THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE

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In spite of admitted limitations in knowledge about the future, a fairly good understanding of the kingdom of Christ as it is portrayed in the last book of the Bible is possible. Though allowance is made for a present aspect of the kingdom, the time of the kingdom in its ultimate form is clearly future. The location of the kingdom is fixed in the earthly sphere rather than a heavenly one. The nature of the kingdom is political and outward in the common understanding of the terms and not merely spiritual and hidden. This is seen from its OT roots, the means by which it is established, and the internal conditions with which it must cope. The span of the kingdom covers the period between Christ's second coming and the creation of the new heavens and new earth—a period of one thousand years on earth as it is now known and then an unlimited phase after the new creation.

Any approach to the predictive portions of the Apocalypse must be with a full sense of limitations imposed on human comprehension of future events, even those spelled out in Scripture in nonapocalyptic terminology (cf. 1 Pet 1:10-11). Yet recognition of the impossibility of comprehending enough details to satisfy human curiosity must be balanced with a determination to know as much as the Inspirer of Scripture intended by way of doctrinal motivation for intelligent Christian life and responsibility. Basic data about the future are discernible if care is exercised to avoid foregone conclusions.1

1Contrary to many current opinions on hermeneutics, preunderstanding is not an element to be factored into the hermeneutical process. It is rather the goal of the interpreter to repress personal bias and to let the text speak for itself.
The text of John’s Apocalypse yields satisfactory answers to at least four questions regarding one of its very prominent themes,2 the kingdom of Christ: What are the time, location, nature, and duration of this kingdom? Too often studies related to the kingdom in Revelation have come only from a limited part of the book, Rev 19:11–20:10 or some comparable smaller context.3 Answers to the above questions should arise from a consideration of the whole book as the following discussion will propose.

THE TIME OF THE KINGDOM

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2McClain furnishes impressive statistical data that demonstrate the prominence of kingdom-related terminology in Revelation by itemizing the frequency of thronos (basilea), didhma (diadma), stfanow (stephanos), basilev (basileu), joysa (exousia), poimanv (poimain), krv (krin), krsiw (krisis), krima (krima), uymw (thymos), and org (org) (Alva J. McClain, The Greatness of the Kingdom [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959] 442-43).

John speaks of being a "fellow partaker in the affliction and kingdom and endurance" with his readers (1:9). A common explanation of this expression has been that the present experience of tribulation is what brings in the kingdom (cf. Acts 14:22), but endurance is mentioned to remind the readers that the kingdom in its fullness has not arrived. A struggle yet remains. Because of the governance of the three words by πάντας άπαντας (en t) in 1:9, perhaps a better view of the expression is to see the three as a hendiatris, i.e. the use of three words with only one thought intended. The major element is "affliction" and the other two words characterize that affliction as being not what the world experiences, but what is particularly connected with the kingdom (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 20:6) and one which requires "endurance" or "patient waiting" (Rev 3:2, 3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12). No matter which explanation is adopted, with little or no dispute "kingdom" in 1:9 refers to the millennial kingdom described more fully in Revelation 20, the future kingdom spoken of by Christ (e.g., Luke 12:32; 22:29), Paul (e.g., 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Thess 1:5), and James (e.g., Jas 2:5). Anticipation of this kingdom is an integral part of present Christian experience, as is seen in the mention of "endurance" motivated by an expectation of coming deliverance (cf. "endurance of hope," 1 Thess 1:3).

Yet the kingdom in Revelation is not only future. An isolated reference to the "kingdom" as a collective designation for believers in Christ during the present era occurs in the introductory doxology in 1:6. Such a corporate designation recalls a continuing NT theme traceable to the beginning of Jesus' parabolic teaching regarding the mysteries of the kingdom (cf. Matt 13:1-52). This present kingdom is a theological entity noticed occasionally by other NT writers (e.g., Col 1:13), but the present kingdom pales into minor significance in the rest of the Apocalypse and may be construed as essentially negligible, since it serves only as a foreshadowing of the future kingdom. Basilea (Βασιλεία, "Kingdom") in the LXX and the NT speaks most often of the Messianic rule and kingdom, an emphasis which most vividly carries

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5E. W. Bullinger, The Apocalypse or "The Day of the Lord" (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, n.d.) 149.
7Swete, Apocalypse 12.
8Fiorenza describes the present and future kingdoms in the Apocalypse this way: "The Kingdom of God, which in the eschatological future will be realized in the entire cosmos, is now through the reality of the Christian community present on earth in the midst of the worldly demonic powers" (Elisabeth Fiorenza, "The Eschatology and Composition of the Apocalypse," CBQ 30/4 [Oct 1968] 559-60).
The Master's Seminary Journal

over into John's Revelation. It reaches its climax in chapter 20 where the future share of the saints in Christ's earthly rule is expressly described (Rev 20:4; cf. 5:10; 11:15). The song of the elders in 11:16-18 is a proleptic anticipation of the millennial reign (20:6), the wrath of the nations (19:19; 20:8), the wrath of God (19:11-21; 20:10), the judgment of the dead (20:12), and the reward of the faithful (chs. 21:1-22:5).

It expands the comparable announcement of 11:15 that the kingdom of God and of His Christ will have arrived at the point anticipated. This end-time event is not to be confused with the progress of the kingdom of God on earth following Christ's incarnation.

Other indicators of a dominant focus on the kingdom's futurity in the Apocalypse include the following:

(1) To the overcomers in Thyatira and elsewhere, Christ promises a future "authority over the nations" (2:26) based on their future destruction of them "with a rod of iron" (2:27). This is a clear promise of a share in Christ's future rule over the nations (cf. 17:14; 19:14).

(2) To the overcomers in Laodicea and elsewhere, Christ promises the future privilege of sitting with Him on His throne (3:21). As with the rest of the promises to overcomers in Revelation 2-3, this one too points forward to conditions described in Revelation 19-22.

Christ's throne is distinguished from the Father's throne in 3:21. The latter is in heaven, and the other is on earth, belonging to Christ as the son of David in the future millennial reign.

Because He is David's son, He will inherit David's throne (cf. Ps 122:5; Ezek 43:7; Luke Clark, 1950, p. 77.

10Lee, "Revelation" 4:645.
11Cf. Lee, "Revelation" 4:645. It can hardly be accurate to conclude that the resumption of God's direct rule began at the birth of Jesus as Sweet assumes (J. P. M. Sweet, Revelation [Pelican; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979] 192).
13Beckwith, Apocalypse 470.
Some reject this possibility. Bruce has written, "In all his [Jesus's] recorded teaching there is not one reference to the restoration of David's kingdom . . . , but on the contrary, the gospels and the rest of the NT are full of references to Christ's Davidic lineage. Christ emphasizes His own Davidic lineage and His role as David's Lord (Matt 22:42-45; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44), and Gabriel explicitly states that Jesus will occupy David's throne when He comes in His future glory (Luke 1:32; cf. Dan 7:13-14; Matt 25:31; Acts 2:30; Heb 2:5-8; Rev 20:4). The gospels use "David" thirty-nine times, once calling him "David the king" (Matt 1:6; cf. Acts 13:22; 15:16).

Likewise, from beginning to end, Revelation in particular emphasizes Christ's assumption of the Davidic throne (cf. 1:5, 7; 3:7; 5:5; 22:16). He promises the overcomer a share in this earthly throne.

Revelation 5:10 refers to the future kingdom again: "You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." The redeemed people of God will not only be a people over whom He reigns, but also share in God's rule in the coming millennial kingdom (cf. 1 Cor 4:8; 6:3). The future tense of basilesoysin (basileusoun) in 5:10 shows this kingdom to be the goal toward which the program of God is advancing (cf. 20:4, 6). The present kingdom serves only as a faint preview of the ultimate kingdom that is future insofar as the Apocalypse is concerned, with only one reference in the entire book pointing to it (1:6). That believers will serve as reigning powers means that they will be the equivalent of kings in this forecast epoch. Spelled out more particularly regarding the millennium in 20:4 and the new heavens and new earth in 22:5, this means their joining with Christ in His millennial and eternal reign.
following His second advent. The futurity of the kingdom is a foregone conclusion for John. It was future not only for him, but also for the entire period of the representative churches whom he addresses in the last decade of the first century. Its futurity is expressed in all three types of literature in Revelation: the narrative (1:9), the epistolary (2:26-27), and the visionary or apocalyptic (5:10). Raber's peremptory dismissal of futurism in the book's treatment of the kingdom is oblivious to overwhelming evidence in the text. So thoroughly imbedded in John's words is this perspective that Ladd has written, "This is the central theme of the book of Revelation: the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth." In light of the prevailing focus of the book, the kingdom can hardly be dated anytime but in the future. If Rev. 20:1-10 is that "ultimate institution" or a part of it, as subsequent discussion in this essay will verify, this fact in essence rules out any theory that Rev 20:1-10 is in any sense a recapitulation of a previously described period before and including the personal return of Christ.

THE LOCATION OF THE KINGDOM

A recently revived theory of dating the Apocalypse in the A.D. 60's seeks to limit the period covered by the Apocalypse to only the very beginning of the church era. This date is suggested in lieu of the traditional date of the A.D. 90's. The early-date preference has characterized one element of the Theonomist movement (i.e., Reconstructionism) (David Chilton, The Days of Vengeance, an Exposition of the Book of Revelation [Fort Worth, TX: Dominion, 1987] 4; Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation [Fort Worth, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989] 1-353). This movement's postmillennial perspective and consequent optimism about Christianity's success in gaining control of secular society necessitates this dating because of Revelation's acknowledged pessimism about society's increasing hostility toward Christians. An early dating of the Apocalypse allows the Reconstructionist to seek fulfillment of its prophecies in the events culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but leaves him to face an uphill battle forging a convincing argument that the book was written this early. Testimony of early Christianity opposes such an early date by putting the book's composition in the 90's (cf. G. B. Caird, The Revelation of St. John the Divine [HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1966] 6; G. R. Beasley-Murray, Revelation [NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978] 37-38; Sweet, Revelation 27; Robert H. Mounce, The Book of Revelation [NICNT, F. F. Bruce, gen. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977] 36; Helmut Koester, Introduction to the New Testament [2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982] 2:250-51). Besides, an early date would create the unlikely probability of John's being side-by-side with Paul in simultaneous personal ministry to the churches of western Asia Minor. According to extant sources, John could not have arrived in this area in time to have written the Apocalypse from there during the 60's.


Ladd, Revelation 161. In essence, Fiorenza agrees with Ladd's assessment when she writes, "This main theme of the Apocalypse is shortly but precisely expressed in the hymn in 11,15-19" (Fiorenza, "Eschatology and Composition" 569), since the theme of this hymn is the future establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

Contra White, "Evidence for Recapitulation" 319-20, 343-44.
The existence of God's kingdom in heaven cannot be questioned. When Jesus offered a model for the disciples' prayer "Your kingdom come... as in heaven, [so] also on earth" (Matt 6:10) He verified the existence of such a kingdom in heaven, but in so doing, also gave notice of a future kingdom upon the earth to be modelled after it.25

Revelation is not a mythical or other-worldly book. Of eighty-two NT occurrences of \( g \) (g), the word for "earth," fifty come in Revelation, far more than in any other book. The key throne-room scene in 4:1-11 portrays God as creator of the earth, with the creation motif incorporated into other scenes as well (e.g., 10:5-6; 14:7). The Apocalypse is not other-worldly or dualistic. "The historical this-worldliness of this [i.e., Revelation's] entire schema, including its extremities, should be clearly seen."26

The Apocalypse in a number of ways focuses on the earth in its expectation for the future:

1. The explicit promise to the Thyatiran overcomer cited above (Rev 2:26-27) is the exercise of authority over the nations after crushing them. The locale of the subjugated nations is the earth.

2. The explicit promise to the Laodicean overcomer cited above is to join Christ in sitting on David's throne on earth (Rev 3:21; cf. 3:7). Only by an unwarranted hermeneutical lapse can David's throne be said to be a heavenly one.27 David ruled the first time on the earth,

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25G. R. Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 151-52; idem, "The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus" and "Comments on Craig Bloomberg's Response to "The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus,"" JETS 35/1 (March 1992) 23-24, 37. To understand a kingdom to be established on earth is not contrary to Jesus' statement to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36a), a statement not intended to designate the location of the kingdom, but rather the origin of it. To debate whether the kingdom referred to in John 18:36 is spatial or temporal (Robert Hodgson, Jr., "The Kingdom of God in the School of St. John," in The Kingdom of God in Twentieth Century Interpretation [Wendell Willis, ed.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987] 164) misses Jesus' point here. The preposition \( k \) conveys nothing about time or space. Immediately after those words about His kingdom, Jesus verified that His intended reference was to the source of the kingdom by adding "My kingdom is not from this place (nteuen)" (John 18:36b). The consummated kingdom of Christ on earth was the constant anticipation of early Christians (Mounce, Revelation 358; Donald K. Campbell, "The Church in God's Prophetic Program," in Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost [ed. by Stanley D. Toussaint and Charles H. Dyer; Chicago: Moody, 1986] 155).


and His descendant will do so in the same place in the future (2 Sam 7:12-16).

(3) The song of four living beings and twenty-four elders in 5:10 explicitly verifies that the redeemed "will reign upon the earth." Words could hardly be plainer regarding the place of this future rule.

(4) According to the song of the heavenly voices and the twenty-four elders in 11:15-18, the future rule of God with His Christ will have as its subjects the nations, whose habitat is planet earth.

(5) The scene of the final battle resulting in the establishment of Christ's future kingdom is an earthly one. In 16:12 the drying up of the great river Euphrates, a specific geographical spot in this world, has a part in preparing the way for the kings from the East to be involved in this battle. Whether "east" means the territory currently known as Iraq and Iran or areas of the Far East with their heavy population, these are spatial designations in this world as currently known. Nor is it necessary to determine whether these kings from the East are distinct from or included among the kings of the whole earth in 16:14. The fact remains that oikoumen (οἰκουμήνη) (16:14) throughout Revelation denotes this world order as presently identified (cf. 3:10; 12:9).

Perhaps further evidence of the earthly location of the kingdom is unnecessary. An additional note regarding the kingdom of Christ extending into the new creation (22:5) must complete the picture, however. The passing of the old heaven and earth are a matter of record in 20:11 and the introduction of a new heaven and earth comes in 21:1. The presence of the throne of God and of the Lamb in this new order (22:3) dictates that the kingdom carry over into the new conditions also. Further confirmation of this extension is the participation of God's servants in His eternal reign in the new creation (22:5).

THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

The nature of the future kingdom on the earth according to the Apocalypse is discernible by several means: from the OT roots of the kingdom, from the means by which the kingdom is established, and from internal conditions with which it must cope.²⁸

**OT Roots of the Kingdom**

Revelation never quotes directly from the OT, but it has many

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²⁸In his discussion of the nature of the kingdom in the Apocalypse, McClain uses Rev 20:4, 6 to conclude that the three governmental functions in the kingdom will be judicial, sacerdotal, and regal (McClain, Greatness 497).
allusions and much imagery that are thoroughly permeated with OT thought. Of the 404 verses in the book, 278 contain about 550 allusions to the Jewish Scriptures. An investigation of several key OT passages provides insight regarding the nature of the kingdom in Revelation.

Of particular importance are the words

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29Swete, Apocalypse cxi; McClain, Greatness 443.
ROMANS 11:25-27 AND THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL
IN PAUL’S THOUGHT

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Ethnic Israel is a dominant theme in Scripture, particularly as it pertains to the future. Paul divulges some key elements in his own Spirit-inspired thinking on this subject in Rom 11:25-27. He looks forward to a time of salvation for the Jewish people by divulging hitherto unrevealed details about their future, i.e., their salvation will follow the bringing in of a prescribed number of Gentiles. Currently beset by a partial spiritual hardening toward God, a significant group of Jews will experience a future repentance and salvation. This will come at some future point in the church age, perhaps as one of the series events that will compose Christ’s second coming. Paul adduces proof of this salvation with two quotations from Isaiah. Through this significant passage God’s future program for Israel becomes clearer than before.

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Significant contemporary interest surrounds the subject of the Jewish nation. Israel’s prominent and permanent place throughout the Bible has been a focus of dispensational theology. A recognition of this prominence is one of the marks distinguishing that system from covenant theology that has often assumed that Israel’s privileges and promises have been transferred to the church. The crux of the matter

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1 After a successful pastorate in a midwestern city for a number of years, Michael Vanlaningham answered God’s call to return to the classroom for further training in the study of God’s Word. It is with great pleasure that the staff of TMSJ makes available in the following essay the fruit of some of his study.
is: Does Israel have a future? The future of Israel is a focal point from both secular and biblical perspectives, a subject that requires understanding for anyone attempting to discern present trends and their relationship to theological themes. Romans 11:25-27 is one of the key Scriptures that teach about this subject. It is worthy of the closest scrutiny in a quest for information on this vital subject.
The following discussion will examine the Romans passage to ascertain Paul's concept of the future of Israel by investigating the hardening of Israel (v. 25a), the identity of "all Israel" (v. 26), the timing of Israel's salvation (v. 26), and the manner of the salvation's accomplishment (vv. 26b-27).

ROMANS 11:25 THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING ISRAEL'S SALVATION

An explanatory gr (gar, "for") links Rom 11:25 closely with 11:24 and the reasoning of the passage up to v. 25. In 11:7-10, Paul has described the divine perspective regarding a hardening that has afflicted the non-elect of Israel, accounting for their rejection of the Messiah. In 11:11-24, Paul has argued that this hardening of Israel has given the Gentile world an opportunity to be recipients of blessings from the Messiah.

While the primary emphasis in this section is the relationship of the salvation of Gentiles and very few Jews, there are hints woven throughout it that Israel "has not stumbled so as to fall" (11:11), that Paul's ministry to the Gentiles would provoke the Jews to envy so that they would seek their own Messiah (11:14), that there would be a restoration of Israel that would be "life from the dead" (11:15), that there was the promise of a spiritual restoration of Jews because of the presence of some who had accepted their Messiah (11:16), and finally, that the Jews could be grafted in once again if they did not persist in their unbelief (11:23).

The explanatory gar beginning v. 25 develops the hints of a possible future restoration of the Jews, and how this restoration fits with God's historical plans for salvation of the Gentiles.

The phrase ou . . . thel hymas agnoein, adelphoi, "I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren," v. 25 occurs in other connections in Paul to highlight what he is about to say and to ensure the full attention of his readers.

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2Leon Morris, The Epistle to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988) 419.
3Scholars are divided on the identification of the "first-fruits" (11:16). Some view them as a reference to the patriarchs (Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1951] 397; Morris, Romans 411-12), or to Christ (suggested, though not held by C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the Book of Romans [New York: Harper, 1957] 216). Either of these options is defensible; but it seems preferable to see the first-fruits as a reference to the Jewish remnant of Paul's day (Barrett's preferred view [Romans 216]). Earlier in Chapter 11, Paul used himself as proof that God had not permanently cast off all of His people, and supports this contention with an appeal to 1 Kgs 19:10 ff.
Furthermore, parx (h aparch) is used by Paul in Rom 16:5 and 1 Cor 16:15 for the initial converts of his ministry in a particular area, suggesting that those first-fruits were viewed as a foreshadowing of a greater redemptive work of God in a geographical area (cf. Dan G. Johnson, "The Structure and Meaning of Romans 11," CBQ 46 [1984]:89-99). The figures of the root and the branches complicate the interpretation of 11:16. While the first-fruits may be the remnant, Nils A. Dahl (Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977] 151) and C. E. B. Cranfield (The Epistle to the Romans [2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979] 2:564) suggest that the metaphor of the root seems to refer to the patriarchs, from whom all Israelites descend. Paul draws upon the continuity of the Israel of his day with the patriarchs as proof of an eventual spiritual restoration for all Israel.
In the expression *na m te [par'] ayto w fnimoi* (hina m te [par'] heautois phronimoi, "that you not be wise in your own estimation," v. 25), the writer reiterates briefly the warning against arrogant thinking toward the Jews on the part of the Gentile believers in the Roman church (cf. v. 20).  *6ina* (Hina, "That") expresses his purpose in revealing the mystery regarding the hardening of Israel.  He was supremely concerned that Gentile believers understand that Israel was not "finished" in the program of God, having been replaced by Gentile believers. Paul opposed a smug attitude in the church against Jewish constituents, especially in light of the Jewish role in God's future plans.

-ROMANS 11:25B `THE MEANING AND IDENTITY OF "MYSTERY"

One of the more difficult points of interpretation in 11:25-27 is the meaning and identification of *mystrion* (to mystrion, "the mystery"). The earliest known uses of the word are in works related to the Greek mystery religions. These denote secret rites or teachings known only by the initiated of a religious cult. Later the word spoke more generally of a secret of any kind. Its only uses in the LXX are eight occurrences in Daniel, where Daniel spoke of an eschatological secret pertaining to what God has decreed for the future (Dan 2:28). A similar usage was in the Jewish apocalyptic writings, where it also designated a divine secret of God that He alone discloses through revelation at the appointed time. The Jewish background of the word influenced Paul more strongly than the Greek.

Complicating the understanding of "mystery" in v. 25 is the use of the word in the NT to refer to spiritual truths revealed in the OT, but revealed in the OT with varying degrees of obscurity. In the case of the rapture of the church, called a

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5Cf. Morris, *Romans* 419 and n. 108. Barrett (Romans 222-23) takes the tendency of the Gentile to be arrogant toward the Jew as indicating that the Gentile fails to recognize (1) that the acceptance of the gospel implies no merit at all, but faith alone (11:22); (2) that the Gentile's faith is itself the result of God's initiative and mercy (11:16); and (3) that the Gentile's faith and inclusion in the people of God are only one stage in the unfolding of God's all-embracing purpose.
6Otto Glombitza ("Apostolische Sorge. Welche Sorge treibt den Apostel Paulus zu den Stzen Rm 11:25ff," *NovT* 7 (1965):312-18) emphasizes the apostle's concern about the unity of the church in Rome. He argues that the primary (if not the sole) motivation for Paul's mention of the mystery of Israel's hardening and restoration is that of seeking to keep the Gentiles from becoming arrogant. Glombitza's point is well taken, but the broader context indicates that Paul's objective in Romans 9-11 was also to provide an apologia for God and His faithfulness in light of Israel's rejection of the gospel.
7Gunther Bornkamm, "mystrion, myv," *TDNT* 4:813-14; G. Finken-rath, "Secret, Mystery," *NIDNTT* 3:501-2. One of the main differences between Jewish and Greek uses of *mystrion* was in the ineffability and impenetrableness Greeks ascribed to their mysteries, as well as their disindignation to manifest or explain mysteries to those outside the cult. J. Armitage Robinson points out that the Jewish and Christian concept of *mystrion* involves an unveiling and revealing by God of divine secrets, and that He charges His apostles and prophets to declare them to those who have ears to hear (St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians [London: MacMillan, 1903] 240).
mystery in 1 Cor 15:51, no unequivocal OT revelation treated this event (thus making it very obscure, even hidden). No clear explanation of this event occurred prior to its unveiling to Paul and thus to the church.

Some truth related to a mystery may be the subject of revelation in the OT, but the mystery itself is hidden until at God's appointed time it becomes a manifest event. Ephesians 3:4-5 reflects this "present-in-the-OT-but-unclear, then clarified-in-the-NT" use of mystrion, as does Rom 16:25-26. Extrabiblical support for this understanding of mystrion is in the Dead Sea Scrolls (especially 1QpHab. 7:4, "[To the Teacher of Righteousness] God made known all the mysteries of the words of His servants the Prophets," and CD. 3:12-14, "[God was] revealing to them [the righteous remnant of the Qumran community] the hidden things in which all Israel had gone astray") where the mystery is revelation from God regarding the clarification of spiritual truths already revealed in the OT. These parallels illumine Paul's use of mystrion in Rom 11:25. The OT had much to say regarding the Messiah and the inclusion of Gentiles in blessings through the seed of Abraham, but God gave further revelation to deepen the knowledge of His people regarding broad OT themes present.

It was not new revelation that Gentiles would be blessed through the seed of Abraham (cf. Gen 12:3; etc.), nor was it new revelation that God could harden the Jews (cf. Rom. 11:8-9 where Paul cites Deut 29:4; Isa 29:10; Ps. 69:22-23). Therefore, neither of these points is identifiable as Paul's mystery in v. 25.

Two viable options for the content of the mystery remain. Possibly what

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8Markus Bockmuehl, Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity (Tubingen: Mohr, 1990) 170. Robert Gundry hints at the fact that the rapture is new revelation in the NT, not found in the OT (The Church and the Tribulation [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973] 14).
10Ephesians 3:4-5: "And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed [w nn pekalfuh]. . . ." While it has been argued that the particle w carries no comparative sense (i.e., the mystery was not known at all previously as it is now known; cf. C. C. Ryrie, "The Mystery in Ephesians 3," BSac 123 [1966]:29), the fact that the OT contains a significant amount of teaching regarding the blessing of Gentiles along with Jews weighs against seeing truth related to the mystery in Ephesians 3 as something entirely new. Though the OT foresaw the future blessing of Gentiles with Jews, it did not, however, predict the joining together of the two groups in one body, the church, as was revealed to Paul according to the Ephesians 3 passage. For an interpretation of w with a comparative force, cf. Harold W. Mare, "Paul's Mystery in Ephesians 3," Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society 7 (1965):83-84.
11It may be instructive to note that the other occurrence of "mystery" in Romans (16:25-26) refers most likely to the "Christ event," which cannot be viewed as completely new revelation.
13Chrys Caragounis, The Ephesian Mysterion: Meaning and Content (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1977) 104 n. 24; Mare, "Mystery" 83-84.
Paul calls the mystery is the way the hardening of the Jews relates to the salvation of the Gentiles. Ridderbos maintains that the mystery pertains to the "back and forth" fashion in which the salvation is effected, beginning first with the Jews, then after the divine hardening, encompassing the Gentiles whose blessings from salvation in turn provoke the Jews to jealousy and consequently salvation in Christ as well. The "back and forth" characteristic applies, but it is discussed in 11:11-24, with v. 25 contributing nothing new to it.

A second option is preferable. What is new both in the context of Romans 11 and in salvation history is the order of salvation of the Gentiles and of "all Israel." The salvation of Israel will not occur until the "fullness of the Gentiles has come in." This understanding of mystriion has much in its favor. It fits well with the concept of "mystery" as new revelation or as an extensive development and clarification of previously given revelation. What is not new is the blessing of the Gentiles and the hardening of the Jews; what is new (not seen in the OT but revealed here) is the sequence of salvation for Jews and Gentiles. This view finds further support in toto (touto, "this") which probably looks forward to the dependent clause introduced by ti (hoti, "that"), which in turn designates the remainder of vv. 25-27 as the content of that mystery.

ROMANS 11:25C ` THE HARDENING OF ISRAEL

The phrase ti p mroyw t 1Isral ggonen (hoti prsis apo merous t Isral gegonen, "that hardness in part has happened to Israel") furnishes the first element of the mystery. The concept of hardening comes frequently in the OT and in the literature of Early Judaism. In the NT, prsw (prsis, "hardness") occurs only two other times (Mark 3:5; Eph 4:18). In both instances it refers metaphorically to hardness of heart (the hard-heartedness of the Jewish witnesses of Jesus' ministry and the hard-heartedness of Gentiles alienated from God, respectively). In 11:25 it means "dullness, insensibility, obstinacy," conveying the notion of a condition that leaves part of Israel unresponsive to the gospel and excluded from salvation. God is the agent behind the hardening (cf. 11:8, uew [ho theos, "God"]).

19Cf. especially the hardening of Pharaoh in Exod 4:21; 7:3; 9:12. See also Ps 95:8; Isa 6:10; 63:17.
21BAGD, 732.
The Extent of the Hardening

The phrase \( \text{apo merous} \) (\( \text{apo merous} \), "in part") expresses the extent of the hardening. The precise meaning and syntactical relationship of this phrase has engendered much debate. One of the problems associated with the phrase is determining whether it is adjectival, adverbial, or temporal in force. There is evidence for an adverbial use in the fact that \( \text{apo merous} \) is roughly like the Classical use of phrases such as \( \text{kat mroyw} \) (\( \text{kata merous} \), "according to a part") and \( \text{mrow ti} \) (\( \text{meros ti} \), "some part"), and on this basis, according to Tholuck, "cannot well signify anything else but in part..." The preposition \( \text{p} \) (\( \text{apo} \), "in"), when used with substantives in Classical Greek, commonly has an adverbial force. Furthermore, \( \text{apo merous} \) is roughly parallel to the \( \text{tinew} \) (\( \text{tines} \), "some, certain ones") of 11:17, and stands somewhat in contrast to \( \text{pw 1Isral} \) (\( \text{pas Isral} \), "all Israel") of 11:26.23

Ksemann maintains that \( \text{apo merous} \) is adjectival and connects it with \( \text{prsis} \), with the resulting sense "a partial hardening has come upon Israel." This connection finds support in 11:7 through the reference to the hardening upon non-Christian Jews alone, leaving Jewish Christianity unaffected by the hardening.24 Yet this is weak in that Paul apparently deals extensively with the numeric expanse of the hardening rather than intensively with its severity.

The temporal interpretation of \( \text{apo merous} \) is probably the least defensible. Hodge maintains that the phrase is temporal in Rom 15:24 and that \( \text{xri o} \) (\( \text{achri hou} \), "until") (11:25), which is also temporal, supports the same understanding of \( \text{apo merous} \).25 Against a temporal understanding, however, is the emphasis of Paul throughout Romans 11. It is arguably more natural to understand the phrase to refer to numbers rather than time.26 Also, the position of the phrase and its apparent antithesis to \( \text{pas Isral} \) speak against such a temporal force.27 A temporal interpretation of \( \text{apo merous} \) is unlikely in 2 Cor 1:14 and 2:5, suggesting that Paul usually intends the phrase to be non-temporal. If he had temporal matters in mind, he possibly would have used a phrase like \( \text{t nn} \) (\( \text{to nyn} \), "the present") instead.28

Although the problem is difficult, the adverbial force has stronger support. A further issue relates to the phrase. Should \( \text{apo merous} \) connect with \( \text{ggonen} \)?

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24 Ernst Ksemann, Commentary on Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960) 313.


26 Lenski, Romans 720. For the points supporting a numerical emphasis of Paul in this context, cf. especially the 7,000 of 11:4; the remnant in 11:5; the \( \text{o loipo} \) in 11:7; the phrase \( \text{tin j atn} \) in 11:14; the “first-fruits" and "root" in 11:16; and the parallel between \( \text{t plrvma} \) in unn and \( \text{pw 1Isral} \) in 11:26.

27 Ksemann, Romans 313.

It is preferable to see the phrase modifying gegonen, a verb (based on other Pauline usage), but a choice of any of the three options does not affect the essential meaning, since interpreters choosing different connections have reached the same conclusion: only a part of all the people of Israel are hardened.

The Time-frame for the Hardening

A time-frame for this hardening is suggested by the clause \( \text{xri o} \ldots \text{eslu} \) (\( \text{achri hou} \ldots \text{eselth} \), "until \ldots has come in"). The phrase (\( \text{achri hou} \)) is a shortened form of \( \text{xri to xronoy} \ldots \) (\( \text{achri tou chronou h} \ldots \), "until the time at which \ldots"). The precise nature of its temporal force has been a subject for strenuous debate. It appears to denote a time after which the hardening of Israel will cease, bringing a change in her spiritual condition. NT usage of the phrase elsewhere may overturn this understanding, however. In a number of passages it can plausibly mean "while" or even "during and after," implying the possibility in the present passage that the
The future of Israel does not stop when the fullness of the Gentiles arrives, but rather that it continues during and after the fullness comes in. In other words, achri hou may not refer to a new spiritual “beginning” for Israel after a future point (the fullness of the Gentiles); instead, it may refer to prevailing circumstances for Israel even after the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

This view of achri hou has been challenged. Murray contends that though it may mean "while" in some contexts, in Rom 11:25 that meaning is unnatural, especially in light of the aorist eslu (iseth, "has come in"). He writes,

In every other instance in the New Testament, whether used with the aorist or future, the meaning "until" is the necessary rendering and indicates a point of eventuation or a point at which something took place (cf. Acts 7:18; 1 Cor. 11:26; 15:25; Gal. 3:19; Rev. 2:25). Hence in Rom. 11:25 it would require a departure from the pattern to render the clause other than "until the fulness of the Gentiles will come in". The context makes this the necessary interpretation of the force of the clause in question.

Also opposed to the meaning of "while" for achri hou are the verses cited to support that interpretation. The most that can be said from these passages to

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Footnotes:
34In support of this understanding of xiri o, there are at least three passages in which it is used with aorist verbs and could be rendered "while" or "during and after." In Matt 24:38 ("they were eating and drinking... until [xiri W] the day that Noah entered the ark"), the "until" does not signal the cessation of eating and drinking; in fact, Gen 7:4, 10 indicate that after Noah entered the ark an additional seven days elapsed, during which there is no indication that the godless behavior of Noah's coevals ceased. In Acts 7:17-18 ("the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, until [xiri o] there arose another king over Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph" [Exod 1:8]), it is apparent from Exod 1:12 that the ascension of the new king of Egypt did not terminate the fruitfulness of the Hebrew people. In the following two examples (1 Cor 11:26; 15:25) the aorist subjunctive is used as it is in Romans 11:25. In 1 Cor 11:26 ("you proclaim the Lord's death until [xiri o] He comes [lu, aorist subjunctive]"), the coming of Christ does not stop the observance of the Lord's Supper, since according to Matt 26:29 there will be at least one more observance of it with Christ "in [His] Father's kingdom." Finally, in 1 Cor 15:25 ("For He must reign until [xiri o] He has put [lu, aorist subjunctive] all His enemies under His feet"), the reign of Christ does not cease at the time His enemies are made His footstool; it continues past that point.


36Murray, Romans 2:92 n. 45; cf. also Cranfield, Romans 2:575, who writes, "Paul's meaning is not that Israel is in part hardened during the time in which the fullness of the Gentiles is coming in, but that the hardening will last until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. The entry of the fullness of the Gentiles will be the event which will mark the end of Israel's hardening."

37The support of the verses is not as clear-cut as it might appear. In Matt 24:38, a serious change took place for the godless after Noah entered the ark, just as happened for the Hebrews when a new
support the contention of DeCaro, Robertson, and Woudstra is that the hardening of Israel may briefly overlap the coming in of the Gentiles' fullness, only to be canceled shortly thereafter. Hence, in Rom 11:25, achri hou points to a time (the arrival of the fullness of the Gentiles) after which the hardening of Israel will cease.

Identifying the "fullness of the Gentiles" has been difficult for interpreters. BAGD prefers the meaning "fulfilling" or "fulfillment" in Rom 11:12 (cf. Rom 13:10 also), but stipulates that some prefer "that which is brought to fullness or completion, full number, sum total, fullness, superabundance of something" in that verse (cf. Rom 15:29; Col 1:19; 2:9 also).³⁸

Space considerations permit only a presentation of conclusions regarding the use of this word in Paul's writings. In his classic essay on plrma, Lightfoot writes,

Substantially one meaning runs through all the passages hither quoted from St. Paul. In these plrma (plrma) has its proper passive force [that which is filled, rather than that which fills], as a derivative from plhron (plroun, "to fill") 'to make complete.' . . . It is . . . the full complement, the plentitude, the fulness.³⁹

When analyzing Rom 11:25, he adds that the word refers to "the full number, the whole body."⁴⁰ But even with this conclusion, the precise meaning of plrma in connection with Μ πνν (πνν ἑθν, "the Gentiles") in the verse is contested.

The "fullness of the Gentiles" has been interpreted in two ways: qualitatively and quantitatively. (1) In a qualitative sense it refers to the full blessings of the Gentiles. This view finds support in the contrast of 11:12 between to plrma and the spiritual conditions of t parptvma (to paraptma, "the transgression") and t eq Ο(,h) tthma (to h eq Ο(,e)tt eq Ο(,e)ma, "loss, defeat"). Neither provides a suitable opposite to pl eq Ο(,e)r eq Ο(,e)ma if it is understood in an arithmatic sense of "full number."⁴¹

(2) A second view is that the "fullness of the Gentiles" is quantitative, referring to the "full number" or the "numerical whole" of the Gentiles, though it probably does not encompass every individual Gentile. Rather it denotes a large representation of Gentiles from throughout the world. This is the preferred view with several scholars⁴² and finds support in Paul's frequent discussion of numbers.

Pharaoh ascended the throne of Egypt (Acts 7:17-18) and will happen for the observance of the Lord's Supper after Christ's second coming (1 Cor 11:26) and for Christ's rule following the subjection of His enemies (1 Cor 15:25; cf. 15:24).

³⁸BAGD, 672.
³⁹J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Phil (rpt. of 1879 ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959) 260-61 [transliteration and translation added].
⁴⁰Lightfoot, Colossians 260.
⁴¹Murray, Romans 2:94-95; Morris, Romans 420.
A few important references from Early Judaism reflecting the apparently common belief in an eschatological conversion of a large number of Gentiles add credence to this position.44 Deciding between the two options is not easy, but the second has a somewhat stronger case. Even Murray recognizes that πλὴρος (plerōs) does not exclude a numerical connotation and that a combination of the views may be preferable to excluding one or the other.45 Besides, understanding πλὴρος (plerōs) in a numeric sense with spiritual overtones provides an adequate rejoinder to the objection that to παραπτήριος (paraptērion) and to ἡσαλθή (hésalthē) in 11:12. The better interpretation sees Paul as pointing to the spiritual conversion of a large number of Gentiles.

This conclusion does not resolve all the problems with the phrase "the fullness of the Gentiles," however. Those who embrace a quantitative understanding of the phrase disagree about the manner and time in which this fullness is reached. This issue is closely related to the timing of the salvation of all Israel that is more fully discussed below.

One of the factors in determining the time of the arrival of Gentile fullness is the correct understanding of the verb εἰσέλθη (eisélthē) (v. 25). Though ἐίσερχομαι (eiserchomai) has the basic meaning of "come in/into," "go in/into," "enter,"[46] the term's significance in the present context is not completely clear. The verb occurs in the Gospels in reference to entering the Messianic Kingdom or eternal life,47 so many scholars take the phrase τὸ πλὴρος τῆς ο ἰνήν εἰσέλθη, "the fullness of the Gentiles come in") to refer to the fulfillment of God's purpose in bringing the Gentiles into the Messianic Kingdom.48 Yet several reasons make this...
view unsatisfactory. Though οἰσχρομαί is used frequently for entering the Kingdom or eternal life, the majority of its 194 NT occurrences have no eschatological technical sense. More importantly, Paul uses οἰσχρομαί elsewhere only in Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 14:23, 24, with neither passage containing eschatological connotations. With a thorough discussion of the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of all Israel yet to follow, this much can be concluded: it is preferable to understand οἰσχρομαί in a non-technical, non-eschatological sense. The more defensible sense in 11:25 is the one suggested by Black who says it is better to view Paul’s use of οἰσχρομαί as parallel to its use in the LXX for the Hebrew ʼו ב (ב ה ה, "he comes"), which means simply "has come," "has arrived," and so "has been realized." In summary, Paul does not use the verb in an eschatological sense, and the context, while referring to events future to Paul, does not refer unequivocally to the future Messianic Kingdom or eternity as the other view requires, further proof of which will follow below. The verb refers to the arrival of the fullness of the Gentiles with no allusion to the Gentiles entering the Kingdom or eternity.

ROMANS 11:26-27` THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF SALVATION

The Manner of Salvation

With the phrase καὶ οὖν ἦ δὲ (καὶ hout eq ʼο, "and thus") (v. 26) Paul changes from the order and time of salvation in 11:25 to consider primarily the manner of the salvation of all Israel in 11:26-27.

Viewing 11:26-27 as instruction about the manner of salvation of the Jews presupposes a modal, non-temporal use of οὖν ἦ δὲ (hout eq ʼο, "thus") which is problematic. Some scholars maintain the phrase is best understood temporally, resulting in the following sense: "There will be a time of hardening until the fullness of the Gentiles arrives, and then all Israel will be saved." Classical Greek usage supports the temporal explanation of καὶ hout eq ʼο as does NT usage in Acts 17:33. In Paul it is probably temporal in 1 Cor 11:28; 14:25; 1 Thess 4:17. Further support for the temporal view comes in the deictic achori hou

scholars mentioned in this note. But Corley also assigns a semi-technical eschatological force to the verb, and for this reason he is listed here with the others.


50Black, Romans 147. Cf. Mark 9:28; Luke 7:6; 14:23; Acts 1:13; 3:8; 5:21; 9:12; 13:14, etc. Black does not appear to assign an eschatological sense to the verb, but does not make himself clear on whether or not an eschatological sense is warranted. Cf. also Johannes Munk, Christ & Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) 132, who says that Paul does not use οἰσχρομαί in the same eschatological way it is used in the gospels. However, in Acts 14:22, Luke does use this word with an eschatological sense in quoting Paul ("Through many tribulations we must enter [eseluen] the kingdom of God.").

51Cf. Xenophon, Ἀναβασις 3.4.8; Epictetus, Dissertationes 4.8.13 (LSJ, 112).

52Ksemann, Romans 313.

53Corley, "Jews" 53-54.
The Future of Israel...

The temporal understanding has several important drawbacks, however. The passages from Paul cited as possibly temporal can be as easily (and perhaps more favorably) understood as non-temporal.1 On a modal view of oivtνw in 1 Cor 11:28, cf. C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: Harper and Row, 1968) 273 (his translation "that [in the previously-mentioned manner] is how he should eat" implies a modal interpretation); in 1 Cor 14:25, cf. Charles Hodge, A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians (rpt. of 1857 ed.; Carlisle, Penn.: Banner of Truth, 1983) 298; and in 1 Thess 4:17, cf. F. F. Bruce, 1 & 2 Thessalonians (WBC, vol. 45; Waco: Word Books, 1982) 103. In Robertson's opinion not a single one of the seventy-three occurrences of houts in Paul can be viewed as certainly temporal.1

The key word in the previous statement is purely. A number of credible scholars maintain that though houts on its own is not temporal, the context virtually infuses such a sense into it in v. 26 because of the strong sequential emphasis surrounding houts. Therefore, houts is probably best understood as modal and not primarily temporal, but it is modal with a temporal ambiance.1

A further problem associated with kai houts eq ν,ov (v. 25) as well.

1Robertson, "Future" 221. In addition, in the nine places where Paul writes kai houts in the same order as 11:26, no temporal understanding is probably justified.1 Rom 5:12; 11:26; 1 Cor 7:17, 36; 11:28; 14:25; 15:11; Gal 6:2; 1 Thess 4:17. As already mentioned, Rom 11:26; 1 Cor 11:26; 14:25; 1 Thess 4:17 are disputed, but are probably not temporal as some claim. On the basis of these observations, a purely temporal force to the phrase is improbable.

The key word in the previous statement is purely. A number of credible scholars maintain that though houts on its own is not temporal, the context virtually infuses such a sense into it in v. 26 because of the strong sequential emphasis surrounding houts. Therefore, houts is probably best understood as modal and not primarily temporal, but it is modal with a temporal ambiance.1

Verses 26-27 are essentially concerned with the manner of Israel's salvation, one aspect of which is its future occurrence.

A further problem associated with kai houts eq ν,ov is determining whether it is retrospective (looking back to what Paul has written in v. 25) or prospective (looking ahead to vv. 26 ff.). Jeremias refers houts to v. 25 and the hardening of Israel, the salvation of the Gentiles, and the reversal in order of salvation (Gentiles preceding Jews). He says that to construe the adverb with kau eq ν,ov (katheoν,ov, "as") (v. 26), which follows, is contrary to typical Pauline syntax.1 Jeremias, "Beobachtungen" 198-99. See Jeremias's treatment for the details. Cf. also, for the same perspective (that oivtνw is retrospective), Dieter S ν,ov ("anger, "Rettung der Heiden und Erw ν,ov ("a)hlung Israels: Einige vorl ν,ov ("a)ufige Erw ν,ov ("a)gungen zu R ν,ov ("a),mmer 11.25-32; RD 32 (1986):107-8; and Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an die R ν,ov ("a)mer (EKK, 3 vols.; Z ν,ov ("a),rich: Benziger Verlag, 1980) 2:254-55. But a review of other uses of the oivtνw... ka (houts... kai, "thus... also") construction, including those in Paul, divulgess that they do not shed much light on the problem.1 In Luke 24:24 (ka eron oivtνw kauν,ov ka a gynakew επον), the oivtνw clearly refers to what precedes, as is the case in Eph 4:20 (eq ν,ov ("y)me eq ν,ov ("@,i)w d eq ν,ov (4,e) o eq ν,ov ("y)x o eq ν,ov ("y)bνw eq ν,ov (1,e) m eq ν,ov ("a)uete t eq
The Identity of the Saved

Regarding the identification of \( \sigma \varepsilon \rho \alpha \varphi \varsigma \nu \theta \alpha \rho \varsigma \omega \lambda \) in v. 26 must have the same sense as "Israel" in 11:25 ("a hardness has come in part on Israel"). The context requires that \( \sigma \varepsilon \rho \alpha \varphi \varsigma \nu \theta \alpha \rho \varsigma \omega \lambda \) be understood to refer to \textit{ethnic Israel}, mentioned in 11:23 ("if they \[ ethnic Israel \] do not continue in unbelief") and 11:30-32 in a contrast between Gentiles and Jews.57

Beyond this conclusion four options for the sense of "ethnic Israel" remain. (1) One is that \textit{ethnic Israel} refers to the elect among the Jews saved throughout the entirety of the church age.58 This finds support in the progressive salvation of increasing numbers of Jews throughout this age concurrently with the salvation of Gentiles. When the full number of the Gentiles comes in, then the full number of

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54Cranfield, Romans 2:576 [transliteration added].
55These views are presented and summarized well in Charles Horne, "The Meaning of the Phrase \textit{And Thus All Israel Will Be Saved},," \textit{JETS} 21 (December 1978):331-33.
57Horne, "Meaning" 331-32.
58For the sake of clarity, "church age" (a phrase used several times in the pages that follow) refers to that period of time beginning on the day of Pentecost and concluding at the second coming.
According to Horne, to view 11:25-32 as referring to the future salvation of national Israel (Israel as a whole, as a nation) disregards the entire thrust of Romans 9-11, a context where Paul adamantly denies that salvation is afforded to the nation (i.e., all ethnic Israel) as such. Horne writes,

I would state therefore in summary that when Paul states that 'all Israel shall be saved' he means to refer to the full number of elect Jews whom it pleases God to bring into his kingdom throughout the ages until the very day when the full number of the Gentiles also shall have been brought in. In keeping with the context, 'all Israel' means 'the remnant according to the election of grace' (11:5), not the nation in its entirety.60

This view has several weaknesses. If "all Israel" is simply the elect from ethnic Israel who are saved along with the Gentiles throughout the age, special revelation to Paul in the form of a myst epion (v. 25) is pointless, since it was clear to him and everyone else even superficially familiar with Christianity in the first century that some Jews were being saved. Also militating against this view is the consideration that the salvation of all Israel comes at a particular point in time in the future as indicated by achri hou . . . eiselth ep (v. 25), as well as by the future svu ep |O(,h)setai (s ep v 0 (~,e)oth ep v 0 (~,e)setai, "will be saved") (v. 26).61 To conceive of "all Israel" as elect Jews saved throughout the church age is unconvincing.

(2) A second option associated with "ethnic Israel" is to refer it to Israel as a whole. Some scholars maintain that "Israel" in Romans 9-11 denotes the Jewish people as a totality, and not the multitude of individual Jews. The main support of this view is that the saved in "all Israel" consist in both the believing remnant and the hardened remainder of Israel. Paul is looking forward to a time when not only the remnant but those of Israel who have strayed will be saved. Furthermore, the concept of "Israel as a whole" finds support in the fact that pas Isr ep 0 (~,e)l stands in contrast to the le ep |O(,i)mma (leimma, "remnant") of 11:5 and tinew (tines, "some, certain ones") of 11:17.62

Several deficiencies in the view are apparent, however. First, "Israel as a whole" is rather ill defined. Several maintain that pas Isr ep 0 (~,e)l refers to Israel

59William Hendriksen, Israel in Prophecy (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968) 44.
60Horne, "Meaning" 334; cf. also Hoekema, Bible 144, 146.
61That the salvation of Israel takes place at a specific point of time in the future is argued by Stanley E. Porter, who writes,

In the logic of the argument here, Paul claims that the hardness has come and will last until such time when the fullness of the Gentiles may come (Aorist Subjunctive) . . . The future form [svusetai] is used parallel to the Subjunctive, here designating a logically subsequent event in relation to another projected event . . . , with the added assurance that if the fullness of the Gentiles enters then the salvation of Israel is expected (Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood [Studies in Biblical Greek, vol. 1; New York: Peter Lang, 1989] 435).

62Cf. Longenecker, "Answers" 96-97; Munck, Christ & Israel 136; Stuhlmacher, "Interpretation" 557; Dahl, Studies 153; BDF, par. 275(4), p. 143; W. D. Davies, "Paul" 16 n. 2; Dunn, Romans 2:681.
as a whole, but not every individual Jew is included in the salvation. If by this
they mean that enough of the individuals in future Israel have exercised faith in
Christ to say that the nation or people as a whole are saved, then this is an
acceptable view. Otherwise, their definition is incongruous. Second, as will be
argued under the third view below, pas Isra eq ∩ 0(−,e] was used in the LXX to
refer to a group of Jews, with the size of that group left unspecified. Hence, to say
that pas Isra eq ∩ 0(−,e] means "the people or nation as a whole" may be
unjustifiably specific based on LXX usage. Third, this view is shaped by some (e.g.,
Stendahl and Dunn) to argue that Paul's goal was not to maintain a sense of indi-
vidualism in the future salvation of the Jews, but to affirm the salvation of the
Jewish people as a consolidated group. In Stendahl's case, the salvation of the
entire group is distinct from the individuals' exercise of faith in Jesus Christ. This
approach is difficult to sustain in light of repeated emphasis on individuals in
Romans 9-11.

(3) A third option, the strongest of the first three, is that "all Israel" refers to
a future group (of unspecified size, though probably a majority) of elect Jews alive
at the time of the fullness of the Gentiles. A number of considerations support this.
In his helpful study of "all Israel" in 1-2 Chronicles (LXX), Osborne has derived
some intriguing observations from a survey of thirty-four uses of the phrase. In his
record of the United Kingdom, the Chronicler used "all Israel" to describe the
support David had from the Jewish people before his coronation (1 Chr 11:10;
12:38), the soldiers of Israel (1 Chr 19:17), Israel's civic and military leaders (1 Chr
15:25, 28), and the consolidated kingdom over which David reigned (1 Chr 14:8).

In relation to the Divided Kingdom, the phrase was used for the group that
was to participate in the crowning of Rehoboam (2 Chr 10:3) and for Judah alone (2
Chr 12:1). It was apparently "... used specifically for those who are loyal to the
king and the cult of Yahweh, and the people from the Northern Kingdom are
included if they meet the criterion.”

For the period of the fall of the Northern Kingdom through the exile, "all
Israel" was used corporately for the whole nation whose sins needed to be expiated
through sacrifice (2 Chr 29:24; cf. also 31:1) and for those who were loyal to the the
Lord (2 Chr 35:3).

Osborne concludes,

This term usually means those people who attach themselves to the Davidic house and to the
worship of Yahweh. ... The term always has the theological meaning of "the people of God." 'All Israel' in its final definition is a term signifying the representatives of Israel who attach
themselves to the Davidic figure, the king, in an expression of loyalty. This suggests that in
Romans 11:26a 'all Israel' is a term designating a majority of people loyal to the messiah, the

63E.g., Longenecker and Davies.
64E.g., the testimony of Paul himself as proof that God has not rejected His people [11:1]; the first-
fruit and the root [11:16]; the individual branches that are broken off [11:17]; and the opening verses
of the entire three-chapter section [Rom. 9:1-5] in which Paul expresses intense concern regarding
the salvation and condemnation of individual Jews (Piper, Justification 38-48, 54).
65Osborne, "Background" 285-86.
66Ibid., 87.
Davidic figure. It is a collective word used for a whole people who may or may not have saving faith. It never has an individualistic connotation.67

Osborne's findings require a number of qualifications. First, his final two statements in the otherwise helpful quotation above are in a sense true. "All Israel" is collective, and hence does not always refer (in the OT) to saved individuals. But many passages in 1-2 Chronicles and other OT passages in which "all Israel" occurs, do specify what kinds of individuals make up "all Israel" (i.e., tribal leaders, military leaders, soldiers, etc.). "All Israel" may refer to a group, but individualistic connotations are not absolutely eclipsed.

Second, the picture painted by the OT use of "all Israel" is neither as simple nor as attractive as Osborne makes it.68 In 1-2 Chronicles, "all Israel" may refer to those loyal to the king or to the Lord, but in Judg 8:27, for example, "all Israel" played the harlot and pursued idolatry. A further example is 1 Sam 13:20: "all Israel" was forced to have its tools sharpened by the Philistines. "All Israel" might even be inclined to help de-throne David (2 Sam 17:13). In 1 Kgs 12:16, "all Israel" (here restricted to the northern tribes) rejects Rehoboam as king and stones Adoram, the king's representative (1 Kgs 12:18). These excerpts indicate a more fluid use of "all Israel" than Osborne implies.

Finally, it may be possible to take the diverse uses of "all Israel" and find a common denominator that is more all-encompassing than Osborne's rather incomplete synthesis. As one investigates the many occurrences of "all Israel," a meaning no more technical than "the Jews" emerges specifically, the Jews who are in the immediate context of the phrase "all Israel."462 Thus "all Israel" could be the Jews that made up a relatively small group of soldiers (1 Kgs 11:16), the Jews who buried Samuel (1 Sam 25:1), the Jews who were in close proximity to Korah at his demise (Num 16:34), and the Jews who, with King Rehoboam, apostasized (2 Chr 12:1). Second Sam 3:37 is an especially interesting use of pas lsra eq \\

(4) A fourth option in the meaning of pas lsra eq \\

67Ibid.

68With the help of IBYCUSTLG, I searched the LXX for the phrase pw 1lsral (to limit the search and to provide the closest parallels to Romans 11, only the nominative singular was considered), and found 73 occurrences, some of which are mentioned in this second caveat.

69The exception to this comes in the geographical references to "all Israel," from Dan to Beersheba (1 Sam 3:20; cf. also 1 Kgs 8:65).
at the time of the fullness of the Gentiles will be saved. Hence, pas Isra\(\text{e}\)l \(\text{e}\)\(\text{v}\) contains no hint of the size of the group (a majority, or Israel as a whole), but instead is simply a non-specific statement that Jews in the future will be saved. This group of Jews is probably at least a majority because their salvation was such a consuming hope for Paul and a minority remnant would not have satisfied his longings. But from the wide range of usage in the OT, pas Isra\(\text{e}\)l \(\text{e}\)\(\text{v}\) cannot be pressed to yield such a specific understanding.

The Time of Israel's Salvation

The verb s\(\text{e}\)\(\text{th}\)\(\text{e}\)\(\text{t}\)\(\text{ai}\) provides a natural occasion to consider more fully the time of Israel's salvation and the fullness of the Gentiles. Four opinions regarding when these events take place have surfaced: (1) in Paul's immediate future; (2) throughout the church age; (3) at a time in the more remote future, but still during the church age; and (4) at the second coming. View 2 was discussed above in connection with the first explanation of pas Isra\(\text{e}\)l \(\text{e}\)\(\text{v}\) (i.e., that it refers to Jews saved throughout the church age), and was found to be unsatisfactory.

(1) The first option is that Paul envisioned the fullness of the Gentiles and salvation of Israel taking place in his own immediate future. Aus offers one of the most articulate defenses of this position. He envisages Paul as anticipating the fulfillment of the many OT prophecies regarding the Gentiles who come to Jerusalem in Messianic days. Romans 15:16 portrays Paul as foreseeing that his ministry in Spain would be the fulfillment of these OT prophecies (Isa 60:1-3, 9; 66:18-20; Ps 72:8-11).

However, Aus's work has several serious methodological flaws. First, he apparently has misread his OT texts (p. 241). He holds that Paul's offering of the Gentiles in Jerusalem would usher in the second coming, but in Isa 60:2-3; 66:19-20, it is the second coming that results in the gathering of Gentiles, Jews, and their offerings to Jerusalem. Second, he draws some unwarranted inferences, claiming that in Rom 15:16 the "offering of the Gentiles" is the Gentiles themselves (appositional genitive) because Paul is thinking of the eschatological doctrine of such an offering (pp. 236-37). He fails to demonstrate this eschatological element in Romans 15, however, and is reasoning circularly. He also avers that the "fullness of the Gentiles" in 11:25 and the offering of the Gentiles in Rom 15:16 are "intimately tied" (p. 242), but fails to show clues from either passage to demonstrate the connection.

Third, Aus maintains that Paul's collection for the Jerusalem church (including not only a sizeable amount of money, but also an impressive number of Gentile converts, thus fulfilling the prophetic "gathering" motif) had definite...
eschatological overtones (pp. 261-62), though Paul never mentions these when discussing the collection. One must ask how Aus can discern that these eschatological hopes were important to Paul without Paul ever mentioning them. Fourth, Aus has Paul revising OT motifs so completely as to make them unrecognizable. Instead of the Messiah coming (Isa 60:2; 66:15-17, 19-20), restoring the nation Israel (Isa 60:2), gathering Gentiles (Isa 60:3; 66:18) who in turn gather dispersed Jews to Jerusalem (Isa 66:19-20), Aus's reconstruction has Paul (a Jew) leading Gentiles to Jerusalem (Rom 15:16) in hope of bringing about the end (Rom 11:25c) and the Messiah's return. It is problematic to perceive of Paul as fulfilling any OT prophecies when what he was doing was so diverse from the OT. Finally, Rom 11:14 (s eq \O(/,v)sv tin eq \O(/,a)w eq \O(1,e) j a eq \O('y)t eq \O(1,v)n (kai s eq \ O (~,o)s eq \ O (~,o) tinas ex aut eq \ O (~,o)n, "and I will save some of them") shows Paul's hopes to be high, but probably not so grandiose as Aus suggests. This view is fraught with enough problems to remove it from consideration.

(2) See the first view regarding the meaning of pas Isra eq \O(~,e)l discussed above.

(3) The third view, that the fullness of the Gentiles and all Israel's salvation takes place in the more remote future but during the church age prior to the second coming, is based on four inferences of the Romans text. [1] In Rom 11:12 and 15, the restoration of the Jews will have an amazing impact on the world for an indeterminate time following this restoration. This weighs against the fourth view below which interprets these events as taking place at the second coming. [2] In Rom 11:23, the key for the "in-grafting" of the Jews is faith. There is no clear indication in the context of 11:25-27 that this faith is sparked by observing the second coming of Christ. Rather, faith may be sparked as it is in Romans 10, through hearing the preached Word of God.

[3] The salvation of all Israel entails the forgiveness of sins which is based on a covenant, according to 11:26b-27. In the NT the New Covenant, of which Paul was a minister (2 Cor 3:6) is probably the covenant intended in this passage. If the New Covenant is in view, it is difficult (though surely not impossible) to see how the salvation of all Israel and the fullness of the Gentiles can take place at a time other than during the church age. [4] Finally, in Rom 11:30-31, the deictic indicators p eq \O(3,o)te . . . n eq \O(1,y)n . . . n eq \O(1,y)n . . . [n eq \O(1,y)n] (pote . . . nyn . . . nyn . . . [nyn], "formerly . . . now . . . now . . . [now]") are crucial to a correct understanding of the timing of the fullness and salvation. Dunn rightly sees the pote/nyn antithesis as a reference to the salvation-historical division of epochs, with pote expressing the pre-Christ era and nyn expressing the arrival of Messianic

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72 This is Aus's observation ("Traveling Plans" 261-62).
73 For Paul's statement of his goal for the collection, cf. 2 Cor 8:13-15, where he says that the collection is designed to meet pressing physical needs in the Jerusalem church.
74 Journet, "Destinies" 85.
75 To be sure, Journet's point can support the view that the second coming is in mind; if Israel is blessed at the second coming, then those blessings can continue to have an impact on the whole earth even into the millennial kingdom (assuming a premillennial eschatology). But the remaining arguments taken together with this one make the second coming difficult to connect with the salvation and fullness if it consists only of a single event.
The final disputed  \textit{nyn} \footnote{Dunn, Romans 2:687.} \textsuperscript{1} The second \textit{nyn} of 11:31 has a spotty MS tradition, giving rise to the use of brackets in the NA \textsuperscript{26} and the UBS\textsuperscript{3}, with a "D" rating in the latter. But there is evidence to suggest that it was the original reading. All three readings ( eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})\textit{steron}; n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})}; omit) have reasonably strong MS support. Following the critical apparatus of NA \textsuperscript{26}, eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})\textit{steron} is supported by diverse text types: 33 is an excellent MS with largely Alexandrian readings as is the Sahidic; 365 is largely Caesarean or Western. This reading is also ancient, with the Coptic originating in the third or fourth century and finding wide acceptance in geographically diverse places (Egypt = Sahidic; the West = 365).

The omission of n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} is supported by the proto-Alexandrian and very ancient \textsuperscript{p\textsuperscript{ag}} (copied ca. A.D. 200), the later Alexandrian A (from the fourth century), the second corrector of D (Western text), the Western and later F and G (both from the ninth century), and C as well as most Old Latin and many Syriac (Byzantine text-type) MSS. These MSS also indicate a wide acceptance from Egypt to Syria to the West.

The inclusion of n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} has strong MS support as well. The great \textit{'} is joined by B in a strong proto-Alexandrian reading (and these are ancient as well: \textit{'} is from the fourth century, B from the fifth). D* is a Western text originating probably in the sixth century but it has numerous singular readings and should be used with caution in resolving textual problems. The Bohairic apparently was based on a similar Greek text to B, giving Alexandrian readings.

From the MS evidence, n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} should probably (with great caution) be accepted as original. But when coupled with the transcriptional probability, the caution may be eased somewhat. Of the three readings, the one that may have given rise to the others is probably n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})}. Metzger writes, "The difficulty in meaning that the second occurrence of n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} seems to introduce may have prompted either its deletion or its replacement by the superficially more appropriate eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})\textit{steron}}" (A Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament [Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1971] 527). Furthermore, n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} is also the harder reading (cf. Zerwick and Grosvenor, Analysis 2:486). From a scribe's perspective, it makes less sense to say that Israel was now being saved when in fact this was not the case. Hence a possible substitution of eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y}) \textit{steron} for n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})}, or else a complete omission. It is difficult to see how the omission could be original since it makes fine sense without any other additions, and is thus less likely to give rise to the other two readings. Also, eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})\textit{steron} is cogent by itself as well, making it difficult to see how it could give rise to n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})}.

In light of its solid MS evidence (including antiquity and geographical diversity), the likelihood that n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} gave rise to the other readings, and the fact that it is the harder reading, the second n eq \textbackslash{\textit{O}(\textit{y})} of 11:31 should be preferred as the original reading and with slightly less reticence than Metzger expresses. should not be understood in a manner any different from the preceding two; Gentiles are being saved now, during the present age; Israel is hardened now, during the present age; and Israel is saved now, during the present age. No special eschatological sense for the final \textit{nyn} is justifiable. Therefore, the three occurrences of \textit{nyn} refer to the gospel era, the interim period before the second coming dimayed by the salvation of Israel. Corley writes,

It cannot be stated with precision whether this episode culminates in the \textit{parousia} or merely precedes it in time; however, the time period for the fulfillment of the prophecy has its \textit{modus operandi} in gospel proclamation and its \textit{terminus ad quem} at the return of Christ.\footnote{Corley, "Jews" 56; cf. also Robertson, "Future" 227.}

The weaknesses of the third view lie in the nature of the evidence for it. Its supporting arguments are admittedly inferential, with one of them, the fourth,
A fourth view of the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of all Israel, one not too distinguishable from the third, is that these events take place at the very moment of the second coming of Christ to earth. This is a popular view with interpreters, and a fair amount of evidence has been proffered to support it. The context makes it probable that Paul is looking at the spiritual restoration of Israel as a whole at the end, making this salvation an eschatological event in the strict sense. Perhaps this coincides somewhat with Matt 10:23b and the conversion of all Israel will occur at the end of the age. 

Apocalyptic literature in its anticipation that the eschaton would follow the repentance of all Israel also supports this explanation. In addition, the future-tense verbs in 11:26-27 (svu eq \O(l,h)setai; eq \O(h) jei; eq \O(a) postr eq \O(3,e)cei [s eq \O(\sim,o)th eq \O(\sim,e)setai]; h eq \O(\sim,e)xai; apostrepsei, "will be saved; will come; will turn") bolster this view. Further, the quotations from Isaiah, being from eschatological/apocalyptic sections of that book, support a reference to the second coming of Christ. Also, eq \O(2,r) eq \O(l,y) omai (hryomai, "I deliver") is used in 1 Thess 1:10 to refer to Christ at His second coming; why not here? Finally, the phrase eq \O(1,e) k Si eq \O(l,v)\n (ek Si eq \O(\sim,o)\n, "from Zion") in 11:26b is probably a reference to the Messiah coming from the heavenly Jerusalem at His second coming.

Several points vitiate this view, however. The future tense verbs may be understood as reflecting a future sense to Isaiah, but not to Paul. For Paul these verbs could refer to an already realized fulfillment of the Isaianic prophecies rather than to a fulfillment yet future to Paul. 

For Paul the Deliverer has already come from Zion (cf. 9.33). This is clearly seen if one compares Rom. 11.28 with 15.8. In 11.26-28 the salvation of 'all Israel' is linked with the promises to the fathers (cf. also 9.5), and in 15.8 Paul tells how these promises have been confirmed when 'Christ became a servant to the circumcised'. This means that God's truthfulness toward his promises is seen in Christ's first coming. 

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78Cf. Boekmuehl, Mysteri 173; de Boor, Rmer 268; Stuhlmacher, "Interpretation" 561; Schmithals, Rmerbrief 2:404; Dunn, Romans 2:682; Munck, Christ and Israel 134, 137; Jacob Jervell, "Der unbekannte Paulus," in Die Paulinische Literatur und Theologie (Sigfred Pedersen, ed.; Gttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989) 45; W. D. Davies, "Paul" 27; Wilckens, Rmer 2:256; Crans, Romans 314; Cranfield, Romans 2:578; Daniel P. Fuller, Gospel & Law: Contrast or Continuum? The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 188, 190.

79Cranfield, Romans 2:557. Dunn (Romans 2:682) avers that the salvation of all Israel will take place at the final salvation, i.e., the redemption of the body and the restoration of all of creation (Rom 8:19-23; 11:12).


81Wilckens, Rmer 2:256.

82Stuhlmacher, "Interpretation" 561 n. 31.

83Corley, "Future" 55; de Boor, Rmer 268; Schmithals, Rmerbrief 404.
Hvalvik also argues that ek Sin may have been a pre-Pauline reading so that Paul did not change the LXX neken Sin (heneken Sin, "on account of Zion") to suit his needs.\(^1\) Cf. the brief discussion of this in the section below on "The Scriptural Proof of Israel's Salvation." But by the phrase ek Sin Paul may have meant simply that the Messiah would come in His humanity from the Jewish people (Rom 9:5),\(^1\) E. Johnson, Function 162. or that the place of the resurrection was earthly Jerusalem.\(^1\) Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 95. In Paul's other use of Sin (Rom 9:33) the reference is apparently to Jerusalem.\(^1\) In fact, in the NT when Sin refers to the heavenly Jerusalem, there are modifiers present to make this clear (cf. Heb 12:22). In summarizing the problems against the view that Paul refers to the second coming 11:25-27, Hvalvik notes, "If arguments are given [in support of the second coming], they are few and not very strong."\(^1\) Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 92. On the other hand, Hvalvik does not respond to all of the evidence to view 3 (e.g., the future tense sthsetai [v. 26] used by Paul outside his citations from Isaiah) and may be overly severe in criticizing it.

A conclusion about the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of all Israel must rule out the first and second views. A merging of views 3 and 4 is the probable solution. The timing of these events should probably be viewed as taking place during the church age at a specific time future to Paul (and not just future to Isaiah, View 3) and as occurring perhaps several years before Christ's second coming to earth.\(^1\) That this conversion is "perhaps several years before the second coming" is suggested by the positive effect the renewed Israel will have on the world (11:12, 15). Furthermore, Israel's conversion serves as a primary prerequisite for the second coming (hence the adjusted View 4).\(^1\) With due respect to D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in Expositor's Bible Commentary (vol. 8, Frank E. Gabelein, ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 487-88 and Robert H. Gundry, Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 474, these scholars miss the point in Matt 23:39 o m me dhte p' rti vw n epete. The residents of Jerusalem will not see Christ until their Ps 118:26-like confession. The order of events is not that they will not see Christ until they see Christ (which, though hopelessly tautologous, is an integral part of the posttribulationism), but that they will not see Christ until the Jews of Jerusalem acknowledge Him as being from God. After that acknowledgment Christ will return to the Jewish people, but not before. So their change of heart transpires before Christ's return as a necessary prerequisite to it, not while He is returning as posttribulationism requires. To be more specific than this is to import theological presuppositions not readily supported by the text.

The Scriptural Proof of Israel's Salvation

A consideration of the purpose of the OT citations from Isa 59:20-21 and 27:9 (Rom 11:26b-27) is in order. Hvalvik argues that these verses should not be seen as speaking of the time of Israel's salvation, but rather as the ground for the statement ka otvw pw 1Isral svusetai (kai houts pas Isral sthsetai, "and thus all Israel will be saved").\(^1\) Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 95. Hvalvik probably overstates his point somewhat, however. The tan carries some deictic force, so that a temporal understanding cannot be completely ruled out. But for the most part he is correct. These verses use the OT to show that God will save
Israel just as Paul also has said. Paul's citation of the two passages from Isaiah are designed to strengthen his case for the restoration of Israel. His use of these verses from Isaiah is important to his argument.

An important change from the LXX in Paul's use of Isa 59:20 (alluded to above in the discussion of the fourth view of the timing of the salvation) is the switch from neken (heneken, "for the sake of," "to") to the use of k (ek, "from," "out from").

Four items differentiate the MT, the LXX, and Romans in these verses. (1) In Isa 59:20, compare the phrase log ,oy 'u ("a Redeemer will come to/for Zion") with the LXX ka eq lO,(h) jei eq lO(6,e) neken Si eq lO(?,y)v eq lO(2,o) eq lO(2,r) y eq lO(3,o)menow ("a Redeemer will come for the sake of/to Zion") and Rom 11:26 eq lO(1,e) k Si eq lO(?,y)v . . . ("from Zion . . . ").

(2) Also compare the MT bOq eq lO(1,;) eq lO(a,y) eq lO(e,B) ; eq lO(a,c) eq lO(e,f) y eq lO(E,b) eq lO(A,v) eq lO(I,1)u ("and those who return from ungodliness/transgression in Jacob") with the LXX ka eq lO(4,i) eq lO(4,o) 1lak eq lO(l,v)b ("and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob") and Rom 11:26b, which reads the same as the LXX. (3) In Isa 59:21, the MT reads < eq lO(A,) /O' y eq lO(I,/)y eq lO(I,r) eq lO(1,B) /O'z y eq lO(I,n) eq lO(1,') eq lO(a,w) ("and as for me, this is/will be my covenant with them") in comparison with the LXX and Rom 11:27a, both reading ka eq lO(4,1) b a eq lO(y)h a eq lO(1,;) yto eq lO(1,;)w eq lO(1,;) par' eq lO(1,;) mo eq lO(1,;) diau eq lO(1,h)kh ("and this is/will be the covenant with them from me"). (4) In Isa 27:9, the MT reads bOq eq lO(1,;) eq lO(a,y)>,o eq lO(1,;) y eq lO(u,k) eq lO(1,; y) /O'z eq lO(1,B) eq lO(A,1) ("therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob will be covered/ atoned for/ removed"), and the LXX has eq lO(6,o) tan af eq lO(3,e)vmai a eq lO(1,;)yto eq lO(1,;) y t eq lO(1,;)h n eq lO(1,;) a mart eq lO(3,i)an ("when I remove his sin") in comparison to Rom 11:27b which reads eq lO(6,o) tan eq lO(1,;)f eq lO(3,e)vmai t eq lO(1,;)w eq lO(1,;)y a mart eq lO(3,i)aw eq lO(1,;) y t eq lO(1,;) v n ("when I remove their sins"). On these differences, Archer and Chiruchigno are probably right (if not overly simplistic) in saying, "Thus we have a conflate quotation, with four minor variants that do not greatly affect the sense . . . .

A great deal could be said about the variations between the texts and how Paul's emendation of the LXX and MT indicates his thoughts in this passage. Schaller has examined the possibility of a variant Greek OT text which Paul may have been following, concluding that Paul did not simply adjust the text to fit it to his purposes, but probably relied on a variant. This is possible (Schaller's arguments are cogent), but it is speculative and does not resolve anything.

In 11:26 Paul draws from Isa 59:21a the promise of the New Covenant. Rather than continuing to cite the rest of 59:21, which tells of the promise of the Spirit, Paul shifts to Isa 27:9, emphasizing a different aspect of the New Covenant, namely, the forgiveness of sins. The theme of forgiveness fits better with Paul's argument for the restoration of Israel than a reference to the gift of the Spirit; Paul has emphasized Israel's parapt eq lO(1,;o)ma and her eq lO(1,;e)t l eq lO(1,;e)ma (11:12) and her eq lO(1,;a) pist eq lO(3,i)a (apistia, "unbelief") (11:23), and the need for forgiveness is strong in this chapter. Hence, the shift away from Isa 59:21b to Isa 27:9 is
explicable. So Paul's use of the prophecies of Isaiah fits well with the essential thrust of his argument in Romans 11.

Paul's use of $\text{eq } \Omega(2,r) \text{y eq } \Omega(3,o)\text{menow (hryomenos, "deliverer")}$ is significant to some scholars. Getty notes that whenever Paul uses the verb $\text{hryomai}$, he uses it in reference to God (Rom 7:24; 15:31; 2 Cor 1:10). No doubt Isaiah used it with God as its referent, suggesting that God, and not Christ, is in view in 11:26. However, the rabbis apparently saw Isa 59:20 as Messianic (cf. $\text{b.Sanh. 98a}$), and it is hard to believe that Paul would have used it referring to any other than Christ.

The phrase $\text{eq } \Omega(4,o)\text{1ak eq } \Omega(4,vb)$ ($\text{apostrepsei asebeias apo Iak eq } \Omega(,o)b$, "will turn ungodliness away from Jacob") is an important link with Romans 4. Hvalvik writes,

These words in the quotation are significant particularly because they form a link to Rom. 4, the great chapter concerning justification by faith. In 4.5 Paul is speaking about the God "who justifies the ungodly ($\text{eq } \Omega(4,o)n eq \Omega(4,a)seb eq \Omega(3,h)\text{ton aseb eq } \Omega(,e)$, "the ungodly")" and it is the same God who speaks in the quotation from Scripture. In 4.7 Paul quotes from Ps. 31.1 the word about those whose sins ($\text{eq } \Omega(2,i)eq \Omega(3,i)ai \text{hai hamartiai}, "the sins") are covered" it is they who are justified by faith, without works. These connecting lines clearly indicate that when Paul speaks about the salvation of Israel in 11:25-27, he refers to justification of the ungodly and justification by faith. Israel's salvation is thus nothing else but salvation sola fide and sola gratia.

Thus the Isaiah quotations fit well again with Paul's Romans emphasis on salvation from sin and ungodliness by grace through faith.

In 11:27a, the phrase $\text{ka eq } \Omega(4,i)\text{a eq } \Omega(4,y)\text{th a eq } \Omega(4,y)\text{to eq } \Omega(3,i)w eq \Omega(4,h)\text{ par' emo eq } \Omega(4,v)\text{dai eq } \Omega(4,h)\text{khh (kai haut eq } \Omega(,e)\text{autoi h eq } \Omega(,e)\text{par' emou diath eq } \Omega(4,i)\text{e k eq } \Omega(,e)\text{, "and this is the covenant from Me with them")}$ is best understood as referring to the New Covenant of New Testament times. Piper writes that the phrase ". . . certainly refers to the 'New Covenant' which Paul construes as a promise of the salvation of all Israel." This issue does not necessarily bear on the timing of the fullness of the Gentiles or of the salvation of all Israel (surely a salvation that might take place at the second coming would be a

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86Dunn, Romans 2:682; Wilckens, Rmer 2:257; Tholuck, Romans 389.
87E. Johnson, Function 128; Zeller, Juden und Heden 259. One might view 1 Thess 1:10 as support for the second-coming view of the conversion in Romans 11. Since the Lord Jesus Christ "delivers from the wrath to come" and this deliverance is eschatological, then perhaps the salvation of all Israel also should be located at the second coming. But 1 Thess 1:10 refers to those who are already saved and are awaiting His coming, and does not speak of a mass conversion at that time. Furthermore, though the deliverance spoken of in 1 Thessalonians is future, it is based upon the finished work of Christ at His first advent. This fits well with the interpretation given in this essay: all Israel will be saved in the future, but this salvation is based not on the second coming of Christ but on His first coming.
88To whom does 1Iakb refer? It is never used in the NT for the church; the reference here must be to Jews. Cf. P. Richardson, Israel 128-29.
89Hvalvik, "Sonderweg" 96 [transliteration and translation added]; cf. also Cranfield, Romans 2:578.
90Piper, Justification,20; cf. also Black, Romans 148; Corley, "Future" 55.
"New Covenant" salvation). The greater emphasis of Paul's teaching regarding salvation under the New Covenant points more to salvation during the church age and through the gospel proclamation of the church than to salvation at the second coming,§1 though all the phases of the latter cannot be completely ruled out.

PAUL'S PICTURE OF ISRAEL SUMMARIZED

In Romans 11 Paul sought to curtail any spiritual arrogance the Gentile believers in Rome might feel in comparing themselves with Jewish believers. He did this by disclosing new revelation he had received regarding the spiritual destiny of the Jews. He pointed out the obvious: a large number of first-century Jews (and, by implication, subsequently throughout the church age) were temporarily hardened. After some future point when a large, divinely determined number of Gentiles will have been saved (probably some time prior to or in conjunction with second-coming events), a (presumably) large number of Jews will be saved through the finished New Covenant ministry of Christ. This is apparently what Paul conveys in the three difficult verses, Rom 11:25-27.

A number of issues emerge from the exegetical conclusions of this study. How does the passage relate to suggestions that Paul taught two ways of salvation, one for the Jews and another for the Gentiles? What does this future salvation contribute to the future of national Israel? What is the locus of the people of God—the church or Israel? What is the contribution of 11:25-27 to theodicy? How does it further an understanding of eschatology as a whole? Further studies will hopefully supply answers to these and other questions.

§1Cf. 1 Cor 11:26; 2 Cor 3:6-18.
THE DYNAMICS
OF SMALL CHURCH MINISTRY

John M. Koessler¹

Small churches in the United States and Canada are a large proportion of the total number of churches and therefore deserve closer attention. A small church’s perception of itself is good in that it helps maintain a family atmosphere, but it can lend itself to pessimism in both pastor and people. Lay influence tends to be greater in a small church, a feature that can be cultivated to advantage through wise leadership. A small-church pastor must accept his administrative responsibilities as well as his relational ones. He must know how to involve his people and impart his vision to them. Small churches that want to grow must ask themselves several probing questions in order to succeed in doing so. Service in a small church can be very rewarding.

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INTRODUCTION

Is the small church really necessary? More than half of the Christians who worship in the United States and Canada do so in just 1/7 of the churches in these two countries. In view of this preference

1) John Koessler has pastored Valley Chapel Bible Church in Green Valley, Illinois, for the past seven years. His struggles and victories in the pastorate are chronicled in “Trapped in an Ill-Fitting Church,” Leadership 13/3 (Summer 1992):118-24. This essay differs somewhat from the usual subject matter of The Master’s Seminary Journal, but is included in this issue because of its special value for contemporary church ministry.
for larger churches, one might think that the day of the small church has passed. However, Lyle Schaller, noted analyst of American churches, reports that despite this phenomenon, the majority of churches in North America are small.

The small church is the normative institutional expression of the worshipping congregation among the Protestant denominations on the North American continent. One fourth of all Protestant congregations on this continent have fewer than thirty-five people in attendance at the principal weekly worship service, and one half average less than seventy-five.

The small church is seemingly a continuing institution in our culture. According to Schaller's statistics, the majority of those entering pastoral ministry will serve a small congregation. Yet most training programs appear to gear themselves for the larger church. The role models placed before seminary and Bible college students are usually "successful" graduates who serve in larger churches. In some cases they are pastors of today's mega-churches.

Such role models can be inspiring, but the operating principles that have enabled them to succeed in the large church are often inappropriate for their smaller counterparts. As Schaller observes, the small church is different. The pastor who wants to succeed in a small context must understand the dynamics of small church ministry.

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2Lyle Schaller, The Small Church is Different (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982) 11. The definition of "small" is a matter of disagreement. Some identify a small church by its attendance. In the 1960's, for example, the New York State Council of Churches attempted to establish a numerical minimum as a mark of congregational viability. Another approach has tried to identify the small church in terms of the number of pastors who serve the church; a small church is one served by a single pastor. For the purposes of this essay, "small" is defined in terms of certain shared characteristics that affect the church's identity, leadership dynamics, and patterns of growth or non-growth. See Anthony G. Pappas, "Let's Talk SMALL," American Baptist Quarterly 9/2 (June 1990):87-90.

3Editor's Note: Though The Master's Seminary is on the campus of Grace Community Church, which usually ministers to over 8,000 people each Sunday, TMS is one of the few seminaries in America to devote an entire course to "Pastoring the Small Church."

4The differing dynamics in a small church should not obscure the broader consideration that the biblical principles according to which Christ has built and continues to build His church (Matt 16:18) have not changed with time and remain
PERCEPTION DYNAMIC

Perhaps the most significant human factor affecting the small church's ministry is the congregation's own self-perception. Large churches tend to see themselves as an institution. They often look to the business world for their role models. The pastor's ability to be an administrator is an important gauge of his effectiveness.

In contrast to this "corporation" mentality, a small church is more likely to see itself as a family. Relational skills are valued more highly than business skills. In these churches the pastor is normally a "father" figure rather than a CEO. This kind of image can pose a problem for pastors whose training has primarily emphasized skills applicable in an office setting such as management and administration. This is especially true of pastors who serve in small towns and rural communities where the relational dynamic is a community as well as a congregational trait.

Positive Features

The tendency of a small church to operate as a family is the basis for many of its strengths. It naturally produces a sense of intimacy that larger churches must make a special effort to achieve, usually through the use of special interest groups. This is an area where a small church enjoys a more easily achieved advantage over a large church. In his study of 100 successful churches, Salter observed that those who were part of a large congregation were often anonymous and unaccountable. He contrasted this with the experience of the small-town church of 100 people where the attender probably feels personally comforted by God's Word and scrutinized by God's equally applicable to both smaller and larger churches. This essay will focus on the dynamics of the small church, but the writer presupposes that these foundational principles apply here as they do in larger churches. For a good summary of the principles, see John F. MacArthur, Jr., The Master's Plan for the Church (Chicago: Moody, 1991).

Schaller, Small Church 25.
Because the small church sees itself as a family, the feeling of personal responsibility is more intense among its members. This produces a strong sense of ownership for the church’s ministries. This sense of responsibility combined with the lack of resources and the short tenure of many small-church pastors results in a high degree of lay involvement.

**Negative Features**

Smallness has disadvantages, however. In a small church the tendency to equate size with success and to view size as a measure of potential effectiveness often produces an inferiority complex that can affect both the pastor and the congregation. Because it is overly sensitive to its resource limitations, imposed because of its size, weaknesses rather than strengths tend to shape the congregation’s self-evaluation. Churches of this sort are inclined to apologize for their failures instead of celebrating their victories. A pastor’s low morale and frequent changes in the pastoral staff aggravate these feelings of

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6Darius Salter, *What Really Matters in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990) 114. Yet this potential in a small church is not always realized. This writer has observed that an increased awareness of the intimate details of the lives of those who attend the small church may actually keep its members from holding one another accountable. This is especially true in a small town, where social pressure sometimes leads to a pattern of denial when serious problems arise. For example, leaders may sometimes be less willing to exercise church discipline when it is warranted, fearing that other members will take offense and leave the church.

7Cf. Gary Harrison, “The Making of a Good Little Church,” *Leadership* 7/3 (Summer 1986) 92-93, has written, “In smaller churches, I have observed what I call the ‘attitudes vs. abilities’ factor. Organizations that work with churches often offer resources to sharpen leaders’ skill levels. Such resources, of course, are both good and needed. Rarely, however, do they address the self-image of the church. It is often that deficient attitude, not the lack of skills, that hinders a small church’s development.” In reality, it would be better to ask, “What does Christ think of our church?” Contemporary applications of His seven messages to first-century churches in Revelation 2-3 help answer this significant inquiry.
inferiority. Another hidden disadvantage of the small church's family orientation is the difficulty it poses for the assimilation of new members. Small congregations are closely knit. Their members are not only part of the same church, but also frequently belong to the same extended, physically related family. New attenders may feel that the only way to gain acceptance is to marry into one of the family clans.

These ties can produce a subtle bias that causes a small church to sabotage its own growth. Members sometimes feel threatened as they watch the congregation's size increase. As a result, they become suspicious of the motives of newcomers. Their frustration increases as attendance expands, because the church seems less familiar than before. A pastor who encounters this mentality, especially one fresh from seminary, who has not yet had his idealism tempered by reality, reacts with outrage when he realizes that he and his congregation are actually working at cross purposes. He prays and struggles to see his church increase in numbers, but the church's members attempt to maintain the status quo or even decrease the size of their congregation.

This frustration can enlarge through a pastor's own hidden or not-so-hidden agenda. Whether the pastor is willing to admit it or not, his calling is also a career whose course can be determined by the performance of the church he serves. As Walrath has observed, "the favored pastoral career track leads through small congregations to a goal in larger congregations: bigger is better." When the time comes for a change in ministry, a solid increase in attendance generally opens the door for advancement to "senior pastor" status in a multiple-staff church.

No doubt, the pastor's frustration with the congregation springs

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8 Schaller, Small Church 60.
from a genuine fear that the church’s parochialism will hinder the great commission. However, the threat that this exclusive mentality poses to his career also contributes to his feeling of futility.

Ironically, when the congregation reacts this way to newcomers, it does so in the belief that its behavior is in the best interests of the church. An awareness that their pastor regards their behavior as subversive to the spread of the gospel would shock and offend the members. Their ambivalence, or even opposition, toward the church’s growth stems from their concern that the new members do not share the same common history as the long-term members of the church.

When these newcomers, one of whom is often the pastor, fail to respect the past and the authority of the patriarchal families, the "old timers" perceive a threat to the very essence of the church. In a sense, this is a threat to "family" solidarity. They conclude, perhaps with good reason, that before long the church as they have known it will cease to exist.

Often the pastor mistakenly decides that the problem with the "old guard" is that they do not care about Christ or the church. In reality, the opposite is sometimes true. Their resistance, however misguided it may be, is an outgrowth of their genuine love for the church and a reflection of their investment in it. They were around when the pastor arrived, and chances are good they will remain when he moves on.

The pastor is probably correct in his assumption that the church must move away from the past if it is to grow. But it is unlikely that he will be able to make any headway until he first affirms that past. When long-time members see that he is willing to acknowledge the investment they have made and guard their history, they will probably be ready to set their sights on the future.

LEADERSHIP DYNAMIC

Not only is the small church’s self-perception different from that of a large congregation, the dynamics of leadership are also different. In many large congregations leadership tends to be vested in the pastoral staff. In some cases one is tempted to use the word authoritarian to
describe them.

For the most part this approach to leadership is based erroneously on pragmatic considerations rather than correctly on theological principles. This can be especially true of the mega-church. A congregation that numbers ten to twelve thousand makes governing by a small board very challenging and actual congregational involvement almost impossible. The strong leadership style of many mega-church pastors may also reflect the important role that their personalities have played in the development of these churches. A church that is largely the result of the vision and energy of one man is going to listen carefully when that man speaks.

**Lay Involvement**

Certainly, it is possible to find small churches where the primary leadership power resides in the pastor. In general, however, small congregations tend to reflect a higher degree of lay influence. This tradition is largely due to the shortage of qualified pastors available to the small church.

Lyle Schaller explains:

> In thousands of small congregations there are no seminary-trained and ordained ministers on the scene. Even in those small-membership churches served by a seminary trained minister, the pastor usually has less influence in charting the course than is true in large congregations.11

One of the prerequisites for pastoral success in the small congregation is the ability to accept the reality of lay leadership and work effectively with the influences that reside in the congregation. The effective pastor, however, must also learn to be sensitive to the church’s changing expectations regarding his role. This can be complicated, since these expectations change with both the size of the church and the individual leadership situation.12

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11Schaller, Small Church 28.
12The situational leadership theory of Blanchard and Hersey points out that the
Small churches numbering under 100 value the personal and relational aspects of pastoral ministry. In churches that average between 100 and 200 the focus is on individual leadership characteristics. In large congregations the emphasis is placed upon organizational leadership. Even within small congregations one finds a range of expectations regarding pastoral leadership. Schaller has divided small churches into three basic organizational types:

(1) The fellowship of less than 35 or 40 which uses an informal decision making process akin to that of the small group. In the fellowship the individual member's voice is going to carry as much weight as the pastor's, if there is a pastor!

(2) The congregation, averaging from 35 to 90, which utilizes standing committees and uses more congregational involvement in its decision making. Churches of this size expect the pastor to be more of an initiator than those that could be regarded as a "fellowship."

(3) The larger (or mid-sized) congregation that averages from 85 to 150 whose government is more representative. Churches of this size expect the pastor to be an initiating leader and an administrator. Notice that there is some overlap in these designations. Whether a church falls into the category of a fellowship, small, or mid-sized congregation depends upon a combination of factors. A good example of this is seen in Steve Burt's description of two churches, both with a congregation of eighty to ninety people and engaged in similar activities, but whose self perception was radically different. One church described itself as a "mid-sized church with a variety of programs." The other described itself as "just a small church." A most effective leadership style depends upon a combination of factors that include both the motivation and the task readiness of those for whom the leader is responsible (Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, Management of Organizational Behavior [Englewood Cliffs: Simon & Schuster, 1988]). This applies only to those opportunities that fall outside well-defined biblical mandates or direction.

14 Schaller, Small Church 161-63.
15 Steve Burt, Activating Leadership in the Small Church (Valley Forge: Judson, 1988)
major contributing factor will be the leadership style employed by the pastor.

It is interesting to note that these differing values not only reflect the increasing organizational complexity of the developing church, but also appear to mirror the corresponding distance that arises in the relationship between the pastor and the congregation as the church grows.

Administrative Demands

The pastor's role is further complicated by leadership demands which are placed upon him but which may not be a part of the congregation's normal expectation. Despite the fact that small churches value relational skills over those that are administrative, the pastor is still required to do the work of administration. Whether or not the small congregation views the pastor as a CEO, he is nevertheless required to function as one. Indeed, the ability to balance congregational involvement with strong pastoral leadership skills may be the key ingredient for success in the small church.

Not only do the leadership demands placed upon the pastor shift as the size of the church increases, they also change with the age of the church. In the early stages of the church's development the entrepreneurial pastor is likely to be the most effective. As the church matures, however, more complex managerial skills are needed and the pastor's leadership function becomes more maintenance oriented.

This change can create conflict for the pastor whose primary area of leadership strength does not correspond to the church's current need. At this stage he can choose either to further develop his own skills in the needed area, compensate through effective delegation, or limit the church's development. In some cases this may be the point at which a pastoral change will take place.

Balancing Personal and Flock Involvement

Successful leadership in the small church is multidimensional. It is
made up of two components that, on the surface, would seem to be in conflict with each other: strong pastoral leadership and strong lay leadership. Strong pastoral leadership is needed for casting vision and providing the kind of direction that will help the church steer clear of those innate tendencies which tend to stifle its growth and development. The right to exercise such leadership is earned.

Strong lay leadership is equally important. While the small congregation may not be capable of being a "full service church," motivated and active members can provide a surprising number of highly effective ministries. Although the small congregation naturally tends to foster lay leadership, the pastor also plays a critical role.

The pastor who wishes to achieve the highest degree of lay involvement must recognize that effective lay leadership is a matter of empowerment rather than employment.

Steve Burt observes,

Too many pastors, in their eagerness to bring in the kingdom fast, act like donkey owners, treating their volunteers like dumb asses who refuse to move instead of treating them like the pearls of great price that they really are.\textsuperscript{16}

As a pastor I must ask myself why I want people to be involved in the ministries of the church. There are two possible motivations. One is utilitarian: their involvement will enable me to accomplish my ministry goals. Viewed from this perspective people become the tools the pastor uses to help the church and further his own ministry. In this model lay leaders serve the pastor. Understandably, members who feel they are being used in this way are often reluctant to cooperate.

A better motivation is one that springs from a desire to see others find complete fulfillment in Christ by helping them develop their full potential. In this model the pastor serves the lay leaders. Lay leaders who are fortunate enough to be part of a congregation that employs this model are more likely to enjoy their ministry, since the church's

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.}, 46.
programs are designed to match their unique gifts and interests. They feel valued because they perceive that the church has a genuine concern for their welfare. The overall quality of ministry is more likely to improve because the church's programs are driven by the interests of those who serve in them. Jesus' observation regarding the Sabbath is equally appropriate for the ministries of the church: programs were made for people not people for programs.

**Vision**

It is also important to recognize that effective lay ministry grows out of a sense of congregational need. The pastor's function as one who casts vision must be balanced with a sensitivity to the congregation's perception of its own needs. The pastor often anticipates a field of ministry that is much broader than that perceived by the congregation. This difference is partially due to the fact that most members view the church as a place to be served rather than to serve.\(^{17}\) They believe that the church's primary responsibility should be to minister to the needs of its own.

Because of this perception the thinking of the average member tends to be rooted in the present. The leadership role of the pastor, on the other hand, requires that his thinking be focused on the future. At times this difference in orientation produces conflicting views of what the church's goals and objectives should be. The pastor, for example, may feel that the church's resources would be most strategically used in fostering the strength of the youth ministry, because he anticipates that an increasing number of teens will come into the church program in the years ahead. The congregation may feel that those same resources would be better used to renovate the kitchen, because they

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\(^{17}\) A 1991 survey by the Barna Research Group revealed that fifteen percent of the adults questioned who described themselves as Christians were also involved in the teaching ministry of the church. Nineteen percent of those surveyed were in positions of leadership. While these percentages are surprisingly high, they still reflect what might be described as a consumer mentality among believers. In the average church a minority does a majority of the work. See George Barna, *What America Believes* (Ventura: Regal, 1991) 261.
are currently being inconvenienced by its inadequate facilities. This difference in priorities does not necessarily mean that the congregation is unconcerned about the youth. It is simply a reflection of their “present minded” orientation. Congregational priorities are likely to change once the current population of children ages and members become aware of the stress placed upon the church’s programs. While such short term thinking is understandable, it is also dangerous because it can limit the church to a maintenance ministry, or it can force a church to base decisions on selfish priorities rather than spiritual priorities.

Perceived needs must be affirmed and balanced with goals that reflect both the developing needs of the church, as well as its broader responsibility to the community at large and to God’s Word. A vision statement can be an effective means of accomplishing this.

George Barna recommends that the church’s vision statement be limited to a short paragraph and satisfy at least three key requirements. First, it must identify the type of people to whom the church has been called to minister. Secondly, it must clarify what the church hopes to accomplish through its ministry to this target group. Thirdly, it should identify the distinctives of the church that have defined its particular ministry niche. Once the church’s mission has been defined and articulated, it should be regularly restated to the congregation.

GROWTH DYNAMIC

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the small church is that of growth. Congregational growth is not automatic. It is affected by a complex set of factors, not all of which can be controlled by the church.

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18The ministry goals of the pastor may also be affected by community needs that are not immediately felt by the congregation. For example, if the congregation is aging, the pastor’s desire for a ministry to teens may have been prompted by his awareness that there are a large number of troubled youth in the community.

19George Barna, Without a Vision the People Perish (Glendale: Barna Research Group, 1991) 130.
Small congregations which are committed to church growth would do well to ask themselves three key questions.

(1) Why are we small? Given the preference worshipers seem to have for larger churches, the fact that the majority of congregations in North America are small is somewhat surprising. One can only conclude that when a church is small, there is a good reason for it. William E. Ramsden identifies three types of small churches: those that have always been small, those that are new and are on their way to becoming larger, and those that were larger but have decreased in size.20

It is not enough for a large church which has shrunk to take into account those dynamics inherent in its smaller size which now hinder its growth. It must also identify and address those elements which originally contributed to the church's decline.

For the new church on its way to being larger, the issue of size is primarily an organizational question. This is especially true if it is located in a community that is experiencing population growth. People are more easily attracted to new churches than to those that are already established.21 The challenge before the new church is to design its organizational structure in a way that prepares for future growth.

The church that has always been small faces the most difficult challenge of the three. The shrinking church wants to be larger. The new church expects to be larger. But the church that has always been small, in the vast majority of cases, falls into that category because it prefers to be small.

(2) Do we really want to grow? The longstanding small church must wrestle with this question for a number of reasons. First, because

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21Schaller, Small Church 129. This is probably not because people are attracted by the fact that the church is new so much as it is because such churches are by nature more inclusive than longstanding congregations. New churches are actively seeking worshipers and have not yet become a closed society. As the church becomes cohesive and develops a sense of its own congregational identity, openness will no longer come so naturally to it.
members must change the attitudes and practices that have kept them from growing in the past. Secondly, because it needs to work through the implications that growth will have for the church. Lyle Schaller explains:

Planning to move up off a plateau in size, especially in congregations averaging fewer than 160 at worship, usually is extremely difficult. One reason is growth usually means attempting to bring strangers into a small, intimate, and warm fellowship that is reinforced by longstanding kinship and/or friendship ties. A second reason it is difficult is that substantial growth usually requires changing the basic organizing principle from a network of one-to-one relationships with the pastor at or near the hub of that network to a network of groups, organizations, classes, cells, choirs, and circles and/or to a larger and more complex program.22

Schaller adds that moving off a plateau in size is especially difficult because people naturally prefer the status quo. In other words, if the small church succeeds in growing, it will lose those characteristics which have attracted its members to it in the first place. They love the church precisely because it is small.

Despite this preference the small congregation still has an obligation to seek growth. Not because bigger is better but because it is heir to Christ's calling to "seek and to save that which was lost." Evangelism is central to every church's mission regardless of size.

(3) What must we do in order to grow? It is possible for the small church to experience growth. But first the church must develop a strategy that is based on its own unique gifts and tailored to the needs of the community.

One of the reasons people prefer larger churches is that they are capable of offering an array of services. The small church cannot afford such a luxury. If it is to be effective it must carefully choose its ministries.

George Barna has observed that this strategy is a common feature

22Lyle Schaller, Create Your Own Future (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991) 73.
of growing churches:

Despite the urge to be all things to all people, the successful churches resisted that impulse to be the answer to everyone's every problem by focusing their vision for ministry, by reaffirming their commitment to quality, and by recognizing their limitations. If they were to devote themselves to meeting every need in their marketplace, they would dissipate their resources and have no impact—the very tragedy that has befallen the majority of Protestant churches in America. In general, these growing congregations refused to be enticed into areas of ministry in which they discerned no special calling. Instead, they concentrated on doing what they knew, beyond a doubt, they were called to do.23

The smaller church is especially well positioned to practice this principle. Unfortunately, many churches, both large and small, seem to develop their ministries by default. Programs are developed haphazardly, without first asking if the church has the resources to staff them or whether they are merited by the needs of the community or even called for by Scripture. In many cases the successful programs of other churches are copied in the hope that, "if it worked for them, it will work for us." This often results in a futile attempt to act like a big church.

Specialization has long been recognized as an effective strategy by the business world. It has been the key to success for many small businesses that fill a "niche" left by other larger companies against whom they would otherwise be unable to compete.

Some may object that such an analogy is inappropriate, arguing that churches ought to cooperate rather than compete. This is a noble sentiment. However, the blunt reality is that most churches are already competing for the same pool of worshipers.24 Most church

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23George Barna, User Friendly Churches (Ventura: Regal, 1991) 51-52. This concept does not bypass the sovereign work of God's Spirit in the church, but rather depends on it.

24George Barna observes that although the number of churches has grown in the past two decades, the number of worshipers has remained the same. "Since 1970
growth comes from new members who transfer in from other congregations, rather than as a result of conversion. A niche approach to ministry that is sensitive to the needs of the unchurched can increase the likelihood of reaching prospective worshipers who lie outside the pool of those who are merely being shifted from one church to another.

A niche approach to ministry can also be a tremendous boost to the small church. It demonstrates that there truly is a place for the small congregation that cannot be filled by its larger neighbors. When the small congregation becomes a specialist in ministry, it discovers that a small church can actually do some things better than a large church.

Such an approach requires a dual focus. First, the church must look inward to discover its area of primary strength. This can be done formally by means of congregational surveys and spiritual gift inventories. Or it can be done more informally by looking at the ministries which the church already has in place. One or two programs will usually stand out above the others. These ought to be seriously considered as possible areas of specialized ministry.

Secondly, the church must look outward to identify an appropriate target group. Lyle Schaller recommends that the church contemplating a specialized ministry ask itself three questions: Who are the people in this general community who are overlooked by the churches? What are their spiritual needs? Which of these needs could we respond to if we decided to make the effort?25

These questions can be supplemented by demographic information that addresses the following questions: Who lives in our community? How does the demographic profile of this community

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25Schaller, Small Church 74.
compare to the make-up of our church? What is the typical lifestyle of the target group we are trying to reach?

Much of this information can be obtained from the latest census report, usually available at the public library. Lifestyle demographics can be culled from observational trips through the community, church-sponsored or professional surveys, and the local newspaper. The local chamber of commerce is often a helpful resource for collecting demographic information.

There is really nothing new about a niche-based ministry. Most churches expect missionaries to employ this strategy as a matter of course. If mission organizations approached their task as inefficiently as the local church, would we continue to support them? So the small church should subject itself to the same kind of accountability.

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

Small church ministry is not easy but it does have its rewards. This fact is poignantly illustrated by Walter L. Cook's account of his conversation with a pastor who had served the same small church in rural Maine for eight years:

He told me he plans to stay even longer, "When I look at the same faces in the congregation each Sunday and often during the week, too, I never fail to find something new in them. It's really more exciting to stay than to travel up from church to church trying to get to the top."

Reflecting on his contentment and the unique privilege of serving a church whose members are closely knit and highly involved, Cook observes: "Maybe he has arrived at the top."

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THE SOURCE AND NT MEANING
OF ARSENOKOITA, WITH IMPLICATIONS
FOR CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND MINISTRY

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Traditional interpretation of arsenokoitai (arsenokoitai, "homosexuals") in 1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10 refers to sexual vice between people of the same sex, specifically homosexuality. Some restrict the term's meaning to "active male prostitute," but stronger evidence supports a more general translation, namely "homosexuals." More recently the definition "homosexual" has been opposed on cultural and linguistic grounds, the claim being that the term "homosexuals" is anachronistic. In addition, criticism of the traditional rendering says the term today includes celibate homophiles, excludes heterosexuals who engage in homosexual acts, and includes female homosexuals. A concern for acts instead of the modern attention to desires was the only factor in the ancient world. The foregoing opposition to the translation of arsenokoitai by "homosexuals" has a number of debilitating weaknesses. Finally, this study argues that Paul coined the term arsenokoitai, deriving it from the LXX of Lev 20:13 (cf. 18:22) and using it for homosexual orientation and behavior, the latter of which should be an occasion for church discipline (1 Corinthians 5-6) and legislation in society (1 Tim 1:8-11).

1Professor De Young has taught for many years at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary. He has contributed articles on homosexuality to other theological journals (see nn. 20, 29 below). The staff of The Master's Seminary Journal is happy to make this additional helpful research available.
INTRODUCTION

Coincident with the rise of the gay rights movement in recent years has been an increasing focus on the biblical statements regarding homosexuality or sodomy. As part of this focus, the meaning of the term ἀρσενοκοίται (arsenokoitai, "homosexuals"), used twice by the apostle Paul (1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10), has received vigorous scrutiny. This issue is particularly crucial to contemporary society since so much of modern ethics is shaped by biblical statements. More particularly, the concern over gay rights and the place of gays or homosexuals in the church and in society require the resolution of biblical interpretation.

This study of historical, linguistic, and literary matters will survey and evaluate recent proposals for the meaning of arsenokoitai and present evidence to point to a resolution. Several writers and their positions represent the modern debate on this word. Three authors, Bailey, Boswell, and Scroggs, have provoked considerable discussion and significantly encouraged the wider acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle in society, in the church, and in the ministry.

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2For convenience sake, the term "homosexual" is used to encompass both same-sex orientation and same-sex behavior. The meaning of this term is one of the main considerations of this study.

3These times are different from just over a century ago. Then P. Fairbairn (Pastoral Epistles [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1874] 891) could write of arsenokoitai that it is a "term for which fortunately our language has no proper equivalent." Unknowingly he thereby touched upon the basis for the contemporary debate and study. The present writer endorses the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles on the basis of internal and external evidence (see Donald Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, [4th ed.; Downer's Grove: Intervarsity, 1990] 621-649, for an extensive discussion and citation of supporters of the Pauline authorship).

4For example, see Scroggs' (see n. 14 below) influence on M. Olson, "Untangling the Web," The Other Side (April 1984):24-29. For a study suggesting a further prohibition of homosexuality in the OT, see A. Phillips, "Uncovering the Father's Skirt," VT 30/1 (January 1980) 38-43. For a bibliography of other sources dealing with arsenokoitai, see the Wilson disc Religion Indexes (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1987).
SURVEY OF NEW INTERPRETATIONS OF ARSENOKOITAI

D. S. Bailey

D. S. Bailey was perhaps the trailblazer of new assessments of the meaning of arsenokoitai. He takes the term in 1 Cor 6:9 as denoting males who actively engage in homosexual acts, in contrast to malakoi (malako, "effeminate"), those who engage passively in such acts. However, he insists that Paul knew nothing of "inversion as an inherited trait, or an inherent condition due to psychological or glandular causes, and consequently regards all homosexual practice as evidence of perversion" (38). Hence Bailey limits the term's reference in Paul's works to acts alone and laments modern translations of the term as "homosexuals." Bailey wants to distinguish between "the homosexual condition (which is morally neutral) and homosexual practices" [italics in source]. Paul is precise in his terminology and Moffatt's translation "sodomites" best represents Paul's meaning in Bailey's judgment (39). Bailey clearly denies that the homosexual condition was known by biblical writers.

J. Boswell

The most influential study of arsenokoitai among contemporary authors is that of John Boswell. Whereas the usual translation of this

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6 J. Boswell, Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality (Chicago: University Press, 1980).
7 Several translations of 1 Tim 1:10 are: KJV, "them that defile themselves with mankind"; ASV, "abusers of themselves with men"; NASB, "homosexuals"; RSV, NKJV, NRSV, "sodomites"; NEB, NIV, "perverts"; GNB, "sexual perverts." In 1 Cor 6:9 these occur: KJV, "abusers of themselves with mankind"; ASV, "abusers of themselves with men"; NASB, RSV, "homosexuals"; NKJV, "sodomites"; NEB, "homosexual perversion." The RSV and NEB derive their translation from two Greek words, malako and arsenokoitai which GNB has as "homosexual perverts." NRSV has the two words as "male prostitutes" in the text, and "sodomites" in the footnote. The active idea predominates among the commentators as well; it is the primary
term gives it either explicitly or implicitly an active sense, Boswell gives it a passive sense.

In an extended discussion of the term (341-53), he cites "linguistic evidence and common sense" to support his conclusion that the word means "male sexual agents, i.e. active male prostitutes." His argument is that the arsena- part of the word is adjectival, not the object of the koitai which refers to base sexual activity. Hence the term, according to Boswell, designates a male sexual person or male prostitute. He acknowledges, however, that most interpret the composite term as active, meaning "those who sleep with, make their bed with, men." Boswell bases his interpretation on linguistics and the historical setting. He argues that in some compounds, such as paidomauw (paidomaths, "child learner"), the paido- is the subject of manthan, and in others, such as paidoprow (paidoporos, "through which a child passes"), the paido- is neither subject nor object but simply a modifier without verbal significance. His point is that each compound must be individually analyzed for its meaning. More directly, he maintains that compounds with the Attic form arreno- employ it objectively while those with the Hellenistic arsena- use it as an adjective (343). Yet he admits exceptions to this distinction regarding arreno-.

Boswell next appeals to the Latin of the time, namely drauci or exoleti. These were male prostitutes having men or women as their objects. The Greek arsenokoitai is the equivalent of the Latin drauci; the corresponding passive would be parakotai (parakoitai, "one who lies beside"), Boswell affirms. He claims that arsenokoitai was the "most explicit word available to Paul for a male prostitute," since by Paul's time the Attic words prnow (pornos, "fornicator") and pornevn (porneun, "one committing fornication"), found also in the LXX, had been adopted "to refer to men who resorted to female prostitutes or simply committed fornication."8

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8Boswell, Christianity 344. Yet this was not a word "available to Paul for a male prostitute," for it does not occur at all in any literature prior to Paul (as a search in the Thesaurus Linguæ Graecæ using IBYCUS confirms). If Paul coined the term, it would
In the absence of the term from pagan writers such as Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, and Plutarch, and from the Jewish writers Philo and Josephus, Boswell finds even more convincing evidence for his affirmation that arsenokoitai "did not connote 'homosexual' or even 'sodomite' in the time of Paul" (346). He also demonstrates its absence in Pseudo-Lucian, Sextus Empiricus, and Libanius. He subsequently finds it lacking in "all discussions of homosexual relations" (346) among Christian sources in Greek, including the Didache, Tatian, Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom. Chrysostom is singled out for his omission as "final proof" that the word could not mean homosexuality.

Boswell next appeals to the omission of the texts of 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy from discussions of homosexuality among Latin church fathers (348). Cited are Tertullian, Arnobius, Lactan-
tius, and Augustine. The last named uses "circumlocutions." Other Latin writers include Ausonius, Cyprian, and Minucius Felix. The term is also lacking in state and in church legislation. By the sixth century the term became confused and was applied to a variety of sexual activities from child molesting to anal intercourse between a husband and wife (353).

Having surveyed the sources, Boswell concludes,

There is no reason to believe that either rsenokotai (arsenokotai) or malako (malakoi) connoted homosexuality in the time of Paul or for centuries thereafter, and every reason to suppose that, whatever they came to mean, they were not determinative of Christian opinion on the morality of homosexual acts (353, transliteration added).

It is clear throughout that Boswell defines arsenokoitai to refer to male prostitutes. He even goes so far as to conclude that Paul would probably not disapprove of "gay inclination," "gay relationships," "enduring love between persons of the same gender," or "same-sex eroticism" (112, 116-17).

R. Scroggs

Robin Scroggs has built upon the discussion of his predecessors and suggested a new twist to the word. Scroggs believes that rsenokotai is a "Hellenistic Jewish coinage, perhaps influenced by awareness of rabbinic terminology." The term is derived from Lev 18:22 and 20:13 where the LXX juxtaposes the two words rsenow (arsenos, "male") and kothn (koitn, "bed"), and represents the Hebrew rb (mikab zkr, "lying with a male"). Yet he believes that Paul did not originate the term, but borrowed it from "circles of Hellenistic Jews acquainted with

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masculorum concubitos, corresponding "almost exactly to the Greek" (348 n. 36).

rabbinic discussions" (108 n. 14). It was invented to avoid "contact with the usual Greek terminology" (108). If this is true, Scroggs observes, it explains why the word does not appear in Greco-Roman discussions of pederasty and why later patristic writers avoided it. It was meaningless to native-speaking Greeks (108).

Scroggs takes the second part as the active word and the first word as the object of the second part, thus differing from Boswell's "learned discussion" (107). Yet Scroggs understands the general meaning of "one who lies with a male" to have a very narrow reference. With the preceding malakoi (1 Cor 6:9), which Scroggs interprets as "the effeminate call-boy," arsenokoitai is the active partner "who keeps the malakos as a `mistress' or who hires him on occasion to satisfy his sexual desires" (108). Hence arsenokoitai does not refer to homosexuality in general, to female homosexuality, or to the generic model of pederasty. It certainly cannot refer to the modern gay model, he affirms (109).

This is Scrogg's interpretation of the term in 1 Tim 1:10 also. The combination of prnoi (pornoi, "fornicators"), arsenokoitai, and andrapodista (andrapodistai, "slave-dealers") refers to "male prostitutes, males who lie [with them], and slave dealers [who procure them]" (120). It again refers to that specific form of pederasty "which consisted of the enslaving of boys as youths for sexual purposes, and the use of these boys by adult males" (121). Even "serious minded pagan authors" condemned this form of pederasty. He then uses these instances of arsenokoitai in 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy to interpret the apparently general condemnation of both female and male homosexuality in Romans 1. Consequently Paul "must have had, could only have had pederasty in mind" (122, italics in source). We cannot know what Paul would have said about the "contemporary model of adult/ adult mutuality in same sex relationships" (122).

In relating these terms to the context and to contemporary ethical concerns, Scroggs emphasizes the point that the specific items in the list of vices in 1 Corinthians 6 have no deliberate, intended meaning in Paul. The form and function of the catalogue of vices are traditional
and stereotyped. Any relationship between an individual item in the list and the context was usually nonexistent. He concludes that Paul "does not care about any specific item in the lists" (104).15

Both on the basis of the meaning of the terms and of the literary phenomenon of a "catalogue of vices," Scroggs argues that the Scriptures are "irrelevant and provide no help in the heated debate today" (129). The "model in today's Christian homosexual community is so different from the model attacked by the New Testament" that "Biblical judgments against homosexuality are not relevant to today's debate. They should no longer be used in denominational discussions about homosexuality, should in no way be a weapon to justify refusal of ordination..." (127, italics in source).

REACTIONS TO THE NEW INTERPRETATIONS OF ARSENOKOITAI

D. Wright

In more recent years the positions of Bailey, Boswell, and Scroggs have come under closer scrutiny.16 Perhaps the most critical evaluation of Boswell's view is that by David Wright. In his thorough article, Wright points out several shortcomings of Boswell's treatment of arsenokoitai.17 He faults Boswell for failing to cite, or citing

15See discussion, 101-4. He says the same thing about Paul's language in Rom 1:26-27 (128). But this is doubtful. See the more cautious words of P. Zaas, "I Corinthians 6.9ff: Was Homosexuality Condoned in the Corinthian Church?" SBLASP 17 (1979):205-12. He observes that the words moixa, malako, and rsenokotai were part of Jewish anti-Gentile polemic. Yet Paul's words at the end of the vice list, "and such were some of you," indicate that "Paul is addressing real or potential abuses of his ethical message, not citing primitive tradition by rote" (210). Wright (see below) disputes Zaas' attempt to associate the term with idolatry (147).

16On Boswell's treatment of Rom 1:26-27, the article by R. B. Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural: A Response to John Boswell's Exegesis of Romans I," JRE 14/1 (Spring 1986):184-215, is an excellent critique.

17D. F. Wright, "Homosexuals or Prostitutes? The Meaning of ARSENOKOITAI (1 Cor. 6:9, 1 Tim. 1:10)," VC 38 (1984):125-53.
inaccurately, all the references to Lev 18:22 and 20:13 in the church fathers, such as Eusebius, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen (127-28). Boswell has not considered seriously enough the possibility that the term derives either its form or its meaning from the Leviticus passages (129). This is significant, for if the term is so derived, it clearly refutes Boswell's claim that the first half of the word (arseno-) denotes not the object but the gender of the second half (-koitai). The LXX must mean "a male who sleeps with a male," making arseno- the object.

Wright also faults Boswell's claims regarding linguistic features of the term, including suggested parallels (129). Though Boswell claims that compounds with arseno- employ it objectively and those with arreno- employ it as an adjective, Wright believes that the difference between the two is merely one of dialectical diversity: "No semantic import attaches to the difference between the two forms" (131). Wright believes that in most compounds in which the second half is a verb or has a verbal force, the first half denotes its object and where "the second part is substantival, the first half denotes its gender" (132).

It is with Boswell's treatment of the early church fathers that Wright takes special issue, because the former has failed to cite all the sources. For example, Aristides' Apology (c. A.D. 138) probably uses renomanew (arrenomanēs), ndrothn (androbatn), and rsenokoitaw (arsenokoitias) all with the same basic meaning of male homosexuality (133), contrary to Boswell's discussion. Boswell fails to cite Hippolytus (*Refut. Omn. Haer.* 5:26:22-23) and improperly cites Eusebius and the Syriac writer Bardesanes. The latter uses Syriac terms that are identical to the Syriac of 1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10 (133-34).

Next Wright shows how the early church fathers use arsenokoitai

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18In an unpublished paper, Henry Mendell, "ARSENOKOITAI: Boswell on Paul," effectively refutes Boswell's claims regarding the philology of rsenokotai. He finds the meaning to be general, "a male who has sex with a male" (4-11). The paper is available from the writer of this essay.

19Wright's end notes (148-49) list additional sources in the church fathers.
in parallel with paidofuora (paidophthoria) referring to male homosexuality with teenagers, the dominant form of male homosexuality among the Greeks (134). Sometimes this parallelism occurs in the threefold listings of moixea (moichea, "adultery"), pornea (porneia, "fornication"), and paidophthoria, with arsenokoitai replacing paidophthoria (136). Clement of Alexandria in Protr, 10:108:5 cites the second table of the Ten Commandments as "You shall not kill, o moixeseiw (ou moicheuseis, "you shall not commit adultery"), o paidofuorseiw (ou paidophthorseis, "you shall not practice homosexuality with boys"), you shall not steal . . ." (150 n. 43, transliteration and translation added).

Another occurrence of rsenokoiten (arsenokoitēn, "commit homosexuality") exists in the Sibylline Oracles 2:71-73. It may be, Wright observes, that the word was coined by a Jewish pre-Christian writer in a Hellenistic setting represented by Or.Sib., book 2 (137-38).

Wright also discusses uses of arsenokoitai in Rhetorius (6th century) who drew upon the first century A.D. writer Teucer, in Macarius (4th-5th cent.), and in John the Faster (d. 595) (139-40). The last in particular bears the idea of homosexual intercourse, contrary to Boswell.

Wright next replies to Boswell's contention that the term would not be absent "from so much literature about homosexuality if that is what it denoted" (140-41). Wright points out that it should not be expected in writers prior to the first century A.D. since it did not exist before then, that the Greeks used dozens of words and phrases to refer to homosexuality, that some sources (e.g., Didache) show no acquaintance with Paul's letters or deliberately avoid citing Scripture, and that Boswell neglects citing several church fathers (140-41). Boswell's treatment of Chrysostom's long uncompromising and clear indictment of homosexuality in his homily on Rom 1:26. Boswell has exaggerated Chrysostom's

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20We also have noticed the same tendency by Boswell to fail to cite all the references to Sodom and sodomy in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. See J. B. De Young, "A Critique of Prohomosexual Interpretations of the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," BSac 147/588 (1990):437-53.
infrequent use of the term. Wright observes that Boswell has "signally failed to demonstrate any use of ἀρσενοκοίτης (arsenokoits) etc. in which it patently does not denote male homosexual activity" (144, transliteration added). It is infrequent because of its relatively technical nature and the availability of such a term as paidophthoria that more clearly specified the prevailing form of male homosexuality in the Greco-Roman world.

Wright also surveys the Latin, Syriac, and Coptic translations of 1 Tim 1:10 and 1 Cor 6:9. All three render arsenokoitai with words that reflect the meaning "homosexual," i.e., they understand arseno- as the object of the second half of the word (144-45). None of these primary versions supports Boswell's limited conclusion based on them.

Wright concludes his discussion with a few observations about the catalogues of vices as a literary form. He believes that such lists developed in late Judaism as Hellenistic Jews wrote in clear condemnation of homosexuality in the Greek world. This paralleled the increased concern on the part of moral philosophers over homosexual indulgence. The term came into being under the influence of the LXX (145) so that writers spoke "generally of male activity with males rather than specifically categorized male sexual engagement with paideu (paides)" (146, transliteration added). If arsenokoitia and paidophthoria were interchangeable, it is because the former encompassed the latter (146).

In summary, Wright seeks to show that arsenokoitai is a broad term meaning homosexuality and arises within Judaism. The views of Boswell, Scroggs and others who limit the term to "active male
prostitutes" or pederasty are without significant support from linguistic and historical studies.

W. Petersen

More recently Wright's understanding has itself been questioned from a different direction. In a brief 1986 study William Petersen found linguistic confusion in using the English word "homosexuals" as the meaning of arsenokoitai. He faulted Wright and English Bible translations for rendering it by "homosexuals" in 1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10.

In a sense Petersen has coalesced Bailey, Boswell, and Scroggs into a single assertion that reiterates, in effect, the position of Bailey. He finds "homosexuals" unacceptable as a translation because it is anachronistic. "A major disjunction" exists between contemporary thought and terminology and the thought and terminology in Paul's time (187-88).

What is this "disjunction"? He bases it on historical and linguistic facts. Accordingly, ancient Greek and Roman society treated male sexuality as polyvalent and characterized a person sexually only by his sexual acts. Virtually all forms of behavior, except transvestism, were acceptable. Christianity simply added the categories of "natural" and "unnatural" in describing these actions. Ancient society knew nothing of the categories of "homosexuals" and "heterosexuals," and assumed that, in the words of Dover quoted approvingly by Petersen, "everyone responds at different times to both homosexual and to heterosexual stimuli . . ." (188).

In contrast to this, modern usage virtually limits the term "homosexual" to desire and propensity. K. M. Benkert, who in 1869 coined the German term equivalent to "homosexual," used it as referring to orientation, impulse, or affectional preference and having "nothing to do with sexual acts" (189).

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22 W. L. Petersen, "Can ARSENOKOIITA Be Translated By 'Homosexuals'? (1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10)" VC 40 (1986):187-91.
23 K. J. Dover, Greek Homosexuality (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1978) 1 n. 1.
Petersen then proceeds to cite the *Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary*, which defines "homosexual" only as a propensity or desire with no mention of acts. Petersen's point is that by using "homosexuals" for arsenokoitai, one wrongfully reads a modern concept back into early history "where no equivalent concept existed" (189). Consequently the translation is inaccurate because it "includes celibate homophiles, . . . incorrectly excludes heterosexuals who engage in homosexual acts . . . [and] incorrectly includes female homosexuals" (189, italics in source). Prior to 1869 there was no "cognitive structure, either in our society or in antiquity, within which the modern bifurcation of humanity into 'homosexuals' and 'heterosexuals' made sense" (189).

The foregoing clarifies why Petersen feels that the translation "homosexuals" is mistaken. Yet is it possible that Petersen is the one mistaken, on both historical and linguistic or philological grounds? The next phases of this paper will critically examine Petersen's position.

**THE JUSTIFICATION FOR TRANSLATING ARSENOKOITAI BY "HOMOSEXUALS"

*Historical Grounds*

A refutation of the foregoing opposition to the translation of arsenokoitai by "homosexuals" begins with the historical and cultural evidence. Since virtually everyone acknowledges that the word does not appear before Paul's usage, no historical settings earlier than his are available. Yet much writing reveals the ancient understanding of homosexuality prior to and contemporary with Paul. The goal is to discover whether the ancients conceived of homosexuality, particularly homosexual orientation, in a way similar to present-day concepts.

Petersen, Bailey, Boswell, and Scroggs claim that the homosexual condition, desire, propensity, or inversion whatever it is called cannot be part of the definition of the term. They assert this
either because the term is limited to acts of a particular kind (Boswell, active male prostitutes; Scroggs, pederasty) or because the homosexual condition was unknown in ancient times (Bailey; Petersen). The following discussion will show why neither of these positions is legitimate. Attention will be devoted to the latter position first with the former one being addressed below under "Linguistic Grounds."

In regard to the latter position, one may rightfully ask, did not the homosexual condition exist before 1869? Is it only a modern phenomenon? Yet if it is universal, as alleged today, it must have existed always including ancient times, even though there is a lack of sophistication in discussing it. Indeed, evidence shows that the ancients, pre-Christian and Christian, not only knew about the total spectrum of sexual behavior, including all forms of same-sex activity (transvestism included), but also knew about same-sex orientation or condition. Petersen admits (190 n. 10) that Plato in Symposium (189d-192d) may be a "sole possible exception" to ancient ignorance of this condition. He discounts this, however, believing that even here "acts appear to be the deciding factor." However, this is a very significant exception, hardly worthy of being called "an exception," because of the following additional evidence for a homosexual condition.

The Symposium of Plato gives some of the strongest evidence for knowledge about the homosexual condition. Plato posits a third sex comprised of a male-female or man-woman (andro-gynon, "man-woman"). Hence "original nature" (plai fsiw [palai physis], 189d) consisted of three kinds of human beings. Zeus sliced these human beings in half, to weaken them so that they would not be a threat to the gods. Consequently each person seeks his or her other half, either one of the opposite sex or one of the same sex. Plato then quotes Aristophanes:

24We are conscious of the fact that Plato's writings may not reflect Athenian society, or that the speakers in Symposium may not reflect Plato's views. However, it is assumed that they do, and with this agrees Dover (Homosexuality 12) and other evidence cited below (n. 26; yet cf. Plato's different view, n. 28).
Each of us, then, is but a tally of a man, since every one shows like a flatfish the traces of having been sliced in two; and each is ever searching for the tally that will fit him. All the men who are sections of that composite sex that at first was called man-woman are woman-courters; our adulterers are mostly descended from that sex, whence likewise are derived our mancourting women and adulteresses. All the women who are sections of the woman have no great fancy for men: they are inclined rather to women, and of this stock are the she-minions. Men who are sections of the male pursue the masculine, and so long as their boyhood lasts they show themselves to be slices of the male by making friends with men and delighting to lie with them and to be clasped in men's embraces; these are the finest boys and striplings, for they have the most manly nature. Some say they are shameless creatures, but falsely: for their behavior is due not to shamelessness but to daring, manliness, and virility, since they are quick to welcome their like. Sure evidence of this is the fact that on reaching maturity these alone prove in a public career to be men. So when they come to man's estate they are boy-lovers, and have no natural interest in wiving and getting children but only do these things under stress of custom; they are quite contented to live together unwedded all their days. A man of this sort is at any rate born to be a lover of boys or the willing mate of a man, eagerly greeting his own kind. Well, when one of them whether he be a boy-lover or a lover of any other sort happens on his own particular half, the two of them are wondrously thrilled with affection and intimacy and love, and are hardly to be induced to leave each other's side for a single moment. These are they who continue together throughout life, though they could not even say what they would have of one another (191d-192c).

Should these two persons be offered the opportunity to be fused together for as long as they live, or even in Hades, Aristophanes says that each "would unreservedly deem that he had been offered just what he was yearning for all the time" (192e).

Several observations about this text are in order. Lesbianism is

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25The translation is that of W. R. M. Lamb, Plato: Symposium LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1967) 141-143. Note the reference to "adul-teress." If there is a homosexual condition derived from birth or the genes, logically there must also be an adulterous condition derived from birth.
contemplated, as well as male homosexuality (191e). "Natural interest" (tn non fsei [ton noun physei], 192b) reflects modern concepts of propensity or inclination. The words, "born to be a lover of boys or the willing mate of a man" (paiderastw te ka filerastw gnetai [paiderastes te kai philerastis gignetai], 192b) reflect the modern claims "to be born this way," i.e., as a homosexual. The idea of mutuality ("the two of them are wondrously thrilled with affection and intimacy and love," 192b) is present. Aristophanes even speaks of "mutual love ingrained in mankind reassembling our early estate" (rvw mfytw lllvn tow nurpoiw ka tw rxaaw fssew synagyew [ho ers emphytos allin tois anthrpois kai ts archaias phyes synaggeus], 191d). The concept of permanency ("These are they who continue together throughout life," 192c) is also present. Further mention of and/or allusion to permanency, mutuality, "gay pride," pederasty, homophobia, motive, desire, passion, and the nature of love and its works is recognizable.

Clearly the ancients thought of love (homosexual or other) apart from actions. The speakers in the Symposium argue that motive in homosexuality is crucial: money, office, influence, etc. . . . bring reproach (182e-183a, 184b). They mention the need to love the soul not the body (183e). There are two kinds of love in the body (186b) and each has its "desire" and "passion" (186b-d). The speakers discuss the principles or "matters" of love (187c), the desires of love (192c), and being "males by nature" (193c). Noteworthy is the speech of Socrates who devotes much attention to explaining how desire is related to love and its objects (200a-201c). Desire is felt for "what is not provided or present; for something they have not or are not or lack." This is the object of desire and love. Socrates clearly distinguishes between "what sort of being is love" and the "works" of love (201e). This ancient philosopher could think of both realms' sexual acts as well as disposition of being or nature. His words have significance for more than pederasty.26

26Elsewhere in the Symposium we are told that it is the heavenly love to love the male and young men (181c), but this must not be love for boys too young; the latter should be outlawed (181d-e). Such love of youths is to be permanent (181d), lifelong
In summary, virtually every element in the modern discussion of love and homosexuality is anticipated in the *Symposium* of Plato. Petersen is in error when he claims that the ancients could only think of homosexual acts, not inclination or orientation. Widespread evidence to the contrary supports the latter.

Biblical support for homosexual inclination in the contexts where homosexual acts are described adds to the case for the ancient distinction. In Rom 1:21-28 such phrases as "reasonings," "heart," "become foolish," "desires of the heart," "lie," "passions of dishonor," and abiding (184a). Where homosexual love is considered a disgrace, such an attitude is due to encroachments of the rulers and to the cowardice of the ruled (182d an early charge of "homophobia"?) In Athens it was "more honorable to love openly than in secret" (182d an ancient expression of "coming out of the closet"). Mutuality was present ("this compels lover and beloved alike to feel a zealous concern for their own virtue," 184b).

For Petersen to label the Symposium a "possible" exception to his position is inadequate and misrepresentative. It is a significant witness to Greek society hundreds of years before the time of Christ.

27Dover (*Homosexuality* 12, 60-68) finds homosexual desire and orientation in Plato’s works (*Symposium* and *Phaedrus*) and elsewhere. Philo writes of those who "habituate themselves" to the practice of homosexual acts (*The Special Laws* 3.37-42; cf. De *Vita Contemplativa* 59-63). Josephus says that homosexuality had become a fixed habit for some (*Against Apion* 2.273-75). Clement of Alexandria on Matt 19:12 writes that "some men, from birth, have a natural aversion to a woman; and indeed those who are naturally so constituted do well not to marry" (*Miscellanies* 3.1). It is addressed in Novella 141 of Justinian’s Codex of laws (it refers to those "who have been consumed by this disease" as in need of renouncing "their plague," as well as acts). Pseudo Lucian (*Erotes* 48) and Achilles Tatius (*Leucippe and Clitophon* II.38) speak of it. Finally Thucydides 2.45.2 has: "Great is your glory if you fall not below the standard which nature has set for your sex."

Boswell (Christianity 81-87) cites poets (Juvenal, Ovid), writers (Martial), statesmen (Cicero), and others who describe permanent, mutual homosexual relationships, even marriages. Even emperors could be either gay-married (Nero) or exclusively gay (Hadrian), Boswell says. Scroggs (*Homosexuality* 28, 32-34) admits that both inversion and perversion must have existed in the past. He discusses possible references to adult mutual homosexual and lesbian relationships, but dismisses them (130-44).
"burned in the desire," "knowledge," and "reprobate mind" prove Paul's concern for disposition and inclination along with the "doing" or "working" of evil (see also vv. 29-32). Even the catalogues of vices are introduced (1 Tim 1:8-10) or concluded (1 Cor 6:9-11) by words describing what people "are" or "were," not what they "do." Habits betray what people are within, as also the Lord Jesus taught (cf. Matt 23:28). The inner condition is as important as the outer act; one gives rise to the other (cf. Matt 5:27).

Petersen errs regarding other particulars too. Transvestism apparently was accepted by the ancients. It was practiced among Canaanites, Syrians, people of Asia Minor, as well as Greeks, according to S. R. Driver. Only a few moralists and Jewish writers are on record as condemning it. For example, Seneca (Moral Epistles 47.7-8) condemns homosexual exploitation that forces an adult slave to dress, be beardless, and behave as a woman. Philo also goes to some length to describe the homosexuals of his day and their dressing as women (The Special Laws III, 37-41; see also his On the Virtues, 20-21, where he justifies prohibition of cross-dressing). Even the OT forbade the interchange of clothing between the sexes (Deut 22:5).

Petersen is also wrong in attributing to Christianity the creating of the "new labels" of "natural" and "unnatural" for sexual behavior. These did not begin with Paul (Rom 1:26-27) but go as far back as ancient Greece, and even non-Christian contemporaries used them. Plato, the Test. Naph., Philo, Josephus, Plutarch, and others used these words or related concepts.

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28See specifics in S. R. Driver A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895) 250. He observes that the prohibition of cross-dressing in Deut 22:5 is not a "mere rule of conventional propriety." See also Dover, Homosexuality 73-76, 144.

29Plato in his last work, in which he seeks to show how to have a virtuous citizen, condemned pederasty and marriage between men as "against nature" (par fesin) (Laws 636a-b; 636c; 836a-c; 838; 841d-e). According to Test. Naph, 3:4-5 the sodomites changed the "order of nature." The Jewish writers Philo (On Abraham 135-137) and Josephus (Ant. 1.322; 3.261, 275; Ag. Ap. 2.199; 2.273, 275) label sexual deviation as "against nature." Finally, first century moralists such as Plutarch (Dialogue on Love
Linguistic Grounds

The research of Wright and Mendell cited, as well as ancient writers documented above, shows that arsenokoitai is a broad term. It cannot be limited to pederasty or "active male prostitutes"; nor can it be limited to acts. It must also include same-sex orientation or condition.

The main difficulty, however, with Petersen's study and that of others before him, lies in the area of linguistics or philology pertaining to the modern term "homosexuals." Petersen has an erroneous concept of dictionaries and meaning when citing the incompatibility of the English and Greek terms.

The preceding historical evidence demonstrates that ancient concepts of homosexuality, though primarily understood as sexual acts, cannot be limited to acts alone. It is plausible, then, that the term arsenokoitai may include both acts and orientation or desire at least in the contexts of Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, and 1 Timothy 1. Paul knew 751c-c; 752b-c) spoke of homosexuality as "against nature." Christians clearly did not invent the labels "natural" and "unnatural." See J. B. De Young, "The Meaning of 'Nature' in Romans 1 and Its Implications for Biblical Proscriptions of Homosexual Behavior" JETS 31/4 (Dec. 1988):429-41.

The philological research by Mendell, in particular, is comprehensive and convincing. He finds Boswell wrong on many points including his observations about the Latin exoleti (5); the prevalence of active male prostitution (6); the meaning of kōtai as a coarse and active word (7); the meanings of compounds of kot* (7-10); the prevalence of rsenokotai in the church fathers (11-18); the law in Roman society (13); the statements of Sextus about Greek law (13); and secular uses (18-19). In appendices Mendell devotes detailed examination to how compounds are formed, including those with kōthw (25-28), and such compounds in astrological settings (28-29).

Our own philological study confirms Mendell's observations. Mr. Tim Teebken assisted this writer in searching Thesaurus Lingua Graecae. The search revealed thousands of occurrences of forms of kōt*, mjt*, and fuort*. Paiderast* occurs about 200 times, and ndrobaten ("practice unnatural vice"), ndromana ("mad after men"), and rrhtoyrga ("filthy lewdness") and rrhtopoiv ("do unmentionable vice") occur only rarely. LSJ cites these and other words referring to "unnatural vice."
about the immorality of Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus (note the similarity of Eph 4:17-24 and 5:3-12 with 1 Timothy 1 and 1 Corinthians 6).

A subsequent question arises: is the modern term "homosexual" limited to orientation or inclination, excluding acts or behavior? Petersen answers in the affirmative and cites as support both the creator of the word and the meaning he assigned to it, as well as the standard dictionary, Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary. In n. 9 (190), however, Petersen acknowledges that Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1971) does include a reference to one who "practices homosexuality" and "same-sex sexual activity" after the definitions referring to inclination and preference. He dismisses this as a "popularized, perhaps Americanized usage," as "slang," and as a "corruption of the original meaning." He characterizes Webster's lexicographers as "ignorant of the psychological facts of the case, even though they may be correctly recording the use of the word in popular speech" (190).

Yet Petersen has overlooked several important points or principles. The first one concerns lexicography. Once a word has entered the stream of society it is defined by its entire context what the users mean by it, regardless of its original definition. Dictionaries reflect usage, including the changes in a word's meaning.

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31 Petersen's reference to the "psychological facts of the case" begs the question. If he is referring to Kinsey and other studies, the "facts" have been disputed. Many psychologists use "homosexual" to cover both orientation and behavior, and have seen many people change from homosexuality to heterosexuality. These include such psychologists (who have published) as Bergler, Anna Freud, Haddon, Hatterer, Janov, Socarides, Kronemeyer, van den Aardweg, and Keefe. Various groups, such as Homosexuals Anonymous of Reading, Pennsylvania, assist homosexuals in changing their orientation and behavior.

It is apparent that popular and scholarly usage of "homosexuals" today has come to include "same-sex behavior"; indeed this may now be the more prominent definition. If this be so, in light of the breadth of meaning of *arsenokoitai*, "homosexuals" is a closer approximation of its meaning than believed by Bailey, Boswell, Petersen, and others.

A second principle is that words are constantly changing in meaning. *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language* (unabridged second ed., 1965) does not include "practice" under the definition of "homosexual" and uses only the words "sexual relations between individuals of the same sex" as the second definition of "homosexuality." Webster's definitions have changed in the span of just six years (compare the third edition cited above). For Petersen to restrict the meaning to an earlier one and to call the later definition a "corruption" is unfortunate.

The meaning of a word may change by being deepened, by being given new value, by taking on a new meaning, or by being given a new concrete application. In the case of "homosexuals," it appears that several of these kinds of changes are occurring because of the increasingly frequent use of the word in different contexts ranging from popular speech to scholarly circles.

A third principle is that words usually mark out a field of meaning. That is, words usually do not have a point of meaning, i.e., a very small area of meaning. The historical-cultural study above shows that homosexuality or whatever word describes it existed in various forms including prostitution, pederasty, lesbianism, orientation, and mutuality. The Greeks and Romans employed scores of terms to describe such orientation and behavior. Therefore, it is plausible that such a term as *arsenokoitai* has a broad meaning when its etymology is simply "male-bed" or "lying with a male," assuming that the context does not restrict it to a narrower meaning.

A fourth principle stems from the preceding. Since no two

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words have exactly the same area of meaning, no true synonyms exist within a language and no exact equivalents occur between languages.\(^{34}\) This allows arsenokoitai to be translated "homosexuals" even though it is somewhat imprecise to do so. Terms in two languages can never be exactly equivalent because their contexts can never be identical (given, at least, the time span). They do not share the same area of meaning. It may well be that "sodomists" better represents the idea of arsenokoitai, since both terms in their moral and biblical settings represent contexts closer to one another.

It may be that Benkert in 1869 misread or was unacquainted with the history of homosexuality in ancient times. He may have unwittingly altered the whole discussion of the subject by limiting his new term to the homosexual condition.

Petersen asserts that translating arsenokoitai by "homosexuals" is anachronistic (the ancients had no concept equivalent to homosexual desire; the English term is limited to homosexual desire), but he is conclusively in error as the above historical-cultural evidence and linguistic principles show. Certain terms such as renomanw (renomans, "mad after males"), 4th century A.D., show that there was a "cognitive structure" for the homosexual condition before 1869 (cf. 1 Cor 6:11, "and such were some of you").

The most that can be said for Petersen's position is that the ancients may not have had a term for exclusive sexual categories (whether a person is "homosexual" or "heterosexual"), whereas moderns do have one or at least may refer to one's primary attraction. Hence the contemporary concept of a homosexual may be slightly different from the ancients, who spoke only of what they considered to be a number of equal options.\(^{35}\) Yet some evidence indicates that "exclusively homosexual" persons were identifiable to the ancients (see n. 27 above). Both the Greek and English terms appear broad enough to cover such cases and cannot be limited to acts. Petersen has decidedly overstated the case for both the ancients and the modern

\(^{34}\)Ibid., 144.

\(^{35}\)An observation of Mr. Teubken who assisted in this project.
Summary of Reactions to the New Interpretations

It is improper to be prescriptive as to the meaning of arsenokoitai. It is better to be descriptive. In surveying those who have written on the meaning of the term, Bailey, Boswell, and Scroggs have erred or have been incomplete when they, respectively, define the term as "perverts," "male sexual agents" or "active male prostitutes," and "pederasts." It is more credible that historical and cultural evidence supports the conclusion that the term is broad enough to include both the various forms of homosexual acts and the homosexual condition, inversion or orientation. The studies by Wright and others supply the linguistic evidence for the more general sense of "homosexuals."

As to the assertion by Petersen that the English "homosexuals" should not be used to render arsenokoitai, it is evident that the English and the Greek words are sufficiently broad to make them fair and suitable equivalents. Because of usage in various historical and modern contexts, each must include both homosexual behavior and orientation or condition.36

SUPPORT FOR THE PAULINE ORIGIN OF ARSENOKOITAI

Some final questions remain to be answered regarding the source of Paul's term. As Mendell points out, anyone wishing to explain Paul's meaning must answer three questions.37 Where does he get the word? Why does he use such an arcane word in speaking to his audience? If the word is ambiguous, as Boswell affirms, how can

36Although the existence of a homosexual orientation or condition has been assumed, we are not thereby stipulating what is its cause or duration. Neither does Paul. He merely uses a word that covers both what a homosexual is and what he does, and at least for the latter he assigns culpability. Investigations of the cause and duration are beyond the scope of this study.

37Mendell, "ARSENOKOITAI" 20.
he expect to be understood?

It is a reasonable position that Paul coined the term based on the juxtaposition of the two words arsenos and koitn in the LXX of Lev 20:13 (cf. 18:22), though absolute proof of this is impossible. It may be suggested that the criteria of style, practice, familiarity with the LXX, and context make this a highly plausible conclusion, however.

Paul has the practice of coining terms, it appears. For example, in 1 Tim 1:3 and 6:3, Paul used a term he had probably originated. The word terodidaskalv (heterodidaskale, "to teach a different doctrine") does not occur before Paul and only afterward in Ignatius to Polycarp 3:1[38]. Hence in the scope of eight verses Paul has possibly coined two terms, though one of them he had used earlier in 1 Cor 6:9.

In general, statistics show that Paul probably coined many terms. There are 179 words found in Paul and nowhere else in pre-Christian Greek literature. Of these, 89 occur only one time. Other statistics support the theory that Paul had a creativity in choosing vocabulary.[39]

In addition, Paul displayed considerable dependence upon the LXX. He usually quoted from the LXX rather than the Hebrew of the OT when he quoted the OT. Out of 93 quotations of the OT classified

[38]Paul also uses rare terms found elsewhere outside the NT only. One such term is ndrapodistaw which occurs in 1 Tim 1:10 and is important to the meaning of rsenokotai. Scroggs defines the former term as "those who steal boys for sexual purposes" and uses it to define the preceding rsenokotai as "pederasts." The word occurs in many pagan writers (e.g., Aristophanes, Plato, Xenophon, Demosthenes, Polybius, Dio Chrysostom). In Philo (Special Laws 4.13) it is used generally of a kidnapper who steals people to reduce them to slavery. It appears that Scroggs is again too narrow in his definition and fails to appreciate the structure and OT background of the list of vices of 1 Tim 1:9-10.

[39]For example, there are 433 words used only in both secular Greek and Paul. Of these 203 occur but once in Paul. More interestingly, 175 words occur only in both the LXX and Paul. Of these 31 occur but once in Paul. Of this last group 5 of the 31 are combinations of two words similar in pattern to that of rsenokotai. See R. Morgenthaler, Statistik Des Neutestamentlichen Wort-schatzes (1973 rpt.; Zurich: Gotthelf-Verlag, n.d.) 175-80. The numbers are our calculations.
by Ellis, Paul used the LXX 14 times, but only 4 times did he quote the Hebrew.\footnote{E. E. Ellis, Paul's Use of the OT (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957) 150-52. Some of the remainder of Paul's quotations are in agreement with both the LXX and Hebrew (19 times), and in others he agrees with neither.} Obviously Paul was familiar with and used the LXX.

More particularly, the NT frequently uses the portion of Leviticus 18:20. The structure and content of these chapters mark them as special. Often identified as the "code of holiness," these chapters (unlike the remainder of Leviticus) are universal in their scope, much the same as the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. The Jews held Leviticus 19 to be a kind of summary of the Torah, a central chapter in the Pentateuch. This respect carried over to the writers of the NT where chapters 18-20 are widely used. They are cited by Christ, Paul, Peter, and James.\footnote{Specific citations are available in J. B. De Young, "The Old Testament Witness to Homosexuality: A Critical Assessment of the Prohomosexual Interpretation of the OT" (an unpublished paper read at the NW section, Evangelical Theological Society, Portland, Oregon, May 4, 1985) 22-23.} "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" is from Lev 19:18. When Paul alludes to 19:19 in 2 Cor 6:14 to illustrate the ban on unequal yoking, he coins a word tereozygontew (heterozygountes, "being unequally yoked") that is found nowhere before him. Yet the adjective form tereo (hetero, "unequally yoked") occurs in 19:19. The LXX probably suggested the coinage to Paul.

Most importantly, both of the contexts where arsenokoitai appears suggest that Paul was thinking of the Levitical "code of holiness."\footnote{Mendel, "ARSENOKOI TAI" 21-24.} First Corinthians 5 has many allusions to Leviticus 18:20. The theme is moral separation, as it is in Leviticus. Topics include distinction from the Gentiles (5:1; cf. 6:1-6; Lev 18:3, 24-30; 20:23) and future inheritance (klhronome [klhronome, "I inherit"], 6:9, 10; Lev 20:23-24). The law of loving your neighbor (Lev 19:18) is reflected in 6:8. Of the ten vices in 1 Cor 6:9-10, only one (drunkards) is not found in Leviticus 18:20. It is feasible, then, that both malakoi and arsenokoitai
come from Lev 20:13 and point to the passive and the active same-sex roles. Leviticus 20:13 said that both persons were to be put to death (the penalty is not found in 18:22). The Corinthian list of vices may be a summation of Lev 20:23-24 (cf. 18:29-30).

The same observations apply to 1 Tim 1:10. In the context Paul begins with perversions of teaching regarding the Mosaic Law (vv. 3-8), moves to legislation in general (vv. 9-10), and ends with the gospel (v. 11). With the Law of Moses so dominant, it is not surprising that the list of specific vices corresponds in order to the fifth through the ninth of the Ten Commandments. Since the list uses both single terms and doublets to refer to the Ten Commandments, it is more probable that andrapodistaw (andrapodistais, "slave-dealers") goes with the following "thieves" rather than with the preceding arsenokoitai. This militates against Scrogg's narrow sexual definition ("slave-dealers who procure boys as prostitutes," 120) of the term. Hence pornois and arsenokoitai represent the sixth commandment.

The preceding discussion justifies the claim that Paul coined the word in question. No one else in Hellenistic Judaism used the term before Paul.

Two questions still remain. Why did Paul coin such a term? It may be suggested that he sought to demonstrate the relation of believers to the Law of Moses, in particular to show that the universal standards of the Law (derived from Exodus 20 and Leviticus 18:20) were still valid. Paul assumed his readers' acquaintance with Judaism: note references to "Satan" (1 Cor 5:5), the "day of the Lord" (1 Cor 5:5), "leaven" and "unleaven" (5:6-8), "Passover" (5:7), and judging angels (6:3). He quoted Deut 17:7 in 5:13. Since Leviticus 18:20 became central to the Day of Atonement, it was natural for Paul to refer to this section of Leviticus (cf. chaps. 16 and 23). The topic of the believer's relationship to the Law or law is the main point in 1 Timothy 1.

Finally, how could Paul expect his Greek readers to understand the term? Compounds involving arseno- and arreno- and koit abounded. The Greeks were adept at forming compounded Greek
Therefore Paul coined a word that brought quick recognition. The word is general, reflecting the passage in Lev 20:13. Paul did not use ἀνδροκοθθω (androkoits, "male having sex with a male"), which would not have suggested a reference to pederasty. His term expressed gender but not gender and maturity; he condemned "males who lie with males of any age." It agrees with the threefold use of ῥην (arsn, "male") in Rom 1:27 where Paul condemns same-sex activity.

This theory also explains why the word did not catch on with the secular world after Paul. The Gentiles did not appreciate the biblical context of OT moral legislation. Paul was ahead of and contrary to his time. Perhaps for the same reason "sodomists" and "sodomy" are fading from general secular usage today.

CONCLUSION

It seems quite likely that Paul himself coined a new term which he virtually derived from the LXX of Lev 20:13. No other current explanation is as practical as this. If this be true, there are significant consequences, assuming that Paul wrote prescriptively. Obviously he viewed the moral law (derived from Leviticus 18:20; Exodus 20) as authoritative for his Christian audience. Since he and his readers in Corinth and Ephesus knew also about same-sex orientation or condition, sufficient reason exists to apply his term to those today who are invertes or homosexuals in orientation. English translations are justified in their use of words such as "homosexuals" or "sodomists."

44Ibid., 6 n. 14. Androkoithw and its cognate verb are much less frequent (c. 13 occurrences in secular papyri ranging from 30 B.C. to A.D. 140 [most before Paul] and apparently a few others [3?] in the church fathers). There are c. 50 occurrences of ῥην (arsn), apparently all post-Pauline.
45One may cite additional reasons for including "adult-adult mutuality" as well as orientation or condition in Paul's term, as the context and wording of Rom 1:26-27 make clear. See De Young, "Nature" 439-40.
Besides, these terms should not be limited to acts or behavior. Just as an adulterous orientation or condition is wrong, so is a homosexual one.\footnote{It may be that one should distinguish between sexual feelings (amoral) and sexual lust or desire (immoral).}

In addition, it appears that lexicons and dictionaries (e.g., BAGD, TWNT, NIDNTT, EDNT) are too narrow in limiting, explicitly or implicitly, the term to male sexual activity with men or boys.

However, since he referred to behavior in his lists in 1 Corinthians 6 and 1 Timothy 1, he excluded from the kingdom of God all those who engage in same-sex behavior, including forms of pederasty, prostitution, or "permanent mutuality." The term malakoi used with arsenokoitai probably refers to the passive agent in same-sex activity and comes under similar condemnation.

Other applications follow from the contexts involved. First, homosexual behavior is cause for church discipline in light of the context of 1 Corinthians 5-6. Certain religious bodies that approve a homosexual lifestyle have rejected scriptural authority. In addition, homosexual orientation should be a concern for church counsel and exhortation with a view toward molding a heterosexual orientation.

Second, homosexual behavior is a proper focus and concern of legislation in society and of the sanction of law, according to the context of 1 Tim 1:8-11. This suggests that "gay rights" is a misnomer. The movement has no legitimate claim to protection by the law.
BOOK REVIEWS


The author is senior pastor of the renowned Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. His three-volume work is a valuable tool for any student working his way through the Book of Genesis. It is not a critical commentary, but provides three things that any Bible student will appreciate in studying this book. The first and most evident contribution of this work is its detailed study of the entire book. A good number of chapters center their attention on a single verse. Other chapters or groups of chapters concentrate on some very significant subjects. One of these is the discussion of covenants in chaps. 19-23, vol. 2. Even those who may not share all the author's views on covenants will find his discussion of "God's Covenant Children" (chap. 23) of interest, especially the reminder to parents at the end of the chapter.

Another factor that makes this work valuable is that Boice does not skirt major issues or problems. Neither does he simply give his own view with support. Instead he devotes a great deal of space giving a fair representation of other views with their support. This is evident even in such chapter titles as "Are There Two Creations?" and "Is the Fall a Fact?" Five chapters deal with different "Views of Creation." He covers evolution, theistic evolution, the gap theory, six-day creationism, and progressive creation. Another chapter discusses the problem relating to "Sons of God/ Daughters of Men" (Genesis 6). As stated above, it is commendable that he gives a full and fair presentation of views which he himself does not endorse.

Another valuable contribution is Boice's weaving in of practical applications throughout the work. He carefully deals with the exegetical difficulties, but having reached a conclusion on what the
passage says, he then deals with the practical implications. The chapters "The Gift of Forgetting" and "No One Loves Me, This I Know" are examples of this. He also has a section in vol. 3 about Joseph and his brothers, which he entitles "God and the Conscience." Subheadings for this subject include (1) The Pinch of Want, (2) The Pain of Harsh Treatment, (3) The Press of Solitude, (4) The Proof of God's Presence, (5) The Pattern of Necessity, (6) The Power of True Affection, and (7) The Purge of Self-Confidence.

Because of the beat of this pastor's heart and the scholarship that is evident throughout, these three volumes will prove valuable to anyone studying Genesis. The blending of an analysis of the text, a careful attempt to deal with major problems, and the practical applications all make these three volumes extremely helpful.

Reviewed by Alex D. Montoya, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

Most pastors enter the ministry for the long haul, without thinking about changing churches, being terminated, or even of retirement. Few are adequately prepared for the transition when it comes.

Mastering Transitions is a closer, realistic look at the unthinkable. Like preparing for one's funeral, it serves a much needed purpose of preparing the pastor for the inevitable. The authors share from their personal experiences of having gone through the various transitions, from termination to retirement. Ed Bratcher gives the "hard-earned insights he has picked up through forty-two years of ministerial transitions" (10). Robert Kemper has pastored three churches. Doug Scott, an Episcopal minister, gives the perspective of those who minister in mainline denominations.

For one such as this reviewer who has ministered in the same church for twenty years and has held no other pastorate, the book was extremely enlightening. Mastering Transitions is a nuts and bolts volume on the art of moving successfully from one church to another. The authors discuss how to know when its time to leave a pastorate and the process of preparing the congregation as well as the pastor's
family for the change. The chapter "The Forced Termination" by Kemper is an honest look at how best to handle a pastor's "firing." His insights may help ministers salvage a life-long calling instead of drowning it in bitterness.

Part three was very helpful, even for men going into their first pastorate. Here the authors talk about the first year of ministry in a new church. They advocate knowing as much as possible about the history of the church. Scott suggests a great way of getting parishioners to talk about their church. He advocates home dinners and gives a list of questions to help people open up. Kemper also offers a unique chapter on how to live in "The Shadow of Your Predecessor."

All in all, Mastering Transitions is a book one should read, if for nothing else than to understand the stressful process of changing pastorates. It will help ministers and their congregations understand the "silent divorce" that sadly occurs too often between them.


In accord with the purpose of the International Theological Commentary series, the author of these two volumes "moves beyond the usual critical-historical approach to the Bible and offers a theological interpretation of the Hebrew text" (1:vii). "The series aims, first, to develop the theological significance of the Old Testament and, second, to emphasize the relevance of each book for the life of the church" (back dust cover, vol. 1).

With this focus Brueggemann, professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, develops the message of the prophet accordingly, paying special attention to two emerging methods in the study of Scripture: sociological analysis (cf. 12-14) and literary analysis (cf. 14-19). Consequently, introductory
matters such as authorship and date are given only summary treatment, but the author devotes enough space to them to call into question the relationship between the historical prophet and the text. For example, in his discussion of the prophet himself, he concludes,

The determination whether such evidences point to a discernible historical figure or an imaginative literary construct is not required for this exposition, and finally adjudication of the matter is impossible. We know enough about tradition, context, and style to recognize "the voice" at work in the text, even if we name that voice with full recognition of the ambiguity, complexity, and uncertainty surrounding that portrayed person (1:12).

Brueggemann is equally ambiguous regarding the authorship of the "Baruch Document" (Jeremiah 36:45), giving it only scant attention. From the opening paragraphs, the commentator deals with the prophecy's theological theme: "Yahweh's sovereign right to rule." He notes,

The prophet (prophetic person, prophetic text) authorized to carry this word is derivative from and subordinated to the irresistible purposes of Yahweh. Thus the text makes a sweeping claim for God's free governance . . . . The conversations with and about the prophet in Jer. 1:5-9 are aimed toward God's magisterial governance expressed in v. 10. It is no wonder that the prophet resists, for who wants to bear such a burdensome and unwelcomed word! But the word overrules its bearer. . . . As the person of the prophet is subject to God's sovereign action, so also is the history of Jerusalem, of Judah, and finally of Babylon (1:24-25).

From this theological perspective, Brueggemann traces God's irresistible purposes through the trials, tests, and object lessons so prominent throughout the prophecy. He directs no attention to the details, as one would encounter with the historical-grammatical approach, but toward the theological significance of the events. For example, commenting on the familiar lament of Jeremiah in 20:7 ff., he says,

Yahweh's power is beyond challenge, and that places the prophet in an unbearable "no-win" situation. On the one hand, Jeremiah is mandated to speak against Jerusalem, but his speaking evokes deep hostility (Jer.
On the other hand, when he does not speak (in order to avoid hostility) he is even more troubled, for the word of Yahweh is a burning compulsion to him (v. 9) (1:174).

On the well-known oracle of promise in 31:31-34, the author argues strongly against any preemption "by Christians in a supersessionist fashion, as though Jews belong to the old covenant now nullified and Christians are the sole heirs of the new covenant" (2:68). Swinging to the other extreme, he virtually disallows any Christian reference or significance and seriously undermines the credibility of the NT by summarily dismissing the use of the passage in Hebrews as "a distorted reading" (2:73). Rather, he contends that the contrast of the "old and new" concerns the Israelite community of covenant in both its parts the "old" prior to 587 B.C. and the "new" after 587.

The "old" covenant belongs to that Israelite community which through its sustained disobedience forfeited covenant with God, even as it lost the city of Jerusalem. The "new" covenant now wrought by God also concerns the Israelite community. This is the community formed anew by God among exiles who are now transformed into a community of glad obedience (2:70).

Later he adds,

At best, we may say that Christians come derivatively and belatedly to share the promised newness. This is not to deny Christian participation in the newness, but Christian participation is utterly grounded in Jewish categories and claims, and can have participation on no other terms. Moreover, this Jewish mediation of newness is left open as an act of profound grace to all who come under these commandments and allegiance to this God (2:73).

Those who embrace the historical-grammatical approach may find the theological focus less helpful than they desire. Technical matters of the text are not treated. However, insightful observations are presented, along with occasionally rich devotional thoughts. Sources cited reflect recent scholarship and provide additional insight into the text. Although the work cannot be recommended as a primary resource for study, it is helpful as a supplement to other more technical works on the prophecy of Jeremiah.

Following the tradition of other "hard sayings" books in this series, Dr. Peter Davids, professor of biblical studies and New Testament at Canadian Theological Seminary in Regina, Saskatchewan, takes up seventy-two difficult Scripture verses or passages and seeks to help the reader understand them. Writing out of both pastoral and scholarly experience, the author endeavors "to take the best of biblical scholarship and interpret it so that non-scholars can understand it and make some practical use of it" (11).

Some of the issues addressed include how Judas died (Acts 1:18; cp. Matt 27:5), "no one has ever seen God" (John 1:18; cp. Exod 34:5 and John 14:9), the identity of Melchizedek (Heb 7:1; cp. Gen 14:18-20), the impossibility of repentance (Heb 6:4-6), and baptism that saves (1 Pet 3:21). It is obvious that any treatment of seventy-two issues in a single volume requires brevity. And so it is. No technical or critical discussions are present. It is easy to read, and takes only a few minutes to get an overview of the difficulty inherent in a passage.

Each discussion is succinct and generally to the point, usually three to four pages in length. In this limited space, Davids attempts to give a summation of the context and the historical situation before enunciating the specific issues or relevant questions. At times he sets forth his resolution of the issue with clarity; on other occasions, the discussion is more vague, leaving readers to ponder the solution on their own.

The work is definitely written for the layman, but he too will have to pursue additional research if the information is to be useful for anything other than his own interest. The author provides a brief bibliography for further study in the "Introduction" (17-18). Footnotes are few but come conveniently at the end of each chapter and occasionally provide direction for further research as well. An "Index to Scripture and Ancient Writings" (305-11) provides ready references.

Not unexpectedly, one will not always agree with the
conclusions reached. Topics that have been debated throughout the centuries do not lend themselves to unanimity. Nevertheless, a layman will find the book a helpful and easily accessed resource tool for quick reference.


This impressive editorial staff has set out to make "available to the larger church the representative scholarship of students of Jesus and the Gospels which is both critically responsible and theologically evangelical" (ix). Placing itself in the category of James Hastings 1909 work Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, the Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels (DJG) purposes to bridge the gap between the new interpretive methods developed by scholars in this century on the one hand and pastors, teachers, students, and lay people who want to keep abreast of the latest developments on the other (back page of dust jacket). In doing this, DJG has sought to avoid the excesses and extremes of non-evangelical scholarship dealing with the gospels.

As expected, the editors and contributors have displayed a high degree of proficiency in achieving this goal. Several scholarly conclusions from non-technically written articles illustrate their proficiency: (1) The work assumes some sort of literary relationship between Matthew, Mark, and Luke (785). (2) It accepts the Two-Document hypothesis as the probable solution to the Synoptic Problem, with Mark's gospel as the earliest and as a source used by Matthew and Luke (279, 512, 513, 648, 787-90). (3) It endorses the theory of a "Q" document as another literary source for Matthew and Luke (644-50, 790-91). (4) It recommends recognition of two more sources, "M" used by Matthew and "L" used by Luke (494-95, 791). (5) Close attention is given to the theological beliefs of the separate gospel writers as distinguished from the theology of Jesus (281, 532). (6) The recommendation is that preaching based on the gospels should give primary attention to the situations of the individual gospel writers rather than that of Jesus (629-30).
The skill with which the contributors and editors have woven into this work a vast amount of material related to twentieth-century scholarship on the gospels is commendable. A tribute is also in order for their efforts to maintain the guidelines of evangelical doctrine. Their target audience will obtain a well-rounded grasp of recent NT scholarship from this reference work.

But is that the complete picture? Has twentieth-century NT criticism been critical enough of itself? Is the phase of NT scholarship represented in the work a suitable basis for a monumental dictionary of this sort? In this reviewer's opinion, all three questions deserve a negative response. Comments on each of the six exemplary conclusions of DJG listed above to support this opinion are as follows:

(1) The assumption of some sort of literary relationship among the Synoptic Gospels is of relatively late vintage in church history. Aside from the church father Augustine (late 4th and early 5th centuries), the church has unanimously taught that each of the three gospel writers wrote independently of any access to the works of the other two (see, for example, Wayne A. Meeks, "Hypomnemata from an Unnamed Skeptic: A Response to George Kennedy," The Relationships among the Gospels [William O. Walker, Jr., ed.; San Antonio: Trinity University, 1978] 171). It was not until the advent of European rationalism in modern times that this assumption was brushed aside in favor of some form of literary dependence among the writers. This reviewer has been unable to locate a single reference in DJG to this unanimity that prevailed for approximately 1700 years. The assumption of literary relationship rests on precarious grounds and without support from ancient times is hardly a basis on which to build a major dictionary, especially one with no mention of the solidity of ancient church tradition to the contrary.

(2) DJG admits the lack of absolute proof to support the Two-Document hypothesis and expresses an openness to a better solution if one should become available (790), yet it proceeds to build itself around the hypothesis as though its correctness is assured. The status of NT studies of the gospels is currently changing, but DJG appears oblivious to this. A diminishing consensus favoring the Two-Document theory and a growing consensus favorable to other theories have created a confused picture. The most recent conferences of international NT scholars have disbanded without agreeing on a solution to the Synoptic Problem (see, for example, Bo Reicke, "The
History of the Synoptic Discussion," The Interrelations of the Gospels [Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1990] 316). Is it advisable or even correct, then, to structure a dictionary of Jesus and the gospels around a theory that is receiving diminishing support from those whom it purports to represent.

(3) DJG attributes certainty to the existence of "Q" as a written source, but it does not attempt to define its contents beyond noting it had "230 or so sayings of Jesus" (650). No one in modern times has ever seen such a document, nor does any writer in ancient times appear to affirm its existence. It is no surprise, then, that a growing skepticism among NT scholars prevails regarding whether such a document ever existed (e.g., John Wenham, Redating Matthew, Mark & Luke [Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1992] 40-111). (4) Even more uncertainty surrounds the existence of "M" and "L" as sources for the canonical gospels. Is it not premature to compose a dictionary whose very foundation is so uncertain and unstable?

(5) Assumptions "1-4" above lead inevitably to making a distinction between the teachings of Jesus and that of the separate writers. Purportedly, the gospels represent the theologies of their individual writers more than they do that of Jesus. This strains the claim that DJG has adhered to guidelines of an evangelical doctrine of inspiration of Scripture. (6) Built upon this, the advice that preachers gear the application of their messages to the "horizon" of the individual writers rather than to the "horizon" of Jesus could influence evangelicals to look for a distinction in theologies that is not actually there. This in turn could result in building sermons from the gospels on a non-existent distinction.

Adherence to biblical inerrancy is also strained, if not broken, in the observation that Matthew mistakenly misplaced the word "immediately" in Matt 3:16 (789). The suggestion that the same writer in his wording of Matt 19:16-17 revises Mark "to eliminate the [theological] difficulty" of Mark 10:17-18 (789) also goes beyond, or at least comes to the very edge, of an evangelical perspective.

The statement that "history and theology both played important roles" (294) in the writing of the gospels is healthy, but the later assertions that "little if any material was recorded solely out of historical interest" and that theological motives must be seen as central (294) imply that theological motives may at times dominate historical interests of the writers. Yet a proper view of biblical inerrancy
strongly insists on the historical accuracy of the gospels in their conveyance of theological emphases, without theology infringing on history.

Some articles not directly affected by the above critical assumptions are helpful. An example is the article on "Chronology" (71-122), though the article on the "Death of Jesus" questions its conclusion of an A.D. 33 date for Christ's crucifixion and seems to prefer an A.D. 30 date (149). Another helpful discussion is entitled "Liberation Hermeneutics" in which the contributor offers a needed precaution to liberation and feminist theologians: "a cogent hermeneutic . . . does not allow interpretation to dissipate into pure subjectivism" (468). Yet it could have been even stronger in warning against a widespread interpretive abuse disguised as "preunderstanding."

DJG is a major work that the evangelical community cannot ignore. It may be helpful if used with the cautions outlined above. Its more popular portrayal of the contemporary status of NT studies is valuable, but a critical eye must distinguish which "critical" conclusions are valid in the work's analyses of the gospels.


Ever since John MacArthur and I explored an intriguing underground tunnel north of Wilson's Arch along the Western Wall in November, 1983, I have been fascinated by attempts to relocate the actual site of Solomon's ancient temple. This ancient tunnel area adjacent to the temple mount is now open to the public. However, on the occasion of our visit, Israel Lippel, then minister of religious affairs, and Dr. Joseph Ginot, distinguished professor of anthropology at the University of Haifa, assured us that few people up to 1983 had ventured beyond the black iron gates just to the north of Wilson's Arch along the Western Wall of the Temple Mount. Thomas Ice and Randall Price have thrown fuel on the fire of my curiosity with their new book.

Quite a frenzy over the temple mount exists in Israel these days,
stirred up by the Jewish organization, the Temple Mount Faithful, and by the Arab paranoia that somehow the Jews will take over the Temple Mount in order to desecrate their sacred site, "The Dome of the Rock." The authors have sanely and informatively handled what could be a subject that invites unscholarly speculation. Anyone interested in the history of the temple and what the Bible says about its future should make Ready to Rebuild a must in their reading.

The book divides into four parts. The first section deals with the current controversies over the temple mount with part two looking to the Temple's past. Then in section three, the authors review what is currently transpiring at the Temple Mount site, and finally in part four what the Bible says about the future of the Temple. Ready To Rebuild is very well laid out and quite readable for both the interested layman and the informed student. This reviewer was pleased to see the commendable amount of research that went into the book that is well documented with over nine pages of notes (280-88).

For someone who has not kept up with the history of the Temple Mount, this book will quickly make them current. The historical chronology of the temple on pp. 250-66 will be especially helpful. It begins with Abraham offering Isaac on Mount Moriah and continues until October 31, 1991.

The authors are decidedly futuristic premillennialists and thus believe that when Christ returns He will set up a literal, earthly 1000-year kingdom whose capital is Jerusalem, whose King is Jesus Christ, and whose throne has been promised from the days of David (2 Samuel 7).

Nineteen pictures located between pp. 140 and 141 will help to give the reader a visual orientation to the geographical site that the authors discuss. The most interesting section for this reviewer (pp. 154-70) evaluated the various theories concerning the possible site of the ancient holy of holies. They thoroughly discuss the northern site to the northwest of the Dome of the Rock, near the Western Wall, where Asher Kaufman has possibly identified the holy of holies as being located under a small cupola that is traditionally called the Dome of the Spirits (or tablets). They also review the southern theory that would place the ancient site somewhere between the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque on the southern end of the Temple Mount. However, the authors support the traditional location which would be the current site of the Rock within the Islamic holy place,
"The Dome of the Rock." Readers will find the discussion and reasoning fascinating, if not convincing.

For those wishing to find a biblical substantiation for the third or tribulation temple, pp. 197-201 tell where all the biblical texts referring to this Temple are. A brief discussion follows concerning the biblical basis for the millennial or fourth Temple in Ezekiel 40-48 (pp. 205-7). The authors refrain from excess speculation on whether the lost ark of the covenant even exists, and if it does, where it might be located. A brief discussion, including an analysis of the possible Ethiopian location, is on pp. 145-49.

Though the book is certainly not the last word to be written on the subject and does not purport to be unabridged, it definitely is interesting, informative, and, in a good sense, provocative. The writers firmly believe that what the twentieth century church looks for in Christ's return was that which the early church also anticipated. Irenaeus, a second century church father, wrote, "But when this Anti-Christ shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, and the glory of the father sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom" (25). This reviewer affirms Irenaeus' hope as that taught in Scripture and about which Ice and Price write.

Bruce Larson, Paul Anderson, and Doug Self. Mastering Pastoral Care, Portland: Multnomah, 1990. 144 pp. $12.95 (cloth). Reviewed by Alex D. Montoya, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

Another training volume in the "Mastering Ministry" series by Leadership, Christianity Today, Inc., and Multnomah Press, the focus of this book is the variety of pastoral care pastors get to practice. The epilogue sums it up this way,

That variety has been manifested in this book. To encourage lay people to care for one another and to reach out to the world is one aspect of pastoral care. To prompt people to go deeper in the Spirit is another. To encourage people in their homes and on the job is another still (144).
Hence the book is about the "other side" of pastoring, the personal ministry to people aside from pulpit ministry. To do this, the authors draw from their expertise and experience in pastoral work. Bruce Larson, on staff at the Crystal Cathedral, draws from his experience at University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, Washington, where he had extensive involvement in small group ministry. Paul Anderson, a Lutheran minister, comes from a rich tradition in the use of worship for pastoral care. Doug Self draws from his rural/mountain experience as pastor of The Church at Redstone in Redstone, Colorado.

The twelve chapters touch briefly on many concerns of pastoral ministry: home visitation, laity involvement, worship, ministry in the job, caring for leaders, inactive members, pastoral counseling, strengthening the personal life, and mobilizing people to help people.

Two factors make this book very helpful. Some pastors are not great pulpiteers and do better at personal care. They will find this book extremely helpful in the development and execution of their skills. In addition, some pastors have a more rural or small town ministry where all the problems of the big city are found, but not the masses of people. These pastors need special training in pastoral care where contacting, nurturing, and keeping people in the fold is extremely vital.

The chapter "Strategies for Ministering to Inactives" by Doug Self was especially insightful. Self draws attention to the need of "listening" to the reasons people give for being inactive members of churches. His other chapter on "The Art of Pastoral Listening" shows how to make better use of a pastor's time with his parishioners.

Pastoral visitation, care, and discipleship is extremely difficult, if not discouraging work. This volume should help to lighten that load and hopefully make pastors more successful in the execution of their vital task of shepherding the flock of God.

The title of this volume will certainly catch the attention of pastors, at least in the United States, if for no other reason than the reality of this statistic cited by Malphurs: "Currently 80-85% of American churches are either plateaued or dying with no revival in sight" (15). Unquestionably, the local church in America is experiencing a time of major transition, thus the motivation for publishing on the subject of vision.

Malphurs treats his subject with a six step approach to a new vision for the church. The book is organized around these six steps as follows:

The first step: To realize the importance of having a ministry vision.
Chapter 1
The second step: To understand the definition of a ministry vision.
Chapter 2
The third step: The process of developing or "giving birth" to a vision.
Chapters 3 and 4
The fourth step: To communicate the vision.
Chapter 5
The fifth step: To implement the vision.
Chapters 6, 7, and 8
The sixth step: To preserve the vision.
Chapter 9

The final section contains various worksheets such as "Developing Your Vision," "Developing Vision Slogans," "Casting Your Vision," "Building a Team - I," "Building a Team - II," "Planning Your Ministry," and "Preserving Your Vision."

The positive value of Malphurs' work is to produce the realization that the twenty-first century and the third millennium is just about on us. Those who are not considering a direction for ministry at the moment and where it will take them in the year two thousand are sadly naive about how fast the world is moving towards this monumental date and how rapidly life is changing around us. For example, though only one hundred and ninety identifiable countries existed in 1992, the prediction is that in the next twenty-five years there could be as many as three hundred countries resulting from the dramatic geopolitical changes occurring now, with more changes expected in the near future.

However, Malphurs' volume reads more like a management
manual than it does a ministry forum. He appeals strongly to logic and common sense, but not so much to Scripture. Recent literature by such well-known names as George Barna, George Gallup, Jr., Warren Bennis, and Burt Nanus dominate the book, dealing with such subjects as the demographics of this country, the nature of churches in general, and the latest recommendations in current church-growth literature.

All-too-little reference is made to the Word of God and its abundance of instruction on the building of Christ's church. Also, one must search diligently to find any reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in the church, the place of prayer, or spiritual qualifications for leadership. The author spends little time discussing spiritual giftedness as outlined in Scripture, but quite a bit of time discussing the evaluation of men in leadership according to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

The strongest point in the book for this reviewer occurred where a sample listing of values and a vision statement for a local church appear (74-75). These include: (1) a commitment to relevant Bible exposition, (2) a commitment to prayer, (3) a commitment to ministry, (4) a commitment to small groups, (5) an appreciation for creativity and innovation, (6) a commitment to excellence, (7) a commitment to growth.

The most notable weakness in the book is Malphurs' definition of a Christian leader: "A godly person (character) who knows where he or she is going (vision) and has followers (influence)" (20). Many people in this world know where they are going and have followers, but that does not necessarily make each of them a spiritual leader who represents the will and the way of God. Even some Christian leaders know where they are going and have followers, but go against the flow of God's biblically revealed will. This reviewer believes it imperative to edit the definition to read, "A Christian leader is a godly person who is walking on the path of righteousness, who conducts ministry according to the will of God as revealed in Scripture, and who has followers." That seems a better parallel to what Paul meant when he wrote to the Corinthian church, "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).

This volume can be valuable in its intent to call the church to a new level of awareness and action in the midst of a major worldwide change point. However, evaluate the practical recommendations with Scripture before adopting Malphurs' method wholesale. Also, be
aware of what Scripture teaches that this volume does not consider. The Bible must remain the one sufficient text on how Christ is building His church (Matt 16:18).


It is the aim of this series to "demonstrate the value of studying the Greek New Testament and help toward the revival of such study" (x) as well as "to serve those who are engaged in the ministry of the Word of God" (xi). Attempts to balance these are not always successful; yet, for the most part, O'Brien has achieved this in his volume on Philippians. The book is a well written, in-depth exegetical commentary on the epistle. The author's penchant for a thorough elucidation of the text, including a diligent presentation of the various viewpoints on different issues, provides an excellent foundation for understanding the epistle. He clearly sets forth his own viewpoint on each issue, supporting the tenets of his conclusion from the Greek text. The extensive use of footnotes and the Scripture index are very beneficial as well.

He begins not with introductory matters but with an extensive (twenty-page) bibliography, providing a "who's who" list of resources. From there the author turns to a thorough treatment of the book's setting, authorship, and date. He discusses the background of the Roman colony, the intricacies of its religious heritage, and the coming of the gospel with the arrival of the apostle Paul. He argues against those who call into question the climactic story of the Philippian jailor's conversion and the events surrounding it (cf. Acts 16). He contends at some length for the unity and integrity of the epistle, carefully reviewing the evidence both for and against (10-18). With clarity he details the views on the letter's date and place of origination, concluding that the evidence favors the Roman imprisonment around A.D. 62 (18-26).

The writer suggests that Judaizers are Paul's opponents in both 1:15-17 and 3:1 ff. In the latter reference, a more hostile group of
Judaizers is in view than in the former. But the enemies in 1:27-28 are heathen inhabitants of Philippi, who threatened persecution of believers (26-35).

O'Brien devotes nearly one hundred pages to the humiliation and exaltation of Christ in 2:5-11 (186-271), discussing the passage both as a unit and in its component parts. He regards its literary form as "a traditional hymnic or poetic piece" (189). He notes that the passage belongs unquestionably in its present context, with its vocabulary anchored in what proceeds and what follows and with its prefiguring of themes that occur later. "In fact, it fits its present context so well that it is hard to see it detached from it" (202). He also includes a number of appendixes covering issues such as "taking the form of a bond-servant" and "He poured Himself out to death" (Isa 53:12).

"Work out your salvation . . ." (2:12-13) is the subject of an equally thorough and in-depth treatment. The author concludes that the "salvation" of which Paul speaks here is not in a sociological sense to describe the spiritual health of the Philippian Church. Rather, it is "an exhortation to common action, urging the Philippians to show forth the graces of Christ in their lives, to make their eternal salvation fruitful in the here and now as they fulfil their responsibilities to one another as well as to non-christians" (280).

Overall, O'Brien's work is a valuable contribution and deserves wide circulation. The serious student will find it a most helpful resource.


A professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School has contributed significantly to evangelical scholarship in this work, which he divides into three parts: General, covering context, grammar, semantics, syntax, and historical/cultural background; Genre Analysis in narrative, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, apocalyptic, parable, and epistle; Applied Hermeneutics, i.e., application to Biblical Theology, Systematic Theology, and Homiletics. The book has an
impressive, up-to-date bibliography (436-80) and indexes.

The book will aid the highly motivated and mature seminarian or pastor. It also will contribute somewhat to beginning seminarians in repayment for laborious effort expended in wading through it.

Osborne argues that the hermeneutical process (likened to a spiral) embraces the original intent of a text, its application to a person in devotional practice, and a contextualized application of it one can share with the church in a sermon (6). The spiral is from the "horizon" of the text to the "horizon" of the reader, because the meaning of the text is not an end in itself. His attention to the role of the Holy Spirit throughout the process is good (5, 340-41).

The original intended meaning, he is convinced, is "a core that is unvarying" (7). Any application in any culture at any time should be true to this original sense and should not depart from that meaning in an effort to achieve cross-cultural relevance.

The author suggests useful sources that explain a context, i.e., commentaries, introductions, dictionaries, theologies, etc. (19-20). He discusses rules to help in deciding the best textual variant (44-47). He believes that a preacher who admits the difficulty of a reading needs to affirm "that this does not affect the integrity of the original and that no doctrine would be left unsupported if a favorite reading must be abandoned because of a more valid variant" (47). He briefly surveys Hebrew and Greek grammar and illustrates their impact on a number of texts (50, 51). However, he is more broadly informational than practically helpful in how to interpret when he suggests five points without developing them (62).

Chapter 3 on semantics gives nine cautions. One is the root fallacy, the idea that every usage of a word will necessarily represent the root idea (66-67). He shows that context determines a word's meaning, not a sealed, unvarying sense in the word. For instance, in James 1:16 theosmos can mean "trial" in vv. 2-12, but switches meaning to "temptation" in v. 13 (76).

Osborne feels that the major contribution of archeology is sociological, as in illuminating customs, and that it has only a small apologetic value in confirming the Bible (129). He finds nine problems with the sociological approach. One is reading present culture back into Scripture and casting God's Word in a false light (141-44). Using sociology, liberal teachers of modern times distort Jesus to conform to their own ideas through a biased choice of facets that fit their theories.
Osborne proposes seven guidelines to counteract this tendency and remain sensitive to biblical integrity (144-47).

Of the many other helpful discussions, one tells how a Bible writer can express his point of view and still write what is inspired by God (156-57). Another is a well-illustrated section of features in biblical narrative (154-64). Also, the author points out weaknesses in narrative criticism, such as its imposition of modern literary categories on ancient genres (164-68).

This reviewer offers a few constructive suggestions. Though some parts of the book are clear with good examples (e.g., the discussion of similes [103]), more simplification and clarity would assist readers, especially in the heavy academic sections (e.g., the chapter on syntax). The work is mostly a compilation of lists and interactions with scholarly views. Successive waves of ponderous material may submerge many readers. Even a strongly motivated student will find it tedious to pick his way through. Vagueness keeps recurring throughout the book. For example, a brief explanation of the favored covenantal view of the ceremony of God walking between the animal parts (Gen 15:7-21) (146) would have helped greatly.

Some statements are incomplete. The assertion that Ezek 39:25-29 puts Israel's restoration "after the exile" (230) needs elaboration because of differing views about precisely when the restoration occurs. Some insist that fulfillment remains in the future even now.

Some guidelines are too general to be helpful. One is, "Study the psalm in terms of its type and basic stance" (189), because each type requires its own kind of study. How does one do this? Readers are to exegete Messianic psalms (189-90). Very well, but Osborne gives little help on how to implement this.

The author needs to rethink some areas so as to avoid confusion. He writes, "Prophecy is not just history written either after (liberals) or before (evangelicals) the event" (213). Evangelicals will agree with the first part, but may puzzle over how they are guilty of "overstatement" in this regard. Prophecy is stated "before the event," even though it does not reveal every detail about future events. So what is Osborne's point? It is not apparent.

This is a good book, but it could be better. Osborne's diligence in pulling together and interacting with many aspects of hermeneutics is commendable. The work is geared for advanced students, not those...
at an early stage of theological inquiry. Still, it should offer much help to all who in using it will show the same diligence as the author.


Anyone who has profited from J. C. Ryle's Holiness may look forward to his *Warnings to the Churches*. According to a note by the publisher, the eight papers that make up this edition have never been published as a unit. The five closing chapters, however, were a part of his best known work, *Knots Untied*, first published in 1877.

John Charles Ryle (1816-1900) was the son of a wealthy banker, a fine athlete, educated at Oxford, and destined for a career in politics. He came to know Christ in 1838 and was ordained to ministry in 1842.

Ryle was a prolific writer, bringing benefit to many through the years. In addition to the two volumes previously mentioned, Ryle's *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels* have helped numerous people.

According to Ryle, God's Word is in season at all times. It is amazing, but not surprising, how relevant God's Word was in Ryle's day and how it remains just as relevant today. Each of his eight articles first appeared as an address or a sermon, and then was put in written form. The eight papers are:

1. "The True Church" (Matt 16:18)
2. "Not Corrupting the Word" (2 Cor 2:17)
3. "Give Thyself Wholly to Them" (1 Tim 4:15)
4. "Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matt 16:6)
5. "Diverse and Strange Doctrines" (Heb 13:9)
6. "The Fallibility of Ministers" (Gal 2:11-16)
7. "Apostolic Fears" (2 Cor 11:3)
8. "Idolatry" (1 Cor 10:14).

The two messages that this reviewer sees as having the greatest and most immediate application for the present are "The Fallibility of Ministers" and "Apostolic Fears." With pastors falling faster than they can be counted and with Satan deceiving a very undiscerning Christian community, these two alone are worth the price of the book and deserve careful reading, application, and dissemination.
These articles should not be plagiarized in the pulpit, but they are full of rich ideas and historical imagery which will enhance any pastor's preaching. If someone's soul needs encouraging or exhorting, if he is a bit weary or possibly complacent, Warnings to the Churches by J. C. Ryle is the kind of spiritual catalyst that should confront and/or revive his energy for ministry.


An associate professor of biblical studies at Evangel College, Springfield, Missouri, has added to the avalanche of literature on hermeneutics that is currently emerging. A distinctive of Tate's work, however, is that rather than concentrating on a small phase, it provides a general overview of a number of the proposed, new hermeneutical twists. For this reason, it is an excellent source to satisfy one's curiosity regarding present trends in biblical interpretation.

The author divides contemporary approaches into three categories: author-centered, text-centered, and reader-centered (xvi-xix). As his book title indicates, he advocates an integration of all three into an interpretive method before it can be considered adequate (xix-xxi, 210, 212). He identifies the author-centered approach as the prevailing method before the advent of New Criticism in the 1940's (xvi). The text-centered approach first appeared in the 1950's, seeking to dislodge the text from its historical mooring and deny the role of authorial intention in interpretation (xviii). At about the same time another group of scholars emerged, heavily emphasizing the function of the reader in creating the meaning of the text (xix).

Tate finds traditional criticism deficient in its unwillingness to move beyond what the text says to what the text is about, i.e., beyond the world of the text to the real world (61-62). In narrative literature, for example, the real world is the actual world of the author, but the story world is that of the text where sequence and characteristics of people do not equate to historical chronology or real-world persons (77).

He also faults traditional criticism for limiting the text to a single meaning. Because each reader brings his own set of
circumstances to the text, the biblical text has at least two levels: an original meaning and a contemporary significance, the latter being that construed by the reader (147). Readers can never divorce themselves from their own world and completely submerge themselves into that of the author.

The informative value of this book is unquestionable. Yet an evaluation of its contents must raise questions regarding its clarity, its consistency, its accuracy, its emphasis, and its evangelical orientation. (1) Tate urges an integration of the three approaches, but nowhere does he clarify in what degree and in what ways the three can be balanced with one another. Obviously the three conflict with one another frequently. How are these conflicts to be resolved? The author offers no definitive counsel.

(2) He appears to be inconsistent with himself in including aspects of source and form criticism under both "text-centered" (115-21) and "author-centered" (xvii, 178-79) approaches. Perhaps this reflects that these two approaches as well as the third are not mutually exclusive of each other. (3) The apparent relegation of redaction criticism to a period before the 1940's (xvi-xvii) contradicts a prevailing opinion that redaction criticism, specifically that which deals with the gospels, did not originate until the 1950's. Also, an incorrect definition of "verbal inspiration" occurs when Tate describes it as presupposing "that God dictated each and every word of scripture to each individual author and that they wrote scripture in a robotic fashion, faithfully and inerrantly recording exactly what was received" (170). Few, if any, advocates of verbal inspiration and biblical inerrancy could endorse this definition.

(4) The emphasis of the treatment is upon how much contemporary readers cannot know for sure. Reader subjectivity "is always present and can no more be absent from the interpretive process than stripes from a zebra" (162). "There is no such thing as a pure reading, an objective interpretation" (165). Is it desirable never to be dogmatic regarding the meaning of a passage, however? This author advocates an ideal balance that lies somewhere between interpretive dogmatism and individual solipsism or skepticism (212). Does this mean that the evangelical quest for propositional truth is futile?

(5) Presumably, Tate calls himself an evangelical. Yet he has incorporated a number of positions that he apparently endorses, but
ones that will be very troublesome to the vast majority of evangelicals. One of these is his espousal of the old JEPD theory regarding the source of the Pentateuch (176-77). Two others are his denial that harmonization of the gospels in a traditional sense is possible (182) and his non-traditional dating of the Synoptic Gospels (178). In addition, he seems to concur with questioning the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles and calls 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, and Ephesians "Pseudo-Pauline" letters (124, 129). His distinction between "truth" and "truth-value" (95) also raises questions.

Biblical hermeneutics is a major focal point of theological developments in the 1990's. Every Christian needs to be aware of the issues involved. This book presents as good an opportunity as any to gain an overview of many questions that are emerging. But a critical eye should govern its use.


A well-known British NT scholar, John Wenham, has broken ranks with the majority opinion of NT scholars regarding a solution to the Synoptic Problem. He forthrightly acknowledges his differences from the viewpoint of "the great majority of scholars" of the twentieth century in rejecting the Two-Document hypothesis (2). Regarding those who still hold that theory, he writes, "Most probably, judging by the attitude of the members of recent gospels conferences, most scholars who have examined this [Two-Document] theory critically have not been particularly impressed with its logical weight, yet they find no other theory convincing, and, since life is short, they have been content to go along with the majority and accept it as a working hypothesis" (2).

In rejecting the Two-Document hypothesis, the author has thorough discussions of the weaknesses of presupposing a hypothetical document "Q" (chap. 3) and of the theory that Mark was the first of the three to be written (chaps. 4 & 5).

He notes that research of the last hundred years has been
dominated by the assumption of some literary connection between Matthew, Mark, and Luke, a contrast to the dominant assumption a hundred years ago among English-speaking scholars that a common oral tradition explained the likenesses between these gospels (3). Wenham's proposal is that the truth lies somewhere between these two positions: "There may be a large measure of [literary] independence as well as an important measure of [literary] interdependence" (10). By this he means he prefers a high degree of literary independence insofar as the individual words of the gospels are concerned (xxi, xxiii, 5, 51-55, 78), but some degree of literary dependence in following a standard order for the gospels (3, 6, 7, 200). He has three reasons for questioning complete independence: (1) the unlikelihood that the identity of order of seventy-two pericopes can be traced to a mnemonic device in oral tradition; (2) the unlikelihood that three leaders (i.e., writers) would refrain from consulting the works of one another; and (3) distinct traditions of gospel order in the early church that presuppose they were not all published at the same time (9-10).

A summary of available evidence leads to a candid conclusion: it is impossible to know "how much comes from literary dependence, how much from oral tradition, how much from assimilation of phraseology in well-known accounts of similar events, how much from an individual author" (213). The author also asks, "Is it possible to be more precise as to the part played by dependence and independence in the creation of the pattern of likenesses and differences which we find in the three gospels? The honest answer must be that we are in the realm of speculation, with small means of checking our guesses" (199).

Wenham attaches great weight to the early Roman tradition that Peter went to Rome in A.D. 42 (cf. Acts 12:17) and was in some sense overseer of the Roman church for twenty-five years until his death (146). He goes to great lengths to defend the accuracy of this tradition (chap. 7). This becomes his basis for dating Mark, a gospel written for Roman Christians, as early as c. 45.

Because of a possible reference in 2 Cor 8:18 to Luke's fame based on his gospel, he dates the gospel of Luke no later than 55. He places the final piece in the puzzle, Matthew, which he has earlier proven to be the earliest gospel, in A.D. 42 (223, 229-44). These dates reflect the sequence of structural but not verbal dependence of the three writers: Mark's dependence on Matthew and Luke's dependence
on Matthew and Mark.

Wenham's work is stimulating, to say the least. After a seemingly endless parroting of an ill-proven theory by many others for the last hundred years, he has provided a chance to move on in an understanding of the relationships among the Synoptic Gospels. In response to several of Wenham's positions, this reviewer must ask two questions, however: (1) How can one draw a satisfactory line between literary dependence for wording and literary interdependence for structure? If the writers trusted their memories for the wording of their gospels, it is improbable that they would suddenly resort to literary dependence in arranging the sequence of the episodes they wrote about. Wenham's distinction between "a large measure of independence" and "total literary independence" (89) is quite vague and unconvincing. One must opt either for independence or for dependence. He cannot have both. For a work professing such a high regard for ancient tradition (xxiv), this book is strangely silent regarding the longstanding tradition of total literary independence of the three gospels.

(2) How fully can an early arrival of Peter in Rome be relied upon? Wenham's discussion of ancient tradition is enlightening, but it fails to explain convincingly Paul's relationship to the Roman church and the statement of Paul's determination not to build on another's foundation (Rom 15:20-24). His early dating of Matthew, a gospel for Jewish readers, leaves unexplained the question of why James, whose epistle so heavily depended on the teachings of Jesus, reflects no knowledge of it. Nor does his dating of Mark in the middle 40's explain the traditional connection of the epistle with the deaths of Peter and Paul in the 60's.

Though this reviewer cannot concur with all the conclusions of this book, it remains one of the more worthwhile additions in some time to studies of the Synoptic Problem.


Yancey reviews a September, 1991 trip with 18 other
evangelical Christians called "Project Christian Bridge." He was editor-at-large of Christianity Today, and others were TV and radio broadcasters, lawyers, publishers, specialists on Russia, pastors, businessmen, and mission executives. Invited to Moscow by the government, they appeared before the president, the Supreme Soviet, the KGB, the press, and other groups. They responded to a call to share answers that could solve what some Soviets tabbed the greatest crisis, a moral and spiritual one (12). The government sought to "to stave off societal collapse" (13) by a radical change at the core (26).

Once Soviets had led an atheistic campaign, banning religious instruction to children and confining priests in prison or killing them, but now leaders told the guests that government sponsorship of atheistic campaigns is illegal (23). KGB cruelty had killed, in Solzhenetsyn's estimate, 60 to 70 million (30). But a KGB speaker told the visitors, "The time has come to repent of that past. We have broken the Ten Commandments, and for this we pay today" (33).

While Yancey was there, Gideons were resupplying Bibles in hotels as guests kept taking them away, 2,500 Soviet radio stations were airing James Dobson's "Focus on the Family," and Campus Crusade was preparing a curriculum on Christianity for public schools (40). Yancey perceived that God had been there all along, long worshipped in the camps, the unregistered house churches, etc. He had heard of the loyalty of individuals such as Basil, a simple farmer who in prison had preached to fellow prisoners each morning in the cold while they waited for guards to arrive (42).

Gorbachev told the guests that he was an atheist but respected Christian beliefs (65). This leader's interest in spiritual things was a real turnabout in a land where Marx earlier predicted that "religion will disappear" because the New Socialist Man will render it obsolete (89).

Appendix A gives the objective and the names of the visitors. Appendix B shows "What Western Christians Can Do to Help," i.e., provide Bibles, doctrine books, ministerial manuals, literature for children, video players, tapes, audio cassettes, etc. Pages 98-105 furnish addresses of groups supplying information on or operating in the area once called the Soviet Union.

Yancey says, "Never in my life have I been among people with a more ravenous appetite for God" (90). The book is a well-written and stimulating description of conditions from a Christian perspective.
It awakens readers to the admission by some that the need of the area is above all a spiritual one.