Neof.* Exod 31:3; *Tg. Neof.* Exod 35:31; Num 11:17, 25-26, 29; 14:24; 24:2; 27:18; and *Frg. Tg. P, V* Num 11:26.

e. "The Holy Spirit."

The expressions "a spirit of prophecy" and "a spirit of holiness" sent from God might be taken in an impersonal sense, but there are a number of cases where the Targums add "the Holy Spirit" where there is no reference to the Spirit of God in MT. *Targum Onqelos* Gen 45:27 says that the Holy Spirit rested on Jacob when he found out from his sons that Joseph was alive, and saw the wagons sent by him. Of the same passage, *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* says that the spirit of prophecy which had left Jacob when Joseph was sold, returned and rested on Jacob. In *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* Gen 27:5, Rebekah heard "by the Holy Spirit" as Isaac gave instructions to Esau, and again in v. 42 Esau's words were shown to her "by the Holy Spirit." Jacob is also said to be the subject of revelation, or to speak, "by the Holy Spirit" in *Tg. Ps.-J.* Gen 30:25; 31:21; 37:33, and 43:14. *Targum Neofiti* Gen 42:1 says that Jacob saw "by the Holy Spirit" that there was grain in Egypt. In *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* Exod 33:16, Moses in speaking with God says that Israel is distinguished from the nations by the spirit of prophecy being withheld from them, and "by your speaking by the Holy Spirit to me and to your people."

As we will note below in §8, the divine Word is to be revealed to increase the Holy Spirit "who is with you" (Moses) and put him upon the 70 in *Tg. Neof.* Num 11:17, an experience to be repeated with the giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples by Jesus (John 20:22). The opposite is the case when God's people experience judgment: "The Word of the Lord will hide the Holy Spirit from you, when the plagues come upon you and upon your children," and "I have spoken in my Word, to withhold from them my Holy Spirit" (*Tg. Ps.-J.* Deut 28:59; 32:26).

6. Hebrew עזר and Targumic Aramaic סעד

In translating verbal and nominal forms of Hebrew עזר (help, helper), verbal and nominal forms of Aramaic סעד are the translation of choice throughout the various Targums. This fact makes it likely, that when the Targums use סעד in paraphrase of the Hebrew, rather than in literal translation, it is reasonable to conclude that the meaning is "help/helper." This consistent relationship between Hebrew עזר and Aramaic סעד seems to have been overlooked by a number of the translators of the Aramaic Bible series, who tend to translate Aramaic סעד according to the sense of

Hebrew סעד, which carries the idea of "support." Etheridge, in contrast, in his 19th century Pentateuchal Targum translations, almost always used help/helper.[19]

a. The Pentateuchal Targums

In the Pentateuch, there are seven passages of interest. For "helper as his complement" (Gen 2:18, 20), none of the Targums use סעד. In Gen 49:25, Exod 18:4 and Deut 33:29, all of the extant Targums use סעד. In Deut 33:7, all of the extant Targums use סעד, but *Tgs. Ps.-Jonathan and Neofiti*, *Frg. Tg. V*, and *GTg*. DD add another word, סמך/סמיך (the same word used in Gen 2:18, 20). In Deut 33:26 (MT, God "rides the heavens to your [i.e. Israel's] help"), all of the Targums interpret as a statement that his Shekinah (or, glory of his Shekinah in *Tg. Neofiti* and *Frg. Tg. V*) is in the heavens. *Tg. Ps.-Jonathan* comes closest to MT in the sense that the participle "ride" (רֹכֵב) is rendered "chariot" (רכוביה); "whose Shekinah and chariot dwell in the heavens." *Tgs. Onqelos* and *Ps.-Jonathan* go on to use סעד in rendering the Hebrew בְּעֶזְרֶךָ, while *Tg. Neofiti* and *Frg. Tg. V* do not translate "your help." Exod 18:4 and Deut 33:26 are also of interest in the use of the noun "help" with preposition בְּ, as the Aramaic regularly does with forms of סעד. Note the following for Exod 18:4:

אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי בְּעֶזְרִי	The God of my father (has been) for my help (MT)
מימר אלהה דאבא בסעדי	The Word of the God of my father (has been) for my help (*Tg. Neof.*)

b. Targum Jonathan of the Former and Latter Prophets

In 30 of 31 cases, *Tg. Jonathan* renders forms of Hebrew עזר with forms of Aramaic סעד. In many of these cases, human helpers are in view. When divine help is expressed, the Targum sometimes has the divine Word as Helper. In MT Isa 41:10 the divine promises to Israel "I am with you" and "surely I will help you" are combined, another example to which the targumists could point to justify their usual rendering of the idea of God being "with" his people with the paraphrase that he helps them. *Tg. Isa* 41:10 uses סעד for both promises: "My Word shall be your helper" (בְּסַעֲדָךְ מֵמְרִי), and "I will help you" (אֲסַעֲדִינָךְ). The divine Word is Helper again in vv. 13 and 14. In Isa 63:5, where the divine warrior says "I looked, and there was no one to help," *Tg. Isaiah* substitutes "It was revealed before me that there is no man who is good," but for "my own wrath upheld me" (סְמָכָתְנִי) at the end of the verse, *Tg. Isaiah* has "by the

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19.   John Wesley Etheridge, *The Targums and Onqelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch, with Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum from the Chaldee* 2 vols (London: Longman, Green, Longman, 1862 and 1865).

Word of my pleasure I helped them" (וּבְמֵמַר רְעוּתִי סָעַדְתִּינוּן).[20] Also in *Tg. Hos* 13:9 God says, "My Word is your helper" (מֵמְרִי הֲוֵי בְּסַעְדְּכוֹן).[21]

c. The Psalms Targum

In 21 out of 28 cases in the *Psalms Targum*, forms of Aramaic סעד are used for forms of Hebrew עזר. The second most common Aramaic root used is סיע ("aid;" six cases). Psalm 20:3 (2) MT says "May he send your help (עֶזְרְךָ) from the sanctuary, and from Zion support you (יִסְעָדֶךָ). The Targum uses סעדך for Hebrew עֶזְרְךָ, and יסייעינך for Hebrew יִסְעָדֶךָ.[22]

d. Other Targums

The Targums of Chronicles, Job, and Proverbs are presumably of less importance than those discussed above, since there is no evidence that their Hebrew counterparts were read in the Synagogue services, but their usage will be mentioned anyway. In 15 of 25 cases in *Targum Chronicles*, forms of Aramaic סעד are used for various forms of Hebrew עזר.[23] In the other 10 cases, forms of סיע are used.

In the Targum of Job, there are four cases of forms of Hebrew עזר. In two, forms of Aramaic סעד are used (Job 29:12; 30:13), and in two, forms of סיע are used. Lamentations 1:7 says that in Jerusalem's calamity, there was no helper for her. In the various lengthy targumic paraphrases extant, all use forms of סיע.

7. Hebrew עזר and the LXX

παράκλητος is not used in the LXX. If it is correct to look to targumic סעד as it relates to MT עזר, help/helper to understand the idea of Holy Spirit as divine Helper, the question comes up, why did John not use a well-known word from the LXX in translating the Lord's words in the upper room?

The noun βοηθός and verb βοηθέω are frequently used in LXX for forms of Hebrew עזר, but the noun βοηθός is used just once in the NT, and that is in an OT quotation (Heb 13:6, quoting Ps 118:6). The verb βοηθέω occurs eight times, once in an OT quotation (2 Cor 6:2; see also Matt 15:25; Mar 9:22, 24; Acts 16:9; 21:8; Heb 2:18; Rev 12:16). If the meaning of παράκλητος is simply "Helper," why did John not use this word so common in LXX? "[O]ne must insist that παράκλητος does not

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20. This passage helps inform the depiction of the returning Jesus as the divine warrior whose name is "the Word of God" in Rev 19:11–13. Ronning, "Targum of Isaiah," 262–64.

21. See also the following Targum passages: Josh 1:14; 10:4, 6, 33; 1 Sam 7:12 (2X); 2 Sam 8:5; 18:3; 21:17; 1 Kgs 1:7; 20:16; 2 Kgs 14:26; Isa 30:5, 7; 31:3 (2X); 41:6; 44:2; 49:8; 50:7, 9; Jer 47:4; Ezek 12:14; 30:8; 32:21; Zech 1:15.

22. See also Ps 10:14; 20:3; 28:7; 30:11; 33:20; 37:40; 54:6; 70:6; 79:9; 86:17; 89:20; 107:12; 109:26; 115:9, 10, 11; 118:7; 119:86; 121:1, 2; 124:8; 146:5.

23. See 1 Chr 12:19 (2X), 20; 15:26; 2 Chr 14:10 (2X); 25:8; 26:7, 13; 28:16, 23 (2X); 32:3, 8 (2X).

primarily or obviously mean 'helper' or 'friend' in Greek: βοηθός would have been a much more natural translation of a term meaning 'helper'."[24]

John may have simply gone his own way; this would not be the only time. In the expression "grace and truth" (John 1:14, 17), most interpreters recognize a dependence on the Hebrew חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת taken from God's self description to Moses in Exod 34:6 (which, incidentally, is a revelation of the divine Word in a handful of different Targum versions).[25] חֶסֶד is usually rendered with Greek ἔλεος; in Exod 34:6, רב חֶסֶד is translated with πολυέλεος. In NT quotations of OT passages where ἔλεος translates חֶסֶד, NT writers retain the LXX (Matt 9:13 and 12:7 from Hos 6:6; Luke 1:50 from Ps 103:17; "rich in mercy" in Eph 2:4 may be dependent on πολυέλεος from Exod 34:6). In using χάρις instead of ἔλεος, John shows a willingness to use what he deems, for his purposes, a more suitable translation; "grace" goes farther than "mercy" in expressing the riches with which God benefits his people.

Is there a reason that John might have chosen the word παράκλητος over βοηθός to convey the idea of the Holy Spirit as divine Helper? If the sense "one called alongside to help" is valid, it could be seen as an improvement over the general "helper," as making explicit the presence of the Helper. One need not conclude that the term must be strictly forensic (i.e., "Advocate"). In OT times, believers were encouraged to believe that God was with them in all sorts of trouble, including that which was due to their own sins.[26] In the incarnation, believers enjoyed "God with us" in a more immediate sense, and Jesus encourages the disciples that they are actually not disadvantaged by his going away, for the Helper will be with them and in (or, among) them. But even if we think in forensic terms, if we need an advocate because of our sins, it is good to be declared "not guilty," it is better to be declared "innocent," and better still that our accuser (the world and the devil) be declared guilty instead. This is a role of the Paraclete described in the upper room discourse: "He will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment" (John 16:8). Perhaps John also wanted to use a Greek word that he was using as a title for Jesus (as in 1 John 2:1), to support the teaching of the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit.

8. The divine Word as Helper in the Crossing of the Sea and in the Wilderness

The reader of the heading just given would probably assume that the crossing of the sea and the wilderness refer to events from Exodus 14 onward, the crossing of the Red Sea, and Israel's sojourn in the wilderness. But the words have a double

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24. George Johnston, *The Spirit-Paraclete in the Gospel of John*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 12 (Edinburgh: Cambridge, 1970), 92.

25. E.g. *Tg. Neof.* Exod 33:23; "You will see the Word (דברא) of the glory of my Shekinah."

26. E.g. Ps 38:18, 23; 40:12–13, 17; 44:9–16; 26; 79:1–9; 86:5, 17.

reference, and that is because in John 6 we see a sort of repeat of those ancient events. The feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-3) obviously recalls the miraculous feeding of Israel with the manna during the wilderness wanderings, which then becomes a topic Jesus uses to point to himself as the bread of life (John 6:22-65). John 6:16-21 describes the crossing of the Sea of Galilee by the disciples, with Jesus coming to them, walking on the water. There are many OT passages that refer to the crossing of the Red Sea by Israel, besides where it is first narrated, Exodus 14. But one would not normally consider Isaiah 43 as one of those passages, unless he was familiar with that passage as we have it in our extant *Isaiah Targum*. In Isa 43:2 the Lord promises to be with his people "when you pass through the waters," which is interpreted historically in the *Isaiah Targum*: "In the beginning, when you passed through the Red Sea, my Word was for your help." During Israel's sea crossing, it was night time, with a strong wind blowing (Exod 14:21); both of these features are present in John 6:16-21 as well.

Apart from any reference to *Tg. Isaiah* 43, interpreters have seen the "I am he (ἐγώ εἰμι), do not be afraid" from John 6:20 as alluding to Isa 43:1, 5 ("do not be afraid") and 10 ("I am he"), whose context includes a promise to be with his people:[27]

> I am he (ἐγώ εἰμι), do not be afraid. (John 6:20)

> Do not be afraid . . . when you pass through the waters, I will be with you . . . . Do not fear, for I am with you . . . so that you might know and believe me, and understand that I am he. (Isa 43:1-2, 5, 10)

> Do not be afraid . . . when in the beginning you passed through the Red Sea, my Word was for your help . . . do not be afraid, for my Word is for your help . . . so that you might know and believe me, and understand that I am he. I am he who is from the beginning. (*Tg. Isa* 43:1-2, 5, 10; cf. 1 John 2:13-14, where John calls Jesus "[he] who is from the beginning")

With the OT background to this chapter, we are invited to see the person and work of Jesus in continuity with his pre-incarnate person and work as the God of Israel saving his people and dwelling among them, helping them in times of trouble and danger. Calling Jesus the divine Word helps the disciples see this continuity, which, Jesus promises, will continue after his departure to the Father, his glorification, through the sending of another divine Helper, the Holy Spirit.

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27. See e.g. David Mark Ball, *"I Am" in John's Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications* Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 124 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 183-85; and John Paul Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea: Meaning and Gospel Functions of Matt 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52 and John 6:15b-21*, Analecta Biblica 87 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), 59.

9. The divine Word and the Giving of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus describes his incarnation as "I have come down from heaven" (John 6:38). Sometimes the Targums paraphrase divine descent as a revelation of the divine Word, and John employs this Targum language to describe the incarnation (John 1:14). The Lord's incarnation should be understood in terms of both continuity and change with respect to his pre-incarnate descents, alluded to in John 3:13 (i.e. he ascended and descended a number of times in the OT). "The Lord came down" is a way of describing his intervention in human affairs, and in the Palestinian Pentateuchal Targums, the language of revelation substitutes for the idea of the Lord coming down, and either the divine Word is said to be revealed, or the Lord's glory, or the glory of his Shekinah. So we can see that Jesus's words, "I have come down from heaven" (John 6:38) are patterned after the words of the Hebrew OT, while John's words, "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14), and "the Son of God was revealed" (1 John 3:8), utilize Targum language to describe the same event.

He came down most notably in the events of the exodus and in the wilderness for a number of purposes: (1) to redeem his people by divine warfare (Exod 3:8); (2) to give the law (Exod 19:11, 18); (3) to reveal his name (Exod 34:5-7); and (4) to give the Holy Spirit (Num 11:17, 25).

For (1), see the above mentioned allusions to Deut 1:32-33 in John 14:1-3 (Jesus going before the disciples to make war against the devil), and to Isa 33:10 in John 12:31-32.[28] For (2), see my analysis of the upper room discourse as a "new Sinai" with a new covenant, new commandment, defining love as divine commandment keeping, blessings and curses.[29] For (3), see John 17:2, 11-12, 26 where Jesus describes his mission as revealing the divine name, and John 1:14, where "full of grace and truth" is taken from Exod 34:6, his pre-incarnate revelation of his name.[30]

For (4), which is most relevant to this study, in Numbers 11 the Lord "came down" and took of the Spirit who was upon Moses, and put him upon the 70 chosen to help Moses in bearing "the burden of the people." The relationship between these elders and those chosen in Exodus 18 roughly correspond to the difference between elders and deacons in the NT church; deacons made their debut in a context similar to Numbers 11 in Acts 6:1-6, where a similar qualification is mentioned: men "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (v. 3). Note the following comparison:

Num 11:17

Then <u>I will come down</u> and speak with you there, and I will take of <u>the Spirit</u> who is upon you, and will put him upon them. (MT)

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28. See "Jesus of Nazareth, Man of War," chap. 5 of *Jewish Targums,* 116-42.
29. See "Jesus the Lawgiver of His People," chap. 7, *Jewish Targums*, 156-74.
30. See "The Name of the Father and the Mission of Jesus," chap. 3, *Jewish Targums* 70-83.

> And <u>I will be revealed</u>, and I will speak with you there, and I will increase some of <u>the spirit which is upon you</u> and place it upon them. (*Tg. Onqelos*)

> And <u>I will be revealed in the glory of my Shekinah</u>, and I will speak with you there, and I will increase <u>the spirit of prophecy that is upon you</u>, and place it upon them. (*Tg. Ps.-Jonathan*)

> And <u>I will be revealed in my Word</u>, and I will speak with you there, and I will increase some of <u>the Holy Spirit</u> who is with you (דמע; cf. John 14:16), and place him upon them. (*Tg. Neofiti*)

Num 11:25

> Then <u>the Lord came down</u> in the cloud and spoke to him, and he took of <u>the Spirit</u> who was upon him, and placed him upon the 70 elders. And when <u>the Spirit</u> rested upon them, they prophesied. (MT)

> Then <u>the Lord was revealed</u> in the cloud and spoke with him, and he increased some of <u>the spirit</u> that was upon him, and put it upon the 70 elders. And it came about that when <u>the spirit of prophecy</u> rested upon them, they began to prophecy without ceasing. (*Tg. Onqelos*)

> Then <u>the Lord was revealed</u> in the cloud, in the glory of the Shekinah, and he increased some of <u>the spirit of prophecy</u> which was upon him, and Moses did not lack anything, and he placed it upon the 70 elders. And it was that when <u>the spirit of prophecy</u> rested upon them, they prophesied without ceasing. (*Tg. Ps.-Jonathan*)

> Then <u>the glory of the Shekinah of the Lord</u> was revealed in the cloud and spoke with him, and he increased some of the Holy Spirit who was upon him, and put him upon the 70 wise men. And it was that when <u>the Holy Spirit</u> rested upon them that they began to prophesy and did not cease. (*Tg. Neofiti*)

While we do not have copies of 1st century Targums, the possibility of contemporary Targum readings which have the divine Word bestowing the Holy Spirit upon his people would obviously be of interest in light of John's designation of Jesus as "the Word," and his narration of the incarnate Word bestowing the Holy Spirit upon the disciples (symbolically in John 20:22) after the promise in the upper room of "another Helper" who is "the Holy Spirit." So we see again that in "the days of his flesh" there is continuity with his pre-incarnate person and work in interaction with his people Israel, and in the upper room Jesus makes provision for continuity of this blessing through the Holy Spirit after Jesus is glorified.

Perhaps the disciples, along with Jesus, sang the pilgrimage "Songs of Ascent" (Psalms 120-134) on their way to Jerusalem for the last supper. Perhaps they sang, "If the Lord had not been for us, when man rose against us," and "Our help is in the name of the Lord, maker of heaven and earth" on their journey (Ps 124:2, 8). Or in the extant Aramaic version, "If the Word of the Lord had not been for our help," and "Our help is in the name of the Word of the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (cf. John 1:1). Jesus the divine Word has been with them, as their Helper for the last three years, just as he was the Helper of his people in OT times, and on the eve of his departure he promises another divine Helper, to be with his church, forever.

Appendix: Raymond Brown's Summary on the Paraclete in John 14-16

Brown summarized the information given in John 14-16 under four headings. In each item listed, the reader can see how the Holy Spirit as Paraclete carries on the work of Jesus in his earthly ministry.

(a) The coming of the Paraclete and the Paraclete's relation to the Father and the Son:
- The Paraclete will *come* (but only if Jesus departs): xv 26, xvi 7, 8, 13.
- The Paraclete *comes forth* from the Father: xv 26.
- The Father will *give* the Paraclete at Jesus's request: xiv 16.
- The Father will *send* the Paraclete in Jesus's name: xiv 26.
- Jesus, when he goes away, will *send* the Paraclete from the Father: xv 26, xvi 7.

(b) The identification of the Paraclete:
- He is called "another Paraclete": xiv 16 . . .
- He is the Spirit of Truth: xiv 17, xv 26, xvi 13.
- He is the Holy Spirit: xiv 26 . . .

(c) The role the Paraclete plays in relation to the disciples:
- The disciples recognize him: xiv 17.
- He will be within the disciples and remain with them: xiv 17.
- He will teach the disciples everything: xiv 26.
- He will guide the disciples along the way of all truth: xvi 13.
- He will take what belongs to Jesus to declare to the disciples: xvi 14.
- He will glorify Jesus: xvi 14.
- He will bear witness on Jesus's behalf, and the disciples too must bear witness: xv 26-27.
- He will remind the disciples of all that Jesus told them: xiv 26.
- He will speak only what he hears and nothing on his own: xvi 13.

(d) The role the Paraclete plays in relation to the world:
- The world cannot accept the Paraclete: xiv 17.
- The world neither sees nor recognizes the Paraclete: xiv 17.
- He will bear witness to Jesus against the background of the world's hatred for and persecution of the disciples: xv 26 (cf. xv 18-25)
- He will prove the world wrong about sin, justice, and judgment: xvi 8-11.

Genesis 3:15 in the Pentateuchal Targums and in the New Testament:

Enmity as a Spiritual Conflict

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Abstract: The present paper conducts a comparative analysis of Gen 3:15 in the Pentateuchal Targums and of allusions to Gen 3:15 at Rev 12:17 (and its broader context) in order to demonstrate that the Targums and the book of Revelation both interpret the enmity announced at Gen 3:15 to be a spiritual battle, not a mere reference to the animus between humans and snakes. This view of enmity is indeed the point of departure for the broader interpretation of Gen 3:15 as a messianic text in Rev 12 and the Targums, as other scholars have shown. Moreover, to explain the congruity between the Targums and Rev 12, this study concludes, in agreement with the general view in comparative targumic and NT studies, that such an interpretation of the enmity at Gen 3:15 existed in the early Jewish community and was incorporated into the NT and into the Targums in accordance with each author's literary purposes and theological convictions.

Key Words: Targum, New Testament, Messiah, Enmity, Genesis 3:15, Revelation 12:17

Introduction[1]

Beginning his discussion on the messianic interpretation of Gen 3:15 with a candid admission, Gordon H. Johnston concedes that "[Gen 3:15] is not an explicitly messianic text."[2] Despite this reality, scholars have taken note of a shared messianic perspective of this passage in two historical corpora of literature of distinct compositional development, though from a common general Jewish background—Rev 12 and the Pentateuchal Targums (Targum Onqelos, 1st–2nd c. AD; Targum Neofiti, 2nd–3rd

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1. Many thanks to Matthew Nerdahl for reading this article and providing helpful suggestions.

2. Gordon H. Johnston, "Messiah and Genesis 3:15," in *Jesus the Messiah: Tracing the Promises, Expectations, and Coming of Israel's King*, ed. Herbert W. Bateman IV, Darrell L. Bock, Gordon H. Johnston (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), 459.

c. AD;[3] and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, 4th–10th c. AD).[4] Addressing this subject in a recent study, Pauline Paris Buisch points to three specific elements in Rev 12 and the Targums that manifest this messianic view—1) that the conflict of Gen 3:15 is to "reach its climax in the eschaton"; 2) that it is to "be concluded by the advent of the Messiah"; and 3) that it is to "involve the woman's children who are identified as those who keep the commandments."[5]

This, of course, raises questions about the compositional history of the shared material between Rev 12 and the Targums: How are these similarities to be explained? Are they random accidents of history? Are they evidence of literary interdependence? Buisch cogently argues that this shared messianic perspective is evidence that the two corpora of literature presuppose "a comparable understanding" of Gen 3:15

3. Targum Neofiti will be cited as the representative of the Palestinian Targums, while the Fragment Targums and Targum Neofiti Marginalia will be referenced where pertinent to the discussion. For a textual comparison of the various targumic renditions of Gen 3:15, see Avigdor Shinan, תרגום ואגדה בו: האגדה בתרגום התורה הארמי המויחס ליונתן בן עוזיאל (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992), 21–22. For more on the Palestinian Targums, see Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction*, Studies in Aramaic Interpretation of Scripture 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 73–83.

4. For a brief introduction to the Targums, see Philip Alexander, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity,* ed. Martin Jan Mulder and Harry Sysling (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 217–53; and Flesher and Chilton, *Targums,* 72–89 (for the dating of these texts, see 84), for Onqelos, 81, and for Pseudo-Jonathan, 88–89 and 158–66. For more on the date of Pseudo-Jonathan, see Stephen A. Kaufman, "Dating the Language of the Palestinian Targums and their Use in the Study of First Century CE Texts," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context*, ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 124; Moise Ohana, "La polémique judéo-islamique et l'image d'Ismaël dans Targum Pseudo-Jonathan et dans Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer," *Aug* 15, no. 3 (1975): 367–87; Avigdor Shinan, "The 'Palestinian' Targums––Repetitions, Internal Unity, Contradictions," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 36, no. 1 [1985]: 87; and see Shinan, אגדתם של מתורגמנים: תיאור וניתוח ספרותי של החומר האגדי המשוקע בכל התרגומים הארמיים הארץ ישראליים לחמשה חומשי תורה (Jerusalem: Maqor, 1979), 1:119–46; and 2:xvi. For the key advocate of an early date, see C. T. R. Hayward, "Inconsistencies and Contradictions in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: The Case of Eliezer and Nimrod," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 37, no. 1 (1992): 31–55; Robert Hayward, "'Red Heifer and Golden Calf: Dating Targum Pseudo-Jonathan," in *Textual and Contextual Studies in the Pentateuchal Targums*, ed. Paul V. M. Flesher, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 55, Targum Studies 1, ed. Jacob Neusner et al. (Atlanta, GA: Scholar's, 1992), 9–32; Flesher, "The Date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some Comments," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 40 (1989): 7–30; and Flesher, "Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Anti-Islamic Polemic," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 34, no. 1 (1989): 77–93.

5. Pauline Paris Buisch, "The Rest of Her Offspring: The Relationship between Revelation 12 and the Targumic Expansion of Genesis 3:15," *Novum Testamentum* 60 (2018): 400–01. See also Martin McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum of the Pentateuch* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 217–22; Max Wilcox, "The Promise of the 'Seed' in the New Testament and the Targumim," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 5 (1979): 13–14; Michèle Morgen, "Apocalypse 12, un targum de l'Ancien Testament," *Foi et vie* 80, no. 6 (1981): 72–73; Martin McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited: Aramaic Paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 115; Miguel Pérez Fernández, *Tradiciones Mesiánicas en el Targum Palestinense*, Estudios Exegéticos Institución San Jerónimo 12 (Valencia-Jerusalem: Institución San Jerónimo-Casa de Santiago, 1981), 33–94.

that existed in the Jewish community of that day, and that the authors of these texts appropriated this interpretation of the passage to their respective compositions in accordance with their theological program.[6] This conclusion is, in fact, generally in line with the view articulated by Martin McNamara concerning New Testament and Targum studies: "All agree that it is not a question of the New Testament being dependent on the Targums (or rabbinic tradition) *but rather both being witnesses to an earlier Jewish tradition*" (my italics).[7] In other words, the common perspective of Gen 3:15 in the Targums and Rev 12 is neither a coincidence of history nor the product of literary interdependence; rather, it is the result of the incorporation of a messianic interpretation of Gen 3:15 that evidently obtained in early Jewish thought.

With a view to contribute to this discussion, the present analysis suggests that the fundamental starting point of this messianic perspective is the presupposition both within Rev 12 and the Targums that the enmity announced at Gen 3:15 is at its core a spiritual conflict, not a mere declaration of the animus between humans and snakes. Various ancient Jewish texts do understand Gen 3:15 to refer to a spiritual battle; other texts, meanwhile, seem to understand it to refer to a natural relationship of tension between snakes and humans.[8] In modern day biblical scholarship, moreover, while evangelical scholars often advocate for a spiritual battle within Gen 3:15, critical scholars contend that the passage is an etiology for the hostile relationship between snakes and humans.[9]

6. Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 400. For other discussions of this issue, see McNamara, *New Testament and the Palestinian Targum*, 217–22; Morgen, "Apocalypse 12," 63–74; and Johnston, "Messiah and Genesis 3:15," 466–67.

7. McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited*, 10. For more on methodology, see Shinan, תרגום ואגדה בו, 20–22; C. T. R. Hayward, "The Present State of Research into the Targumic Account of the Sacrifice of Isaac," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 32 (1981): 127–50; Geza Vermes, "Jewish Literature and New Testament Exegesis: Reflections and Methodology," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 33 (1982): 361–76; Bruce D. Chilton, *Judaic Approaches to the Gospels*, University of South Florida International Studies in Formative Christianity and Judaism 2 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994), 305–15; Michael B. Shepherd, "Targums, the New Testament, and Biblical Theology of the Messiah," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51, no. 1 (2008): 45–58; Flesher and Chilton, *Targums,* 385–408.

8. See remarks in Johnston, "Messiah and Genesis 3:15," 461–67; and a collection of texts in James L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 98–100.

9. See John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Scribner, 1910), 78–82; R. A. Martin, "The Earliest Messianic Interpretation of Genesis 3:15," *Journal for Biblical Literature* 84 (1965): 425–27; Walter Wifall, "Gen 3:15—A Protevangelium?" *Catholic Bible Quarterly* 36 (1974): 361–65; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary ١ (Dallas: Word, ١٩٨٧), ٧٨–٨١; Claus Westermann, *A Continental Commentary: Genesis 1–11* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 256–61; T. Desmond Alexander, "Messianic Ideology in the Book of Genesis," in *The Lord's Anointed*, ed. P. E. Satterthwaite, R. S. Hess, and G. J. Wenham (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 19–39; K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, New American Commentary 1A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 243–48; Jack Collins, "A Syntactical Note (Genesis 3:15): Is the Woman's Seed Singular or Plural?" *Tyndale Bulletin* 48, no. 1 (1997): 139–48; John H. Sailhamer, "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 1 (March 2001): 5–23; E.

However, a comparative analysis of Rev 12 and the Targums reveals that these texts interpret the enmity of Gen 3:15 to be a spiritual battle. In these texts, this perspective is indeed the foundation and the point of departure for the broader interpretation of Gen 3:15 as a messianic text. That is, the view that this enmity is spiritual warrants the appearance of the three messianic elements in Rev 12 and the Targums that Buisch considers in her study, as indicated above: 1) the integration of the law of God into the context of Gen 3:15; 2) the reference to the eschaton as the temporal point of culmination of this conflict; and 3) the mention of the Messiah during whose reign triumph is achieved. At the same time, while the spiritual nature of the conflict is presupposed, the natural animosity between the actual reptile of the Serpentes suborder is not always denied; rather, this natural animosity is in certain cases perceived to be a manifestation of the spiritual conflict.

Finally, the implication of all this for the composition of Rev 12 and the Targums is, as maintained by targumic scholars more generally, that this view of Gen 3:15 existed in various circles of the early Jewish community and was incorporated into the NT and into the Targums in accordance with each author's literary purposes and theological convictions.

The Spiritual Nature of the Conflict in the Targums

The Targums are unequivocal in their perspective of Gen 3:15 that the nature of the conflict is fundamentally spiritual, albeit not to the exclusion of the physical facet of antagonism between snakes and humans. This spiritual aspect of the conflict manifests itself in various interpretative renderings within the targumic texts. The interpretative translation of the text, however, is not arbitrary or without literary grounds, from the perspective of the targumist. Rather, each rendition in the Aramaic is triggered by the specific articulation of the text in the Hebrew. Therefore, the targumist derives the Aramaic expansion from within the Hebrew text, as the analysis of each of the Pentateuchal Targums below demonstrates.[10]

A. Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, Anchor Yale Bible 1 (London: Yale University Press, 2008), 21–28; Robert Alter, *The Hebrew Bible: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019), 1:17n15.

10.   For a thorough study of the exegesis in the Pentateuchal Targums, see Alexander Samely, *The Interpretation of Speech in the Pentateuch Targums: A Study of Method and Presentation in Targumic Exegesis*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 27 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).

Targum Onqelos

MT	I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he will strike you on the head, and you will strike him on the heel.[11]	וְאֵיבָה אָשִׁית בָּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עָקֵב
Targum Onqelos	I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your sons and her sons; he will remember what you did to him from the beginning, and you will keep [antagonism] toward him until the end.[12]	וּדְבָבוּ אֲשַׁוֵּי בֵּינָךְ וּבֵין אִיתְּתָא וּבֵין בְּנָךְ וּבֵין בְּנָהָא הוּא יְהֵי דְּכִיר מָא דַעֲבַדְתְּ לֵיהּ מִלְּקַדְמִין וְאַתְּ תְּהֵי נָטַר לֵיהּ לְסוֹפָא׃

The perspective that the conflict is spiritual reveals itself in Onqelos in its subtle but certain interpretative translation of and addition to the Hebrew text. In the final part of the verse, Onqelos renders the Hebrew "he will *strike you* on the head, and you will *strike him* on the heel" as "he will *remember what you did to him* from the beginning, and you will *keep [antagonism] toward him* until the end" (italics mine). These changes reflect a spiritual understanding of enmity on the part of Onqelos in two interrelated respects.

First, Onqelos interprets the root "strike" (שׁוּף) not as a physical action, in which the human stomps on the head of the snake or the snake snaps at the heel of the human, but as a cognitive experience of remembering (דכר: "he will *remember* what you did to him") and keeping (נטר: "you will *keep* [antagonism] toward him"). Explaining this translation, Grossfeld states that the word "strike" (שׁוּף) "was understood as the root š'p—'long for,' and rendered by the somewhat related roots of 'to remember' and 'to guard/sustain (in one's heart).'"[13] Thus, with respect to the human, the essence of the conflict pertains to the memory of the serpent executing concerted efforts to compel the first humans to disobey God.[14] And with respect to the serpent, the nature of the conflict refers to the serpent's preservation of a particular, arguably negative, perspective toward the humans. While this perspective of the serpent is unspecified, the parallel structure between דְּכִיר and נָטַר implies an intellectual sense of נָטַר just as it is evident in דְּכִיר. In addition, while the targumic rendering does not make explicit

11.   Compare with the NJPS translation.

12.   Compare with translation in Bernard Grossfeld, trans., *Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible 6B, ed. Kevin Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1990), 46 at Gen 3:15.

13.   Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, 46n9. For additional remarks on the meaning of שׁוּף, see Wifall, "Gen 3:15—A Protevangelium?" 364; McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited*, 105 and 114–15; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 81.

14.   See also Shinan, 2:212, אגדתם של מתורגמנים; Pérez Fernández, *Tradiciones Mesiánicas en el Targum Palestinense*, 40–45.

what it is that the serpent will "keep" (נטר; i.e., lacking a direct object),[15] the context suggests that the reference pertains to the serpent's act to entice Adam and Eve to disobey God. That is, the text to be supplied in this ellipsis is to be drawn from the preceding line—"you will keep [what you did, i.e., the antagonistic assault] toward him." Note the structure in the table below:

He will remember **what you did** to him from the beginning, and you will keep [**what you did**] toward him until the end.	הוּא יְהֵי דְכִיר **מָא דַעֲבַדת** לֵיה מִלְקַדמִין וְאַת תְהֵי נָטַר [**מָא דַעֲבַדת**] לֵיה לְסוֹפָא:

Thus the serpent will not simply strike at the offspring, but, more than this, preserve the antagonism that he expressed toward Adam and Eve in the garden.[16] In an analysis of this verse, Pérez Fernández understands this clause to mean that the serpent will be "lurking to do evil" ("Estar al acecho para hacer el mal").[17] And in an English translation of this clause, Grossfeld supplies the term "hatred" in order to make the text clear, thus producing: "*you will sustain* [your hatred] *for it to the end*."[18] In effect, Onqelos shifts the nature of the conflict from the physical "strike" (שׁוּף) to the cognitive "remember" (דְכִיר) and "keep" (נטר), with spiritual implications at play in that the context of the passage relates to the obedience and disobedience of God.

Second, the targumic addition of the clause "what you did to him" (מָא דַעֲבַדת לֵיה) casts the serpent's act of compelling humankind to disobey God in a morally, that is to say spiritually, negative light specifically by the use of the verb "did" (עבד). The negative force of the verb appears first in God's condemnatory interrogation of Eve at v. 13: "What is this you have *done*" (Heb: מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂית; Arm: מָא דָא עֲבַדת). Subsequent to this the verb reappears in God's condemnatory exclamation to the serpent at v. 14: "Because you have *done* this, cursed are you…" (Heb: כִּי עָשִׂיתָ זֹּאת אָרוּר אַתָּה; Arm: אֲרֵי עֲבַדת דָא לִיט אַת). Thus when the targumist adds the clause at v. 15 that Eve's offspring will remember "what you *did* to him" (מָא דַעֲבַדת לֵיה), the statement bears the force of condemnation on account of its function within the preceding two statements of God.

While the changes are slight, Onqelos's perspective of the hostility at Gen 3:15 nonetheless is clear—that the hostility is more than natural; it is spiritual.

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15. Compare with Onqelos Deut 5:10, 12; 27:1; Targum 1 Sam 30:23; Targum Ruth 1:13.

16. For a helpful discussion on parallel structure, see Edward L. Greenstein, "How Does Parallelism Mean?" in *A Sense of Text: The Art of Language in the Study of Biblical Literature*, Papers from a Symposium at the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, May 11, 1982, A Jewish Quarterly Review Supplement (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 41–70.

17. Pérez Fernández, *Tradiciones Mesiánicas en el Targum Palestinense*, 180.

18. Italics original. Grossfeld, *Onqelos to Genesis*, 46 at Gen 3:15.

Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

MT	I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he will strike you on the head, and you will strike him on the heel.	וְאֵיבָה אָשִׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עָקֵב
Targum Neofiti	And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your sons and her sons.[19] And it will come about that when her sons keep the Law and do the commandments, they will aim at you and strike you on your head and kill you. But when they forsake the commandments of the Law, you will aim and bite him on the heel and make him ill. However, for her son,[20] there will be healing, but for you, O serpent, there will not be healing, inasmuch as they are destined to make appeasement[21] in the end, in the day of the king messiah.[22]	ובעל דבבו אשוי בינך ובין איתתה ובין בניך ובין בנה ויהוי כד יהוון בניה נטרין אורייתא ועבדין פקודייה יהוון מתכוונין לך ומחיי׳ יתך לראשך וקטלין יתך וכד יהוון שבקין פקודי דאוריתא תהוי מתכוין ונכת יתיה בעקבה וממרע יתיה ברם לבריה יהוי אסו ולך חויה לא יהוי אסו דעתידין אינון מעבד שפיותיה בעוקבה ביומא דמלכא משיחא:

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19. Literally, "I will put an enemy…" (see Num 35:21–22). See comments in Martin McNamara, trans., *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, The Aramaic Bible 1A, ed. Kevin Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992), 61n11; B. Barry Levy, *Targum Neophyti 1: A Textual Study,* Studies in Judaism (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987), 1:96; Roger Le Déaut with Jacques Robert, eds. and trans., *Targum du pentateuque: Traduction des deux recensions palestiniennes complètes avec introduction, parallèles, notes et index*, *Genèse*, Sources Chrétiennes 245 (Paris: Latour-Baubourg, 1978), 94n10.

20. For challenges in translating לבריה as a singular or as a plural, see McNamara, *Neofiti 1: Genesis*, 61n12; McNamara, *New Testament and the Palestinian Targum*, 219–20; and see a suggestion that this might indicate messianic implications in Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 395.

21. For challenges in translating שפיותיה as "peace," "appeasement," "remedy," "cure," or "crushing," see McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited*, 116n12; Michael Maher, ed. and trans., *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis,* The Aramaic Bible 1B, ed. Kevin Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992), 28n28; David Rieder and Mordekhai Zamir, תרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל על התורה, מתורגם לעברית עם באורים ציוני מקורות ומקבילות: בראשית- שמות (Jerusalem: Miryam Rieder, 1984), 15 at Gen 3:15; Shinan, 22, תרגום ואגדה בו,50n; Marcus Jastrow, "שְׁפִיּוּת," in *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Luzac & Co., 1903), 1567; and Jastrow, "שָׁף, שְׁפִי," in *A Dictionary of the Targumim*, 1614–15; Michael Sokoloff, "שׁפי" and "שְׁפִיו," *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*, 2nd ed. (Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002), 563.

22. See the translation in McNamara, *Neofiti 1: Genesis*, 61 at Gen 3:15; and see similar text in the Fragment Targums and in the Neofiti Marginalia.

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan	And I will put enmity between you and the woman, between the offspring of your sons and the offspring of her sons. And it will come about that when the sons of the woman keep the commandments of the Law, they will aim and strike you on your head. But when they forsake the commandments of the Law, you will aim and bite them on their heels. However, for them there will be healing, but for you there will not be healing, as they are destined to make appeasement in the end, in the day of the king messiah.[23]	ודבבו אישוי בינך ובין איתתא בין זרעית בנך ובין זרעית בנהא ויהי כד יהוון בנהא דאיתתא נטרין מצוותא דאורייתא יהוון מכוונין ומחיין יתך על רישך וכד שבקין מצוותא דאורייתא תהוי מתכוויין ונכית יתהון בעיקביהון ברם להון יהי אסו ולך לא יהי אסו ועתידין הינון למיעבד שפיותא בעיקבא ביומי מלכא משיחא

Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan, introducing interpretative expansions that are similar to each other, indicate even more definitively that their understanding of the hostility at Gen 3:15 is more than merely natural. However, in these two Targums the natural aspect of the conflict does remain.[24]

The spiritual element is added to this battle in both Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan in that the battle is conditioned by the practice of keeping or not keeping the commandments of the law, a condition that the biblical text lacks. On the one hand, the sons of the woman will strike the serpent when they keep the law. Thus Neofiti reads: "And it will come about that *when her sons keep the Law and do the commandments*, they will aim at you and strike you on your head and kill you"; and Pseudo-Jonathan states: "And it will come about that *when the sons of the woman keep the commandments of the La*w, they will aim and strike you on your head" (italics mine).[25] On the other hand, when the sons of the woman do not keep the law, the serpent will attack them. Neofiti reads: "*But when they forsake the commandments of the Law*, you will aim and bite him on the heel and make him ill"; and Pseudo-Jonathan states: "*But when they forsake the commandments of the Law,* you will aim and bite them on their heels" (italics mine). This integration of the law into the context of the battle portrays the battle as being governed by the relationship of the sons of the woman to the law of God. McNamara remarks that this expansion correlates with the Jewish theological concept that "one's eternal destiny was determined by

23. See the translation in Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 28 at Gen 3:15.

24.   Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 393. The plural nouns and verbs in these texts indicate that the targumists understood the singular forms in the Hebrew ("he" הוא; "will strike" יְשׁוּפְךָ; etc.) to function as collectives; but regarding the singular understanding of offspring in Neofiti, see footnote 20 above.

25. Italicized text represents the targumic additions.

one's attitude to the Law."[26] And in another work he notes that "The belief that the righteous would be rewarded for their good deeds and that the wicked would be punished for their sins was, of course, commonplace in Jewish literature."[27]

The actual incorporation of the expanded text into these two Targums, just as in Onqelos, is intricately linked to the words that appear in the Hebrew text. Thus the trigger that prompted the expansions concerning the commandments of the law is the verb "strike" (שׁוּף). While the verb is retained in the verse and rendered as "strike" with respect to the sons, and "bite" with respect to the serpent, the verb is also reinterpreted and linked directly to the practice of the keeping of the law. Maher explains that the similarity of the root שׁוּף ("to strike") to the root שָׁאף ("to pant") triggered and allowed for the expansion concerning the law. He writes:

> The idea of "keeping" (Nf, Ps.-J.) or "toiling in" (Nfmg, P, V, N, L) the Law seems to have been introduced into this verse because the *meturgemanim* took the verb šwp in *yšwpk r'š*, "he shall bruise your head," to be derived from š'p, "gasp, pant," which they took to refer to the striving and the effort required in the observance of the Torah. By then linking the verb šwp with the same verb š'p in the sense of "pant after, long for," and thus "strive to reach a goal," the *meturgemanim* (Nf, P, V, N, L, Ps.-J.; cf. Nfmg) derive the idea of "take aim" from *yšwp(k)* and *tšwp(nw)*, "he/you shall bruise."[28]

In other words, upon linking שׁוּף and שָׁאף, evidently due to the phonetic similarity between the words, the targumists then applied שָׁאף specifically to a desire for the law. Indeed, this very usage of שָׁאף appears at Psa 119:131: "I open my mouth and *pant*, for I long for Your commandments" פִּי־פָעַרְתִּי וָאֶשְׁאָפָה כִּי לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ יָאָבְתִּי (ESV; italics mine).[29] This type of interpretive procedure conceivably served as the grounds for the expansion that the battle between the sons of the woman and the serpent is not

26. McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited*, 209, and see page 115. For a sampling of the theological relationship between success and obedience to the law in targumic thought, see Pseudo-Jonathan Gen 3:24; 4:8; 15:1; 17; 25:23; 27:40 (also Neofiti and Onqelos); 30:18; 38:25; 39:10; 49:1; Pseudo-Jonathan Num 24:14; Neofiti Deut 33:29. Note also the Hebrew text of Deut 28 and 30:15–18. For comments, see Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis,* 30n58; McNamara, *Neofiti 1: Genesis,* 61n13; Le Déaut with Robert, *Targum du pentateuque,* 94n10; Morgen, "Apocalypse 12," 72–73; A. Melinek, "The Doctrine of Reward and Punishment in Biblical and Early Rabbinic Writings," in *Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday,* ed. H. J. Zimmels, J. Rabbinowitz, and L. Finestein (London: Soncino, 1967), 275–90; C. T. R. Hayward, "A Portrait of the Wicked Esau in the Targum of Neofiti 1," in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context,* ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 291–301; R. P. Gordon, "The Targumists as Eschatologists," in *Congress Volume: Göttingen 1977,* ed. J. A. Emerton, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 29 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 113–30.

27. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 30n58.

28. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 27n27; and see Shinan, 213–2:211, אגדתם של מתורגמנים.

29. See *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, s.v. "שָׁאַף"; See also Isa 42:14; Job 5:5; 7:2; 36:20; Jer 2:24; 14:6; Ecc 1:5.

merely natural antagonism between humans and serpents, but that this battle is rather governed by the sons' success or failure to keep the law.

As noted above, however, while the targumists reinterpret the root שׁוּף "to strike" as שׁאף "to pant," they nonetheless also proceed to include the meaning of the actual root שׁוּף "to strike" with respect to the sons and with respect to the serpent, thus providing a double translation of this verb—on the one hand, as "to keep the law," deriving from שׁאף, and on the other, as "to strike," deriving from שׁוּף.[30] David Golomb refers to this approach as "creative exploitation of ambiguity," where instead of choosing one translation, the targumists "pick 'both-and.'"[31] Thus, the sons will "strike" the serpent on the head if they keep the law (Ps-J: ומחיין יתך על רישך), or, alternatively, the serpent will "bite" the sons at their heels if they do not keep the law (Ps-J: ונכית יתהון בעיקביהון). With this reworking of the text, while the nature of the battle is elevated to the realm of the spiritual (i.e., keeping the law), the physical aspect of the battle remains, and, in fact, serves as the practical outworking of the spiritual state of the conflict.

In the end, assessment of the targumic rendering of Gen 3:15 demonstrates that, in the view of the targumists the conflict announced at Gen 3:15 is at its core a spiritual, not merely a natural, conflict.

The Spiritual Nature of the Conflict at Revelation 12:17

Very much a comparable perspective of the conflict of Gen 3:15 is expressed in the NT at Rev 12:17 in a manner that parallels the targumic text in various ways. Two specific elements at 12:17 represent this congruity with the Targums: 1) the perception that the serpent is more than a mere snake, in fact, a spiritual personality; and 2) the association of the woman's offspring with the commandments of God, similar to the text of the Targums.

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30. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 27, n. 27; Shinan, אגדתם של מתורגמנים, 2:211–213; Pérez Fernández, *Tradiciones Mesiánicas en el Targum Palestinense*, 44–47.

31. David Golomb, "Ambiguity in the Pentateuchal Targumim," in *Textual and Contextual Studies in the Pentateuchal Targums*, Targum Studies 1, ed. Paul V. M. Flesher (Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1992), 141; see also Levy, *Targum Neophyti 1,* 52–53.

Revelation 12:17

Rev 12:17	**¹⁷** Then the dragon was angry with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.	**¹⁷** καὶ ὠργίσθη ὁ δράκων ἐπὶ τῇ γυναικὶ καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ποιῆσαι πόλεμον μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῆς τῶν τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ.

The first element at 12:17 that reveals the text's presupposition that the conflict of Gen 3:15 is spiritual is the perspective of Rev 12 that the serpent of Gen 3 and the devil, Satan, and the dragon are one and the same spiritual personality. While 12:17 mentions "the dragon" (ὁ δράκων) without further specification, Rev 12:9 explicitly identifies the dragon as the devil (Διάβολος), Satan (Σατανᾶς), and "that ancient serpent" (ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος). On the one hand, this identification of the dragon forges a clear connection to Gen 3, in that the dragon is described with the lexical term "serpent" (ὄφις), which corresponds to the term used to describe the serpent in Gen 3 (cf. Heb: נָחָשׁ; LXX: ὄφις).[32] On the other hand, the depiction of this dragon as a spiritual personality demonstrates that Rev 12, with 12:17 included, imagines the serpent of Gen 3 to be more than a mere snake. Admittedly, such an explicit identification of the serpent is absent from the Targums. Nevertheless, as noted above, Onqelos does hint that the serpent wields the cognitive faculty of keeping antagonism toward the offspring. Overall, however, this suggests that while the Targums and Rev 12 share the broader view that the conflict is spiritual, the Targums do not follow the exact same reading of the serpent within Gen 3 vis-à-vis Rev 12.[33]

The second element at 12:17 that points to the text's view that the conflict is spiritual is the text's association of the woman's offspring with the commandments of God. On the one hand, Rev 12:17 draws a direct link to Gen 3 in employing the specific term "offspring" (σπέρμα), which corresponds to the Hebrew equivalent זֶרַע and which serves as the antecedent to the pronoun הוּא at Gen 3:15. Aune points out that, "The phrase τὸ σπέρμα αὐτῆς, literally, 'her seed,' is a very unusual expression, for 'seed' or 'offspring' are normally associated with a male progenitor"; and so he interprets this feature to be a point of connection to Gen 3:15, in which the offspring

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32. For some discussion on the serpent in Gen 3 and Rev 12, see Morgen, "Apocalypse 12," 65–67; Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 98–100; and Johnston, "Messiah and Genesis 3:15," 461–63.

33. But note Pseudo-Jonathan's introduction of the adversarial angel Sammael at Gen 3:6, to whom Maher refers as a "hostile and destructive being" (Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis*, 26n8). See Pseudo-Jonathan Gen 4:1; and for further reference, see Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 2nd ed., trans. Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 2003), 2:1389–90.

is specifically associated with Eve.[34] Osborne, adding to this conclusion, observes that "σπέρμα…is found only here in the book and alludes to Gen. 3:15."[35] On the other hand, Rev 12:17 reveals its presupposition that the battle is of spiritual kind in that this offspring is described as "those who keep *the commandments of God* and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (τῶν τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ; cf. 14:12; italics mine).[36] This statement articulates the fact that the serpent is executing a battle against a very specific group of individuals—those who keep the commandments of God.[37] As noted in the discussion on the Targums, placing this conflict in the context of the law of God indicates that this conflict is not one that is defined merely by the natural hostility between the humans and the snakes; rather, the essence of the battle is spiritual in that the dragon's (i.e., the serpent's) hostility is strategically aimed at those who demonstrate their obedience to God.

Therefore, as in the case of the Targums discussed above, so in the case of Rev 12:17, the perspective of Gen 3:15 is that the conflict is of spiritual nature.

The Implications of the Parallels between Revelation 12:17 and the Targums on Genesis 3:15

Furthermore, the analogous reference to the offspring who keep the commandments both at Rev 12:17 and within the Targums raises questions about the literary relationship between these two literary corpora. Is the NT borrowing from the Targums? Are the Targums relying on the NT? Are they independently drawing on a tradition of their time? Buisch states that "Targumic borrowing from the New Testament is highly implausible … and New Testament borrowing from the Targums is impossible since the New Testament antedates the Targums as we have them."[38] How then is this shared perspective to be explained? Ultimately, analysis of the similarities and differences in the presentation of this tradition within the Targums and at Rev 12:17 reinforces the scholarly view that both the NT and the Targums adopted an already existing interpretation of Gen 3:15, which, in this case, relates specifically to the perception that the conflict is spiritual.[39]

34.   David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, Word Biblical Commentary 52B (Dallas: Word, 1998), 708; and G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans, 1999), 679; and Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 397n32; but see also Michael Rydelnik, *The Messianic Hope: Is the Hebrew Bible Really Messianic?* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2010), 135n19.

35.   Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 485.

36.   Osborne, *Revelation*, 485–86.

37.   Note Johnston's discussion of the plural understanding of offspring at Rev 12:17 and its relationship to the singular pronoun הוא "he"(?) at Gen 3:15 in Johnston, "Messiah and Genesis 3:15," 469–71; and see Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 679.

38.   Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 389; and see footnote 7 above.

39.   See McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited*, 10. Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 400.

Considering these questions on a broader level between Rev 12 and the targumic expansions of Gen 3:15, Buisch points to various similarities and differences between these compositions and contends that these two literary corpora do share a common interpretation of Gen 3:15, but without evidence of literary dependence. The similarities she identifies include the appearance of the same characters (a woman, a serpent, the Messiah, and the offspring who keep the commandments); the parallels in plot (a deadly conflict between the woman/woman's offspring and the serpent; and the eventual defeat of the serpent); and a common temporal setting (the eschatological time-period).[40] The differences she notes are: the relationship between the woman and the messiah (as to whether or not he is the son of the woman); the outcome of the offspring's obedience (as to whether they execute an attack on the serpent or endure an attack by the serpent/dragon);[41] the reference to healing and appeasement in the eschaton; the description of the battle in heaven; the mention of Jesus; and the distinct rendering of the term "offspring" זֶרַע in each composition—the figurative sense in σπέρματος "offspring" in Rev 12, in contrast to the concrete sense in בנהא/ בניה "sons" in the Targums.[42]

To this analysis we may add a few similarities and differences specifically with reference to the offspring who keep the commandments at Rev 12:17 and in the Targums (except Onqelos, which lacks this expansion). Consider the textual elements of this reference in the table below:

study the Law and keep the commands	לעיין באוריתא ונטרין פיקודיא[43]	Fragment Targums
keep the Law and do the commands	נטרין אורייתא ועבדין פקודייה	Neofiti
keep the commandments of the Law	נטרין מצוותא דאורייתא	Pseudo-Jonathan
those who keep the commandments of God	τῶν τηρούντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ	Rev 12:17

As regards the similarities, two observations are in order. First, all the renditions share the interpretation that the offspring is a plurality, inasmuch as the participles used to refer to the offspring are consistently plural (לעיין; נטרין; עבדין; and τηρούντων), whereas the grammatical number of the offspring at Gen 3:15 is ambiguous (if not

40. Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 397–98.

41. See comments in Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 393, 399; Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 708; and Osborne, *Revelation*, 485.

42. Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 398–99. Buisch infers that "The use of σπέρμα in Rev ۱۲:۱۷ shows that this source had not been influenced by the Targumic agenda to concretize and remove any metaphor, in which case τέκνον or υἱός would have been the term of choice" (400; and see 391).

43. Neofiti Marginalia yields the same text here.

singular, i.e., הוא).[44] Second, all the renditions employ the equivalent of the locution "keep" to communicate the idea of obeying the law (נטר in Aramaic and the corresponding **τηρέω** in Greek). These subtle similarities add to the contention that a common perspective of Gen 3:15 lies beneath these formulations of the text.

As regards the differences, three comments are in order. First, the targumic texts all use verbal participles to describe the offspring's act of observing the law (לעיין ;נטרין ;עבדין), while Rev 12:17 uses an attributive participle to convey the same idea (τῶν τηρούντων).[45] Second, two different patterns of syntactic structure are employed to convey a similar notion of observing the law. On the one hand, the Fragment Targums and Neofiti use two clauses conjoined by the conjunction *waw* with nearly the same diction. On the other, Pseudo-Jonathan and Rev 12:17 use one clause that manifests a similar structure and similar diction—the participles נטרין and τῶν τηρούντων represent the action "keep" in the first position; the direct objects מצוותא and τὰς ἐντολὰς represent the noun "commandments" in the second position; and the prepositional phrases דאורייתא and τοῦ θεοῦ represent the modifiers "of the Law" and "of God," respectively, in the third position. Third, while the Targums make reference to the Law (אורייתא) and to the commandments (פיקודיא ;מצוותא), they do not explicitly associate these with God. In contrast, Rev 12:17 makes the link between the commandments and God explicit (τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ), while also adding the particular remark about the offspring's commitment "to the testimony of Jesus" (τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ). Thus the distinct features within each expression of the text exhibit evidence of literary independence on the part of the author of each composition.

In the end, the combined assessment of these similarities and differences suggests that, a common tradition of Gen 3:15 does seems to sustain the renderings of the Targums and Rev 12:17; however, literary dependence seems not to be in effect between these compositions. Articulating this conclusion in a helpful manner, Buisch writes that "both the New Testament and the Targums presuppose a comparable understanding of the same biblical text but without sharing exact wording."[46]

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44. Shepherd, "Targums," 52; and see Abner Chou, *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), 83–89.

45. Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 90–95, §3.4.3; David M. Golomb, *A Grammar of Targum Neofiti*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 34 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press: 1985), 121–22; Edward Morgan Cook, *Rewriting the Bible: The Text and Language of the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum* (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), 190–91 and 217–19; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 612–55, especially 618; David L. Mathewson and Elodie B. Emig, *Intermediate Greek Grammar: Syntax for Students of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 205–26.

46. Buisch, "Rest of Her Offspring," 400.

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of Rev 12:17 and the Pentateuchal Targums demonstrates that these two bodies of texts share a common understanding of the conflict at Gen 3:15—that the conflict is more than merely natural; indeed, that it is a spiritual conflict. This perspective is in fact the interpretive foundation and the point of departure for the larger messianic interpretation that Gen 3:15 receives at Rev 12:17 and in the Targums. For it is this perspective that sustains the integration of the law of God, the reference to the eschaton, and the inclusion of the Messiah into the context of Gen 3:15. The fact that this view of the conflict appears in both of these literary compositions suggests that this understanding of Gen 3:15 existed in the early Jewish community prior to the production of these texts, and that this interpretation was ultimately incorporated into Rev 12 and into the Targums in accordance with their literary and theological program.[47]

47. McNamara, *Targum and Testament Revisited*, 10.

Book Reviews

Akopian, Arman. *Classical Syriac*. Gorgias Handbooks. Piscataway: Gorgias, 2019. xiv + 384 pp. $98, paperback.

Arman Akopian has 24 years of experience on the faculty of Yerevan State University in Armenia, teaching Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic and Syriac. He obtained a PhD from Yerevan in Oriental Studies, focusing on Semitic Philology and also has decades of experience in international affairs, including service to the United Nations and NATO. Akopian is also the author of the 2017 Gorgias Handbook *Introduction to Aramean and Syriac Students,* which discusses the language, culture and religion of Syriac-speaking peoples, including their literary work and tradition, missionary work, and communal identity.

The goal of Akopian's grammar is to provide a comprehensive course in Syriac, and he employs a unique system to accomplish this. A differentiating element in Akopian's approach is that he focuses on teaching Syriac primarily from the Serto script, moving into and incorporating Estrangela script. Typically other Syriac grammars do the opposite; beginning with Estrangela script (assuming it to be the standard) and then later incorporate or employ Serto to varying degrees. Akopian's purpose in this is to help students develop a full facility with both scripts while emphasizing that Serto was, historically, the more popular script. In many Biblical manuscripts and early Christian works, scribes used both scripts, but other grammars usually focus on teaching Estrangela. The rationale in teaching both scripts is that a student would be able to have a more complete grasp of the forms of the language going beyond a simple or limited translation ability.

Within the last two decades or so, several major Syriac grammars have been published of which Akopian's is the most recent. In 1999, Thackston's *Introduction to Syriac* was published, and has been the most commonly used grammar since. Thackston moves at a breakneck pace, with the entire substance of the grammar being twenty sections and coming in at just over one hundred pages, preceded by a rather overwhelming ten-part introductory section. In 2001, Eisenbrauns produced an English translation of Nöldeke's German-language *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, which can also be difficult starting place for a student and may be better used as a reference text. In 2005, Muraoka's *Classical Syriac* was published, and although it is labeled as "basic," it more accurately lends itself to the intermediate student. In 2016, Stephen Hallam produced *Basics of Classical Syriac* which follows a similar outline to the other popular-level "Basics" grammars that Zondervan has produced. Hallam's grammar is a good start, but has numerous typographical errors and is useful as a first step and perhaps a supplement to other grammars. Arman Akopian's grammar, in my view, excels in the areas where these other grammars fall short.

There are several aspects that distinguish Akopian's grammar. First, the pace of the grammar strikes a balance that its predecessors were not able to find. It is designed to be learned over the course of one year, but it lends itself to different paces depending on the ability of the student. Like many other Syriac grammars (excepting Hallam's), it has an extensive introductory section which is comprised of eight short and simple lessons on the phonological basics of the language such as the vowels and alphabet. Following this incipient section, the grammar is divided into forty main lessons, each of which is never more than ten pages, and concludes with exercises and vocabulary which progressively increase in difficulty. From a pedagogical standpoint, it would be ideal for a student to learn the introductory portion of the grammar on their own, and then to complete one or two lessons weekly over the course of two semesters. For a language that is so foreign to modern systems of grammar, it is inadvisable to use a grammar like this in a condensed format for an intensive course. Additionally, unlike some other Syriac grammars, Akopian teaches the language with vowels. In my view, including and teaching the vowel system is the right decision, being more helpful for beginning students. Just as Classical Hebrew is taught with vowels even though these were unoriginal, teaching Syriac in this way is helpful not only for pronunciation but also for memorization and retention.

The design of the grammar is simple and the font is easy to read. This may seem very basic, but when one is using a grammar (which is read and referred to repeatedly) this is imperative. In some other available grammars (such as Thackston's *Introduction*), the font is small, the lines are very close together and the Syriac font can be difficult to read. Akopian's grammar is a physically larger book and has more pages than other grammars, but this is likely due to the fact that the font, paradigms, examples and descriptions and spaced out more widely and helpfully on each page, which works against a feeling of being overwhelmed at the page of a grammar (a feeling that students of ancient languages know well).

In terms of the drawbacks of Akopian's grammar, its primary areas for improvement are related to the sections at the end of each lesson. First, as is common among grammars, there is a final section of vocabulary and Syriac-to-English translations in each chapter, but Akopian also includes a section of English sentences for a student to translate in Syriac, which seems unnecessary. Students trying to learn Syriac are going to be interested in translating from Syriac to English and not the other way around. This inclusion seems to lengthen chapters that otherwise could have been shorter or included more relevant information. Second, it would have been helpful for the ending sections to have more space or wider margins for a student to mark in the textbook itself or to practice writing scripts. Hallam's grammar is one of the few that includes such sections and spaces, and Akopian's grammar could have been improved with such an addition.

Syriac was one of the major languages of the early church, and is especially important for biblical and theological studies. Various important early Christian

documents were written in Syriac, such as Tatian's second-century gospel harmony (dubbed the Diatessaron) and the many fourth-century hymns and theological works of eminent writers like Ephraem the Syrian. Such documents, in varying measure, aid in illuminating the practices and beliefs of a sizable group of early Christians for whom Syriac was their language, and prove invaluable in determining how biblical texts were translated. Beyond these orthodox Christian texts, several apocryphal documents that were originally written in Syriac have been discovered, including a third-century text which has been called the Acts of Thomas.

Because of its prevalence as a language utilized significantly in early Christianity, translators of the New Testament and translators of the Old Testament, learning Syriac has great benefit for the theology student or aspiring biblical scholar. Akopian's grammar is an excellent tool in that pursuit, whether as a course textbook or as a guide for self-teaching. One could use half of the grammar to gain a basic understanding of the language or complete all forty lessons to gain a broad competency which would put a student in a good position to begin reading ancient Syriac texts or translations. However one utilizes it, it serves as a helpful resource for developing competency in this neglected language.

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Muraoka, Takamitsu. *A Biblical Aramaic Reader: With an Outline Grammar.* **Leuven: Peeters, 2015. 82 pp., $25.00.**

A Biblical Aramaic Reader by T. Muraoka is a concise Aramaic outline grammar that also contains notes on the Aramaic texts of the Hebrew Bible (Dan 2:4b–7; Ezra 4:8–24; 5–6; 7:12–26; Gen 31:47; Jer 10:11). Takamitsu Muraoka is Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Language and Literature, Israelite Antiquities and Ugaritic at Universiteit Leiden. Since 1982, Muraoka has been publishing technical works in the field of ancient languages and Semitics including, Syriac, Hebrew, Egyptian and Qumran Aramaic, Biblical Aramaic, and Greek (LXX). The work for which T. Muraoka is probably best known is *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, a translation and revision of Paul Joüon's original work. *A Biblical Aramaic Reader* showcases T. Muraoka's decades of language expertise.

This work seeks to be a "chrestomathy" to "help students consolidate the acquired knowledge of the grammar" (p. ix). Muraoka seeks to fill a gap in Aramaic resources by providing a systematic presentation of content on the Aramaic texts of the Hebrew Bible specifically for didactic purposes. To that end, *A Biblical Aramaic Reader* is far more than just a reader, even though it is quite short (only 82 pages).

In the formal Reader portion of this work (pp. 41–76), Muraoka comments on specific words and clause structures in the Aramaic text. He does not, however, provide the Aramaic portions of the Hebrew Bible in full. One would be expected

to have a Hebrew Bible side-by-side with this work. Even without the full Aramaic texts alongside the reader, the grammatical discussions are helpful for understanding and reinforcing the concepts from the outline grammar. Ranging from text critical comments to parsing verbs, Muraoka provides enough information to be helpful, but not so much that the textual notes are overwhelming. When Muraoka comments on items that are also discussed in the outline grammar, he references that section so that students can follow up with a summary discussion of that particular element of Aramaic phonology, morphology, syntax, or grammar. Since most students who pursue Aramaic studies have already had Biblical Hebrew, Muraoka regularly points students to a comparison of the same grammatical or morphological phenomenon in Biblical Hebrew (marked as BH in the reader). While not exhaustive, Muraoka comments on every verse of the Aramaic portions in the Hebrew Bible.

Because the Aramaic Reader is so succinct one should consider having other aids on hand while reading. Muraoka simply does not have the space to explain complex syntactical constructions or morphological phenomena. He simply states what the construction is and moves on. Perhaps Todd Murphy's *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of Biblical Hebrew* (IVP, 2003) or Miles Van Pelt's *Biblical Hebrew: A Compact Guide*, 2nd ed. (Zondervan, 2019) would be helpful for understanding Muraoka's grammatical terminology when it is not readily defined in the outline grammar. I realize that both of these suggested resources are Hebrew resources, but the help needed to supplement Muraoka is not Aramaic grammatical terms; rather, students may need to look up definitions of the various linguistic terms.

One should be aware of Muraoka's nomenclature for grammatical and morphological discussions throughout the book. Muraoka uses verb terminology associated with the פעל system. Therefore, so-called "weak verbs" are labeled according to their פעל designation (Lamed-Yod; Pe-Guttural; etc.). Additionally, Muraoka uses the abbreviation system of Comparative Semiticists for parsing verbs (G, D, tD, H, etc.) rather that the system used in most Arabic and Hebrew grammars (Qal, Piel, Hithpael, Hiphil, etc.). This system is quite efficient and makes for consistent transition between Semitic languages, but for those used to working with a first-year Hebrew grammar, it may take some time to get used to this system for parsing.

The best way to use this resource is to begin by reading through the outline grammar. This will provide the student with enough basics of Aramaic morphology and grammar to make use of the reader portion of the work. One should not expect the outline grammar to be a full Aramaic primer. With the formal outline grammar at only thirty-one pages, this work proves to be much shorter than Franz Rosenthal (Harrassowitz, 2006) or Alger Johns (Andrews University Press, 1972). The brevity of this work is commendable in its simplicity, but one will likely need to rely on other resources for a full comprehension of Aramaic grammar.

After reading the outline grammar, Muraoka suggests the student work through the book of Daniel followed by Ezra. The "Grammatical and philological notes are written and presented" on the assumption that the student will work in this order (p. ix). Because of this trajectory of the work, Muraoka says, "Notes on the later chapters of Daniel and on the chapters of Ezra are pitched on a slightly higher level" (p. ix).

Two additional features of this work are worth mentioning. First, between the outline grammar and the Aramaic Reader, Muraoka includes two full paradigms for Aramaic verbs (pp. 35–37). One is the "regular verb" and the other is the "Lamed-Yod verb." While these paradigms will prove helpful references, they both seem to leave out the so-called *shaphel* stem even though the comparative Semitics nomenclature labels the causative stem as "Š." I would assume Muraoka left out the *shaphel* due to the fact that the *haphel/aphel* are far more common in Biblical Aramaic as the causative stem than *shaphel*. For consistency, Muraoka labels the paradigm causative stem with "H/A" (*haphel/aphel*).

The second additional feature worth mentioning is what Muraoka labels as "Simple Exercises" (pp. 37–38). These exercises come with an answer key (pp. 77–82), and so one would theoretically be able to practice the morphological concepts and paradigms necessary to learn and reinforce Biblical Aramaic.

Muraoka's outline grammar and reader would be most valuable for someone who has had at least one year of Biblical Hebrew and perhaps even a semester of Biblical Aramaic. The grammar claims to be "An Outline Grammar of Biblical Aramaic for Beginners," but remembering the state of my Hebrew after one year, I'm not sure that I would have comprehended all of the concepts and terminology in Muraoka's grammar and reader. Reading it now, I can appreciate the simplicity and concision of the grammar, but as the first Aramaic grammar one encounters, it could perhaps lead to frustration.

On the other hand, the notes in the formal Reader portion of the book will prove helpful to anyone seeking to read the Aramaic texts of the Hebrew Bible. Muraoka explains forms, grammar, and morphological changes in a way that is helpful and succinct. This book would be best suited in an Aramaic classroom where additional instruction or guidance would come from a professor. It is possible that highly motivated language students could make excellent use of this resource in the pastoral study after having a year of Biblical Hebrew. However, it is likely best that this volume remains in the academic classroom.

Muraoka's work in this volume was born out of several semesters of teaching Asian students the Aramaic language. It was intended to be a succinct grammar and Reader and Muraoka accomplished that goal. Even though it is succinct, Muraoka has piled mountains of information into this work. For those wanting to revisit or refresh their Biblical Aramaic, this volume is worth the investment.

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Van Pelt, Miles V. *Basics of Biblical Aramaic: Complete Grammar, Lexicon, and Annotated Text*. **Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011, xiii + 235 pp, $59.99, paperback.**

The sun was blazing on the open plain of sand. I could hear the crashing waves of the lake, but it remained elusive. Certain it had to be over the next sandy hill, I hoisted two of my children onto my back and began a determined charge to the top. Cresting the crumbly mountain, my eyes met another vast tract of the Sleeping Bear Dunes. Would we ever get there? Many divinity students know this feeling. After years of study they finally feel ready to advance beyond the Greek of the Apostle John. Having conquered their fears with Jonah and Ruth, they start over "in the beginning," reading Hebrew with Moses. And just when they think they have arrived at the lakeshore, the rolling dunes of Aramaic meet their gaze.

In the past decade it has become increasingly easier for students and pastors with a working knowledge of biblical Hebrew to gain access to the Aramaic texts of the Bible. In 2011 Miles Van Pelt added a biblical Aramaic textbook to Zondervan's popular "Basics of Biblical Language" collection. Van Pelt, co-author of *Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, is the Alan Hayes Belcher, Jr. Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages at Reformed Theological Seminary—Jackson. He also leads the Summer Institute of Biblical Languages, an 8-week intensive study program. In addition to authoring numerous volumes in Zondervan's biblical language series, he has edited *A Biblical Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016) and serves as associate editor for the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament. His experience and authorship in this arena provide those stuck on the sand dunes ample encouragement to complete their journey.

Basics of Biblical Aramaic (BBA) shares a very similar format to its Hebrew predecessor. It covers phonology/orthography, the nominal system, the verbal system (basic), and the verbal system (derived stem). It provides charts with paradigms, a lexicon, and video lectures. BBA differs in that each chapter includes workbook style exercises at the end, and the book includes the entire annotated Aramaic text found in the Bible. Most importantly, BBA presents Aramaic via comparison to biblical Hebrew in order to (1) reinforce Hebrew grammar, and (2) to minimize extra effort needed to retain concepts. Every chapter encourages memorizing vocabulary glosses such that diligent students will recognize over 90% of the Aramaic text. Van Pelt encourages Aramaic study in a four-step process: (1) study the grammar and exercises, (2) work through annotated text, (3) translate unannotated text, and (4) never stop reading (p. xii).

Van Pelt's BBA has a very focused audience: those who have already learned biblical Hebrew and have an interest in reading the roughly ten chapters of the Bible composed in Aramaic. Such an audience will greatly appreciate the refresh of

Hebrew grammar through the comparative approach. Van Pelt does an admirable job offering succinct summaries of Hebrew grammar without going into an exhaustive review. For those who have used other volumes in this Zondervan series, the style will be familiar. For those who have not used the series (like myself), it is quite accessible. BBA provides relevant and efficient access to translation knowledge of biblical Aramaic. This is truly a textbook written with the focus audience in mind.

Such a sharp focus also cuts two ways. The restricted focus on biblical Aramaic reduces the comprehensive value of this text. For example, some grammar paradigms leave out various feminine forms not extant in the Bible (p. 46). Or, for those who want to develop basic communicative ability in the language, they cannot even learn to count to ten because of numeral omissions (p. 66; cf. Rosenthal §63). Such omissions could easily have been screened in grey or marked as "not occurring" in the biblical text. Further, even the target audience may eventually wish they had such materials when they learn about the Aramaic Targums, an ancient translation and interpretation covering most of the Old Testament. I would list them as the fifth step in Van Pelt's learning progression. Knowledge of such a historic resource and how it connects to learning biblical Aramaic could significantly boost motivation to learn the language well. Granted, a few adjustments are needed to read Targumic and/or Imperial Aramaic. Assuming most readers of Van Pelt will only ever access Targums via electronic resources (e.g., via Logos or Accordance Bible Software), complete paradigms and a simple appendix would potentially make BBA the only resource such readers would ever need. Ability to translate the whole Bible from the original languages is a good motivation to take the Aramaic trek; access to a wealth of ancient Bible translation and commentary puts a pleasant wind at your back!

Van Pelt offers a streamlined pedagogical resource. Each of the 22 chapters, averaging 6–7 pages, can function as an independent lesson complete with vocabulary and exercises. The annotated text provides immediate follow up to traditional grammar lessons as students begin contextual translation exercises. Rosenthal's *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Weisbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 2006) serves as a more complete reference resource, but it offers little help as a pedagogical tool. Schuele's *An Introduction to Biblical Aramaic* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2012) finds a middle road between Rosenthal and Van Pelt: requiring classroom prep but offering more complex linguistic discussions. For those who desire a brief foray into non-biblical Aramaic, certain chapters of Greenspahn's *An Introduction to Aramaic* (Atlanta: SBL, 2003) offer a broader survey of the language. But for those who simply want translation preparation for the Aramaic of the Bible, Van Pelt's well focused presentation will likely win the day in classroom and self-study.

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Quick, Laura. *Deuteronomy 28 and the Aramaic Curse Tradition*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 240, $93, hardcover.

Laura Quick (D.Phil., University of Oxford) is Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible and Tutorial Fellow of Theology and Religion at Worcester College, University of Oxford. She returned to her alma mater in 2019 after a two-year Assistant Professorship in Religion and Judaic Studies at Princeton University. Dr. Quick co-edited the *Philology and Gender* issue for *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* (Mohr Siebeck, 2019) with Drs. Jacqueline Vayntrub and Ingrid E. Lilly, and her second monograph *Dress, Adornment and the Body in the Hebrew Bible* is in production with Oxford University Press.

According to Quick, *Deuteronomy 28 and the Aramaic Curse Tradition* was written with three main goals. The first was to reorient the contemporary reader's view of the ancient world by presenting the literary importance of Northwest Semitic inscriptions in a field that often privileges biblical and Mesopotamian texts. When their value has been shown, the specific trope of the futility curse found in the Old Aramaic inscriptions are viewed considering the Hebrew Bible, especially Deuteronomy 28. Finally, by seeing a fuller picture of the futility curses in the ancient world the reader will be able to better understand the function of the curses in Deuteronomy 28.

Quick's summary on the past and present scholarly debate on the background of Deuteronomy 28 is a helpful key to understanding the need for a new approach to the topic. The scholarly consensus is that Deuteronomy 28 was written as a direct subversion to Esarhaddon's Succession Treaties (EST) during Josiah's reign. Scholars such as Bernard Levinson and Jeffrey Stackert have seen the EST as a conceptual template for Deuteronomy 28. However, recently Carly Crouch has pushed back on this theory by stating that subversive literary features (e.g. Akkadian loanwords, linguistic interference, and citations) are not present in the parallels between Deuteronomy and EST. If Deuteronomy 28 is not directly subverting the EST, then a new framework is needed to understand the function of the text and what other traditions are influencing Deuteronomy 28.

Such a framework comes from combining the work of Meir Malul and David Carr. The comparative method of Malul begins with the point of a plausible, historical connection between two texts. If the nature and type of connections (e.g. direction connection, mediated connection, common source, or common tradition) are not met with a test of literary uniqueness and possible corroboration, then comparative work should not begin. Malul's work provides a correction to older methodologies of finding second millennium Hittite parallels in Deuteronomy, which was the work of George Mendenhall and more recently of Joshua Berman, and newer methodologies like the lack of material needed to accept the Akkadian EST hypothesis. In Carr's intertextual approach, the scholar must assume that there could be broader cultural

records that provide the closest analogy to the work found in the biblical text. This leads to Quick's investigation of the first millennium Aramaic epigraphs, which contain a tradition of futility curses, and her definition of intertextuality as "the complex network of associations which exist between our sources, and which the author was largely unaware of as he drew from traditional discourse in the construction of his text, be this found in the levels of literature or reality." (p. 67).

Following the work of Delbert Hiller, Quick describes the futility curse motif as "[a curse] consisting of a protasis describing an activity; and an apodosis, describing the frustration of that activity, and often introduced by 'but not' (Aramaic *w'l*; Hebrew *wl'*, *w'yn*)". (p. 69). Three Old Aramaic epigraphs display such a motif: the Tell Fakhariyah Bilingual Inscription, the Sefire Treaties, and the Bukān Stele. All three contain lexical, conceptual, and syntactical overlap. Lexically, the curses contain words like "calf", "cows", "bread", "oven", and "bake"; conceptually, these lexemes are being frustrated with infertility; syntactically, they favor a "*subject–future-verb–object-conjunction–future-verb* syntax" (p. 92). These contrast with the lexemes, concepts, and syntax of Mesopotamian and Hittite treatises and curses.

Quick uses the patterns found in the Old Aramaic epigraphs to compare forty-four examples of the futility curse from the biblical corpus (the full list is found on p. 107). Although the biblical texts are more diverse in topic and syntax, there is, nonetheless, an ideological focus on frustration that pervades almost every curse. For example, there are seeds that cannot be harvested (Deut. 28:38; Hos. 8:7; Mic. 6:15a, etc), olive groves that do not produce oil (Deut. 28:40; Mic. 6:15b), and people who are barren (Deut. 28:30a, 41; Hos. 4:10b; 9:12, 16b) (a full list is found on p. 130). Syntactically, the pre-exilic prophets contain the simplest forms, mainly "*future-verb–conjunction–future-verb*" (p. 131), while the post-exilic prophets are more keen to break away from the traditional syntax found in the earlier biblical and Old Aramaic material. Although, Quick notes some variety, such as inverted protasis and apodosis (Deut. 28:30a, 30b, 30c), additional prepositional clauses (Deut. 28:40), and *ky* clauses which provide more complexity to the ideology of some curses (Deut. 28:38, 39, 41), the futility curses of Deuteronomy 28 are closer to the early material in syntax and concepts than the post-exilic biblical texts. The proximity to the Old Aramaic material and pre-exilic prophets bolsters the claim made by most redaction-critical scholars that the temporal context of Deuteronomy 28 is best placed in the mid-eighth and seventh century.

The final two chapters seem to be Quick's way of answering Malul's propositions on plausible historical connections between Deuteronomy 28 and the larger literary world of the mid-eighth and seventh century Levant. Of the three Old Aramaic epigraphs the Tell Fakhariyah Bilingual Inscription is the most important for the discussion of placing Deuteronomy 28 in contact with Mesopotamian texts. The inscription contains the same text, but written in two different languages, Akkadian and Aramaic, and exhibiting two different styles of writing, West Semitic

(especially as it relates to the earlier discussion on the uniqueness of the futility curse) and East Semitic. Quick's observations on the inscription find parallel results in Deuteronomy 28, namely, where scholars once saw direct interplay with the EST, Deuteronomy 28 was more likely interacting with the tropes of the Neo-Assyrian world while returning back to the literary style of Northwest Semitic. The function of the text finds a comparable companion in the Tell Fakhariyah Bilingual Inscription. Therefore, Deuteronomy 28 was not written to directly subvert the EST, but rather it was influenced by many intertexts, including the encroaching Mesopotamian threat, its local Levantine futility curses, and the ritual world of Northwest Semitic covenant cutting.

Deuteronomy 28 and the Aramaic Curse Tradition is an example of a comprehensive and well-reasoned work on a topic that had seemed to be well worn. The camps had been set and divided; however, Quick's approach has brought fresh insight to handling the biblical material. Those working in futility curses in the Hebrew Bible are without excuse and must consult the evidence found in the Old Aramaic epigraphs.

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Williamson, Paul R. *Death and the Afterlife: Biblical Perspectives on Ultimate Questions*. **Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018, pp. 226, $20, paperback.**

Paul R. Williamson serves as professor of Old Testament, Hebrew, and Aramaic at Moore College in Sydney, Australia. Among his many published works, Williamson made a previous contribution to the NSBT series in his work, *Seal with an Oath* (InterVarsity, 2007), where he examined the nature of the biblical covenants as central to God's advancement of universal blessing. He is a contributor to the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (InterVarsity, 2000) and the co-editor of *Exploring Exodus: Literary, Theological and Contemporary Approaches* (InterVarsity, 2008).

In his most recent publication, *Death and the Afterlife: Biblical Perspectives on Ultimate Questions*, Williamson explorers the metaphysical reality of death and the afterlife from the vantage point of the Bible's storyline. After a brief examination of the literature in ancient religious cultures, chapter one outlines the trajectory of the book. Williamson's chief aim is to evaluate the biblical data related to death, resurrection, judgment, hell, and heaven.

Williamson contends (chapter 2) that death, apart from being a ubiquitous reality across the ages and cultures, is diversely variegated. In the Old Testament (OT), death has little by way of positive connotation, though the continued existence of spirits is quite evident. The period between the testaments, notes Williamson, brought about more nuanced ideas related to death, being influenced largely by dualistic Greek

anthropology (49). Matters in the New Testament (NT) are brought into sharper focus: death becomes a temporary separation between the physical and non-physical.

Chapters three and four examine resurrection and judgment, respectively. In general, ancient Near Eastern religions rejected any notion of a person being resurrected, let alone judged. Even in Greek philosophy, observes Williamson, resurrection was not a welcomed idea. The notion of bodily resurrection in Second Temple Literature clearly embraced such a concept (69). While future resurrection moved from more to less amorphous in the OT, the NT is robustly clear, forcefully defending a future (as opposed to immediate) resurrection of the dead.

The book closes with a chapter on hell and a chapter on heaven. Williamson surveys some passages related to the general idea of hell, noting that the concept becomes less vague as one transitions from the OT to the NT. With respect to the biblical concept of heaven, the author presents an exegetical defense of eternal existence in a re-created earth, taking the visions in Revelation as symbol-laden presentations of heaven.

Death and the Afterlife exemplifies true scholarship, being written for the academic and the layperson alike. The work exudes many strengths—four being particularly worthy of comment. First, Williamson's prose makes the book a delight to read and easy to follow. The faithful churchgoer with little to no academic training will find himself engaged with the contents of this work, undoubtedly finding its flow and arguments rather accessible. The layout of the book presented in the table of contents allows readers to quickly take stock of what to expect from the author.

Second, the book is an exegetical tour de force. Readers would fare well to follow Williamson's methodological approach. His arguments are steeped in biblical reasoning, being presented as the careful conclusions of a meticulous exegete. He engages well with divergent conclusions, never going on a theological limb. Rather, Williamson presents opposing arguments and analyzes their conclusions against the backdrop of the biblical data. He makes thorough use of the grammatical-historical method of interpretation.

Third, this work represents a rigorous undertaking in biblical theology. Williamson takes the theme of personal eschatology and judiciously presents a case based on how the biblical authors understood it. Thus, for example, the concept of death is first considered by the OT authors and then evaluated in the NT. What is more, Williamson observers the way the NT authors use and develop the OT authors' understanding of a particular idea. While not inspired, the author includes copious references to Jewish intertestamental literature, serving to inform how the NT authors thought about certain topics. This is very helpful, particularly when seeking to do justice to the historical context within which the NT was composed.

Finally, the book deals fairly and honestly with opposing views. When presenting a conflicting perspective, Williamson is careful to articulate another's position as

originally put forward before engaging with it. Readers will be hard-pressed to find unsubstantiated or hasty generalizations by the author.

The five themes explored in this book (death, resurrection, judgment, hell, and heaven) are all proportionately presented—each theme is covered in roughly thirty pages. One wonders, however, assuming the total page limitation, whether some themes should have been discussed in more detail. Death, on the one hand, is a theological idea that seems to occupy a fairly large landscape of agreement among evangelicals and non-evangelicals. Hell, on the other hand, is hotly debated, even among evangelicals. Williamson's dialogue with Edward Fudge helpfully highlights the reality of a non-traditional view of hell within confessional evangelical circles—a view gaining in popularity in the last few decades. Accordingly, then, the book could have dedicated some more time to a discussion of hell. As readers work through Williamson's response to Fudge, they may be left wanting more, feeling as though the treatment was not sufficient.

Overall, students of biblical and theological studies will find this work beneficial as a model of how arguments in their field should be crafted. The main contents of the work should also be of valuable service to students. Williamson's engagement with anthropological realities (most notably the idea of hell's eternality vis-à-vis the human experience) fits with contemporary narratives that are at odds with the biblical data. In this way, the book helps students to be informed of competing arguments and how best to interact with them.

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Abernethy, Andrew T. and Gregory Goswell. *God's Messiah in the Old Testament: Expectations of a Coming King.* **Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, pp. xii + 292, $29.99, paperback.**

Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment but the fulfillment of what? Over the years people have made him into their own image, as the fulfillment to their own self-determined needs and ideals. Think of all the images constructed: Jesus the fulfillment of Plato and Aristotle, a teacher of liberal morals, a Hindu Sage, a Nazi, a Marxist revolutionary, a hippie, the greatest salesman, the greatest therapist, a Hollywood superstar. Jesus of Nazareth came to fulfill what?

The real Jesus of Nazareth came to fulfill the BC Scriptures. That was and is his "job description." He is "the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26), God's Messiah. The words "Christ" in Greek (*christos*) and "Messiah" in Hebrew (*mashiach*) mean "Anointed One" (cf. John 1:41). While Jesus fulfills the BC Scriptures in many ways, one crucial dimension is the royal Messianic King from the line of David, anointed with the Holy Spirit.

To understand Jesus of Nazareth as the anointed Davidic King requires study of the BC Scriptures. For that study I recommend this volume. Andrew T. Abernethy is associate professor of Old Testament and degree coordinator of the MA in Biblical Exegesis at Wheaton College, and Gregory Goswell is academic dean and lecturer in Old Testament at Christ College in Sydney, Australia.

The volume discusses messianism and the expectations of a coming Davidic king in the Old Testament. The authors take a balanced approach that avoids two ditches evident in the secondary literature. Some studies limit the scope to passages explicitly using the word "anointed one" in reference to a future figure. Those who follow that approach end up devoting more space to intertestamental literature than to the Hebrew Scriptures. Some other studies try to shoehorn into the topic almost every future-tense passage, including texts about priests and prophets. Abernethy and Goswell focus on the texts that explicitly deal with kingship, in which "this royal figure is prefigured, anticipated, predicted, or described" (p. 1).

Except for Ruth, the authors follow the tripartite order of books in the Hebrew canon: Torah (Pentateuch), Former and Latter Prophets, and Writings. They deal with texts in the following biblical books: Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi, Psalms, Daniel, and 1-2 Chronicles. They treat the texts in a holistic way and avoid extracting verses from their written and historical context. They conclude the volume with a survey of Jesus as the Christ in the New Testament.

The volume is well-written and displays thorough research. The authors attend to the Hebrew in a commendable way. For example, they point out that the noun often translated "branch" denotes vegetative growth or a "sprout" that springs up from the ground, not a branch on a tree (Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12): "Just as vegetation grows from an unseen seed beneath the surface of the ground, so God's promise to David will spring to life when all seems lost" (p. 108).

Various kinds of biblical material set forth expectations for the coming Davidic King such as explicit promises, royal narratives, and prayers. The biblical texts most commonly characterize the Messianic King as promoting the centrality of God as King and his temple and reigning with justice and righteousness. The king can be spoken of with various metaphors, such as lion, scepter, shepherd, and sprout. By including many biblical texts in their discussion the authors reveal a complex and multifaceted picture, what they liken to an abstract mosaic.

Here are some highlights. The authors begin with the Pentateuch as laying the foundation, concentrating on Genesis 3:15 and 49:8-10, Numbers 24:17-19, and Deuteronomy 17:14-20. They offer a nuanced view of the book of Judges, showing that it invites the readers not to give up on kingship but to hope for a human king who "would rule in a way that guides Israel to live under the rule of God" (p. 34). They give an insightful discussion of the book of Ruth as giving hope for the future of the Davidic house. The books of 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings set forth the ideal

for the future Davidic King. King David himself was the basic paradigm, a king after Yahweh's own heart who prioritized true worship of Yahweh, implemented justice, and was victorious in battle over Israel's enemies. Central to the entire topic is God's covenant with David. The ideal of the early Solomon includes the king's extensive dominion, ruling with justice and wisdom, commitment to the temple, and exclusive faithfulness to Yahweh. The subsequent Davidic king who receives the highest marks is King Josiah. (The authors should have given more attention also to King Hezekiah.) The book of Kings helps to establish Messianic expectations. The book of Chronicles encouraged the postexilic community in their current situation by highlighting the centrality of temple worship, which was fostered by King David and other Davidic kings. At the same time the Chronicler stressed God's enduring commitment to the Davidic promise. The prophets spoke of a future Davidic king who will be an agent of God's kingly rule. In Zechariah the royal Davidic "sprout" is portrayed as rejected, pierced, and slain in accord with God's plan. The authors rightly emphasize the fulfillment as both the "now" and the "not yet."

By way of critique I thought that the authors' treatment of the Psalms was too beholden to a sequential reading strategy. The prayers for the Davidic King in Psalms 72, 89, and 132 were to remain the prayers of postexilic Israel. The authors should have given more attention to the portrait of a suffering Davidic King, which is evident both from the Davidic Psalms and from the history of King David. They neglected Psalm 22. According to the four Gospels, Jesus' reign on David's throne began on the throne of a cross.

I also found some of their interpretations unconvincing. With a rather convoluted argument they propose that "the booth of David" in Amos 9:11 refers to Jerusalem and her temple. On the contrary, it is simply a sarcastic play on the idiom "the house of David." Instead of a strong "house" it was a flimsy "booth/hut" about to fall. But God promised to raise it up. According to James as understood within the context of Acts, God restored the Davidic dynasty by raising Jesus the Davidic Messiah from the dead (Acts 15:16; cf. Acts 2:24-32; 13:22-37). Goswell suggests that the figure riding on a donkey in Zechariah 9:9 is Yahweh, but that seems highly unlikely given the text's focus on the animal and the parallel in 1 Kings1:33-40. Moreover, the authors ignore some things that call for attention, such as the significance of calling the future royal figure simply "David" (Ezekiel 34:23; 37:24; Hosea 3:5; cf. Isaiah 11:1) and the importance of Isaiah 11:10, the promise that Gentiles will come to the future Davidic King (cf. Romans 15:12). They ascribe the promise of worldwide "greatness" in Micah 5:4 to Yahweh instead of the future Davidic King, but that is grammatically less likely.

Nevertheless, I found their work overall to be an outstanding treatment of one important trajectory in the BC Scriptures. We Christians confess that Jesus of Nazareth is "the Anointed One/Messiah/Christ." He was and remains the Messianic King from the line of David, as the crucified, risen, and exalted Jesus himself states

at the end of the Bible: "I am the shoot and the descendant of David" (Revelation 22:16; cf. 5:5). The fine volume by Abernethy and Goswell greatly aids us in making that confession with understanding and clarity.

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Provan, Iain. *Seriously Dangerous Religion: What the Old Testament Really Says and Why It Matters*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014, pp. 502, $49.99.

In this book, Provan has set out to argue that, among the many worldview stories that are active in the world today—most of which are anti-Christian—the "Old Story" (Old Testament) is genuinely dangerous. "*Biblical* monotheism is *seriously* dangerous" (10, italics original). By dangerous, Provan does not mean that the Old Story intends to harm society in any way. Rather, he argues that when understood properly, in light of the narrative that the Old Story itself tells, it poses a threat to all other worldview stories, *and* it poses a threat to those who take its own message seriously. The ideologies of the Old Story "threaten" to answer the most important questions humans ask. According to Provan, the Old Story answers those questions satisfactorily for those who are willing to be shaped by its message.

Provan begins the Introductory chapter, "Of Mice, and Men, and Hobbits" by outlining the common stories we encounter in our world today with two example novels. The first is like *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy,* in which "Absurdity rules" (1–2). The second is from Tolkein's *The Lord of the Rings*. Frodo and Sam find themselves in a story, but it is a story that is part of a much longer and much older Story. This older Story helps them find meaning, purpose, and hope in their current story. Since each human inhabits his or her own personal story, we must admit that we are in a story. The question is whether we will admit that this story is part of a larger one that gives meaning to the present one, and if we admit that, of what Story are we a part?

In the modern age, Provan identifies three stories, one of the "Axial Age" (5–6), one of the "Dark Green Golden Age" (6–7) and one of the "Scientific New Age" (7–8). I'll leave it to the reader to discover what Provan has in mind with these stories, but the common thread among them according to Provan is, "Each of the new stories is, indeed, consciously told in an attempt to displace, above all other stories [the] dominant Old Story of Western culture" (9). They view the Old Story of the Old Testament as either "ineffective" or "dangerous" to a culture that has evolved beyond ancient narratives. "It is in the light of this thoroughgoing modern assault on the Old Story from all sides that I have written this book" (10). In one sense, this book is intended for the critics of the Old Testament to reconsider what the Old Testament itself claims, perhaps even to read it for the first time rather than assuming

they know its content from critical reports about the Old Testament. In another sense, Provan "has written this book,…, for the *readers* of critics" (10, italics original). In such a post-Christian world, Provan desires that those who read the critics of the Old Testament will also engage afresh with the content of the Old Testament as presented in this volume.

Since Provan argues that the Old Testament answers some of the most profound questions that humans can ask, he spends the bulk of the book asking and answering those questions. From the chapter subtitles, Provan seeks to answer: "What is the World?" "Who is God?" "Who are Man and Woman?" "Why Do Evil and Suffering Mark the World?" "What am I to Do about Evil and Suffering?" "How Am I to Relate to God?" "How Am I to Relate to My Neighbor?" "How Am I to Relate to the Rest of Creation?" "Which Society Should I Be Helping to Build?" "What Am I to Hope For?" In fitting Provan fashion, each chapter answers these questions thoroughly and with an eye toward unveiling the philosophical and ideological presuppositions of even the most seasoned critic.

In the final chapters of the book (Chpts 12-13), Provan summarizes the findings with an eye toward the New Testament and asking whether this Old Story is really dangerous.

In this volume, Provan has limited himself to the Old Testament primarily. Other than the summary chapter, "Further Up and Further In: New Dimensions in the Old Story" (Chpt 12), the primary content of this book focuses on the Old Testament. Provan decided to do this because many critics do not understand the Old Testament rightly. Even those who do know the Old Testament haven't always read it rightly. Whether layering on the Old Testament a New Testament lens or just flat misunderstanding the historical and cultural context, even many Christians do not read the Old Testament well. Therefore, he approaches these questions from the Old Testament alone.

In each chapter, Provan also employs a strategy to begin with evidence in Genesis. He says, "The book of Genesis is where the biblical story begins, and no story can be read well if the beginning is not properly understood" (14). Therefore, a proper understanding of the beginning will lead to greater understanding across the entire Old Story as Provan seeks to answer these questions. After beginning each chapter with an understanding of the question in Genesis, Provan moves to the rest of the Old Testament in a somewhat topical fashion centered on the question at hand.

Toward the end of the first chapter, Provan gives a list of ideal readers of this book. His assessment is accurate, at least from the perspective of his intentions when writing. He mentions there "students who have often heard in the course of their education, … , about the problematic or dangerous character of the biblical tradition, yet have read enough of the Bible, … , that they have come to question what they have been taught" (19). I would also add that this book could be helpful for students who thoroughly believe the Old Testament, but only read it through the

lens of the New Testament. Provan addresses these questions using the Old Story on its own terms, and that can be helpful for long-time Christian readers to see the Old Testament afresh.

In typical Provan fashion, he does not disappoint with this volume. The overall goal and audience of the book make it applicable and accessible to a large audience. His insight and philosophical orientation make this more than just a "re-telling" of the Old Story. He has shown how the Old Story *should* fit into the modern stories being told and why the Old Story should be taken seriously even among committed Christians. In the end, this Old Story will be "seriously dangerous" to the critics if followers of Christ would take its message seriously and live as if this Old Story informs our present story. Likewise, a commitment to the Old Testament on its own terms may prove "dangerous" for Christianity in the sense that they become radically committed to the grand narrative God has written and its fulfillment in Christ. Like Frodo and Sam, committed Christians may find themselves in part of a much grander story than they imagined, informing their understanding of the world and heightening their hope that these Scriptures still matter.

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McDermott, Gerald R. ed. *Understanding the Jewish Roots of Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship between Christianity and Judaism* **(Studies in Scripture and Biblical Theology). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021, pp. 264, $29.99.**

After the introduction by the editor the volume consists of twelve essays. Here I will briefly summarize the main point of each essay. Mark S. Gignilliat shows how thoroughly the New Testament relied on the Torah, Prophets, and Writings (Old Testament) as its own theological grammar and argues that it would not even exist on its own apart from its connection with the Old Testament. Matthew Thiessen argues that the Synoptic Gospels depict Jesus as Jewish-law observant and using standard legal argumentation to defend his actions. The Jesus of the Gospels did not plan to start a new religion by dishonoring the temple and discounting concerns over ritual impurity and sacred time. On the basis of 1 Corinthians 7:17-20, Acts 15 and 21:17-26, David Rudolph contends that the apostle "Paul lived as a Torah-observant Jew and taught fellow Jews to remain faithful to Jewish law and custom" (p. 40). David M. Moffitt shows how Hebrews correlates Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension with the sequence and logic displayed in Exodus-Leviticus. In that way Hebrews does not mark a decisive break from Jewish roots.

Matthew S. C. Olver argues that sacrifice was one of the most important Jewish influences on early Christian worship, especially with respect to the Eucharist as the central act of worship. Malachi 1:11 was cited frequently by the early church

fathers. Isaac W. Oliver asks when and how the gatherings of Jesus-followers and the synagogues split. No single date can be specified. Various factors fueled the split, including the claims about Jesus of Nazareth, the desire of non-Christian Jewish communities to maintain their status as a minority in the Roman Empire, the growing Gentile character of the church, and the increasing dominance of Rabbinic Judaism in the synagogue. Jewish believers in Jesus became isolated from both church and synagogue. Eugene Korn gives an honest survey of the history of the church and the Jews from Constantine to the Holocaust. He describes how each side has viewed the other in the past and sees promising signs for a more positive relationship in the future. Jennifer M. Rosner focuses on post-Holocaust thinkers: Karl Barth and Thomas Torrance on the Christian side; Franz Rosenzweig, Elliot Wolfson, and Michael Wyschogrod on the Jewish side. She also discusses Mark S. Kinzer's Messianic Jewish theology. They all argue for seeing the two traditions as intertwined and inseparable. Sarah Lebhar Hall tells the fascinating history of how Anglicans helped pave the way for the Jewish people's return to the land of Israel.

Mark S. Kinzer discusses how the growing movement of Jewish believers in Jesus functions both to critique the church's past history and to raise fresh possibilities for the church in the present and future to recover her Jewish character. Archbishop Foley Beach emphasizes the Jewishness of Jesus and its implications for Christians: exhibiting no anti-Semitism, understanding the Hebrew roots of the faith, valuing the Old Testament, understanding the teachings of Jesus in his first-century Jewish background, desiring to share Jesus with our Jewish friends, and appreciating the great debt we owe to the Jewish people. Finally, Gerald R. McDermott offers perceptive comments on the essays' implications for Christians. He notes that four biblical words need proper definition: "Christ, Jews, Law, and Kingdom."

The essays are impressive, well-written, and well-researched with current secondary literature. Overall I found the volume quite strong and pushing in the right direction. Christianity should not be thought of as a western, Gentile faith even though much of her history looks that way. Our mother church was the Jewish church in Jerusalem. Romans 11 pictures the one people of God as consisting of both "natural and alien branches," and Revelation 7 portrays sons of Israel and Gentiles together praising "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (verse 10). The biblical perspective needs to receive the spotlight.

During the past 70 years there has been much fruitful dialog between thinkers of synagogue and church, and this volume does a good job of bringing the reader up to date. The reader should note two important recent documents from the perspective of the synagogue: "*Dabru Emet*: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity" and "Orthodox Rabbinic Statement on Christianity."

By way of critique I found the terminology in the essays blurring necessary distinctions. According to the entire New Testament, Jesus fulfills the Torah, Prophets, and Writings. But the claim is not that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Mishna and the

Talmuds or of every Qumran text for that matter. Not all Jewish texts can be placed into the same basket. The essays should have devoted more sustained attention to the definition of "Judaism," which cannot simply be equated with the tenets of the Torah, Prophets, and Writings.

The essayists did not deal with Jesus' predictions about the coming destruction of Jerusalem and his mission mandates, both of which meant that Jerusalem's temple would not remain the central worship site and that followers of Israel's Messiah would include Gentiles worldwide. This worldwide mission is in keeping with Israel's prophets and Psalms (e.g. Isaiah 11:10/Romans 15:12). More attention should have been given to the episodes recorded in Acts of synagogues opposing the Jewish apostles. One key debate concerned "the hope of Israel," the bodily resurrection (Acts 28:20; cf. 23:6; 24:15, 21; 26:6-8).

The volume raises some important questions in my mind. One issue pertains to Jewish believers in Jesus, who have in fact always existed and whose numbers are growing. On the one hand, have churches in the west become so predominantly Gentile as to make it difficult for Jewish followers of Jesus to participate? On the other hand, according to Jesus and his Jewish apostles, must Jewish believers in Jesus obey the Sabbath laws and food laws of the Pentateuch? Another issue focuses on location. Today where do discussions and debates between church and synagogue actually take place that deal with the Torah, Prophets, and Writings? For example, churches today have many scholars of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The Jewish apostle Paul expressed his deep love for his kinsmen according to the flesh (Romans 9:2-3). His former teacher Gamaliel expressed openness to what was happening via the Jewish apostles (Acts 5:34-39; cf. 22:3). May the Jewish-Christian conversation grow ever stronger. To further that mutual conversation, I heartily recommend this volume of stimulating essays.

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Feldman, Liane M. *The Story of Sacrifice: Ritual and Narrative in the Priestly Source.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020, pp. 245. 104€, hardback.

Liane Feldman is Assistant Professor at New York University in the Skirball department of Hebrew and Judaic studies. Feldman earned her PhD from the University of Chicago Divinity School in Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East.

In *The Story of Sacrifice* Professor Liane Feldman explores the "literary function" of the priestly ritual materials. Feldman is clear in the introduction that she intends to read and explain these ritual materials "as part of the story", in conjunction with, not separated from their narrative setting (11-18). Her inquiry is simple: what happens when one assumes that the ritual and narrative texts in the Priestly source were intentionally placed together, and one chooses to read them as literature?

Feldman divides the book into six chapters: Introduction, Moses's Private Audience: The Construction of Space in the Story World (Exod 40–Lev 7), Yahweh's Public Performance: The Creation of a Cult (Lev 8:1–10:7), Inside and Outside: Yahweh's Delineation of Boundaries (Lev 10:8–15:33; Num 7:1–8:4), The Possibility of Decontamination (Lev 16–17), and Conclusion. This review will summarize the book's contents, follow with a critique, and end with recommendations for the reader.

In chapter two Feldman reasonably asserts that the broad narrative concerning the tabernacle is conceptually split into physical labor and ritual labor (35–37). Moses arranges "Yahweh's home" in Exodus 40:17–33 allowing His presence to reside within it (Exodus 40:34). Finally in Leviticus 1:1 Moses begins learning the ritual labor (Lev 1–7) which he applies during the tabernacle's inauguration (Lev 8–10). Feldman rightly claims that the ritual instruction contained in Leviticus 1–7 logically precedes Moses's ritual labor in Leviticus 8–10 because how else could Moses anoint the tabernacle without knowledge of the needed sacrifices (46)?

Her third chapter hones-in specifically on Moses's ritual labor and its importance in maintaining God's presence. Feldman convincingly reasons for her principle of ritual innovation: a principle contrary to what typical (especially confessional) readers of Leviticus (and other priestly materials) might expect. She, along with many others, have observed that the priesthood's installation (Lev 8:1–10:7) strays from the order outlined in Exodus 25–31, 35–40, and Lev 1–7 (68, 79). She clearly maintains that Moses's deep grasp of the sacrificial system described by God up to this point, gives him the tools to innovate when necessary, which in this case, is caused by the priesthood's incomplete anointing. Here Feldman's trustful posture towards the text's author(s) generates immense insight.

Chapters four and five represent a slight change in emphasis. Chapter four is Feldman's most ambitious, arguing that various scenes in Leviticus *and* Numbers occur simultaneously within the story world. She does offer a very attractive reading for Moses and Aaron's disagreement in Leviticus 10:16–20. Again, she appeals to ritual innovation, noting that Aaron, now a fully-fledged priest, can make logical and situational adjustments to the ritual system, whereas Moses cannot because his term as interim priest is over (116–120). Her argumentation for the simultaneity of Numbers 7:1–88 with Leviticus 10:8–20 and Numbers 7:89–8:4 with Leviticus 11:1 is well-received but may not pack the same punch as do her previous insights (123–133). In the fifth chapter Feldman argues for the Day of Atonement's non-performance, instead arguing that Leviticus 16 depicts God *describing* the ritual procedure to Aaron via Moses (155–158). This is comparable to her analysis of Leviticus 1–7, where Moses is simply learning how to administer the sacrifices(s) rather than performing them.

Feldman's work deserves very high praise for many reasons. First, her desire to depict the ritual texts as *legitimate* literature yields immense results (3, 5). She contends that modern assumptions of what constitutes literature incidentally

exchanges the original "implied reader" for the modern one, leading the modern one potentially to misjudge the literary conventions of other cultures and eras (3). Feldman upholds the logic of the text until she is forced to concede that it is garbled, and this work is full of examples of how this presumption of the text's coherence clarifies otherwise difficult texts. For instance, Feldman makes sense of the odd sacrifice offered by Moses in Exodus 40:29 arguing that through the current plot development, Yahweh's location in the heavens, Moses's default status as Yahweh's intermediary, and the previous uses of this type of offering in the Pentateuch, one can make sense out of this strange sacrifice (36-38). The current author cannot champion this element of Feldman's work enough.

This leads to a second praise: throughout, Feldman offers a masterclass in close reading. Perhaps the most outstanding display is found in Feldman's notion of ritual innovation (35–38, 87–94). In chapter three Feldman explains while Aaron's mixed-form purification ritual is indeed divergent from instructions in Leviticus 4, it is logical and internally coherent per Aaron's liminal priestly status. Using this principle of ritual innovation, Feldman also makes sense of Nadab and Abihu's error. The two brothers' failure originates in rushing to meet God without God's invitation (41) whereby they innovate beyond the logical boundaries of the ritual system. Feldman's belief that the ritual system itself demands innovation (35–37) provides a rich springboard for further research.

Third, Feldman, at times working against the history of scholarship, argues convincingly for the Priestly source's democratization of the cult (48-49, 56–59, 105, 133). Rather than reading Leviticus 1–5 as an instruction manual for priests, Feldman uses the principles of narratology to argue that the implied reader, presumably a lay Israelite, is brought into the private conversation of God and Moses and learns the cultic procedures before the priests themselves (48). Moreover, the Israelite-laity become central to the cult itself not only as imaginative implied readers but as the offerors who slaughter their own sacrifices before handing the animals off to the priest (56).

A fourth commendation concerns Feldman's inclusion of ritual background information to the benefit of those unfamiliar with the Bible's ritual material. This is most obvious in pages 49–65 where she walks the reader through a typical sacrificial procedure, using the careful explanation itself to argue for the intentional and obvious democratization of the cult.

The current author does have a few very minor critiques. First, with her focus on the narratology of ritual procedures, a test case showing the difference between ancient written ritual and its real-world performance would have greatly benefited the persuasiveness of her argument (5–15). Second, while the author is favorable to Feldman's translation of אכבד – "I will be present" – they were left desiring a more thorough explanation (104).

For those who are mistrustful of a source-critical-first approach which assumes the unreadability of the Bible, Feldman offers a way forward. Because of her attempt to combine both historical-critical methods and literary approaches, often disconnected in Biblical scholarship, the field will benefit greatly from this book. Her model of ritual innovation alone providing a way to make sense of seeming inconsistencies in the text is worth the purchase alone (5). In a similar vein, her reasonable methodological assumptions do justice to both the academy and faith communities trying to understand the text (25)

With that said, the book, printed by one of the field's most prestigious publishers, is intended primarily for the scholar. However, Feldman's lucid writing and consistently clear explanations makes her work accessible to the diligent student. The careful undergraduate will begin to see just how fragmented Pentateuchal scholarship is, which only underscores Feldman's successful attempt at bridging the gap previously mentioned. The reader will obtain the highest yield from this work if they gain a familiarity with both Leviticus and perhaps Milgrom's commentary on Leviticus published by Fortress Press.

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Bekins, Peter. *Inscriptions from the World of the Bible: A Reader and Introduction to Old Northwest Semitic.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Academic, 2020, pp 300, $79.95, hardback.

If you know Biblical Hebrew, then you essentially know ancient Edomite, Moabite, Ammonite, and Phoenician. You can add those to your résumé. They are all basically the same language. The differences among them are rather minor. For example, the direct object marker in Hebrew and Moabite is *'t* (*aleph-tau*), whereas in Phoenician (and Aramaic) it is *'yt* (*aleph-yodh-tau*). A modern analogy might be English spoken in London, New York, Minnesota, and Georgia. Moreover, if you know Biblical Hebrew, then you are well on your way to a knowledge of Aramaic.

We should not think of Biblical Hebrew as a completely unique language all alone, as if it were *per se* a holy language. It was part of the common language spoken throughout the area of ancient Syria and Palestine. It was, you might say, part of the *lingua franca* of that area, much like the Koine Greek of the New Testament in the Greco-Roman world. There is a theological message here. The Creator chose to communicate with his human creatures in an everyday language, the kind of language spoken by everyday people at that time and place. He is not some secretive god with a mysterious code accessible to only a few cognoscenti. He is the transparent God who communicates in human language that is readily understandable.

The linguistic label for this language-group is Old Northwest Semitic. It consists of four major sub-languages: Phoenician, Hebrew, Moabite, and Aramaic.

Peter Bekins has taught advanced Biblical Hebrew and Northwest Semitics at Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion. With this textbook he provides a reliable, accessible, and well-organized introduction to old Northwest Semitic. Part I of the volume introduces students to old Northwest Semitic languages and their grammar, including phonology, morphology, and syntax. Part II then offers readings selected from Northwest Semitic inscriptions that date to the time of ancient Israel's monarchy, basically from the time of King David (about the year 1000) to the Babylonian exile (the year 587). For each language Bekins provides the student with the text, explanatory notes on the words, a translation, and a glossary. The languages are: Old Phoenician, Old Hebrew, Moabite, and Old Aramaic. He treats separately texts from Deir Alla (east of the Jordan River north of Ammon and Moab) and the ancient kingdom of Samal (northern Syria) because of their distinctive linguistic features. At the end of the volume he includes a helpful bibliography.

Bekins made good choices with his selection of inscriptions. Each inscription has enough lines that the student can get the feel for the language. Several of the inscriptions have biblical connections. For example, a Hebrew inscription dated about the year 600 found at Ketef Hinnom near Jerusalem repeats the first two lines of the Aaronic benediction. Hebrew inscriptions from Kuntillet Ajrud in northern Sinai offer a blessing "by Yahweh and by his Asherah" (a goddess), giving evidence of the kind of syncretism condemned by the biblical authors. The Mesha inscription (Moabite Stone) correlates with 2 Kings 3. The Deir Alla inscriptions dated about 800-750 give a prophetic vision by Balaam son of Beor (compare Numbers 22-24). And there are other connections.

I highly recommend this book for students who have had beginning Hebrew. Knowledge of Biblical Aramaic is also helpful. Bekins does a great job of leading students into the fascinating world of inscriptions. The book will enable them to understand Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic in their linguistic context of old Northwest Semitic. As a side benefit, they can then impress their family and friends that they know Moabite.

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Andrew S. Malone. *God's Mediators: A Biblical Theology of Priesthood*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017, pp. 230, $25.00, paperback.

Andrew S. Malone serves as Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Dean of Ridley Online at Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia.

In *God's Mediators*, Malone develops an expositional and synthetic biblical theology of the theme of priesthood, studying both individual and corporate priestly identities and work across the canon so as to "augment and refine our existing knowledge, reinforce or reshape our theological framework, and make us better

expositors of the texts and their consequences for God's holy people" (p. 10). He contends, specifically, that Christians struggle to define priests and priesthood in a manner following the patterns of the biblical witness (pp. 8–9; 186–187). Malone descriptively surveys, therefore, the biblical landscape for individual priests, starting with Aaron's and his sons' mediation at Sinai with an important focus on "the kingdom of priests" found in Exodus 19:5–6 as a royal priesthood (pp. 16–17, 126). His survey of the Aaronic priesthood, ultimately, establishes a baseline to consider implications for 1) Israel's corporate priesthood, 2) Jesus' priesthood, and 3) the nature of the church's corporate priesthood. He labels the Aaronic priesthood by its status of (unearned) holiness (pp. 130–133) that allows for a safe approach to God and mediation to draw others closer to God (pp. 20, 35, 45–46). Thus, Israel's corporate priesthood sets the whole nation as a mediator for those beyond itself (pp. 126–136): a graded and missiological holiness (pp. 20, 45–46, 134–137). Ultimately, the failures of individual priests and the corporate priesthood pave the way for a greater priest (pp. 125–126, 137–144). For Malone, the NT, and especially Hebrews, transforms the OT categories of the Aaronic priesthood to teach "Jesus as our great high priest who facilitates everything foreshadowed in the earthly [OT] cultic system" (p. 114). He posits that both "Jesus' individual priesthood and Christians' corporate priesthood are derived from closely related Old Testament antecedents, *but they are not derived in the same fashion* (p. 184)." Malone argues that the NT transforms the graded holiness of the OT because Jesus' priestly ministry provides an access to God that needs no other priest "to facilitate [further] access" (p. 186), mark[ing] believers as beneficiaries of the altar and sacrifice rather than as contributors to them" (p. 170) Christians' corporate priesthood, therefore, depends on and "respond[s] to God's grace with 'sacrificial' praise and acts of service (p. 172)," not with sacerdotal contributions that forge access to God, leaving the church with a spiritual priesthood that allows the church "to *be* and to *behave* in such a holy – God-worthy manner – fashion that the wider nations are brought to join the worship of the universe's creator (emphasis original) (p. 178)."

In chapter 1, Malone lays out his problem and methodology. His approach to priests and priesthood "invoke[s] the English concept of 'mediator' and/or 'mediation' (p. 9)" in a rather broad sense because the primary thrust of his thesis and analysis is descriptive.

In Part 1, Malone focuses on individual priesthood, beginning with chapter 2's look at the mediation of Aaron and his sons. Malone argues for an Aaronic priesthood whose ministry emphasizes a "[s]afe approach to God in response to the terrifying theophany at the mountain and the Tabernacle's "concentration of God's presence in creation" (p. 18) Even Aaron's clothes mark his status and those of his sons' as closer to God, reflecting a priestly royalty (pp. 24–25) that facilitates holiness (pp. 28–34) and communicates such (p. 38) to forge "successful *reconciliation* of humanity to God (emphasis original)" (p. 38).

Malone, then, in chapter 3 draws the reader to a discussion of the garden of Eden and priests before Sinai. Adam's depiction corresponds to priestly work, even a regal priesthood that anticipates the Aaronic priesthood. He, also, focuses on Melchizedek as a priestly king, showing how these two roles work together (p. 63) before depicting Moses himself as a priest (pp. 65–66).

In chapter 4, Malone tackles individual priesthood in the rest of the Old Testament, beginning with the failures of the golden calf. His broad definition of "priest" ultimately highlights the prophets condemning the Israelite priesthood and promising a restored priesthood of Israelites and foreigners (86–96).

In chapter 5, Malone finishes Part 1 of his study of individual priests by examining new covenant transformation. He asserts that the failed Israelite priesthood continues in NT narrative (97–102). Finding little support for Jesus' depiction as a priest in the gospels, he leans upon Hebrews' confession of Jesus as high priest that uses a combination of comparisons and contrasts, a "*synkrisis* [that] inherently relies upon the unfolding developments found in salvation history and progressive revelation (115)." He further supports Jesus' perfect priesthood in Revelation and in 1 Peter (116–120).

In Part 2, beginning with chapter 6, Malone considers Israel's corporate priesthood as a kingdom of priests so as to draw closer to understanding how the Aaronic priesthood relates to corporate Israel, Jesus, and corporate Christians (125–126). In particular, he focuses on Exodus 19:5–6's "kingdom of priests" to reinforce Israel's holy status for the benefit of the world. Israel's priestly mediation is missiological (134–137). Unfortunately, Israel does not live consistently with its holy status (137–144).

In chapter 7, Malone pivots to the church's priestly commission as a spiritual house with spiritual sacrifices, a principle that he again tethers to Exodus 19:5–6 via 1 Peter 2:9–10. He develops this corporate priesthood as a chosen people from all the nations with a holy and special status before God that grants their role as priests with behaviors consistent with this status (137–153). Turning to Revelation, Malone identifies the church's corporate priesthood as both inaugurated and regal, ministering so that the nations may worship God (161–163). Hebrews regards the church as beneficiaries of Jesus' priesthood (164–170), approaching God to walk in spiritual sacrifices of "praise and acts of service (172)."

Malone concludes his work in chapter 8 with final reflections that draw out biblical implications for how individual and corporate priesthoods work "under the old covenant and after new-covenant transformation (182)." He extends these insights into ecclesiological and missiological components that challenge churches to walk in its assigned priesthood.

Malone succeeds in defending his descriptive-focused thesis. His examination of priesthood connects categories across the two canons and provides consistent and sufficient evidence for the patterns described. Pastors and scholars will strengthen

their understanding of the church's dependence on Jesus' priesthood and the corresponding call to walk in a missiological mediation through this book. Also, this volume prepares for more detailed and more prescriptive examinations of its data. It offers clearly aligned relationships of priesthoods, but its study proves a mere starting point, being embedded with unanswered questions beyond this volume's scope. Thus, its greatest weakness in the limiting of its scope that made the study useful on so many levels also leaves readers with a desire to resolve these same questions. Such answers will hopefully stem from other works that will draw from this resource that will enable churches and denominations to examine their own understandings of priesthood in light of the whole biblical corpus.

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Muraoka, Takamitsu. *Why Read the Bible in the Original Languages?* Leuven: Peeters, 2020, pp 106, $24.00, paperback.

Takamitsu Muraoka received a PhD from Hebrew University in 1970 and has served as a lecturer on Semitic languages at Manchester University, professor of Middle Eastern Studies at Melbourne University, and chair of Hebrew, Israelite Antiquities, and Ugaritic at Leiden University. Since his retirement in 2003 he has continued to publish in Semitic and Septuagint studies as well as teach biblical languages and the Septuagint in Asian countries. In 2017 he received the Burkitt Medal for Hebrew Bible studies from the British Academy.

In *Why Read the Bible in the Original Languages*, Dr. Muraoka seeks to convince readers that when the Bible is read in its original languages "it can be interpreted and analyzed better or differently than when it is read in this or that modern translation" (7). He introduces the work by sharing his passion for the languages through a brief autobiography. He then outlines two general principles concerning the value of the biblical languages: (a) there are certain aspects of language (such as poetic devices) that can only be seen in the original language, (b) and reading the original language makes one aware of possible alternate interpretations (16). In the rest of the book Muraoka shares insights from Hebrew (chapter 1), Greek (chapter 2), and Aramaic (chapter 3). He concludes with a final chapter on the Septuagint (chapter 4), advocating for its value as a bridge between the Old and New Testaments.

Through many examples Muraoka succeeds in demonstrating a key way the original languages aid biblical interpretation: one can see the biblical author's emphasis. He notes that since all three biblical languages have the subject of a verb built into its ending, explicit pronouns and repeated references to the subject are unnecessary and therefore indicate focus. One example he gives is the repeated use of *David* with multiple verbs in 2 Samuel 12:19 to slow down the narrative and highlight David's response to the death of his child (30). Muraoka also notes that

Greek and Hebrew word order, being more flexible than English, often highlights certain ideas or characters. For example, Genesis 22:1 states: "After these things, God tested Abraham," but the placement of "God" before "tested" is not the expected word order for Hebrew narrative and Muraoka explains that the author is zooming in on God and the surprising event of Him testing a human (25-26). Other aspects of emphasis Muraoka highlights include the use of repetition and the significance of the definite article.

Muraoka also explains important ways the verbal systems of the biblical languages differ from common languages today. He explains that Hebrew verbs have specific endings to indicate the gender of the subject of the verb. This gender correspondence often helps identify the subject of the verb when it could otherwise be ambiguous, such as the various speakers in Song of Solomon (35-36). Most of the chapter on Greek is devoted to the issue of verbal aspect (kind of action). Holding to a tri-aspectual system, he explains the present aspect as portraying continuous action, perfect aspect as portraying an action that has already been completed, and aorist aspect as referring to the action in general without reference to its ongoing or completed nature (72). To demonstrate insights available from aspect he notes that the woman in Luke 7:38 was continually kissing and wiping Jesus's feet since the verbs are in the present aspect. But when Jesus confronts Simon in verse 45, He highlights the action of kissing in the present aspect while describing the other actions with the aorist aspect. Muraoka also shows how Jesus is not teaching that the woman is forgiven because of what she is doing, but that her sins had already been forgiven (perfect aspect) and her present actions were a demonstration of gratitude for that forgiveness (73-75).

Acknowledging that Aramaic and the Septuagint are likely unfamiliar to the average reader, Muraoka begins chapters three and four with their respective histories to demonstrate the value of studying each discipline. These introductions highlight the complex linguistic milieu behind the Bible and encourage readers to consider the impact of this milieu on our understanding of scripture. He makes a great case for the importance of these two subjects, but the examples used in these chapters do not measure up to the breadth of examples provided for Hebrew.

While this work is primarily for beginning readers, Muraoka expresses his hope that more advanced readers will also benefit from the insights he offers (7). One such insight concerns Judah and Tamar in Genesis 38. Muraoka notes that many translations state Tamar became pregnant 'from him' in 38:18 (23). However, he argues that the Hebrew preposition used here (*lamed*) never means 'from' and that Genesis 38:18 should be translated: "she became pregnant for his best interests." This alternate interpretation, Muraoka argues, paints Tamar as faithfully trying to preserve the promise of offspring given by God to Abraham, an interpretation possibly strengthened by the positive description of Tamar later in scripture (Ruth 4:12, Matthew 1:3). While this interpretation may or may not be correct (Muraoka

does not comment on the same preposition in 38:24 where it indicates that Tamar became pregnant *by* prostitution), it certainly highlights Muraoka's thesis of various possible interpretations made possible by the original language.

One weakness of this work is its inconsistent organization. There are several sections and paragraphs that appear out of place. One section in the chapter on Aramaic relates more to translation issues in general and not to insights drawn from Aramaic. Muraoka also includes an insightful section on the Greek words for love and a Japanese politician-soldier who adopted the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40) as his life motto. This section, however, seems out of place in the chapter on the Septuagint and might fit better in the chapter on general Greek. There are also several sections where the flow of an example is interrupted by a different idea making it hard to follow Muraoka's point. These sections would benefit from rearranging and updating so that the insights could be more fully appreciated.

This is a great book for anyone considering investing the time to learn the original languages of scripture. Through this book the reader will become well acquainted with the kinds of insights reading the Bible in its original language can offer. Since Muraoka wrote this book for readers who have no knowledge of the biblical languages (7), he does not use any Hebrew or Greek letters and only rarely refers to specific words in the original languages. Instead, he communicates his points through English translations and explanation. He also avoids many technical grammatical terms unfamiliar to the average reader, and thoroughly explains terms he does include. While this book certainly contains many valuable insights into scripture, readers who have some familiarity with the biblical languages will find more a more thorough overview of potential insights in *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Greek,* and *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew.*

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Naselli, Andrew David. *The Serpent and the Serpent Slayer.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020, pp. 160, $15.99, paperback.

Andrew David Naselli (PhD theology, Bob Jones University and PhD New Testament exegesis and theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) is associate professor of systematic theology and New Testament for Bethlehem College & Seminary in Minneapolis, MN, administrator for the evangelical theological journal *Themelios,* and one of the pastors of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. Naselli's *The Serpent and the Serpent Slayer* is an entry in the Short Studies in Biblical Theology series (SSBT) from Crossway Publishers (edited by Dane C. Ortlund and Miles V. Van Pelt). The studies are short because of the series purpose "to connect the resurgence of biblical theology at the academic level with everyday believers" (11).

Naselli's preface begins with a statement of presuppositions consonant with the SSBT purpose and the evangelical confessional stance of the publisher: (1) the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture; (2) the necessity of a "whole-Bible canonical approach" to biblical interpretation; and (3) the conviction that "the whole Bible progresses, integrates, and climaxes in Christ" (13-14). Naselli's "biblical theology of snakes and dragons" (13) aims to contribute to the goal of the series by demonstrating that his colleague Joe Rigney's "pithy way to summarize the Bible's storyline" is accurate: "Kill the dragon, get the girl!" (15, 17). Though the "serpent theme" might be relatively unfamiliar to the average believer, Naselli argues that it "is a prominent theme at the Bible's bookends … *and in between*" (33, emphasis added). The serpent of Genesis 3 and the dragon of Revelation 12 are not coincidental, as most readers will recognize, but neither are they marginal, as some may suspect. In other words, the Scriptures, studied canonically, present a unified dragon-slaying story.

After a brief preface, Naselli's introduction provides several paradigms for understanding Scripture as a dragon-slaying story. Satan is the "serpent" (villain), God's people are the "damsel in distress," and Jesus is the "serpent slayer" (hero) (18). Naselli includes both "snakes" and "dragons" under the "umbrella term" of "serpents." However, these are not mere synonyms; Naselli argues that the two categories of "snakes" and "dragons" represent "two major strategies" of Satan, *the* Serpent: "Snakes deceive [tempt, lie, backstab]; dragons devour [attack, murder, assault]" (18).

With the stage set to view Scripture as a dragon-slaying story, Naselli offers four chapters and a conclusion, followed by an appendix. True to his purpose (33), Naselli's chapters examine the serpent theme "at the Bible's bookends" (chs. 1 and 4) "and in between" (chs. 2 and 3). The first chapter focuses on the first "bookend" in Gen 3. Satan, through the talking snake (46-47), deceives Eve, Adam follows, the couple is banished from the garden, and the battle is on: "The rest of the Bible's storyline traces the ongoing battle between the snake's offspring and the woman's offspring" (40).

The middle chapters survey this battle "between the Bible's bookends." In the second chapter, Naselli explains that, though serpents and serpent symbolism occasionally represent the "positive quality" of shrewdness (50-51), they are "overwhelmingly negative in the Bible" (51). They primarily symbolize God's enemies, ultimately Satan, "*the* serpent that energizes other serpents [i.e., enemies of God and His people] to craftily deceive and devour people" (54, emphasis original). The third chapter is a diachronic survey of six "categories of the serpent's offspring" in the Bible's symbolism (69). The exodus was a victory over Egypt's serpent-worshiping Pharoah (69-82). The "wicked leaders" of Canaan and Moab (like scale-wearing Goliath) were "serpent heads to crush" (82-91) Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians were "sea monsters" and "serpents" (92-93). Though there is no

explicit 'serpentine' language applied to Herod by Scripture, "Satan the murderous dragon energizes" him as he follows Pharoah's path of killing children (93-95). The Pharisees are a "brood of vipers" who "first *tempt* Jesus [like snakes]… and finally resort to *murdering* Jesus [like dragons]" (95-97), followed by other "deceitful" false teachers compared to Satan in the NT (97-103).

The fourth chapter examines Satan's work as "the devouring dragon" at the Bible's latter "bookend," Revelation. The dragon is a "deceiver" (Rev 12:9) and a devourer (Rev 12:4), but he is defeated by Christ, "the ultimate serpent crusher" who "decisively crushed the dragon by being '*crushed* for our iniquities'" (111, emphasis original). Because of the "*already but not yet*" nature of God's Kingdom, Naselli argues, the dragon-slaying story will nevertheless continue until Christ's return (115).

Naselli concludes with six ways to apply Scripture's dragon-slaying story in the Christian life. Naselli exhorts believers not to imitate the serpent by "killing unborn babies" (like Pharoah and Herod killed newborns), "embracing the prosperity gospel," or "slandering people" (123-24). They ought not believe Satan's lying temptations to sin (125-26), but rather they ought to fight him by "feel[ing] disgust at his poison" (129). They ought to "exult in the serpent slayer" (129-30), "enjoy good serpent slaying stories … that make [them] love what God loves and hate what God hates" (130), and "trust the serpent slayer … when the serpent is persecuting [them]" (131). Besides substantive indices, Naselli includes an appendix of 11 Hebrew and 5 Greek words naming serpents, their definitions in HALOT and BDAG, respectively, and their occurrences broken down by book and chapter.

Naselli's work is short without being shallow and full without being dense, serving its purpose and its target audience. Any thoughtful Christian reader should find Naselli's illustrations and applications meaningful (like the six applications in the conclusion) and his more technical explanations (like the brief discussion of millennial views on p. 120) sufficiently understandable. Some readers may wish for elaboration at points (e.g., the relationship between commendable 'shrewdness' and damnable 'deception') or question the value of some sections (e.g., an overview of "six of the most popular dragon-slaying stories in English literature" [19]). In a work of this size and scope, however, Naselli has set a high standard of excellence for an introductory 'theme-tracing' biblical theology book, a prolific category at present.

Those with an academic interest in the book's topic or the broader field of biblical theology may be pleasantly surprised at the value of Naselli's short work as a useful starting point for research (especially through footnotes, the appendix, and the indices). In contrast to James Charlesworth, whose "744-page tome" takes Scripture's serpent symbolism as "primarily *positive*" (14, emphasis original), Naselli sees serpent symbolism as primarily *negative* in Scripture, including in John 3:14 (14). Following John Currid, Naselli takes the "pole" on which Moses' bronze serpent was placed as a "military standard," signifying Yahweh's victory over Egypt (76). Along these lines, Naselli suggests that "it is possible that Moses depicted [the

serpent] as *impaled* on a military standard," corresponding to Christ's death on the cross as a representative of sin (77, emphasis original). This negative view of serpent imagery aids Naselli's take on Scripture as a unified dragon-*slaying* story with a primary antagonist. Though brief, broad works of biblical theology must by necessity take some points for granted and assume some arguments, Naselli effectively demonstrates the potential of these works to undergird more narrow arguments and make valuable suggestions for further scholarship.

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Merkle, Benjamin L. *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Greek: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019, pp. 163, $14.19, paperback.

Benjamin Merkle currently serves as professor of New Testament and Greek at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC, a position he has held since 2008. He also serves as the editor of the *Southeastern Theological Review* and series editor of the *40 Questions* series. In the area of biblical Greek, Merkle has co-authored *Beginning with New Testament Greek* (B&H, 2020), an elementary Greek grammar, *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek, Revised Edition* (B&H, 2020), an intermediate Greek grammar, and *Greek for Life* (Baker, 2017), a guide for refreshing Greek.

In *Exegetical Gems,* Merkle offers motivation for students learning or re-learning biblical Greek. Covering various debated passages in scripture, he provides thirty-five 'exegetical gems,' which are "substantial insights from NT passages gained by a proper knowledge and use of Greek" (vii). This volume also provides a brief review of Greek syntax normally covered in a second semester/year Greek course. Each chapter covers a different area of Greek syntax and is broken into three sections: (1) an introduction which presents a verse or passage to be interpreted; (2) an overview of the point of Greek syntax, framed towards interpreting the passage, and (3) an interpretation of the given passage utilizing the relevant syntactical concept and offering a solution to the exegetical question.

Merkle presents the areas of Greek syntax in the same order as his intermediate grammar *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek*. The first two chapters cover changes in Greek during the Koine period and textual criticism. Chapters three through eleven cover nouns, adjectives, and the article (as well as Colwell's Canon and the Granville Sharp rule). Verbs, participles, and infinitives are then covered in chapters twelve through twenty-four. Pronouns, prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, and particles are covered in chapters twenty-five through twenty-eight. The book concludes by covering an assortment of topics, including conditional sentences (chapter 29), figures of speech (chapter 30), context (chapter 31), word studies

(chapter 32), exegetical fallacies (chapter 33), discourse analysis (chapter 34), and diagramming (chapter 35).

The purpose of *Exegetical Gems* is to help "students of New Testament Greek prosper and ultimately succeed in using Greek" (vii). Merkle recognizes that students do not persevere in the study of Greek because they do not see it as valuable. Although he acknowledges that "knowledge of NT Greek does not answer every exegetical or theological question" (vii), Merkle does assert that a proper understanding of Greek makes a significant difference in the interpretation of debated passages. His goal in this book, then, is to provide an accessible demonstration of the value knowing Greek adds to the student of scripture.

One of the strengths of this volume that best aids its purpose is its brevity. The student unsure of the value of a subject will not invest too much time into learning it, so Merkle kept this volume short to overcome the inertia inherent in starting a massive book. Each chapter is only three to five pages long, and syntactical concepts are helpfully bulleted for clarity. A drawback to this brevity, however, is that helpful explanation must be cut from the chapters, potentially confusing the unfamiliar reader. Merkle seeks to combat this drawback by thoroughly footnoting the chapters to provide resources for further study. However, the brevity required by the purpose of *Exegetical Gems* precludes it from being a stand-alone introduction, and Merkle rightly notes that it should be read by someone already familiar with Greek syntax or alongside a more thorough textbook (ix).

Throughout the book, Merkle promotes understanding Greek as one would any language and combats common abuses of interpretation. He consistently affirms the important role context plays in understanding language, noting that the interpretation of a passage does not hang on one syntactical factor but is informed by the broader syntactical and theological context. He also asserts that each syntactical category does not represent what that part of speech means but represents one way a speaker/writer can use that part of speech given the lexical, grammatical, and contextual factors (cf. pages 63, 72, and 94). In addition, Merkle notes incorrect interpretations people have made when they do not pay attention to the influence of a word's meaning (54-56), the specific genre (85-87), or the stylistic preference of an author (153-155). The reader of *Exegetical Gems*, then, should come away understanding Greek as an interconnected system of language and not as a special code to reveal hidden meaning.

Another way Merkle helps students learn to apply Greek is through the inclusion of multiple viewpoints in the interpretation sections. As he interprets the passages, Merkle does not simply present his own position as if it were the only possibility, but he lists other positions on any given issues and includes evidence for the viability of the various positions. This inclusion gives the student practice thinking through the various ways the language can be interpreted and allows the student to weigh various options and come to their own opinion.

While it is a thorough review of Greek syntax, there are aspects missing from *Exegetical Gems*. One grammatical topic missing is a discussion of verbal voice. In his intermediate grammar, Merkle devotes a half chapter to a discussion of the voice system of Greek verbs. However, this is not a topic that he chose to cover in *Exegetical Gems*. The nuance of the middle voice makes it ideal to be included among the topics covered in this book, especially since the middle voice is not used in English. Merkle also does not address current issues of debate in Greek study. He will sometimes include footnote references to different views on a topic but does not inform the reader that this issue, such as aspect, is currently being debated by scholars. It is possible that Merkle did not want to bog a student down with these issues, but he could have strengthened this volume by noting current debates.

Its brief nature and exegetical depth make *Exegetical Gems* an ideal volume for a student struggling with motivation to learn Greek or a former Greek student wanting to dive back into Greek. However, once the student is properly motivated and situated in the Greek language, the benefit of the volume is limited. Merkle does helpfully summarize the syntactical categories, but standard reference grammars do the same thing in more detail. Ultimately *Exegetical Gems* accomplishes the goal Merkle set for it, and it is a helpful tool that fills a pedagogical role not filled by other books. Any person wanting to learn or re-learn Greek would do well to read through this book.

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Armstrong, Karl L. *Dating Acts in its Jewish and Greco-Roman Contexts*. LNTS 637. London: T&T Clark, 2021, pp. 229, $115.00, hardback.

The emergent consensus that Acts was written post-70 CE but pre-90 CE is not much more than "political compromise" says Karl L. Armstrong in *Dating Acts* (p. 3): fraught with methodological and interpretive problems; Armstrong received his PhD (Christian Theology) from McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario Canada, and *Dating Acts* is a revised form of his PhD dissertation there under Dr. Stanley E. Porter. According to Armstrong, the re-asserters of a late (post-100 CE) date for Acts—a growing minority—fare no better than the current consensus, given as they seem to be to ideological literary theories which, while commendably creative, have not come to grips with the powerful traditional arguments for an early date of Acts made in days gone by. In *Dating Acts*, Armstrong demonstrates these assertions and completely re-founds a case for the early date of Acts (à la Rackham) in light of contemporary historiography and linguistics.

Summary: Following his introduction (summarized above), Armstrong offers a chapter on historiographical method (chapter 2) and advances a series of principles which define the procedure of the study: for selecting and interpreting sources,

defining facts and events, and for drawing relevant textual conclusions (pp. 29–33). The proposition to be defended: in light of the relevant evidence, it can be plausibly shown that Acts was written before 64 CE (~ 62–63 CE).

Asking the question as to how one's theory of sources impacts one's view of the date of Acts (chapter three), Armstrong eschews notions that Acts is a pastiche reducible to literary sources and invention, and defends the notion that the author relied on personal memory and eyewitness and written sources; common areas of discussion (the prologue; the "we" passages) are treated here. Armstrong also employs linguistic and text-critical examination of the relevant texts in support of two major source theories which would seem push the date of Acts later: that the author of Acts depended on the Pauline corpus (mentioned below), and/or on the works of Josephus, and finds both wanting (chapter four).

The treatment of the end of Acts is the capital contribution of the monograph and spans much of its content (chapters five through eight). The traditional hypothesis—that the author narrated only what he knew, and thus that key omissions demonstrate that Acts was likely written before the omitted events occurred—is defended with new rigor. In addition to offering a history of interpretation (chapter 5), Armstrong appeals to papyrological and historiographical data to set Acts 28:17–28 in its Jewish historical context (hopefulness is projected with respect to a Jewish response to Paul, consistent with a pre-70 AD date; chapter six), Acts 28:11–31 in its papyrological context (the Western text helps to demonstrate the earliness of the text; chapter seven), and the end of Acts ultimately in its Greco-Roman context (the omission of key socio-political events of Roman history move the date back even more concretely before 64 CE; chapter eight).

Evaluation: A critical point of framing in the methodology of the monograph is that Armstrong demonstrates that any treatment of Acts as ancient historiography demands a treatment of its date—there are too many relevant and important reliably datable events to be ignored (the reign of Nero, the fire in Rome, the death of Paul, the Jewish war, the destruction of the temple). At the same time Armstrong also demonstrates that those looking to examine the date of Acts must do so informed not only by ancient history, but also by contemporary historiography (pp. 23–9). This is commendable, yet those familiar with the field might wish that there was more explicit interaction with particular historiographical methods or models: for example, are there particular historical methods, or considerations of historical epistemology, which would further aid the case? It is implied throughout but not made explicit here.

With respect to source-critical issues, it is commendable that Armstrong interacts primarily with the classic work of Jacques Dupont (but also especially Cadbury) and in so doing shows that some important insights of Dupont have not been properly emphasized (pp. 69–73). It builds confidence in the reader that the author is not merely relying upon secondary literature (in this case, *of* secondary literature) but is dealing with his sources themselves. In an over-saturated field, the

solution is perhaps not to rely on this or that summative work, but to identify key and classic works and to be well-familiar with them.

As regards the specific source-critical issues of the author's dependency on the Pauline corpus and/or Josephus, while it is noted that the latter view is more determinative for dating Acts, the options available on the Pauline-dependency thesis could have been spelled out in greater detail since in theory there could have been dependence on an *early* letter collection (thus not demanding a late-date). Admittedly, however, this would have meant an *excursus* on the whole topic of Paul as a letter-writer and of the Pauline letter collection.

As regards the monograph's major contribution, it is praiseworthy that Armstrong devotes a chapter to a history of interpretation. This is in keeping with good historiography (and is a tacit consensus amongst pre-modern, modern, and post-modern historians/philosophers of history), as one cannot situate oneself properly with respect to a historical interpretation of a matter if one does not consider how that matter has come down to the present in the published literature of historians. This sets the stage for the major contribution, and if this historiographical point was spelled out explicitly (even touched upon in the methodology chapter) there would have been a sense of even greater coherence when arriving at this chapter.

Also as regards the major undercurrent of argumentation in chapters six through eight, the reasoning throughout could have been made stronger by appeal to the philosophical/historiographical literature as to just how strong certain formulations of *argumentum ex silentio* can be. For example, it could be asserted (as some have) that other ancient authors (like Thucydides) do not conclude events ostensibly important to them (like the Peloponnesian war) even while they know the outcome. Armstrong considers such points made by middle-position scholars (i.e., those who date Acts post-70 but pre-90 CE), and he does mention the argument from silence (p. 114 and n. 17), but as it is the main counter-argument to his primary contribution there could have been more *explicit* appeal to philosophical and logical reasoning here (see for example Timothy McGrew, "The Argument from Silence" *Acta Analytica* 29 [2014] 215–28). However, this is clearly implicit and the data marshalled is compelling.

Considerations: Armstrong's chapter two will be a particular benefit to read because of its treatment of contemporary historiography. A course is (briefly) charted through the conflicting seas of hard-empiricist historiography and poststructuralist historiography, and the benefit here concerns how these theoretical considerations in the philosophy of history can aid in the outline of an approach and model for defining, selecting, and interpreting evidence. In this light, those who want to see how a project informed by historiography (and especially attentive to issues of language and text) can be undertaken for New Testament studies will benefit.

Those interested in examining the evidence for an early date of Acts (or defending this position) will be greatly helped by the volume. Armstrong is invariably fair to his sources and demonstrates the claims he makes with the kind of varied evidence

one expects of a New Testament scholar. In one sense, a sub-highlight of the book is something of the exposé it offers of consensus position.

Ultimately, *Dating Acts* is a learned shot-across-the-bow with respect to the middling consensus and the more radical emerging minority of late-daters; none dare ignore it.

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Allen, Michael, and R. David Nelson, eds. *A Companion to the Theology of John Webster*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021, 366 pages, $50.00, hardcover.

John Webster (d. 2016) is celebrated as one of the greatest English-speaking systematic theologians of his generation. This *Companion*, introduced by the publisher as "[a]n overview and analysis of John Webster's seminal contributions to Christian theology" (dust jacket) is both a handbook for readers of Webster himself, and a set of gently critical interactions with Webster's theology which lay down paths for potential future theological work in Webster's wake. The editors (who, between them, also contribute a preface, four chapters, and an epilogue) have assembled a highly qualified group of contributors made up largely of Webster's former academic colleagues and students.

The *Companion* consists of seventeen chapters, plus a foreword by Kevin J. Vanhoozer and an epilogue by R. David Nelson. There is also a useful bibliography of published works by Webster, which brings up to date the list that previously appeared in Webster's 2015 Festschrift, *Theological Theology*. (This list is still incomplete, lacking the important chapter by Webster, "The Service of the Word: Theological Reflections" in the 1997 co-authored booklet, *What Happened to Morning Prayer?*, although this work is mentioned on p. 260, n. 46.)

Three of the chapters are revisions or reprints of previous publications: Ivor Davidson's biographical and personal tribute (chapter 1), and two of the three essays by Michael Allen, on "Theological Theology: Webster's Theological Project" (chapter 2) and "Anthropology" (chapter 12): all the rest are original chapters for this volume. The *Companion* is in two parts. Part I is on "Webster's Theological Development", and contains the aforementioned chapter by Allen on "Webster's Theological Project", "Webster on Eberhard Jüngel" (R. David Nelson), "Webster on Karl Barth" (Kenneth Oakes), "Webster on the Theology of the University" (Martin Westerholm), and "Webster's Theological Exegesis of Christian Scripture" (Matthew Levering). Part II, "John Webster on the Theological Topics", includes chapters on "Scripture" (Darren Sarisky), "Reason" (Michael Allen), "The Triune God" (Fred Sanders), "The Perfection of God" (Christopher R. J. Holmes), "Creation" (Justin Stratis), "Anthropology" (Michael Allen), "Jesus Christ" (Katherine Sonderegger),

"Salvation" (Ivor Davidson), "The Church" (Joseph L. Mangina), "Metaphysics" (Tyler R. Wittman), and "Ethics" (Paul T. Nimmo). The book is helpfully structured so that many of the chapters in Part II reflect on diachronic developments, following the broad outlines of that development charted in Part I. For example, one of the finest short summaries of Webster's well-documented turn from the influence of Barth towards Aquinas in his later work comes in Christopher Holmes" chapter in Part II (p. 168).

This book will serve a variety of audiences well. For the reader who comes to the *Companion* with little or no previous experience of reading Webster himself, it should be both a useful orientation and a spur to read Webster's own work. A number of the chapters reflect such heavy influence of Websterian turn of phrase that they begin at times to read like Webster himself rather than as commentary or critique. Readers new to Webster are thus primed to expect certain emphases and not to be caught off guard by Webster's particular style and approach. While, on the one hand, new readers should anticipate the bracing experience of encountering "earnest and conspicuous notes of *joy*" (p. xix) in Webster's theology, there may also be challenges since, for example, "[r]eading Webster is like going back in time" (p. 183), a nod to his Protestant-inflected *ressourcement*. Contributors are therefore at pains to help us read Webster *rightly*, so that we avoid "apprais[ing] his work in lopsided or eagerly schematic fashion" (p. 17). A further aim is that (as Webster himself desired) we might be led from reading Webster himself to reading his primary sources—Holy Scripture and the great texts of the Christian tradition. Above all, a repeated theme in the *Companion* is that reading Webster ought to lead us to the contemplation of God himself and to growth in our discipleship as creatures called into fellowship with God by his grace.

As indicated above, a particular practical help to new readers of Webster is Part I's focus on theological development. This serves as an invaluable guide to "locating" Webster's writings in the appropriate stage of his career. For example, the recently published *The Culture of Theology* (2019) is actually a re-publication of a lecture series that Webster gave in 1998. These lectures are significantly different, both formally and materially, from Webster's later work, such as the essays in the two volumes of *God Without Measure* (2015). An appreciation of context and development is essential to correctly interpreting Webster in this case. At the same time, some contributors note that we should also focus on the "profound continuities" that might be eclipsed by an over-zealous periodization of Webster's theology (p. 140). This is a helpful corrective.

Some of the chapters in the *Companion* are easier than others to approach without prior knowledge, whether of Webster himself or of particular doctrinal or philosophical areas of interest. For example, this reviewer found Wittman's chapter on "Metaphysics" one of the most challenging in the book, doubtless partly due to a lack of specifically philosophical training. Along these lines, it might have been helpful

to offer a suggested order for reading Webster suited to new readers. That is because Webster's own *oeuvre* ranges from the relatively easy to access (such as his sermons or the monographs *Holy Scripture* and *Holiness*) to his comparatively complex interpretive work on Jüngel and Barth (which demands some familiarity with these theologians) and other pieces that require a more robust philosophical apparatus.

The student who is already basically conversant with Webster's theology will also find much of great interest and enjoyment in these chapters, not least repeated encouragement to go beyond a "basic" Webster canon of his collected essays collections and the monographs mentioned above to include his published sermons and other, less celebrated, essays or even audio recordings. While most of the chapters in the *Companion* follow what have already become well-worn lines in Webster interpretation, some are distinctly fresh. In this latter category are Matthew Levering's fascinating piece on "Webster's Theological Exegesis of Christian Scripture". This chapter is almost an apologetic directed towards the criticism often levelled at Webster that, despite his own exhortations to the contrary, he did not spend enough time on actual biblical exegesis. The chapter contains an analysis of Webster's use of Scripture in *Holiness*, and concludes that there is a significant "cumulative impact" of Webster's biblical citation which amounts to a more important exegetical contribution than that for which he is often given credit (p. 111). Doubtless debate in respect of this question will continue, but Levering has certainly offered us an intriguing case.

The other truly "fresh" chapter in this volume is the epilogue by R. David Nelson, entitled "Course Charted but Not Taken". This 18-page finalé is as significant as any of the others chapters in the book, not least because it makes available in published form for the first time sections of Webster's own proposal for his *Systematic Theology*, a projected 5-volume work which was never realized due to his untimely death. Nelson's own personal and professional investment in this project means he is clearly the best person to situate and explicate this proposal. It is regrettable that we will likely not see the multiple drafts of Webster's first volume, but Nelson's epilogue goes some way to helping us understand the contours of the entire project as it might have materialized.

Indeed, it is a common feature of many of the chapters in the *Companion* that they leave readers with a variety of "courses charted but not taken" by John Webster, and the encouragement to pursue some yet unresolved questions or to take up Websterian resources in our theological labors. For example, Michael Allen argues that we need to "move beyond Webster" even as we learn from him in our account of human creatureliness (p. 145). Not many of the chapters offer sustained criticism, but there are exceptions, even when the authors are broadly positive in their evaluation. For example, Darren Sarisky observes rightly that the "lingering challenge of dualism" remains in Webster's doctrine of Scripture (p. 130). In Webster's bibliology, "the description of Jesus in relation to the creaturely realm

makes it appear that the mundane features of the [biblical] text can be of no more than marginal pertinence to how it communicates": as Sarisky concludes, "this is a real problem" (p. 129). Another significant example of criticism (albeit framed with the reticence of the subjunctive mood!) is found at the end of Paul T. Nimmo"s excellent chapter on "Ethics". While most of the contributors to this book seem to stand with the later Webster in his commitments to beginning theological science with God *a se*, and rejecting a Christologically-defined doctrine of God, Nimmo is one Webster interpreter who has registered unease with the latter's move from a Barthian to a more "scholastic mode of thinking" in the final phase of his career (p. 296). For Nimmo, the later Webster (at least possibly) "precludes allowing the person of Jesus Christ to be sufficiently determinative of the understanding of God and of human beings; [...] risks eliding a more dynamic and more historic perspective of what it means to be human; and [...] inclines towards an understanding of grace as reified and tenable in a way that fails to attend to the full depths of human sin" (p. 296). The irony for Nimmo is that these are precisely the sorts of concerns that Webster himself registered at an earlier stage of his career, but in respect of which his anxieties appear to have abated over time. These are central theological issues, and it is likely that the debates they inspire will continue to be a focus of Webster studies in the future.

It is to the future, then, that the *Companion* points us. How will study of John Webster's theology develop, and what will be the potential fruits of such study? As Vanhoozer quips in his Foreword, "[t]his handbook, published so soon after [Webster's] passing, is probably as close as Protestants come to canonization" (p. xiii)! There is a half-truth here. It is only five years since Webster's death, and one senses that most secondary reflection on his legacy continues to be written in almost hushed tones by those who knew him personally. There is nothing wrong with that: Webster was a theological luminary and those who enjoyed his light are right to reflect well on a superlative teacher, mentor, and friend. But a future generation of Webster readers and students, perhaps one step removed from the man himself, may feel freer to interact with Webster's theology from a more critical perspective, while still cultivating the humility and teachableness to learn from Webster's example.

John Webster is perhaps not as well-known as he might have been. This may be a consequence of his personal humility (a feature of his character remarked upon by several contributors). But it is incumbent on students of theology to make Webster's acquaintance, not least because of his widening influence through his many former students around the world. This *Companion* would be a great place to begin, in order to "situate" Webster and begin to interact with his theology. In addition, reading John Webster opens up a promising way to learn from and engage with the broader tradition of western, Reformed, evangelical theology. (Webster himself expressed his intention to write "evangelical" theology, and he is often known as an evangelical theologian. But as he pointed out in the proposal for his *Systematic Theology*, Webster intended "the German sense of *evangelisch* rather than the more restricted North

American sense of a particular blend of modern Protestant developments" [p. 300].) Finally, reading John Webster is a bracing experience because of his principal subject matter: the eternal and replete Triune God who, of his overflowing love, creates, restores, and perfects creatures for everlasting fellowship with himself.

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Tipson, Baird. *Inward Baptism: The Theological Origins of Evangelicalism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2020, hardcover, $79.

It is safe to say that within the conservative Protestantism of the last hundred years, there has been no common understanding of the relation in which the modern movement stands to earlier Protestantism. In the Victorian era, conservative Protestants saw things differently. With a sense of urgency provided by a resurgent Papacy bent on re-exerting international influence and by movements within Protestantism, such as the nineteenth-century Oxford Movement – which aimed at the re-Romanization of Anglicanism, Protestant historians tended to maximize the continuity of Protestant movements from one era to the next. Born in the age of Reformation, Protestantism was understood to have been reinvigorated in the age of Puritans and Pietists and enlivened in the era of transatlantic awakenings, but still been a constant.

This broad-brush approach was in need of refinement and it has come about, beginning with the 1988 release of David W. Bebbington's *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*. While chiefly about developments within the United Kingdom, Bebbington's work suggested elements of discontinuity between the transatlantic and trans-denominational evangelical movements arising in the 1730's and what had gone before. Meanwhile, a modern resurgence of evangelical Calvinism has had the unforeseen effect of pitting various streams of that movement at odds with one another—some extolling the Reformation age, some the Puritan era, some the period of eighteenth-century awakening as definitive. By any of these analyses, we are very far from the Victorian view of an almost-seamless Protestant heritage. To add further to the mix, we now witness the over-association of the very term "evangelical" with right-wing religious and political causes so that the term has fallen into discredit.

It is the very great strength of Baird Tipson's *Inward Baptism* that—while fully allowing that momentous developments occurred disrupting the flow of a common Protestant history (none more so than the English Civil Wars, followed by an Interregnum, Restoration of Monarchy and re-imposition of religious unity)—he maintains that there have also been constant themes and commonalities bridging the eras of upheaval. Tipson has adroitly demonstrated this commonality by tracing—across five hundred years—pastoral attempts to ensure that the balm of the gospel was both appropriated and suitably internalized by persons ready to confess their sins. Of course, the half-millennium he surveys (pre-Reformation Europe through

the eighteenth century) shows upheavals and discontinuities. But throughout, there was an unvarying pastoral quest to lead those hoping for forgiveness through Christ's passion into some confidence that what they sought had indeed become theirs.

The pre-Reformation penitential system, (chap. I) presupposed confession of sin to a priest, who—if satisfied as to the penitent's sincerity—would pronounce an absolution of guilt. But the absolution of guilt presupposed that the one confessing would be ready to carry out a prescribed penitential activity (a pilgrimage, a donation) which would demonstrate change of heart. To have done this, was to do "what was within one's power" (implying exertion). But all sins were not necessarily confessed and all prescribed penitential acts were not carried out. Purgatory loomed for those passing from this life with unfinished business. But indulgences, available for purchase, assured those who purchased them that through the application of the surplus merits of deceased saints, their own imperfect acts of penitence would be properly augmented. On this plan, the certainty of salvation applied to the individual was contingent on the gestures and imperfect aspirations of that person.

Martin Luther upended this apple cart (chap. II) through his preaching of salvation by faith in Christ alone. Not the aspirations of the sinner after holiness, not the auricular confession of the individual, certainly not the lent merits of departed saints, but faith in Christ was now determinative of who could be counted among the ranks of the redeemed. If those confessing their sin with a trust in Christ doubted their standing in grace, the Lutheran reformation directed such persons to the solace of baptism and the Lord's Supper as seals of Christ's provision for them. Lutheran sacraments while not directly communicating grace in the Roman Catholic sense, were still understood to be essential in the appropriation of salvation. The penitent who leaned on these had the assurance he needed.

Not quite so with the Reformed (chap. III). As articulated by Calvin's successor, Theodore Beza, at the Colloquy of Montebeliard (1586), an acceptance of divine election qualified the ability of the two sacraments to certify the possession of salvation. The genuineness of a saving faith anchored in the eternal divine purpose could only be displayed by a subsequent pursuit of holiness. This development, carried forward in the Puritanism of William Perkins (chap. IV), emphasized that the reality of regeneration, the "inward baptism", could only be corroborated by subsequent conscientious obedience to the moral law. But an acceptance of this same divine election led others into antinomian reactions in both Old and New England; the Puritan emphasis on conscientious holy living as corroboration of rebirth was denigrated in light of claimed an immediate divine communication certifying acceptance.

A reaction to this excess in both Old and New England (chap V), i.e., moralism, maintained the older Puritan emphasis on the necessity of holy living while downplaying the necessity of spiritual rebirth. All of this leads Tipson to a fresh appraisal of the transatlantic awakening (chap.VI) in which appear both alarming emphases found in the antinomianism of the preceding century (against which

Jonathan Edwards warned) and that theologian's more careful exposition of what constitutes a saving work of the Spirit in a human life.

The reviewer has already typified this work as "adroit". Written at a scholarly distance from today's evangelical movements, its sensitive assessment is nevertheless full of implications for an evangelical Protestantism currently struggling to identify what is its own mainstream and what are its backwaters. It represents a masterful combination of the author's own researches and the best modern scholarship.

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Carter, Craig A. *Contemplating God with the Great Tradition: Recovering Trinitarian Classical Theism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021, pp. 352, $32.99, paperback.

Craig A. Carter currently serves as research professor of theology at Tyndale University in Toronto, Ontario, and he serves also as theologian in residence at Westney Heights Baptist Church in Ajax, Ontario. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of St. Michael's College and has published multiple books within the discipline of theological studies. Carter is both Reformed and Baptist, confessing the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith (1689). The book at hand is the second part of a trilogy that aims to recover important insights from the classical Christian tradition. The first installment was *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis*, which took up the subject of classical theological hermeneutics.

In *Contemplating God with the Great Tradition* (*CGGT*), Carter argues that Christians today should be intentional with retrieving and confessing the doctrines of God and the Trinity that were developed by the pro-Nicene patristic fathers along with the hermeneutics and metaphysics they used in so doing. This retrieval is necessary if Christians are to confess the doctrines of God and the Trinity as articulated in the Nicene Creed (pp. 1–11). Carter names this model of God *Trinitarian classical theism* (TCT), and he juxtaposes it with what he terms *relational theism* (RT).

Carter begins with an autobiographical preface wherein he describes how he "changed his mind" over his career as a theologian. While initially intrigued by the theological projects of Stanley Grenz, John Howard Yoder, Colin Gunton, and others, Carter became convinced that these projects could not avoid the pitfalls of revisionist theology, and after much reflection and engagement with the patristic fathers he shifted to the TCT of the "Great Tradition" (GT). After discussing what he sees to be numerous problems with RT, he engages in a polemic for theologians to retrieve the TCT of the GT. He defines *classical theism* (CT) as "the historic orthodox doctrine of God, and it says that God is the simple, immutable, eternal [atemporal], self-existent First Cause of the cosmos. God creates the world and acts on it, but the world cannot

change God in any way" (p. 16). RT, on the other hand, "is a term that we can apply to a number of different doctrines of God, all of which affirm that God changes the world and the world changes God" (p. 16). Examples of RT include theistic personalism, theistic mutualism, open theism, panentheism, pantheism, process theism, polytheism, and social trinitarianism. The problem with RT, he claims, is that they diminish God's transcendence and overemphasize his imminence.

Carter's second chapter lays out all the content that he means to communicate with TCT in the form of 25 theses. He helpfully lists all 25 of these theses in summary form in the Appendix (pp. 307–308). In summary, TCT is a doctrine of God that affirms a classical, or Latin, view of the Trinity, as well as the assorted doctrines included in CT. Such is the doctrine of God that is affirmed by all the pro-Nicene fathers and is enshrined in the Nicene Creed. Not only this, but TCT is the result of the proper interpretation of Scripture concerning the doctrine of God. Chapters 3–6 develop the biblical basis for TCT by means of a theological exegesis of Isaiah 40–48. Carter's three main emphases here are that God is "the transcendent creator," "the sovereign lord of history," and "the one who alone is to be worshipped." The first of these focuses on the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* (CEN), which claims that God created the cosmos from nothing and requires a high theory of divine transcendence. The second of these focuses on how God acts upon creation and history, moving history towards its destiny in the Kingdom of God. The last emphasis re-focuses on God's transcendence, claiming that God alone is the Creator and worthy of worship.

In the final three chapters of the book, Carter looks at TCT throughout history by focusing on the biblical nature of TCT and RT's abandonment of CT and the doctrine of CEN by reverting to "pagan mythology." He criticizes modern theologians who have insisted that CEN is not a biblical doctrine and is a result of the primitive Christian message being subsumed into the Greek metaphysics assumed by the patristic theologians. He concludes with an Epilogue wherein he discusses why the church does not change its mind on the doctrine of God and why TCT is the orthodox doctrine of God. All versions of RT—explicitly or implicitly—are outside the boundaries of orthodox Christianity.

There are several positive aspects about *CGGT*. First, Carter takes seriously the task of historical theology. Taking his que from the projects of Lewis Ayres[1], Khaled Anatolios[2], and Stephen Holmes[3], he has serious reservations about the so-called revival of trinitarian theology in the 20th century. More times than not, the 20th century projects were more revised than retrieved with many of these revisions smuggling in foreign metaphysical assumptions. Carter is right to properly

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1. Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

2. Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018).

3. Stephen R. Holmes, *The Quest for the Trinity: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012).

understand and locate the patristic fathers in their historical contexts and to consider their metaphysical assumptions. He is also right to demonstrate that TCT was not developed apart from the fathers' commitment to the biblical witness. Carter rightly demonstrates that the patristic fathers' use of Greek philosophy is more nuanced than the Hellenization thesis admits, and that careful study of the patristic sources reveals that the fathers frequently revised Greek philosophy in service to Scripture. He also rightly emphasizes the importance of Christian doctrine for Christian worship, and he rightly emphasizes the creator-creature distinction.

Despite these positive qualities, *CGGT* has numerous problems, the first of which concerns some definitions on which the project hinges. Carter frequently describes RT as denying "transcendence" of God. It is very unclear what he means by "transcendence." Not only this, but it is interesting that Carter insists on using these conceptual terms that were developed by enlightenment thinkers, especially since he spends so much of his book decrying the atrocities that modernism and the enlightenment created for Christian theology. More significant than this, however, is that Carter nowhere provides an actual definition of "transcendence." The following list of propositions *seem* to be included in what he means by the term.

1. God is distinct from and unlike the creation.

2. God cannot be affected by creation in any way.

3. God enjoys aseity.

4. Aseity hinges on the doctrine of divine simplicity (DDS).

Carter claims that all versions of RT deny transcendence of God, implying that all variants of RT are guilty of denying some of these propositions. The first problem here is that Carter never defends his view of transcendence; he asserts it as though it were axiomatic. Second, many whom he designates as RTs explicitly affirm transcendence, such as William Lane Craig, Alvin Plantinga, and Richard Swinburne, though they define it differently. Craig and Swinburne have written lengthy treatments on the doctrine of aseity, and all three of these philosophers affirm CEN, a doctrine that necessitates that God exists a se and is distinct from creation. Carter seems to think, however, that DDS is necessary to affirm CEN and aseity. This may be, but there are numerous arguments against such a claim in the philosophy-of-religion literature, none of which Carter engages. What Carter has done is setup definitions of the views that he disagrees with, definitions that many of the alleged adherents would deny, and critiques those definitions as though they represent said adherents, which is the straw man fallacy. Carter commits this fallacy numerous times throughout the book. If he is going to hinge as much of his polemic on this idea of "transcendence," then he needs to 1) provide clear and distinguishable definitions of the key terms and concepts,

and 2) faithfully engage the literature that argues explicitly against his position. Otherwise, he will continue to straw man his opponents and not convince his readers.

Another definition that Carter struggles with is "social trinitarianism" (ST). It is worth noting that he never provides an actual definition of ST in the book; rather, he mentions Swinburne's and Moltmann's varieties of ST and seems to presume that these are representative of all varieties of ST. For example, because Swinburne and Moltmann emphasize that God is temporal, Carter assumes that every version of ST affirms this, which is demonstrably false. Though he affirms that God is temporal with creation, William Lane Craig affirms that God is atemporal sans creation. Craig also affirms ST, though his is very distinct from Swinburne's and Moltmann's. Had God never created, on Craig's model, then God would exist both as a social trinity and atemporally and would not constitute a variety of RT. This is but another instance of how problematic definitions lead Carter to build up straw men.

Another problem is that Carter never engages those with whom he disagrees. He cites Swinburne, Craig, Plantinga, Bruce Ware, and many others as RTs, but he never engages with their actual arguments. He cites them as examples of RT, reminds his readers of why he thinks RT is unacceptable, and then dismisses them as missing the bar of orthodoxy. To treat fellow scholars in such a manner is uncharitable and unscholarly. If one is going to write off other scholars, especially ones with the distinguished careers as those mentioned, then they owe those scholars the charity and dignity of engaging their arguments, demonstrating which of their premises are false, and demonstrating *why* those premises are false, and Carter does none of these. He insists repeatedly that we need to retrieve TCT, but he never engages with any of the arguments against CT in general. He never tells his readers what the arguments against DDS, immutability, impassability, and atemporality are, and he never explains which of the arguments' premises are supposedly false. This is consistent with the overall polemic in the book.

There are more issues with *CGGT,* but space only allows for the discussion of one more. Though Carter aims to demonstrate that TCT has its roots in Scripture, much of his exegesis is theologically stretched and he ignores numerous important exegetical voices. For example, he argues that DDS finds its biblical roots in Exodus 3:14, where God reveals himself as "I am who I am." While this is one plausible translation of the Hebrew, there are others as well, such as "I am who I will be," which finds support in a lot of contemporary Old Testament scholarship. Carter never engages or mentions these other plausible translations, and he never argues for his preferred translation as a result. A similar negligence occurs in chapters 3–6, where he exegetes Isaiah 40–48. Though he mentions a few contemporary scholars in passing, Carter neglects major important interpreters of Isaiah in these chapters, such as John Goldingay and John Watts. He accuses most contemporary biblical scholars of being beholden to philosophical naturalism, which causes them to misinterpret Scripture. While some contemporary interpreters are guilty of this, it is extreme

to believe that this represents the majority. Goldingay and Watts, for example, are not philosophical naturalists, and they do provide interpretations of Isaiah in its canonical context—which Carter argues for. This canonical hermeneutic may not be their primary exegetical method, but it does play a part in their exegesis. Carter thus continues to straw man his opponents.

Though there are positive aspects of *CGGT*, they are far outweighed by the negative ones. Though Carter has good intentions, his poor definitions, lack of engagement with those with whom he disagrees, and his repeated use of the straw man fallacy make *CGGT* unsuitable for a work of scholarship. This is not to say that Carter is a bad scholar, but that *CGGT* falls short of scholarly standards. I neither would recommend it as an introduction to the doctrine of God or as an important work in the field. Overall, it makes too many errors in scholarship and most of its contents contribute nothing to the ongoing discussions and debates over the doctrine of God. The most original part of the book is its attempt to ground CT in a theological exegesis of Isaiah 40–48, but even here errors abound. For those interested in contemporary articulations of and arguments for CT, I recommend the works of Katherin Rogers, Brian Leftow, James Dolezal, Paul Helm, and John Webster. Carter's *CGGT* has potential, but it is never actualized.

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Pitkin, Barbara. *Calvin, the Bible, and History: Exegesis and Historical Reflection in the Era of Reform*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020, pp. xii + 250, £64.00, hardback.

Barbara Pitkin is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at Stanford University, where she teaches on the history of Christian thought, including the sixteenth-century reformations and the history of biblical interpretation. She is the author of *What Pure Eyes Could See: Calvin's Doctrine of Faith in its Exegetical Context* (OUP, 1999), editor of *Semper Reformanda: Calvin, Worship, and Reformed Traditions* (V&R, 2018), and co-editor with Wim Janse of *The Formation of Clerical and Confessional Identities in Early Modern Europe* (Brill, 2006). Pitkin also serves as an editor for the *Sixteenth Century Journal* and is a former president of the Calvin Studies Society.

In *Calvin, the Bible, and History*, Pitkin investigates Calvin's biblical exegesis through a series of case studies and seeks to show how he was consistently historically attuned. Though Pitkin argues that Calvin was not a historian *per se*, she demonstrates that Calvin was an astute exponent of the Bible as history. Chapter 1 functions as the book's introduction, which summarises, in broad terms, how Calvin's biblical interpretation was influenced by exegetical tradition, his legal and humanist studies, and the social and political context in Geneva and beyond; it outlines key features

of Calvin's interpretative approach, such as his commitment to 'lucid brevity' (p. 17) and the unity of scripture; and it sketches the trajectory for the book's remaining chapters. Chapter 2 examines Calvin's reception of Paul, including both his epistles and his appearances in the book of Acts. Pitkin shows that, for Calvin, Paul's theology (especially as articulated in Romans) was the key to understanding the rest of scripture. Chapter 3 then examines Calvin's treatment of John's Gospel. Calvin's historicizing approach meant that he rejected earlier commentators' assumption (informed by fourth-century Christological debates) that the primary purpose of the gospel was to communicate doctrine concerning Christ's divinity. Instead, Calvin emphasised its soteriological themes. From Chapter 4 onwards, Pitkin pivots her focus towards the Old Testament. Chapter 4 focuses on Calvin's treatment of David in the Psalms, who he saw as a model for Protestant faith. Chapter 5 convincingly argues that Calvin read Isaiah's prophetic message to Israel's exiles as a mirror for his own sixteenth-century context. This fascinating chapter — which, for this reader, was one of the highlights of the book — illuminates how sixteenth-century experiences of exile informed Calvin's readings of the prophets in profound ways. In Chapter 6, Pitkin discusses Calvin's exegesis of Daniel and shows that Calvin eschewed eschatological interpretations of Daniel's prophecies, preferring to see them as being historically fulfilled in Christ's first advent with their contemporary significance drawn out by way of analogy. Chapter 7 focuses on Calvin's harmony of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, drawing attention to how trends in early modern historiography informed this work. Finally, Chapter 8 compares Calvin's expositions on 2 Samuel, delivered against the backdrop of the French Wars of Religion, with François Hotman's *Consolatio è sacris litteris*, emphasising their mutual commitment to 'sacred history'. The book closes with an epilogue, outlining the main contributions of this book and potential avenues for future research.

There is much to commend in *Calvin, the Bible, and History*. By focusing so intently on Calvin's historicizing approach, Pitkin illuminates an important and unifying theme of Calvin's exegesis. She convincingly shows that while he handled different biblical genres with distinct emphases, and was frequently conscious of his text's application to his contemporary context, he was nonetheless absolutely committed to upholding the importance of a historical reading of the Bible. Indeed, Pitkin rightly notes that even when Calvin engaged in typological exegesis (an approach widely used by early modern Reformed exegetes) he did so without relinquishing a clear sense of his passage's own historical context. In fact, she argues that this historicizing impulse is so pronounced that 'few if any were as consistent', as Calvin, 'in seeking to preserve the integrity and unity of that history – as Christian salvation history, to be sure, but history nonetheless' (p. 4). Pitkin also helpfully shows *how* Calvin applied the biblical text to his sixteenth-century context, consistently but in varying ways, while maintaining his determined commitment to a historical interpretation of the biblical text.

While Pitkin admirably draws out these distinctive aspects of Calvin's exegesis through her seven biblical case studies, one can still detect signs of the book's origins as separate chapters and articles, originally published between 1993 and 2014 (p. x). In chapter 8, for example, where Pitkin engages in comparative analysis between Calvin's sermons on 2 Samuel and Hotman's *Consolatio*, she breaks from the preceding chapters' more exclusive focus on Calvin's exegesis, suggesting that they had originally been developed in different contexts. This observation is not intended as a criticism of the quality of Pitkin's research — indeed, the comparison between Calvin and Hotman is illuminating it its own right — but it does serve to illustrate a slight unevenness of methodology, despite Pitkin's overall success in drawing a unified line of argument throughout the book.

Notwithstanding this minor quibble, *Calvin, the Bible, and History* is a valuable resource for scholars of John Calvin, Reformation history, and the history of biblical interpretation. Pitkin's careful and enlightening exploration of Calvin's commitment to the 'sacred histories' provides an important glimpse into how and why Calvin handled distinct biblical genres in the manner that he did. While this book will primarily benefit researchers, students may also benefit from this work, especially from Pitkin's discussion of Calvin's reception of Paul in Chapter 2, which so compellingly demonstrates how Romans functioned for Calvin as a hermeneutical key for understanding the rest of scripture. Students at all levels would be well served by the insights offered by this chapter, which could profitably be read in isolation. That being said, students who are dipping their toe into scholarship on the Bible in the Reformation era for the first time may find chapters in volume 3 of the *The New Cambridge History of the Bible* (CUP, 2016) a more accessible starting point.

In the years to follow, we can hope for further research that builds on *Calvin, the Bible, and History*, but in the meantime those of us with interests in early modern biblical interpretation should be grateful to Pitkin for her careful and thorough exposition of Calvin's commitment to history in his exegesis.

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Hampton, Alexander J. B. and John Peter Kenney, eds. *Christian Platonism: A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 512, $130.00, hardcover.

Christian Platonism: A History is edited by University of Toronto Assistant Professor Alexander J. B. Hampton and Saint Michael's College Professor Emeritus John Peter Kenney. The individual chapter authors range from various universities around the world from Cambridge to Notre Dame to Toronto to Oxford. It is hard to imagine that the editors could have assembled a more well-educated group for the topic. And at over 500 pages, it is a dense, well-researched, *tour de force* on the topic.

The book is divided into three parts: Concepts, history, and engagements. Before the main three sections the editors provide an overall introduction to Christianity and Platonism. The editors argue that the term "Christian Platonism," for the purposes of this book, is elastic given the complex relationship between Christianity and Platonism and the significant variances across history (p. 3). However, they do suggest that there *is* one constant thread throughout history: transcendence, or a commitment to a higher level of reality beyond the material world (p. 4).

The first section on the major concepts of Christian Platonism begins with a chapter from Lloyd Gerson on the value of Platonism. He argues that, by the Council of Nicaea, philosophical contemplation by Christians was done "almost exclusively within a Platonic context" (p. 13). He then argues that Platonism, at its most basic, means "there is a distinct, hierarchically arrayed subject matter irreducible to the material or physical world" (p. 16). Such a definition is rather thin given that Platonism is committed to a vast array of further doctrines. Because of the elasticity in the definition, he can argue that those like Aristotle are Platonists too (p. 22). John Dillon and Daniel John, in their chapter "The Ideas as Thoughts of God," then trace the development of the Platonic Forms as ideas of God. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz follows Dillon and John's brief chapter by arguing that both Greek and Latin pro-Nicene theologians in the late fourth century drew primarily from Platonic resources in their Trinitarian theologies (p. 53). The chapter closely analyzes how similar alternative theologies such as Arianism (a theological movement that denied the divinity of Christ) mirrored Platonism. Of course, he also shows how Platonism could be employed with very different Trinitarian theologies, so it is not simply reducible to Platonism (p. 69). The following chapter from Kevin Corrigan seeks to show how Christianity developed and transformed thinking from those like Plotinus (p. 85). Corrigan thus provides his own definition of Christian Platonism as "a sophisticated, critical, but sympathetic dialogue, that thinks through the logic of language in relation to God, while freely acknowledging our inability to know anything about God's nature" (p. 95). Next, Olivier Boulnois traces the development of theology as that of a rational science of faith. The final chapter in the section from Rudi A. te Velde considers the necessary conditions of a Christian doctrine of creation and whether a Neoplatonic understanding of participation can be transformed to meet its criteria.

The second section on history begins with Mark Edwards who seeks to show the continuities and discontinuities from early Christians and Platonism—sometimes finding an ally and other times a foe. Next, John Peter Kenney provides an overview of Platonism and Christianity in Late Antiquity. Kenney, like many of the authors in this work, suggests that the unifying principles of Platonism are not its actual doctrines but its "shared intellectual style, textual canon, forms of discourse, and modes of personal formation" (p. 163). However, Kenney suggests that "Christians were never really Platonists in antiquity" though sometimes they were "fellow travelers" (p. 166). Many early Christians such as Justin Martyr and Origen found

Platonism useful as a transcendent metaphysical basis but not a spiritual path (p. 171). Later Pro-Nicene Christians would take up the transcendental metaphysics of Plotinus alongside his modifications (p. 177). Next, Lydia Schumacher examines the medieval west. Her focus is to examine an indirect channel of Platonism that is largely ignored in the literature—Islamic readings of the tradition before Aquinas and Bonaventure (p. 185). Then, Torstein Theodor Tollefsen expounds the Byzantium tradition and Platonism. Tollefsen utilizes a distinction between formal and diffused Platonism, where formal Platonists are those who strictly adhere to Platonism *and* identify with Platonism as such, and diffused Platonists are those that do not so identify with Platonism but still borrow some ideas like transcendence and the Forms (p. 208). This section closes with chapters on the Renaissance, the Northern Renaissance, early modernity, Romanticism, and modernity.

The third and final section focuses on creative and critical engagements with Christian Platonism. Andrew Davison and Jacob Holsinger Sherman open with a wide-ranging chapter on Christian Platonism and natural science. They cover topics from participation to math to biology and psychology. The following chapter is from Alexander Hampton on nature and environmental crisis. Hampton attempts to argue that a Platonist participatory ontology provides a needed "radically non-anthropocentric answer" to the crisis of anthropocentric conceptualizations of nature that determine all sorts of economic, religious, and scientific perspectives (e.g. placing humans *above* nature in some sense that leads to environmental degradation) (p. 381). The remaining chapters cover art and meaning, value, dualism, and materialism, love and friendship, and multiplicity in earth and heaven. The first two are the most creative, while the final four cover more traditional loci within Platonist thinking.

It is hard to appraise such a work as this either negatively or positively given its breadth and varied authorship. Despite this, on the whole, it is a fine introduction into the Christian adaptation of various Platonist doctrines. Several of the chapters are quite stimulating and even fresh new ground is broken in chapters like Hampton's work on the environmental crisis and Christian Platonism. Overall, the chapters are all well-argued, well documented, and well situated. There is hardly a chapter that lacks any of these virtues. Thus, it should be widely acclaimed as *the* resource on the topic given its breadth and depth.

However, I do have one main qualm with the book—though this does not detract from its overall value. The problem is this: I am continually confused over the proper definition of Christian *Platonism*. At times it seems the authors assume if thinkers use *any* Platonic themes, they are Christian Platonists. Other times they admit that Christian Platonism is a term lacking clear definition. Take several examples besides those listed in the summary above: Joshua Levi Ian Gentske says, "I treat Platonism as a historically and culturally contingent mesh of dynamic and diverse ideas, practices, and images, which can nevertheless be heuristically envisioned as a recognizable discourse" (p. 328). Elsewhere Lydia Schumacher: "there are as many

kinds of Platonism as there are Platonists" and "the meaning of the term ultimately breaks down" (p. 190). But I find this elastic understanding largely unhelpful given that such a flexible definition ends up reducing to nothing uniquely *Platonist*. When used in this way, I do not know what makes it different than other philosophical traditions that would be comfortable affirming something like divine transcendence. Such a definition of Platonism likely stems from a reliance on Lloyd Gerson's "Ur-Platonism" that defines it negatively by five "anti's": anti-materialism, anti-mechanism, anti-nominalism, anti-relativism, and anti-skepticism. But while these may be *necessary* conditions of Platonism, they surely are not *sufficient* conditions. For example, traditionally, Platonism has been described as adhering to certain theories of Form and abstract objects. Yet one could reject such theories, affirm the five "anti's" and be considered a Platonist. I do not find such a way of categorizing Platonism especially useful or persuasive. Moreover, the Christian tradition, as shown throughout, has a variegated way of utilizing certain Platonist concepts here. So, when Christian Platonism is defined in this elastic way, it is never clear why it should be called Christian Platonism rather than simply Christianity.

So, how should the biblical-theological student interact with this book? For the student desiring to understand much of the philosophical background to various thinkers throughout the history of the church, I think this resource presents a helpful guide. You will find background on thinkers from Thomas Aquinas to the Cappadocian Fathers. I also think it will prove beneficial for highlighting various shared metaphysical and epistemological assumptions throughout the Christian tradition. It should be noted that the book is not an undergraduate level text. It is best suited for graduate students and requires some level of prior philosophical-theological knowledge. In sum, I warmly commend *Christian Platonism: A History*. It is carefully argued, well written, and contains several new appropriations of special interest to theologians seeking to retrieve the past for renewal.

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Song, Felicia Wu. *Restless Devices: Recovering Personhood, Presence, and Place in the Digital Age*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2021. pp. 216.

How do we understand personal identity in a time where we do not simply go online, but we live online? Song's work in *Restless Devices* examines the question of personal identity in a digital age through the lens of an unapologetic Christian theological anthropology. It takes a supple voice and keen mind to navigate the complexities of digital media to an overwhelmingly uninformed audience about the ethical issues behind technology used every day.

The expertise and tenure of Song's work here shine in the landscape of the contents of *Restless Devices*. Anyone studying the ethics of technology understands the complexity of the relationship between the device as a mere instrument and the device as an implement of power. For example, Part 1 ("Being at Altitude; The Terms of Agreement; and The Industrialization of You and Me") examines how "smart" technologies shape the user through the values laden by the producers of said technology (cf. Jürgen Habermas' economic thesis). Tech companies use and exploit behavioral psychology and insights from neuroscience to make addictive products without much concern for the ethical and moral outcomes of the user's relationship. In part 1 (pp. 17–96), Song exposes how Silicon Valley, through tech like social media, has rewired our perceptions of social networks to a series of analytics––will this post attract engagement?

How are users to reconcile personhood, presence, and theological identity in light of the commodification of our social/digital identity? In part 2 (pp. 97–214), Song further examines her thesis that digital technologies often leave us frustrated, exhausted, and isolated, but this disenchantment does not have to be the end of our relationship to technology. Rather than address and engage every issue related to digital technologies, Song goes to the root of the theological and psychological fundamentals of how devices shape us and our appetites for meaning, significance, and security. Instead of taking a Luddite approach to digital technology, Song advises applying a form of the spiritual disciples and practices to the use of our devices, ones that are grounded in spiritual wisdom and community (p. 13).

Song proffers that through understanding the *imago Dei* as a reflection of humans' creation of communion with God, we can adequately situate our relation to one another (p. 111). According to Song, we are tempted to subcontract our fellowship with God for connection with people through the device as an implementation of presence. Imperative to Song's thesis is that we develop counter-liturgies that help us resist this temptation through the practice of spiritual disciplines like a sabbath from our phone or intentional times of disconnection to commune with God's word and His people. Moreover, Song's caution about spiritually disruptive devices links to call for ethical due care about the values laden within the technology be created (p. 27). Thus, the scope of her thesis goes beyond cultivating a digital etiquette but to understanding each device as a spiritually shaping instrument. In the words of Song, "we need to recognize that our souls have appetites" (p. 35), and her book is an introduction to the praxis of spiritual disciplines aimed at ensuring the ensouled body is spiritually cultivated and feed.

Restless Devices is a much-needed addition to the literature of theological reflection on media studies. The work is unique in that it proffers a complexity thesis between our devices and spiritual development. Song does not bemoan technology and its usage but rather cautions her readers to consider the theological shaping of the tools we allow into our lives and how they can shape us in both positive and

negative ways. I would have liked to have further addressed in Song's work within the discussion of personhood and fluidity amid embodied and disembodied spaces. This is not a criticism of her work, but I mention this in hopes that she and others will further explore this topic in later additions and publications. While Song addresses personhood and connects it to the *imago Dei* ("image of God"), a normative reading in Christian theological circles, much more could be said about this topic in our digital age. For example, the incarnation of Jesus is often cited as the model of what we should strive for regarding embodied presence within the local church and our communion with the saints, but this does not mean there is no room for the disembodied presence within digital communities and the powerful connections that can come through digital media. I mention this because there is a temptation to say digital media, and presence through such, is less than embodied physical presence.

Nevertheless, human persons are more than material, and we must be careful to account for the immaterial (i.e., soul) in the life of faith and cultivation of the soul, and there is hope for such because of the incarnation, which goes far beyond mere physical presence. I believe Song would agree with the assessment, and I do not see the absence of this topic as a weakness of her work; in fact, I see *Restless Devices* as a primer for these conversations as virtual reality and future digital media becomes more integrated into the life of faith and the local church. Song's work in *Restless Devices* deserves serious consideration by the academic and lay reader alike. Her work would make a great addition to any Christian ethics course on the undergraduate or graduate level because of its scholarly rigor and *telo*s aimed toward praxis in the local church.

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Kim, Matthew. *Preaching to People in Pain*: *How Suffering Can Shape Your Sermons and Connect with Your Congregation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021, xvi + pp. 223, $21.66, paperback.

With the heart of a pastor, the mind of a theologian, and the skill of a soul-surgeon, Matthew Kim navigates the turbulent waters of pain. This insightful work will "encourage pastors to preach less pain-free sermons and to preach more pain-full sermons where preachers disclose their suffering and pain" (p. xi). Kim (Ph.D., University of Edinburgh) serves as the Professor of Preaching and Practical Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Hamilton, MA, as well as past president of the Evangelical Homiletics Society. He is a seasoned pastor and prolific author of works such as *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence* and *Homiletics and Hermeneutics*: *Four Views on Preaching Today*.

Preaching to People in Pain is a balm for each preacher's soul as well as their weary flock. If after reading this book, you can see the value of preaching on pain, then Kim has fulfilled his goal (p. 201). He arranges his work into two units: *Naming the Pain* (three chapters) is an invitation to authentic dialog concerning how and why pastors and congregants suffer pain, with a clear process for the task of preaching on pain (p. xii). In *Preaching on Pain* (six chapters) Kim investigates six distinctive categories of pain that hearers frequently conceal (p. xiii). Each chapter concludes with a Kim sermon addressing that particular pain. There is a helpful Appendix with a *Worksheet for Understanding Pain* (pp. 205-211).

Chapter 1 alone is worth the price of this book, for it addresses the elephant in the room – the pain of the preacher. Kim admits what most pastors will not admit, "I can count on one hand the number of times that a church member asked me how I was doing and actually cared enough to listen to my pain and suffering" (p. 3). Should pastors preach on pain regularly, even revealing their own? He supplies some "*Pitfalls of Preaching on Pain"* and the danger of the preachers' self-disclosure, for it will 1) damage listeners' faith in God, 2) diminish pastoral authority, 3) focus the sermon excessively on the preacher, and 4) make for repetitive sermons (pp. 9-12). Conversely, there are "*Benefits of Sharing our Suffering,*" which will 1) humanize us, 2) connect us with people and their pain, 3) help us model how to overcome pain, and 4) help us become self-ware (pp. 12-15).

Listeners' Pain comprises chapter 2. Weighty is the baggage that listeners live with and bring to worship every week (p. xii). Many pastors have lost their way and instead, "Pastors might like the stage on which to preach but no longer want to serve as a pastor to others and be involved in their painful, messy lives" (pp. 21-22). A way is offered to create an "inventory" of listener and church pain (pp. 24-25). While noble, one might wonder about the time-consuming process of this daunting task. Kim also provides a preaching strategy to address pain and reorder the hearers' biblical and theological mindset, we should preach: 1) to expect to suffer, 2) to lower one's expectations (people disappoint), 3) against entitlement and ingratitude, 4) to educate and reconcile the church, 5) a big God and small problems, 6) lament without an immediately happy ending, and 7) for spiritual maturity (pp. 27-34).

Chapter 3 "invites us to consider some of the key elements for preaching on pain and an initial pathway for how we can preach on pain intentionally and end effectively" (p. 35). Kim provides a template called *Preparatory Questions to Preach on Pain*: 1) Which passage will I preach on, 2) What type of pain/suffering is revealed in the text, 3) How does the Bible character or biblical author deal with the pain, 4) How does this pain in the text relate to our listeners' pain, 5) What does this pain say about God and his allowance of pain, 6) How does God / Jesus / the Holy Spirit help us in our suffering, 7) How can their preaching show care and empathy, 8) How can we share this pain in a Christian community, and 9) How will God use our suffering to transform us and bring himself glory (pp. 36-41).

Part 2 (chapters 4-9) deals with six areas to consider when dealing *with* and preaching *on* pain: 1) decisions, 2) finances, 3) health issues, 4) losses, 5) relationships, and 6) sin. For each of these subjects, the *Nine Preparatory Questions for Preaching on Pain* are asked, followed by *Principles for Preaching* on that specific painful issue. Kim reminds us that "ministry requires pulpit time and people time. Imbalance will lead to ineffective preaching and ineffective discipleship" (p. 142).

This work has several strengths. *First*, the weight given to addressing pastoral pain is commendable. Kim asserts, "Pastors are not immune from encountering unspeakable tragedy and hardship. If we believe in the power of the local church, why, then, are we so reluctant to share struggles with our beloved Christian communities? (p. 4). Of the few books that address this topic, his is most insightful for he offers a roadmap for wisely disclosing pain in the pastor's life (p. xii). Sagaciously he states "we cannot allow ourselves to stand "above the congregation" as if we are better than they. We can admit and share our pain and suffering with judiciousness" (p. 5). *Second*, one may, by first impression believe Kim will try to hammer pains' *square peg* into preachings' *round hole*. Rest assured Kim always prioritizes the text, "I hope that after reading this book you will agree with me that speaking on suffering regularly, *and as you're preaching pericope warrants*, will contribute to increased vulnerability and congregational change (p. xv). He states further, "I am not arguing that every single sermon must address pain and suffering. This would be unfair, unwise, and unfaithful to Scripture and its assortment of genres and passages … As a general rule of thumb, we can preach on pain and suffering when the sermon text addresses it" (pp. 35-36). *Finally*, his emphasis on compassion or *preach with your presence* is a much-needed word. This type of preaching occurs in "a hospital room, palliative care center, waiting room, home visitation, police station, courtroom, prison, and other physical locations where they are" (p. 46). He concludes, "Preaching on pain involves more than simple proclamation. It requires active participation and empathy" (p. 202).

This book is homiletical and pastoral gold. To be sure, "Scripture exposes suffering and pain because God provides solutions for us and *is* the solution for the Christian" (p. 9). It serves as a stark reminder that preaching and pastoral ministry can never be divided (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2; 2 Tim 4:2) and it also reminds us that we are to preach *to* pain, but sometimes we will preach *with* pain. This excellent work is for every vigilant shepherd of God's flock and every professor who trains shepherds in preaching and pastoral ministry. For other helpful works see Timothy S. Laniak *Shepherds After My Own Heart*: *Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible* (IVP Academic, 2006) or Brent A. Strawn *Honest to God Preaching*: *Talking Sin*, *Suffering*, *and Violence* (Fortress Press, 2021). This is a must-read for every shepherd who takes their calling, their preaching, their *pain,* and *that of their flock* seriously.

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Jamieson, Bobby. *The Path to Being a Pastor: A Guide for the Aspiring.*
Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021, 185, $17.99, paperback.

Bobby Jamieson is an Associate Pastor at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. Formerly, Jamieson was an assistant editor for 9Marks. He did his doctoral work at the University of Cambridge and his MDiv from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written on all areas of pastoral ministry, including *Guarding One Another: Church Discipline, Leading One Another: Church Leadership, and Hearing God's Word: Expositional Preaching.*

    The Path to Being a Pastor is a brief discussion about the necessary conversations that need to be had before one goes from participant to pastor. When one becomes a pastor, they join an elite group that God has used to do mighty works. Jamieson maintains that some have made this leap without realizing what they are getting involved in. As a result, the churches have suffered, and pastors have experienced burnout. Although Jamieson admits to not having been a pastor himself, he has helped many on the journey. This book is the fruit of that labor. The first third of the book sets up the dialogue about whether or not someone should enter pastoral ministry by discussing the move away from the common language of being "called" and finding certainty that one meets the necessary qualification. The second portion involves moving from saying you will be a pastor to implementing the groundwork used in the pastoral position. This section is the heart of the book. It includes but is not limited to the things that a would-be minister of the Gospel should already be doing. The final section acts as a summary and gives final advice on how to enter the ministry.

    In the preface, Jamieson states that the book's thesis is not a direct map for entering ministry but is to "provoke" his reader (p. 13). Instead, he says that his goal is to incite thought. The topics listed are what a would-be pastor should be discussing with the pastor or elder who is discipling them. Before getting into the book, it is essential to note the similarities between this book and another would be manual for those entering the pastorate: Richard Baxter's *The Reformed Pastor.* Both are relatively brief, but the similarities more so lie in the fact that both exclaim that the primary steps in preparation for the role of shepherd include shepherding oneself. One cannot lead others to a proper theology if they do not have one. One cannot catechize others if they have not catechized themselves. One cannot spread the Gospel to others if they have not (and do not daily) preach the Gospel to themselves.

    While many books leave their most important themes until the end, Jamieson begins with his. Pastoral ministry has the sense of being set apart or called to this particular vocation. Rather than ask, "are you called?" Jamieson asks, "are you qualified?" While it is only explicit in the beginning chapters, most of the book is

about being a pastor to oneself and discerning whether one is truly qualified for the position. For Jamieson, the question of being called leads to ego and focuses on the self rather than Jesus. Jamieson qualifies being called as a way of the "would-be preacher," stating that he is qualified for ministry. This is different from being set apart by church leadership, observed, and then set apart for ministry work. Calling also necessitates that one meets specific qualifications. For that reason, the bulk of the book focuses on fleshing out those qualifications.

It is not easy to name all the tools in a pastor's bag, especially in a book with less than two hundred pages. It is even more challenging to distinguish which ones are essential or merely beneficial to pastoral ministry. Nevertheless, that is Jamieson's goal. It is a short list, not an extensive one. Pastor, there may be tools that Jamieson did not mention, but as he says in the early pages, his goal is to provoke. His chapters on seeking counsel are to help one seek out more mature believers and pastors more senior. He mentions safeguards to avoid falling into the traps that so often are attached to pastors' names as news about them being removed for things like "moral failures." Jamieson's lessons are for pastors, but they are also helpful for lay leaders. For example, everyone in the church can benefit from the short section on memorizing Scripture (p. 80-81). Jamieson's Calvinistic theology does shine through, especially in his selection of pastors and scholars to quote, like Carson, Vanhoozer, and Schreiner. Spurgeon features prominently like many books of pastoral ministry, but there is not so much reliance that one must subscribe to this theology to benefit.

Jamieson offers a brief and fantastic resource for those entering the pastorate and those interested in pastoral ministry. It raises thought-provoking questions dealing with pursuing the call to pastoral ministry.

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Book Review Index

Book Reviews