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Edited by
Stephen M. Vantassel
& P. H. Brazier

Core Values
The *Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics* subscribes to the historic decisions of the early church councils. We hold dearly to the deity of Christ, the virgin conception, salvation through Jesus Christ, and the Trinity. We also believe in the unity of Scripture and consider the Bible as the final authority on all issues of faith and practice. This high view of Scripture requires submissions to be underpinned by a thoughtful biblical and theological analysis. The Editors also welcome non-Evangelical contributors to submit critiques of Evangelical political and social thought, providing they are suitably respectful of our values and beliefs, and that submissions are of interest and relevance to the aims and readership of the journal. Articles appearing in the journal do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors.

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Introduction

Stephen M. Vantassel

About

The Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics is an online journal. All articles and reviews are published online as PDF files, and are downloadabl.

All articles and reviews are published in real time. Once peer reviewed and typeset they are immediately published online. This takes the place of a printed journal. All material can be printed and bound in a folder for future reference. This means there is no delay between acceptance and publication of an article: the material becomes available immediately to the academic and Church communities.

What you have here are the articles, review articles, and reviews from 2023 collected together in a single edition for subsctibers to print-off, or consult in electronic mode on Kindle or an e-Book reader.

In addition all past volumes of The Evangelical Review of Society and Politics are available for subscribers from the website: www.the evangelical review.net.

The Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics is a peer-reviewed,

online journal exploring God's revelation to humanity in the form of Jesus Christ. Scholarly submissions that are suitably respectful of the Evangelical Christian tradition are welcomed and invited from across the disciplinary spectrum: Evangelical theology, biblical studies, biblical theology, politics, society, economics, missiology, homiletics, discipleship, preaching, conversion, salvation, atonement, redemption, the Church et al.

About...

The Evangelical Review of Society and Politics and *The Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics*, are international peer-reviewed journals exploring Evangelical issues from an interdisciplinary perspective. The purpose of the journal is to bring an international and scholarly Evangelical analysis to bear upon various social and political issues of national and international interest. The Editors are committed to presenting the full spectrum of Evangelical thought to provide readers (whether Evangelical or those analysing Evangelical phenomena) with thoughtful, scholarly debate and original research that is biblically based and theologically sound.

Core Values

The Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics subscribes to the historic decisions of the early church councils. We hold dearly to the deity of Christ, the virgin conception, salvation through Jesus Christ, and the Trinity. We also believe in the unity of Scripture and consider the Bible as the final authority on all issues of faith and practice. This high view of Scripture requires submissions to be underpinned by a thoughtful biblical and theological analysis. The Editors also welcome non-Evangelical contributors to submit critiques of Evangelical political and social thought, providing they are suitably respectful of our values and beliefs, and that submissions are of interest and relevance to the aims

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Submissions

Scholarly submissions that are suitably respectful of the Evangelical tradition are invited from across the disciplinary spectrum. Given the broad and interdisciplinary nature of the subject matter covered by the journal, contributors should refer to our core values and submission instructions, which provide further details of material suitable for inclusion.

Intending authors should see our guidance notes for articles, review articles, and book reviews and use the electronic submission form:

https://www.evangelicalreview.net/ter_authors.html

Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics

Articles

The Problem of Scholastic Monoculture (An Open Letter to the Academy)

Stephen M. Vantassel

Contemporary academia has a problem. The problem is too many scholars are unwilling to engage opposing points of view in a substantive and thorough way. In the view of this writer, the academy has been transformed from a space where debate over difficult topics is tolerated, if not welcomed, to a club where debate is only allowed in areas that do not matter such as the text critical questions of whether there was a nu at the end of a word or not or whether a poem was written by Shakespeare[1].

Put another way, academics, even tenured ones, avoid the crucible of debate, choosing instead to surround themselves with those who will only confirm their opinions or at best offer minor tweaks to improve them. Like a cocoon that protects the fragile butterfly pupa from the harsh realities of the environment, many academics sidestep difficult ideas in two ways, passively by avoiding research that conflicts with their own and actively by policing the membership rolls of the academy. For example, I was once speaking with a professor at a land-grant university about diversity. He was all for academic diversity. But his tone and demeanor took on a stern and oppositional tone when I raised the issue of intelligent design. One wonders, why he was so passionate about this issue. Was he

1 Ronald Thisted and Bradley Efron. "Did Shakespeare write a new-discovered poem?" *Biometrika* 74(3), 1987, 445-455. See, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2336684

concerned that having an intelligent design believing professor on the department's faculty would poison the minds of impressionable students? Or was he worried that a peer, whose belief system, stood opposed to his agnosticism, would make his intellectual cocoon uncomfortable? It seems that Allan Bloom's observations about the academy published in 1987 are still true[2].

Academics also avoid engagement of ideas by their acquiesce to student protests. In recent years, American schools of higher education have cancelled numerous invited speakers[3] Abbey Jackson provides a list of speakers who were disinvited at universities in 2016.[4] It is truly ironic that professors (both teaching and administrative) who are supposed to be our intellectual betters kowtow to student demands. Could it be that the professors agree with the students' position or think they are less intelligent than their students? I am doubtful. Or is it that faculty are simply afraid of their students and the customer role they play?[5] Of course, all the above explanations could be simultaneously true at any given institution, but one suspects that one or two may be more likely.

Sean M. Kammer is a Professor of Law at the University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law[6], who attempts to defend the academy from the charge of intellectual group think by defining intellectual diversity as distinct from ideological diversity[7]. He writes (p. 156),

"Ultimately, this article concludes that the accusations of universities

2 Allan Bloom. *The Closing of the American Mind: how Higher Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. London,UK: Touchstone, Simon and Schuster, 1987.

3 Abby Jackson."Disinvitations' for college speakers are on the rise – here's a list of people turned away this year. July 28 2016. https://www.businessinsider.com/list-of-disinvited-speakers-at-colleges-2016-7 visited 11-20-2021.

4 Abby Jackson."Disinvitations'..." visited 11-25-2022.

5 Tom Nichols. *The Death of Expertise: The Campaign against Established Knowledge and Why it Matters*. OUP, Oxford, UK: 70-74, 2017.

6 https://www.usd.edu/research-and-faculty/faculty-and-staff/sean-kammer visited 11-25-2022.

7 Sean M. Kammer. "The 'Intellectual Diversity' Crisis that Isn't: Liberal Faculties, Conservative Victims, and the Cynical Effort to Undermine Higher Education for Political Gain. *Quinnipiac Law Review* 39(149):149-224, 2021.

lacking intellectual diversity or otherwise stifling conservative ideas are without merit. These accusations represent an ideologically-driven charge made by people whose goal is not intellectual diversity or even ideological balance, which is itself impossible to ascertain. Rather, the goal is to undermine the very academic "marketplace" they claim to cherish by artificially granting more market share to certain ideas with which they sympathize. In so doing, they undermine principles of academic freedom that are integral to the functioning of universities."

Kammer's use of the distinction of intellectual versus ideological diversity to defend contemporary universities from the charge of intellectually monoculture is certainly a clever approach to be sure. But I think that Kammer fails to take seriously how much one's ideological lenses influence one's academic work (cf. pp. 180ff). But let's put that more philosophical evaluation aside and focus on Kammer's main claim that intellectual diversity should not be used as the standard to require universities to hire faculty who support ideas that cannot withstand intellectual scrutiny. At face value, I think Kammer's sense here is correct. Not all ideas or ideologies deserve a place at the university table. Just consider flat-earthers, Holocaust deniers, and those that deny binary genders. Unfortunately, if I have read him correctly, Kammer appears to assume that academics arrived at their ideas based on a careful evaluation of the evidence of the various options. From my experience, I am not convinced that this assumption is true. Readers should ask themselves how often their professors assigned texts containing the best arguments against their professor's position? I have no problem with professors professing. Sadly, I have encountered too many teachers that failed to profess what they thought. However, I also believe that faculty unjustifiably censor content and ideas from their students. Ironically, it is Kammer's own testimony regarding the alleged superiority of Darwinism over creation science that supports my view that too often faculty have not adequately engaged alternative views (p.198) or at least criticisms of the views they espouse (see also Kammer's comments on the Covid pandemic).

How can institutions and faculty guard against improper scholastic monoculture? While no policies can ever guarantee protection against invalid group think as humans are just too tribal and fallen to be guided solely by enlightened principles (cf. Romans 1). Policies and principles, nevertheless, can help guard against our baser desires and foster the search for truth through relentless testing and inquiry much in the way traffic laws reduce collisions.

Permit me to list a few principles or guidelines that I believe would help address the problem of intellectual ghettoization. Principle 1. Read and assign publications with which you disagree. Choose materials that address a topic that is important in your field of study. For example, scientists regularly argue that evolution (often not precisely defined) is essential to understanding biological science[8]. It is argued that students who lack familiarity with the theory will be hindered in their discovery of new knowledge or its application. Let's assume that view is in fact correct. Would students be irreparably harmed by engaging the views of those, such as Laufmann and Glicksman, who deny the human body underwent gradual evolution?[9] Or would the experience of engaging alternative viewpoints, fairly presented actually harden and strengthen their faith in evolution?

Principle 2. Invite speakers to campus whose ideas, you disagree with. In person dialogue has lots of advantages, not the least of which is that it humanizes those who hold beliefs with which you strongly disagree. In person communication also mitigates straw man arguments and caricatures which hinder honest and open dialogue. If nothing else, I would hope that all scholars would agree that legitimate scholarship always seeks to fairly understand views and positions, particularly those with which we disagree.

8 Randolph M. Nesse, Carl T. Bergstrom, Peter T. Ellison, David Valle, ... "Making Evolutionary Biology a Basic Science for Medicine." *PNAS* 107 (Suppl. 1), 1800-1807. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0906224106.

9 Steve Laufmann, & Howard Glicksman. *Your Designed Body*. Seattle, WA: Discovery Institute Press, 2022.

Principle 3. Be open to debates either in print or in person. Now I am sure that some of you are thinking, "Well the opposing views are unworthy of response". That is certainly true of some claims. I am not arguing that scholars must respond to every opposing view. Clearly, some claims are so outlandish that one would have difficulty knowing where to begin. My point is simply this, true scholarship is manifest by a willingness to engage opposing ideas. Too often bad ideas continue to exist because those who know the truth fail to systematically destroy the false beliefs[10].

Principle 4. Practice humility. Engaging other views in a purposeful manner is threatening because you might find that you were not as smart or correct as you thought you were. Contact with other views also helps you understand your own opinions with more clarity and depth.

My hope is that this journal is an example of a place where the walls of the intellectual ghetto that so frequently protects academics from inconvenient truths gets torn asunder. As the editor of the ERTP, I want this journal to be a place where scholars can feel free to make claims, destroy arguments, and do so without having to pay exorbitant publication fees or wait years for the article to see the light of day. Proverbs 27:17 says it well, "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another (NASB)." We need more scholarly engagement not less.[11] I hope you would agree and join us in this important endeavor.

10 Nichols, *The Death of Expertise* (2017) argues that too often academics/experts fail to engage the public resulting in poorer public policy, 216-17.

11 My sincere gratitude to Anthony Royle for his thoughtful and constructive review of this paper. His comments made it a better paper.

An Expository Analysis of the Bread of Life Metaphor in John 6:35 and its Implication for Stomach Infrastructural Taxonomy in Nigeria.

Oladosu, Samson Bisi Ph.D

KEYWORDS:

| Starvation | Poverty | Socio-Political Agitations | Criminal Activities | Stomach Infrastructure | Stomach Infrastructural Taxonomy |

ABSTRACT:
In all human travails, starvation appears to be the most worrisome. As a Yoruba adage "Bi ebi ba ti kuro ninu ise, ise buse". Translated literarily, it means whenever food is removed from problem of poverty, that poverty is defeated. It is no longer news that Nigeria in the contemporary times has become an amphitheater of socio-political agitations, culminating in all sorts of criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, ritual killings, internet fraud, prostitution and all sorts of social vices. Looking inwardly, however, starvation cannot be ruled out as the basis for such socio-political unrest because "a hungry man is an angry man". While the political class are found wanting in providing conducive environment for comfort by their promise and fail attitudes, others have been engaging in what they termed, "stomach infrastructures" in Nigeria. Since its inception in 2014, the rate at which stomach infrastructure is being rampantly engaged is no doubt becoming a taxonomy in Nigeria. This paper examines the historical background of the bread of life metaphor in John 6:35 and applies it in expositional form for

the contemporary Nigerian context. Findings reveal that Jesus' audience had been subjected to acute poverty by the powers that be and were desperate to survive by all means. The paper concludes that giving peanuts to citizens from our collective patrimony might be doing more harm than good to the peaceful co-existence of the Nigeria nation..

INTRODUCTION

Donald Guthrie, in his New Testament Introduction, devoted nearly one hundred pages to the many peculiar issues involved in the background to the Gospel of John (238). Like the synoptic Gospels (Scroggie:83), John contains the story of John the Baptist, call of the disciples, Jesus' feeding of the five thousand etc. But unlike the synoptic Gospels' John gives much treatment to words and phrases such as "Life, light, love, belief, truth and I am". The bread of life metaphor is first of the seven I am symbolic sayings of Jesus in John's Gospel.

The metaphorical I – am saying of Jesus provokes the reader to transcend his or her regular boundaries between linear time and eternity, between life and death and between real and ephemeral. The metaphors transfer eternity into this life and the above into below. According to Olivia.

"To reach beyond or above the earth, we have to transcend time and space, our individual context and limited visual horizon. To overcome the obstacle of confined space we can rely on metaphors since their key faculty is to transport (1)"

Background to the Bread of life metaphor.

Earlier, Jesus fed a hungry crowd of five thousand men with only five loaves and two fish. After all had been satisfactorily fed, twelve baskets of full of scraps were collected. It is little wonder that "They were intending

to come and take him" by force, to make him the King (John 6:15). The food they had just tasted from the power they had just seen was more than they could possibly understand.

When Jesus saw that the crowd was about to force him to be their King, He "withdrew again to the mountain by himself alone"(John 6:15). Mathew and Mark both recorded that Jesus first sent the Twelve Disciples away in a boat and then dismissed the crowd (Mt.14:22, Mk 6:45). But John simply stated that "Jesus ... withdrew again to the mountain by himself alone (John 6:15). Then, when evening came, his Disciples headed back toward Capernaum in a boat but not uneventfully. As they were crossing the lake in the darkness, a violent storm arose and threatened to sink their boat (John 6:16-18). With terror on their faces, they saw Jesus walking on the surface of the water, who upon entering their boat brought back an overwhelming relief on arrival at Capernaum.

The second day, the crowd which had followed Jesus earlier and had eaten of the loaves and fish began to look for him. Knowing that he was from Capernaum, home – base during his adult ministry, the crowd headed there in boats to find him. Upon arriving in Capernaum, they found Jesus spoke to a more physically determined crowd, an audience who were more desperate to feed their stomach much more than their soul.

EVALUATION OF MOTIVE AND PRIORITIES

Samuel M, Ngewa (A scholar and a pastor who lectures at the Nairobi Evangelical graduate school of Theology, Kenya), divides the dialogue between Jesus and the crowd into six "scenes" (108). The six scenes are, the approval of God (John 6:25); the work of God (John 6:28); the bread of God (John 6:30); the will of God (John 6:34); the son of God (John 6:42); and the everlasting enjoyment of God (John 6:52). Five of the scenes were introduced by a question from the crowd. For the purpose of this work, we shall follow up to scene four

The first salvo fired from the crowd was "Rabbi, when did you come here" (John 6:25). This question appears reasonably gentle and innocent. If the motive for the question came from a sincere heart, one is likely to see it coming from loving friends. According to Boice, "The people sought to use him (Jesus) as they saw fit because he gave them what they wanted (in this case bread), (453-5). From Jesus' response in John 6:25, the question appears a subtle bribe to get more. Jesus was not moved by the crowd's platonic greetings. With an abruptness that brings to mind the way he responded to Nicodemus (Jn.3:3), Jesus immediately came to term with the crowd: "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. Do not work for the food which perishes but for the food which endures to eternal life…..(6:26 – 27)". Going by the observation of Ngewa:

> Jesus contrasted what is prohibited with what is commanded. The former involves "Food that spoils", while the latter refers to food that endures to eternal life. The crowd were to stop working for the food that will go bad, and instead work for the food that will last… (109)

With Jesus prohibition, awkward positive command and an emphasis on Jewish law, the crowds want to know all that is necessary to please God. "What must we do to do the works God requires? Surburg opines that, "the Rabbis taught that observance of the law was the only way to obtain life after death (65). They were actually expecting Jesus to give them a list of work that would curry God's favour. Rather than releasing a comprehensive list as being demanded, Jesus gave only one, that is, "to exercise faith in Him" (6:29). We must not forget the original demand was what was required to gain eternal life. Jesus' response was therefore without prejudice to doing good works. What he was trying to correct was the Jewish concept that one has to do A,B and C to obtain eternal life.

The question in scene three was meant directly to authenticate the identity of Jesus if they were to have faith in him, "What miraculous

sign will you give that we men see it and believe you? (John 6:30). To strengthen their case, a comparison analysis of what Moses did in the wilderness was dangled at Jesus (John 6:31-32). In Exodus 16, Moses had given their ancestors manna from heaven after a list of codified set of law. If Moses could do that, what can you do for us to believe you? Jesus, having corrected the crowds' misunderstanding of Moses (John 6:32), responded that God was now giving them something better and greater than the manna of Moses, the "true bread".

In scene four, there was a change of "Modus operandi". After Jesus had described true, life-giving bread in John 6:33, there was no need for any further question, the crowd made a request, "Sir, from now on give us the bread (John 6:34). This kind of response from the crowd could be liken to the Samaritan woman in her conversation with Jesus (John 4:15). As the woman asked for living water, the crowd asked Jesus to give them some of the bread of which he spoke. Jesus then used their request as an opportunity to teach the deeper meaning of life.

THE METAPHORICAL BREAD

Of the seventy one verses in John 6, the whole lot is thematically dominated by food (Scott:1176). In the first "I am saying of Jesus" (6:35), the author establishes his major point through three cycles of repetitive teaching (vs. 35- 40; 41-51 and 52-59). Each cycle contains closely related or identical truths about the certainty, extent and subject of salvation as well as a variation on the bread of life motif (Porter:2)

The unique focus of the first of the three cycles of teaching in the discourse (vs 35 40) is on the father's will in the salvation of man. This cycle teaches that salvation is certain and complete for who have been given by the father to the son. In verse 36 however, Jesus mainly reveals

that those in the crowd, seeking for physical bread did not believe him. To this, Pink opines that "It should be noted that this crowd of Jews had in fact asked this bread from Christ (vs. 34, "sir, give us this bread always). But the request alone was not enough. Christ knew they did not believe in Him (328).

We must not forget that it was the request of the crowd that prompted Jesus' response " I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believe in me shall never thirst" (vs. 35). The claim to satisfy hunger and thirst is a follow up to a messianic theme from the Old Testament (Kostenberger, 210). In Isaiah 49:10 and 55:1, both speak of a time when hunger and thirst shall be a thing of the past. Jesus is hereby declaring himself to be the fulfillment of the prophecy. But according to Richards

> ... the crowd was in fact motivated by materialistic rather than spiritual concerns. What counts with the crowd is the now, not the hereafter, biological life, not spiritual life……. Their point (in asking for sign, 6:30) is that Moses provided manna for 40 years. If Jesus were to continuously provide bread, they would certainly believe in Him (234).

Jesus was indeed claiming to be the only permanent satisfaction for the human desire for life. But the attainment of this satisfaction must hinge on belief (Jenney, 316). The destination of this term however varies between the people's use of it (vs. 30) and Jesus' use (vs. 35). According to Tenney, "To them" belief" meant acceptance of his competence on the basis of miracles; to him it meant commitment, not on the basis of the miracles but on trust in his person (315). The slowness of the crowd to understand brought about the emphasis "I am the bread of life" (6:35). Keener observes that.

> Jewish expositors had already often used manna as a symbol for spiritual food, God's law, or Torah/wisdom/word. The dead would be raise to eternal life on the last day, the day of the Lord, when God would transform the world and inaugurate his eternal kingdom (280).

In essence, Jesus is saying, "I am the true life – giving bread we have been talking about. This bread, as explains by Ngewa, is characterized by life, and as a result gives life. It shares what it is with those who eat it. Jesus later describes this bread as living bread (John 6:51) (113). The Jews wanted a perpetual supply of the bread with the understanding that this bread would be much more superior to the manna their forefathers ate. As much as their assumption was right they never realized that this bread was not meant for the stomachs alone but much more for their souls.

STOMACH INFRASTRUCTURE IN NIGERIA

Advanced learner's dictionary describes infrastructure as the basic systems and services that are necessary for a country or an organization such as buildings, transport, water and power supplies for administrative purposes (615). Onwuka, while contributing to debate on the cable news on February15, 2022 at 9:10am opines that "Stomach infrastructure quietly crept into our political life in Ekiti state when PDP's (People Democratic Party) candidate, Ayodele Fayose mobilized voter with food items (13). As a result of endemic poverty, the PDP candidate reduced the vulnerable electorate to the gridlock of stomach infrastructure and successfully defeated the then – incumbent APC's (All Progressive Congress) governor Kayode Fayemi. And until now, politicians are handing over to Nigerians the dividends of democracy in the form of cash by exploiting poverty to mobilize voters with food items such as bags of rice, semovita and even gari are usually customized, packaged strategically with the image of political candidates and the parties they represent.

In his own contribution, Tunji Olaopa writing on the issue in the Guardian News Paper on June 5, 2019 said, Fayose may be shamefully exploiting the base existential needs of the electorate to further his

own political ambition, it was indeed an unconscious reference to a book written by French political scientist Jean – Francois Bayart, titled "Politique du ventre" translated in English as "The politics of the Belly". According to him,

> The argument of the groundbreaking work is that given the patrimonial and hence corrupt, nature of power, African politics extends the metaphor of eating and the belly into a solid framework of clientelist vertical relationship - between clients and patrons – that consumes national resources.

As far as Jeans was concerned, this type of politics is actually an effective governance model that is autochthonous to Africa, defined by the collusion of the legal and the illegal, the merger of the public and the private enterprises, the prominence of corruptive tendencies like bribery to facilitate transactions, and the private aggrandizement of public funds and resources. In the Nigeria context, all of the above speaks to the necessities of surviving a hostile socio – political environment, and using politics as a means to do so. Because of the need for the citizens to survive the endemic poverty outside of the capacity of the government, greedy politicians weigh in with palliatives that are just temporary and are not even infrastructure at all.

On November 5, 2022, the Vanguard news papers reported that Governor Wike of River state announced the second batch of one hundred thousand (100,000) political advisers to help his administration "finish well". The governor who had earlier appointed the first batch of one hundred thousand of such on November 3, 2022 brought the number to two hundred thousand. And with thirty thousand Naira monthly allowance (30,000), about 42, 127 billion Naira is expected to be spent between the time of appointment and May 29, 2023 when the governor is expected to finish his tenure. The huge amount includes the 50,000 each of another 59 constituency and local government area liaison officers so appointed.

Governor Wike said the appointments fulfill his declaration on the Rebids I flyovers when it was inaugurated that he would begin to

implement his policy of stomach infrastructure, saying the engagement will put money in the pockets of rivers people. On the duties of the appointees, they were to interface with rivers people to know what they are saying their assessment of government projects and policies, whether positive or negative, and feedback to his office through the constituency and ward liaison officers. There are three things that raise concern. The time of the implementation (at the twilight of his eight years tenure), the acceptance of 30,000 (the minimum wage with the rate of inflation in the country) and the usefulness of their duties to the socio – economic development of Rivers state (whistle blowing).

In spite of the adoption of stomach infrastructure by various politicians, poverty has refused to be placated in the country. A report from Sami Tunji in the punch Newspaper of 18th November 2022, titled Nigeria's poverty exceeds World Bank projection, five states lead, the National Bureau of statistics disclosed that 133million Nigerians are presently multi-dimensionally poor. The poverty index offers a multivariate form of poverty assessment, identifying deprivation across health, education, living standards, work and shocks. Quoting the statician – general of the federation and CEO of the Nigeria Bureau of statistics, Semiu Adeniran, the 133 million poor Nigerians exceeded the 95: 1 million projected by the World Bank in 2022.

Follow up to the above staggering reality the editorial board opinion of the punch Newspaper of 21st November 2022, titled Nigeria is losing the battle against poverty, said,

> ... The just released National Bureau of statistics' 2022 multidimensional poverty index shows that 133 Million Nigerians, representing 62.9 percent of the population, are living in poverty, plagued by insecurity, energy insufficiency and monetary penury. Buhari and other regime actors should stop living in denial, and fashion new realistic strategies to stop the poverty rampage.

It said further that

> The states should prioritise the provision of rural infrastructure,

> design autonomous, self – reliant economic programmes emphasizing private investment, agriculture, SMES, Job creation and exports.

EXPOSING FALSE MOTIVES

This paper would not be complete without putting into scrutiny three actions of Jesus' crowds vis-à-vis Nigeria political class and victims of stomach infrastructures. The actions under review are found in John 6:2,15 and 24. This presupposes that the bread of life metaphor cannot be treated in isolation of the entire chapter 6 of the gospel of John.

In John 6:2, three imperfect tenses are used to describe the actions of Jesus' crowd's. These are "was following", "they were seeing", and "he was doing". The "following" was not an instantaneous one. Probably, the crowd had been following Jesus even before he crossed the Sea of Galilee. The reason for their vigorous following is given as because "they were seeing" what they were seeing were the miraculous signs that Jesus was doing. The picture of their action in the verse may be painted like, "Jesus doing> the crowd seeing> the crowd following" (Ngewa:100). In his own words, Bruce McLarity opines that:

> Verse 2 contains three verbs in the Greek imperfect tense which indicate continuous action. In other words, the meaning of the passage is "a great multitude kept coming because they continued to see what Jesus continue to do (41).

As it is, verse 2 only sets in motion the original intention of the crowd in "doing, seeing and following", which is anything but genuine. Ngewa captures this well by saying that, "their (crowd) motivation was not as good as if they were following Jesus out of love, but nevertheless they longed to be with him" (100).

In John 6:15, we are told that, "Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him King by force, withdrew again to mountain by

himself". Why on earth would they want to force Kingship on a non contestant? That answer may not be known unless the background to this action is digested.

A detailed inclusion by John after the crowd's action "seeing and following" is that "the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand" (6:4). The cleansing of the temple had also taken place when the Passover of the temple was also at hand" (2:13a). This little detail might appear minor, it could lead to why so many people came to see and hear Jesus that day.

The Passover season in first – century Israel was a time when Patriotic passions ran high. Each year the Jews would gather in Jerusalem and wait to see if the Messiah would arrive that year to overthrow their Roman rulers and restore the free independent Kingdom of Israel. Consequently, when Jesus excited the people of Galilee by performing miracles and the Passover was approaching, the Jews were filled with strong expectations that Jesus might be the King of Israel they had been expecting for many years. McLarty said:

> When the five thousand men (John 6:10) followed Jesus that day, they were not just casual listeners who came because of curiosity. Instead, they were hot – blooded Jewish fighters who were ready to follow the Messiah into battle. Farmers dropped their hoes and shopkeepers closed their business in order to go to the far side of the Sea of Galilee to hear Jesus (42).

Continue further, McLarty observed that:

> ... let us imagine what the five thousand were thinking that day. Once they declared Jesus to be their King, what could they expect to happen? Having just eaten their fill of Jesus' miracle food, they probably expected Jesus to find a sword somewhere and multiply it to equip this ragtag army of farmers and shopkeepers (42).

Such intention of forcing him to be their King was not to be taken lightly. If they had succeeded in making Jesus their King, the powers of Rome would have seen their actions as a declaration of war. It would have ended abruptly God's plan of salvation through Jesus. After all, in order

for one King to be enthroned, another must be dethroned.

Beside the miraculous signs, the crowd revealed another false intention by searching for Jesus in John 6:24. They were desperate enough to ask a flattering question, "Rabbi, when did you get here? (6:25) Frederickson describes the question as a petulant (127). It was so petulant to a level of bad tempered and unreason able, especially because you cannot do or have what you want (Wehmeier: 871). We will appreciate this when we observed that Jesus did not greet the crowd with tender words of appreciation and acceptance but immediately rebuked them in John 6:26 – 27. Simply put, the crowd was not after Jesus' welfare nor were they interested in the value of what he was saying. They were after their stomach.

Compare the intentions of the above crowd to the political crowds in Nigeria, does the stomach infrastructures translate to the acceptance of the political gladiators? The answer is a resounding no. The Nigeria electorates are very much aware that the stomach infrastructures are designed as a deception at the beginning of campaigns and towards the tail ends of political tenures. The former is strategist to win elections and the latter to own applauds and dig a booby trap for the incoming administration, especially when it is from the hitherto opposition candidates.

By this strategic deception, it is not going to be an exaggeration to prove that the famous quote by Mario Cuomo, the 52nd Governor of New York State in the United States is being manifested in the Nigeria Politics. Mario once opines that, "Politicians campaign in poetry, but they govern in Prose" (Jide Ojo: np). Nigeria politicians are always aware of the parlous state of financial resources available before throwing their hats into the political ring to contest, only to get elected and bring up mega excuses on why things cannot be done as promised during campaigns, hence the need for stomach infrastructures which they think is the most important need of the electorates.

Collection of such fraudulent gifts was therefore not an acceptance of the political elites. Inwardly, they knew the gifts are not purchase from

private earnings. They are sourced from what should ordinarily belongs to all of us together. Moreover, if they refused to collect, they may never get anything again.

CONCLUSION

The paper understudies the bread of life metaphor in John 6:35. Jesus had provided, miraculously, food for hungry crowds in the course of his ministry. The crowds before the appearance of Jesus, had both political and religious leaders, who apparently neglected the basic needs of the citizens. With the sudden emergence of another leader who appears to understand the plight of the people, attempt was made to make Jesus their King ostensibly for their continuous enjoyment of daily needs. They were however shocked to hear that the food they were after cannot lead to satisfaction except they have in their lives, the giver of the food and not the food itself.

Comparatively, Nigeria leaders were trying to provide a kind of succor to the lingering problem of hunger in the land. The kind of succor is called stomach infrastructure. These are in two phases, political and spiritual stomach infrastructures. Unlike Jesus' sincerity of agitation of permanent succor for the people, Nigeria's own leaders were temporary and for selfish reasons. Any provision of infrastructure that will stand the test of time must look towards the people being self – reliant. It is better to teach people how to fish than to give people fish to eat. While the latter is not lasting, the former would be able to stand the test of time. This is what would ease the peace and socio-political development in the country. it has also been observed that the surging crowd had been following Jesus before gathering to eat from the miraculous bread and fish. Were they lazy or busybody men? The Palestinian land was agro-based economy. Though the Israelites were under the imperial Rome, we have no evidence to believe that they were restricted from their nomadic and farming businesses. How then were they able to see what Jesus was

doing before following him if they had means of livelihood?

Several passages both in the old and the new testaments of the Bible warm people against laziness and indolence. Proverbs 6:6-11 is particularly interesting. Lazy people are described as sluggard and compared to ants that in spite of being leaderless, were industrious enough to have and still store up provisions against future scarcity. Individuals with gift of speech and brains, as huge as a whole anthill, were being sarcastically advised to bend over, peer down and learn from the lowly ants without which will result into poverty, crime and arm begging.

In an agrarian environment such as Israel and Nigeria, the bible does not accept "lack of nothing to do" as excuses for depending on others to live a fulfilled life. The writer of Ecclesiates 9:9-10 and 11:5-6 admonishes his readers to enjoy the gift of God in the midst of life's perplexities; encourages them to be fully engaged in earthly occupation with utmost zeal and concentration in and out of seasons. The counsel here is for them to make efforts and leave the rest to God.

Of course, compassionate leaders, who will give exemplary directions, are needed in every society. Leaders like Jesus whose only goal is the wellbeing of his followers cannot but be sought for. The wisdom gotten from the ants in proverbs 6:6-11 is enough to persuade everyone that without leaders, one can still live a fulfilled life. Three leadership synonyms-commander, overseer and ruler-are used to emphasise the leadership lack of the ants, yet, this does not stop them from diligently pursuing their daily activities for the sake of now and future.

It is this kind of leadership spirit that apostle Paul invoked when warning the Thessalonian Christians against idleness and meddlesomeness in 2 Thessalonians, 3:6-10, culminating in his command, "If a man will not work, he shall not eat". We will recall that Paul had earlier warmed them in I Thessalonian 2:9 and 4:11 which apparently had not been taken seriously. Coming hard on them this time around, Paul qualifies idleness as living at someone else's expense and meddling in someone else's affairs (2 Thessalonian 3:6-8a). Paul points out how they lived by

example, working with their own hands, and refusing to be a burden, though they had right to do so, as their leaders. As an African proverb states, "The hen eats where she scratches and the sleeping hawk does not catch fish".

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Anti-theism and Eschatology: Countering Nietzsche's Claim that Christianity is too "other-worldly"

Ben Somervell

KEYWORDS:

| Apologetics | Eschatology | Friedrich Nietzsche | Anti-theism | New Atheism | Total Depravity |

ABSTRACT:

Friedrich Nietzsche is undoubtedly one of the most influential atheists in history and his work continues to strongly influence atheism today. The firmest legacy of Nietzsche's atheism has actually been his antitheism and view that the Christian way of life is undesirable. We see this influence in the virulent and pervading anti-theism of the "New Atheists". However, despite Nietzsche's clear influence, relatively little modern academic work has been directly published on the specific question of how Christians today ought to respond to his critique of Christianity. In this essay, I hope to begin to redress that inattention by critiquing Nietzsche's polemic against Christian salvation and eschatology.

INTRODUCTION

In this article, I assess the extent to which Christianity is solely an other-worldly religion, examining how this might affect our presentation of the Gospel today. This question is especially topical as anti-theism is common in western Europe and was particularly acute in the output of the "New Atheists", especially Christopher Hitchens who wrote, 'I am not even an atheist so much as an antitheist […] life would be miserable if what the faithful affirmed was actually true'.[1] We must take care to forensically trace the deep, historic roots of this thread of anti-theism in order to effectively diagnose them and then engage with these critiques today in context.

In the first part of this article, a summary of Nietzsche's critique of Christian eschatology, which he sees as an escapist, life-negating form of transcendental nihilism, will be provided.[2] After that, I will analyse his critique, explaining why it is a polemical caricature due to its oversimplification and misunderstanding of Christian eschatology, as well as its neglect of nuanced understandings of the key Christian doctrines of creation, Incarnation, sanctification, and the self. This analysis will be conducted in three subsections, each of which will examine a different aspect of Nietzsche's critique. The first explores his understanding of the doctrine of total depravity as this-worldly denial. The second assesses Nietzsche's view that Christianity proposed a 'slave morality' which amounted to this-worldly denial. The third and final aspect I will investigate is Nietzsche's critique of the Christian ideal of self-denial as being inherently hostile to earthly life.

I argue that, while Nietzsche's critique of Christian eschatology is thought-provoking, it is over-simplistic and unfairly caricatures Christianity,

1 Christopher Hitchens, *Letters to a Young Contrarian* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), p. 55; Peter Hitchens, *The Rage Against God: How Atheism Led Me to Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010).
Hitchens's brother, Peter, meticulously catalogued this new trend in *The Rage Against God*.

2 Iain Thomson, 'Transcendence and the Problem of Otherworldly Nihilism: Taylor, Heidegger, Nietzsche', *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, 54.2 (2011), 140–59.

often asserting false dichotomies. Although Nietzsche's critique presumes an inaccurate and partial understanding of Christian eschatology, I still think it demands a thorough response from the believer, even if it may now be even less applicable to today's more nuanced Christianity. Then, as an alternative to Nietzsche's attack on eschatology, as expressed in statements such as: 'The god on the cross is a curse on life, a signpost to seek redemption from life', I will propose inaugurated eschatology.[3] Finally, I conclude that Christianity is neither a solely this-worldly nor a solely other-worldly religion, as 'This Age' and 'The Age to Come' substantially overlap due to the Recreation.

I contend that Christianity is a largely 'this-worldly' religion as it yearns to see the transformation, rather than replacement, of this world. Therefore, our Gospel presentation should reflect this nuance by incorporating the fact that, even though we believe this life points to the Recreation and 'The Age to Come', we still believe in life before death, as well as life after it.[4]

NIETZSCHE'S POLEMIC OF CHRISTIANITY AS A SOLELY 'OTHER-WORLDLY' RELIGION

Nietzsche's underlying concern with Christianity is its perceived obsession with an imaginary utopian world, separate from earth, to which humans would flee at death.[5] He viewed Christianity as a solely

3 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Viking, 1967), p. 1052; George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, ed. by Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993). Benjamin L. Gladd, *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016). Derek Morphew, *The Future King Is Here: The Theology of Matthew* (Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2011); Derek Morphew, *The Implications of the Kingdom* (Derek Morphew Publishing, 2010); Derek Morphew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom: Tools for Christian Discipleship* (Independently published, 2019). James Paul, *What on Earth Is Heaven?* (London: IVP, 2021). Grant Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

4 'Our Aims', Christian Aid <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/our-work/about-us/our-aims> [accessed 12 May 2022].

5 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, §129, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale

other-worldly religion which denied earthly life to affirm eternal life.[6] 'Other-worldly' refers to a world spatially and temporally separate from this one (another world beyond this one). Nietzsche's eschatological critique rests on his polemical perception of total human depravity, and Christianity's "Master-slave morality", which leads to "*ressentiment*" and the "Denial of Life".[7] Nietzsche can be said to have had a broadly similar understanding of Christianity's supposed devaluation of temporal life to that of Ignatius of Antioch who once wrote, 'I want no more of what men call life'.[8] Thomas à Kempis writes in a similar vein: 'It is good that we sometimes have some troubles' as they force us to remember that humans are 'here [on earth] in banishment [… then] he sorroweth [… and] is weary of living longer, and wishes that death would come'.[9] However, while Nietzsche may inadvertently have ended up echoing both Ignatius and Kempis in their respective diagnoses of earthly life's emptiness within Christian theology, this similar initial observation led them to very different conclusions. While Ignatius and Kempis viewed their bleak diagnosis of temporal life as an enticement to the afterlife, the same diagnosis led Nietzsche to instead choose to reject Christianity on the basis of taste and its failure to appreciate the present moment as good in itself.[10]

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 48.

6 Ibid., Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and Nobody*, trans. by Graham Parkes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 28.

7 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, Essay I, §10, and Essay III, §15, ed. by T. N. R. Rogers, trans. by Horace B. Samuel, Dover Thrift Editions (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc.), p. 18. 79-80; Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §154, pp. 110–11.

8 Ignatius of Antioch, 'The Epistle to the Romans', in *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. by Andrew Louth, trans. by Staniforth Maxwell, Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth ; New York: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 87.

9 Thomas À Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, ed. by Paul Bechtel, The New Moody Classics (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), p. 39.

10 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Joyous Science*, §132, trans. by R. Kevin Hill, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 2018), p. 146.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY AS THIS-WORLDLY DENIAL

Within the context of his general distaste for the Christian view of earthly life, Nietzsche especially took issue with the idea of total depravity, which was deeply ingrained within him thanks to his 19th-century pietist, Lutheran upbringing.[11] He derived his particular perception of total depravity (that, in lieu of divine grace, humans could never perform good deeds and would never choose God) from a plain reading of certain scriptural verses, including, for example, Jeremiah 17:9, Psalm 51:5, and Isaiah 64:6. For him, these sorts of verses reinforced the point that Christianity was hostile to this-worldly life. Nietzsche believed that Christianity turned humans into miserable, bitter, self-loathing, pitiable and helpless subjects whose purpose in this-worldly life was to repeatedly fling themselves upon God's mercy and endlessly bow down to him like grovelling, sycophantic slaves.[12]

He writes, moreover, that Christianity 'buried [humanity …] in mud: into […] total depravity it then suddenly shone a beam of divine mercy, so that, […] stupefied by […] grace, man gave vent to a cry of rapture'.[13] He saw Christianity as producing 'profound self-dissatisfaction, guilt, soul torment, self-contempt, […] habitual shame, despair, and sickening obeisance'.[14] He also contended that Christianity was too ambitious regarding its moral capabilities, forgetting that we are 'human, all too human' (born into original then perpetual sin). Hence, Christianity's

11 *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Thought*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 295.

12 Stephen N. Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist: Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI : Bletchley, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom: Baker Academic : Paternoster, 2006), pp. 90, 112; Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, Essay II, §14, §21-22, and Essay III, §26, pp. 47–48, 54–56, 97–99.

13 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 114.

14 Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist*, p. 124; Friedrich Nietzsche, Daybreak, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 60, 69, 75, 77–79, 94, 130, 321, 546.

strict prohibitions set its followers up to fail and then condemned them for doing so.[15] Stephen N. Williams summarises Nietzsche's attack on total depravity well: 'Demeaned humanity plus subservience to the law of a Creator plus complicity in the grace of redemption equals the human worm'.[16] Nietzsche, therefore, saw total depravity as life-negating and a confirmation of Christianity's excessively and nauseatingly other-worldly nature, and hostility to this-worldly existence.

It is, however, worth remembering that Nietzsche's critique here may be more readily applicable to the strict pietist Lutheranism of the 19th century with which he was brought up than it is to today's mainstream Christianity.[17] However, having said that, it would be difficult to argue that Martin Luther himself devalued earthly life, 'God wants the government of the earthly kingdom to be a symbol of the heavenly kingdom, like a mime or mask'.[18] It is also worth remembering that the precise definition of total depravity is still disputed and not all Christians, especially in the case of Roman Catholics and liberal Protestants, subscribe to the doctrine.[19] Furthermore, Nietzsche has a habit of generally neglecting creation, sanctification, the Incarnation and recreation to the detriment of his understanding of Christianity. Even when he does directly address

15 Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, pp. 78, 247; Nietzsche, The Will to Power, §159, pp. 112–13.

16 Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist*, p. 125.

17 Claeys (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Thought*, p. 295.

18 Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, Volume 13: Selected Psalms II, ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 197. Gustaf Wingren provides a helpful summary of Luther's view high view of earthly life: 'God has made all the offices. Through this work in man's offices, God's creative work goes forward […] God gives his gifts through the earthly vocations, toward man's life on earth […] Thus, love comes from God, flowing down to human beings on earth through all vocations' (in Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocatio*n (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), pp. 27–28).

19 *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. by F. L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 1645; Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*, trans. by J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012); Louis Bouyer, *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism*, trans. by A. V. Littledale (New York, NY: Meridian Books, 1955), pp. 148, 151–52, 156–57; Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books, 1974), pp. 108, 110, 112–13.

these topics, he often produces oversimplified caricatures.[20] This weakens his argument for Christianity's exceedingly other-worldly nature, especially as no real distinction may be drawn between creation and salvation. Providing a more compelling vision in comparison with Nietzsche's thought, David Bentley Hart writes: 'In the end of all things is their beginning, and only from the perspective of the end can one know what they are, why they have been made […] protology and eschatology are a single science'.[21] As Williams rightly states, 'a theology of creation warrants the most vivid possible interest in creation', as God purposefully made a 'very good' world (Genesis 1:31) and made 'humankind in his image' (Genesis 1:27), and will renew creation, rather than abandoning it (Romans 8:18-24).[22]

Adding to this stream of nuanced Christian eschatology where God wishes to renew rather than destroy or replace creation, Henri de Lubac writes,

> Christianity does not deny man in order to affirm God […] its revelation of God was a promotion of man […] "The Glory of God is a man fully-alive" […] Christianity professes so lofty an idea of man that it defends his nobility and wants to assure his salvation.[23]

De Lubac is powerfully arguing here that Christianity's emphasis on fallen humanity's redemption does not itself imply a divine distaste for humanity per se. God's choice to redeem humanity through the Incarnation by having his Son take on human form and live on earth shows that God works in and through the world, not despite it or against it. He works to restore our true, divinely-willed human nature.

As Christ was fully-human, he is the template for humanity so, as Max Scheler argued, 'it was Nietzsche who diminished man; the

20 Williams, p. 65.

21 David Bentley Hart, *That All Shall Be Saved: Heaven, Hell, & Universal Salvation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2019), p. 68.

22 Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist*, p. 107.

23 Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), p. 400.

Christian God, on the contrary, allowed man to be more than man' such that 'the death of God means the death of man'.[24] Yet, for de Lubac, 'The denial of God did not open up a new era for a "liberated" man; […] it drove him into primeval savagery', as was for him evidenced by the contemporary rise of Nazism across Europe.[25] Nietzsche's understanding of total depravity, therefore, led him to see Christianity rather negatively, particularly as a solely other-worldly religion.

CHRISTIANITY'S 'SLAVE MORALITY' AS THIS-WORLDLY HOSTILITY

In a similar vein, Nietzsche viewed Christian morality and its restrictions as being inherently hostile to earthly life. Nietzsche believed that the persistent Christian focus on the afterlife makes Christians undervalue this-worldly existence and its pleasures, moralising them into sins to be avoided. He viewed Christianity as an excessively prohibitive religion, preventing humans from acting on their instincts and thereby affirming this-worldly life.[26] He believed that there were no moral phenomena but only moral perceptions of phenomena, arguing that Christianity invented morality and sin.[27] Christians' 'determination to find the world

24 Yves Ledure, 'The Christian Response to Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', in *Nietzsche and Christianity*, ed. by Claude Geffré and Jean-Pierre Jossua, trans. by Ruth Murray (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1981), pp. 42–50 (pp. 45, 47); Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*, p. 65.

25 Ledure, 'The Christian Response to Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', p. 47.

26 Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Twilight of the Idols', in *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 31–124 (p. 52).

27 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §108, trans. by Helen Zimmern (Seattle: Amazon Classics, 2017), p. 73; Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Joyous Science*, Book II, trans. by R. Kevin Hill, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 2018), pp. 146, 148, 150; Friedrich Nietzsche, 'The "Improvers" of Mankind', §93, in *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969); Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, §132, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 202; Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, §148, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 132–35; Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, §143, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 1–3.

ugly and bad has made the world ugly and bad'.[28] He used the Christian condemnation of lust to explain this: 'Christianity gave Eros poison to drink', making it degenerate '[in]to Vice'.[29]

Nietzsche identified two types of morality: 'master morality' and 'slave morality'.[30] 'Master morality' described the behaviour of 'strong-willed' 'noblemen' who valued pride, power, strength, courage, self-worth, and self-betterment through the 'will to power'.[31] Conversely, 'slave morality' emphasised compassion, forgiveness, charity, humility, pity, chastity, self-control and selflessness.[32] Out of the two, Nietzsche preferred the former and argued that the latter described Christian morality.[33] He saw religious moral values as deriving from the aggrieved, envious and vindictive instincts of early weak, cowardly and resentful Christians who deviously subverted master morality by inverting its values.[34] Nietzsche thus argues that the Christian is envious of what the master has and represses this jealousy by asserting that the master's self-improvement is immoral, deriving from sinful selfishness.[35]

Incidentally, Christopher Hitchens echoed this Nietzschean understanding of Christian morality and God's oversight of us when he said,

> it's an excellent thing that there's no reason to believe [in God …] It is the wish to be a slave. It is the desire that there be an unalterable, unchallengeable, tyrannical authority who can convict you of thought crime while you are asleep, who must subject you to a total

28 Nietzsche, *The Joyous Science*, §130, p. 146.

29 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism §168, trans. by Helen Zimmern (Seattle: Amazon Classics, 2017), p. 168.

30 Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, Essay I, pp. 16–28.

31 Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, Book I, §55, §124 and §129, and Book II, §252, pp. 48–50, 90, 94, 171–72.

32 Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §169, §235, §394, §734, and §786, pp. 117, 159–60, 252–53, 471, 499–501; Nietzsche, Human, All Too Human, §46-47, §50, and §103-104, pp. 37–38, 55–56.

33 Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, *Essay* I, §9, p. 17.

34 Ibid., *Essay* I, §10, p. 18.

35 Ibid., *Essay* III, §15-16, pp. 78–81.

surveillance around the clock […] a celestial North Korea.[36]

It is especially interesting that he chose to focus on the prohibitive nature of morality, to employ the language of slavery in relation to Christians, and to discuss the desirability, rather than probability, of God's existence.

For Nietzsche, the Christian does not want to overtake the master, but bring them down to their lower level – what Nietzsche calls 'the cleverest revenge'.[37] The Christian then invents a utopian paradise where they will receive a hundredfold in compensation for their selfless earthly sacrifices, while the master is eternally punished in Hell.[38] This resulted in Christianity becoming a vindictive, cynical, resentful, cowardly religion of weak slaves. Here Nietzsche writes: 'The Christian denies even the happiest lot on earth: he is sufficiently weak, poor, disinherited to suffer from life […] The god on the cross is a curse on life, a signpost to seek redemption from life'.[39] Nietzsche argues further that priests count this earthly life as 'a bridge to that other existence. The ascetic treats life as a wrong path that he has to walk along backwards till he reaches the point where he starts'.[40] Indeed, Nietzsche believed that Christian eschatology almost implied that God had made a mistake in creating this world. He suspiciously viewed Christianity as, 'the will to deny reality […] a conspiracy against health, beauty, well-constitutedness, bravery, intellect, *benevolence* of soul, *against life itself* [… It is …] the *one* great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct for revenge'.[41] For Nietzsche,

36 Christopher Hitchens, Peter Hitchens, *Debate: Hitchens V. Hitchens* (Grand Rapids, MI: Hauenstein Center for Presidential Studies, 2008) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngjQs_QjSwc> [accessed 23 February 2023].

37 Ibid., *Essay* III, §15-16, p. 16.

38 Ibid., Nietzsche, *Essay* II, §XXII, p. 55; Nietzsche, The Will to Power, §129, p. 69; Matthew 19:29.

39 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 1052.

40 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, ed. by Keith Ansell-Pearson, trans. by Carol Diethe, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 85.

41 Friedrich Nietzsche, 'The Anti-Christ', in *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (New York and London: Penguin, 1990), p. 62.

'Christianity is the antithesis of the free spirit' and is inherently opposed to curiosity and experimentation.[42]

It is in this way that Nietzsche saw Christian eschatology as the escapist, cowardly invention of another better world where weak, embittered Christians would finally have their self-denying moral efforts and unfulfilled vengeance for wrongs suffered ultimately recompensed.[43] Nietzsche writes, 'Suffering it was [… that] created all worlds behind this one'.[44] He saw this form of eschatology as wishful thinking by Christians who are secretly envious of *Übermensches* ("Overhumans") who overcome challenges by affirming life itself in this world.[45] As Donald Ude summarises, in Christians' 'warped sense of judgement, the healthy and the noble of this world are the ones that will be condemned to eternal damnation, while they [Christians …] are supposed to be compensated'.[46] Eschatology, in this sense, is the ultimate expression of Christians' antagonism towards this world: Christianity 'has forged out of the *ressentiment* of the masses its *chief weapon* against *us*, against everything that is noble, joyful, high-spirited […] against our happiness on earth … "Immortality" granted to every Peter and Paul has been the […] most malicious outrage on noble mankind ever committed'.[47] Nietzsche saw such an other-worldly and pessimistic eschatology as being inherently hostile to earthly life, viewing it as the main piece of evidence demonstrating Christianity's life-denying spirit.[48] Ude summarises, Nietzsche 'sees Christian eschatology as a political device used by the unfortunate to tyrannize the fortunate'.[49]

42 Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist*, p. 101.

43 Donald C. Ude, 'Ressentiment in Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity' (unpublished MA Thesis, University of Alberta, 2016), pp. 38–39 <https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/d083cc85-0a1d-4954-aa53-3a7849a507f9>.

44 Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 28.

45 Ude, 'Ressentiment in Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', pp. 38–39; Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, pp. 13–14.

46 Ude, 'Ressentiment in Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', p. 38.

47 Ibid, Ude.

48 Ibid, Ude, p. 37.

49 Ibid, Ude, p. 42.

Conversely, Nietzsche sees suffering as a vital tool for human betterment, wishing that all his 'disciples' should experience 'suffering, desolation, sickness, ill-treatment […] self-contempt' and 'defeat' so they may demonstrate their ability to endure and thirst for life itself.[50] Nietzsche summarises his view of Christian eschatology thus: 'God degenerated to the contradiction of life […] God the formula for every calumny of "this world", for every lie about "the next world!" In God […] the will to nothingness [was] sanctified'.[51]

On the basis of this critique, Nietzsche argues that Christianity invented the moralistic concept of sin to constrain the behaviour of its followers and limit their success but also to piously appear magnanimous in defeat to the victors in this life, in resisting temptation and turning the other cheek.[52] Christianity thus infantilises its followers, turning them into resentful, depraved, enslaved, grovelling, sycophantic worms: 'Christianity is a revolt of everything that crawls […] directed against that which is *elevated*'.[53] Nietzsche argued that Christians were 'the very people who invented sin in the first place!', and this devalued the temporal significance and consequences of our earthly actions.[54] Morality is central to Nietzsche's attack on Christian eschatology and supports his thesis that Christianity is solely an other-worldly religion. For Nietzsche, this is because the overburdensome prohibitions that Christianity enforces constrain human curiosity and success, preventing life-affirmation.

50 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, ed. by Oscar Levv, trans. by Anthony M. Ludovici (Delhi: Delhi Open Books, 2020), p. 576.

51 Nietzsche, 'The Anti-Christ', p. 18.

52 Nietzsche, 'Twilight of the Idols', §38, pp. 161–62.

53 Nietzsche, 'The Anti-Christ', p. 43; Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals, Essay II*, §14, §21-22, and *Essay* III, §26, pp. 47–48, 54–56, 97–99.

54 Nietzsche, *The Joyous Science*, pp. 148, 150.

SELF-DENIAL OR DENIAL OF LIFE?

Nietzsche saw the Christian virtue of "self-denial" as a pre-requisite to eschatology, and the main barrier between Christians and temporal life-affirmation. He took a plain interpretation of these verses: 'let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me' (Luke 9:23); 'those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life?' (Matthew 16:25-26); and 'I punish my body and enslave it' (1 Corinthians 9:27). He uses such verses to argue that Christianity is hostile to life. Nietzsche writes, 'If man is sinful through and through, then he ought only to hate himself', neglecting the fact that the Fall marred, but did not eradicate, the divine image (Genesis 1:28).[55] Furthermore, the Bible commands Christians to love themselves, as well as others: 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Leviticus 19:18, cf. Matthew 22:39). Neighbourly love cannot therefore automatically come at self-love's cost – that would be too binary a view. It is also possible to love others as much as yourself and even prefer their needs to your own without neglecting yourself.[56] "Self-denial" may therefore be better understood as "self-limitation" and/or the condemnation of "self-preference".[57] Nietzsche's critique of Christianity does not seem to sufficiently appreciate these nuances.

Moreover, Christianity's notion of the self is complex to say the least, as is evidenced by St. Paul's own humble bafflement on the subject: 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me'

55 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 388.

56 John Lippitt, 'True Self-Love and True Self-Sacrifice', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, 66, 2009, 125–38 (p. 126); R. Groenhout, 'Kenosis and Feminist Theory', in *Exploring Kenotic Christology*, ed. by C. Stephen Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 291–312.

57 Lippitt, 'True Self-Love and True Self-Sacrifice', p. 126; Robert Merrihew Adams, *A Theory of Virtue: Excellence in Being for the Good* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 95–111.

(Galatians 2:20, AKJV). St Paul states that humans are inherently divided selves and so the kind of straightforward condemnation of self Nietzsche is implying here is ruled out, 'I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do' (Romans 7:18-19). Furthermore, it is no surprise, given Nietzsche's general neglect of creation, that he glosses over the fact that God saved the peak of his creation (humanity) until the final day, uniquely making humans in His image (Genesis 1:28).[58] We read in the Scriptures, 'your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit' (1 Corinthians 6:19), but Nietzsche would respond that this infantilises us, making us mere incubators for Holy Spirit.[59] In a similar vein, Nietzsche also seems to neglect sanctification: 'clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God' (Ephesians 4:24), and 'all of us […] are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another' (2 Corinthians 3:18). If the self is being sanctified, it makes it harder for us to believe Nietzsche's suggestion that it is straightforwardly condemned.

Not only that though, but God freely chose to send His only Son to become incarnate, assuming human nature and living among us. In this respect, I agree with Emmanuel Mounier and Yves Ledure that Nietzsche's underestimation of the Incarnation's centrality enabled him to misunderstand Christianity's affirmation of life.[60] As Ledure writes, 'Christianity, a religion of incarnation, which has to be lived by flesh and blood people, in their human weakness […] is necessarily bound up with life on earth'.[61] That is why Christians pray, 'Your kingdom come […] on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10). It is therefore clear that Nietzsche's understanding of self-denial leads him to see Christianity as

58 Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist*, p. 65.

59 Nietzsche, 'The Anti-Christ', p. 43; Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals, Essay* II, §14, §21-22, and *Essay* III, §26, pp. 47–48, 54–56, 97–99.

60 Emmanuel Mounier, *L'Affrontement Chrétien* [The Christian Confrontation], ed. by Guy Coq (Les Plans-sur-Bex (Suisse) Paris: Parole et silence, 2017); Ledure, 'The Christian Response to Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', p. 49.

61 Ledure, 'The Christian Response to Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', p. 49.

a life-denying religion, but he fails to adequately factor the Incarnation into his argument.

INAUGURATED ESCHATOLOGY AS AN ALTERNATIVE ESCHATOLOGICAL VISION

The main flaw of Nietzsche's anti-eschatology is his presumption that there is a stark, binary separation between this world and the afterlife. As a more accurate alternative to his polemical caricature of Christian eschatology, I present 'inaugurated eschatology', as developed by George Eldon Ladd.[62] Ladd was, like Nietzsche, concerned with what he saw as the Christian obsession with only the 'futuristic aspects of the Kingdom of God', which meant that the Kingdom 'often ceased to have immediate relevance to contemporary Christian life, except as hope'.[63] As alluded to in section three above, Nietzsche's misconception of Christian anthropology and eschatology is largely caused by his neglect of the Incarnation and creation (*creatio originalis* [the original act of creation], *creatio continua* [God's ongoing act of sustaining the world], and *creatio nova* [the New Creation]).[64] He forgets that God is always fully present to and caring for his creation, and is incrementally recreating this world. Nietzsche also neglects Christ's nearness to us in his Incarnation and God's free, deliberate choice to create this world and wish for it to be redeemed with us, not destroyed.[65]

62 Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, p. 70.

63 George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), p. xi.

64 See further Guy Burneko, 'Creatio Continua', *The Journal of New Paradigm Research*, 61.8 (2005), 622–28 (p. 622) <https://doi.org/10.1080/02604020500288117>; Dennis Bielfeldt, 'Creatio Ex Nihilo' in *Luther's Genesis Commentary and the Causal Question* (Institute of Lutheran Theology), p. 14 <https://www.academia.edu/12405696/Creatio_ex_Nihilo_in_Luthers_Genesis_Commentary_and_the_Causal_Question>; Williams, *The Shadow of the Antichrist*, p. 107.

65 Tom Wright, *Surprised by Scripture: Engaging with Contemporary Issues* (London: SPCK, 2014), p. 32; Stephen D. Morrison, *Jürgen Moltmann in Plain English* (Columbus, Ohio: Beloved Publishing, 2018), p. 35.

Ladd's approach rightly highlights Nietzsche's misconceptions concerning eschatology which led to his polemic against Christianity. Ladd developed an 'already and not yet' eschatology, seeing the Kingdom as being both a 'present reality' (Matthew 12:28) and 'future blessing' (1 Corinthians 15:50).[66] Moreover, he argued that the Kingdom has two moments: the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises through Christ's temporal ministry, and that fulfilment's consummation/realisation at This Age's end, heralding the Age to Come.[67] Ladd's approach remains loyal to the contours of Scripture, making equal sense of both those passages which declare that God *is already* King of the whole world (2 Kings 19:15; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 46:8; Psalm 29:10; 99:1-4), and also those which prophesy a day when he *will become* King (Isaiah 24:23; 33:22; 52:7; Zephaniah 3:15; Zechariah 14:9ff).[68] Ladd states that although God *is* King *now*, the ramifications of His rule have *not yet* been realised globally.[69] It is true that we read that 'the kingdom of God is among you' (Luke 17:21) and Jesus's declaration, '"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing"' (Luke 4:21). However, we also read that 'the end is not yet [… and] will come' (Matthew 24:6, 14) and 'He must reign till he has put all enemies under His feet' (1 Corinthians 15:25).[70] I find Ladd's analogy for this world's predicament helpful, since 'Satan has been bound; he has fallen from his place of power; but his final destruction awaits the end of the age'.[71] The pivotal battle in the war against Satan has been won but the final victory awaits in the Age to Come.[72] Each victory over the manifestations of Satan's power is a foretaste of Christ's ultimate consummation of creation.[73] These nuances go largely unrecognized in

66 George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), p. 18, 48.
67 Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, p. 108.
68 Ibid, p. 109.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid., pp. 115–16, 118.
71 Ibid., p. 118.
72 Ibid., p. 117.
73 Ibid.

Nietzsche's critique of Christian eschatology.

Inaugurated eschatology is, however, not only the most convincing approach Biblically though, it is also the most applicable to our post-Enlightenment era where the ultimate inability of the advances of reason, science, technology, medicine and the free market to promote humanity's relentless progression into peace, health and happiness has become clear.[74] This is because Ladd's approach affirms *both* the present and the future, refusing to dispense with the essential virtue of eschatological hope while also advancing a nuanced understanding of hope temporally. Stephen D. Morrison summarises this understanding well, 'In contrast with escapist hope and utopian hope, [Christianity] is hope in the transformation of this world by the coming of God'.[75] Morrison continues, 'True Christian hope is not hope for *another* world but the new creation of *this* world', agreeing with Tom Wright that 'The Bible is not about the rescue of humans *from* the world but about the rescue of humans *for* the world'.[76] Paula Gooder agrees with Morrison and Wright, arguing, 'the world we live in is not something temporary that we will cast off […] but is the place where we learn to live as we will live for eternity with the difference that the new heaven and earth will be united'.[77] Finally, Hans Urs von Balthasar powerfully put it this way,

> The earthly man already lives in eternity […] this fleeting, temporal existence […] is not a pure here-and-now, followed by […] an eternal beyond as a second existence. Rather, the two are one […] time is concealed eternity, and eternity is revealed time.[78]

74 John D. Simons, 'The Myth of Progress in Schiller and Dostoevsky', Comparative Literature, 24.4 (1972), 328–37 (p. 328) <https://doi.org/10.2307/1769460>; Richard Bauckham and Trevor A. Hart, *Hope Against Hope: Christian Eschatology in Contemporary Context, Trinity & Truth Series* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1999), pp. 26–31.

75 Morrison, *Jürgen Moltmann in Plain English*, p. 31.

76 Ibid., p. 35.

77 Paula Gooder, *Heaven* (London: SPCK, 2011), p. 103.

78 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Grain of Wheat: Aphorisms* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), p. 140.

> [I]t is not about detaching oneself from the transitory things […] to flee into some real or supposed eternity, but, conversely, about sowing the seed of eternity into the field of the world and letting the Kingdom of God spring up in this field.[79]

It is important to remember that, while there is certainly significant overlap between this life and the one to come, there are also key differences, such as the absence of marriage, which should not be neglected in efforts to correct oversimplistic, dualist misunderstandings of Christian eschatology.[80]

Building on these proper understandings of Christian hope, Moltmann rightly notes that the most common criticism of eschatological theologies of hope is they are too utopian, implying satisfaction's futuristic deferment and an evacuation theology.[81] They seem to rob us of happiness here and now, devaluing this-worldly existence, implying we are merely on 'probation' here.[82] It is at this point that an emphasis on *inaugurated* eschatology avoids these earlier pitfalls. Indeed, responding to those arguing that the recreation emphasis within his eschatology merely changed the geography (from another world to a recreated earth in the future) and not the substance of Christianity's hostility to life here and now, Moltmann writes:

> Expectation makes life good, for in expectation man can accept his whole present and find joy not only in its joy but also in its sorrow […] living without hope is like no longer living […] The hope that is staked on the Creator *ex nihilo* becomes the happiness of the

79 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Life Out of Death: Meditations on the Paschal Mystery*, trans. by Martina Stockl (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), p. 35.

80 See Mark 12:25.

81 Rob Bell, *Love Wins: At the Heart of Life's Big Questions* (New York City: Harper Collins, 2011), p. 46.

82 Thomas À Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, trans. by Aloysius Croft and Harold Bolton (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2012), p. 9; Irenaeus of Lyons, 'Against Heresies: Book IV', in *The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, ed. by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, trans. by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), pp. 25515–63 <https://ccel.org/ccel/irenaeus/against_heresies_iv/anf01.ix.vi.xxxix.html>.

> present when it loyally embraces all things in love, […] bringing to light how open all things are to the possibilities in which they can live.[83]

Continuing this theme of Christian hope beyond mere blind optimism as a nuanced response to Nietzsche's critique, Moltmann argued that the theology of hope must be rooted in the Resurrection whose effects continue to incrementally ripple throughout all creation, even though the event has already happened within history, and will only be fully implemented by the time of the recreation. Pope Benedict XVI provides further insight that resonates with Moltmann's approach:

> Faith is not merely a personal reaching out towards things to come that are still totally absent [...] It gives us even now something of the reality we are waiting for [...] Faith draws the future into the present, so that it is no longer simply a "not yet". The fact that this future exists changes the present.[84]

Benedict did not, however, agree with Nietzsche that this means Christian hope must necessarily dissolve into temporal nihilism or that this made Christianity a solely other-worldly religion. Indeed, Rik Van Nieuwenhove likewise calls into question Nietzsche's view that a focus on eschatological hope makes this world now largely superfluous or corrupt:

> Whenever we cry out, in the face of suffering, "This is not how it should be!" Our very revolt implicitly affirms the overall goodness of the world [...] Our revolt or indignation only makes sense in the light of an implicit affirmation of the thesis that goodness overrides evil in this world.[85]

83 Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 22.

84 Pope Benedict XVI, 'Spe Salvi', 30 November 2007 <http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html> [accessed 3 April 2021].

85 Rik Van Nieuwenhove, 'Protest Theism, Aquinas and Suffering', in *Suffering and the Christian Life*, ed. by Karen Kilby and Rachel Davies (London: T&T Clark, 2019), pp. 71–86 (pp. 73–74).

Given the potential of Nietzsche's critique, a refreshed perspective on Christian eschatology is warranted. It is therefore clear that inaugurated eschatology is a strong, grounded alternative ideal for combating Nietzsche's assertion that Christianity is solely an other-worldly religion.

LESSONS FOR GOSPEL PRESENTATION

Although I do not agree with Nietzsche's conclusion that Christian life is unattractive, his critique of eschatology and caricature of Christianity as a solely other-worldly religion has been a catalyst for further thought. His critique of eschatology is therefore a thought-provoking sounding board and 'necessary cathartic', even if it is inaccurate concerning Christianity's essence.[86] Nietzsche's critique is a helpful antidote to Christian insularity and complacency regarding our Gospel presentation style. Nietzsche reminds us that salvation must be presented as a past, present and future reality, and that God purposely created this world and wishes to recreate it. A redressing of this balance would help the Gospel become more relevant to 'the average person' in their daily lives, rather than seeming to be a nihilistic, utopian hope in a remote and alternate world. This is an important lesson for us today, given the rise of religious apathy in both Christians and non-Christians.[87] To engage in evangelism and Christian witness most effectively, we must therefore adopt a more biblically informed eschatology and accurately represent the Gospel in the light of that fresh understanding.

A 2021 Gallup poll found that 25% of the US population thought religion was 'not very important' and only 27% thought it was fairly important.[88] More critically, a 2020 YouGov poll found that 44% of

86 Ledure, 'The Christian Response to Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity', p. 49.

87 Milan Dinic, 'How Religious Are British People?', YouGov, 2020 <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/lifestyle/articles-reports/2020/12/29/how-religious-are-british-people> [accessed 10 May 2022]; 'Religion', Gallup, 2007 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1690/Religion.aspx> [accessed 10 May 2022].

88 Ibid.

British Christians said that 'religion isn't important in their life'.[89] Appreciating this religious apathy and engaging with it in an informed way is especially important in our evangelism to young people who tend to be the most indifferent towards religion and are the most likely generation to not be religiously-affiliated.[90] These statistics demonstrate the need to recontextualise the Gospel in a way which is immediately relevant to people's this-worldly lives.

This discussion of Nietzsche's opposition to Christianity based on 'taste' rather than rational probability provides an insight into why particularly young people today do not want Christianity to be true so do not then take the necessary leap of faith.[91] I believe that Nietzsche's anti-theism effectively paved the way for the rise of the "New Atheism". His laying of the initial groundwork is why the "New Atheists" became so popular so quickly. This insight into the true roots of today's strand of anti-theism should encourage evangelists to emphasise why people *should want* God to exist, instead of simply trying to persuade others that he *does* exist.

89 Ibid.

90 'America's Changing Religious Landscape', Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, 2015 <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/> [accessed 10 May 2022]; K. Robert Beshears, 'Apatheism: Engaging the Western Pantheon of Spiritual Indifference' (presented at the Evangelical Missionary Society, Dallas, Texas, 2016), p. 6 <https://hcommons.org/deposits/item/hc:11093/> [accessed 10 May 2022]; Michael Green, *You Must Be Joking: Popular Excuses for Avoiding Jesus Christ* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), pp. 13–24, 76–87; Paul Weston, *Why We Can't Believe* (Leicester: Frameworks, 1991), pp. 23–37.

91 Nietzsche, *The Joyous Science*, §132, p. 146; Thomas Nagel, 'Evolutionary Naturalism and the Fear of Religion', in *The Last Word* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 127–43 (pp. 130–36); Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (Melbourne: Rough Draft Publishing, 2014), p. 40.

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A Refugee and Immigrant Literature Survey: Lived Experiences of the Global Refugee Crisis

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KEYWORDS:

| Refugee Crisis | Forcibly Displaced Populations | Immigration | | Refugee and Immigrant Literature | Immigration and Migration | Language Learning |

ABSTRACT:
The ongoing refugee crisis surpassed 100 million forcibly displaced people as of mid-2022. Narrative publications of the immigrant experience throughout history and continuing up to the present day, in various genres and forms of creative expression, reveal an ongoing dynamic and divine action plan through which a most special genre emerges, letters of faith imprinted on the most fragile parchment of all--the spiritual fabric of the human heart. On these heart-parchments, the Spirit of God drafts living messages of gospel hope and healing to members of the human family experiencing the worst possible tragedies and unimaginably catastrophic ordeals. Guided by a lived experience framework, this current article surveys recent publications across these representations of the immigrant experience, an attempt to understand and respond to the current refugee crisis from a biblical *ethos*.

> *Comprehension does not mean denying the outrageous, deducing the unprecedented from precedents, or explaining phenomena by such analogies and generalities that the impact of reality and the shock of experience are no longer felt. It means, rather, examining and bearing consciously the burden which our century has placed on us—neither denying its existence nor submitting meekly to its weight. Comprehension, in short, means the unpremeditated, attentive facing up to, and resisting of, reality—whatever it may be.*
>
> Hanna Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. viii.

INTRODUCTION: AN ONGOING CRISIS

The ongoing refugee crisis[1] facing humanity in the early decades of this new millennium represents millions upon millions of individuals struggling to survive and recover from unimaginably tragic circumstances. At the end of 2021, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimate stood at 89.3 million forcibly displaced people around the world. See Figure 1: UNHCR Refugee Estimates 2021[2] (UNHCR, 2021)

This was before the Ukraine crisis began in early 2022, which added 12 million Ukrainian refugees to the UNHCR 2021 estimates above, and before the escalation of military conflict in Sudan, resulting in significant numbers of internally displaced Sudanese as well as international refugees fleeing to neighboring Chad, Egypt and across the Red Sea to Saudi Arabia.[3] See Figure 2: UNHCR Refugee Estimates mid-2022[4] (UNHCR, 2022).

1 The crisis can actually be seen as multiple crises in a plural sense, a complex global challenge as nations grapple with the "Human Flow" (Weiwei 2017) of refugees

2 https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html

3 "Global Displacement Hits Another Record, Capping Decade-long Rising Trend" (2022, June 16). UNHCR.

4 https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/insights/explainers/100-million-forcibly-displaced.html

From a general theistic perspective, how does one who believes in the existence of God even begin to understand or explain the scope of the ongoing refugee crisis/crises around the globe? In Judeo-Christian tradition, the book of Job is *the* foundational text for explaining the suffering of a righteous man. In contrast to an agnostic and quasi-secular denial of a demonic dimension to evil and a highly controversial "banality of evil" interpretation (Arendt, 1963), the concept that "good" people may sometimes get caught up unwittingly, apathetically and unwillingly in the perpetration of evil outcomes--without necessarily being evil themselves—the Bible records Job's misfortunes as resulting from a direct challenge to God's character by an evil and malevolent spiritual being who motivates and perpetrates evil schemes against a despised humanity, relatively powerless and mortal creatures living in fragile "houses of clay" (Morris, 2010; Job 4:19). In the midst of suffering, mere intellectual speculation[5] will not suffice, as Job lamented to his friends, "Miserable comforters are you all" (Job 16:2). More specifically today, with reference to the plight of refugees, why would God allow suffering and tragedy in the lives of so many millions of people who have become displaced for no apparent fault of their own, with no immediately apparent or rational explanation for their plight?

The purpose of the current article is not necessarily to provide a comprehensive answer to such questions, but to apply a lived experience selective methodology to guide readers toward carefully considered, recently published resources which represent a few steps in the right direction toward finding at least some of the answers, toward possibly becoming part of the solution(s), and toward realizing the sovereignty of an infinitely wise, holy and just God amid tragic suffering and displacement. Many of these resources may be of use to educators in general who--more likely than not--have already had the privilege of welcoming refugee English language learners (ELLs) into their classrooms. And if not yet, as Miriam Adeney (*Refugee Diaspora* 2018) eloquently explains,

5 i.e. Arendt's *vita contemplativa* vs. *vita activa* (1958, The Human Condition).

the love of God, and His moving and acting on behalf of the oppressed continues to result in life-changing experiences and previously unlikely intersections of human lives, and the resulting dramatic transformations of people (Oliveira 2020). Learning a new language and adapting to a new culture is frequently where it all begins for refugees in their new lives and transformative experiences.

LANGUAGE LEARNING, RELIGIOUS FAITH, AND THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

In general, foreign language learning has had important historical connections to cross-cultural experiences, including the immigrant experience, including religious faith experiences. For what might be called "language of the heart" reasons, people are more likely to respond to a message of faith which they can understand in their own language, and from within their own cultural framework.[6] So the history of cross-cultural experience and dialog has of necessity involved learning new languages, assimilating to new cultures, and establishing a basis for meaningful interaction.

As one refugee has explained from his own family's experience, the deep connections with one's mother tongue, or L1 speech community, are profound. While living in exile from Afghanistan after being forced to flee the threat of Taliban violence, Dr. Ahmad Karim's[7] family longed for contact with other Afghanis, and he rightly observes that "It's better to speak five words in a language that people know than to speak five thousand words in a language they don't know" (*Refugee Diaspora*,

6 The "redemptive analogies" discussed by Don Richardson in classic missionary narratives such as *Peace Child* (1974) and *Eternity in their Hearts* (1981) illustrate the search for cultural keys to unlock understanding in a cultural setting which is seemingly antithetical to the gospel. The concept of "refuge" is one such redemptive analogy discussed by Richardson, a proscribed area off limits to acts of violence between warring tribes, a point of safety upon entry.

7 A pseudonym.

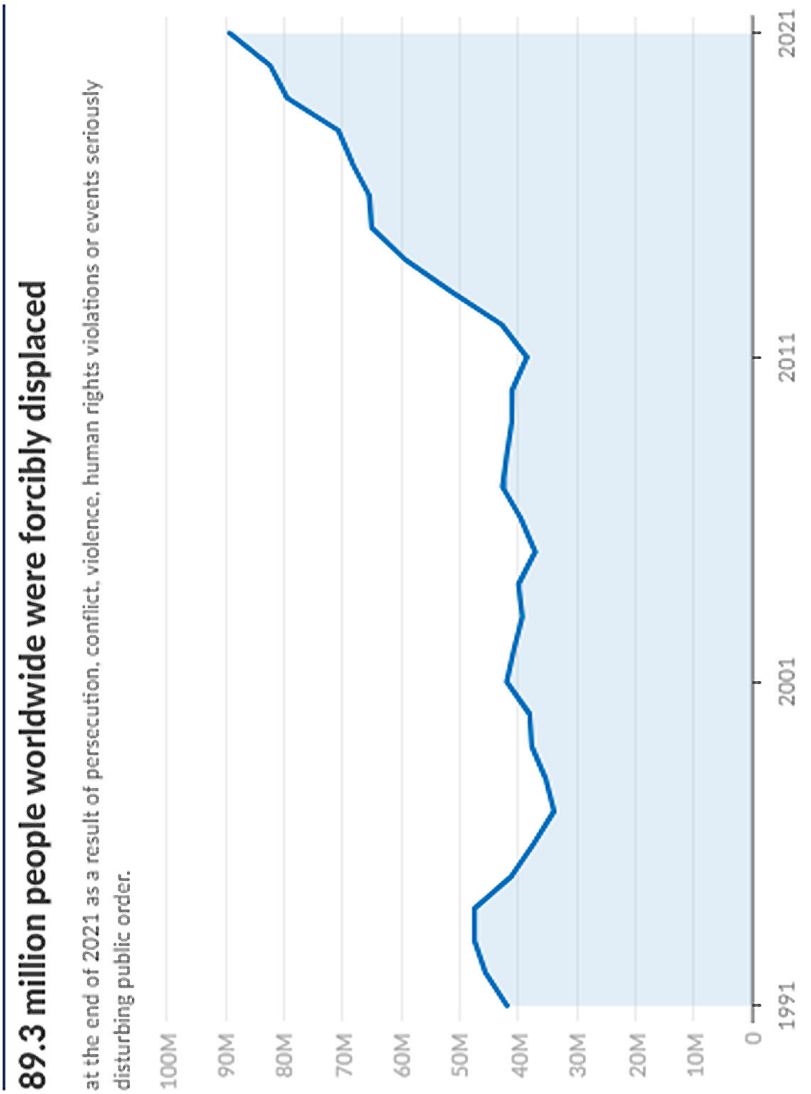
2018, "Three times a refugee: journey of an Afghani doctor" 16).

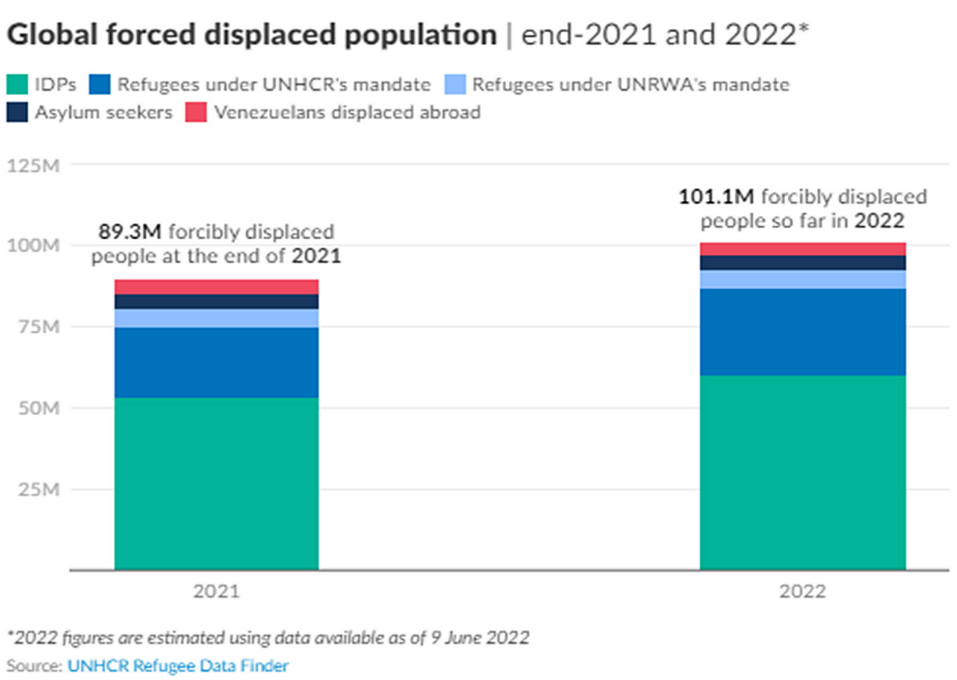
Thus, due to this natural affinity with the mother tongue, and the profound connections to their speech communities, the seeds of religious faith germinate within individuals through hearing the gospel in words which their heart understands ("How are they to hear without someone preaching [in a language their heart understands]?" Romans 10:14, ESV). Further, the development of these seeds of faith into *authentic* as opposed to nominal or token, or even forced and/or coerced religious conversions, often involves learning languages to advanced proficiency levels, translation of ideas and texts, as well as deep forays into cultural and anthropological research, not to mention subsequent literacy education and orthography development.[8] And this development of understanding might be said to be the case for any serious student of the Bible (languages, texts, cultural contexts, interpretations, etc.), by no means limited solely to the sphere of cross-cultural missions and evangelism.

Since no language is learned in isolation, the sociocultural aspects of human communication are something all language users have learned to negotiate since their very first utterances. Without a speech community (a term originated by Gumperz, 1968) and the social interactions to support language use, the back-and-forth linguistic exchanges occurring on a daily basis could not take place. Similarly, the linguistic "homesickness" of those such as the Afghani doctor Dr. Ahmad Karim and his family, is an all too common challenge faced by refugees who have become separated from their speech communities; instead of connections with people to speak to in their own language(s), they are surrounded in their countries of refuge by a completely foreign culture[9] and language(s), utterances which are unintelligible, incomprehensible

8 As in the historical example of the Cyrillic alphabet, developed by early Christian missionaries Cyril and Methodius as part of their missionary work among the Slavic peoples. For a more recent continuance of such work, see the *Literacy and Evangelism International* website at https://www.literacyevangelism.org/

9 Unless they have found refuge in a country sharing aspects of their own language and culture.


89.3 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced
at the end of 2021 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.
100M
90M
80M
70M
60M
50M
40M
30M
20M
10M
0
1991
2001
2011
2021


Global forced displaced population | end-2021 and 2022*
IDPs
Refugees under UNHCR's mandate
Refugees under UNRWA's mandate
Asylum seekers
Venezuelans displaced abroad
125M
100M
75M
50M
25M
89.3M forcibly displaced people at the end of 2021
101.1M forcibly displaced people so far in 2022
2021
2022
*2022 figures are estimated using data available as of 9 June 2022
Source: UNHCR Refugee Data Finder

and meaningless without help from someone in a position to mediate—interpreters, teachers, bilingual assistants, and others to assist and advocate on their behalf.[10]

As the Ethiopian eunuch queried Philip nearly 2,000 years ago after Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, "How can I [understand] unless someone guides me?" Trying to make sense of an unfamiliar biblical passage, this international voyager pondered a significant scriptural text[11] as he traveled in his chariot, returning from Jerusalem to Ethiopia. While reading the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, the Ethiopian eunuch must have wondered in his mind, "Who is this person being described by the prophet Isaiah? Someone who had been humiliated? Someone for whom justice had been denied? And most shockingly, someone whose very life had been taken from him?" (Isaiah 53).

Thankfully, God sent Philip to "share with him the good news about Jesus" who was the prophetical subject of the text being read. As is the case for many language learners reading an unfamiliar text, the Ethiopian pilgrim did not understand until scriptural context (i.e., "scaffolding" and meaningful interaction, Tedick, D., 2019) was provided en route from Jerusalem to Gaza on the return journey to Africa (Acts 8:31-40). A baptism followed shortly, an outward demonstration of the inward transformation which had occurred along that dry and dusty road through the desert. And the rest is history, church history that is, spanning every continent—including Antarctica[12]—and comprising living messages of the transformative power of the gospel: "Your lives are a letter . . . a letter from Christ, written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God" (2 Corinthians 3:2-3).

10 See Jacobsen et al's "The Challenged Sense of Belonging Scale (CSBS)—a validation study in English, Arabic, and Farsi/Dari among refugees and asylum seekers in Germany." *Meas Instrum Soc Sci* 3, 3 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1186/s42409-021-00021-y

11 Possibly the first recorded case of texting while driving!

12 https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/blog/churches-in-antarctica

GOD'S PEOPLE: *IN TRANSIT* AND *EN ROUTE*

"Migration runs like a thread through the whole Bible narrative" observes Chris Wright in his essay on "A shared human condition" (*Refugee Diaspora*, 2018, 143; Wright, C. J., & Măcelaru, 2018). Written in exile, and/or recorded by God's people while they were on the move, Holy Scripture is permeated by the theme of displacement as in

- The original displacement of humanity from Eden (Genesis 3:23)
- The enslavement of Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37:28) and subsequent move of Jacob's family to Goshen (Genesis 45:10)
- The wilderness wandering period of the Hebrews following the Exodus (Numbers 14:33)
- The experiences of Old Testament biblical characters such as Moses, Ruth, Esther, Daniel, Nehemiah, and in the New Testament the disciples (Matthew 26:31, where Christ quotes Zechariah 13:7, "Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered")
- Christ's earthly incarnation and earthly sojourn (at his birth, during the flight to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath, and throughout his ministry as one having "no place to lay his head" as depicted in Matthew 8:20)
- The persecution of the early church, particularly Paul's voyage to Rome, his being shipwrecked *en route* on the island of Malta, where still to this present day an annual holiday every 10th of February, the Feast of St. Paul's Shipwreck, commemorates this close call (Acts 28)
- Satan's expulsion from heaven (Luke 10:18, Revelation 12:13), the dragon of Revelation and his warfare against the woman, the male child, and the "rest of her offspring", during which time the woman flees to the wilderness while the warfare continues against those who "have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17), war notably being a primary cause of displacement throughout human history, allowed by a sovereign God, but during which protection and "nourishment" are mercifully available; and also present in this simultaneously historical and prophetical passage is a foreshadowing of judgement and wrath against perpetrators of violence such as Pharaoh (Romans 9:16-22), but mercy and deliverance for the oppressed through faith (Romans

9:23-30).

The state of being *in transit* from one place to another is an all-too-common human experience, yet this state also means God is not finished with us as individuals, or with humanity as a whole.[13] Through faith and the righteousness of Christ, we as Christians are *in transit* and *en route* to somewhere better, to becoming a new creation, to experiencing the redemption and transformation at the heart of the divine plan. A plan which remains open to all, "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). God's action plan is an "ultimate mystery of the ages . . . God hears our groans, and from his eternal center he is drawing all peoples and all dimensions of life together, smoothing the sharp edges, weaving a pattern out of the fragments . . . In Christ, everything in the cosmos is being knit together. This is the mystery at the heart of the universe" (Adeney 168). God is working in this world to make things right:

> God is a mover. He acts. He is at work in the world. Most gloriously he moved when the Word became flesh, took on the form of a human being, and humbled himself to the point of death—and then exploded right out of the tomb because God is God over death as well as life. Such a God is not still. No, he moves—because he loves (Miriam Adeney, 2018, 168-69)

Alongside displacement and migration, *love* is a theme which emerges strongly from the biblical refugee narratives. One of the earliest refugee accounts recorded in the experience of diaspora Jews is the remarkable multilingual narrative recorded by Daniel in both Hebrew and Aramaic, with Greek, Old Persian, Akkadian, and Ancient Egyptian lexical items also evident (Dizon, 2014; Humphreys 1973), textual reflections of the linguistic diversity of ancient Babylon to which useful captives of that time were transported after successful military conquests.

13 For a Bible study guide available in numerous language translations, see the French Bible Society's "A Journey Through the Bible for Migrants" (Alliance Biblique Universelle, 2008).

Transplanted by military force to Babylon, Daniel and his fellow captives were trained to become civil servants of the ancient Babylonian empire. They were taught the "learning and tongue of the Chaldeans" (Daniel 1:4), and as refugees in a foreign land, these prisoner-émigrés sat down by the now archetypal "rivers of Babylon", hanging their harps upon the willow trees in a deeply evocative and nostalgic refusal to sing in a strange land and as prisoner- *émigrés* wept at the memories of their home (Psalm 137).

A special place seems to exist in God's heart for those such as Daniel who have been removed from their homelands and transplanted elsewhere due to circumstances and forces beyond their control. Such can be inferred from the commands to love the foreigners, to extend hospitality to strangers in our midst (Leviticus 19:33-34; Hebrews 13:2)[14], and from parables such as the prodigal son (Luke 15). Significantly, of this refugee Daniel, the phrase "greatly loved" is used multiple times (Daniel 9:23, 10:11, & 10:19), underscoring the great love of God for the forcibly displaced, and demonstrating absolute empathy for their condition, and a determination to act on their behalf.

In this day and age, God's divine action plan, this great "mystery at the heart of the universe", has become less and less of a *mystery*, and more and more an *actuality*, as humanity comes to realize that in all of these refugee experiences, "God is with us" (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23), sharing in our sorrows and grief (Isaiah 53:3), and lighting the path before us along the way (*en route*) to our heavenly home. As Adeney concludes in the final chapter of *Refugee Diaspora*, "There is indeed a safe place, and it is one that is available to every refugee" ("Conclusion: A Place Called Home", pp. 167-74). However, and of importance to the free will aspects of our humanity, the prodigal son did not find such safety until he decided to return home to his father. Ruth did not find such a safe place until deciding in faith to join herself to Naomi, "Your people will

14 See "Entertaining Angels: How One CCU Family Left Everything Behind to Care for Migrant Families." *Beyond, Fall* 2022, 31- 41. https://www.ccu.edu/_files/documents/beyond-magazine/beyond-fall-2022.pdf

be my people, and your God will be my God" (Ruth 1:16). Yes, safety is available, eternal security above all other forms of refuge, but acts of faith and obedience are required to "enter that rest . . . [and] receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:11-14).

REFUGEES IN A STRANGE COUNTRY

Such safe places along the way are not necessarily physical locations. Rather, they also involve the state of mind, the ability to understand and be understood in communicating with others. Since the days of the Babylonian captivity when Hebrew youth were taught the "tongue of the Chaldeans" (Daniel 1:4), language learning and teaching has been necessary for reasons of transition and re-adjustment of the displaced. The profession of English language teaching with its particular connection to refugee education reaches back hundreds of years to the Huguenot "Refugiate in a strange country" who fled religious persecution in France to settle in England. These hundreds of thousands of Huguenot refugees, though speaking a language closely related to English, arrived in England during the Elizabethan era, the period of early modern English, the language of Shakespeare. A.P.R. Howatt cites one of the English language teachers and authors from this time period, Jacques Bellot (*Familiar Dialogues*, 1586), who poignantly describes the reasons underlying his work as a teacher of early modern English:

> [W]hat sorrow is for them that be refugiate [refugees] in a strange country, when they cannot understand the language of that place in which they be exiled, and when they cannot make them to be understood by speech to the inhabiters of that country wherein they be retired . . . I thought good to put into their hands certain short dialogues in French and English.
>
> (cited in Howatt, 1984, 16)[15]

15 A.P.R. Howatt was the current author's dissertation supervisor at the University of

In light of the biblical imperative to love our neighbors—including "foreign" neighbors—as if they were our own selves (Leviticus 19:31-34), language teaching is a foundational means to alleviate the "refugiate" sorrow described by Bellot, enabling that most basic of human need, namely the need to communicate, understand, and be understood.

Whatever one's religious persuasion, political views, or sociocultural and ideological mindset, the plight of refugees is one which affects us all as members of our extended human family. We cannot close our eyes to human suffering without violating some deep and integral aspects of our humanity, and without marring the divine imprint of our Maker within the very core of our being. We must help and empathize because of our common humanity, because they too have been created in the image of God. A calloused and clench-fisted response to our extended family siblings' needs would resemble Cain's insolent questioning of the Lord God, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

We are indeed our "brother's keeper" as was evident from the beginning in the Lord God's response to Cain's guilty deflections of responsibility: "What have you done? Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!" (Genesis 4).

For Christians, the example which the Author of our faith himself demonstrated, in crossing from eternal realms to the temporal dimension on our behalf, represents the ultimate benchmark and model to aspire to and emulate. Living as a refugee (Matthew 2:13-15, 8:20, Luke 2:7) Himself during His earthly mission, Christ's life and teachings were documented from numerous angles and eyewitness accounts. For teachers today looking back in historical mode, the Son of God's divinely inspired pedagogy shone brightly amid dark times. Even darker times followed, yet the Judeo-Christian heritage today is one which recognizes the solemn obligation to welcome the strangers and foreigners in our midst.[16] An

Edinburgh in the 1990s. Professor Howatt's understanding of the history of ELT, not to mention his own international ELT experience and scholarship, was greatly inspiring.

16 "The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself" (Leviticus 19:34); "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35).

ethic of care requires not just utilitarian responses, but a Samaritan-like binding of wounds, transporting of the injured, and contributing from one's own resources toward the recovery of those lying alongside life's road in a helpless, ignored, and injured state.

If so inclined, how does one become part of the divine action plan with regard to understanding refugees and displaced peoples?

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE DISPLACED: AN ONGOING GLOBAL CRISIS

Refugee narratives and representations of their lives are an excellent starting point to learn about the experiences of the displaced. Communicating with others regarding a traumatic experience is of therapeutic value. And communication helps individuals as well as communities to interpret experiences, and also to document as a warning to others, or as an inspiration to encourage those facing similar tragedy, and to advocate and educate on their behalf. Importantly, finding refuge, Adeney's "safe place . . . available to every refugee", is not just a physical quest, but a mental and psychological journey as well, and indeed an arduous spiritual trek, all of which encompass innumerable genres of human expression.

Historically, and continuing into the present day, the experiences of displaced peoples have been documented by the refugees themselves through their own accounts of displacement, deprivation, endurance, and perseverance. From external perspectives too, the modern refugee crisis has also been the focus of numerous recent works advocating for displaced populations and depicting the enormous scale and extremely complex nature of the global refugee crisis at the start of a new millennium. Such accounts offer unique and deeply personal perspectives across multiple genres (poetry, film documentary), mediums of expression (drawings, photography, sculpture), and publication types (digital, print).

Methodology: Lived Experience Accounts of the Displaced

For the purposes of this review, a basic "lived experience" selection criterion was applied in tandem with a recent publication criterion with a selection bias toward works released in the last decade since the Syrian war began in 2011, and toward works created by refugees themselves, or by individuals with an especially apparent deep level of familiarity with the refugee experience. The sheer volume of works published necessitates filtering and careful selection of representative publications for such a review. As such, this review is merely a starting point, a scratch on the surface of the overwhelming volume of worthy narratives which might just as well have been included, and which ought to be considered by those who wish to delve even deeper into the body of refugee and immigrant literature.

Lived experience research, a form of qualitative phenomenological inquiry[17], has been used to discover and describe the lived experiences of populations across various fields of study including food policy and "people's lived experience of food environments" (Neve et al, 2021), mental health "[l]lived experience research as a resource for recovery" (Honey, A. et al, 2020), micro-phenomenological aspects of and methods for discovery (Petitmengin, C. et al, 2019), and also of relevance to the current review, in refugee studies (Charles, L., 2021; Haugen, S., 2019; Aldiabat, K. et al, 2021; Krisjánsdóttir, E., 2019; Eastmond, M., 2007).

Limitations and criticism do exist of such approaches, so while this is a secondary research review, similar lived experience limitations and caveats exist with reference to primary research, specifically

- Experiences of particular populations may not be representative of populations elsewhere, even populations from the same national and ethnic backgrounds (Charles, L. 2021)
- Reported experiences are subject to subsequent interpretation and modification (Nayeri 2019, 261; "Memories are always partly untrue"

17 See https://www.microphenomenology.com

Nayeri 2020, 37; "Narratives are not transparent renditions of `truth' but reflect a dynamic interplay between life, experience and story" Eastmond, M., 2007)

With such limitations and caveats in mind, the premise should also be underlined and supported of accepting refugee narratives as being representative accounts, as did Charles (2021), caveats notwithstanding, in stating the view that the challenges of one particular population studied are likely to be similar to the challenges faced by other vulnerable populations with similar backgrounds.

Further, apparent exploitation and creative adaptation of stories has occurred, with films such as *The Good Lie* depicting much more than what might at first appear; the apparent usurious duplicity behind the scenes on the part of the film industry seems to have been settled out of court, but only after a legal challenge from the Lost Boys and Girls of Sudan, Inc. to assert co-authorship of this narrative. Such an account brings into focus the role of interviewers and lived experience researchers, certainly another area requiring tact, empathy, and a forthright obtaining of consent and outlining of expectations when interacting with human subject research participants (Ryan, M., 2016).

The selected and previously published narratives for consideration, from across various genres and mediums of expression, are as follows under the sub-headings of art, film, poetry, journalistic reporting, biography, and living letters of faith.

Art

In 2019, "The Warmth of Other Suns" was the title of a museum exhibition in Washington, D.C. organized by the Phillips Collection. This exhibit featured migration themed works with a focus on the Mediterranean nexus of the refugee plight at that time. One review aptly headlined "The Museum is the Refugee's Home", delved into modern art as a "refugee camp where despair and inertia intermingle with evocations of home,

family and the everyday" (Farago 2019). As an experiential medium of expression, art beckons visitors to the refugee camps to see for themselves the portrayed realities of what has been experienced—the tragedies, the dreams, the shipwrecked hopes.

An actual ship, Christoph Büchel's "Barca Nostra" featured at the 58th Biennale de Venezia, bringing into perspective the scarred remains of a recovered shipwreck in which over 800 migrants had lost their lives, "one of the deadliest shipwrecks in the Mediterranean in living memory" (Povoledo 2019). "Our ship" or "Barca Nostra" in Italian, displays what is left of this vessel's battered hull, an evocative symbol as Büchel explained, the ship wreckage serving both as a memorial to tragedy and a monument to modern migration.

Shortlisted for several major awards as of 2022, George Butler's *Drawn Across Borders: True Stories of Human Migration* (2021) is an on-site rendered, contemplative portrayal of the displaced. The portraits in this book were drawn and painted over a ten-year time period in various refugee crisis zones in Europe, North Africa, Asia and the Middle East. And recently, with the support of organizations such as the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting, Butler visited Ukraine in 2022, continuing to "draw at the fringes of atrocity" (O'Kelley 2022), "listening to people's stories" (MacDiarmid 2022), and publishing his latest work at georgebutler.org.

Digital exhibits such as Cambridge University's *Displaced Bodies and Hearts*[18] are also a "space" for artistic expression to thrive, depicting "destruction of live [sic], escape and separation, liminal lives, and living with the past . . . [central themes] to migration and forced displacement."

Such artwork allows viewers to glimpse the lived experiences of the displaced, and to thereby better understand, relate to, empathize with, advocate for, and support these fellow members of *barca nostra*, shipwrecked souls in need of comfort, warmth, and sustenance along their life voyage(s).

18 https://exhibition.respondmigration.com/about-us/

Film

Film transports viewers to the refugees' worlds of experience, bringing them alongside migrants on their journeys in stark detail. One notable such migrant travelogue is Hassan Fazili's *Midnight Traveller* (2019). The videographers used their smart phones to document the families' three-year journey from Afghanistan, which to Europe.

Ai Weiwei's *Human Flow* is a powerful portrayal of the refugee experience from the perspective of the rescuers, aid workers politicians and royals. The escalating crises in the several years since *Human Flow's* release make this an even more urgent and emphatic *must* see, *must* read. A photo of the author-artist from the book version depicts Weiwei employing a confrontational, urgent gesture. With both hands to his eyes, forefingers lifting upwards, thumbs downwards, Weiwei's gesture speaks for itself: "Can't you see what is happening? Open your eyes, world!"

Films such as these vividly portray the lived experiences of refugees as perhaps no other form of media can. To be practically on site as interviews occur, as endless lines of displaced people trek across the countryside, or as pouring rain drenches weary travelers to the bone, or as mourning family members weep at the loss of loved ones along the way—these realities conveyed are important in understanding the great need, particularly the "speed and scale of forced displacement [. . .] outpacing solutions for refugees."[19]

Poetry

Written poetry speaks across the artificial barriers which have been erected between human souls, the "tribal" boundaries delineating the space between mine/yours, us/them, friend/enemy. *Ink Knows No Borders: Poems of the Immigrant and Refugee Experience* (Vechionne & Raymond 2019) portrays the experience of refugees through a teenage

19 "Global Displacement Hits Another Record, Capping Decade-long Rising Trend" (2022, June 16). UNHCR.

and young adult lens illustrating their adaptation, learning, and resilience in the face of multiple challenges.

Fleeing one's home and finding oneself transplanted to a foreign land has been likened to the predicament of a date palm growing away from its indigenous habitat:

> A palm tree I beheld in Ar-RuṢāfa,
> Far in the West, far from the palm-tree land:
> I said: You, like myself, are far away, in a strange land;
> How long have I been far away from my people!
> You grew up in a land where you are a stranger,
> And like myself, are living in the farthest corner of the earth:
> May the morning clouds refresh you at this distance,
> And may abundant rains comfort you forever!
>
> '*Abd ar-Raḥman ad-Dāḥil*, Cordova.
> (Nykl, A.R. 1946, 18)

Echoing the above nostalgic yearnings of an exiled Ummayad prince for his home in Baghdad, the modern literature of the displaced documents the ongoing discourse of the "refugiate in a strange land" across time, their weeping by the archetypal rivers of Babylon, and hanging of their harps upon the willow trees in abject sorrow.

For literate cultures, inked words in written form preserve poetry for future audiences, and these printed words communicate to readers at a distance; Yet in pre-literate epochs and for pre-literate cultures, poetic language was imbued with a sense of the immediate. Powerful oral delivery techniques amplified the messages, the stories, the word images—and the connections between poets and their audiences became even more meaningful and profound. And it is in this spoken word sub-genre of poetry that the contrasts between *orality* and *literacy* become apparent. Since Walter Ong's "technologizing of the word" (Ong 1982), poets' words have taken flight into digital realms where social networking

platforms both transmit and preserve oral poetry recitations.[20]

Organizations such as the International Refugee Poetry Network sponsor poetry workshops, helping refugees to find their voice and "tell their stories".[21] And these skillfully worded poem-stories should not be overlooked. Indeed, some of the deepest sentiments are conveyed in unique voices of this poetic sub-genre.

JJ Bola's "Refuge" echoes and reverberates across space and time: "Everything was foreign, unfamiliar, uninviting" and "we are all always reaching for a place that we can call home."[22] Or as Aryan Ashory puts it, "Our destination is a question mark. I just wish that no one's life should be a question mark!" For Aryan, poetry is therapeutic, "Writing poem it makes me to feel free and to empty my pains."[23] And the "barca nostra" theme emerges as a re-occurring one in Abe Nouk's spoken word poems: "Guess what, Dad, the year after you died, we were granted refugee status, so we flew here. [to Australia] Can you believe it? I can't, because I'm waking up every morning thinking, 'That could've been us on those sinking boats!' " Nouk relates in a poetically envisioned exchange with his deceased father who still inspires this courageous young man.[24]

Understandably, the pedagogical value of poetry is recognized and used in general education contexts such as U.S. universities where international students craft "where I'm from poems" as a popular assignment using identity-based pedagogy to help students feel welcomed and connected on campus (Ivanova 2019). In specific refugee contexts, research on the use of spoken word poetry workshops demonstrates the significance of this sub-genre in students' social and educational integration (Burton & Van Viegen 2021).

20 For example, the "instapoets" using Instagram to convey their poetry in what may be seen as a reversion to the immediacy evident before the digital age in the pre-literate and primarily oral cultures described by Ong.

21 https://www.refugeepoetry.org/

22 JJ Bola, "Refuge." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3dgPtyQ3PI

23 Aryan Ashory, "How this young Afghan refugee uses poetry to 'empty' her pain and feel hope." https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/2021/10/daily-news-lesson-how-this-young-afghan-refugee-uses-poetry-to-empty-her-pain-and-feel-hope/

24 Abe Nouk, "To be a poet." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-ja-Mfpw60

As with related forms of artistic output, poetry can also be an effective medium for drawing attention to biases, prejudice and injustices. Brian Bilston's "Refugees" is shocking at first read, describing as it does the view that "They are not welcome here" and that we ought to "Build a wall to keep them out." As the poem concludes, "The world can be looked at another way" and it is only through a reverse reading from bottom to top that a new message emerges from this poem, quite a different perspective from an initial, straightforward reading.[25]

Rachel Mannix's spoken word poem, "We are a pilgrim people" similarly encourages another way to see ourselves, our fellow human beings, and our Heavenly Father, and it urges us as readers to share our hearts and homes—with each other, and by spiritual extension with God Himself. Rich in biblical allusion and spiritually imbued imagery, this beautiful spoken word poem depicts the divine action plan theme (Adeney 2018) re-emerging in a Living Word fashion, "We coalesce in flesh and blood/ To heal, refresh and seek the lost."[26] If home is where the heart is or longs to be, poems such as these are signposts pointing the way.

Journalistic Reporting

Valuable for an "insider" perspective, the news reporting engaged in by refugees themselves presents an inside look at what is actually happening behind the refugee camp fences and barricades.

Most media reporting is done from an "outsider" perspective, by journalists and reporters who may visit refugee camps, but who have never themselves been a refugee. In contrast, an insider perspective, with news stories drafted by refugees themselves, represents the authentic voices of the displaced—what they have seen, what they have endured, and what they hope to do with their lives and futures.

25 Bilston, B. "Refugee." https://nationalpoetryday.co.uk/poem/refugees/
26 Mannix, R. "We are a pilgrim people." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5lNBN6Rtgw

Stefania D'Ignoti summarizes some of the latest notable developments with regard to the recent phenomenon of "Newsrooms Inside Refugee Camps: Reporting by Migrants, for Migrants" (2022) and discusses the following journalistic endeavors:

- *Migratory Birds*, a refugee managed newspaper published from Greece[27]
- *Dispatches in Exile*, a journalistic training focused newsroom effort in Bosnia-Herzegovina[28]
- Migrantes 2.0, a special section published in Italian newspaper Il Solidale[29]
- Kanere, a news reporting platform in Kenya published by refugees at the Kakuma refugee camp[30]

Along similar lines to *Il Solidale's* printing of a special section for migrants, major news outlets have begun publishing special editions and sections, for example, the Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* has responded to the Ukraine crisis with a special news edition for Ukrainians.[31] And in the Americas, *El Migrante* is a monthly newspaper published in a similar vein, providing vital information and advice to help immigrants on their journeys.[32]

These forms of journalistic reporting represent additional angles of lived experience from within, rather than viewed from outside—an "-emic" versus an "-etic" perspective,[33] and much more meaningful as is a native versus non-native language proficiency.

27 See https://migratorybirds.gr/
28 See https://dispatchesinexile.com/
29 See https://www.ilsolidale.it/archivio.php?c=7
30 See https://kanere.org/
31 https://notesfrompoland.com/2022/02/28/special-newspaper-for-ukrainian-refugees-published-in-poland/
32 https://internews.org/elmigrante/
33 See https://www.anthroencyclopedia.com/entry/emic-and-etic

Biography

The biographical narratives authored by refugees tell of their quests for asylum, safety and survival (Kuklin 2020; Ashraf 2020; McDonald-Gibson 2016; Boursier 2019), their dreams (Villalobos 2019), their heartbreaking tragedies, (Kurdi 2018; Nguyen 2018), their educational experiences (Fishman 2021; Smith 2020), their gender-specific ordeals (Abouzeid 2020; Yousafzai 2019; von Welser 2017) and their complex, lifelong psychological ordeals. From members of the same families, siblings write complementary and also contrasting brother and sister (Nayeri 2020 "a true story" fictional account; Nayeri 2019) interpretations of their shared yet different experiences.

The themes are all too common threads in the woven word tapestries of this genre—displacement, suffering, violence, tragedy, identity, journeys, nostalgic yearning, lamentation, longing, dreaming, persevering, overcoming—each narrative uniquely voiced in diverse styles and techniques to create enduring images and symbols in literary form.

The simple desires for friendship and human connection emerge. Not wanting anyone's pity, but instead a basic recognition of shared humanity, is a common refrain: "I am your guest . . . we're so close. You can maybe hear my heart beating, scared. I have one, just like yours . . . like you, I was made carefully, by a God who loved what he saw. Like you, I want a friend" (Nayeri 2020, 12-16).

In this narrative discourse genre, scenarios from actual experiences come into view. Such as skeptical interviews by immigration officials. Memories of horrific violence. Descriptions of affiliations and friendships made along the way. Entrapment in Kafkaesque legal mazes. Swimming for hours to bypass fences and walls. Confinements in squalid conditions. Educational transitions, adaptations, and achievements. And in spite of it all, unvanquished hopes and dreams of a successful life in a new country, finally re-united with family, safe and secure in a place to call home.

Some make a successful journey. Many do not, and perish along the

way, mostly un-noticed by a calloused global audience, except for occasions when tragic images prick the collective conscience of the world, such as what happened in 2015. *The Boy on the Beach* (Kurdi 2018) recounts the tragedy which befell the family of a young Syrian refugee whose death came to symbolize the refugee crisis at that time—the photographs of a drowned young child . . . conveying a message which words lack power to express.

Refugee narratives tell of emigration during tumultuous times, revolutions and political upheavals, larger forces squeezing the displaced at the borders and margins of existence. Living in camps and various countries as life inevitably continues, the difficulties are never-ending, and the psychological portraits painted are of refugees as well as their advocates, and the "truths" which must be fabricated and woven into backstories which have a better chance of their being believed and accepted by immigration officials: "Refugees will spend the rest of their lives battling to be believed. Not because they are liars but because they're forced to make their facts fit narrow conceptions of truth" (Nayeri 2019, 261), and also because "Memories are always partly untrue" (Nayeri 2020, 37).

Living Letters of Faith: Spiritual Drafts in Progress

This next category of "publication", living letters of faith, derives from 2 Corinthians 3:3 which depicts Christian believers as a "letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." Of all the various expressive forms of publication, these imprints of spiritual faith upon the hearts of living men and women are perhaps the most dramatic and life changing narratives yet considered. Who else but God alone can touch the fragile parchment of a living human heart, and use our human weaknesses to convey powerful messages of living hope? This most unique medium of composing pulsates with life itself amid great sorrows and tribulations of the refugee experience.

Yousef AlKhouri describes the paradox of missionaries expecting

to comfort refugees in need, only to be "surprised to hear of the work of God's Spirit bringing hope, restoration, and redemption to them [the missionaries]" (*Refugee Diaspora* 161). "God is working through the church, the community of God's people, to bring about the redemptive work among refugees" (163), as AlKhouri has observed, through firsthand experience among refugee populations in the Middle East. Desperate conditions are turning into gospel opportunities for the Kingdom of Christ in completely unexpected ways: "escaping conflict zones . . . miracles that happened [following prayers] in the name of Isa [Jesus] . . . miracles had turned them toward the living God in new ways that would not have been possible back in their homeland" (165). As AlKhouri realizes, "God is sovereign over all human dispersion and is doing a new work among refugees everywhere" (166). Or as Afghani doctor Ahmad Karim found, "This longing [for contact with other exiled Afghanis] led our family not only to fellow Afghans but to the Lord Jesus Christ" (15). Like Weiwei's must see film "Human Flow", Sam George and Miriam Adeny's (eds.) *Refugee Diaspora* (2018) with its multi-author practitioner perspective, is a compelling must read for the firsthand accounts of how God is working today in the lives of refugees from all regions of the globe. Regional narratives and descriptions, practical ideas for responding to refugee crises, and theological/missiological reflections are important features of this thorough and practical text. For instance, there is an intriguing discussion of "appification" and the use of smartphones as a means of "Leveraging Modern Tools for Safe Passage" (pp. 127-132). The deep philosophical and theological implications emerging from separately authored strands are sure to encourage and enlighten, particularly the hopeful depictions of God Himself acting on behalf of the oppressed through the most dynamic universal action plan ever formulated since before time even began (Romans 8:29).

Another practical and response-oriented book well worth reading to help understand the "endless catastrophe" of the refugee crisis is Jairo de Oliveira's *Changing Stories: Responding to the Refugee Crisis Based on*

Biblical Theory and Practice.

Oliveira documents the working of God in modern times. The "changing stories" of countless refugee immigrants are testimony to the even more powerful and life-changing, transformative power of the gospel message: "The current forceful human displacement has been scattering people who used to live in isolation from the gospel. Consequently, in their exile, they now have access to the Holy Scriptures" (5). As experienced by AlKhouri, and as also described by Mehta (2019) in a secular sense, a reversal of expectations is frequently the norm when interacting with refugees:

> I am stunned by their kindness, generosity, and resilience in light of the great suffering they have experienced. Refugees are an example of daily overcoming. Day by day, they choose to fight for life, dream for a better future, and seek new beginnings. Consequently, we must not assume that when we serve refugees, we are the ones giving, teaching, and comforting. They have much to share. Besides being generous and friendly, they have plenty of lessons to teach us. As we commit to serve them, we must do it with open hearts because we will probably receive much more than we can expect or give. In one way or another, our lives will likely be transformed (12).

Turning evil intent into a good outcome is evidence of God's ongoing divine action plan (Adeney 168-69) in the lives of refugees and displaced persons today. A modern day parallel to the salvation and redemption narratives of biblical figures such as Joseph, Daniel, Ruth, Esther, and countless others.

Hearing the gospel of Christ might not have been possible in a closed, repressive socio-religious context, so the "Human Flow" out of such modern-day prison-states is not just a flight from physical dangers, but from spiritual repression and blindness. Conversely, afflictions of believers are depicted in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 as a means of being "comforted by God" Himself. Historical populations of Christian believers in the Middle East in Syria and Iraq have waned in the face of

persecution (Kammou, W., "Iraq: What Happened to the Christians?", in George, S. and Adeney, M., 2018), and as Christ warned his followers, "In the world you will have tribulation; but take heart, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Similarly, Paul comforted believers in his day, while undergoing a series of relentless tribulations. Receiving help during such ordeals allows individuals to in turn help and encourage those facing similar afflictions (2 Corinthians 1:4). When the Apostle Paul and the ship's company landed on Malta, they were helped in their shipwrecked state, and though afflicted and nearly drowned, Paul left a lasting legacy of Christian evangelism on this Mediterranean isle.[34]

Oliveira analyzes the evangelism angle as well in Changing Stories, citing Human Rights Convention articles in support of the position that human beings ought not ever be coerced in matters of faith, but that they also ought to have the freedom to consider and evaluate for themselves their religious choices, and to change/convert/follow whatever faith expression they may choose."

In response to the question "Can we share our faith with refugees?" Oliveira responds, citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

> . . . we can surely say that evangelism is not against human rights. On the contrary, refugees have the human right of evaluating their faith expressions and even changing their religion if they so wish . . . Of course, in our interactions with refugees, we cannot be disrespectful, manipulative, or insensitive, but should always let them spontaneously choose if they want to hear the gospel and how they want to respond to it (9).

34 While gathering firewood after the shipwreck, Paul is bitten by a venomous snake which—surprisingly to the local residents who knew this dangerous viper—had no effect on Paul. "He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm" (Acts 28). The appearance of the serpent in this narrative of Paul's lived experience is a powerful image and symbolic reminder of humanity's deadly foe (the serpent of Eden (Genesis 3), and Satan, the dragon of Revelation--one and the same--attacking the woman, the male child, i.e. Christ, and those having the testimony of Jesus) whose power and venom have been overcome by the gospel of Christ. The serpent dangles over the fire, shaken off harmlessly by Paul, as does today the dragon of Revelation (ch. 12) dangle over the eternal fires of judgement which await these rebellious and malevolent forces of evil.

Oliveira's account is a story of our "shared humanity" and a "glimpse of God's bigger story" (10) containing remarkable portraits of those coming to faith from repressive religious backgrounds where once stifled basic religious freedoms and human rights have now found expression in transformed lives. There is also a missional research component in the form of qualitative research methodologies implemented, comparative analyses of ministry workers and refugee views, and implementation of best practices for churches and ministries working among forcibly displaced populations. Useful appendices are further value-added components, such as a cultural sensitivity document and a list of refugee support organizations. There are also end-of-chapter discussion questions, prayer points, and calls to action--highly practical, grass-roots level features for potential use in training and educational settings with a solid template for evaluating what ministries/churches are doing well, and areas needing improvement.

The intense labor involved in traditional mission field preparation and subsequent deployment contrasts sharply with the current opportunities for advancing the gospel and Christ's message of reconciliation through the movement of people to new countries, a "circumstance [which] allows us to reach the world and proclaim the good news to the people that God has purposefully brought from far and wide to become our new neighbors" (Oliveira, 110-113).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Called out of darkness and heading toward the light of a city and kingdom built by God,[35] Christians are on a journey from a temporary residence in this world to a permanent citizenship and home in heaven. Being pilgrims, wayfarers and wanderers ourselves, we ought to be all the more empathetic in responding to the needs of refugees and immigrants at our

35 Isaiah 9:2, 1 Peter 2:9, Hebrews 11:10

door.

The political policy debates surrounding immigration ought not to obscure the clear biblical mandate to meet the physical needs of those from completely different and even alien or "enemy" backgrounds; the challenge for Christians is to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:20-21; Matthew 5:43-48), and to cultivate a "harvest of righteousness . . . sown in peace". Such a mindset runs contrary to natural impulse, "earthly, unspiritual, demonic" wisdom set against the "wisdom from above" (James 3:13-18), the type of love which loves "while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:8-10).

Understanding the dynamic narratives and genres of the refugee experience is an invitation to become part of the ongoing story in a *vita activa* (Arendt, 1958, *The Human Condition*, ch. 5) and faith to works (James 2:17-18) progression from mere philosophical contemplation or "miserable comforters" (Job 16:2) mode to a thoughtfully engaged level of participation and service.

Active and Thoughtful Works and Lives of Faith

There are countless possibilities for becoming actively involved in helping to alleviate the "afflictions" of displaced populations and implementing the clear teachings of 2 Corinthians 1. In doing so, as Mehta (2019, 197) has observed, and as Christian missionaries themselves have experienced, the "rescue fleet" may be arriving, in need of aid certainly, but also bearing resources and capabilities of their own to benefit their hosts. Consider what Paul himself experienced, afflicted and shipwrecked in the Mediterranean; not as a refugee, but rather as a shipwrecked politico-religious prisoner bound for Rome, he was helped by his hosts, but he gave in return the precious knowledge and healing presence of the gospel. Believers in his footsteps today similarly have valuable "treasure in earthen vessels" to share with others even while being "troubled on every side . . . perplexed . . . persecuted . . . cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:7-9).

The non-exhaustive list of recent books and films and miscellaneous works surveyed in this current article are a relatively miniscule portion of the incredible volume of works which have been published—and which continue to be published—on the ongoing refugee crisis. Like an unfinished pilgrimage, the journeys continue on, the stories told along the way are not yet finished, the colorful individuals within each narrative are mere sketches of what they will eventually become. And the destination point is a culmination of circuitous pathways meandering and wending their way home.

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Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics

Theological Reflections

Stanley Hauerwas: A Short Biography[1]

T.L. Hulsey

Joanna Hauerwas, like Hannah (1 Sam. 2), prayed for a son who would dedicate his life in service to God. [2] Her son was told of his mother's prayer at age six, which resulted in the boy dedicating his life to Christian ministry and becoming "saved" in the Pleasant Mound Methodist Church – about three miles east of Dallas and one of the first churches in Dallas county.[3] The son was Stanley Hauerwas. The week before Stanley was born on July 24, 1940, his parents saw the 1939 movie *Stanley and Livingstone*, about the Scottish missionary presumed to be lost in Africa and the intrepid Welsh reporter Henry M. Stanley sent to find him. The reporter's story inspired them to give his name to their only son.[4]

THE TEXAN BRICKLAYER

Like most working-class Texans, young Stanley's acquaintance with hard work came early. By age four or five he was hoeing the family garden;

1 Article is excerpted from *25 Texas Heroes*, by the same author, published December, 2020.

2 Hauerwas, Stanley, *Hannah's Child: A Theologian's Memoir* (Eerdmans, first edition, April 16, 2010, ISBN 978-0802864871, 308 pages), page 3.

3 Nall, Matthew Hayes, "Pleasant Mound, TX," *Handbook of Texas Online* (last edited June 15, 2010) <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hvp62> accessed November 20, 2018. The article places the town at "Loop 12 and State Highway 352" and notes that when it was annexed by Dallas in 1950, it had a population of only 800.

4 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 3.

by age six he was delivering beans in his wagon for sale;[5] by age seven, apprenticing with his bricklayer father, Coffee Hauerwas.[6] Hauerwas reflects on this lesson learned from his parents as follows:

> The word used for lives that just get on with it is "work." I cannot remember any time in my life that I did not have work to do. I never felt oppressed, even as a child, by the fact that I was expected to work, because I assumed, given the example set by my parents, that work was what everyone did.[7]

Even today Stanley gets up at five in the morning and works until six in the evening.[8] He learned another habit from his parents, and possibly from the Texas heritage that he is very proud to display: The habit of straight talking, even with unabashed swearing:

> I assumed that my parents would never want me to be anything other than straightforward. Bullshit was not allowed. Plain speech and plain thinking was the hallmark of their life, and I took it to be the hallmark of my life.[9]

The most colorful illumination of the centrality to Hauerwas of the concept of "narrative," or "story," appears in his essay "A Tale of Two Stories: On Being a Christian and a Texan." His account is especially moving in its references to the Southern writer William Humphrey. Early on Hauerwas proclaims:

> Texas, like the South, generally continues to represent a unique cultural experience which places its stamp on you forever. […] To say that one is "from Texas" is never meant just to indicate where one happened to be born, but represents for many of us a story that has, for good or ill, determined who we are.[10]

5 Ibid., 18-19.
6 Ibid., 20.
7 Ibid., 18.
8 Ibid., 45.
9 Ibid., 44.
10 Hauerwas, Stanley, *Christian Existence Today: Essays on Church, World, and Living in Between* (Labyrinth Press paperback, January 1, 1988, ISBN 978-0939464487, 266 pages), page 27.

Being a Texan does not provide an automatic ethic or philosophy, but it does provide something that stamps our identity: A history – a "fate," if you like. Does that history contain injustices? Of course it does: All history is rooted in the sin and suffering of those who live it, who are born of it. But although fixed forever and undeniable, it provides the sure starting point for all steps to recovery and openness to divine grace: Acceptance. Hauerwas quotes Reinhold Niebuhr:

> No society ever achieved peace without incorporating injustice into its harmony.[11]

The notions of locality, place, and communal life form the heart of "narrative," meaning the local traditions represented as a story that provides context not only for personal identity but for the local community's sanctioned moral values. "Narrative" thus defined is a concept central to his interpretation of "virtue ethics."[12] Naturally this exposes Hauerwas to the charge of sectarianism and relativism, since the term allows every sect and community to establish very unlike moral standards – something quite different from one morally absolute "rock of ages." To the charge of relativism, at least, Hauerwas concedes.[13] Contradictory or not, the term allows him to deny not only any church with a universal narrative, but also any church with a national narrative. His use of the term allows him to boast that he has "made a career criticizing the accommodated character of the church to the American project."[14]

A BOOKISH JOURNEY

But for his mother's prayer, Stanley Hauerwas might have lived and died a bricklayer. He had reading disabilities[15] in elementary school,

11 Ibid., 28.

12 MacIntyre, Alasdair, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (University of Notre Dame Press, first American edition, 1981, ISBN 978-0268005948, 252 pages), page 221.

13 Hauerwas, Stanley, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (University of Notre Dame Press, fourth edition, 1981, ISBN 978-0268007331, 298 pages), 101.

14 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, ix.

15 Ibid., 19.

and even today admits:

> I cannot spell and [...] I have a penchant for getting word order wrong.[16]

Nevertheless, he realized early on that books were the way to the fulfillment of his mother's prayer. Stanley earned a New Testament reading pin[17] from Linz Jewelers,[18] which the jeweler offered to students in association with the public school system. He found in the Methodist church's library *A Faith for Tough Times*, a book of sermons by Harry Emerson Fosdick.[19] At Southwestern University in Georgetown, just north of Austin, he found a true friend and intellectual peer, the celibate John Score, who introduced him to Plato, Nietzsche, and other philosophers.[20] Stanley also discovered the Cokesbury bookstore in downtown Dallas.[21] He joined the "notorious Faith and Life Community in Austin"[22] – notorious for its blend of psychotherapy and radical theology, and for its appeal to Tom Hayden.[23] During all his time at Texas schools, he would return home in summer to lay brick with his father.

In 1962, at age 22, Hauerwas went to the divinity school at Yale.[24] And although he just missed a legendary generation of theologians

16 Ibid., 190.

17 Ibid., 6.

18 Joseph Linz came to Texas in 1877, to sell diamonds not exactly door-to-door but ranch-to-ranch; his Dallas store opened in 1891. See Hollandsworth, Skip, "The Carat and the Schtick," *D Magazine* (published December, 1986) <https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1986/december/the-carat-and-the-schtick/> accessed November 21, 2018.

19 Ibid., 5.

20 Ibid., 10.

21 Founded originally as the United Methodist Publishing House in 1789, it carried secular titles as well. The store that opened in downtown Dallas in the 1920s has long been closed, although a storefront still exists at 5905 Bishop Boulevard in north Dallas.

22 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 13.

23 Tom Hayden was one of the best known of the student radicals of the 1960s. He was one of the founders of the Students for a Democratic Society, author of the Port Huron Statement, and one of the defendants in the Chicago Seven trial in 1969.

24 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 47.

associated with Yale – H. Richard Niebuhr, Roland Bainton, Robert Calhoun, George Lindbeck, and Hans Frei, from whom he took just one course – he stated that "I am not sure if I became a Christian at Yale, but I certainly began to be a theologian because of what I learned there."[25] What he did learn from one Yale theologian is telling:

> [I]f anyone cares enough to try to understand the way I do theology they will discover that I am a pale imitation of [Julian N.] Hartt.[26]

Hartt's best-known work begins as follows:

> As a form of criticism of culture the Social Gospel was lively, productive, and pertinacious. Reactions to it were remarkably diverse; and even its memory is execrated by people whose unyielding devotion to the King James Version is an integral part of a version of Christianity dedicated to the sanctity of private property, free enterprise, white supremacy, the segregation of the races, the gold standard, and the open shop.[27]

The intellectual formation at Yale nevertheless allowed time for Hauerwas to learn something of the problems of the working man. While working summers at G&O Manufacturing at New Haven, he became convinced of the need for labor unions;[28] he was "drawn into New Haven democratic politics," especially under the influence of Robert A. Dahl's study of power structures in that city in his 1961 book *Who Governs*;[29] and he was a defender of Black Power.[30] Looking back nostalgically on those days, Hauerwas says:

> Of course, it would be a mistake to romanticize [the Sixties].

25 Ibid., 49.
26 Ibid., 52.
27 Hartt, Julian N., *A Christian Critique of American Culture: An Essay in Practical Theology* (Wipf & Stock Publishers, April 1, 2006, paperback reprint of 1967 original, ISBN 978-1597522335, 464 pages), page 3.
28 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 56.
29 Ibid., 57.
30 Ibid., 79.

> The liberations heralded destroyed many. But for me the sheer energy, the willingness of many to put their lives on the line, and the challenge to imagine a different world remain gifts.[31]

FORMATION IN THE NORTHEAST

Stanley has never felt the need to modify his statement that "[s]ometime between 1960 and 1980, an old, inadequately conceived world ended, and a fresh, new world began."[32] The more bookish than activist Hauerwas protests that he is neither a liberal nor a feminist, yet he somehow manages to say that he prefers "the more radical feminists like Shulamith Firestone".[33]

In 1970, Hauerwas went to teach at Catholic Notre Dame, although it was no longer dominated by the Holy Cross order: Jesuits, Protestants, and laity by that time were teaching there.[34] The interdenominational medley suited him. Then, as now, he is untroubled by any need to identify himself with a particular faith – for which mutability he has been accused of "promiscuous pew-hopping."[35] As he said, "At the time, I did not think I was either Protestant or Catholic,"[36] and "I have never had a home in a particular ecclesial tradition."[37] He admits that his "position" – which he protests is not a "position" at all, but theology proper[38, 39] – is "a strange brew of Catholic and Anabaptist resources".[40] Despite being received into

31 Ibid., 84.
32 Hauerwas, Stanley; Willimon, William H.; *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Abingdon Press, expanded 25th anniversary edition, April 15, 2014, ISBN 978-1426781902, 198 pages), page 15.
33 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 90.
34 Ibid., 97.
35 Hauerwas, Stanley, *The Hauerwas Reader* (Duke University Press, first edition, paperback, July 23, 2001, ISBN 978-0822326915, 729 pages), page 22.
36 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 94.
37 Ibid., 254.
38 Ibid., 134.
39 Ibid., 63.
40 Ibid., 135.

Broadway United Methodist Church in a poor part of South Bend, Indiana during Easter, 1980,[41] and moving to the Methodist Duke University later in the decade, he nonetheless has called himself an Episcopalian,[42] a "high church Mennonite,"[43] a "Mennonite camp follower,"[44] and a "neo-Anabaptist."[45]

In spite of his equivocation of faith, sometime during his Notre Dame years he hardened unequivocal views in politics, stating that "I combine what I hope is a profound commitment to fundamental Christian convictions with a socially radical ethic", and that "worship of Jesus is itself a politics [...and... b]asic to such politics is the refusal of [...] violence".[46] He bluntly affirms his embrace of pacifism, names its inspiration for him, and seals it off from any theoretical questioning by making it an article of faith:

> I am not a pacifist because of a theory. I am a pacifist because John Howard Yoder convinced me that nonviolence and Christianity are inseparable.[47]

Hauerwas considers his own 1991 pacifist manifesto for Christianity, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, to be the most comprehensive of all his work.[48] Beyond this fixed star of pacifism, however, Christianity can offer few answers:

> When Christianity is assumed to be an 'answer' that makes the world intelligible, it reflects an accommodated church committed

41 Ibid., 141.

42 Hauerwas, Stanley, "Why Community Is Dangerous," *Plough Quarterly Magazine* (No. 9, published Summer, 2016) <https://www.plough.com/en/topics/community/church-community/why-community-is-dangerous> accessed October 30, 2018.

43 Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*, page 6.

44 Hauerwas, Stanley, *Dispatches from the Front: Theological Engagements with the Secular* (Duke University Press, May 24, 1995, ISBN 978-0822317166, 248 pages), page 22.

45 Hauerwas; Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, 178.

46 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 135.

47 Ibid., 60.

48 Ibid., 137.

> to assuring Christians that the way things are is the way things have to be. Such 'answers' cannot help but turn Christianity into an explanation. For me, learning to be a Christian has meant learning to live without answers. Indeed, to learn to live in this way is what makes being a Christian so wonderful. Faith is but a name for learning how to go on without knowing the answers.[49]

The Peaceable Kingdom, the key book in the Hauerwas corpus, was made possible by his momentous encounter with Alasdair MacIntyre's groundbreaking book, *After Virtue*, published in 1981.[50] Yet the pacifism in *The Peaceable Kingdom* was not from MacIntyre, but from the second great philosophical influence on his thinking, the aforementioned John Yoder, whose most important book was his 1972 *The Politics of Jesus*.

It was from John Yoder that Hauerwas drew another line of thought: The critique of – as Yoder called it – America's "Constantinianism." This latter concept is the belief that Christians are an exceptional people whose beliefs anoint them with the ability, indeed the duty, to guide the nation-state, without necessarily merging the functions of church and state. Hauerwas would deny Christians the use of the political process to enact Christian legislation or pursue Christian social goals.[51] Naturally this exposes him to the criticism that he advocates a political quietism that withdraws Christians from political life entirely. Hauerwas responds not with a clarification, but with a pivot to the term "narrative," a prolific theme inspired by his reading of Hans W. Frei, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and others. As mentioned, it is understood as a story rooted in locality and place:

> Yoder understood well, therefore, that you do not free yourself of Constinianism by becoming anti-Constantinian. For him the alternative to Constantinianism was not anti-Constantinianism, but locality and place. According to Yoder, locality and place are the forms of communal life necessary to express the particularity

49 Ibid., 207.
50 Ibid., 160-161.
51 Hauerwas; Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, 43.

> of Jesus through the visibility of the church. Only at the local level is the church able to engage in the discernment necessary to be prophetic.[52]

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attack, Stanley was dismissed from the board of the ecumenical, conservative magazine *First Things* – a prominent journal with 27,000 subscribers, founded by theologian Richard John Neuhaus – for his pacifist views.[53] In response to anti-terrorist measures 15 years later, Hauerwas stated: "If the Trump administration should follow its brinksmanship logic and begin forcibly to register Muslims, Christians might identify as Muslims" to subvert such registrations.[54] How then should a pacifist respond to terrorist attacks, especially on Christians? A few months after the European Union declared the ISIS attacks on Christians in northern Iraq to be genocide, Hauerwas recommended the certain martyrdom of sending "missionaries to be present in Iraq" during those attacks because "love to our persecuted brothers and sisters must mean facing the same dangers that they are undergoing."[55]

Closely related to the political criticism of the "American project" is his contempt for its economic system, of which he says:

> [E]conomic liberalism is antithetical to the formation of communities capable of caring for one another in the name of the common good.[56]

52 Hauerwas, Stanley, "The place of the church and the agony of Anglicanism," *ABC Religion & Ethics* (published September 27, 2012) <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/the-place-of-the-church-and-the-agony-of-anglicanism/10100274> accessed October 23, 2018.

53 Ibid., 268.

54 Hauerwas, Stanley; Tran, Jonathan; "A Sanctuary Politics: Being the Church in the Time of Trump," *Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Religion and Politics* (published March 30, 2017) <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/a-sanctuary-politics-being-the-church-in-the-time-of-trump/10095918> accessed November 2, 2018.

55 Hauerwas, "Why Community Is Dangerous."

56 Hauerwas, *Hannah's Child*, 269.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Hauerwas received one of theology's highest recognitions by being asked to give the Gifford Lectures for 2001. These lectures provided the material for his book *With the Grain of the Universe: The Church's Witness and Natural Theology*.[57] In that same year *Time* magazine named him "America's Best Theologian." The year before, his book *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* was listed among the 100 books that had a significant effect on Christians this century, according to the magazine *Christianity Today*.[58] His tremendously popular *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (co-written with William Willimon), a restatement of his themes from the point of view of a sharp distinction between the church and the world, still enjoys multiple reprintings, even after some 30 years.

Even now at age 83, Stanley remains very active, and he remains a prolific writer. In 2022, he received Lifetime Achievement Award from The Society of Christian Ethics.[59] In that same year he published Fully Alive: The Apocalyptic Humanism of Karl Barth.[60] He lectures and interviews frequently, always in that familiar Texas drawl that remains untouched by his great learning.[61]

57 Ibid., 262.

58 "Books of the Century," *Christianity Today* (published April 24, 2000) <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/april24/5.92.html> accessed November 23, 2018.

59 "Stanley Hauerwas, author of *Fully Alive*, Receives 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award from The Society of Christian Ethics," *University of Virginia Press* (last updated December 4, 2022) <https://www.upress.virginia.edu/news/stanley-hauerwas-author-of-fully-alive-receives-2022-lifetime-achievement-award-from-the-society-of-christian-ethics/> accessed April 5, 2023.

60 East, Brad, "The Ruins of Christendom," *Los Angeles Review of Books* (published July 10, 2022) <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-ruins-of-christendom/> accessed April 5, 2023.

61 Plough, "Stanley Hauerwas: What is the church's mission?" (YouTube, length 2:06, last updated March 16, 2023) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opKKCbvUFiE> accessed April 5, 2023.

Evangelical Review of Theology and Politics

Reviews

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Book Reviews

Linzey, A., & Linzey, C.
An Ethical Critique of Fur Factory Farming.
Palgrave Macmillan.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-10621-7
pp. ix-100 with index.

Reviewed by,
Stephen M. Vantassel,
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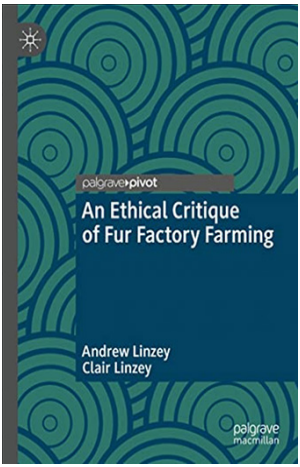


What duties do humans have toward non-human sentient creatures? That is the question that Professor Andrew Linzey, Director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics[1], has sought to answer since his landmark publication, *Animal Rights: A Christian Assessment*,

1. https://www.oxfordanimalethics.com/who-we-are/director/ visited 6 March 2023.

was published in 1976. Prof. Linzey along with his daughter, Dr. Clair Linzey, Deputy Director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics[2] continue this research as editors of a new book series on animal ethics of which *An Ethical Critique of Fur Factory Farming* is a part (p. ix).

Fur farming, as the name suggests, is the practice of raising animals in captivity for the purpose of harvesting their pelts for commercial purposes, such as garments. Fur farming is different to fur trapping in that the latter practice involves capturing free-range furbearers in their natural habitats rather than utilizing animals raised under controlled conditions, such as a warehouse (p. 1).

The text is remarkably short, consisting of only 81 pages (size 8.5 x 5.15 inches) divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 and chapter 8 introduce and summarize the topic and arguments respectively. Chapter 2 surveys the scope of the fur farming industry from an economic perspective along with a summary of the typical life of a furbearing animal housed in a fur farm. Chapter 3 engages key industry legislation and regulations, primarily in Europe, noting that the trend is toward banning the practice.

The heart of the book really begins in chapter 4 with the Linzeys evaluating 14 key arguments employed by proponents of fur farming. These arguments ranged from appeals to historical tradition, freedom of choice, inadequacy of contemporary opinion to guide morality, sustainability, the domestic status of the animals and the anti-fur movement flows from western values. The authors contend that all the arguments are logically questionable or outright fallacious (p. 19). While the authors correctly point out the weaknesses of many of the arguments, this reviewer thought some of the pro-fur arguments were redeemable. In chapter 5, the authors' critique "Welfur", the name identifying fur farming standards proffered by fur farming proponents to ensure humane treatment of the animals.

2. https://www.oxfordanimalethics.com/who-we-are/deputy-director/ visited 13 March 2023.

Unsurprisingly, the Linzeys find the standards vague, insufficient and lacking real enforcement ability. In chapter 6, the Linzeys argue that fur farming endangers public health in several key ways. First, fur farm waste (e.g., excrement) pollutes water bodies. Second, continued exposure to the cruelty of fur farming causes psychological damage to fur farm workers leading to antisocial behavior (p. 61). Finally, fur farms create conditions where zoonotic diseases can live, emerge, and spread, such as with COVID-19 (pp. 62ff).

Chapter 7 discusses the ethical reasons why fur farming is morally indefensible. The authors reach back to the tired arguments namely that animals are innocent and that they suffer both pain and deprivation. The authors briefly use all three moral theories (deontological, utilitarian and virtue, which in the book is treated as theological). Fur farming, it is claimed, fails to be supportable by any of the ethical theories.

Unfortunately, *An Ethical Critique of Fur Factory Farming* has several key weaknesses. The weaknesses fall into three categories, namely charitableness, argumentation, and theological engagement. I will address each in turn.

I found that the Linzeys lacked charitableness with their opponents[3], by which I mean that frequently they failed to steel man their opponents' arguments (p. 41). For example, the Linzeys argue that the desire to ban fur farming is grounded in the same morality as banning cock fighting and bull baiting, namely, to stop cruelty (pp. 24-5). But that argument assumes that fur farmers believe their actions are analogous to cock fighting and bull baiting. Is fur farming morally equivalent to cock fighting? Is it not possible that a fur farmer could oppose cock fighting because in that activity the suffering caused by two birds fighting to injure and/or kill each other is the goal of the activity whereas with fur farming, the goal is not suffering but obtaining fur? One may find the difference between the two

3. The Linzeys do assert that they do not think that all fur farmers are necessarily cruel (p.71), but how this compares with the alleged psychological damage sustained by fur farmers is not explained (pp. 61f).

activities minimal, as I guess the Linzeys would, but delving into a deeper explanation as to why the distinction lacks moral significance would have made a more compelling case. Too often the tone and type of arguments used by the Linzeys struck me more as made by people who have not deeply endeavored to see the world from the perspective of the pro-fur farming side.

Another instance of this lack of charity can be seen straight away in the book's title, which uses the term "factory" as in, fur factory farming. The use of the pejorative "factory" with its Dickens' and Marxist baggage, automatically condemns the opposing side. Is the use of inflammatory words helpful in convincing opponents to consider your point of view? Why not use the phrase, intensive fur farming? Ultimately, I wonder if the authors have supported fur farming if it wasn't intensive? I think not (cf. p.35).

The book's second problem lies in its argumentation. The Linzeys did not define key terms and concepts to ensure that meanings are clear[4]. For example, what exactly constitutes "cruelty"? This question is not a cheap debate trick, such as is done with those who wonder what constitutes pornography. Rather the definition lies at the crux of the debate in that all kinds of human activity involves and causes animals to experience pain and even death. If the standard for fur farming is zero injuries (p.45), is that reasonable? I do not think so and I was left with the impression that even if a fur farm could raise mink with a zero-injury score (which is doubtful), the Linzeys would still oppose it because of the privations caused by fur farming. Likewise, the authors frequently mention that fur is unnecessary or a luxury item (pp.22, 25). Presumably they said this to diminish the value of fur and therefore lower the evidence needed to undermine arguments in favor of fur farming. But what about other "luxury" items or activities whose development or use result in harm to animals? Are they to

4. Let me list a few of the terms that need substantial unpacking and explanation: "well taken care of" p. 34; "humane slaughter" p. 36; abusive practices p. 39; and unnecessary suffering p. 74.

be banned as well? If not, why not? For example, most airline passengers have no idea of the number of birds being hazed and/or killed[5] to prevent catastrophic bird strikes.[6] Does this make airline travel a cruel act? Why or why not? The Linzeys should have explored the inner workings of their claim. Simply repeating the point that fur farmed animals suffer does not help readers develop criteria for evaluating when suffering is justified or not. Andrew Linzey's director page shows a picture of him carrying what I presume to be his pet dog. How does Linzey distinguish the true feelings and desires of the dog as opposed to the behavior of an animal that suffers from Stockholm Syndrome?[7]

Another aspect of the Linzeys' problematic argumentation centered on their use of evidence and standards of even handedness. For example, the authors claim that mink live in the wild for 10-12 years but in a fur farm only 6 months (p.55). The implication being that fur farming deprives mink from the chance of living a full life. While the Linzeys did not specify whether they were referring to American (*Nevison vision, formerly Mustela vison*) or the endangered European mink (*Mustela lutreola*)[8], the

5. Begier, M. J., Dolbeer, R. A., & Washburn, J. E. (2021). Protecting the Flying Public and Minimizing Economic Losses within the Aviation Industry: Assistance provided by USDA-Wildlife Services to reduce Wildlife Hazards to Aviation Fiscal Year 2020. Washington, D.C.: U.S Department of Agriculture - Wildlife Services Retrieved from https://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/wildlife_damage/fsc-ws-assist-aviation-fy20.pdf

6. Dolbeer, R. A., Begier, M. J., Miller, P. R., Weller, J. R., & Anderson, A. L. (2022). Wildlife Strikes to Civil Aircraft in the United States, 1990-2021. (Serial Report Number 28). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Aviation Administration & U.S. Department of Agriculture - Wildlife Services Retrieved from https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/2022-07/Wildlife-Strike-Report-1990-2021.pdf Study states that in 2021, there were 15,556 strikes reported in the U.S. system.

7. I wish to thank Wes Jamison for this notion.

8. Maran, T., Podra, M., Polma, M., & Macdonald, D. W. 2009. The survival of captive-born animals in restoration programmes - Case study of the endangered European mink *Mustela lutreola*. Biological Conservation 142:1685-1692. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2009.03.003 and The Mammal Society. (2023). American Mink - *Neovison vison*. Mammal Society. Retrieved 9 March from

fact is neither live that long in the wild.[9]

Finally, the Linzeys' appeal to theology in general and to Christianity in particular, had all the weaknesses of the flattening effects of ecumenicalism. I would concede that the authors were likely not trying to make a detailed theological case for their view. However, the selective, and I would suggest highly biased, use of theology was particularly goading. For example, they appeal to Matthew 25:40 as our model for treating our fellow humans and by extension the animal kingdom. But how does that accord with Jesus' anti-animal behavior in allowing pigs to be demonized (Mark 5:13) and ultimately drown without any evidence of concern for the pigs' welfare? Or what about the miracle of the fishes where Jesus allowed fish to be harvested in abundance just to prove a point (Luke 5:6)? Are those the activities of a man who sees his role as a "servant species" to creation (p. 75)? Religions do suggest kindness toward animal creatures but that is only the context of clearly distinguishing that humans are ontologically and morally distinct from animals. Humans can do things to animals that they can't do to humans because animals and humans are morally different is significant ways. I found it particularly intriguing that in all the arguments used by the Linzeys they never once compared our treatment of the unborn as a moral cudgel against our bad treatment of animals.[10] This is quite odd given that the unborn is sentient and is morally innocent and vulnerable (cf. pp. 69ff). I would suggest that this oversight, if not deliberate, stemmed from the Linzeys' inadequate appreciation for the

https://www.mammal.org.uk/species-hub/full-species-hub/discover-mammals/species-american-mink/

9. Lariviere, S. 1999. *Mustela vison*. Mammalian Species 608:1-9. In regard to European mink, I found a site that said the species had been known to live for 120 months (i.e. 10 years). But that is a potential number in the wild that only a small number of animals would ever achieve. EOL. 2023. *Mustela lutreola* (Linnaeus 1761). https://www.eol.org/pages/311519 visited March 9, 2023.

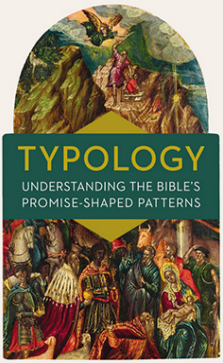
10. The Linzeys frequently employed arguments appealing to progressive moral evolution as when they said suggested the arguments in favor of fur farming were morally comparable to those used to support subordination of women, slavery, and racial inferiority p.20.

dignity of humanity or the sinlessness of Christ.

In sum, this book is a quick introduction to the argument's that animal activists have against fur farming and likely other consumptive activities involving animals. The Linzeys should be commended for discussing the issue of fur farming. Those interested in living a moral life, and Christians in particular, should reflect on the moral implications of their careers, be it theirs or others. As I argued in my own book, *Dominion over Wildlife? An Environmental-Theology of Human-Wildlife Relations*, animals do have moral status. They are not simply inanimate objects. However, the arguments and content of the book are not for scholars looking for a deeper discussion that recognized all the data and perspectives in a fair and forthright manner.

James M. Hamilton.
Typology: Understanding God's Promise-Shaped Patterns: How Old Testament Expectations are Fulfilled in Christ
Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic
ISBN: 0310534402 pp. 384.

Reviewed by, Aaron Kelley (MA student at King's Evangelical Divinity School)



In his book, *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promised-Shaped Patterns*, James M. Hamilton, Professor of Biblical Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, provides a rigorous methodology for studying typology. Hamilton's central argument is that, as God spoke promises and the biblical authors recorded

them, the authors recognized patterns emerging in the fulfillment of God's promises. The study of typology, therefore, is the study of these patterns and how they connect across Scripture. As an evangelical Baptist who affirms the divine inspiration of Scripture, Hamilton denies that the authors contrived these patterns alone. Instead, he argues that God ordained the historical events, promises, and records that gave rise to the literary patterns. Hamilton demonstrates throughout the book how these "promise-shaped patterns" ultimately link to and find fulfillment in Jesus Christ, thus providing unifying themes that tie the whole Bible together as a single coherent narrative (p. 4-5, 29-30).

The greatest challenge of Hamilton's book is also its greatest strength: the whole book is structured as a chiasm, which is a literary device where certain themes are addressed in order from the introduction to the central theme, and then the same themes are developed in reverse order from the central theme to the conclusion. This organization strengthens the book by allowing Hamilton to deal with themes progressively and manageably, communicating connections without sacrificing clarity in a book dense with material. Because of this chiastic structure, Hamilton suggests reading both chapters 1 and 11 first to understand the overall structure and methodology of the book before moving on to the other chapters (p. 29), a suggestion which this review will follow.

In Chapter 1, Hamilton outlines his methodology, looking particularly at "micro-level indicators", including historical correspondence and escalation, for discovering the authors' typological intentions (p. 19). He defines typology as "God-ordained, author-intended historical correspondence and escalation in significance between people, events, and institutions across the Bible's redemptive-historical story (i.e., in covenantal context)" (p. 26). To establish historical correspondence, Hamilton looks for four elements in

the biblical data: repeated key terms, repeated quotations, repeated sequences of events, and redemptive-historical/covenantal similarities. To establish escalation, Hamilton notes where these correspondences repeat and accumulate, thus creating anticipation for how God will fulfill the promises embedded in the patterns. This method is a key contribution to the field of biblical theology and thus is another unique strength of the book: the use of a clear, reproducible method for investigating typology that can test various interpretations.

In chapter 11, Hamilton focuses on the superstructural "macro-level" and tracks the biblical use of chiasms to communicate typological links, particularly in Genesis. Hamilton suggests that the book of Genesis can be structured as a chiasm and that even the content within each unit follows chiastic patterns (p. 337-338). Based on this structure, Hamilton argues that Isaac receiving a bride is the central point in the Genesis chiasm, communicating that the line to the seed of the woman promised in Genesis 3 will not be broken despite the deaths of Sarah and Abraham (p. 337, 342).

Hamilton also uses chiasms as organizing patterns for his own material, both within individual chapters and across the entire book. Each chapter in the book stands as a point in a chiasm, with the central chapter (Chapter 9) dealing with the "righteous sufferer" motif as ultimately fulfilled in Jesus. Hamilton employs this method so that typological persons in Part 1 (Adam in Chapter 2, Priests in Chapter 3, Prophets in Chapter 4, and Kings in Chapter 5) correspond respectively with typological events and institutions in Parts 2 and 3 (Marriage in Chapter 10, the "Leviticult" in Chapter 9, Exodus in Chapter 8, and Creation in Chapter 7). In addition to the benefit of balance, this book can be read in at least two different ways: in a linear progression or according to chiastic pairs. Either reading would allow the reader to process the material in distinct ways and thus deepen their appreciation for typology in Scripture. Hamilton proves his

case effectively, organizing historical correspondence and escalation thematically to demonstrate that the authors intended to forge these connections that culminate in Christ.

One minor but notable weakness bears mention: some of the proposed literary correspondences contain narrative inconsistencies, which puts the methodology in danger of exaggerating correspondences and thus losing credibility. In Chapter 1, Hamilton links God's commission of a guiding angel in Genesis 24 to a similar instance in Exodus 23. He argues that the repetition of the phrase links the servant's mission to get a bride for Isaac in Genesis 24 on the one hand to Moses' mission as a servant to procure a covenant partner for God in Exodus 23 on the other (p. 3). The problem with this literary link is the narrative inconsistency: the servant in Genesis 24 had not yet procured the bride, whereas Moses in Exodus 23 had already brought the people to God at Sinai. In the first case, the angel is sent before the bride is secured; in the second case, the angel is sent after Israel is rescued. There may be a literary correspondence, but the narrative inconsistency clouds the connection. Another example appears in Chapter 8. Hamilton argues that the account of Jacob deceiving Isaac parallels the account of the Fall in Genesis 3 and notes several points of correspondence. Some of the literary links, however, have strained narrative connections. For example, although Esau played no part in the deception of Isaac, Hamilton links God's judgment of the serpent with Isaac's judgment of Esau (p. 259). In the same section, Hamilton links the clothing of Adam and Eve after their transgression with the clothing of Jacob before his transgression (p. 259). Despite the literary links, the narrative elements are inconsistent in both cases, making some of the correspondences appear exaggerated and weakening the credibility of Hamilton's method. Hamilton could allay some skepticism by addressing these slight narrative inconsistencies.

Hamilton's contribution fits within the literature on inner-biblical

exegesis by maintaining similarities with other insights, advancing typological method, and avoiding some dangers of one approach to typology. Hamilton's approach resembles insights from Richard Longenecker's *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, where he outlines four types of Jewish exegesis employed to varying degrees by the apostles: literalist, midrashic, pesher, and allegorical (Longenecker, p. 84). Typology as outlined by Hamilton connects most closely to pesher exegesis, which is concerned with understanding the eschatological fulfillment of passages of Scripture (Longenecker, p. 95) and connects to how John's gospel emphasizes a typological understanding of the Old Testament as fulfilled in Christ (Longenecker, p. 280). Hamilton's argument runs in the vein of a kind of pesher exegesis by exploring how historical anticipation and fulfillment in the Scripture is communicated through types. An important clarifier that Longenecker offers based on his interaction with the literature is that, while allegorical interpretation looks for symbolic connections without historical correspondence, pesher exegesis aims to link symbolism with historical, eschatological fulfillment (Longenecker, p. 306). Hamilton also emphasizes historical correspondence as opposed to ahistorical interpretation.

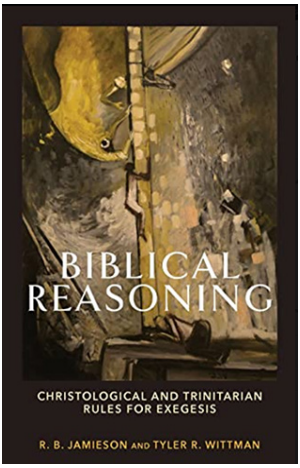
Furthermore, Hamilton's method as applied to typology is an improvement upon Richard Hays' seven criteria for "scriptural echoes" as outlined in *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, which studies how Paul uses the Old Testament in his own writings (Hays p. 30). Hays' seven criteria for a scriptural echo, which is comparable to what Hamilton means by "type," are the "availability" of scriptural sources, the "volume" of an echo demonstrated by the rhetorical significance given by the biblical author, the "recurrence" of a particular scriptural citation, the "thematic coherence" of the echo with the author's argument, the "historical plausibility" of Paul communicating and his audience understanding that echo, the "history of interpretation" in relationship to the proposed echo, and the "satisfaction" of the

echo in terms of making sense in context (Hays p. 30-32). Hamilton improves upon this approach by offering a more efficient method with two criteria instead of seven, although his two criteria generally accomplish the same goals as Hays' criteria with the exception of the "history of interpretation" criteria, which is not one of Hamilton's primary concerns in this book.

Finally, Hamilton demonstrates his commitment to a historical approach to typology by his refutation of the dangers of prosopological exegesis as defended by Matthew Bates. Prosopological exegesis argues that certain New Testament ascriptions of Old Testament passages to Jesus, such as Hebrews' citations of Psalm 22 and Isaiah 8 (p. 145), indicate that the Old Testament authors were really speaking from the personal perspective or "prosopon" of Jesus, which explains how those Old Testament passages apply to Jesus. Hamilton argues that this approach undermines the historical and literary context of Old Testament passages and that a typological understanding which looks to Christ as the fulfillment of the type preserves the historical and literary context of Old Testament passages cited in the New Testament (p. 145).

In sum, Hamilton demonstrates that studying typology properly does not involve imposing patterns onto the text but recognizing the patterns that the authors themselves intentionally included. This book is best suited for students, pastors, or scholars because of the use of Hebrew and complex content. Those who lack such exposure may experience difficulty yet can still benefit from the content.

R.B. Jamieson &
Tyler Wittman.
Biblical Reasoning:
Christological and Trinitarian
Rules for Exegesis
Grand Rapids: Baker Academic,
2022 ISBN 1540964671 pp 320.



Reviewed by, Aaron Kelley
(MA Student, King's Evangelical
Divinity School)

R.B. Jamieson and Tyler Wittman's book is a timely contribution to evangelical scholarship. A growing body of literature is engaging in the task of theological retrieval to reclaim classical theism for contemporary theology. Classical theism conceives God as the greatest being, thus possessing absolute attributes such as divine simplicity, omniscience, omnipotence, immutability, and impassibility. Classical theists apply this perspective to the doctrine of the Trinity and to Christology in particular, arguing that the persons of the Trinity are perfectly united in the one absolute being of God, meaning each person fully possesses all the divine attributes without being three separate Gods. Classical theists also explain how Jesus has two natures united in his one person, the divine nature possessing absolute divine attributes and the human nature not possessing those absolute attributes. To revive this tradition, scholars such as Matthew Barrett, Craig Carter, and Gavin Ortlund, among many others, currently write and teach on the subject of theological retrieval, which is the process of reading and appropriating the consistent witness of patristic, medieval, and Reformation theologians, particularly in theology proper and Christology. The

conflict that arises, however, is that three potentially competing lines of inquiry are involved: systematic theology, historical theology, and exegesis/biblical studies. Some scholars, including Bruce Ware and Wayne Grudem, have previously raised this question: to what extent should the classical tradition govern our reading of Scripture? Put differently, how do we reconcile these three lines to maintain a consistent, biblical, and theologically robust witness?

Jamieson and Wittman effectively tie these three lines together to produce a sound exegetical "rule-kit." The introduction sets forth the methodology of the book: creating a framework that sets exegesis and theology in a mutually informing relationship by critically retrieving and appropriating fourth-century principles of biblical interpretation.

The book is divided into two parts which develop seven principles of biblical interpretation. Part 1, which includes Chapters 1-3, focuses on the authors' first three principles: Scripture directs Christians towards eternal life in the vision of Christ's glory (p. 4), God uses all of Scripture to teach finite and fallen creatures (p. 24), and Christ presents himself to his people in inspired Scripture (p. 43). Based on these principles, readers should look at Scripture as a unified witness in order to understand its unified theological vision.

In Part 2, which includes Chapters 4-10, the authors develop their last four principles to demonstrate how the Trinity and the doctrine of Christ inform the task of hermeneutics. The fourth principle sets forth a qualitative distinction between creatures and the Creator: God created all things ex nihilo and thus transcends his creation (p. 74). This means readers should interpret Scripture in a "God-befitting" manner, making sure not to undermine God's transcendence in their interpretation (p. 77). The fifth principle affirms basic trinitarianism, that God is one nature in three

distinct persons (p. 91). Based on this principle, readers should discern in Scripture what qualities are common in the divine nature and what qualities are proper to the distinct persons. For example, omnipotence is common to all persons of the Trinity, but the term "begotten" is only properly applied to God the Son. Because the three persons hold the divine nature in common, the external operations of the Trinity are inseparable. Readers should be careful to maintain the unity of the persons in their works and to understand their common properties even when a passage applies a common divine property to a single person of the Trinity (p. 91). The sixth principle affirms the unconfused union of two natures in the Son's person, meaning he is truly human and truly God (p. 126). From this principle, readers should recognize that only one divine subject acts in the two natures. This is true even though Scripture sometimes ascribes to one nature what belongs to the other, which is known as the *communicatio idiomatum* (p. 127). Because of this unity of natures in one person, the authors commend partitive exegesis, or "two-nature exegesis," which aims to distinguish between what Scripture says about Christ according to his humanity versus what Scripture says about Christ according to his divinity (p. 154). The seventh and final principle explains the eternal relations of origin within the Trinity: the Father eternally generates the Son and the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and Son (p. 179). This principle helps readers to understand how Scripture uses these ordered personal relations to explain how the persons relate to each other and how they work together in their particular order (p. 179). In Chapter 10, the authors apply these seven principles to John 5:17-30 to model exegesis that is biblically sound and theologically informed (p. 213). The Conclusion closes the book with a reflection on how proper exegesis leads us to behold God's glory.

A couple of the book's weaknesses warrant note here. First,

although the rule-kit itself is helpful, the way the authors develop the framework is inconsistent with how they describe the relationship between exegesis and theology. The authors argue that exegetical reasoning epistemologically precedes theological reasoning (p. xvii, 56), but then they develop theological principles in Chapters 1 and 2 without first establishing an initial method of exegetical reasoning. In other words, they acknowledge that exegesis precedes theology, but then they explain their theology before their exegetical method. The usual hermeneutical considerations such as language, grammar, history, and literary context are not listed until Chapter 3, after the authors have already arguably employed some undefined exegetical method to develop their first two theological principles. This is in some ways intentional, as they admit that they "cannot justify every exegetical decision" as they could in a biblical studies volume (p. xx). They also clarify that they aim to derive rules for exegesis from principles of theology (p. xxii). Failing to explain their initial exegetical method, however, strengthens the criticism from the field of biblical studies that these kinds of books place doctrine before exegesis. This failure also undermines the authors' claim that exegetical reasoning epistemologically precedes theological reasoning. They could resolve this problem by taking the elements of exegesis mentioned in the section entitled "The Practice of Biblical Reasoning" in Chapter 3, previewing those elements in the introduction of the book, and then explicitly referencing those elements as they develop their initial theological principles. Doing so would allow them to remain consistent with their claim that exegesis epistemologically precedes theology.

A second weakness of the book is that it is ambiguous about what counts as "creaturely" when applying their "God-befitting" rule, particularly when referring to the Son's relationship to the Father. In describing the personal missions of the Father and Son (i.e., sending and being sent, respectively), the authors argue,

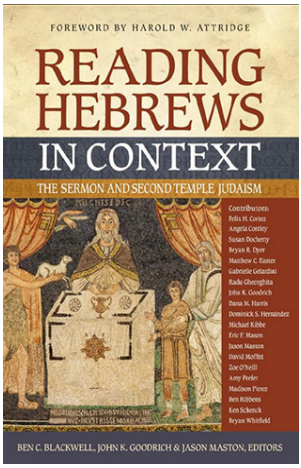
"the God-fittingness rule reminds us that divine missions are not like creaturely missions. They imply no temporal sequence, local commute, or chain of command...The Son therefore obeys *because* he is sent, not in his sending" (p. 205, authors' emphasis). In doing so, they deny that the divine Son is "subordinate" to the Father or that he "obeys" in his sending. Why? "Because commanding belongs to a superior, and obeying belongs to an inferior" (p. 202). For Jamieson and Wittman, affirming the divine Son's obedience in his being sent carries creaturely connotations that deny the Son's equality with the Father. While it might be true in human relationships that obedience implies inequality, it is not clear why commanding and obeying must always have these creaturely connotations, especially if the Son's generation does not carry the creaturely connotations of human generation. This problem is heightened in footnote 29 of Chapter 10, where the authors affirm that the word "dependence" is acceptable as opposed to "subordination," "provided the term is properly unpacked" (p. 234). It is unclear, however, why "dependence" or "generation" can be properly unpacked, but "subordinate" cannot be. Why is it inconsistent with the God-befitting rule to safeguard "obedience" and "subordinate" in a similar way? It would be helpful for them to demonstrate why these terms necessarily carry a creaturely connotation that cannot be unpacked to be God-befitting, like "dependent" or "begotten." Doing so would clarify the details of the God-befitting rule. As a result, it would also strengthen the process of partitive exegesis by indicating how the reader can discern what is categorically and irrefutably "creaturely," and thus what cannot be ascribed to the divine nature.

This confusion is particularly clear in their exegesis of John 6:38, where Jesus says, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me." The authors argue that the Son's submission in this passage is only human because "it

is soteriologically necessary that the will the Son submits to the Father is human" (p. 203). The problem with this exegesis is that it confines submission to the incarnation when Jesus explicitly does not confine that to the incarnation. In Jesus' statement, the "I" who came down from heaven, which refers to his pre-incarnate state, is the same one who is not doing "my own will but the will of him who sent me." Based on the text, it seems that Jesus' purpose in coming down from heaven was to submit his will to the Father's, which would in turn indicate a continuity of will and submission from his pre-incarnate state to his incarnation. In order to strengthen their argument to the contrary, the authors would have to demonstrate exegetically that Jesus refers to two different natures in sequence in this statement rather than one person coming down to submit his will to the Father's.

Jamieson and Wittman's book is a great exegetical resource that ties systematic theology, historical theology, and biblical studies together to produce a sound guide for biblical interpretation. This book serves as a great introduction to hermeneutics and theologically informed exegesis, whether for the new seminarian or the layperson looking to read their Bible more effectively. It also fills a gap in the burgeoning field of theological retrieval by contributing a detailed exegetical framework informed by theological retrieval, thus helping to bridge the divide between biblical studies and theological inquiry.

Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, & Jason Maston (eds.). *Reading Hebrews in Context: The Sermon and Second Temple Judaism.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2023. ISBN: 978-0-310-11601-1.



Reviewed by Jonathan Rowlands, Graduate Tutor and Lecturer in Theology, St. Mellitus College

Hebrews has undergone something of a resurgence in recent scholarship. It's not so long ago that it was numbered among the New Testament's 'muted voices',[1] but a recent rise in publications focussing on the text suggests this is increasingly not the case. And with good reason. It is, "one of the most intriguing documents in the New Testament, distinctive in its rhetorical style, its interpretation of Israel's Scriptures, and its presentation of the significance of Christ and his death," as Harold Attridge notes in the foreword to the present volume (p. xiii).

However, Hebrews' appeal does not diminish the fact that it is a difficult text. I sympathise with students who begin with every good intention and struggle to make it beyond the barrage of technical language and obscure vocabulary that comprises the exordium of Heb. 1.1-4. One of Hebrews' idiosyncrasies is that it often seems to operate within a different thought-world than other New Testament authors. To this end, when teaching Hebrews, I often find myself talking about the texts behind Hebrews, as

1 This phrase is taken from the title of Katherine M. Hockey, Madison N. Pierse, and Francis Watson (eds.), *Muted Voices of the New Testament: Readings in the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews* (LNTS 587; London: T&T Clark, 2017).

much as Hebrews itself. Grasping the content of Hebrews, in other words, requires guiding students through Second Temple Jewish texts with which they are often unfamiliar.

How grateful I am, then, to have this volume that brings Hebrews clearly into dialogue with these texts behind the text. Aimed at undergraduates and students unfamiliar with Hebrews, this volume follows the approach taken in the parallel volumes on Romans, Mark, and Revelation by pairing a key portion of Hebrews with a notable parallel text that illustrates the thought-world Hebrews inhabit. The aim is to allow scholars to demonstrate where and how Hebrews builds upon certain predecessors, and where it differs. In doing so, students gain an appreciation of the nuances missed in a superficial reading of Hebrews and are introduced to important texts from its wider Second Temple milieu.

Each chapter, then, sees a scholar discussing a potential influence upon the text and then, in turn, examining a specific portion of Hebrews in light of this given influence. So, for example, Chapter 1 sees Angela Costley bringing the thought of Philo of Alexandria to bear upon Heb. 1.1-4; Chapter 2 has Félix H. Cortez bringing 4 Ezra into dialogue with Heb. 2.1-9; and so on. (I won't repeat the full list of texts here; this can be gleaned quickly enough from the table of contents). Each chapter also concludes with a bibliography pointing students to further resources for study.

In the introduction to the volume, the editors clearly and concisely offer an overview of the key themes, debates, and figures in both Hebrews scholarship and study of Second Temple Judaism. This gives students the framework to make sense of the parallel pairing of texts that comprise the main body of the volume. The work also concludes with a helpful glossary of key terms and figures, alongside indices for passages, subjects, and authors. (Words that appear in the glossary also helpfully appear in bold in the main body of the text).

Most chapters discuss a text from Hebrews in conversation with texts from two primary sources: Philo and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Helpfully, the editors of the volume offer a clear overview of the methodological problems

arising from attempts to discern influence of these corpora upon Hebrews. For example, when introducing Philo of Alexandria, the seminal works of Spicq and Williamson are summarised with concision (pp. 4-7). Happily, readers rightly cautious of parallelomania in biblical scholarship need not be worried by this approach; the contributors are judicious in teasing out similarities between texts and are quick to highlight where potential influences have been overplayed. Angela Costley, for example, rightly concludes (pp. 29-30) that Philonic thought is unlikely to be behind the Christological claims of Heb. 1.3-4. Similarly, Gabriella Gelardini notes (pp. 174) a shared hermeneutical approach employed in Philo and Heb. 13.1-25 but is equally keen to stress their points of divergence in how this approach is employed by the respective authors. Where influence is more clearly ascribed to a parallel text – for example, in Matthew Easter's claim that Heb. 11-12 "likely parallels" 2 Macc. 6-7 (p. 144) – the case is made carefully and without hyperbole.

There is much to praise about this volume. The list of contributors itself is worth noting. The volume includes scholars who have long shaped Hebrews scholarship (Susan Docherty, Kenneth Schenck, David Moffitt) alongside those who will surely guide the field's future (Madison Pierce, Angela Costley, Zoe O'Neill). As such, the collection of essays not only reflects the best of where Hebrews scholarship has come from, but likely also the best of where it is headed. In other words, rather than a staid introduction, the volume brings students into a field that is genuinely alive with the possibility of future work. Students are invited into an ongoing conversation, not merely given a summary of past insights. In this respect, the editors are to be commended for their choice of contributors.

I am, rather unusually, reluctant to single out any particular contributions to the volume. Happily, this is because the chapters are uniformly of a high standard. Each chapter offers a different perspective on how Hebrews is to be read in its literary and theological context and, subsequently, the work as a whole would suffer were any of them omitted. To highlight a handful of works at the expense of others would, I think,

do a disservice to those whose work have contributed to a genuinely consistent level of quality throughout the volume.

Finally, and most significantly, this introduction offers real insight into *how* to study Hebrews as much as anything else. Moreover, it does this not through overly technical methodological content, but through showing scholars in the process of discussing parallel texts and the insights they glean from the actual application of this approach. More than an introduction to Hebrews, the volume serves as an introduction in how to study Hebrews. In other words, the contributions herein don't merely tell students what Hebrews is about but invite them and equip them to answer such issues for themselves. Scholarship is as much about asking better questions than it is about finding answers. This collection of essays enables and encourages students to ask better questions.

There is very little to detract from the book. An overly critical reader might find issues: Georg Gäbel and R.B. Jamieson's important works on the cultic thought of Hebrews are hardly mentioned, for example. (Jamieson is mentioned once; Gäbel not at all). Elsewhere, some might find German scholarship more broadly to be slightly underrepresented. (Reference to Erich Grässer's work, for example, is absent). But these would be disingenuous criticisms given the volume's intended readership. In an introduction such as this, brevity and clarity trump comprehensiveness; to expect this volume to instil doctoral-level knowledge of contemporary Hebrews scholarship would be unreasonable. Anything teachers find lacking in the volume (like the above examples), could easily be supplemented in a classroom setting if necessary. This volume is clear regarding its intended readership and it meets the needs of that readership well.

I can't recommend this book highly enough. If you are engaged in either the study or teaching of Hebrews, it is simply an essential purchase. It combines a breadth of scholarly contributions, clarity of purpose and content, and approach that forms students into patterns of scholarly thinking, rather than merely bombarding them with information. I can

think of no better introduction to a difficult text undergoing a scholarly renaissance. It is the book I wish had existed as a student; I am grateful to have it as a teacher.

Whitaker, Robyn.
Even the Devil Quotes Scripture
Grand Rapids, MI:
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
2023. 189 pp

Reviewed by,
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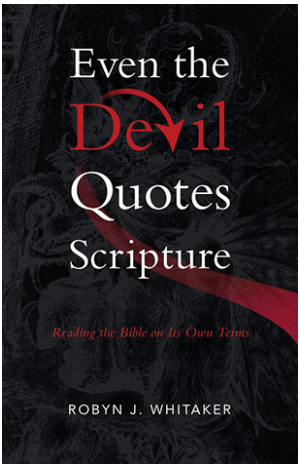


The title of Robyn Whitaker's book, *Even the Devil Quotes Scripture*, reflects the importance of biblical interpretation and the issue that Scripture can easily be wrested. Whitaker, who is Associate Professor of New Testament at the University of Divinity, Melbourne, addresses biblical hermeneutics, her journey of faith, and how her experiences have affected her method of exegesis. She begins by detailing her early life as a fundamentalist Christian, her journey into seminary, and her surprise as she studied the history of the biblical canon(s).

In chapter one, Whitaker addresses the different biblical canons used by different Christian groups, and what these groups mean when they say the Bible is "inspired". Ultimately, Whitaker admits that she has now left her fundamentalist view and instead holds to a much looser view of

inspiration. For Whitaker, inspiration is more of a feeling, rather than a type of dictation (p. 23). She also questions inerrancy by asserting that "the Bible itself is infused with cultural limitations and human bias as well as human imagination and creativity" (p. 28).

In chapter two, Whitaker argues that the Bible interprets itself. While this concept may seem relatively straightforward, Whitaker means something much more nuanced. She is not suggesting that one passage in the Bible helps to elucidate the original authorial intent of the initial passage, but rather later authors reinterpreted the Scriptures and created their own meanings and relevance (p. 54). For Whitaker, this is an example for the church. In fact, it is not merely an example, it is an imperative.

In chapter three Whitaker explains why this approach to interpretation is so important to her. She argues that biblical records hold contradictory information and these supposed contradictions are the result of different authors holding different interpretations. For example, Whitaker argues because Gen 1 and 2 are pitted against each other, it suggests that they were written by separate authors. In presenting her argument, she uses a blend of form criticism, comparing the creation accounts with other cultures' origin stories (p. 68), and source criticism, in which she associates the Gen 1 story with the "Priestly tradition of biblical writers" (p. 71).

In chapter four, Whitaker continues to argue that these apparent contradictions are not contradictions, they are simply multiple interpretations. Since later authors reinterpreted the Bible, and the Bible discusses events that pertain to history, later authors reinterpreted Israel and Judah's history. Thus, Chronicles is not a parallel account of history to Kings, it is an additional, different account, that focuses on different things. Historicity is not the concern. Theology is. The gospels are interpreted in this same way. Whitaker writes, "[The authors of the gospels] were not interested in writing a historically precise account of events for the sake of history alone. They were not impartial (not that any history is impartial)" (p. 98).

In Chapter five Whitaker argues that Jesus also reinterpreted the Bible,

just as Old Testament authors had. In examining Jesus's quotation of Isa 61 while in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:18–19), she suggests that Jesus interpreted the passage by "plac[ing] himself in the prophecy of Isaiah" and that the blended quotation (of Isa 61 and 58) could possibly be Luke misremembering the passage and accidentally combining two chapters. Thus, her approach focuses less on the authority of the text of Scripture and rather on the way that the text was used; the text was given immediate relevance and that immediately relevant form of interpretation provides a guide to the church today.

Finally, chapters six and seven are the climax of Whitaker's argument regarding interpretive method. To this point, Whitaker has attempted to show that the Bible should be interpreted with an emphasis, not on the text itself, but on how the text can be made relevant to the current situation. Furthermore, Whitaker reveals that the purpose of biblical interpretation is not understanding what historically took place and thereby attempting to understand God's working throughout history; interpretation is about love. Whitaker calls this approach the "hermeneutic of love." Whitaker defines love as "based in action: patience, kindness, lack of irritability, lack of arrogance, and forbearance" (p. 137). If one's interpretation does not result in an application related to love, then the interpreter has missed the point, and the text has not been made relevant.

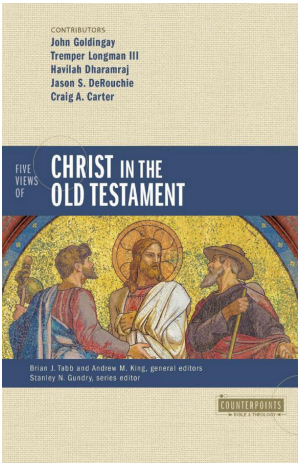
In many ways, Whitaker's book is fascinating as she impressively blends traditional hermeneutics with her "hermeneutic of love." The problem with her approach, however, is that it appears to approach the Bible in a way that the Bible itself does not advocate. While Whitaker uses the Bible to show how Jesus interpreted the Bible (which she does successfully), her initial assumptions about the Bible create a difficult dynamic in the book. Although Whitaker sees God as inspiring the Bible, she sees it as the flawed product of humans who will contradict one another and even make statements that are simply untrue. These assumptions lead to a difficult interpretive stance: "Many contemporary Christians…have been taught that inerrancy is the correct belief about the Bible…Such a stance

puts faith at odds with scientific and historical scholarship, pitting belief in a creator God against evolution, and rejecting contemporary medical insights on matters of gender or sexuality" (p. 26). Although this book seeks to consider how those in the Bible interpreted the biblical books that possessed, it also undermines itself by fighting the Bible's own authority. While the "hermeneutic of love" is helpful in establishing the first and second greatest commandments as the test by which the rest of the Bible is interpreted and applied, the book also creates doubts about the relevance of the Bible itself. Why is a hermeneutic of love significant if the Bible is riddled with errors and contradictions? Why use the Bible if one cannot really trust what it says?

Whitaker repeatedly recalls her seminary experiences and her struggle with seeing some of the possible biblical contradictions that she had not known as a fundamentalist. This book is her wrestling with that assault, and ultimately blending higher criticism with a belief in God's existence and inspiration of the Bible. What results is a book that asserts the importance of love, but ultimately breaks down the trust that one has in the Bible, and, while attempting to remain respectful toward the Bible, begins to push it into irrelevance.

With that said, if one can hold on to a high view of the Bible and overlook the faulty approach to certain biblical passages, this book has much to offer. Christianity needs to be reminded of the hermeneutic of love. Jesus taught that love was the summation of the law and the prophets (Matt. 22:36–40). Paul wrote that love was the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:8–10; Gal. 5:14). Furthermore, Jesus and Paul both derived their teaching from the Torah itself (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:4–9). Love is thus central to Christianity and Scripture revolves around it. Whitaker's book reminds Christians of this and urges us to take that love and put it at the forefront of our understanding, every time we read the Bible. Certainly, that is a valuable reminder.

Brian J. Tabb, and Andrew M. King, editors. *Five Views of Christ in the Old Testament: Genre, Authorial Intent, and the Nature of Scripture.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic 2022) pp. 322 ISBN 9780310125518, $26.99.



Reviewed by, Caleb Massey, King's Evangelical Divinity School

Five Views of Christ in the Old Testament[1] is a part of Zondervan's long running Counterpoints series. The format of this volume follows a presentation-responses-rejoinder pattern that makes the overall feel of the debate highly interactive. It allows for every contributor to interact fully with each contributor highlighting thought-provoking questions, pointing out weak or strong parts of the presentation, demonstrating gracious agreement and disagreement, and overall letting iron sharpen iron.

John Goldingay represents the First Testament Approach. He argues that Christ is not in the Old Testament, "that it is impossible to prove from the First Testament that Jesus is the Messiah" (p. 69) and "that we are unwise to read Jesus back into them and thus miss what they have to say" and yet "we are wise to read the New Testament in light of them" (p. 21). He explains from the Gen. 22 case study, "there is nothing to put the ancestors on the track of the idea that the passage may be messianic. Christ is not in Gen. 22, nor does Gen. 22 point to Christ. But Gen. 22 helped Mark

1 Contributors: John Goldingay, Tremper Longman III, Havilah Dharamraj, Jason S. DeRouchie, Craig A. Carter

and Paul understand Christ." Goldingay distinguishes the meaning of the text from its significance, that the First Testament has a meaning as it is written, while the New Testament highlights the significance of the First. In his rejoinder, after the other contributor's remarks, Goldingay humbly admits he overstated his case of the improvability of Jesus as Messiah in the First Testament, acknowledging that Paul does do this in Acts (p. 69–70).

Tremper Longman III argues for the Christotelic Approach. Christotelic meaning that Christ is the *telos* (from the Greek), the *goal* of the Old Testament, a term nearly synonymous with Christocentric. He advocates for a two reading method of the Old Testament. The first reading aims at grasping the literal meaning of the author in his context using the historical-grammatical approach, asking, "what was Solomon trying to say in Proverbs 8?" for example. Then, to follow with a second reading, taking what is known of the apostolic writings back to the Old Testament for greater illumination or *sensus plenior*, asking, "what would the New Testament writers see of Christ in Proverbs 8?" Each reading having a specific intent in focus.

Havilah Dharamraj explores the Reception-Centered, Intertextual Approach. This approach is set in contrast to "production-centered intertextuality, a largely author-centered, historical endeavor." (p. 128). Dharamraj's method focuses on the Common Reader, who operates by "instinct" to set Old Testament and New Testament texts into "conversation" with each other. She considers, the whole reader's community, background, and culture in exploring the Bible devotionally because the method is "a largely reader-centered, literary investigation." (p. 129).

Jason S. DeRouchie advocates for a Redemptive-Historical Christocentric Approach. He states that his proposal is "a multifaceted approach that accounts for the central role Jesus plays in redemptive history" and is "biblically faithful" (p. 181). He then suggests that passages in the Old Testament fall into three overlapping contexts— a close or immediate context of the book's specific meaning, a continuing context being the ongoing account of God's salvation history and a complete

context looking at the book through the whole of the Bible. Once contexts are clarified DeRouchie lists seven ways to see Christ in the Old Testament. These include any direct predictions, keeping the flow of God's salvation plan in mind, observing contrasts and similarities between the old covenant and the new, typology, how Yahweh acts, and identifies himself, wisdom and ethical ideals, and the law of love.

Finally, Craig A. Carter argues for the Premodern Approach. According to Carter this approach rejects the hermeneutical tradition of grammatical-historical method that has developed since the 19th century and seeks to return to an older, less Enlightenment influenced hermeneutic. He gives four principles for interpretation: 1) the Unity of Scripture, 2) the Priority of the Literal Sense, 3) the Reality of the Spiritual Sense, and 4) the Christological Control on Meaning. In line with his Premodern position Carter argues for a Four-Fold hermeneutical method popular in medieval times. He seeks to balance the literal and spiritual senses of the text writing that "the interpretation of Christ in the Old Testament itself arises out of the Bible's own account of the metaphysical situation in which interpretation occurs." (p. 265).

The primary aim of each contributor is to explain his or her particular view of how to read and interpret Christ in the Old Testament. Key questions that guided the writers were: "How do you understand the nature, unity, and progression of the Scriptures, and what role does the New Testament play in your interpretation of the Old Testament texts?" "What is the relationship between the intentions of the human authors and editors of the Old Testament and the divine author?" "How does your approach to Christ in the Old Testament benefit readers?" (p. 16). Guidelines for each chapter include a treatment on the nature of scripture and interpretive steps that Old Testament readers should take. Each author demonstrated their view using Gen 22:1–19, Prov 8:22–31 and Isa 42:1–4 as case studies for practical application.

A primary theme that emerged throughout the book was the issue of authorial intent with each author seeking the balance between the

human and divine. Longman writes that "we should insist on an author-centered understanding of meaning," leaning towards the human (p. 80) Carter states that "the focus on human authorial intent makes for very subjective interpretation," and advocates seeking divine meaning from the start (p. 120) All parties agree God is the ultimate author, thus the tension is unavoidable. Carter's view of seeking divine meaning as priority would operate under the umbrella of the Bible's emphasis on God desiring relationship with man. It allows God to speak through a relationship with the author, similar to God speaking through the incarnation of Christ.

In reading a book which clearly is structured to teach multiple views of a particular topic, it is easy to start seeing if you happily fall into one particular position or another or, on the other hand, vehemently disagree with a specific position. Tabb and King, the editors of this volume, preempt these thoughts when they write that "doubtlessly, readers will resonate more or less with aspects of each view. The goal, however, is not to adopt a particular label, but rather to develop a faithful and robust approach to Scripture that is self-aware of our presuppositions and methodology" (p. 293).

Being "self-aware of our presuppositions" is a key element to any hermeneutical approach, particularly those addressing the person of Jesus Christ. This volume will give you much food for thought as you work through each position and the counterpoints made by the other contributors. Even though there is a final rejoinder by each author to the collective responses given by the other contributors, I find myself wondering what more Goldingay, for example, may have said to Carter on a particular point or other, and if on longer term reflection how any of the authors may have modified their own views based on the feedback given in this volume.

One of the strengths of *Fives Views of Christ in the Old Testament* is its friendly back and forth approach of the authors. In past volumes this interaction has not been present, so it is helpful here to see what each writer thinks of the other's views and where they were challenged or found

something lacking. Dharamraj's perspective coming out of south Asia was a refreshing change to the more Western outlook. Carter's presentation of the Premodern Approach dared to challenge the grammatical-historical method. A method that should be critiqued more often in light of the New Testament usage of the Old Testament. As a whole, there is much in this volume that will help both the first year Bible school student and the seasoned scholar think more deeply about how one reads Christ in the context of the Old Testament.

One weakness of the book is that four of the positions come from a Western or Euro-Centric worldview. The inclusion of an offering from a Southern Asian culture opens up the question of how a believer from Brazil or Africa might read Christ in the Old Testament. Surely someone from a Muslim or Jewish background who came to Christ would have a different outlook again? Having at least one Messianic Jewish contributor would have enhanced the book greatly. In the same vein, there is a distinct lack of exploration in a first century Jewish hermeneutic as a guide to Christ in the Tanakh (Old Testament). Would this not have added greatly to the discussion of authorial intent? Each method was just that, a method, developed by the contributor over years of study. None wrestled with a hermeneutical approach rooted in Second Temple Period Judaism. Carter suggested the Four-Fold approach, but could equally have been justified in presenting PaRDeS, a four level Jewish method from medieval times.

Five Views of Christ in the Old Testament is a useful and thought-provoking volume on Old Testament/New Testament relations. For anyone interested in Christology broadly, Christ in the Old Testament specifically, or how the two Testaments work together, will benefit from reading this work. The language is not overly technical, but where it is technical it explains itself (except in the case of prosopological exegesis, I had to look that up elsewhere). There is a handy list in the back of all the works cited throughout for anyone who wants to explore more on the topic.

Patrick Deneen.
Regime Change:
Toward a Post-Liberal Future
New York, NY: Sentinel, 2023.
pp. 288, $30.00.
ISBN 978-0593086902.

Reviewed by,
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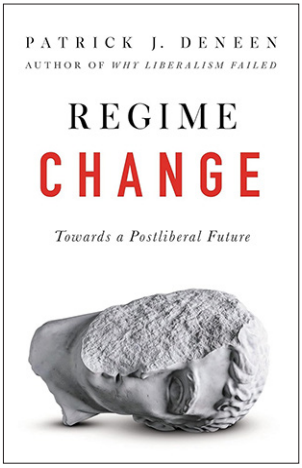


In his latest book, Patrick Deneen frames contemporary political turmoil as a re-instantiation of the classical conflict between the many and the few. The ancient solution to this problem was a mixed regime in which the classes were mixed and balanced, directing themselves towards the common good. Modern society is dominated by an elite few whose aims are greater economic freedom and transformation in social relations, as exemplified by classical liberals and socially progressive liberals.

Both types of liberals are united in an opposition to the inherent economic and social conservativism of common people which Deneen refers to as the 'many' (x-xi). The many desire elements of the American right and left, namely pro-life policies, a greater role for religion in public life, economic protectionism, the social safety net, and anti-monopolism. As ultimate ends the many seek, "stability, order, continuity, and a sense of gratitude for the past and obligation to the future (xiii)." Deneen's solution to this divide is not a different political system, but rather the replacement of the current elite with one more amenable to the conservatism of the many through a mixed constitution. To bolster his framing of the situation and advance his solution, Deneen splits his text into three sections. The

first outlines the problems of our current elite, the second presents his common-good conservativism (hereafter CGC), and the final section offers strategic advice for pursuing it.

In chapter 1, Deneen notes that the current conflict between classes is marked by negative partisanship, with neither admitting their own faults nor offering a defense of their class (17). Classically, however, each class was viewed as capable of unique virtues, while also being prone to particular vices. In contemporary American society, the few disdain those of lower station while the many exhibit numerous anti-social behaviors such as addiction, out-of-wedlock births and divorce. Conversely, the many are a repository of tradition and common sense, while the elite are creators of high culture and a sense of duty towards the many due to their own privilege. To prevent malformation, each class needs to act a check to the other, hence the need for a mixed constitution (22-25).

In chapter 2, Deneen describes the current elite as possessing four unique traits which distinguish them from historical elites. They are managerial, possessing interchangeable skills and favoring productivity and exercise, antihierarchical while displaying cognitive dissonance to their own status, reliant upon John Stuart Mill's harm principle as an offensive weapon to limit the people's opposition through claims of victimization, and the concentration and use of power through non-government entities such as universities, the media, and corporations (27-29).

Having presented the problem, Deneen now constructs his alternative in CGC. Chapter 3 classifies the western political streams of classical and progressive liberalism and Marxism as ideologies of disruptive social and/or economic progress. They only differ in their preference for the few or the many. These he contrasts with CGC which favors the many as an inherently conservative group seeking stability and rule by common sense (93-94).

The fourth chapter begins with the question, "Who is best capable of rule on behalf of the common good - a qualified few, or the general mass of the people (99)?" Progressives favor expertise, CGC the people's common

sense (102). Common sense stems from the vast pool of knowledge handed down over generations, makes connections between fields as opposed to specialization, and contributes to a stable society of generational continuity. A society which favors expertise requires increasing expertise to run, meaning that it functions as another mechanism by which ever-churning progress is advanced (110-111). The preference of one type of knowledge constitutes and advances a political project, rather than being the mere result of it.

Chapter 5 explains and promotes the ideal of a mixed constitution. The elite must be protectors of tradition and common sense of the people. Both of these contain the elite's ambitions, while the elite lift up the people through their advanced education and resources (125-26). Deneen spends the rest of the chapter tracing the lineage of this idea in the Western tradition.

In turning to his third section on prescriptions, Deneen states that the current progressive elites must be confronted by and displaced by a "muscular populism" with new elites lifting up the people, which he calls "aristopopulism" (147). In chapter 6, he advises that this displacement takes place by means of the "raw assertion of political power," to circumvent the economic and cultural institutions dominated by the current progressive elite. His guide in this area is Niccolò Machiavelli. Reflecting historically, Machiavelli viewed antagonism between the classes as both unavoidable and a healthy means by which the people could extract concessions from the nobility in Republican Rome. Historical examples provided include verbal tirades between the Roman Senate and mobs, mobs running through the streets causing economic shutdown and flight of the citizenry, public demonstrations, and refusal to serve in the military (165-67).

The use of Machiavelli is concerning, especially given the violence and discord associated with contemporary populism such as the falsely premised January 6th attack. As Christians we need to be cognizant that righteous goals are not advanced by unrighteous means. I do not believe Deneen is encouraging violence, but his advocation for Machiavelli results

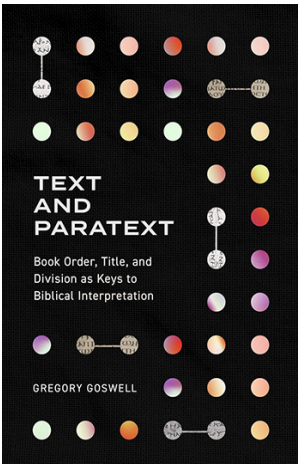
in ambiguity. A far better tutor for disruptive political action would Civil Rights leaders who accomplished unthinkable advances in the rights of minorities without violence.

Deneen's final chapter introduces a new idea that liberalism is inherently a system of separations of aspects of society, such as the division of labor, separation of powers, of Church and State, etc. He proffers how integrating these separations might help society move past liberalism (189).

While offering a convincing explanation of our country's current woes, Deneen's solution is hampered by the reality of right-wing populism in this country. By his own admission, "This movement from below is untutored and ill led. Its nominal champion in the United States was a deeply flawed narcissist who at once appealed to the intuitions of the populace, but without offering clarifying articulation of their grievances and transforming their resentments into sustained policy and the development of a capable leadership class (152)." In reflecting their leader, populists in America have mobilized, not for CGC, but instead false election fraud claims, anti-vaccine hysteria, and at times violence. This is not to say that Deneen's plan has no merit, but merely to state that it must take into account the anti-culture that exists in the populist right and offer a program to purge these vices from the movement.

On another front, evangelicals must decide if this is a fruitful path to follow in obedience to Christ. In seeking to replace the current elite, Deneen is arguing for pursing the very path warned again by social theorist, James Davison Hunter in his work *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World*. In that text, Hunter proposes a program of faithful presence within culture to spread the gospel as opposed to the seizing of power to impose Christian values from above. It is ultimately up to the Church to decide whether a program of leavening or taking over as the baker are better approaches to cultural change.

Greg Goswell.
Text and Paratext: Book Order, Title, and Division as Keys to Biblical Interpretation
Bellingham, WA: Lexham Academic, 2022. 256 pp.
£22.42 ISBN: 9781683596110.



Reviewed by, Mina Monier,
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One of the most promising avenues of biblical manuscripts today is the study of the biblical text as it appears within its material context, known as new philology. Many researchers around the world aim to understand how the text was transmitted as part of a codicological eco-system that cannot be ignored and superseded by our own projected views. In this respect, Professor Greg Goswell of Christ College (Australia) has published the new study on *Text and Paratext*. The objective of this book is to introduce the shape of the canon, as it appears in the manuscripts that survive today. A reader of the book title would expect to find a survey of both textual and paratextual features in ancient biblical manuscripts. However, the author limits his scope to book order, title, and division as keys to biblical interpretation. This led me to wonder what was really meant by "paratext" in the title. According to Goswell himself, a paratext "may be defined as everything in a text *other than words*, that is to say, those elements that are adjoined to the text but are not part of the text itself if 'text' is limited strictly to the words" (p. 1). This definition

strikes me as inaccurate. A paratext is by definition a *text*, even if it is a secondary text, being supplementary to the main (running) text, yet it cannot be reduced to symbols or structures (division). Therefore, the book continues to define paratext as the order of the books and their respective divisions (pp. 180-2). Goswell even adds a footnote to this definition, in which he quotes Martin Wallraff and Patrick Andrist's definition of paratext, being "all contents in biblical manuscripts except the biblical text itself"[1] which is very different from what Goswell says.

The book is divided into three parts corresponding to the canonical structure, book titles, and textual divisions. Under each part, Goswell surveys the main aspects of the Old and New Testament books in order, concluding every chapter with guidelines for interpretation. These guidelines are particularly helpful as they enable the reader to see the relevance of the studied themes of canon, order, titles, and book divisions for contemporary application, and how to negotiate what is found in ancient manuscripts with modern scholarly views. This practice justifies Goswell's very important statement in the beginning of the book: "every Bible is a Study Bible" (p. 4). This study does not go into detail regarding the diversity of manuscript witnesses, but it offers an essential and handy tool for students to familiarise themselves with the aforementioned themes, and how to use them in their own study of the Bible. In this respect, and within the limitations of its scope, it is a welcome book particularly for those who teach Biblical modules.

1 Wallraff, M., & Andrist, P. (2015). Paratexts of the Bible: A New Research Project on Greek Textual Transmission. Early Christianity, 6(2): 237–243, at 239.

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