

FALSE PROPHETS AND THE DECEIVING SPIRIT

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First Kings 22:19-23 occasions the herculean challenge of identifying "the spirit" in a way that best accounts for the reality of false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6. From six suggested possibilities, a personified spirit of prophecy, a demon, and Satan are initially deemed the most reasonable identifications and thus merit further inquiry. Considering the philological, hermeneutical, and theological factors of the three interpretations, Satan best fits "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21. Demonic activity, initiated and superintended by Satan, is the most probable and immediate dynamic responsible for the false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6 and explained by 1 Kgs 22:19-23. Finally, God did not ordain this event; however, He did permit it.

R. A. Torrey realistically recognized that one of the most puzzling passages in the Bible is 1 Kings 22 and its parallel account in 2 Chronicles 18.¹ Nearly everyone acknowledges that no conclusive agreement regarding the meaning of "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21 has surfaced. The interpretation of this passage is tantalizing for students of Scripture.

Even scholars of the same tradition differ over solutions to this enigma of how a holy God apparently collaborates with deceiving spirits. The central question is how to harmonize "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21 with the false prophecy of 1 Kgs 22:6. How can the immediate text, the holiness of God, and the inerrancy of Scripture yield a satisfactory identification of "the spirit"?

The dilemma is how a holy and true God can associate Himself with the apparent instigation of lies among false prophets? A

¹R. A. Torrey, *Difficulties in the Bible* (Chicago: Moody, n.d.) 73. See Ray Dillard, "The Chronicler's Jehoshaphat," *TrinJ* NS (1986):20, for a discussion of why the Chronicles' account is unique to Chronicles and also differs from 1 Kings 22.

proposed solution to this ultimate conundrum will address three significant questions.

1. Does 1 Kgs 22:1-40 represent sane factual history, or is it fictionalized drama with a spiritual message?
2. Is Micaiah's vision in 22:19-23 one of reality or merely symbolic?
3. What reality or dynamic force best accounts for the false prophecy of 22:6` human, angelic, or divine?

Several secondary inquiries also provoke curiosity, even though they are not the primary objective of this study. Who is Micaiah` possibly the prophet of 1 Kgs 20:35 ff.? Why did Ahab call for Micaiah and not Elijah in 22:8? What caused Jehoshaphat to question Ahab's prophets at 22:7? How did Ahab recognize Micaiah's initially barbed answer in 22:15?

First Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18, arguably, rank as the foremost example of prophetic conflict between kings and prophets, between God and false prophets, and between true and false prophets.

Other memorable encounters from the OT include Balaam (Numbers 22`24), Elijah's contest with the four hundred prophets of Baal (1 Kgs 18:16-40), and Jeremiah's confrontation of Hananiah (Jeremiah 28). In the NT, Jesus (Matt 7:15; 24:11, 24), Peter (2 Peter 2), and John (1 John 4:1-6) warned about prophetic conflict. Paul contended with Elymas (Acts 13:6-12) and Revelation records the last foray with "the false prophet" (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). However, no passage in Scripture warns as distinctly as 1 Kings 22 that (1) kings have more to fear from true prophets than true prophets from kings and (2) false prophets have more to fear from God than from kings.²

BIOGRAPHICAL LINEUP

Since the focal point of this investigation is to identify "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21, a biographical and historical sketch is foundational. Ahab, Jehoshaphat, and Micaiah are the chief personages encountered in 1 Kings 22, where Ahab faces the decision of whether to engage Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, in a military confrontation.

²Patrick Miller, Jr., "The Prophetic Critique of Kings," *Ex Auditu* II (1986):82.

Ahab

The eighth king of Israel during the Divided Kingdom phase of Jewish history, Ahab was the son of Omri. His reign began in the thirty-eighth year of Asa, king of Judah, and continued for twenty-two years (1 Kgs 16:29). Thiele fixed Ahab's rule from 874/73 to 853 B.C.³

Ahab's wife Jezebel worshipped the Tyrian god Melqart and introduced, through Ahab, the cult of Baal-Melqart to Israel.⁴ She vividly demonstrated her intolerance for anything related to the LORD by her attempted annihilation of the prophets of God (1 Kgs 18:13).

Because of Ahab's "religious" activities which abundantly and absurdly violated the Mosaic standards, he had an ominous reputation. He was the ruler who did more to provoke the LORD, God of Israel, than all the kings of Israel before him (1 Kgs 16:30-33).

Premature death is often the fate of those who forsake the LORD, so Ahab died from an arrow-wound (1 Kgs 22:34-37) and Jezebel fell before Jehu (2 Kgs 9:30-37). In fact, their whole pagan family perished, again at the hands of Jehu (cf. 2 Kgs 9:8 with 2 Kgs 10:1-28).

Obviously neither of the royal couple was a man or woman of God. Their religion was pagan and their activities ruthless (1 Kgs 18:4; 19:2; 21:1-16). Athaliah, a daughter of Jezebel, even attempted to kill Joash, who was the only legal heir to the Messianic promise through David (2 Kgs 11:1-3).

Jehoshaphat

The reign of Jehoshaphat obviously contrasts with that of Ahab. The son of Asa, he reigned as the fourth king of Judah twenty-five years (1 Kgs 15:24; 2 Chr 20:31).

This righteous ruler sought the God of his fathers, followed God's commandments, and did not act as evil Israel did (2 Chr 17:4). He removed high places and the Asherah (2 Chr 17:6; 19:3), and did right in the sight of the LORD (2 Chr 20:32). The writer of Chronicles characterizes Jehoshaphat as a man who sought the LORD with all of his heart (2 Chr 22:9).

Yet Jehoshaphat's reign was not blameless. Due to military pressures from Ben-Hadad of Syria and Shalmaneser III of Assyria, Jehoshaphat allied himself to Ahab by the marriage of his son Jehoram

³Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 66.

⁴William F. Albright, *From The Stone Age To Christianity* (2nd ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1957) 234-35.

to Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chr 18:1; 21:6). This marital bond paved the way for joint military operations (1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18), which resulted in a rebuke from the LORD by Jehu, the seer (2 Chr 19:2).

Jehoshaphat, a God-fearing ruler, allowed governmental pressures to supersede his relationship with the Creator. The Jewish nation did the same in demanding a king like all the other nations (cp. 1 Sam 8:19-20 with 1 Sam 12:12). In each case, God permitted sinful activities; but, as with Joseph (Gen 50:20), He used them to fulfill His ultimate divine plan (Isa 46:10).

Micaiah

The Bible does not speak about Micaiah, son of Imlah, except in 1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18. Apparently Micaiah was not the only true prophet of God in Israel (cf. 1 Kgs 17:1; 18:4), but he probably was the only one immediately available. The Scriptures are silent and provide no basis for conjecture on why Ahab summoned Micaiah and not Elijah. It seems that Micaiah returned to the custody of Amon and Joash from whom he had been released to appear before the royal court (1 Kgs 22:26; cf. "quickly" in 1 Kgs 22:9).

Ahab's reaction (1 Kgs 22:8) suggests that Micaiah could be the prophet who declared Ahab's death for not killing Ben-Hadad as God commanded (1 Kgs 20:35-43).⁵

From the narrative of 1 Kings 22 and from the fulfillment of Micaiah's dream (cp. Deut 18:22 and 1 Kgs 22:28 with 1 Kgs 22:17 and 1 Kgs 22:37), it is conclusive that Micaiah was truly a prophet of the LORD. None other than Ahab himself attests this (1 Kgs 22:8, 16) along with Zedekiah, son of Chenaanah (1 Kgs 22:24).

In the face of severe pressure (1 Kgs 22:13, 16), Micaiah was faithful to God. In spite of overwhelming unpopularity, he delivered perfectly the divine message. Zedekiah rewarded him with a humiliating facial blow (1 Kgs 22:24) and a return to prison, where the soup de jour was water and the entree was bread (1 Kgs 22:27). Whether Micaiah obtained a release when Ahab's lifeless body came back to Samaria (1 Kgs 22:37) is unknown. However, it is a certainty that God did not leave Himself without a true witness in Israel!

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

⁵C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Kings* (trans. by James Martin, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 3; 1970 rpt., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.) 274.

The military lineup in the ancient Near East during the 10th and 9th centuries B.C. included Shishak of Egypt (945-924 B.C.), Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.) and Shalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.) of Assyria, Ben-Hadad of Syria (890-841 B.C.), and the numerous kings of Israel and Judah.⁶ About 879 B.C., Asa, king of Judah, called upon Ben-Hadad I of Syria to attack Baasha and the kingdom of Israel, who were threatening Jerusalem (1 Kgs 15:16-22). In 855 B.C., Ben-Hadad I struck Israel with a coalition of thirty-two kings (1 Kgs 20:1). As he was getting himself drunk, the LORD delivered him into the hands of Ahab (1 Kgs 20:13-21).

Again in 854 B.C. Ben-Hadad I attacked Ahab at Amphek and was soundly defeated (1 Kgs 20:26-30), as the LORD prevailed for Ahab (1 Kgs 20:28). The LORD indicated His displeasure at Ahab for not killing Ben-Hadad I (1 Kgs 20:31-34) through a prophet of God (1 Kgs 20:35-43).

In the meantime, however, Shalmaneser III of Assyria was threatening both Syria and Palestine from the east. Ahab and Ben-Hadad I formed a military alliance with neighboring kings to meet Shalmaneser and stop his southern thrust. The combatants met at Qarqar (modern Khirbet Qarqur) on the Orontes River in a decisive battle unmentioned in the Bible but recorded on the Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser.⁷ Though Shalmaneser was probably the victor, the encounter prevented further southern penetration.

After thwarting the Assyrian threat, Ahab and Ben-Hadad I renewed their mutual hostilities because of Ahab's desire to retake Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kgs 22:1-3). It was this military prospect that occasioned Jehoshaphat's quest for the LORD's approval. Although the LORD caused Ahab's previous victories, the king demonstrated no interest in the things of God (1 Kgs 22:3-5). The LORD delivered Israel from defeat by Ben-Hadad I not because of Ahab, but in spite of him.

This is the immediate situation of the interpretive problem of this essay. A godless pagan Ahab sought to involve the God-fearing Jehoshaphat in a military operation to regain previously lost territory. Without seeking the LORD's leading or help, he plunged forward, little realizing that God had delivered him twice before, but would seal his

⁶See John C. Whitcomb Jr., *Chart of Old Testament Kings and Prophets* (Chicago: Moody, 1968).

⁷James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958) 188-92.

doom in this third engagement with Syrian forces.

INTERPRETIVE HISTORY

Aetiological View

Of thirteen theologically liberal scholars consulted, over half suggest this rationalistic view. They are not all fully agreed in their explanations, but are united in denying the literality of Scripture and the supernaturalness of God.

Heaton described "the spirit" as the Hebrew way of accounting for evil. He writes,

The sequel is worth pausing over, because it indicated how the existence of false prophecy was accounted for. Obviously it posed a problem. Had God lost control? Couldn't he stop it? . . . The Hebrews . . . preferred even to attribute calamity to God and so with astounding daring they also explained evil things like false prophecy as instruments used by God for his own purposes. . . . This naive explanation of evil may not satisfy us, but at least it enabled the Hebrew to maintain his faith in God's supreme sovereignty, despite what we should call "intellectual difficulties."⁸

Burney⁹ and Eissfeldt¹⁰ identify "the spirit" as an "imaginary" and "legendary" character, respectively. Eissfeldt observes,

For the vision accounts of Balaam and Micaiah ben Imlah are likely also to have been imitations by the narrators from what they could observe in the prophets of their own time. Thus we cannot go

⁸Eric William Heaton, *His Servants The Prophets* (London: SCM, 1949) 25. Matheney (M. Pierce Matheney and Roy L. Honeycutt, Jr., *1-2 Kings* [in *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, ed. by C. J. Allen; Nashville: Broadman, 1970] 223), Oesterly (W. O. E. Oesterly and T. H. Robinson, *Hebrew Religion: Its Origin and Development* [1944 rpt.; London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, n.d.] 222), Seigman (Edward F. Siegman, *The False Prophets of the Old Testament* [Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1939] 3-4), and Wellhausen (Julius Wellhausen, *History of Israel* [trans. by J. S. Black and A. Menzies; Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1885] 403) also take this basic position.

⁹C. F. Burney, *Notes On The Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings* (in *The Library of Biblical Studies*, ed. by Harry M. Orlinsky; New York: KTAV, 1970) 255.

¹⁰Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (trans. by P. R. Ackroyd; New York: Harper and Row, 1965) 148.

further than saying that we have only biographical narratives, some of them of a legendary character. . . .¹¹

A third variation of the aetiological position is explained by Eichrodt¹² as the development of the Hebrew concept of *ur* (*ra*, "spirit"). Von Rad considers "the spirit" to be the "spirit of Yahweh," which is a well-defined concept in the progressive development of the OT prophetic office.¹³ They both see it as a developing concept with possible Canaanite and Ugaritic backgrounds.

The common element in each proponent is the interpreter's rationalistic explanation of a vision given to the prophet Micaiah, supposedly from God. Their positions are not well supported by biblical data.

Self-deluded View

F. W. Farrar describes the subject passage as a "daringly anthropomorphic apologue." He writes, "The prophets were self-deceived, but this would be expressed by saying that Jehovah deceived them."¹⁴ Typical of many older expositors, Farrar treats this enigmatic passage with little more than personal opinion expressed in somewhat elaborate and nebulous language.

More recently, this view has attracted wider support. Advocates include Dillard,¹⁵ Kaiser,¹⁶ and Vannoy¹⁷. Kaiser succinctly

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols., trans. by J. A. Baker; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967) 2:52.

¹³Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. by D. M. G. Stalker; New York: Harper and Row, 1962) 2:56-57.

¹⁴F. W. Farrar, *The First Book of Kings* (in *The Expositor's Bible*, ed. by W. R. Nicoll; New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903) 492-93. Also see Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible* (New York: Eaton and Mains, n.d.) 476; W. A. L. Elmslie *The Book of Chronicles* (in *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, 2nd ed., A. F. Kirkpatrick, ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 1916) 243-44.

¹⁵Raymond B. Dillard, "2 Chronicles," in *WBC* (ed. by David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. A. Barker; Waco: Word, 1987) 15:142.

¹⁶Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983) 256. Also idem, *Hard Sayings of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988) 120-21.

¹⁷J. Robert Vannoy, *The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985) 520.

notes, "These prophets spoke `out of their open minds.'"¹⁸ In this writer's analysis, the "self-deluded" approach does not do adequate justice to the immediate text or to similar texts such as Job 1`2, Zechariah 3, 2 Thessalonians 2, and Revelation 12, because it does not allow for the reality of a heavenly encounter between God and "the spirit."

Demonic View

A popular choice among conservatives, the demonic identification, also has early patristic support from Augustine (354-430 A.D.).¹⁹ Recent advocates of this position are mostly conservatives.²⁰

Though each of these scholars may have convincing arguments for his position, they usually offer sparse support. The following features have been used to identify "the spirit" as demonic:

1. The identification of $\epsilon\upsilon\ \delta\epsilon\mu\omicron\ \alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\omicron\ \epsilon\upsilon\ \delta\epsilon\mu\omicron$ (*mal@k r#m*, "messengers of evil") in

¹⁸Kaiser, *Hard Sayings* 120.

¹⁹Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. VIII, ed. by A. Cleveland Coxe and P. Schaff; New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1888) 376.

²⁰These include Chafer (L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* [Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948] 4:294), Dickason (C. Fred Dickason, *Angels, Elect and Evil* [Chicago: Moody, 1975] 180, who seems to identify "the spirit" with demons, but does not rule out Satan), Feinberg (Charles Lee Feinberg, personal correspondence dated October 11, 1973, a view never formally published apparently), Gates (John T. Gates, "1 Kings," in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* [ed. by C. F. Pfeiffer and E. F. Harrison; Chicago: Moody, 1962] 339), Hoyt (Herman Hoyt, "Biblical Eschatology" [unpublished class notes; Winona Lake: Grace Theological Seminary, 1966] 158), Jacob (Edmond Jacob, *Contemporary Old Testament Theologians* [ed. by R. B. Laurin; Valley Forge: Judson, 1970] 154), Kleinknecht (Hermann Kleinknecht, "pnema, pneumatikw," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [ed. by Gerhard Friedrich and trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromily; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968] 4:363), McClain (Alva J. McClain, John C. Whitcomb Jr., and Charles R. Smith, "Christian Theology`God and the World" (unpublished class notes; Winona Lake: Grace Theological Seminary, n.d.] 119-20), Merrill (Eugene H. Merrill, "1 and 2 Chronicles." in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* [John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds.; Wheaton: Victor, 1985] 633), Scott (Thomas Scott, *The Holy Bible* [Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, and Crocker, and Brewster, 1831] 2:288), Strong (Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* [1970 rpt.; Old Tappan: Revell, n.d.] 457), and Wood (Leon J. Wood, personal correspondence dated October 3, 1973, a view never formally published apparently, but commented upon briefly in *The Holy Spirit In The Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976] 131).

- Psalm 78:49 as demons.²¹
2. The identification of *h ur* (*ra r#h*, "evil spirit") in Judg 9:23; 1 Sam 16:14-16; 18:10; 19:9 as demonic.²²
 3. The numerous NT references to demons as spirits. Examples include Mark 1:23; Acts 8:7; 1 Tim 4:1; Rev 16:13-14.
 4. The article with "spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21 is used in its generic sense.²³
 5. The activity of "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:19-23 is representative of demonic activity.²⁴

Against this view, however, there are some serious objections:

1. Nowhere in Scripture do demons appear before the throne of God.
2. The generic explanation of the article with "spirit" is only one of several grammatical possibilities.
3. Since demons are not omnipresent, one demon could not affect four hundred prophets simultaneously (1 Kgs 22:6, 22-23).

It appears that the majority of confusion and misunderstanding in this passage has resulted from a failure to identify the cause and effect relationship between 1 Kgs 22:1-7 and 22:19-23. Whoever or whatever "the spirit" in 22:21 is, it must also account for the reality of the prophets of Ahab prophesying falsely (cp. 1 Kgs 22:6 with 22:34-36). The demonic view can adequately explain the false prophecy, but is weak as an identification of "the spirit."

Personified View

A majority of interpreters have adopted this, a position presented by all traditions of interpreters except Patristic.²⁵ Edersheim

²¹ Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* 376.

²² Note the article is lacking in each instance.

²³ John Gray, *I and II Kings* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970) 452. Leon Wood reasons differently: "The article is only to designate a definite spirit . . . rather than merely spirits in general . . ." (personal correspondence).

²⁴ A. J. McClain, et al., "Christian Theology`God and the World" 119-20. Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* 457.

²⁵ Included are Alden (Robert L. Alden, personal correspondence dates Sept 28, 1973), Barry (Alfred Barry, *1 Kings* [C. J. Ellicott, ed.; *Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, rpt., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.] 2:95), Brown (R. E. Brown et al., *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* [Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968] 197), Burrows (W. O. Burrows, *The First Book of Kings* [London: Rivingtons, 1899] 95), DeVries (Simon J. DeVries, *Prophet against Prophet* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978] 45; also idem, *1 Kings* [in WBC; Waco,

represents this view which has been variously explained:

It must not be understood as declaring what really took place in heaven, but as a vision in which the prophet saw before him, as in a parable, the explanation and the higher Divine meaning of the scene that had just been enacted before the two kings. . . . It was a real external vision, God directed, which the prophet describes; not a vision of what really occurred, the seduction of Ahab by his false prophets as the result of Divine judgment, was thus presented in a parable, as it were, from the heavenly point of view.²⁶

As to specific identification of "the spirit," Keil comments,

The spirit (**ur** [*hra*, "the spirit"]) which inspired these prophets as a lying spirit is neither Satan, nor any evil spirit whatever, but, as the definite article and the whole of the context shows, the personified

TX: Word, 1985] 268 and "The Three Comparisons in 1 Kings XXII 4B and Its Parallel and 2 Kings III 7B," *VT* 39/3 [1985]:283-306), Cook (F. C. Cook, ed., "1 Samuel Esther," in *The Bible Commentary* [1970 rpt., Grand Rapids: Baker, n.d.] 222), Edersheim (Alfred Edersheim, *The History of Israel and Judah* [New York: James Pott and Company, n.d.] 69), Eichrodt (Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* 2:52; Eichrodt terms this the demonic aspect of the developing doctrine of the spirit), J. C. Gray (James C. Gray, *The Biblical Encyclopedia and Museum* [Hardford: S. S. Scranton, 1900] 3:102), J. Gray (John Gray, *I and II Kings* 452), Hammond (J. Hammond, *1 Kings* [H. D. M. Spence and J. S. Excell, eds., *The Pulpit Commentary*; New York: Funk and Wagnalls, n.d.] 535), Honor (Leo L. Honor, *Book of Kings 1* [New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1955] 319), Keil (C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Kings* 276), Lumby (J. R. Lumby, *The First Book of the Kings* [Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, J. J. S. Perowne, ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 1894] 233), Montgomery (J. A. Montgomery and H. S. Gehman, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Kings* [ICC, C. A. Briggs, et al., eds.; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1930] 339), Nichol (F. D. Nichol, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary* [Washington: Review and Herald, 1954] 840), Patterson and Austel (R. D. Patterson and Hermann J. Austel, "1 & 2 Kings," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* [Frank E. Gaebel, gen. ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988] 4:165), Rawlinson (George Rawlinson, *Kings' Books I and II* [*The Holy Bible*, F. C. Cook, ed.; New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co., 1875] 619), Torrey (R. A. Torrey, *Difficulties in the Bible* 73-75), Whitcomb (J. C. Whitcomb, Jr., *Solomon to the Exile* [Winona Lake: BMH, 1971] 46), and Young (E. J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952] 136-42).

²⁶ Alfred Edersheim, *The History of Israel and Judah* 69.

spirit of prophecy. . . .²⁷ [transliteration and translation added]

Unfortunately, this view creates more problems than it solves. It provides a possible interpretation, but it does not explain the cause of the false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6. Moreover, it leaves the interpreter with the even larger problem of explaining what or who the personified spirit of prophecy is. Keil would respond,

But the false prophets as well as the true were governed by a supernatural spiritual principle, and, according to divine appointment, were under this influence of the evil spirit in the service of falsehood, just as the true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in the service of the Lord.²⁸

However, if the Holy Spirit is God's dynamic force for true prophecy, then what reality accounts for the numerous accounts of false prophecy in the OT? The view does not explain this satisfactorily.

One possible explanation has been suggested by Whitcomb, "In the vision, the spirit who volunteered to entice Ahab's prophets may have been a personification of the spirit of false prophecy as in Zechariah 13:2."²⁹ But if this be true, what reality is the spirit personifying and how does this relate to the false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6? Who or what is the false spirit of prophecy? Both 1 Kgs 22:21 and Zechariah 13:2 demand that the energizing force behind the false prophecy be identified by something more than a biblical term; it must identify the actual cause! Commentators either briefly pass over 1 Kgs 22:21 with a quick identification or labor unconvincingly to find a token touch of causal meaning in the passage.³⁰

Supporting arguments for this view include,

1. Grammatically **ר** **ur** (*ra eger*) is in the construct state and must be translated "spirit of deceit" rather than "deceiving spirit."
2. **ur** (*ra*) is used in a similar sense elsewhere in Scripture.

Exod 28:3	spirit of wisdom
Num 5:14	spirit of jealousy
Deut 34:9	spirit of wisdom
Judg 9:23	spirit of evil

²⁷C. F. Keil, *The Books of the Kings* 276.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 277.

²⁹J. C. Whitcomb Jr., *Solomon To The Exile* 46.

³⁰E. J. Young, *My Servants The Prophets* 136-42.

Isa 11:2	spirit of wisdom and understanding spirit of counsel and strength spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord
Isa 19:14	spirit of distortion
Isa 28:6	spirit of justice
Isa 29:10	spirit of deep sleep
Jer 51:1	spirit of a destroyer
Hos 4:12; 5:4	spirit of harlotry
Zech 12:10	spirit of grace
Zech 13:2	spirit of uncleanness

Heinisch explains, "The hagiographer simply wished to emphasize the fact that every event, whatever the circumstances, has been willed by God and must be traced back to God as its final cause."³¹

By far the most serious objection to this view is its implications for interpreting similar passages. If this is a parabolic personification, how then are Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Isa 6:1-13; Zech 3:1-10 to be understood? The normal conservative interpretation of each is that they were actual encounters in heaven. As a matter of fact, this was John's explanation of Isaiah 6 (cf. John 12:36-41.) He declares that Isaiah actually saw the glory of Christ on the throne.

Satanic View

Although this view does not have the strongest numerical support, it is the majority choice of the early scholars who wrote concerning this passage.³² In support of this position, the following proofs

³¹Paul Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. by William Heidt; Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1955) 122.

³²Advocates of identifying "the spirit" as Satan are Cassian (John Cassian, *The Conferences of John Cassian* [E. C. S. Gibson, trans., in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, ed. by P. Schaff and Henry Ware; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, reprinted, 1955] 11:304), Chrysostom (John Chrysostom, *Epistles of Paul To The Corinthians* [T. W. Chambers, ed., in *Nicene Fathers*, First Series, ed. by P. Schaff; New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1888] 12:169), Davidson (A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament* [S. D. F. Salmond; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1904] 302-3), Gill (John Gill, *An Exposition of The Old Testament* [London: W. H. Collinridge, 1853] 393), Heinisch (Paul Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament* 138), Kittel and Noth (R. Kittel and M. Noth, *Liber Regum* [Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1966] 554; see critical note on 1 Kings 22:21); John MacArthur, *God, Satan, and Angels* [Panorama City, CA: Word of Grace, 1987] 75), Oehler (G. F. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament* [trans. by G. F. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. by G. E. Day; New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1883] 449), Origen (Origen,

have been suggested:

1. The parallel situations of Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Zech 3:1-10; Rev 12:10, where Satan appeared before God in heaven, suggest "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21 be identified as Satan. Merrill Unger notes, "This is an extremely attractive thesis since Satan is King and head over the demonic powers."³³
2. The use of the article with "spirit" to indicate a particular, well known spirit suggests Satan.³⁴
3. The title of "the father of lies" given to Satan by Christ in John 8:44, characterizes "the spirit" of 1 Kgs 22:21.
4. Paul's description of Satan as a disguised angel of light in 2 Cor 11:14 describes "the spirit" of 1 Kgs 22:21.
5. Satan's activity in Genesis 3 of deceiving Eve and in 1 Chr 21:1 of deceiving David suggest an identification of Satan. Also compare the influence of Satan upon Ananias to lie to the Holy Spirit in Acts 5:3.
6. The deceiving activity of Satan in Revelation parallels that of "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21. Cf. Rev 12:9; 20:3, 8, 10.
7. Ephesians 6:12 suggests that Satan is a spirit being. This is supported by Satan's entry into Judas. Cf. Luke 22:3 and John 13:27.
8. Second Thess 2:11-12 presents a clearly different but similar situation and uses almost identical language to describe God sending a deluding influence upon the world.

The most formidable argument against this view is that Satan is not omnipresent and could not possibly have entered the mouth of all four hundred prophets (1 Kgs 22:6, 22-23). Additionally, it has been suggested that *ruwr* (*ra eger*) (1 Kgs 22:22-23) is in the construct state and should be translated "spirit of deceit" rather than "deceiving spirit."

Angelic View

Origen De Principiis [trans. by F. Crombie, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951] 4:329), Payne (J. Barton Payne, *Theology of the Older Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962] 294; personal correspondence dated October 2, 1973 agrees as does "1 & 2 Chronicles" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* [Frank E. Gaebelin, gen. ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988] 4:499), Wordsworth (Charles Wordsworth, *The Holy Bible* [London: Rivington's, 1868] 84).

³³Merrill F. Unger, personal correspondence dated September 25, 1973.

³⁴J. Barton Payne, *Theology* 294.

This view is an extreme possibility although it was not advocated by any scholar consulted. Though not supporting this idea, F. C. Cook suggests it as a possibility.³⁵ Because no indication is in the immediate text or anywhere else in the Bible that good angels are involved in deceiving activities, this view cannot receive serious consideration.

Non-committal View

Several commentators, both liberal and conservative, conveniently chose to avoid dealing with the identity in question.³⁶

PHILOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Text

The OT Massoretic Text has no textual variations within or between 1 Kgs 22:21 and 2 Chr 18:20. A comparison of 1 Kgs 22:21 with 2 Chr 18:20 in the LXX reveals a significant variation, however. The 1 Kings passage presents "*spirit*" as an anarthrous noun while in 2 Chronicles the noun is articulated. This is also at variance with the Massoretic Text.

The Aramaic Targum of Jonathon renders both verses 'iur (*r@*, "the spirit"). This original spelling indeed agrees with the MT because of its use of the postpositive article ' (@).³⁷ The Latin Vulgate is noteworthy because the definite article is absent from both passages. Since Latin has no word for either the definite or indefinite article,³⁸ the Vulgate witness is inconclusive.

In view of the MT and Aramaic Targum evidence for the article,

³⁵F. C. Cook *1 Samuel-Esther* 222.

³⁶These included Benson (Joseph Benson, *The Holy Bible* [New York: T. Carlton and J. Porter, n.d.] 114), Dentan (R. D. Dentan, *The First and Second Books of the Kings* [in *The Laymen's Bible Commentary*, ed. by B. H. Kelly; Richmond: John Knox, 1964] 68-70), Josephus (Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* [VIII:15, trans. by W. Whiston; Philadelphia: John E. Potter, n.d.] 224-25), Myers (Jacob M. Myers, *II Chronicles* [in *The Anchor Bible*, Wm. F. Albright and David N. Freedman, gen. eds.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965] 104-5), and Poole (Matthew Poole, *Annotations Upon The Holy Bible* [New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1853] 713).

³⁷Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic* (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1961) 23.

³⁸N. J. DeWitt, J. F. Gummere, and A. Horn, *College Latin* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1954) 12.

which is supported by the LXX reading in 2 Chronicles, the conclusion is that the article in 1 Kgs 22:21 is the correct rendering. Kittel considered the LXX reading of 1 Kings insignificant and did not include this variation in the critical apparatus of *Biblia Hebraica*.³⁹

Unfortunately, no Dead Sea Scroll manuscript has 1 Kgs 22:21. However, there are fragments from 1 Kgs which include 1 Kgs 22:28-31. Examples of the Former Prophets have been located in several Qumrn caves. Milik observes, "They seem to be derived from the same Hebrew tradition as is represented in the LXX!"⁴⁰ Brownlee⁴¹ and Baillet⁴² concur with this analysis.

Several fragments of 1 Kings are included in *Les 'Petites Grottes' De Qumrn*. They are 1 Regum 3:12-14 (fragment 1), 1 Regum 12:28-31 (fragments 2, 3, and 4), and 1 Regum 22:28-31 (fragment 5).⁴³ These fragments are dated in the last half of the second century B.C. as verified by the antiquated orthography. In these five fragments, sixty-seven consonantal characters, all of which are in agreement with the Massoretic Text, occur. This in no way verifies that the MT is totally substantiated or validated by the DSS, but it does serve as an empirical demonstration of the MT's reliability after 1000 years of transmission through hand-lettered copies.

If LXX readings are more often reliable in the Dead Sea Scroll fragments of the Former Prophets than anywhere else in the OT, how does this affect the above conclusion that the article in 1 Kgs 22:21 is correct in light of its absence in the LXX? In view of the strong supporting evidence for the Massoretic reading, it appears that the LXX rendering could possibly be marred by a scribal error of omission although there is no absolute explanation for this mistake from the evidence at hand. Therefore, the remainder of this investigation assumes the validity of the articulated reading.

Syntax

³⁹R. Kittel and M. Noth, *Liber Regum* 554.

⁴⁰J. T. Milik, *Ten Years Discovery In The Wilderness of Judaea* (trans. by J. Strugnell; Naperville, ILL.: Alex R. Allenson, 1959) 25.

⁴¹W. H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumrn Scrolls for the Bible* (New York: Oxford, 1964) 12.

⁴²M. Baillet, J. T. Milik, and R. deVaux, *Les 'Petites Grottes' De Qumrn* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962) 107.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 107-8.

The Article (**ur** [*hira*, "the spirit"])

Because of the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture, it can be ascertained that the articulated noun *hira* was used by the Holy Spirit for a specific reason. In Hebrew grammar the article is always omitted when a person or thing is represented as undetermined or unknown.⁴⁴ Therefore, it is conversely true that the article is used almost exclusively when the person or thing is determinable.

Of the numerous uses of the article in Hebrew, three possibilities are applicable to this problem.

1. The article is used to limit ideas of species to definite individuals or things.⁴⁵
2. The article may be employed in a *generic* sense to indicate the totality of the individuals in the genus so that the union of a singular noun with the article includes every individual under the species.⁴⁶ This same effect can be equally well accomplished by the plural.
3. A peculiarity in Hebrew is the use of the article to designate a single unknown which is to be later determined or identified.⁴⁷

Because "the spirit" is not later identified, alternative 3 can be dismissed from consideration. Either option 1 or 2 is valid. The first alternative seems to be the natural use in its simplest sense and is preferred in light of further supporting evidence. The generic use (alt. 2) is legitimate grammatically, but it is the more difficult use and is not necessary to identify "the spirit."

Construct State or Attributive Adjective? (**ur** [*ra eger*, "deceiving spirit"])

The expression *ra eger* occurs in vv. 22 and 23. Those who argue for the personified view, understanding "the spirit" to be the spirit of prophecy, interpret this form as the construct state, which would best be translated "spirit of deceit." The satanic and demonic positions demand that *eger* function as an attributive adjective and have the

⁴⁴E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (2nd ed., ed. by A. E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910) 377.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 376, and A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax* (3rd ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901) 25.

⁴⁶E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* 377. Also see Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction To Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 114.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 378.

meaning "*deceiving* spirit."

The form *ra* is used as both absolute and construct, which makes this determination difficult since the spelling is correct for either.⁴⁸ Obviously positive identification of the form is impossible, but the possibility that "the spirit" does not have to have a personified meaning is evident. It is absolutely essential to the demonic or satanic view that the attributive understanding (i.e., construct state) is legitimate. Those who use the construct state to support a personified position must recognize that the construct offers another attractive alternative.

Singular or Collective Use? (*ra eger*)

Almost any word may be used in the singular as a collective, especially words that name classes of persons or things.⁴⁹ The force of this observation is somewhat diminished in this particular instance by the normal plural form of "spirit" which is /*oiur* (*rt*). In context, however, vv. 22 and 23 speak of the effect upon the four hundred prophets of Ahab for which "the spirit" of v. 21 was to be responsible. Since one spirit (regardless of the identification) cannot be omnipresent in 400 men simultaneously, a collective understanding of *ra eger* is necessary.

Syntactically, it may be understood then that "the spirit" of v. 21 was responsible for a multiple deceiving effect upon the prophets. As theological considerations will show, the only alternative which can be naturally explained is that "the spirit" is none other than Satan.

Semantics

Spirit (*ra*)

The Ugaritic *rw*, meaning "wind, spirit, or breath,"⁵⁰ has four basic meanings:⁵¹

⁴⁸F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (1972 rpt, Oxford: Clarendon, n.d.) 924.

⁴⁹A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax* 19.

⁵⁰Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Handbook* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1947) 323, and Stanislaw Segert, *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984) 201.

⁵¹David Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* (Cambridge: University Press, 1967) 206-15; Hermann Kleinknecht, "pnema, pneumatikw," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. by Gerhard Friedrich, and trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromily; Grand Rapids:

1. breath/wind
2. a principle which gives life to the body
3. seat of emotions, intellectual functions, and attitude of will
4. supernatural influences acting upon men.

As expected, alternative 4 is the use in 1 Kgs 22:21-23.

Those who espouse the Personified View have identified "the spirit" with "the spirit of prophecy" as if this spirit of prophecy was a well-known concept. On the contrary, the phrase "spirit of prophecy" appears only once in the Bible. In Rev 19:10 the testimony of Jesus is equated with "the spirit of prophecy." This use associated with Christ could in no sense account for "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21, much less for the false prophecy in 22:6.

The concept of a "spirit of prophecy" is surely derived from the familiar OT phrase, "the Spirit of the LORD came upon him and he prophesied. . . ." This is strengthened by 2 Pet 1:21 which directly testifies that the Holy Spirit is God's agent for the revelation of true prophecy. However, this does not account for a "spirit of false prophecy."

Ra in the OT and *pnema* (*pneuma*, "spirit") in the NT are used in reference to demons. Such OT passages as 1 Sam 16:23; 18:10; 19:9 possibly use "evil spirit" in reference to demonic activity. Far more conclusive is the NT use, especially in the gospels. Examples include Mark 1:23; Acts 8:7; 1 Tim 4:1; Rev 16:13-14.

Neither Testament calls Satan a spirit, but this does not make the identification impossible. Because Satan entered into Judas (cf. Luke 22:3; John 13:27), he must be a spirit being. Further, Paul's description of a Christian's battle against the forces of evil equates Satan (Eph 6:11) with a force not of flesh and blood but with "spiritual" (*pneumatikw* [*pneumatikos*]) forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12).

Semantically, a good case can be made for either a Satanic or demonic identification of *ra* in 1 Kgs 22, but a "spirit of prophecy" responsible for false prophecy finds no support.

Entice (**h** [*pth*]) and Deceive (*ra eger*)

Pth, which can be translated "deceive, entice, persuade, seduce, or prevail upon," has the basic idea of overcoming or prevailing.⁵²

Eerdmans, 1968) 4:359-67; Paul Younger, "A New Start Towards A Doctrine of the Spirit," in *CJT* 13:2 (1967):123-33.

⁵²F. Brown et al., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon* 834; Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), 786; also see

This victorious result is obtainable either legitimately or dishonestly. In Jer 20:7-9; Ezek 14:9, this activity is credited to God. In Exod 22:16, it has the sense of a man seducing a virgin sexually, and in Deut 11:16, it involves deception which results in turning away from truth. Only context can determine the legitimacy of the action whereby one prevails over another.

+*Seqer* involves deception by words through falsehoods and lies.⁵³ It speaks in Jer 14:14; 23:25-26; 29:21 of prophets prophesying falsely, in Ps 101:7 of a lie, and in Prov 17:4 of a liar.

The interchange of these two terms in 1 Kgs 22:23 is interesting in that it highlights the difference between two almost synonymous words. In 22:20 God asks for a volunteer to entice (*pth*), and in 22:21 "the spirit" volunteers to entice or, better yet, prevail. When God asks "the spirit" in 22:22 what activity would be used, "the spirit" replies he would be a deceiving spirit (*ra eger*). In 22:22-23 God approved of the deceiving activity (*eger*) which resulted in overcoming (*pth*) Ahab in the sense that God allowed it to occur, not that He planned or approved of the dishonest means to a legitimate end.

Jer 20:7-9 and Ezek 14:9 prove that God prevails and overcomes. The direct statement in Tit 1:2 and the fact that God is never associated with the word *eger* in the OT confirms that He never lies. However, overcoming by falsehoods is an activity characteristic of Satan and his demonic agents.

HERMENEUTICAL CONSIDERATIONS⁵⁴

Figurative Language In Prophecy

Symbolic Speech

More than one interpreter has erred by failing to understand the purpose of symbols used prophetically. A basic maxim which provides guidance and stability is, "Prophecy arises out of a historical

R. Laird Harris et. al., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1980) 2:742-43.

⁵³Brown et al., *Lexicon* 1010, 1055.

⁵⁴Two recent volumes can be consulted for key aspects of the hermeneutical process. See Elliot E. Johnson, "Hermeneutical Considerations of the Goal of Interpretation," in *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990) 31-53. Also William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction To Biblical Interpretation* (Dallas: Word, 1993) 87-116, discuss presuppositions and preunderstanding.

situation."⁵⁵ This leads logically to a normal interpretation of prophecy, recognizing the legitimate use of speech figures. Symbols in prophetic passages represent the reality of a literal person or object about which the author writes.

Mickelsen suggests three characteristics for symbols:⁵⁶

1. The symbol is itself a literal object.
2. The symbol is used to convey some lesson or truth.
3. The connection between the literal object and the truth it teaches becomes clearer in light of the intention of the one who used the symbol

Once a figure has definitely been pinpointed, it is then the interpreter's responsibility to seek diligently the literal idea the author intended. For example, four beasts in Dan 7:3-7 are used symbolically, but the interpreter finds help at 7:17 where Daniel explains that these four beasts are four literal kingdoms. John describes Jesus in Rev 1:12-16 with symbols and then furnishes the literal meaning of several of these symbols in v. 20.

What symbols did Micaiah see in his vision of 1 Kgs 22:19-23, and what are their interpretations? First, it must be recognized that this vision is symbolic in terms of self-interpreting anthropomorphisms. First, the expressions "the LORD sitting on His throne" and "all the host of heaven standing by Him" are anthropomorphically communicating the setting for Micaiah's vision. Instead of requiring a separate interpretation such as in Daniel or Revelation, these phrases are self-explanatory. Second, although the surroundings have an anthropomorphic description, the main personages are not also necessarily symbolic.

In the demonic view, "the spirit" is symbolic of demonic agents, and their appearance before the LORD symbolically represents God's permissive will with respect to demonic activity. "The spirit" then symbolically pictures that real dynamic or energizing power which caused the prophets to prophesy falsely in 1 Kgs 22:6. Inherent in this understanding also is the generic use of the article as discussed above. This explanation, however, ignores Satan's reign over demons and creates a bigger problem—why is Satan bypassed in this process?

While this possible interpretation is legitimate, it does require a unique happening never repeated before or after in Scripture. It is more natural to recognize the anthropomorphic background of the

⁵⁵A. J. McClain, *The Greatness of The Kingdom* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1959) 135.

⁵⁶A. B. Mickelsen, *Interpreting The Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 265-66.

vision, but to interpret "the LORD" and "the spirit" literally. With this approach, "the spirit" seems certain to correspond with Satan's other literal appearances before God in Job 1; 2; Zech 3:1; Rev 12:10.

Parables

Those interpreters who advocate the Personified View identify "the spirit" as the personified spirit of false prophecy in a parabolic vision that approximates the setting of 1 Kgs 22:3-6. This connection between heaven and earth must be made to introduce the parable into the context. Does the vision in 1 Kgs 22:19-23 qualify as parabolic, though?

According to all definitions of parables, 1 Kgs 22:19-23 can legitimately be termed a parable. It is like other OT parables, e.g., 2 Sam 12:1-4. Yet this is the only feature that qualifies the Personified View as a legitimate possibility hermeneutically.

The next issue is whether the parabolic explanation of "the spirit" accounts for the reality of false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6. Those holding the Personified View would answer that it is "the spirit of false prophecy." But the question arises, "Who or what is the spirit of false prophecy?" It is at this point that the parabolic interpretation and its attendant identification falters.

The most defensible position is that 1 Kgs 22:19-22 has not been placed alongside 1 Kgs 22:6 for comparison as the parabolic understanding demands, but rather is a causal explanation for the actual false prophecy in 22:6. The more natural explanation is to understand Micaiah's vision to include a real encounter between God and Satan. Satan then performed the deception through his demonic assistants according to God's permissive will. J. Barton Payne concurs:

I would hesitate to involve the hermeneutic of symbolic interpretation without contextual substantiation, though it is true, the statement about the "spirit" occurs in a vision (yet most of us would argue for literalism even in such a case: cf. hell in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, or the millennium in the visions of Revelation). A connection in time and place with Job would favor Satanic understanding. . . .⁵⁷

Biblical Visions

A vision involves a supernatural presentation of certain events before the mind of the prophet that can be represented symbolically

⁵⁷J. Barton Payne, personal correspondence dated October 2, 1973.

(Dan 4:10-17) or actually (Ezek 8:5-18). Furthermore, because some objects in a vision can be symbolic, it is not necessary that all the objects be symbolic (Rev 4:2`5:14). A good rule of thumb is not to interpret symbolically when the object can be real, especially when there are no theological objections to do so (Ezekiel 40`48; Isa 65:25).

Visions can be *predictive*, such as that given to Micaiah in 1 Kgs 22:17 and 1 Kgs 22:19-23, or *didactic*, as when Micaiah communicated his vision to Ahab and Jehoshaphat after the fact. The subject passage affords a very rare situation because both the predictive and didactic aspects, along with the fulfillment, are present within the same context. The vision had originally been given to Micaiah by God as predictive; it was fulfilled in 1 Kgs 22:6; and it was related in its didactic sense in 22:19-23.

Why was the vision given to Micaiah? Obviously, the primary purpose was didactic, for the vision was not revealed by Micaiah until after the prophecy was fulfilled. What then does the vision teach? Two elements seem prominent. First, the four hundred prophets of Ahab had indeed prophesied falsely. Second, "the spirit" was the source from which the false prophecy had originated.

"The spirit," however identified, must account for the prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6 which Jehoshaphat correctly evaluated as false. Interpreting "the spirit" as a personification of the spirit of prophecy does not provide a real answer as to the cause of false prophecy. The Holy Spirit is the source of God-breathed prophecy, but who or what is responsible for false prophecy?

A response might be that the prophets were just lying and really did not know the answer to Ahab's question. However, it would not be to the prophets' benefit to prophesy falsely, knowing that there was good reason to believe that the prophecy might fail. It was this same basic situation that the Chaldeans faced when Nebuchadnezzar challenged them to tell him his dream (Dan 2:1-11). Even in the face of a death sentence (Dan 2:12-13), they refused to speak falsely.

What caused Ahab's prophets to prophesy falsely? It certainly was not the Holy Spirit of God. Therefore, another source must be identified, one that would make the prophets believe their prophecy was indeed true. Biblically, that leaves two choices: Satan or his demonic assistants. This explanation fully satisfies the inquiry into the real source of false prophecy.

Additional support for a primarily literal as opposed to symbolic understanding of Micaiah's vision is added by three biblical

visions whose settings approximate 1 Kgs 22:19. The prophet Isaiah through a vision viewed the LORD with His heavenly court. In Isaiah 6, the description recalls Micaiah's account of the celestial encounter in 1 Kgs 22:19. The context of Isaiah 6 suggests an essentially literal understanding as does John's God-inspired, NT commentary. John 12:40 quotes from Isa 6:10 and interprets that Isaiah actually saw the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (739 B.C.).

Joshua the high priest, the angel of the LORD, and Satan were all participants in the vision recorded in Zechariah 3. Not only the setting but also the appearance of Satan before the LORD is instructive as a parallel to 1 Kgs 22:19-23. Finally, the setting in Rev 4:2 approximates that of Micaiah's vision also, as do Ezek 1:26-28; Dan 7:9-10; Acts 7:55-56.

These passages by themselves are not sufficient to demand a literal interpretation of "the spirit" as Satan. However, taken together, they are other positive indicators which compel serious consideration for a Satanic identification of "the spirit."

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Satan

Satan In The OT

Job 1:2 depicts Satan's appearing before God at the assembly of the sons of God. During this encounter, God and Satan discussed the future of an earthly inhabitant, i.e. Job. Understanding that the scene is anthropomorphically described, one is hard pressed to understand it as anything but a literal interpretation. Job 1:13-22; 2:7 record the real events resulting from this heavenly conference.

The similarities between these Job passages and 1 Kings 22 are striking in character and setting. Delitzsch, commenting on Job 1, opposes Keil's understanding of 1 Kings 22. He observes, "Finally, it agrees with 1 Kings xxii.19-22, Zech. iii., on the one hand and Apoc. xii. on the other that Satan here appears still among the good spirits. . . ." ⁵⁸ Zckler similarly states, "In 1 Kings xxii.19, where a scene greatly resembling the present is discovered, the tempter bears no name, but his individuality is distinct, for he is characterized as *the spirit*." ⁵⁹

⁵⁸F. Delitzsch, *Job* (in *Commentary On The Old Testament*; trans. by Francis Boltin; rpt., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.) 4:53.

⁵⁹Otto Zckler, *The Book of Job* (in *Lange's Commentary On The Holy Scriptures*, trans. by

In Zech 3:1 Satan personally appeared before the LORD in the presence of others. This seems to reflect the norm for Satan's appearances in the OT.

That Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel is the report of 1 Chr 21:1. Interestingly, the parallel passage in 2 Sam 24:1 suggests that it was the LORD who caused David to conduct the census. John Davis explains,

The Chronicles account and the Samuel account merely reflect two aspects of the same incident. Satan was the immediate cause of David's action, but, theologically speaking, God was the ultimate cause in that He did not prevent the incident from occurring.⁶⁰

The 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21 passages not only provide an almost identical parallel for identifying "the spirit" as Satan, but also mirror the causal factors in 1 Kgs 22:22-23. In v. 22 "the spirit" is the prevailer, and in 22:23 Micaiah attributes the false-prophecy phenomenon to the LORD.⁶¹ By His permissive will, God allowed Satan to deceive the four hundred prophets of Ahab.

Illustrative of Satan's deceiving activities is his encounter with Eve in the Garden of Eden. The serpent in Gen 3:1 is certainly Satan (compare 1 Tim 2:14; Rev 12:9; 20:2). When man began to inhabit this earth, Satan was the chief deceiver. His character in Genesis 3 vividly recalls "the spirit" in 1 Kings 22.

These appearances of Satan in the OT and their close resemblance to 1 Kings 22 in action and character are strong reasons to identify "the spirit" as Satan. The personified spirit of prophecy has no

L. J. Evans; 1971 rpt., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.) 4:294.

⁶⁰J. J. Davis, *The Birth of A Kingdom* (Winona Lake: BMH, 1970) 164; also see Richard Mayhue, *Unmasking Satan* (Wheaton: Victor, 1988) 138-39.

⁶¹James L. Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971) 83, notes, "The divine responsibility for false prophecy is nowhere expressed more unequivocally than in the story of Micaiah ben Imlah (1 Kings 22:1-40)." See also J. J. M. Roberts, "Does God Lie? Divine Deceit As A Theological Problem in Israelite Prophetic Literature," in *Congress Volume: Jerusalem 1986* (ed. by J. A. Emerton; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988) 211-20. Although this subject deserves at least an article-length discussion, let it suffice for now to say that while God is ultimately the first cause of all, He is not the morally responsible, immediate agent of sin such as false prophecy (Job 2:10; Isa 45:7; Lam 3:38). Thus, it is asserted that the events of 1 Kings 22 were not caused by God's decreed will, but rather allowed by His permissive will, for which there is then human and angelic accountability to God in judgment.

biblical support in the realm of deceit and false prophecy, and thus is unconvincing. The possibility of "the spirit" representing demons collectively is recognized, but demons are never known biblically to have appeared before God. OT theology strongly supports the Satanic identification.

Satan in the NT

Satan is not directly referred to as "a spirit" in either Testament unless "the spirit" of 1 Kings 22 is Satan. This does not mean, however, that Satan is not a spirit. The Bible has indirect indications that Satan is a spirit. In 2 Cor 11:14, Satan is called an angel of light. Angels, of course, are spirits (Heb 1:14; cf. Ps 104:4). Satan must be spirit by nature, for he entered into Judas (Luke 22:3; John 13:27). Further, Paul discusses how to combat Satan in Eph 6:10-20. The opponent is identified in v. 11 and the nature of Satan is discussed in 6:12. The struggle is not against flesh and blood but against "spiritual" (*pneumatikw* [*pneumatikos*]) forces of wickedness. The nature of Satan as spirit in being harmonizes with a Satanic identification of "the spirit" in 1 Kings 22.

The apostle John characterizes Satan as a being in whom there is no truth, who is a liar, and in fact, is the father of lies (John 8:44). It was "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:22 who suggested deceit as the means to prevail over Ahab. Satan is the most likely identification.

The strongest objection to the Satanic identification is that Satan is not omnipresent and could not have indwelt all four hundred prophets simultaneously; so he could not be "the spirit." It is correct that Satan is not omnipresent, *but* this does not negate his identification as "the spirit." Satan can be in only one place at any given time because he is not the omnipresent God.⁶² However, the effect upon many prophets can be explained by Satan's relationship with demons.

Matt 12:24 identifies Satan as the ruler of demons. Matt 25:41 and Rev 12:9 speak of Satan and his angels. Demons are fallen angels.⁶³ It is this precise relationship that of Satan's ruling over

⁶²Compare Job 1:7 and 1 Pet 5:8. Also see Rev 20:2-3 where Satan is confined to the abyss for one-thousand years.

⁶³C. R. Smith, "The New Testament Doctrine of Demons," *Grace Journal* 10/2 (Spring 1969):32-35. Dr. Smith has written a well-documented case for demons being identified as fallen angels. Also see Ps 78:49 where demons are referred to as a band of destroying ("evil," NASB margin) angels.

demons`which explains Satan's worldwide ministry of evil and explains how one spirit who is not omnipresent could affect many prophets simultaneously.⁶⁴ One of the many functions of demons is to disseminate false information.⁶⁵ Jas 3:14-15 suggests that being against the truth is from a demonic source. It is perfectly natural that demons assisted Satan in light of his ruling relationship over them.

Acts 10:38 illustrates this inseparable relationship between Satan and demons. Peter, speaking to Cornelius, relates how Christ went about doing good and healing all whom Satan had oppressed. Numerous NT cases of people whom Christ healed, involved demon possession.⁶⁶ Here, Peter apparently speaks of Satan (the ultimate cause) who ruled and directed the demons (the immediate cause).

The height of attempted Satanic deception is in Matt 4:1-11. Satan attempted to deceive God in human flesh. The Lord Jesus Christ thwarted this subtle effort only because He is God. The deceiving activities of Satan in Revelation are frequent and worldwide in scope (Rev 12:9; 20:3, 8, 10). If Satan attempted to deceive Christ, he must have found it easy to deceive Ahab's four hundred.

Satan is called the father of lies in John 8:44. Ananias and Sapphira knew personally of this Satanic influence as Peter detected (Acts 5:1-11).

Rev 12:10 states that Satan accuses the brethren in the presence of God day and night. The fact that Satan accuses is not significant for identifying "the spirit," but the place of the accusations is. Satan stands before the presence of God, a characteristic that fits 1 Kgs 22:19-23.

Paul indicates Satan's relationship with false prophets in 2 Cor 11:13-15 where he notes that they disguise themselves as false apostles just as Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. False prophets are actually servants of Satan, so it is not surprising to see a direct relationship in 1 Kings 22 between false prophets and Satan.

Second Thess 2:9-12 in its similarity to 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21, parallels 1 Kings 22 in emphasis. Satan is at work through the lawless one (2:9-10), causing God to "send upon them" a deluding influence so that they may believe what is false (2:11).⁶⁷ The

⁶⁴M. F. Unger, personal correspondence dated September 25, 1973. Dr. Unger writes that **ur** is "probably a reference to , since the **ur** has the article. This is an extremely attractive thesis since Satan is King and Head over the demonic powers."

⁶⁵M. F. Unger, *Biblical Demonology* 199.

⁶⁶See Matt 4:24; 9:32; 12:22; 15:21-28.

⁶⁷Robert L. Thomas, "1, 2 Thessalonians," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Frank E.

close parallel between these three passages is perhaps the most convincing argument for the Satanic identification of "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21.

CONCLUSIONS

This essay has examined 1 Kgs 22:21 to identify "the spirit" which caused the false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6. The disciplines of philology, hermeneutics, and theology have been used as evaluative tools.

Six possible views—the aetiological, self-deluded, angelic, personified spirit of prophecy, demonic, and Satanic positions—received initial attention. The aetiological view was inadequate because of rationalistic presuppositions concerning the Scriptures and God. Replacement of biblical reasoning by subjective opinion was the basis for ruling out the self-deluded view. The angelic view failed because of the absence of biblical indications that good angels practice deceiving activities. This left the personified, demonic, and Satanic identifications as reasonable possibilities.

First came an investigation of philological matters. Textually the articulated reading of "spirit" was substantiated and found syntactically to support any one of the three reasonable alternatives. Next, **רַעַר** (*ra eger*) proved to be either "the spirit of deception" or "deceiving spirit," allowing for the correctness of any of the three views. Semantically, the use of **רַעַר** (*ra*) supported only the demonic or Satanic view as did the usage of **חַ** (*pth*) and **רַעַר** (*eger*).

Second, a hermeneutical investigation of the symbolic speech of the passage demonstrated that it was possible to understand Micaiah's vision literally as supporting the Satanic view, symbolically supporting the demonic view, or parabolically as supporting the personified spirit of prophecy view. However, in light of the literal understanding of Satan's appearances before God in Job 1 and 2, Zechariah 3, and Revelation 12, the Satanic view emerged as the most natural and the most likely.

The study of biblical visions reduced the possible causes of false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6 by one. The demonic and Satanic positions remained possible although the Satanic understanding was favored because of similar literal interpretations of heavenly visions in Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1, Daniel 7, Zechariah 3, Acts 7, and Revelation 4. Hermeneuti-

cally, the Satanic view was most probable in both Testaments, but was not conclusive.

Third, the theological implications of OT and NT revelation concerning Satan, which include his activities and character, best describe "the spirit." Finally, the answer to the objection to a Satanic identification`i.e., that Satan is omnipresent and could not affect all four hundred prophets simultaneously`demonstrated Satan's role as ruler over demons. This relationship and the known activities of Satan theologically provided the most consistent explanation for identifying "the spirit" as Satan and demons as Satan's instrument in the mouths of Ahab's false prophets.

These philological, hermeneutical, and theological factors lead to the conclusion that "the spirit" in 1 Kgs 22:21 was in fact Satan and that demonic activity, initiated and superintended by Satan, provided the dynamic force responsible for the false prophecy in 1 Kgs 22:6.

THE MODELING OF MINISTERS

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An often neglected part of leading a local church is the element of providing an exemplary lifestyle for the flock to follow. Modeling has its origin in the creation of man in God's image, but through the fall and new creation of man in Christ, it has assumed a renewed importance. NT usage of the τυπος (tipos, "type") and μιμητής (mimētēs, "imitator") word-groups provides a good idea of the responsibility of church leaders to live as good moral examples before those whom they lead. Only when they do so can pastoral ministry fulfil the biblical standards of that office.

* * * * *

Reportedly, a cleric once said, "Do as I say; don't do as I do." This frank adage has unfortunately characterized many past and present preachers, many of whom have reputations as great teachers of God's Word. However, when measured by the Bible's qualifications for communication *and character*, such "ministers" come up woefully short.

Saying-but-not-doing in its multiplied forms and settings has always been particularly detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Jesus spoke to the crowd about the scribes and Pharisees, telling them to follow their instructions from Moses, but not to follow their personal example, because "they keep on saying and yet are not doing" (Matt 23:3, note Greek present tenses). His indictment ultimately embraced a whole lineage of dark examples of hypocrisy throughout fallen mankind's history.

All men are accountable to God for profession without practice (e.g., Jas 1:22-27); yet certain ones by virtue of their office are responsible at the highest level of divine accountability for *prescription* without practice (e.g., Jas 3:1). Therefore, it is no wonder Paul emphasized to Timothy and to Titus God's mandate not only for exhortation but also for exemplification (1 Tim 4:12-16; Tit 2:7). Similarly, Peter, in his directives to elders, spotlights the *showing* dimension of shepherding (1 Pet 5:1-4).

The Scriptures on spiritual leadership are intimidating to contemporary ministers of the gospel. How can we who are not yet perfect hold ourselves up as ethical examples? How can we whose practice does not yet match our position say, "Do as I do"? A consideration of the macro and micro theological context of modeling will bring *some* relief from intimidation, but God designs all theological tensions to be constructive. As in the cases of other equally powerful biblical metaphors, the poles of this one i.e., the revealed reality that we are not yet glorified in, the inescapably clear mandate for modeling should first develop in us general humility, and then a renewed dependence upon God and His resources.

THE MACRO-THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF MODELING

This context of modeling is exceedingly broad. It entails some of the panoramic issues of theology e.g., Christ as the image of God, man's *creation* in the image of God, commensurate issues of Adam Theology, salvation history with special emphasis upon moral re-creation in the image and likeness of God, and the ethical significance of the Lord's operations of sovereign grace primarily through His efficient means of the Word and the Spirit.

The Importance of Image

A theological priority rather than a logical one is the best starting point. When viewed from a historical perspective, traditional theologies usually begin with the creation of mankind/humanity (i.e., originally Adam, or from a theological vantage point, the "First Adam") "in"/"according to" the "image"/"likeness" of God.¹

¹Both the Hebrew terms for "image" and "likeness" and the two prepositions used with them function essentially in a synonymous fashion within the context of the early chapters of Genesis. John F. A. Sawyer, "The Meaning of צֶלְמִית " $\langle \text{e}, \text{l} \rangle \text{e} \langle \text{e}, \text{x} \rangle \text{e} \langle \text{I}, \text{B} \rangle \langle \text{b}, \text{e} \rangle \langle \text{O}(+, \text{e}) \rangle \langle \text{O}(+, \text{s}) \rangle \text{elem} @ \langle \text{O}(+, \text{e}) \rangle \langle \text{O}(~, \text{o}) \rangle \text{h} \langle \text{O}(=, \text{i}) \text{m}$. In "The Image of God" in Genesis 1:26-27," *JTS* 25 n.s. (October 1974):418-26 on a technical level; John J. D. Cross, *Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis* (Winona Lake: BMH, 1975), 81 on a popular level. **However, the theological Archetype, Christ Himself furnishes the better beginning place. Since He is uniquely the effulgence of God's glory and the exact impress of His being or essence (Heb 1:3), and since He alone perfectly displays the Godhead (John 1:18, cf. 14:9), the Lord is the image of the invisible God (Col 1:15). Consequently, He is one who fully manifests and represents God and who also concretely stands ethically as the ultimate and perfect Exemplar (cf. 1 Cor 11:1).**

Christ is uniquely the image of God, but in a derived sense God "made" or "created"¹ ¹The Hebrew is בָּרָא ($\# \text{a} \text{š} \text{a}$, "made") in Gen 1:26 and בָּרָא (bar , "create") in 1:27. Both verbs speak of the creation of humanity in Gen 5:1-2. mankind in His own image and likeness. Although "the Bible does not define for us the precise content of the original *imago*,"¹ ¹Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* (Waco: Word, 1976) 2:125. Chap. 10 of this work is particularly worthy of study. generally it appears to be "cohesive unity of interrelated components that interact with and condition each other."¹ ¹Ibid. This vague conclusion is exegetically credible, but does not cover some of the major extrapolations about the *imago Dei*. In the history of systems

atic theology, three basic views relating to the image of God in man have surfaced: the substantive, the relational, and the functional.¹ ¹Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984] 495-517. Historically, these views relate to analogies of being, analogy of relation, and dominion, respectively.¹ ¹G. C. Berkouwer, *Man and the Image of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962) 67-118. The following brief excerpts from Erickson describe the general characteristic(s) of each camp.

[1] The substantive view has been dominant during most of the history of Christian theology. The common element in the several varieties of this view is that the image is identified as some definite characteristic or quality within the makeup of the human. . . . [2] Many modern theologians do not conceive of the image of God as something resident within man's nature. Indeed, they do not ordinarily ask what man is, or what sort of a nature he may have. Rather, they think of the image of God as the experience of a relationship. Man is said to be in the image or to display the image when he stands in a particular relationship. In fact, that relationship is the image. . . . [3] We come now to a third type of view of the image, which has had a long history and has recently enjoyed an increase in popularity. This is the idea that the image is not something present in the makeup of man, nor is it the experience of a relationship with God or with fellow man. Rather, the image consists in something that man does. It is a function which man performs, the most frequently mentioned being the exercise of dominion over the creation.¹ ¹Erickson, *Christian Theology* 498, 502, 505.

The basic shortcoming of both the second and third views is that they do not address the consequences of the *imago Dei*. They are valid functions, but do not answer the apparently ontological implications of key scriptural texts.¹ ¹Ibid., 510-12. It is difficult to eliminate some sort of analogy in man's image-bearing. Yet, historically expressed, problems have plagued the first view, especially in light of the catastrophic affects of the fall of man. Erickson seems to be on the analogical track when he suggests "the attributes of God sometimes referred to as communicable attributes constitute the image of God."¹ ¹Erickson, *Christian Theology* 514. He is also right in making a Christological connection: "The character and actions of Jesus Christ can be a particularly helpful guide . . . since he was the perfect example of what human nature intended to be" (ibid.). Indeed, the moral attributes of God constitute a significant and large dimension of His image in man, a fact that is acutely relevant to the consideration of the issue of modeling.

The Retention of the Image: Devastated but Not Destroyed

After deciding for the analogy-of-being view, the haunting question remains, what about the affects of the fall? Once again, the biblicist must enter the poles of another scriptural tension. On the one hand,

the fall of man was a catastrophic personality shock; it fractured human existence with a devastating fault. Ever since, man's worship and contemplation of the image of God have been broken, his devotion to the divine will shattered. Man's revolt against God therefore affects his entire being. . . . His revolt against God is at the same time a revolt against truth and the good.¹ ¹Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* 2:134-35.

On the other hand, however, "there is some sense in which the image of God in man persists even in fallen man."¹ ¹Charles M. Horne, "A Biblical Apologetic Methodology" (unpublished ThD dissertation; Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Ind., 1963) 84. The *potential* for the communication and sovereign application of the Word of God in a restored relationship, and moral renovation remains. Avoiding endless pur-

through logical labyrinths, Kidner wisely makes the soteriological transition in his brief synopsis: "After the Fall, man is still said to be in God's image (Gen 1:26 and likeness (Jas. 3:9); nonetheless he requires to be 'renewed . . . after the image of him that created him' (Col. 3:10; cf. Eph. 4:24)."¹ ¹Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1967) 51; cf. O. Flender, "e1kvn," *NIDNTT* 88.

The Re-Creation of Image

By original creation man bore the image of God, including its significant moral dimension. His fall¹ ¹For discussions of Adam Theology, i.e. the "first Adam" as representative of and in solidarity with the whole race and the "Last Adam" as representative of and in solidarity with God's elect, see John Murray's *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959); *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959); Lewis Johnson, Jr., "Romans 5:12: an Exercise in Exegesis and Theology," in *New Dimensions in Bible Study* (ed. by Richard N. Longenecker and Merrill C. Tenney; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1965) 100-101. The Fall radically perverted the whole image, so much so that no hope for any kind of reformation remained. Yet the Word of God says that the image and likeness of God continue even with man in this horrible condition. By God's grace, men redeemed in Christ have embarked on an upward and onward journey of moral restoration (cf. 2 Pet 3:18). Their destination is moral perfection, Christlikeness. Consequently, the overarching challenge to all genuine disciples is still, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (Lev 11:44-45, 19:2; 1 Pet 1:16).

The primary means of grace in moving the saved along that highway of sanctification is the Word of God attested by the Spirit of God, and a vital component of this divine testimony is the incarnate example of Christ. Indeed, He alone is God's perfect moral manifestation.

THE MICRO-THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF MODELING

Because of His pattern, the attitude and actions of His people should mirror His in integrity and consistency of Christlikeness (cf. Phil 1:27 ff.; 2:5 ff.; 1 John 2:6). As they mature morally, some more rapidly than others, they themselves also become reflections of His moral model (cf. 1 Thess 1:7). Growth should characterize all His "saints,"¹ ¹A profession without practice constitutes a highly culpable state of pretense. For a discussion of progressive sanctification, see O. Procksch, "ἀγιασμός," *TDNT* 1:113; George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 50-51. but the NT holds those recognized as church leaders especially responsible for providing good examples. They are visible and derived moral models for the Exemplar'sē kēkklēsia, "church"). This awesome responsibility is the focus of the rest of this study. A semantical background will prepare the way for the remainder.

The Vocabulary of Modeling

The OT is replete with commands and implicit obligations concerning the holiness of God's people, but it contains no transparent teaching about following the example of God or His chosen leaders.¹ ¹Michaelis concludes that "on the whole the idea of imitation is foreign to the OT. In particular, there is no thought that we must imitate God" (W. Michaelis, "mimōmai, mimēthēte, k. t. l.," *TDNT* 4:663. In the LXX this word-group appears in the Apocrypha, where it does not refer to divine emulation (ibid.). Yet in the pseudepigrapha writings some occurrences urge the imitation of OT men of renown and even God Himself (ibid., 664). Philo exhibits his same pattern of usage (ibid., 664-66). Michaelis' controlling presupposition

distorts his interpretation of these data, however. However, the NT abounds with this cept. As a matter of fact, a whole arsenal of modeling terms surfaces.¹ general discussion of the most significant of these terms see W. Mundle, O. Flender, J. Gess, Martin, and F. F. Bruce, "Image, Idol, Imprint, Example," *NIDNTT* 2:284-91. Their opening graph on essential synonymity is important, and subsequent discussions of the Christological are worthy of special attention. Of these, the *typow* (*typos*, "example") and *mimetes* ("imitator") word-groups are the most important.

In ancient secular Greek *typos* exhibits the following usage categories: 'what is stamped,' 'mark,' . . . 'impress' . . . 'stamp,'" e.g., of letters engraved on stone, images, or painted images; "b. 'Mould,' 'hollow form' which leave an impress," . . . and in a transferred sense "ethical 'example'" . . . ; and "c. . . . 'our figure,'" i.e. of the stamp or impress.¹ L. Goppelt, "typow, á nt3typow, k. t. l.," *TDNT* 8:246-47. Regarding etymology, Müller states, "The etymology of *typow* is disputed. It may be derived from *typtiv*, strike, beat, . . ." (H. Müller, "Type, Pattern," *NIDNTT* 3:903); cf. Goppelt who is impressed with this etymological connection (Goppelt, "typow" 8:246-47). He suggests the development goes from a blow "to the impress made by the below," then "from these basic senses it develops an astonishing no. [number] of further meanings which are often hard to define. In view of its expressiveness it has made its way as a loan word [i.e. "type"] into almost all European languages" (ibid.). "In the LXX *typos* occurs in only 4 places":¹ Müller, "Type" 3:903; the model or pattern for the tabernacle and its furnishings in Exod 25:40, for images in Amos 5:26, for the "wording," "text," of a decree" in 3 Macc 3:30; for "(determinative) 'example'" in 4 Macc 6:19.¹ Goppelt, "typow" 8:248.

In the NT its full range of semantical usages include,¹ This follows the classifications of BAGD, 829-30. Sub-category 2, "copy, image," has not been cited because it furnish no NT examples; however, two of the extra-biblical references that are cited i.e., a reference to a master being the image of God to a slave and children as copies of their parents bear illustratively upon the moral references of category 5. This fifth category encompasses the doctrine of modeling in the NT. On the history of the hermeneutical significance of sub-category 5, see Goppelt, "typow" 8:251-59, and Müller, "Type" 3:905-6.

1. *visible impressions* of a stroke or pressure, *mark, trace*, e.g., John 20:25
3. *that which is formed, an image or statue*, e.g., Acts 7:43
4. *form, figure, pattern*, e.g., Romans 6:17
5. (*arche*)*type, pattern, model*, both literally, e.g., Acts 7:44, Hebrews 8:5; ethically as *example, pattern*, e.g., 1 Timothy 4:12, etc.
6. in reference to divinely ordained *types*, whether things, events, or persons, e.g., Romans 5:14.

Of the fourteen occurrences of the noun *typos* in the NT, half relate to modeling, either implicitly as a negative illustration (e.g., the adverb *typikwv* [*typikwv*, "typically,"], 1 Cor 10:6) or explicitly as positive patterns (Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 2:14; 1 Thess 3:9; 1 Tim 4:12; Tit 2:7; 1 Pet 5:3). Further, one other occurrence of *typos* has a tangential theological relation:

In Rom. 6:17 [*typow* refers to] the context, the expressions of the doctrine. However, the original meaning of the form which stamps can still be strongly felt. Previously sin, so now the new teaching, i.e. the message of Christ, is the factor which stamps and determines the life of the Christian.¹ Müller, "Type" 3:904-5; cf. Goppelt, "typow" 8:251-59. "Typow is . . . the impress which makes an impress, so that in context the teaching of Christ is described as the mould or norm which shapes the whole personal conduct of the one who is delivered up to it and has become obedient thereto" ("typow" 8:250).

The efficient means of the Word of God is seen here as a press and die which leaves an amazing mark on the people of God.

Though the data relating to modeling are quite conspicuous, contemporary scholarship is reluctant to attribute to the concept a fully ethical significance. For example, Goppelt refuses to allow that a disciple's life is "an example which can be imitated."¹ ¹Goppelt, "τυπῶν" 8:249-50. Interestingly, two sentences later he comments on 1 Tim 4:12 wherein he apparently concedes a more direct association with ethical emulation. It would seem that a good share of Goppelt's reluctance is due to Michaelis' quite dogmatic conclusions about the μιμητικῶν word-group; cf. Michaelis, "μιμητικῶν" 4:659 ff. His emphasis on the primacy of the Word of God and the priority of an ultimate reference to God are commendable, but as subsequent treatments of the key texts will reveal, their inescapable overtones are patterns from people. Müller in his discussion of this issue is not quite as one-sided. For example, he asserts that the crucial texts are not simply admonitions to a morally exemplary life. . . . The shaping power of a life lived under the Word has in turn an effect on the community (1 Thess. 2:15) causing it to become a formative example."¹ ¹Müller, "Type" 3:905. He carefully interrelates the effectual means of the Word with a derived means consisting of ethical examples.

The *mimētes* word-group, the source of the English word "mime,"¹ ¹E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), 2:248. furnishes a rich semantical heritage also. Generally speaking,

the word group μιμητικῶν etc., . . . arose in the 6th cent. [B.C.], and came into common use in both prose and poetry. Μιμηθῶμαι has the sense 'to imitate, mimic,' i.e. to do what is seen to be done by someone else.¹ ¹Michaelis, "μιμητικῶν" 4:659.

Bauder sub-classifies the classical Greek usages as follows:

- (a) imitate, mimic . . .
- (b) emulate with joy, follow
- (c) in the arts (plays, paintings, sculpture and poetry), represent reality. In imitation, imitate is a artistic way. . . . an actor is therefore a *mimos*, a mimic. A *symmimētes* (Lat. *imitator*) is an imitator, especially a performer or an actor who imitates. When used in a derogatory sense, the words refer to a feeble dramatic "aping" or feeble copying with lack of originality.¹ ¹W. Bauder, "μιμηθῶμαι," *NIDNTT* 1:490.

Significantly, from the earliest stages of this group's history in classical Greek literature, the words were used to express ethical demands made on men. One should take after one's model the boldness of a hero, or one should imitate the good example of one's teacher or parents."¹ ¹Ibid. Such imitations are without a revelational norm, but they nevertheless illustrate a *linguistic* background for usage in the NT.

One particular nuance in classical usage deserves special attention. The *mimētes* word-group's place within the typically dualistic cosmology of the ancient Greeks. Of course, Plato is especially fond of its employment in this sense. Bauder captures the gist of it: "The whole of the lower world of appearances is only a corresponding, imperfect, visible copy or likeness (*mimēna*) of the invisible archetype in the higher world of the Ideas."¹ ¹Ibid., 491. Such thinking is antibiblical, but in the process of its development among pagan philosophers, discussions arose about "divine" imitation.¹ ¹Cf. Michaelis, "μιμητικῶν" 4:660. Though Michaelis concludes "that in such statements the *imitatio dei* is not so closely bound to the cosmological mimesis concept,"¹ ¹Ibid., 662. this scholar concludes that such ancient references "have quite plainly an ethical thrust."¹ ¹Ibid., 663. albeit without revelational norms.

Since "The Vocabulary of Modeling" above has alluded to the Jewish use of this word-group, it will suffice to add that two of the four occurrences in the Apocrypha speak of emulating heroes of the faith in martyrdom¹ Cf. Mic "mimhthw" 4:663. and that in subsequent history

the Rabbis were the first to speak of imitation of God in the sense of developing an image of God in men. In the Pseudepigrapha in addition to the exhortation to imitate men of outstanding character . . . one can also find the thought of the imitation of God (i.e. keeping his commands . . .) and of particular characteristics of God.¹ ¹B. "mimθomai" 1:491.

Again, apart from any accretions, eccentricities, perversions, etc., in the materials, such usages are a linguistic link in the conceptual chain culminating in the corpus of the NT teachings.

Bauder's breakdown of the word-group is succinct and accurate: "In the NT *mimēomai* is found only 4 times (2 Thess. 3:7, 9; Heb. 13:7; 3 Jn. 11); *mimētes* 6 times (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14; Heb. 6:12); and *symmimētes* only once in Phil. 3:17."¹ ¹Ibid. The deponent middle verb meaning "imitate, emulate, follow" occurs with accusatives of person, and the uncompounded noun *mimētes* ("imitator") occurs either with a personal referent or with an imperator in the genitive.¹ ¹BAGD, 522. Also, "it is noteworthy that in all its NT occurrences *mimētes* is joined with ἡσθεύω, denoting moral effort."¹ ¹James Hope Moulton and C. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930) 412. Indeed, a safe assertion is that "all [words in the group] are used with an ethical-imperative aim and are linked with obligation to a specific kind of conduct."¹ ¹Bauder, "mimθomai" 1:491.

Michaelis opposes this ethical-emulation thrust of the words and reinterprets according to his chosen viewpoint. He bolsters his contention with a few textual observations, especially pertaining to contextual emphases on suffering, persecution, death, industriousness, obedience, etc.¹ ¹Michaelis, "mimθomai" 4:666-68, passim. All these contextual colorings have some credibility, but special applications do not negate the all-embracing ethical perspective of total character and consistent life-style. Much more subjective is his discussion built upon the presuppositional foundation of apostolic authority, though nearly all interpreters will empathize with its apparent motivational tension i.e., how can any finite and fallible person, including Paul, say, "Follow my ethical example?" Despite this tension, no exegete should forge a few implicit references into a hermeneutical hammer for driving many round texts into square contexts.¹ ¹Ibid., pp. 6-7. The text contains eccentric applications and overstated conclusions based on some glaring examples of totality transfers which are always hermeneutically counterproductive. Bauder supports the essential thrust of Michaelis' thesis, but is usually much more careful in his expressions of "mimθomai" 1:491-92). The ensuing treatment of key passages will document the fact that the NT evidence "cannot be reduced to a demand for personal obedience."¹ ¹Bauder, "mimθomai" 1:491.

The Vocation of Modeling

The best way to organize key NT texts dealing with modeling is by their essentially theological development.¹ ¹Another approach would be to follow chronological order. Still another is a biblical theological approach, i.e., modeling in the Pauline corpus, Epistle to the Hebrews, in Peter, in 3 John, etc. Though this method has inductive advantages, it does not lend itself to viewing the total NT picture through a common lens. Another way of organizing the data is the grammatical, i.e., noting the passages which historically exemplify modeling and then examining others which command it. Yet it seems better to employ a

organizational category, at the same time calling attention to the indicatives and imperatives. Whether historically noted or ethically urged, the NT data present God's model. His people, show the moral example of the apostolic circle to all the church. We emphasize the particular area of responsibility in reference to church leaders and advocate that all Christians be maturing moral models for the spiritual well-being of the whole body. This plan is basically consistent with both the early church's historical development and special gradations of judgment or reward pertaining to church leaders. It does not dictate some sort of ethical "apostolic success" but, however, essentially an unbreakable chain, it comes full circle, creating a theological necklace which begins and ends with the sovereign grace of God and Christ's moral model.

God: The Ultimate Model for His Church. Eph 5:1 instructs the church to "keep on becoming (or being) imitators of God." Michaelis argues that this passage along with similar ones "does not speak of true imitation of Christ or God."¹ Michaelis, "mimhthw" 4:673; Michaelis' presupposition of utter moral transcendence causes him to reject the implications of the thrust of Paul's argument in 4:25 ff. (ibid., 4:671-73). Yet it is the setting that begins with an identical imperative (4:32) inculcating reciprocal kindness, tenderness, and forgiveness based on Christ's example. Furthermore, the *kauvw* (*kathos*, "just as") clause, which bridges to the Lord's perfect pattern, assumes analogy and infers emulation. Immediately after 5:1 comes another continuously binding imperative to "keep on walking in love" followed by an indication of Christ as the Exemplar (*peripateite . . . kauvw [peripateite . . . kathos]*). Additionally, the simple adverb of comparison *w* (*hos*, 5:1b), "as beloved children," points to the propriety of ethical emulation by believers.

On a larger scale, this command to imitate God and Christ is part of a larger section about holy living (4:25-6:20). This in turn is a subset of the practical holiness of the epistle (i.e., the "do" section) beginning at 4:1. All these exhortations are appropriate responses to the sovereign grace of God, i.e., the theologically "indicative" section (i.e., the "done" section) of this great epistle (Ephesians 1:3).¹ Ladd, *Theology of the NT* 493-94, 524-25, for a discussion of the indicative/imperative motif relating to sanctification. On yet a grander scale of inclusion is the comprehensive scriptural challenge to be holy because God is holy. From the reversed perspective of obligation to "be holy for God is holy" receives definitive resolution through the prevalent indicative/imperative presentation of ethical obligation, with a variety of explicit exhortations as elaborations. This is the natural theological setting for moral modeling, e.g. "Be imitators of God as beloved children."

The Derived Apostolic Model in the Church. The designation "apostle" pertains to the apostolic circle, and allows for God's use of both apostles and transition men such as Timothy and Titus in establishing churches during the first century. The latter group were not apostles, but were in a special sense apostles, an apostle. For example, they supervised the planting and the solidification of local NT churches. When doing this, they were not technically one of the past teachers-elders-overseers of a given local church or group of regional churches; this section treats them as mediate models. However, apparently in their day-to-day ministries they worked alongside and functioned similarly to pastoral leaders. Therefore, it is also appropriate to apply what is said below about 1 Tim 4:14 and Tit 2:7 to the next major division, "The 'Third Generation' Model of Church Leadership."

(1) Modeling Directly

Paul did not shy away from offering himself as an ethical model.

believers he had personal contact with (e.g., 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 2 Thes 9).¹ This treatment will discuss only passages explicitly employing "model" or terminology, omitting the many conceptual allusions to Paul's own example. Maintaining accurate theological perspective requires a treatment of 1 Cor 11:1 and Philippians 3 first.

First Cor 11:1, "be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ," is basic modeling on the horizontal plane. Paul was not *the* Exemplar; only Christ could be that. However, that did not exempt him from the divine responsibility of being a derived moral example. The contextual application of his statement has to do with not becoming an offense because of one's personal freedom in Christ (10:23 ff.). Paul closes his discussion with a command to comply (10:32), and then holds himself up as an example (10:33), then picking up that same thread but repeating it with the vocabulary of moral modeling (11:1a). He is careful to add, however, that when they follow his example, they are following the ultimate pattern of Christ's treatment of others (11:1b).¹ Bauder concludes, "Paul never intends to bind the demand for imitation to his own person. It is always ultimately to the One whom he himself follows" (Phil 3:17:1:491).

Philippians 3 has raised significant questions about the propriety of his own moral example. After Paul urges the following of his own example (3:17), does he not confess his own finiteness and moral fallibility (3:3-16)?¹ Michaelis is dogmatic ("mimhthw" 4:667-68), and Bauder more subdued ("mimthomai" 1:491). Or, in the words of Bauder, "Prior to the demand to imitate him, he deliberately places a confession of his own imperfection (Phil. 3:12)."¹ Bauder, "mimthomai" 1:491.

He does indeed assert he has not arrived at moral perfection. "He does not think of himself as the personal embodiment of an ideal which must be imitated."¹ Ibid. but this saint in process *does* urge the Philippian church to keep on becoming (or being) fellow-imitators of (or with) him (3:17a).¹ This is the only NT occurrence of the compounded plural form *symmimhthw*. Here it stands as the predicate nominative of the familiar present plural imperative *g3nesue* (cf. Eph 5:1). The personal pronoun in the genitive refers to Paul. In addition to Paul, others are consistently living (3:17b) according to the pattern (i.e., *typon*) of the apostolic circle.¹ In the context of 3:17c, Paul includes Timothy and possibly Epaphroditus with Paul (cf. Phil 2:19, 25). It is wrong to ignore one facet of biblical revelation because of another equally important truth which raises an apparent logical contradiction.

But is it possible to resolve this scriptural tension? Like most other biblical paradoxes, not fully. Nevertheless, several observations will ease the difficulties which cause our limited logic. For example, the major portion of this epistle has to do with ethical exhortation (i.e., 1:27-4:9). From the beginnings of this section, the theme of unity through humility, including the preferring of others over oneself, dominates. But the supremely important example of Christ (2:5-8) undergirds the subsequent moral responsibilities. The Lord is the primary pattern for attitudes and actions. Based directly on that perfect example, Paul challenged the Philippian church to progress in their sanctification (2:12), reminding them that the resources for such a holy calling reside with God (2:13). The Philippian disciples were responsible, but not adequate in themselves. Interestingly, following this general challenge to holy living, Paul refers to Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-3:1) as others-oriented examples.

To begin chapter 3, he rehearses his pre- and post-conversion experiences (3:3-16). These not only compare and contrast the pre-conversion Paul (esp. v. 4:6) and other genuine Christians (3:7 ff.) with some externalists in Philippi (e.g., 2:18-19), but also compare especially the post-conversion experience of Paul with that of all true disciples. Although both Paul and true believers at Philippi were positionally "perfect" in Christ, neither he nor they were perfect experientially.

Consequently, his quest like theirs should be one of an intensifying pursuit of moral purity. Such a focus, by the grace of God, qualified one to be a reflective model of ethical development. However, the perfect moral mold remains the one who said, "You are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48).

This theological perspective sheds light on other Pauline statements. For example, when he writes earlier in 1 Corinthians, "Therefore I urge you to imitate me" (4:16, NIV), he does not disregard Christ as the ultimate example (11:1). Does he intend to leave the impression that he had arrived. He has already negated any claims to self-sufficiency, especially in his exposure of all human wisdom (chaps. 1-3). In addition, he has built a solid bridge to genuine maturity (chaps. 3-4), largely from prominent personalities as illustrations. That sets the stage in chapter 4 to challenge Corinthian arrogance. By weaving in positive examples, he exposes the heinousness of their pride (4:6 ff.). He also mixes several testimonials to God's ultimacy and sufficiency to His servants (e.g., 4:1-4; etc.). This is hardly the context for a Pauline ego trip. His personal example in 4:16 once again reflects the pattern of Christ and His grace.

He wrote to the Thessalonian church to encourage them to follow the apostolic example (2 Thess 3:7, 9). Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy (2 Thess 3:1) supplied positive examples as a corrective for any who were out of line among the Thessalonians (i.e., ἀτάκτως [*ataktos*, "disorderly"], 3:6, 11; cf. the verb form in v. 5, especially in matters of free-loading and meddling. The disciples at Thessalonica recognized "how it was necessary [for them] to imitate (mime@uai [*mimēisthai*] [the apostolic circle])" (3:7). Paul and his associates offered themselves as a "mirror" (τύπον τύπον) for the members of the body there to emulate (3:9).¹ In this context, the industry of the apostolic circle (3:8) is what provides the example for the Thessalonians to follow (3:9b).

(2) Mediate Modeling

First Tim 4:12-16 is an exceedingly important passage regarding ministerial exemplification. It equals 2 Tim 4:2 in importance as a qualification for Christian ministry. In fact, it stresses that in importance patterning the Word is a necessary corollary to preaching it, with the former usually preceding the latter.

Furthermore, the whole epistle places a very high priority on character and conduct. The man of God is always accountable in areas of personal and professional responsibility. He cannot just be faithful in teaching the truth; he must live the truth. Heralding God's gospel is a highly motivating and weighty call, yet the human instrument must possess certain qualities of integrity (e.g., 1 Tim 3:7). As with Paul (e.g., 1:12-17), he must accept both responsibilities with a profound sense of humility and in utter dependence upon the one who commissions. Indeed, by the time 1 Timothy closes (e.g., 6:11-16), the young man of God certainly understood the two primary obligations of spiritual leadership.

But chapter 4 is especially cogent. Vv. 7b-8 set the tone for vv. 12-16. Paul's command to Timothy to "work out" strenuously (γυμνάζω, *gymnazō*, "I exercise") to develop spiritual muscle for godliness (v. 7b). For all intents and purposes, the many imperatives in vv. 12 ff. supply the why's and the where's of the exhortation to holiness. In 1 Tim 4:12-16, three waves of commands patterning Timothy with his two general responsibilities. The first wave crashes with an overwhelming reminder of his personal responsibility (i.e., v. 12). As it begins to subside, commands relating to his professional accountability drench him (i.e., vv. 13-16). For most conservative evangelicals, the professional requirements (e.g., v. 13) are an authoritative given. The same applies concerning personal requirements; however, the application of these is far more sensitive personally. The intimidation factor at times seems to be overwhelming. For that reason, the

of this brief discussion will concentrate on the modeling requirements.

The first command of v. 12 does not directly address the man of God; it addresses those he leads. Indirectly it implies that he himself must be irreproachable (cf. the first and general qualification of 3:2). The implication of v. 12a finds confirmation in v. 12b. His obligation is one of exemplifying himself to the members of the flock: he was to "be (or become) a type (or pattern or model) for the believers."¹ Moulton and Milligan (*Vocabulary* 645) cite an ethical parallel in Tim 4:12 in an inscription from the first century B.C. It speaks of being a model for "godliness" (βειά [*eusebeia*]), a noun used in 1 Tim 4:7b). Paul typifies the moral example in five areas: in the language (communications) of the man of God, in his general lifestyle, in his character (cf. v. 12b), in his conduct (cf. v. 12c), and in his faith (cf. v. 12d).¹ The word ἀναστροφή (*anastrophe*, "way of life, behavior") relates to cognates in Heb 13:7 (discussed below); 1 Pet 1:15, 17, 18; 3:1-2; 2 Pet 3:11. Here it connects with εὐσέβεια ("godliness"), i.e., holiness of life-style. This word-group was also ethically significant in Hellenistic Judaism (cf. Tobit 1:1; Macc 5:8; 6:23). in his ἀγάπη (*agape*, "love," i.e., that unselfish, extending, all-encompassing variety which exudes tenderness, compassion, tolerance, etc.), in his "faithfulness," better, "faithfulness, trustworthiness, reliability," the passive meaning of πίστις [*pistis*]), and in his personal purity. Without integrity of life, his pronouncements and preachings, his proclamations and indoctrinations (e.g., vv. 11, 13) are severely limited.

A second wave of commands comes in v. 15 to remind the man of God to concentrate on both his personal (i.e., v. 15a) and professional (i.e., v. 15b) responsibilities.¹ Two present imperatives, μέλειτα and ἔσθι σου, point to a continuing responsibility: "keep on caring for" these things and "be" in them. Robertson suggests that the latter of the latter is "give yourself wholly to them," and adds, "It is like our 'up to his ears' in work . . . sticking to his task" (A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the NT* [Nashville: Broadman, 1931] 4:58). Paul's goal is that his advancement might be clearly visible to "all." The concluding phrase of v. 15 stresses the importance of Timothy's modeling.¹ As Stahlin notes, Timothy's moral and ministerial advancement "is to be visible, for he is to show himself hereby as a *τύπος* for believers (v. 12). . . ." (G. Stahlin, "προκόπη, προκοπή," *TDNT* 6:714). His life was to exhibit significant "progress."¹ In secular Greek προκόπη (*prokope*, "progress") is a nautical term for "making headway in spite of blows," and was employed in an extended way, esp. among the Stoics. Philo picked up the ethical sense and tried to give it a theological orientation (cf. Stahlin, "προκόπη, προκοπή," 6:704, 706-7, 709-11). The verb form is used of "progress" (Luke 2:52). Therefore, v. 15 not only reiterates his patterning responsibility, but it also confirms that it is not necessary for ethical models to be absolutely perfect, but they must be growing in holiness.

Two imperatives in v. 16, Paul's third crashing wave, emphasize the two areas, "yourself" and "your teaching" (cf. vv. 12-14; cf. also Acts 20:38), but in a slightly different way. Putting person before ministry, Paul writes, "Pay attention" to yourself and to your teaching (v. 16). Calvin summarizes, "Teaching will be of little worth if there is not a corresponding uprightness and holiness of life."¹ John Calvin, *The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians and the Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (trans. by T. A. Small, in *Calvin's Commentaries*, ed. by D. W. and T. F. Torrance; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 248. Guthrie expresses it, "Moral and spiritual rectitude is an indispensable preliminary to doctrinal orthodoxy."¹ Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles* (The Tyndale NT Commentaries, ed. by R. V. G. Tasker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950) 19. Paul emphasizes even further Timothy's personal and ministerial responsibility with his closing injunction to "persist (or continue or persevere) in them."

The rationale for these commands is overwhelming: "because as you grow in doing *this* [singular pronoun referring to both duties], you will save both yourself and the ones who hear you." Almost unbelievably, personal example is side by side with the ministry of God's Word in a salvific context.¹ Calvin's theological comments are helpful here (*Timothy*, 248-49).

Titus 2 has the same message more briefly stated. Following instructive

about appointing elders (1:5-9) and combatting false teaching (e.g., 1:10-16; cf. 11) with healthy doctrine (e.g., 2:1, 15; 3:1, 8a), come directions for how Titus handle various groups: older men (2:2), older and then younger women (2:3-4), younger men (2:6), slaves (2:9-10), and the whole flock (3:1-8). A major message was the priority of good deeds (cf. 1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14).

Among the instructions to young men, probably Titus' age group, reminds Titus of his obligation to be a moral model. Preaching alone was not enough (2:6); he must also live before them (2:7). In other words, he must both exhort *and* exemplify. For the man of God, a pattern (i.e., [*typon*]) of good works is never optional (cf. Eph 2:10). It is essential to preaching and teaching.

*The "Third Generation"*¹ "Third generation" applies to the passing of the precedent from the "second generation" of Timothy and Titus to the permanent local church leaders (cf. 2 Tim 2:2).
Model of Church Leadership

The same thread permeates the Epistle to the Hebrews, from the superior model of Jesus Christ, through the faith's hall of fame (chap. 11), into imperatives about church leaders (chap. 13). Accountability of church leaders is the subject of 13:17, but 13:7 deals specifically with their modeling responsibility. The writer instructs the recipients, "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you." Consider¹ The participle *ἀναθεωροῦντες* (*anatheorountes*) is best taken as an imperative in force in light of its subordination to *μιμηθεῖτε* (*mimēsthe*). The outcome is to "follow their way of life and imitate their faith" (NIV). Examining the result of their lifestyle (i.e., from [*anastrophe*]) and emulating (present imperative of *mimēsthe*) their persevering faith are parallel efforts. Such concrete examples dovetail with the total thrust of the epistle, which is to "keep on keeping on."

Peter's corresponding message addresses the leaders of the church directly. He commands the elders, "Shepherd (or tend or feed) the flock of God which is among you" (5:2a; cf. John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28). This is the only imperative in the passage, but its obligatory force permeates all the qualifiers to follow (vv. 2b-3). Three contrasts highlight motives for spiritual leadership: spiritual leaders must not serve because of human constraints *but* because of divine commitments (v. 2b), must not minister for unjust profit *but* with spiritual zeal (v. 2c), must not be prideful dictators *but* as humble models (v. 3).¹ Cp. v. 3b with 1 Tim 4:12b. Cf. the discussion above, esp. in reference to the vocabulary of 1 Tim 4:12b. Goppelt aptly synthesizes the key passages as follows: "Along the same lines as in Paul, the exhortation in 1 Pt 5:3 admonishes those who represent the word to become *τύποι . . . τοῦ ποιμνίου*, 'examples to the flock.' The command just be recited; it can be attested only as one's own word which shapes one's own conduct. The office-bearer is thus admonished: 'Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conduct, in preaching, in conversation,' 1 Tim 4:12; cf. Tt 2:7: 'In all things shewing thyself a pattern (doing) of good works'" (Goppelt, "τύπων" 8:250). NT shepherds have the binding obligation of being an ethical model for the flock of God. The sheep in turn are to emulate their leaders' lives (cf. Heb 13:7). This requires genuine humility (1 Pet 5:5b-6).

The Model of the Church to the Church

All believers are to be examples for other believers to follow. For example, Paul mentions two instances of this. Paul asserts that when the Thessalonians received God's gospel, they did so in a societal setting analogous to that of the Judean churches, i.e., while being persecuted (2:14-16). Paul's words, "for as you have obeyed, so you have become imitators (*μιμηταὶ γενήθητε* [*mimetai egenēthete*]) of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea" (NASB), provided an incentive to the church to keep on persevering.

Besides being a reflection of the Judean churches (2:14), the Thessalonians' persecution modeled both the apostolic circle and the Lord Himself, and

turn became a pattern for believers throughout the regions of Macedonia and Achaia (1:6-7). Michaelis objects to any form of "conscious imitation,"¹ ¹Mic "mimhtw" 4:670. Some of his contextual comments are credible, but his controlling assumption modeling relates only to authority limits his conclusion about the verses by his presupposed mold (ibid.). but the subsequent verses not only document their persecution, but mention continuing evidence of their faithfulness (cf. 1:8-10). These exhibitions were a vital element in the pattern displayed before other believers.

Heb 6:12 speaks of modeling also. The exemplars here are all "who are inheriting the promises through faith and longsuffering." The writer urges recipients of this epistle to join their ranks by mimicking conduct.

Michaelis is correct when he says,

The admonition of 3 Jn. 11: *mī mimoy tō kakóna llá tōá gauōn* (*me mimou to kakō to agathon*, "do not emulate what is bad but what is good") is general, but it stands in close relation to what precedes and follows. Gaius must not be ensnared by the trephes who is denounced in v. 9f. He should follow the Demetrius who is praised in v. 12.¹ ¹Michaelis, "mimhtw" 4:666. [transliteration and translated added]

The Scripture never tells believers to imitate an abstraction. As here, the example is always concrete. This passage furnishes both negative and positive patterns.

The above discussion has shown that God's people should emulate not only other mature disciples, but also the men whom God has given to them as spiritual leaders (cf. Eph 4:11 ff.). In turn, they in accord with testimonies of the apostolic circle should strive to model Christ, who alone displays the perfect moral image of God. In the NT the vital link of ethical emulation represented in church leadership is particularly conspicuous. Consequently, rediscovering pastoral ministry according to God's Word requires that today's church leaders not only recognize and teach the priority of moral modeling, but accept its overwhelming challenge personally and, by His grace, live as examples before His sheep and a scrutinizing world ready to level the accusation of hypocrisy.

1 COR 13:11 REVISITED AN EXEGETICAL UPDATE

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About twenty years have passed since this author advanced the interpretation that τῆλειον (to teleion, "the complete," "the mature") in 1 Cor 13:10 referred to the mature body of Christ and that a stage of maturity in the growth of that body marked the termination of revelatory and sign gifts in the ancient church. With a fresh focus on 1 Cor 13:11, he now updates the discussion in light of various responses that have questioned the validity of that position. He elaborates on why the substantive cannot mean "the perfect," why it must mean "complete" or "mature," why the context requires such, and answers objections to the view.

* * * * *

A number of years ago I proposed an interpretation of 1 Cor 13:10 which assigned τῆλειον (*to teleion*) the meaning of "complete" or "mature" instead of the more frequently rendering of "perfect."¹ At least three developments show the subject needs a renewed look: (1) a misconstruing or confused statement of my view by others;² (2) a continuing claim that biblical exegesis yields no explicit indication of the termination of some spiritual gifts;³ and (3) a growing personal

¹Robert L. Thomas, "Tongues . . . Will Cease," *JETS* 17/2 (Spring 1974):85-89; idem, *Understanding Spiritual Gifts* (Chicago: Moody, 1978) 106-13, 199-204.

²E.g., see note 30.

³Wayne A. Grudem ("The New Testament Gift of Prophecy: A Response to My Friends" [unpublished paper presented to the Forty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in San Francisco, Nov. 21, 1992] 18) has called 1 Cor 13:10 an "immovable stumbling block" for the view that the gift of prophecy has ceased.

realization that explanations of the passage have overlooked the important contribution of 1 Cor 13:11 to the meaning of *to teleion*. A renewed discussion of the issue can probably do little to remedy whatever it is that causes (1) above, but perhaps a focused treatment of the exegetical nuances related to 1 Cor 13:11 and their impact on the meaning of *to teleion* in 13:10 will contribute to a recognition that (2) is wrong in light of the oversight named in (3).

Farnell has conveniently summarized the five main viewpoints regarding the meaning of *to teleion* in 1 Cor 13:10: (1) the death of a believer when ushered into Christ's presence, (2) the eternal state, (3) the completed NT canon, (4) Christ's second advent, and (5) the maturing of Christ's body through the course of the church age.⁴ Positions (2) and (4) assign the meaning "the perfect" to *to teleion* largely because of the neglect of important factors in 1 Cor 13:11. With respect for those who interpret differently, I offer the following as some of these factors.

Reasons Why to teleion Cannot Mean "the Perfect" in 13:10

The most common definitions of the English word "perfect" applied to 1 Cor 13:10 would probably include:

- (a) being entirely without fault or defect⁵
- (b) corresponding to an ideal standard or abstract concept
- (c) the soundness and the excellence of every part, element, or quality of a thing frequently as an unattainable or theoretical state.⁶

Either of these three or a combination of them is the usual notion the average person attaches to the word. All three are qualitative in nature, a characteristic that renders them unsatisfactory renderings of *to teleion*. Four reasons demonstrate this:

- (1) No other use of *teleios* in Paul can possibly mean "perfection"

⁴F. David Farnell, "When Will the Gift of Prophecy Cease?" *BSac* 150 (April-June 1993):191-93. In his defense of view (5), Farnell agrees with the position advocated in the present discussion.

⁵Grudem ("Response" 15) continually injects the qualitative notion as the meaning of *k mroyw* (13:10): "This . . . [is a statement] about the imperfect nature of our activity of prophesying" ("Response" 17) and "He states quite clearly that these imperfect gifts will last until the time of Christ's return" ("Response" 18). On the contrary, *k mroyw* speaks of the gifts' partial nature, not their imperfection in quality. Grudem is in conflict with himself at this point. In 1982 he wrote that the phrase refers to quantitative rather than qualitative imperfection (Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* [Washington: University Press, 1982] 148-49 n. 59). Now in speaking of the same phrase as referring to "the imperfect *nature*" [italics added] ("Response" 17; cf. also 17 n. 24), he unfortunately appears to have switched to a qualitative sense for the same phrase.

⁶*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* 872.

in the sense of the absence of all imperfection. In fact, the meaning of "perfection" in Greek philosophers that of a "perfect" man is absent from the NT.⁷ Utopian perfection was a philosophical notion, not a NT idea, for this word.⁸ Elsewhere in Paul the adjective is figurative and refers almost exclusively to a grown man (cf. 1 Cor 2:6; 14:20; Phil 3:15; Eph 4:13; Col 1:28; cf. also Heb 5:14).⁹ One other time, in Col 4:12, it means "mature" in the OT sense of wholeness and obedience to God's will, and picks up on his ambition for every man as stated in Col 1:28.¹⁰ So six out of the other seven times Paul uses the word, it means "mature." The remaining use is in Rom 12:1 where its meaning is "complete."¹¹

This pattern of usage establishes a strong probability that the word includes the sense of maturity in 1 Cor 13:10, especially since its other two uses in 1 Corinthians have that sense.

(2) In the immediate context of 1 Cor 13:8-13, a qualitative word is unsuitable in light of the apodosis of the sentence in 13:10. "Perfect" is not a suitable opposite to $\kappa \mu \rho \omicron \upsilon \omega$ [*ek merous*], "partial"). A better meaning would be "whole" or "complete" as antithetical to *ek merous*.¹²

(3) The terminology of 13:11 is most conclusive, however, because it is an analogy with the stages of human life (i.e., $\eta \rho \iota \omega \nu$ [*npios*, "child"] and $\eta \rho$ [*anr*, "child"]).

(a) This analogy directly impacts the meaning of *to teleion* in 13:10, because it sets up a *teleios/npios* antithesis in vv. 10-11 that is relative, not absolute, and therefore incompatible with the concept of perfection. The difference between childhood and adulthood is a matter of degree, not one of mutually exclusive differentiation.

(b) The *npios/anr* antithesis in v. 11 has the same

⁷Gerhard Dellling, "tlow, telv, k. t. l.," *TDNT*8:77.

⁸Ibid., 8:69-72.

⁹R. Schippers, "tlow," *NIDNTT*2:62.

¹⁰In Col 4:12 *teleioi* is "a term evidently chosen to counteract the gnostic aspiration to 'perfection' by their regimen and cult" (Ralph Martin, *Colossians and Philemon* [NCB; Grand Rapids, 1973] 134).

¹¹Grudem erroneously uses Matt 5:48 and Rom 12:2 to illustrate the meaning of "perfect" for *tleiow* ("Response" 14-15). "Complete" is a better English word for these two passages because the concept behind *tleiow* is the Hebrew $\lessdot{\mathbf{y}}$ or $\lessdot{\mathbf{z}}$, "wholeness," not the philosophical connotation of perfection in a qualitative or ultimate sense as the word "perfect" implies (Dellling, "tlow" 8:74, 76-77).

¹²Dellling, "tlow" 8:75.

contextual effect of ruling out the notion of an ideal state as denoted by the translation "perfect."

(4) The terminology of 13:12 requires an allusion to degrees of revelatory understanding, not perfection or freedom from imperfection. The verbs *blepomen* (*blepomen*, "I see") and *ginsk* (*ginsk*, "I know") correlate with the gifts of prophecy and knowledge and their limited insights compared with the complete understanding that will prevail in the future. This is quantitative, not qualitative, so *to teleion* must have the same quantitative connotation.

Hence both etymological and contextual considerations argue emphatically *against* the meaning "perfect" for *to teleion*.

Reasons Why to teleion Must Mean "Complete" or "Mature"

Corresponding to the reasons for not translating "the perfect" in 1 Cor 13:10 are four considerations that point toward the meaning "complete" or "mature."

(1) The idea of totality, wholeness, or completion controls the NT usage of *teleios*. In the present connection, totality took on an added dimension: "Yet in the main the feeling of antiquity . . . was that only an 'adult' can be a 'full' man; hence these senses can overlap in Paul."¹³ The thought behind the overlap of "complete" and "mature" in this word's usage is that in the minds of the ancients adulthood represented a degree of completeness that was not, relatively speaking, present during childhood. If ever a clear case for this "overlap" in meaning existed, 1 Cor 13:10 is that case. The background of *teleios* not only allows for the overlap; in the circumstances of the context, it also requires the dual concept of "complete-mature."¹⁴

¹³Delling, "tlow" 8:76. Oepke notes the concept behind childhood in ancient times: "Antiquity primarily sees in the child the element of immaturity or childishness" (Albrecht Oepke, "paw, paidon, k. t. l.," *TDNT* 5:642). The opposite of this state is maturity. *Npiow* was used for small children between the ages of 1 and 10 (Georg Bertram, "npiow, nhpizv," *TDNT* 4:912). The goal of human development was *tleiow nr*. As the adult sets aside the nature of a child, so the Christian with the coming of *t teleion* sets aside the *gnsiw* that is essential during the stage of the *npiow* (ibid., 919). *1Anr* indicates an adult man as distinct from a boy (Albrecht Oepke, "nr, ndrjomai," *TDNT* 1:361, 363).

¹⁴Robert L. Reymond, *What about Continuing Revelations and Miracles in the Presbyterian Church Today* (n.p.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977) 31-36, and Walter J. Chantry, *Signs of the Apostles, Observations on Pentecostalism Old and New* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1976) 50-54, capture the overlapping meaning of *teleios*, but weaken their

(2) Another reason for this meaning is the consistent sense of the *teleios/nepios* antithesis in Paul, the NT, and all Greek literature. Whenever in the proximity of *nepios*, as it is in 1 Cor 13:10-11, *teleios* always carries the connotation of adulthood versus childhood (1 Cor 2:6 and 3:1; 14:20; Eph 3:13-14; cf. Heb. 5:13-14).¹⁵ In 1 Cor 2:6 Paul speaks of imparting wisdom to *tois teleiois* (*tois teleiois*, "the mature"), but he encounters an obstacle because, according to 1 Cor 3:1, his readers are *nepiois* ("infants"). In 1 Cor 14:20 his command to the Corinthians is to be children (*nepizete* [*nepiazete*]) in malice, but adults (*teleioi* [*teleioi*]) in understanding. In Eph 4:13-14, his goal is for all members of Christ's body to attain to the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, i.e., to a *teleios anr* (*teleios anr*, "mature man"), so that they be no longer *nepioi* (*nepioi*, "children"). The writer of Hebrews echoes this antithesis in 5:13-14 when he compares elementary teaching to milk that is suitable for a *nepios* ("child" or "infant") with solid food that is suitable for *teleion* ("the mature").

(3) First Corinthians 12-14 has many parallels with Eph 4:1-16, a passage that teaches the gradual maturing of the church through the present age. This correspondence is all the more instructive in light of Paul's presence in Ephesus while writing 1 Corinthians. He was probably teaching the Ephesian church the same principles he penned in the Corinthian letter. Then about five years later, as he wrote back to the Ephesian church, he found it necessary to re-emphasize and develop further the same truths about growth in the body of Christ that he had instructed them about while present. The similarities between the two contexts include the following:

- (a) All seven unifying influences listed in Eph 4:4-6 are present in 1 Cor 12-14 (1 Cor. 12:4-6, 13; 13:13; 14:22). Particularly noticeable are one body, one Spirit, one Lord,

position by a refusal to apply 13:12 to the situation following the parousia. John R. McRay, "To *Teleion* in I Corinthians 13:10" *RestQ* 14 (1971) 172-174, also notes the twin meanings of the term, but concludes that 1 Corinthians 12-14 must be explained on the basis of the entire argument of Ephesians, particularly the Jewish-Gentile issue that is prominent in that book (174-83). Raymond and Chantry refer v. 12 to the completion of the NT canon, but McRay refers it to the final stages of Paul's work among the Gentiles (183). Both positions are different from that defended in the present study.

¹⁵Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914) 297-98; Thomas Charles Edwards, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1885) 349.

- one baptism, and one God and Father of all.
- (b) Emphasis on unity in the body (1 Cor 12:4-6, 11-13, 24-26; Eph 4:3, 13) along with the diversity of the body's members (1 Cor 12:14-26; Eph 4:11, 16) pervades each passage.
 - (c) The noun *mrow* (*meros*, "part") in both passages depicts individual members of Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph 4:16).
 - (d) Corporateness of the body (1 Cor. 12:27a; Eph 4:15-16) combines with an individualistic focus (1 Cor. 12:27b; Eph 4:4, 7, 16) as a ruling consideration in both places.
 - (e) The general subject under discussion in Ephesians (Eph 4:7, 11) is spiritual gifts as it is in 1 Corinthians 12-14.
 - (f) The figure representing the church in both passages is the human body, as it is always when Paul talks about spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 4:4, 15-16; cf. Rom 12:3-8).
 - (g) Edification of the body of Christ is the stated objective in both sections (1 Cor 14:12, 26; Eph 4:12, 16).
 - (h) Growth from childhood to adulthood is portrayed in Eph 4:13-14 as it is in 1 Cor 13:11.
 - (i) The *npiow*/*teleios anr* antithesis is found in Ephesians as it is in 1 Cor 13:10-11 (Eph 4:13-14).¹⁶
 - (j) Love is the overarching quality in the growth process in both passages (1 Cor 13:1-13; Eph 4:15-16).

Since Eph 4:1-16 offers a distinct picture of a gradually developing and maturing body of Christ,¹⁷ the probability is strong that Paul intends to convey the same in 1 Cor 13:11. Though he may not say explicitly "the complete or mature body" (i.e., the complete body with reference to revelatory activity) in 1 Cor 13:10, he had doubtless some

¹⁶"In Eph. 4:13 . . . the *nr tliow* is the adult . . . in contrast to the *npiow* of v. 14" (Gerhard Dellling, "*plrhw*, *plhrv k. t. l.*," *TDNT*6:302).

¹⁷Du Plessis notes that *tleiow* in Ephesians 4:13 is characterized in three ways: (1) Growth is involved. A body-building process or a dynamic development transpires throughout the period of the church's existence. (2) The dynamic is corporate in nature. Though composed of many members, the body of Christ grows as a unit. (3) Since the image of *tleiow* is in the character of an exhortation, it is maturity progressively realized in the present state of the church's existence (Paul Johannes Du Plessis, *TELEIOS, the Idea of Perfection in the N. T.* [Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1956] 188-93).

time during his extended 18-month residence in Corinth taught them verbally (as he did the Ephesian church) regarding this analogy so that it was perfectly clear to them what he was talking about. It remains for the interpreter to clarify what he meant by resorting to another of his writings that is quite relevant to 1 Corinthians.

(4) The illustration of 13:11 is hardly suitable to refer to the difference between the present and a period after the parousia.¹⁸ So the analogy of v. 11 must be supplying data supplemental to what is in v. 12.

- (a) To say that the parousia is in view in v. 11 is to see Paul as using his own adult status to illustrate a perfection that follows the parousia. Yet in Phil 3:12, he views himself as incomplete in his current state as an adult (*tetelevmai* [*teteleimai*, "I am brought to completeness"] a pf. tense; cf. *ggonā* [*gegona*], 1 Cor 13:11, which has a present force: "now that I am a man"¹⁹). In fact, in the very next verse, 1 Cor 13:12, he disclaims such a completed state by noting that currently he is among those whose present state is that of conspicuous limitations.²⁰ This state of incompleteness in Paul as an adult negates any possibility that his adulthood of v. 11 is intended to correspond to the state of completion in v. 12. It is also contrary to Pauline Christian humility as reflected elsewhere in the apostle's writings that he would choose such an illustration (e.g., 1 Cor 15:9; Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:15).
- (b) The nature of the transition from childhood to adulthood is not sudden as will be the change at the parousia. It is a gradual process.²¹ Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood.
- (c) By nature the process described by *katrghka* (*katrgka*, "I render inoperative") in 13:11 indicates an altered condition that continues. It is a dramatic perfect.²² It indicates "a change of state which still continues; the emancipation

¹⁸Robertson & Plummer, *1 Corinthians* 297.

¹⁹A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 900, 971.

²⁰Thomas, "Tongues . . . Will Cease" 85. In fact, in v. 12 he refers to himself personally (i.e., in the singular) as currently having only partial knowledge (*ginskv*).

²¹Farnell, "When . . . Cease?" 193.

²²Cf. Robertson, *Grammar* 896.

from childish things took place as a matter of course, . . . and it continues."²³ If Christ did not return before a permanent body of NT revelation was finished, a degree of completion would arrive that would render unnecessary a continuation of the revelatory process involving the revelatory gifts.

- (d) The difference between childhood and manhood is a very feeble illustration of the vast difference between the Christian's present state and that which will exist after the parousia.²⁴

Reasons Why 13:8-13 Requires the "Completion" "Maturity" Concept

(1) The purpose of the paragraph of 1 Cor 13:8-13 is to establish the eternity of love. This is proven by the beginning ("love never fails," v. 8) and end ("the greatest of these is love," v. 13) of the paragraph.

(2) Between these two points the writer shows the eternity of love by two sets of contrasts: (a) one between the duration of revelatory gifts that may or may not extend until Christ's return (13:10-11) and the triad of faith, hope, and love that will definitely extend to the time of Christ's return (13:13a) and (b) one between the triad of faith, hope, and love that continue until Christ's return (13:13a) and love alone that will remain after Christ's return (13:13b).

(3) These two sets of contrasts emphasize the secondary character of the revelatory and confirmatory gifts from a temporal standpoint, and the supreme importance and lasting character of love because of its eternity. Love lasts longer than these gifts; it even lasts longer than faith and hope with which it is so closely associated until Christ's second advent.

Objections to the Completion-Maturity Explanation

The objections to this position seem to be about six in number, though no extensive response to the view has yet appeared:²⁵

²³Robertson & Plummer, *1 Corinthians* 298; cf. Frederic L. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians* (2 vols., Rev. A. Cusin, trans.; 1957 rpt., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1886) 252.

²⁴Robertson & Plummer, *1 Corinthians* 297.

²⁵The relevant quotations of Wayne Grudem and Gordon Fee from which these objections are lifted include the following: (1) "This view fails to recognize that vs. 11, which speaks of Paul in the first person and in the past, is merely an illustration, and our understanding of what

(1) *Objection:* V. 11 is merely an illustration or an analogy and its meaning must be explained in light of the meaning of v. 12, which refers to Christ's second coming.²⁶

Response: If v. 11 says something different from v. 12, it must be allowed to have its distinctive contribution. Paul was not just padding his discussion when he inserted v. 11. To interpret v. 11 in light of the meaning of v. 12, is to rob this verse of its distinctive contribution, thereby robbing Scripture of an aspect of its meaning.

(2) *Objection:* V. 12 has *te* (*tote*, "then") to link it with *tan* (*hotan*, "when") of v. 10.²⁷ V. 11 has no such temporal indicator.

Response: V. 11 *does* have temporal indicators, i.e., the two occurrences of *te* (*hote*, "when"). Such a temporal indicator picks up the *hotan* of v. 10 even more specifically than the *tote* of v. 12, which does not limit the temporal reference of the *hotan* in v. 10, but is antithetic to the two occurrences of *arti* in v. 12.

(3) *Objection:* The idea of the maturity of the body of Christ is

it illustrates must conform to vs. 12, which speaks of believers generally ('we') and in the future ('shall know'). And only vs. 12 has *tote* which links it clearly to the *hotan* in vs. 10. Vs. 11 illustrates not the maturity of the church (an idea which is nowhere discussed in this context) but the fact that something complete or perfect replaces something incomplete or imperfect" (Grudem, *1 Corinthians* 215 n. 60). "Whereas Christ's return is mentioned clearly in 1 Corinthians 13:12, no verse in this section mentions anything about the completion of Scripture . . . or the 'maturity' of the church (whatever that means 'is the church really mature even today?'). All of these suggestions [including the one about 'maturity'] bring in new elements not found in the context to replace one element 'Christ's return' which clearly is right there in the context already" (Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* [Weschester, IL: Crossway, 1988] 238-39).

(2) "The precise reference of the word [*teleios*] must be determined by the individual context, and there, as we have seen, the context indicates that 'when the perfect comes' refers to the time of Christ's return" (Grudem, *New Testament* 236).

(3) "Such views [i.e., those that see 'when the perfect comes' as some time before Christ returns] all seem to break down at 1 Corinthians 13:12, where Paul implies that believers will see God 'face to face' 'when the perfect is come'" (Grudem, *New Testament* 238).

(4) "This view has nothing to commend it except the analogy of v. 11, which is a misguided emphasis at best" (Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987] 645 n. 23).

(5) "Even though Paul says 'we know in part,' the emphasis is not on the immaturity of the Corinthians, but on the relative nature of the gifts" (Fee, *1 Corinthians* 645 n. 24).

²⁶Grudem, *1 Corinthians* 215 n. 60; Fee, *1 Corinthians* 654 nn. 23, 25.

²⁷Ibid.; cf. also Grudem, "Response" 15.

nowhere present in the context.²⁸

Response: Maturity *is* in the context, in 13:11. See also 14:20 where individual maturity is in view. In 1 Cor 2:6 and 3:1 individual maturity is also in focus. It is not a matter of maturity's not being in the context; it is rather a question of the maturity of what, individuals or the corporate body? V. 11 most naturally refers to corporate maturity because of the singular number used in the analogy of v. 11 compared to the plurals in vv. 9, 12. Paul has a proclivity for going back and forth between talking about the corporate aspect of the body of Christ and the individual members of that body. He does the same in the broader context here (12:12, 27; cf. Eph 4:13-14).²⁹ The presence of maturity in the context forces a choice between individual and corporate maturity. The nature of the discussion and the added input from Eph 4:1-16 tips the scale in favor of corporate maturity.

The criticism of this maturity-view, which notes that the context does not speak about the immaturity of individual believers,³⁰ rests on a misunderstanding of the view. The view looks at the immaturity of the total body during its earlier years, not explicitly that of individuals. It was the temporary nature of these gifts that marked the infancy of the body of Christ, not of single members of that body.

Maturity is also implied in the emphasis on edification of the body in 1 Cor 14:12, 26 (cf. 12:7). Edification equates with building up, which is equivalent to growth the same as maturing according to Eph 4:13-16. So maturity shows itself contextually in yet another way: through the emphasis on edification that is found in 1 Corinthians 12-14. It *is* a factor in the passage under study.

(4) *Objection:* The context says nothing about the completion of

²⁸Grudem, *New Testament* 238-39; Fee, *1 Corinthians* 645; cf. also Grudem, "Response" 14.

²⁹1 Cor 12:12: "For just as the body is *one* and has *many members*, and *all the members* of the body though they are *many* are *one* body, so also is Christ." 1 Cor 12:27: "Now you are [such a thing as the] *body* [an anarthrous collective term] of Christ and *members individually*." Eph. 4:13-14: "until *we all* attain to the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature *man*, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that *we* may be no longer children, tossed about and carried around by every wind of doctrine through the trickery of men in craftiness to the deceit of error. . . ." [italics added]

³⁰Fee, *1 Corinthians* 644-55, whose criticism of the mature-body view is off-target when he says that the contrast between immaturity and maturity "will not do since the contrast has to do with the *gifts*' being 'partial,' not with the believers themselves."

Scripture.³¹

Response: Here is another superficial objection. Completion *is* in the context. Note the four occurrences of *ek merous* that require an opposite "completion": 13:9 (twice), 13:10, and 13:12. It is not a matter of completion's not being in the context; it is rather a question of the completion of what. The completion spoken of in v. 12 is unobscured cognitive sight to replace the limited prophetic revelations and unlimited knowledge to replace revelations through the gift of knowledge. V. 12 does not speak of seeing God face to face,³² which would be more of a qualitative condition that is inappropriate to this context. This would break the continuity of the earlier part of the paragraph where revelatory gifts are in view. V. 12 must refer to unlimited prophetic sight and knowledge. What is *not* in this context is a contrast between perfection and imperfection. It is not talking about a qualitative set of conditions.

(5) *Objection:* The idea of completion or maturity replaces the reference to Christ's return that is clearly in the context.³³

Response: The maturity concept does not "replace" Christ's return; it supplements it. It adds to it another possible eventuality. Uncertain as he was about the time of Christ's return, Paul left open the possibility that before Christ's return the body might reach the requisite stage of maturity where the revelatory and sign gifts were unnecessary (13:11). But he also indicated the possibility of Christ's advent before the church reached that stage (13:12).

(6) *Objection:* It is a misguided emphasis to focus on v. 11 to explain the meaning of *to teleion*. It is like letting the tail wag the dog to allow an analogy to dictate the meaning of the argument as a whole and the plain statement of v. 12b.³⁴

Response: The completion-maturity explanation does not focus on v. 11 alone, but it does give the verse its deserved place as part of the explanation.

An unwillingness to let 13:11 have its natural sense leads inevitably to viewing the analogy to human development as ambiguous.³⁵ It is obviously going to appear ambiguous if it does not say

³¹Grudem, *New Testament* 238-39.

³²Contra Grudem, *New Testament* 238.

³³Grudem, *New Testament* 236, 238.

³⁴Ibid.; Fee, *1 Corinthians* 645 nn. 23, 25.

³⁵E.g., "the ambiguity of the first analogy [childhood and adulthood]," Fee, *1 Corinthians*

what the interpreter wants it to say. By allowing v. 11 to inject the element of maturity into the discussion, one has not allowed the analogy to have precedence over the argument as a whole. He has rather taken into account an indispensable ingredient of the argument. Just as it would be wrong to let the analogy of 13:11 exclude the reference to the second coming in 13:12, it is also wrong to let the reference to the second coming exclude the graphic analogy that expresses another possibility regarding the cessation of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge. The verse cannot be treated as excess baggage that gets in the way of a preconceived interpretation.

So far, the maturity-completion view stands without one unanswerable objection because the proposed weaknesses of the view rest on misunderstanding or have adequate responses.

Paul and the Future of Prophecy, Tongues, and Knowledge

Paul knew of an earlier period when God spoke directly to His prophets, a period that had come to an end with the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, being followed by the 400 silent years (cf. Matt 23:35, 37; Heb 1:1-2). He also knew that the close of the OT canon coincided with the cessation of OT prophecy (e.g., Luke 24:44) long before the first advent of Christ.³⁶ He was conscious that he was now in the midst of a new period during which God was speaking directly to His apostles and prophets, resulting in inspired utterances that in part were taking their place alongside the OT canon as inspired Scripture (cf. 1 Cor 14:37; 1 Thess 5:26; 2 Pet 3:15-16). One possibility he foresaw was that this period of prophecy could come to its conclusion before the second advent of Christ just as OT prophecy had come to its conclusion 400 years before the first advent of Christ. Such a cessation would be like the gradual development from childhood to manhood. When the church reached an appointed stage, it would no longer need revelatory and sign gifts. It would expectedly come to a close with the completion of a new canon of an unknown number of writings that resulted from NT prophecy, to serve as a companion to the OT canon. Because of Paul's strong anticipation of Christ's imminent coming, this was a secondary expectation, however, and was added in v. 11 according to the mode of customary Pauline digression.

Paul also knew the possibility that Christ's second coming could be very soon, even within his own lifetime (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:15-17). Had this happened, the period of NT prophecy would have halted abruptly as the members of the body of Christ were transformed immediately into the image of Christ (cf. 1 John 3:2). This would automatically culminate a new completed body of Scripture to serve future generations, because the body of Christ would no longer be on earth to receive more revelation. This principal expectation is reflected by the *gar* that connects 13:12 with 13:10.³⁷

The apostle did not know which of these would occur first, a stage of relative completeness marking adulthood in comparison to childhood or a stage of absolute completeness that will characterize

³⁶Cf. Robert L. Thomas, "The Spiritual Gift of Prophecy in Rev 22:18," *JETS* 32/2 (June 1989):215.

³⁷C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1968) 306.

those in the immediate presence of Christ. So through inspiration of the Spirit he portrayed his uncertainty by choosing terminology and illustrative material that were compatible with either possibility. He knew that the partial would be replaced by either the mature or the complete, and perhaps by first one and then the other.

The best he could do to emphasize the eternity of love was a double contrast:³⁸ (1) a contrast between revelatory and sign gifts that may or may not characterize the entire church age on the one hand, and on the other, the qualities of faith, hope, and love that would definitely characterize the entire period; and (2) a contrast between the triad faith, hope, and love that continue to the parousia on the one hand, and on the other, love alone that will survive and continue following the parousia.

It is interesting to compare the ways Paul states the disappearance of faith and hope at the parousia. In 2 Cor 5:6-8, faith is juxtaposed with sight, and one is associated with being absent from the Lord and the other with being present with the Lord. Faith will be replaced by sight when Christ returns. According to Rom 8:24-25 the Christian awaits what he hopes for, but once it arrives, hope has no further place. When Christ the believer's hope appears, hope will have no further function.

The disappearance of the revelatory gifts is described in terms that are very different. "They will be rendered inoperative" (*Katagh-usetai* [*Katērgthsetai*], vv. 8 [twice], 10) in the same way as adult maturation has rendered inoperative and keeps on rendering inoperative (perfect tense, *katrghka* [*katrgka*]) the characteristics of childhood (v. 11). This is hardly an exclusive reference to the parousia as is the case with faith and hope. Prophetic sight and knowledge will be infinitely increased at that time so that they are no longer partial. This will be the prevailing state. If the revelatory gifts were unquestionably to extend to the parousia, no rendering inoperative of those gifts is appropriate; they would simply be replaced by universal knowledge for all.

Regardless of what the future might hold, Paul was confident of one thing: "love never fails . . . and is the greatest of these." It will stand the test of time and eternity.

This overarching "fruit of the Spirit" is the supreme quality, for which sensible Christians are very thankful. They may differ in their

³⁸Grudem's proposed single contrast—"when Christ returns, prophesy will cease" ("Response" 18) is too simplistic to account for all the exegetical data of the passage.

interpretations of this or that passage, but they have the privilege of continuing to love one another, no matter what. I am grateful for this opportunity of once again voicing in love what I deem to be the truth about a very important text of the NT: *to teleion* in 1 Cor 13:10 refers to maturity in the body of Christ, and consequently furnishes a very good exegetical basis for concluding that revelatory and sign gifts granted to the body of Christ ceased functioning in early church history.

NT COMMENTARIES FOR BIBLE EXPOSITORS, 1987-92¹

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The following is a continuation of the annotated bibliography begun in the Spring 1993 number of The Master's Seminary Journal. This listing treats NT books in much the same way as the earlier one dealt with the OT. A sample ranking of commentaries in different categories closes the article.

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NT COMMENTARY SETS

¹Editor's note: As in the Spring 1993 issue of *The Master's Seminary Journal* which treated works on the OT, the volumes and annotations in this article have been selected from a larger annotated bibliography compiled by Professor Rosscup. Recently revised, updated, and enlarged (1993 revision of a 1983 ed.), this larger work *Commentaries for Biblical Expositors* includes approximately 1,300 individual commentaries or sets of commentaries with annotations on all sixty-six books of the Bible, the volumes deemed to be the most helpful for expositors and teachers of the Word based on the compiler's thirty-five years of seminary involvement and teaching. The unabridged bibliography is available through Grace Book Shack at the same address as *The Master's Seminary Journal*. This article has selected works from the last five years, 1987-92, and pertaining to the NT only. The listings below are not exhaustive, because in some cases where a set of commentaries is discussed in the early section, individual works in that set are omitted in dealing with individual commentaries.

Paul Enns, ed. *Moody Gospel Commentary*. Chicago: Moody, 1992`

This very readable evangelical series purposes to provide help to expositors and will cover the four gospels. J. Carl Laney's 407-page volume on John is the first to appear. Other volumes will follow. Enns and Laney are premillennial and dispensational.

Arno C. Gaebelin. *Gaebelin's Concise Commentary on the New Testament*. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

This is a one-volume revision of the NT portion of the multivolume set *The Annotated Bible* written by one of America's most popular Bible teachers during the early twentieth century. It incorporates diligent explanation and frequent application to help pastors and lay readers. It resembles the general works of H. A. Ironside.

New American Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1990` .

This is a replacement of the older *American Commentary on the New Testament*, which included the outstanding work by John Broadus on Matthew. All *NAC* authors "affirm the divine inspiration, inerrancy, complete truthfulness, and full authority of the Bible" (Editor's Preface). Craig Blomberg's commentary on Matthew is a very good survey, marked by careful study, wide acquaintance with literature, and perceptive handling of many problems. John Polhill's work on Acts is also quite good. Some volumes, as the one on the Pastorals, are surveys that make good contributions at times, but do not come up to the quality of Matthew and Acts.

New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989` .

Such well-known evangelical scholars as Robert Mounce (Matt), F. F. Bruce (Phil), Gordon Fee (1 Tim/Tit), and Peter Davids (Jas) are contributors to this series. Much of the work by these high-ranking scholars rests on well-studied detail and sound hermeneutics. The series began in the early 1980's with Harper and Row as *The Good News Commentary* and using the GNB translation, but Hendrickson picked it up in the late 1980's and changed to the NIV.

Lloyd J. Ogilvie, gen. ed. *The Communicator's Commentary (NT)*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982` 91.

This is a twelve-volume set by twelve expositors noted for the spiritual refreshment and insight they impart in their preaching: Myron S. Augsburger (Matt), David McKenna (Mark), Bruce Larson (Luke), Roger Fredrikson (John), Lloyd Ogilvie (Acts), D. Stuart Briscoe (Rom), Kenneth Chafin (1-2 Cor), Maxie Dunham (Gal/Phile),

Gary Demarest (1 Thess`Tit), Louis Evans, Jr. (Heb), Paul Cedar (Jas Jude), and Earl Palmer (Rev). Basing their remarks on the NKJV, the contributors combine scholarly interpretations, illustrations leading to application, and book outlines. The last feature appears in frequent bold-faced headings for smaller sections of text. The following specific selected strengths and weaknesses represent the quality of the work: (1) Many times the sweeping comments on main emphases are good and well illustrated, but other times rest on debatable interpretations. An example of a disputed meaning is in Matt 19:9 when Augsburgers adopts Schweizer's meaning for *pornea* (*porneia*, "fornication"): "continual infidelity rather than a single act of adultery." (2) Another shortcoming is failure to explain how a point is consistent with another well-known truth. For example, how is a person's paying all to secure the pearl (Matt 13:46) in harmony with God's unconditional gift of eternal blessing? An explicit harmonization of such would be helpful. (3) Briscoe's work on Romans is very well-written and illustrated. His following of the explanations of Rom 2:7 by Cranfield and Ksemann is refreshing. His interpretation shuns the hypothetical route in favor of explaining the words as actual, lived-by-grace compliance consistent with the provisions of grace apart from human merit in Rom 3:28. Yet his treatment of 2:11-15 leaves many unanswered questions, as it does in 3:27-31 where his illustration is good, but the explanation is shallow. He does fairly well on 5:12 ff.; 6:6; and 7:14 ff., however. (4) The commentaries on John's Epistles and Revelation are very often so general that they impart little understanding of the text (e.g., 1 John 5:16; Rev 2:10-11; 7:1-8; 9:1-11). The bibliography for Revelation is particularly weak in solid interpretive works.

The best feature of this twelve-volume set is the refreshing and suggestive illustrations it furnishes for preachers. Verse-by-verse interpretation is quite good in some places, but weak or non-existent in others.

Pillars Commentary Series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988` .

This is a substantial continuing project with three volumes complete so far: Leon Morris (Rom, 1988), D. A. Carson (John, 1991), and P. E. Hughes (Rev, 1990). The contributions of Morris and Carson are very helpful to expositors in their clarification of principal passages in fairly adequate detail and with readability. Hughes follows an amillennial understanding of Revelation. "Pillars" is a name for the set sometimes used because the dust jacket has broad lines resembling

pillars on it.

Ritchie New Testament Commentary Series. 10 vols.; Kilmarnock, Scotland: John Ritchie, or Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1988` .

These are commentaries for laypersons done with a firm evangelical conviction of inerrancy and a dispensational view of Scripture. The discussions often lack references to other relevant helpful literature.

Warren Wiersbe. *The Bible Exposition Commentary.* 2 vols.; Wheaton: Victor, 1990.

This author is one of America's most appreciated and staunchly evangelical Bible-conference teachers. He is noted for his diligent refreshing expositions. His twenty-three earlier books in the "Be" series comprise these two volumes. He appeals to lay people particularly in the way he crystallizes sections, deals with some of the verses, handles certain problems and backgrounds, and applies principles. He is premillennial.

COMMENTARIES ON INDIVIDUAL NT BOOKS

Matthew

D. Frederick Bruner. *The Christbook: Matthew.* 2 vols. in 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987^1990.

This effort to teach Matthew doctrinally is too wordy. Bruner sees a doctrinal emphasis in each chapter: chap. 1, God with us; chap. 2, man (magi, human nature under the power of sin); chap. 3, repentance; etc. He assumes Markan priority (xvii), and says that Mark is Luther, Matthew is Calvin or Thomas, Luke is Wesley or Xavier or Chrysostom, and John is Augustine or Barth (p. xvii), parallels that many find dubious. His apparent liberal orientation appears in his understanding that Matthew erred in having only thirteen names in the third part of his genealogy (p. 15) and that Jesus as a child made mistakes (p. 15). His excessive detail at times is not relevant to Matthew, but he does sometimes help, for example, in his sections "The Roman Catholic position on Peter" and "The Reformation Position on Peter" in connection with 16:18. He sees a posttribulational rapture of the church in 24:40-41 (p. 882). He allows sexual infidelity as a ground for divorce in 19:9.

Donald A. Carson. *When Jesus Confronts the World: An Exposition of*

Matthew 8-10. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 154 pp.

Sermons at Edon Baptist Church, Cambridge, England, are sources of six chapters on Jesus' authority, authenticity, mission, trustworthiness, compassion, and decisiveness. The book has much help for expositors and also applies some valid principles to life today.

W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *The Gospel According to Matthew*. 3 vols., ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988` .

The first two volumes are complete and cover through Matthew 18, with a third volume yet to appear. This replaces the single-volume work by W. C. Allen (1912) in the ICC series. The volumes are very expensive, but contain an immense amount of information. It is very liberal, but informs evangelicals of differing views (e.g., eight views on the structure of 1:2-17, eight views on the Son of Man's coming in 16:28), arguments (e.g., nine reasons Mary's pregnancy is traced to the Holy Spirit [pp. 201-2]), and sources (e.g., the use of Hos 11:1 in Matt. 2:15 [p. 263]). The 26-page general bibliography has mostly liberal works, ignoring the work of William Hendriksen, but including that of evangelical R. H. Mounce. It has a 148-page introduction. The authors argue that the Jewish flavor and use of the OT point to a Jewish author (pp. 33, 58). They see a "massive unity" in the overall structure, but a "structurally mixed" situation that does not yield a clear outline (p. 72). They advocate the priority of Mark (p. 73) and sum up the most important of Allen's conclusions (e.g., p. 73). Helpful features include discussions of semitisms, triads, repetition, headings, and conclusions and different kinds of tables. They see a redactional source for many of the statements in the gospel. They date Matthew between 80 and 95 (p. 138) and give Antioch as the place of origin (pp. 146-47). This ranks at the top of technical works because of its exegetical detail.

John MacArthur, Jr. *Matthew*. 4 vols., MacArthur New Testament Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1985`90.

This is a conservative, premillennial, and very readable exposition that often deals in some detail with problem verses and elaborates on vital lessons of Jesus' teachings. The author often explains customs and gives differing viewpoints and supporting reasons. In Matthew 13, he takes only the fourth soil to represent genuinely saved people and understands the leaven in a good sense. In Matthew 24, the one taken is removed in judgment and the one left is preserved on earth safely to enter the earthly kingdom promised in

the OT.

Herman N. Ridderbos. *Matthew*. Bible Students Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. 556 pp.

This work is from the famous Dutch series (e.g., Aalders on Genesis, etc.) originally published in 1950-51. It provides expositors with much help with its competent interpretations and definitions and defenses of varying viewpoints. Ridderbos is amillennial and does not deal with critical issues as much as other scholars. Because of its earlier publication, it does not reflect awareness of works on Matthew since the 1940's.

Haddon W. Robinson. *What Jesus Said about Successful Living: Principles from the Sermon on the Mount for Today*. Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1989. 298 pp.

The author is an outstanding preacher, a former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary and president at Denver Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary and now a distinguished professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The book is popularly written and devotionally enriching and is a resource for sermon preparation and life application. Like Don Carson, D. M. Lloyd-Jones, and John R. W. Stott, Robinson develops the meaning for today in graphic style.

Mark

R. A. Guelich. *Mark 1:18:26*. Word Biblical Commentary, 1st of 2 vols.; Dallas: Word, 1989.

This is a much-praised moderately conservative work, though some would question that it is conservative. It features expertise on linguistic details, varying viewpoints with their supporting arguments, and citations of modern scholarly sources. It will provide assistance for scholars and pastors who grapple with interpretive issues.

R. Kent Hughes. *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*. 2 vols., Preaching the Word Commentary; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News Publishers, 1989.

Hughes is a good expositor who pastors Wheaton College Church and has completed several commentaries in the Preaching the Word series (e.g., Joshua). This work is a broad flowing study that can help in sermon preparation and stimulate spiritual enrichment in day-by-day lay reading. The author is conservative and premillennial, and

draws illustrative material from many sources.

W. D. Spencer and A. B. Spencer. *The Prayer Life of Jesus: Shout of Agony, Revelation of Love, a Commentary*. New York: University Press, 1990. 296 pp.

The authors teachers at Gordon-Conwell Seminary have prepared a comprehensive treatment of Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4, Jesus' parables on prayer and emphasis on prayer in His busy life, NT words for prayer, Jesus' positions in prayer, John 17, Gethsemane, and the cross. The volume has many good comments and will be refreshing to those who use it.

John

G. R. Beasley-Murray. *John*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1987. 441 pp.

Beasley-Murray, an evangelical with a somewhat critical leaning, has written this competent, usually detailed book on text, grammar, movement of passages, and bibliography. He has a fairly good survey of the relationship between the fourth gospel and the synoptics (pp. xxxv-xxxvii) and argues for leaving the text in its present order instead of rearranging it as Bultmann and others have done (p. xliii). Nevertheless, he sometimes devotes more attention to critical theories than he does to the text of John. Some of his conclusions are subjective, for example, his attributing of "Look, the Lamb of God" (1:36) to John the Baptist and of "who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29) to the evangelist writer (p. lii). Yet he voices his conviction of a high view of the reliability and divine origin of the material (p. liii). He assigns authorship to one of a circle associated with the beloved disciple whom he assumes was not one of the Twelve (p. lxxiv), though within that circle John the Apostle is a possibility. The treatment of the text is good at times, fair at others, and weak in some places. Some examples of the weaker places are his cursory discussion of "born of water and of the Spirit" (3:5), an even thinner discussion of 3:14-15, an unexplained relationship between 10:27 and 10:28-29, his pitiful glossing over the details of 15:2, and a confusing explanation of 20:22.

Robert M. Bowman, Jr. *Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesus Christ and the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 171 pp.

The focus of this work on John 1:1 is to respond to the Jehovah's Witnesses who have changed their line of argument from a few years

ago. It also deals with John 8:58 and 20:28. Bowman has a reputation for skillfulness in refuting cultic error as associate editor of *Christian Research Journal* and also in other capacities.

Donald A. Carson. *The Gospel according to John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 715 pp.

This is an excellent commentary from an evangelical with a breadth of scholarly study and a keen awareness of recent literature. He gears the work for teachers and preachers, but it is readable for lay-people too. It has an 84-page introduction with characteristics of the gospel, the "how to's" of its interpretation, its genuineness, purpose, doctrinal distinctives, and other matters. Technical notes and comments appear, but more attention goes to following the flow of the text and drawing out doctrinal principles. Some will rate this at the top of evangelical works or in close contention with the similar work by Leon Morris.

D. M. Lloyd-Jones. *John 17*. 4 vols.; Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988-89.

The four volumes are entitled *Saved in Eternity* (17:1-5), *Safe in the World* (17:6-19), *Sanctified through the Truth* (17:17-19), and *Growing in the Spirit* (17:17-24). They stem from messages preached in 1952-53. Lloyd-Jones assists other pastors and lay readers in finding much devotional stimulation for spiritual triumph by dwelling on their position in God's grace. This is the best work on John 17 with Rainsford ranking next, Wiersbe third, and Brown fourth.

John Phillips. *Exploring the Gospel of John*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1988. 425 pp.

This articulate exposition relates well to life. It is the product of one of the fine Bible conference leaders and prolific writers of today. He is an evangelical and organizes his work well by following his outline step-by-step. It is, however, a puzzle why the outline comes at the end rather than at the beginning. A pastor or lay reader will derive help in following the flow of thought through John and in a light exposure to some of the book's problems. It possibly would serve best in daily readings.

Acts

F. L. Arrington. *The Acts of the Apostles. An Introduction and Commentary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988. 298 pp.

This is a fairly good work by the professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis at the Church of God School of Theology, Cleveland, TN. It helps on many basic points from an evangelical perspective, but it does not rank high.

F. F. Bruce. *The Acts of the Apostles. The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary.* 3rd ed., rev. and enlarged; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. 569 pp.

This commentary is more technical and refers to Greek grammar more than the author's work on Acts in the *NICNT*. It is briefer, but good. The larger work explains more. The works of this author, one of the foremost NT scholars of the late 20th century, are always exacting in their scholarship. This is a revision and enlargement of the earlier editions, the first in 1951 and the second in 1952. The fruit of scholarly study since those dates is interwoven into the volume's comments. The 96-page introduction has a new section on the theology of Acts.

F. F. Bruce. *The Book of Acts.* *NICNT*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 541 pp.

This is a revision of the commentary first issued in 1954. The revision, coming not long before Bruce's death, has a new translation of the Greek text in place of the ASV appearing in the first edition. The documentation in footnotes has been extensively updated. The author has interacted with later studies, arranged comments on fewer verses, and achieved a more lucid style in places. Yet the basic verse-by-verse comments are substantially the same. It is still the finest commentary on the details of Acts. Bruce defers to I. H. Marshall's commentary for detail on Luke's theology. He reflects a fine grasp of pertinent history, a sound explanation of most passages, and insights on many problems.

Hans Conzelmann. *Acts of the Apostles.* Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987. 287 pp.

Using the RSV, the author supplies frequent assistance as he comments on syntax, background, customs, etc. He is liberal as exhibited in his copious use of redaction-criticism suppositions at various points. He denies the validity of miracles. A discerning pastor or student can derive what is worthwhile from this much-studied scholar immersed in Acts and literature relevant to it and leave behind the parts that are not valid.

Colin J. Hemer. *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*. Tbingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1989. 482 pp.

This noted author argues for the historical accuracy of Acts on the ground of Luke's correctness in details not essential to the spiritual message (p. 104). His methodology lends itself to good support in some places and reliance on suppositions in others.

Simon J. Kistemaker. *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 1,010 pp.

A detailed commentary follows a 40-page introduction. The explanation comments on the Greek text, exposition, and doctrinal and practical remarks. Kistemaker as an evangelical contributes much in elucidating the flow of the book, goes behind problems, and shows relevance. As a continuation of the Hendriksen NT Commentary series, this is one of the better conservative works on Acts.

John R. W. Stott. *The Message of Acts: The Spirit, the Church and the World*. Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990. 405 pp.

This verse-by-verse evangelical exposition considers key questions such as charismatic gifts, signs and wonders, baptism in the Spirit, etc. After the introduction come four divisions: Jews (1:6-6:7), foundations for world mission (6:8-12:24), the apostle to the Gentiles (12:25-21:17), and on the way to Rome (21:18-28:31). As usual, Stott is very articulate in capturing the message, showing the flow, and letting the text come alive. This is lucid for lay people and also helpful at times for pastors.

Romans

Norman Anderson. *Freedom under Law*. Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1988.

A biblical scholar who is also a professor emeritus of legal studies shows how law relates to true freedom. Various types of freedoms flourish under protection by laws. Later, the author examines law in the spiritual life according to Scripture. He argues in Matt 5:17-20 for fulfillment of the law in the appropriate sense God has designed for it to have (p. 121). God purposed that Mosaic rules and regulations on ceremonial cleanness have their place in OT times, but also look forward to moral cleanness such as was realized in Jesus's spiritual life and teaching and spiritual power. The Mosaic law was

not designed to be a way to merit salvation by obeying, but revealed ways God willed for saved people to live for their well-being (p. 155). The law could speak of the need for life, but could not impart the life God gives in grace through Christ in the gospel. In the gospel-way God supplies power to obey God's will as portrayed in the moral principles of the law, etc.

James M. Boice. *Romans, an Expository Commentary. Volume I, Justification by Faith, Romans 1-4*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

This Philadelphia preacher expounds the text, highlighting doctrinal points and their application to human life. This will be another multivolume commentary. It is full of teaching that will build up the believer.

James D. G. Dunn. *Romans*. 2 vols.; Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, 1988.

Dunn, professor of divinity, University of Durham, Scotland, has resorted to critical theories more than some conservatives would like, but he certainly reflects a massive amount of study in the work. He has much on viewpoints and their supports, word meanings, grammar, and bibliography on each pericope. His interaction with other scholarship makes this one of the best on Romans in that regard.

R. Kent Hughes. *Righteousness from Heaven*. Preaching the Word; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News, 1991. 339 pp.

This very readable exposition explains Romans, section-by-section, and frequently introduces items from broader reading to stimulate the user. Hughes is diligent in researching and communicating winsomely and pointedly what the text says, and then realistically applying it to daily life. His studies are broad and will be more useful for lay people desiring a quick and interesting escort through Romans.

Douglas Moo. *Romans 1-8*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1991. 591 pp.

Moo thoroughly analyzes each passage, interacting with various viewpoints and their supports and usually sifting out clearly his own preferences. His 21-page bibliography and citations are copious. His major sources are twelve in number: Barrett, Calvin, Cranfield, Dunn, Godet, Ksemann, Kuss, Michel, Murray, Nygren, Sanday and Headlam, and Wilckens. He is so cautious that at times it

is difficult to determine his viewpoint. Whether agreeing with Moo or not, one will find reward in a careful reading of his discussions of controversial issues. In commenting on the Greek and discussing theological ramifications, the work must rank as one of the top evangelical treatments, along with Cranfield and Murray.

Leon Morris. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 578 pp.

Completed at age 74 by this noted scholar, this is a work that is quite thorough in many places. Morris is evangelical, reformed in his theology, and amillennial, as his remarks on Romans 11 demonstrate. He has a mature and profound grasp of issues to be explained and a broad knowledge of literature on Romans from various perspectives. His judgment on problem passages is perceptive. He has excursions on God's righteousness, truth, the law, justification, judgment, and sin. All in all, the commentary is worthy of a place alongside those by Cranfield, Hendriksen, Moo, and Murray.

First Corinthians

Donald A. Carson. *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of I Corinthians 12-14*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 229 pp.

This evangelical exposition at times offers good insight into issues related to 1 Corinthians 12-14. A section on the theology of spiritual gifts draws from texts in Acts and 1 Corinthians. In evaluating contemporary charismatic claims and experience (chap. 5), Carson concludes that charismatics should guard against pride in having gifts and in claiming that tongues are a sign of "the second blessing." He says that noncharismatics ought to guard against saying that the gifts ceased. He believes that "that which is perfect" (1 Cor 13:10) relates to Christ's parousia and that tongues can be valid privately and publicly today. He also defends women's right to prophesy.

Gordon H. Fee. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 880 pp.

This is the all-round best evangelical commentary on the epistle. Fee is well-organized, clear, and perceptive on issues. His work replaces the Grosheide commentary (1953) in this series. He is thorough, verse-by-verse, and skilled in Greek details. He keeps the argument of the epistle in view. His grasp of literature on 1 Corinthians is masterful, and his treatment includes more by way of

disputed-passage discussion and application than other commentaries on the letter. Many conservatives will disagree with him on some issues, of course. In a 10-page discussion of 14:34-35 he concludes the verses are a textual gloss and therefore have no bearing on woman's role in the church. He devotes 40 pages to 11:2-16 and takes "head" to denote source, not authority. He is affiliated with the Assemblies of God and is sure that all the spiritual gifts are for today. Yet those who disagree with him will admit that he argues his position well.

John F. MacArthur, Jr. *Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12)*. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

This is an exposition of a key and much-discussed section and subject from a viewpoint that some gifts were intended to be permanent in the church age and some temporary, being limited to the early church. MacArthur's *Charismatic Chaos* (1991) is also relevant here.

Second Corinthians

Paul Barnett. *The Message of 2 Corinthians*. Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988. 188 pp.

This flowing and competent commentary moves section-by-section. It also discusses Paul as a minister and human being with weaknesses, facing problems and criticisms but experiencing God's power in his weakness. The applications are often very good. He has more detail in chapters 1-6 (100 pp.), but is cursory on such problems as "thorn" in chapter 12. The book can provide refreshment for devotional times and can serve as a catalyst for grasping and ministering the Word to others.

Frederick W. Danker. *II Corinthians*. Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989. 223 pp.

This evangelical work ranks high among those conversant with scholarly study regarding the setting of that day and offering a great deal of information. One of the author's earlier works is *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study* (3rd ed.; Saint Louis: Concordia, 1970, 295 pp.). His background study of "benefactor" helps him illumine chapters 8-9. Benefactors might distribute wealth with a noble spirit of obligation, while also having a right to see those to whom they shared respond in a noble way according to their means. Danker is, overall, quite good in a number of ways and will provide benefit in the study of 2 Corinthians.

C. G. Kruse. *The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 224 pp.

R. V. G. Tasker's work served well for years, but Kruse's commentary replaces it with stronger exegesis. Based in the NIV, it is a fairly concise evangelical effort that brings together much that is of help in following the thought through and dealing with problems in a well-written flow.

J. P. Lewis, ed. *Interpreting 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. An Exercise in Hermeneutics*. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity, 17; Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1989. 194 pp.

Four writers have written this expensive book (\$49.95 in 1989). It deals penetratingly with interpretive history, exegesis, problems, and theology.

A. B. Spencer and W. D. Spencer. *2 Corinthians*. Bible Study Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. 144 pp.

The Spencers are faculty members at Gordon-Conwell Seminary. They believe that Paul defends the leadership style that he and his associates model so as to help readers follow the right example and not be led astray. Their work is a survey, but displays a clear flushing out of principles that can assist Christ workers.

Galatians

R. A. Cole. *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 240 pp.

This is a revision of a work of twenty years earlier. It interacts with scholarly studies since then. It is a good evangelical commentary, well-informed, solid, clear with occasional good help on problem verses.

Ronald Y. K. Fung. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 342 pp.

This replaces Hermann Ridderbos's earlier work in the same series. It is thorough, usually reaching traditional conservative views, with many satisfactory and even some excellent explanations. Fung is lucid and detailed on some verses, but bypasses some real problems such as the meaning of falling from grace (5:4). The same weakness applies to what it means to be "crucified with Christ." He follows the south Galatian theory and adopts an early date of A.D. 48. His

reasonably good introduction updates scholarly discussion and relates 2:1-10 to the famine visit in Acts 11:27-30.

Richard N. Longenecker. *Galatians*. Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, 1990. 323 pp.

This noted evangelical scholar is professor of New Testament at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto. His long introduction to Galatians surveying scholarly issues precedes a verse-by-verse commentary. Each pericope has its own bibliography, translation, notes, and literary analysis. The author leaves few stones unturned, at least the more crucial ones. His discussions of problems and summations are helpful. He has an earlier fine commentary on Acts and also has written *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964, 310 pp.).

John MacArthur. *Galatians*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1987. 221 pp.

With sensitivity to grammar and word meaning, this fairly thorough evangelical treatment explains in a clear way the meaning of sections and verses. The author sees "the Israel of God" in 6:16 as literal Jews who have been saved, not as people of the church per se among the Gentiles. In most respects the commentary is articulate in helping pastors and lay people grasp matters of the gospel of grace and freedom of the Christian life. The first printing of the commentary had a discrepancy regarding the date of writing (pp. xii, 118).

Ephesians

F. Foulkes. *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale NTC, 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 189 pp.

The author has revised his own work of the 1960's, using the RSV and updated introductory matter. The evangelical author traces Paul's flow of thought well, summing up sections, looking at views and their supports, dealing competently with words and exegesis, but sometimes doing so more briefly than many readers would prefer.

R. Kent Hughes. *Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ*. Preaching the Word; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News, 1990. 304 pp.

Hughes has a highly readable, practical exposition that is refreshing for devotional use. He both explains Ephesians

competently in a general way and relates it engagingly and vitally to Christian life. In remaining true to the text, it is like an alpine breeze in its spiritually invigorating tone.

Andrew Lincoln. *Ephesians*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1990.

This detailed evangelical effort ranks at the top or near the best in overall exegetical explanation. The author evidences a background of immense reading, a thorough grasp of disputed passages and turning of details, a good ability to summarize, and often judicious decisions.

Philippians

John Gwyn-Thomas. *Rejoice . . . Always! Studies in Philippians 4*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1989. 159 pp.

These are messages on one chapter delivered by a pastor in Cambridge, England. The book explains verses perceptively and sensitively and shows how they apply today. J. I. Packer in the introduction commends the book and the author as a good spiritual shepherd.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. *The Life of Joy and The Life of Peace*. 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.

This two-volume work on Philippians has typically rich pastoral comments from a master preacher who is well-known for his *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* and expositions on Romans, Ephesians, and 2 Peter. This is a republication of a 1989 British edition containing messages preached at Westminster Chapel in 1947-48. Both pastors and lay readers will find stimulation in this capable and refreshing effort.

Ralph P. Martin. *The Epistle to the Philippians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

This is a revision and updating of the 1959 edition by the same author, one of America's foremost moderate evangelical NT scholars. It displays unusual insight in regard to Greek grammar and exegesis and a fairly frequent use of other scholarly literature, critical positions, etc.

Moises Silva. *Philippians*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1988. 255 pp.

Silva's treatment is a high-quality evangelical production, usually with good insights into the Greek and in the handling of differing viewpoints in current literature. This was the first commentary in the Wycliffe series. On many verses he is top-notch in perceiving and addressing issues with clear language. He sees two groups against Paul in Philippi, true Jewish Christians holding that grace ideas led Paul too far in freedom from the law (Philippians 1) and Judaizers within the Christian circle (Philippians 3). To him the theme of the book is not joy, but steadfast continuance in sanctification, victorious over difficulties. The author weighs differing interpretations carefully in his vast awareness of literature on the book.

Colossians and Philemon

Murray J. Harris. *Colossians and Philemon*. Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

This is the first of a projected twenty commentaries in this series. The author, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, has an earlier commentary on 2 Corinthians. This 1991 work helps a student who is beginning to review Greek to see, paragraph-by-paragraph, a structural analysis of every phrase and every word and virtually every feature of the message of the Greek text. It teaches much about the Greek of the two epistles and also passes along some homiletical suggestions from a meticulous scholar.

R. Kent Hughes. *Colossians and Philemon: The Supremacy of Christ*. Preaching the Word; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News, 1989. 183 pp.

The evaluation of this work corresponds closely to that of the discussions of Mark and Ephesians by the same author. In vivid strokes he displays the vital message for Christians in a refreshing devotional way and also gives ideas to expositors.

N. T. Wright. *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

As typical of this evangelical series, the author furnishes readers with concise and clear but well-thought-out comments on verses, sometimes with aid on difficult verses.

First and Second Thessalonians

John R. W. Stott. *The Gospel and the End of Time: The Message of 1*

and 2 Thessalonians. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991. 220 pp.

Stott is evangelical, well-informed in good scholarly thinking, and has unusual ability to write understandably and to sum up. As in his other expositions (e.g., Sermon on the Mount, Romans 5-8, Acts, Galatians, Ephesians), his comments are good. His introductions are too brief, a total of eight pages on both books, but his commentary is well-organized and articulate. In this work he tends to be general and without detail on individual verses, but the flow of the exposition is refreshing. He stops to deal with a few problems (e.g., how Satan hindered Paul's return [2:18], what "vessel" means [4:4]). In 2 Thessalonians 2, he favors the state as the "restrainer" (p. 170). This is not a top commentary, but will serve lay people well as a devotional guide.

Charles A. Wanamaker. *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*. New Testament Greek Text Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 316 pp.

As part of a relatively new series, this work offers considerable expertise on details of the Greek, views on interpretive issues, lines of argumentation, and interaction with other scholars. This evangelical work must rate among the best on the Thessalonian epistles.

Pastoral Epistles

Gordon D. Fee. *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*. New International Bible Commentary; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.

This is a reworking of Fee's 1984 work in the *Good News Commentary*. Fee is clear in most cases, but hard to follow when he becomes very terse. He is good on Greek grammar and local setting and on the unity and integrity of the books. His contribution is that Paul authored the books and wrote to meet specific situations in the churches, not to give a manual for the church as some have held.

Donald Guthrie. *The Pastoral Epistles*. Tyndale NTC, rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

This recent revision of a 1957 publication has a good introduction, but the commentary lacks the detail of Bernard and Huther. The author is better known for his large work on New Testament Introduction. This commentary is especially helpful in supplying conservative answers to radical critical views concerning introductory matters.

Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin, Jr. *I, II Timothy, Titus*. New

American Commentary; Nashville: Broadman, 1992. 352 pp.

Lea, a professor at Southwestern Baptist Seminary, handles 1 and 2 Timothy, while Griffin, a PhD graduate of the University of Aberdeen, comments on Titus. The authors have seven arguments to prove Pauline authorship (pp. 23-49). Their discussions of doctrinal themes are good, as are their book outlines and the amount of space devoted to individual verses. Their work on problems is not always thorough, however (e.g., the law made for the righteous [1 Tim 1:9], the spiritual status of the two trouble-causers [1 Tim 1:19], "the husband of one wife" [1 Tim 3:2], Timothy's saving himself and others [1 Tim 4:16], the status of the unfaithful [2 Tim 2:20], the crown of righteousness [2 Tim 4:8]. It does have a pretty good survey of viewpoints and their supports in regard to women being saved through child-bearing (1 Tim 2:15). Occasional excursions occur, such as those on biblical evidence and the Baptist practice of ordination (pp. 141-44). Footnotes containing explanations and sources for further study add to the value.

Hebrews

F. F. Bruce. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Before his death the author updated this outstanding evangelical work that first appeared in 1964. The introduction discusses recent developments regarding the main facets of the book. The discussion of how the epistle uses the OT and its harmonization of the epistle with the gospel witness about Jesus (pp. 25-34) are two of the areas. This, the best evangelical work on Hebrews, is clear and excellent on detail in most verses, competent in Greek grammar, word study, and background.

William L. Lane. *Hebrews 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1987.

This volume provides much in the details of the Greek text, exegesis, and bibliography. It will inform readers of a wealth of scholarly opinion and be especially helpful to teachers, preachers, and Bible class leaders who are serious about their preparation. Its bibliography rates higher than its commentary which is a bit inferior to that of Bruce.

James

Ralph P. Martin. *James*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX:

Word, 1988. 240 pp.

Here a moderate evangelical shows a broad awareness of scholarly opinions and lines of argument in both the introduction and the verse-by-verse commentary. His expertise in Greek details, his good grasp of relationships with other Scripture, and his thorough bibliography are evident. It is overrated, however, when called "the best longer work on James" (Douglas Stewart, *A Guide to Selecting and Using Bible Commentaries* [Dallas: Word, 1990] p. 126).

First and Second Peter and Jude

Peter H. Davids. *The First Epistle of Peter*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Davids has an earlier highly respected commentary on James. Here he uses a 42-page introduction to review issues and discuss scholarly literature from an evangelical perspective. Then follows a 266-page commentary in which he capably handles the Greek and deals with the differing views on problem passages.

Wayne A. Grudem. *I Peter*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 239 pp.

At many points this evangelical work is good in regard to views and helpful in regard to the Greek text. The author advocates double predestination in 2:8 and says that God destined the stumbling and disobedience of the unsaved (p. 106). In 3:19-20, he takes the spirits in prison to be unsaved humans of Noah's day, who are now in prison. A special appendix details the "spirits" passage at some length. His 36-page discussion of this passage takes one of several conservative options. He also favors traditional conservative viewpoints elsewhere.

D. E. Hiebert. *Second Peter and Jude*. Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1989. 324 pp.

Hiebert adopts conservative positions, even to the point of understanding Jude to be written after 2 Peter. He usually provides clarification and evidences considerable awareness of viewpoints and issues. Both preachers and lay people will find this work worth the time.

Simon J. Kistemaker. *Peter and Jude*. Hendriksen NTC; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 441 pp.

This careful evangelical scholar of the reformed tradition continues the Hendriksen series with good attention to exegesis,

viewpoints, arguments, and some practical applications. The work is quite readable for preacher or lay person.

I. Howard Marshall. *I Peter*. IVP NTC; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991. 184 pp.

This volume launches a new series under the general editorship of Grant R. Osborne. It is designed for brevity, for capturing the message competently, and for practical use by the church. Marshall writes with clarity and refreshment. He shows awareness of differing perspectives on interpretation and usually reasons well and crystallizes data beneficially. Five points defend Petrine authorship, and nine points summarize Peter's theology. His remarks about trials in 1:6-7 and purity and growth in 2:1-3 are outstanding. He lists the views in 3:19-21 capably, but ends with a questionable conclusion to the matter. All in all, this is a very fine concise work that is bound to provide students and all Christians with a quick, well-informed review of the text and a daily reading guide.

J. Ramsay Michaels. *I Peter*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1988. 337 pp.

Many view this as the current basic evangelical work in English on 1 Peter. The author deals well with Greek details and is abreast of scholarly writings as evidenced by his helpful lists. His discussions of debatable issues is thorough, with frequent good defenses of his own views. One unusual feature is his theory that Peter lived through the persecution under Nero, contrary to evidence of his death under Nero, and wrote the epistle in the A.D. 70's with help from the church at Rome.

1, 2, 3 John

John R. W. Stott. *The Epistles of John*. Tyndale NTC, 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 234 pp.

Here is a clear and stimulating treatment by a gifted writer who has served as rector of the All Souls (Anglican) Church, London. Several NT scholars have hailed the commentary as outstanding in exegesis, exposition, and warm application. This 1988 edition updates the 1964 work. Stott displays a vast breadth of reading in the best conservative commentaries on the Johannine epistles.

Revelation

David Chilton. *Days of Vengeance: An Exposition of the Book of*

Revelation. Fort Worth, TX: Dominion Press, 1987. 721 pp.

This is a learned case for postmillennialism. Gary North in the "Publisher's Preface" says that what Chilton generalized in an earlier book "is now supported with chapter and verse indeed, lots and lots of chapters and verses" (p. xv). He asserts that Chilton has at long last found the secret key to unlock the code of the book of Revelation (p. xvi).

David S. Clark. *The Message from Patmos: A Postmillennial Commentary on the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 148 pp.

This is a more succinct effort than Chilton's volume to support the postmillennial interpretation.

Philip E. Hughes. *The Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. 242 pp.

Hughes was a renowned NT scholar and Anglican clergyman. He has provided an amillennial work (p. 211) that is clear, but not outstanding in exegesis. His commentary on 2 Corinthians is very good and the one on Hebrews is fairly good.

Leon Morris. *The Book of Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale NTC, rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 256 pp.

Morris concisely comments on verses in an amillennial vein, as in Revelation 20. He frequently helps on views and information based on his wide reading. Noteworthy here and there, the work as a whole does not rank as high as his commentaries on John, Romans, and the Thessalonian epistles.

Robert L. Thomas. *Revelation 17, An Exegetical Commentary*. vol. 1 of 2 vol. set; Chicago: Moody, 1992. xxvii + 524 pp.

Thomas has a second volume yet to come in this most exegetically detailed effort yet by a premillennialist. The field is one of his specialties since his ThD dissertation was "The Argument of the Book of Revelation." He brings more than thirty years of Greek-teaching expertise to the task. He argues for authorship by the Apostle John (pp. 2-19) and a date of ca. A.D. 95 (pp. 20-23). His wide interaction looks at issues fairly and carefully. A good section explores hermeneutics for interpreting the Apocalypse (pp. 29-39). He employs his own translation verse-by-verse. He deals in considerable detail

with many interpretive issues, gives reasons for viewpoints, is clear, and follows a detailed outline. He favors seeing the Lord's day (1:10) as Sunday, sees in 1:19 a threefold division of the book based on grammar, opts for human messengers in 1:20, and sees a mixed group in the churches (i.e., some genuinely saved, others only professors). He looks penetratingly at views on the Nicolaitans (2:6), sees "the overcomer" as applicable to all genuinely saved persons, reasoning this out with awareness of relevant factors, and prefers taking "crown of life" in 2:10 as a genitive of apposition i.e. "crown which is (eternal) life" understood as a crown received through grace and not merit. Thomas favors a pretribulational removal of the church in 3:10, devoting six pages to an appraisal of arguments for differing views. The twenty-four elders are exalted celestial beings. The decision on the white-horse rider in 6:2, after a long evaluation of views, is that he personifies a movement or force working against the Messiah's interests in the future tribulation period. He defends the view that the 144,000 in chapter 7 are distinctively certain men of Israel, not the church.

CLASSIFICATION AND RATING OF COMMENTARIES

As explained in the reviews of OT commentaries,² space does not permit a ranking of all the NT commentaries, even the ones done in the last five years. This comprehensive table appears in the unabridged work described in footnote #1. All that can be furnished here is a sample categorization, for which the book of Revelation has been chosen. An asterisk following the author's name indicates a work discussed in the pages above.

Table 1 showing the rating of commentaries on Revelation appears on the next page.

²James E. Rosscup, "OT Commentaries for Bible Expositors, 1987-92," *TMSJ* 4/1 (Spring 1993):93.

RATING OF COMMENTARIES ON REVELATION

Table 1

<i>Detailed Exegetical</i>		

Expositional Survey

Devotional Flavor

- | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| <p>1. R. L. Thomas*
 (premil dispen.)
 W. Hendriksen
 (amil)
 H. B. Swete
 (technical)
 D. Chilton*
 (postmil)</p> | <p>1.J. F. Walvoord
 (premil dispen.)</p> | <p>1.J. Stott (Rev. 2`3)</p> |
| <p>2. I. T. Beckwith
 (amil)
 D. Clark* (post-
 mil)</p> | <p>2.J. B. Smith (premil
 dispen.)</p> | <p>2.W. Newell (premil)</p> |
| <p>3. R. H. Mounce
 (amil)</p> | <p>3. L. Morris* (amil)</p> | <p>3.M. Wilcock (amil)</p> |
| <p>4. G. R. Beasley-
 Murray (amil)</p> | <p>4.J. A. Seiss (premil)

 5.G. E. Ladd (premil)
 6.C. Colclasure
 (amil)</p> | |

BOOK REVIEWS

Raymond Bailey. *Hermeneutics for Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992. 223 pp. \$15.95 (cloth). Reviewed by Alex D. Montoya, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

The author is professor of preaching and also Director of the National Center of Christian Preaching at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. This volume presents various approaches to preaching based on differing contemporary interpretations of Scripture. Bailey gathers a number of present-day preachers, each of whom promotes a particular interpretive method, and illustrates each approach with a sermon based on that method.

The seven models in the book are:

Chapter 1:	A Historical Model	David Dockery
Chapter 2:	A Canonical Model	John Watts
Chapter 3:	A Literary Model	Alan Culpepper
Chapter 4:	A Rhetorical Model	Craig Loscalzo
Chapter 5:	An African-American Model	James E. Massey
Chapter 6:	A Philosophical Model	Dan R. Stiver
Chapter 7:	A Theological Model	Raymond Bailey

Hermeneutics for Preaching is both a book on interpretation and a text on homiletics. Bailey states,

The preacher's vocation requires him or her to be as familiar with hermeneutics as a doctor must be with the theories and techniques of diagnosis. The preacher has the responsibility of determining meaning not only for self, but also for others. . . . Preachers must strive to determine the meanings of texts, consider the implications for a particular people in a particular culture at a particular time, and then communicate their findings to these people. Preachers have the dual responsibility of understanding and explaining (8).

He illustrates his premise through the writings and examples of various types of preachers. The articles are well written and documented, and portray well each hermeneutical approach. This reviewer found special interest in the African-American model, which differed from the others in tailoring the text to a particular class of

people.

A weakness of the work is that overall the hermeneutical principles governing the majority of contributors are those espoused by Schleiermacher, Barth, and the like. The inescapable impression created by the book is that the text is not what dictates the sermon, but rather the presuppositions of the exegete and the needs of the people. Yet even in ministering to contemporary society, every preacher must remember that his primary calling is always to "preach the Word" (2 Tim 4:2).

F. F. Bruce. *The Book of the Acts*. NICNT, rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. xxiii + 541 pp. \$24.95 (cloth). Reviewed by Irvin A. Busenitz, Professor of Bible and Old Testament.

A few years prior to his death, F. F. Bruce revised his 1954 commentary on the Book of Acts, replacing the American Standard Version (1901) text with his own *ad hoc* translation and incorporating thirty years of additional relevant research. In this revision, his goal is to make the wall between the first and twentieth centuries transparent, and to cause not only the voice of Luke but also the word of God to be heard by his readers (xvii).

The author devotes careful attention to the origin and purpose of Acts. While noting the important role played by the book as a challenge to Marcion's second-century heresies, thereby cultivating theories of a second century authorship, he rejects such notions, and contends that "the historical, geographical, and political situation presupposed by Acts, and for that matter by Luke-Acts as a whole, is unmistakably that of the first century and not of the second. This is specially true of Paul's invocation of his Roman citizenship and his appeal to Caesar" (6). Different from some scholars, he dates Luke's composition after the death of Paul "at some point within the Flavian period [A.D. 69-96], possibly about the middle of the period" (12) arguing that Luke's purpose extended beyond his desire to give information to Theophilus only. Luke also "gave an intelligible history of the rise and progress of Christianity, and at the same time gave a reasoned reply to popular calumnies against it . . ." (12). He debunks the idea that Luke's narrative purposed to serve as evidence for Paul's defense in the imperial court, noting that "there is much in Acts that would have been quite irrelevant forensically . . ." (12).

At times, the text is investigated with greater depth and precision than at others. His description of the apostles' choice of a replacement for Judas is thorough and lucid, for example. Contrary to an oft expressed opinion, the selection of Matthias was not inappropriate. Besides Paul's not possessing the qualifications set

forth in 1:21-22, Bruce maintains that such a view "betrays a failure to appreciate the special character of Paul's apostleship" (48). Such thoroughness is lacking, however, in his discussion of Acts 2 where he allots only minimal space. With superficial brevity, he concludes that the cosmic disturbances of Joel 2 referred to by Peter found fulfillment in the events surrounding the death of Christ a few weeks earlier (62).

He has full treatments of Stephen's sermon and stoning, Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and the introduction of the gospel to the Gentiles at the conversion of Cornelius, with insights from historical and extra-biblical data highlighting the text. He treats the time frame of the Jerusalem Council succinctly, but adequately, concluding that the "Jerusalem conference of Gal. 2:1-10, the Antioch controversy of Gal. 2:11-14, and even the writing of the letter to the Galatians itself . . . antedated the council of Acts 15" (283).

The inclusion of many historical and extra-biblical insights amplifies one's understanding of the text, especially the events surrounding Paul's appearances before Felix, Festus, and Herod Agrippa II. Footnotes rather than end notes including terms and phrases in Greek and Hebrew characters are very helpful to the serious student. With the addition of recent scholarship, this commentary remains one of the finest expositions of Acts for both pastors and laymen.

Lewis Drummond. *Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1992. 895 pp. \$22.00 (paper). Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Director of Academic Assessment, The Master's College, and MDiv candidate, The Master's Seminary.

The Centenary of the death of Charles Haddon Spurgeon has been the occasion for the release of several Spurgeon-related works. Drummond's *Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers* is among the more prized of these. Drummond has the most extensive biography of Spurgeon since G. Holden Pike's two-volume set published in 1899. The biography follows an analogy between Spurgeon and the character "Christian" in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, one of Spurgeon's favorite books. So "this new biography of Charles H. Spurgeon picks up pithy poems, places and personalities of Bunyan's classic allegory and makes them the motif of Spurgeon's life and ministry" (13). Each of the thirteen chapter-titles is a quotation from *Progress*. Drummond follows his plan with effectiveness and clarity.

He has done his homework and has produced a readable and well-documented biography. His thorough discussion of Spurgeon covers both major and minor aspects of his life. The excellent

appendices, dealing mainly with the "Downgrade Controversy," reflect expert use of original sources from the Baptist Union and private correspondence. As did Carlile in his 1933 biography, Drummond conclusively shows that Spurgeon clearly possessed all the evidence necessary to prove the existence of modernism among many pastors in the Baptist Union. Spurgeon was "capable of substantiating" (701) the charges, but when S. H. Booth, moderator of the Baptist Union, urged confidentiality on personalities involved in his correspondence with Spurgeon, for better or for worse, Spurgeon honored his request.

A few modifications would improve this already excellent work. Reportedly, Spurgeon preached at the service commemorating the restoration of Bunyan's tomb on May 21, 1801 (346). This date was over thirty years before Spurgeon's birth. The correct year was 1864. Another deficiency is the many long quotations that are poorly identified or not referenced at all (e.g., 326, 382, 532). Also, space-conservation was undoubtedly a factor in the already long book, but the use of a "fractional width" format tends to run letters together and make reading sometimes difficult. Perhaps a two-volume work would have been more serviceable.

Drummond deserves praise for the chapter on "Spurgeon's Theology" (chap. 12), the highlight of the book. He writes, "In the pure sense of the word, Spurgeon never wrote any theological works. At any rate, he never systematized his thought in writing. Therefore, to discover his theology of the Bible one must glean it through his sermons and other writings" (615). Spurgeon produced more published works than any other Christian in history, so sorting out his theology is a laborious task, one that this biographer has accomplished admirably. His own personal convictions seem to have prejudiced His conclusions about Spurgeon's doctrine sometimes. For example, he equates "hyper-Calvinism" with the doctrine of double predestination (641) without distinguishing between active and passive reprobation, the latter being the clear position of Spurgeon (*ibid.*). Spurgeon rejected "hyper-Calvinism," which rejects the need to preach the gospel actively to the lost, but he firmly embraced the total sovereignty of God in election. He balanced his position by teaching that God ordains both the end (i.e., salvation of the elect) and the means (i.e., human instrumentality in preaching the gospel). He expressed it this way: "That God predestines, and that man is responsible, are two things that few can see. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictory; but they are not. . . . These two truths cannot be welded into one upon any human anvil, but one they shall be in eternity" (*ibid.*)

As a challenge to today's world of theological morass and doctrinal compromise, Drummond's biography portrays a man of single-mindedness and theological consistency. The present scene needs more men like Spurgeon men of vision, energy, and ability, but

above all, men who put God's glory and honor and the truth of the Scriptures above all considerations of earthly life.

Ronald Y. K. Fung. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. NICNT, ed. by F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. xxxiii + 342 pp. \$22.95 (cloth). Reviewed by Irvin A. Busenitz, Professor of Bible and Old Testament.

The author, resident scholar and adjunct lecturer at the China Graduate School of Theology, Hong King, initiated this project while doing graduate work under F. F. Bruce at the University of Manchester. His goal has been to provide a scholarly treatment in a "user friendly" format for pastors and students, "especially for an examination of the letter specifically as Paul's most direct defense and exposition of justification by faith . . ." (xi).

With the characteristic imprint of his mentor, Fung skillfully guides the reader into the text. His succinct treatment of introductory issues has numerous, occasionally lengthy, footnotes with documentation and technical details. It is so succinct that some treatments are less than full. For example, the rudimentary discussion of the location of the Galatian churches (1-3) is noticeably brief, referencing instead the works of others. On the other hand, he treats the date of composition extensively (9-28), finally accepting the conclusion of his mentor that "Galatians may well have been written on the eve of the Jerusalem Council (*ca.* A.D. 48)" (28) and identifying the Jerusalem visit of Galatians 2:1-10 with the famine relief visit of Acts 11 (86).

Fung's analysis of the text is, for the most part, quite helpful as it touches upon the central features and their meaning. Yet he frequently fails to reveal little more than what is elementary and cursory. His discussion of the "different gospel" in 1:6-7 is quite brief. He rejects the conventional distinction between the two Greek adjectives in this passage, concluding, "As in 2 Cor. 11:4, no essential distinction is intended; this becomes all the more likely in the light of the consideration that the word 'another' ('gospel' has been supplied in translation) seems to be used somewhat pleonastically in order to introduce the following 'only' or 'except that'" (45).

The discussion of the fruit of the Spirit is insightful and thorough (262-73). It has an extended description of each quality, tracing each through the Pauline writings as well as through the NT. He carefully explains the difference of terminology and meaning when comparing 6:2 with 6:5: "While that verse [6:2] speaks of 'heavy loads' that one finds unbearable and requires assistance in carrying, this verse [6:5] speaks of a person's 'own proper burden,' like the traveler's

own pack. The reference is probably to the ineluctable duties of life that fall to each person, including answerability to God for one's own conduct and performance" (291).

The extensive indexes of subjects, authors, and Scriptures provide a quick reference tool and enhance the value of this exclusively English work. Though brevity in both the text and the footnotes regarding some major interpretive issues reduces the commentary's usefulness, it will still serve as a beneficial resource for pastor, teacher, and student.

Hank Hanegraaff. *Christianity In Crisis*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 1993. 448 pp. \$16.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Richard L. Mayhue, Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

Hank Hanegraaff has done the Christian community a great service by compiling his detailed and thoroughly documented analysis of the "faith movement." Hanegraaff, president of the California-based Christian Research Institute and successor to Walter Martin, has crafted a powerful biblical polemic against a growing segment of American Christendom. Along with John MacArthur's *Charismatic Chaos* (Zondervan, 1992) and Michael Horton's *The Agony of Deceit* (Moody, 1990), he provides necessary background material for a pastor to answer the questions of his congregation and refute the errors of false teachers of the "faith movement."

The author cuts to the heart of the issue by writing, "If cultic and occultic systems like the New Age movement pose the greatest threat to the body of Christ from without, the deadly cancer represented by these quotes poses one of the greatest threats to Christianity from within. The true Christ and the true faith of the Bible are being replaced rapidly with diseased substitutes offered by a group of teachers who belong to what has been labeled the 'Faith movement'" (11). He concludes, "We must shift from perceiving God as a means to an end to recognizing that He *is* the end. We must shift from a theology based on temporary *perspectives* to one based on eternal *perspectives*" (12).

Hanegraaff deals with such widely known people as Paul Yonggi Cho, Morris Cerullo, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, Paul and Jan Crouch, Kenneth Hagin, E. W. Kenyon, Katherine Kuhlman, Marilyn Hickey, Fredrick K. C. Price, Robert Tilton, and Benny Hinn, perhaps the most visible and controversial of them all. The author's documentation is most impressive. He has forty pages of footnotes to validate his observations and conclusions (379-418). Most of these are either from conversations on "Praise the Lord" on TBN or from someone's writings.

He also provides a seventeen-page

bibliography to direct the reader to the literature that validates his claims. In addition, he includes extensive Scripture and subject indexes that make this volume tremendously usable to the pastor. Pastors can safely commend this volume to their people as a biblical analysis of what is wrong with "health and wealth" theology.

Two other special features of note are (1) the Epilogue in which the author gives a brief ministry background for most of the leaders in this movement and (2) Appendix A, "Are 'God's Anointed' beyond Criticism?" in which he strongly calls for biblical accountability within the body. Hanegraaff's work is worthy of high recommendation for every pastor's library as one of the most comprehensive evaluations of the in's and out's and who's who of the modern "Faith movement."

Glenn A. Hewitt. *Regeneration and Morality: A Study of Charles Finney, Charles Hodge, John W. Nevin, and Horace Bushnell*. Brooklyn, New York: Carlson, 1991. \$50.00 (cloth). Reviewed by Ken L. Sarles, Associate Professor of Theology.

Among the most debated issues in nineteenth-century American Evangelism was the nature of conversion, including the respective roles of the human and the divine in the process, the consequent changes wrought in the human condition, and implications for gospel presentation. Hewitt highlights the diversity of theological opinion on conversion, an issue that was anything but a monolithic concept in North American Protestantism during the last century. He examines four leading theologians, contrasting their understanding of conversion and its relation to Christian morality. The four, all of whom wrote on the subjects of regeneration and revivalism, represent the Arminian, Reformed, mystical, and liberal traditions.

Hewitt first scrutinizes Charles Finney, the leading revivalist of the antebellum era. He correctly observes that Finney held to the premise that obligation presupposes ability (27); therefore regeneration arises from a voluntary decision to change the ultimate intention of the will (30). In an understatement, Hewitt takes Finney's position as enhancing the stature of the individual as the agent in regeneration (31). He sees an implication of Finney's position that moral good as such exists independently of God's will (41). If the human will becomes prominent in salvation, by logical necessity the divine will declines. The one misfire in Hewitt's analysis of Finney involves the connection of the human faculties in conversion. The author states that the intellect and sensibilities were irrelevant in Finney's view of regeneration (28), but it is possible to prove the opposite from Finney's own writings. See *Lectures on Systematic*

Theology [London: Wm. Tegg, 1851] 1-3; *Lectures to Professing Christians* [New York: E. J. Goodrich, 1878] 400; *Sermons on Important Subjects* [New York: John S. Taylor, 1836] 8.

The author then deals with Charles Hodge, perhaps the greatest of the Princeton theologians. Though contemporaries exposed to the same Presbyterian tradition, Hodge and Finney were polar opposites, not only in theology, but in epistemology, style, and temperament as well. What the one affirmed, the other denied, and vice versa.

Because of his commitment to total depravity and absolute divine sovereignty, Hodge wanted to protect God's exclusive action in regeneration (57). Unlike Finney, he advocated passive rather than active regeneration. Hewitt summarized the difference between the two well:

The dispute between Finney and Hodge on the process of regeneration is largely reducible to the question of agency. For Finney, the sinner has full ability to choose to be regenerated. . . . For Hodge, God has already chosen who will be regenerated and the action is entirely in God's hands. . . . For Finney the important factor was the sinner's will; for Hodge it was the supernatural decree of God. Whereas Finney collapsed regeneration into conversion, Hodge maintained the distinction and the priority of regeneration (61).

Since Hodge was as consistent in his perspective as Finney was in his, he also differed from the latter in his understanding of the relation of God's will to morality (72). Hodge argued that the moral law found its basis in the will of God, and therefore was not outside of it. Hence, he correctly categorized Finney's theology as a moral philosophy, based on Finney's conviction that the standards of the moral law existed independently of the divine character.

The only time where the author departs from a cogent analysis of Hodge is when he evaluates Hodge's application of the moral law. Hewitt notes,

Those laws which Hodge liked could be conveniently interpreted as eternally binding laws of God. Other laws, inappropriate to Hodge's nineteenth-century American culture, could be limited to ancient Israel. It is not suggested that Hodge did this consciously. Rather his culture and society subconsciously shaped his understanding of which laws should still be applicable and which should not (81).

Despite his disclaimer, the author's criticism is invalid for two reasons.

First, it is next to impossible for Hewitt to judge the status of Hodge's subconscious, especially in light of his historical distance from him. Second, the premise that culture shapes the subconscious is open to question, because even if it were true, one's ability to detect it would be dependent upon a mind that itself is shaped by culture in a subcon-

scious way. This type of criticism leads to an unhealthy historical skepticism, which by the way, neither Finney nor Hodge would have advocated.

The third theologian considered is John W. Nevin, one of the architects of the Mercersburg Theology. He moved away from the older faculty psychology of Finney and Hodge, and developed a more complex personality theory centered on the formation of the self (107). In Nevin's words, as quoted by Hewitt, "In a profound, awful sense, every man is the architect of his own person; he builds himself, year after year, into spiritual being" (112). Regeneration for Nevin was an inexplicable mystical union between the self and the life of Christ communicated through His corporate body (119-20). Epistemologically, Nevin departed from the Common Sense tradition of Finney and Hodge, and articulated a developmental approach to theology. He "conceived of Christian theology not as a timeless body of knowledge, but as an evolving self-understanding of the church" (122). Though not critiqued as such by Hewitt, this represents the Achilles heel of Nevin's thought.

The final thinker analyzed is Horace Bushnell, the father of American religious liberalism. For Bushnell, regeneration occurs gradually by natural law (132). In the same way, regenerative power is transmitted from parent to child through natural laws (143). Clearly, Bushnell is the furthest removed from any biblical notion of regeneration. Hewitt properly criticized him for his excessive optimism and exaltation of human ability to do good. He states simply, "Bushnell failed to note the pervasiveness of evil" (158).

This volume is commendable for its extensive research and scholarship. It is also well written and carefully organized, though designed for the reader already acquainted with nineteenth-century American religious history. Of the four approaches to the doctrine of regeneration detailed in the book—including Finney's rationalism, Hodge's biblicism, Nevin's mysticism, and Bushnell's naturalism—this reviewer prefers the biblicism of Hodge. This work is highly recommended as a comparative study in historical context of the biblical view of regeneration and the various departures from that view.

Josh Hunt. *Let It Grow*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993. 199 pp. \$10.99 (paper). Reviewed by Alex D. Montoya, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

The subtitle of this book, "Changing to Multi-Congregational Churches," tells Hunt's basis thesis. The book is in two parts: "Exploring the Multi-Congregational Model" and "Implementing the Multi-Congregational Model."

Let It Grow strikes at a common sense approach to church growth. Instead of expending large resources to build larger churches, why not increase the number of services in a given church? Existing churches can also find use in housing various types of worship services to accommodate different preferences. The facilities can also house different congregations.

Hunt does an excellent job of presenting a rationale for multi-congregational churches in America. Those who minister in high-density-population areas and in ethnically changing communities will profit from his ideas. The approach is highly innovative, but practical and reasonable.

Unfortunately, *Let It Grow* is permeated with principles and practices of the church-growth movement whereby principles take a back seat to pragmatism. Nevertheless, its basic tenet is a viable tool for church growth as the church moves into the first decade of the twenty-first century.

James D. Newsome. *Greeks, Romans, Jews. Currents of Culture and Belief in the New Testament World*. Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992. 475 pp. \$29.95 (paper). Reviewed by Keith Essex, Adjunct Professor of Bible.

This work purposes to serve as a textbook introducing seminary students and interested lay people to Jewish history, literature, and theology of the Greco-Roman period, which was the setting of the NT. *Greeks, Romans, Jews* covers much of the same material found in the four-volume revision of Emil Schurer's *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, but in an abridged form at a fraction of the price. For the beginning student, Newsome has done an admirable job of summarizing the current state of Judaic studies for the period 332 B.C. to A.D. 135.

The book has three main strengths. First, it has a well-written, in-depth analysis of the literature of Greco-Roman Judaism in two uneven parts. The first two-thirds deals with the Greek (Hellenistic) period in Palestine: two chapters on the historical background from the coming of the Greeks (Alexander the Great, 332 B.C.) to the collapse of the Hasmonean State (63 B.C.) and five chapters that discuss the Jewish literature during this 270-year period, the theology of Palestinian Judaism, and the development of the Qumran Community. The last one-third chronicles the Roman Era, with two chapters surveying the historical background from 63 B.C. to 135 A.D. and the final two chapters discussing the Jewish literature of this 200-year period.

Second, Newsome incorporates the primary and secondary sources necessary for further study in his footnotes and bibliography.

Third, he has written a good six-page synopsis of the principal Ptolemaic, Seleucid, and Roman rulers (449-54). A similar synopsis for the Hasmonean rulers would have been most helpful.

Two striking weaknesses are evident in the book. First, the book's format includes discussions of Roman-era events before the presentation of Roman history. For example, the beginning student would better understand Herod the Great's proposed relationship with the Essenes (120-21) after reading the historical introduction to Herod the Great (281-99). So he should read chaps. 1, 2, 8, 9 first for the historical background, then read the chapters dealing with the Jewish literature. Second, Newsome's higher critical viewpoint places some of the OT canonical literature in the intertestamental period. An example is the book of Daniel (76-78). Though the consensus of liberal thought dates Daniel in the Maccabean era, good reasons exist for dating the book in the 6th century B.C. (see OT Introductions of Archer, Harrison, and Young). Newsome gives fair assessments of non-canonical dating with different viewpoints noted, but he does not give the OT canonical books the same treatment.

Nevertheless, the beginning student in NT backgrounds with a good foundation in Biblical Introduction will find *Greeks, Romans, Jews* a helpful book to begin his study of the history and literature of Greco-Roman Judaism.

John Seel. *The Evangelical Forfeit: Can We Recover?* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993. 124 pp. \$5.99 (paper). Reviewed by Richard L. Mayhue, Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

John Seel, co-editor with Os Guinness of *No God But God* (Moody, 1992), provides a succinct analysis of evangelicalism's current state. He asserts, "We have forfeited our influence within American society and are on the verge of forfeiting the vestiges of our biblical identity" (11). This book is his assessment of the state of American evangelicalism.

He begins by defining what he means by an "evangelical." Seel writes, "Evangelicals are those who seek to define themselves and their lives by the demands of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is, evangelicals are those who have a passion for the first things of the gospel" (16). With that definition in mind, Seel suggests that evangelical leadership is currently in a mood of somber reassessment. He speculates, "In fact, evangelicalism may be in its most reflective mood since the forties when a handful of leaders forged a powerful new consensus that has lasted for fifty years" (22).

In five fast-paced chapters, Seel makes his analysis. Chapter one is an introduction to the subject. Then in chap. two he surveys the

highlights of Christianity in American history. He argues

that 'yesterday's man' is more Americana-cum-debased-nineteenth-century-evangelicalism than the real thing. Modern American evangelicals have largely abandoned our historical connection to pre-American evangelicals to the patristic fathers, the reformers, the Puritan divines, and others (27).

He concludes the discussion by suggesting that the popularity of Frank Peretti's recent best sellers, *This Present Darkness* and *Piercing the Darkness*, illustrate this cultural and national tainting of biblical Christianity in America. He urges that evangelicalism divest itself of American tradition and return to its biblical roots.

Chapter three, entitled "The Crises of Evangelicalism," stems from interviews with 125 prominent evangelical leaders. Seel summarizes his findings with eight dominant themes as identified by these leaders to characterize today's evangelicalism. Evangelicalism has (1) a growing uncertainty over what constitutes an evangelical, (2) a growing disenchantment with evangelical institutions as ineffective and/or irrelevant, (3) a dissatisfaction with current leadership, (4) pessimism about the future of evangelicalism, (5) questions about the effectiveness of evangelicalism since numbers are up but impact is down, (6) a sense of cultural isolation by society, (7) two wrong responses to culture—a political response and a methodological response and (8) shifting of priorities from a truth-centered to a market-responsive base. He believes these are at the heart of the current crisis in American evangelicalism.

In chap. four, Seel outlines a two-year process through which leaders of mega-churches dialogued with leaders of several seminaries regarding the future of seminary training and the training of Christian leaders in America. Many believe that seminary training in America is at a crisis-point, because churches are saying they can train men for ministry better than seminaries. The challenge of the mega-church to seminaries is for seminaries to become relevant or die the death of a dinosaur. This does not characterize all seminaries, nor is it necessarily true of any one seminary, but it is a perception on the part of many mega-church leaders.

Seel concludes with a call for repentance and a return to a Christ-centered definition of evangelicalism. Though it is short and in some points might seem to border on the simplistic, *The Evangelical Forfeit* nonetheless identifies and initiates discussion of the confusion among evangelical leaders in the 1990's.

Moisés Silva. *God, Language and Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. 160 pp. \$14.99 (paper). Reviewed by David C. Deuel,

Associate Professor of Old Testament.

The author, professor of New Testament at Westminster Seminary, is also general editor of the *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation* series of which this book is a part. His readable, often anecdotal style makes the theoretical issues he discusses approachable for the linguistically uninitiated. His primary aim in the book is "to provide guidance in the use of biblical languages" (back cover).

The book abounds with correctives that concern the misuse of words. One example is, "In short, the range of meaning, and therefore the potential sentence use, of a word is established by its opposition to semantically neighboring words" (91). Another of his proposed remedies is, "There is nothing exotic or artificial about New Testament Greek. The Apostles were primarily interested in communicating their message clearly and vigorously. And under God's guidance they succeeded" (75).

Because the book stresses a linguistic approach to biblical interpretation, one might expect a complete sell-out to linguistic theory and methodology. Silva shows this is not the case by his thoughtful disclaimer regarding linguistics and philology: "Modern linguistics cannot replace the 'common sense' skills of a good interpreter; indeed, it has the potential for an exaggerated formalism that can swallow up those skills but it can provide new perspectives and methods leading to greater consistency" (122).

The section dealing with lexical semantics provides in places a balanced perspective not found in many grammatical works. Silva's warning regarding the relationship between grammar and lexicology will be particularly helpful to students who are new to the original languages:

In conclusion, we may say that an interpreter is unwise to emphasize an idea that allegedly comes from the use of a tense (or some other subtle grammatical distinction) unless the context as a whole clearly sets forth that idea. Whether the use of the tense contributes to that idea or whether it is the idea that contributes to the use of the tense is perhaps debatable, but no interpretation is worth considering unless it has strong contextual support. If it doesn't, then the use of the grammatical detail becomes irrelevant; if it does, then the grammar is at best a pointer to, not the basis of, the correct interpretation (118).

For the interested reader, an appropriate sequel to the present work might be P. Cotterell and M. Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*, a volume recommended in Silva's work as well as in his review of it in *WTJ* 51 (1989):389-90.

Douglas D. Webster. *Selling Jesus: What's Wrong with Marketing the Church?* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992. 165 pp. \$9.99 (paper). Reviewed by Richard L. Mayhue, Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

Douglas Webster is the teaching pastor at Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church in Englewood, Colorado. He, like most present-day pastors, has worked hard to understand and evaluate the current strong emphasis on a marketing approach to church-growth. The volume offers his conclusions about this American phenomenon designed to produce "user-friendly churches."

He asks the crucial question, "Are the strategies and tactics of church marketeers consistent with a spirit-led, Christ-centered approach to numerical growth and spiritual growth?" He deals with many promoters of this movement, including the writings of George Barna and Bill Hybels.

Chapters worth noting are those entitled "Marketing the Church," "The Traditional Church," "The Target Audience," and "Meeting Felt Needs." In these, he interacts with current market-driven philosophies and critiques them from a biblical perspective.

For instance, he comments (67) on the rich young ruler as the one character in Jesus' ministry that best captures the ethos of the baby boomer. But then he contrasts Jesus' response to the rich young ruler with the response of the market-sensitive church to a similar unchurched person of our day. Illustrative of another point made by Webster is the pastor who defines his target audience as people he would like to spend a vacation with. Webster comments,

I fear that the church has exalted personal preference over Christian mission and has confused discernment with discrimination. The proclamation of the gospel and the character of the household of faith challenge the baby boomer market profile (72).

Webster has written with an irenic spirit, with a good understanding of what the modern church growth movement is saying, and with the recognition of the positive elements of this movement insofar as they desire to share Christ with the lost. But he also instills a much needed mid-flight correction.

He concludes his volume (154-59) with twenty-four practical suggestions for the household of faith. In this reviewer's opinion, these suggestions alone are worth more than the price of the book. If the churches of America would take them seriously and implement them fully, the direction of the American church would change drastically for the better, which is also the biblical way.

David F. Wells. *No Place For Truth: Or, Whatever Happened To Evan-*

gelical Theology? Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1993. 318 pp. \$24.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Richard L. Mayhue, Professor of Pastoral Ministries.

David Wells, the Andrew Mutch Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, supplies an incisive analysis of evangelicalism in 1990's. Many would consider Wells an alarmist; this reviewer commends him for his courageous realism. Wells pulls no punches and withholds no commentary for the sake of winning friends and influencing people. This provocative work will excite the reader regardless of his perspective. The author demonstrates keen historical insight rarely encountered in analyses of religious movements.

His thorough introduction charting the course of the study evidences the excellence of the whole book. He illustrates the heart of the issue with a classroom vignette that apparently occurred early in his theology-teaching career. A student approached him and asked, "Was it right to spend so much money on a course of study that was so irrelevant to my desire to minister to people in the church?"

The question of that theology student, according to Wells, is the question evangelicalism asks today. He writes, "I have watched with growing disbelief as the evangelical church has cheerfully plunged into astounding theological illiteracy. Many taking the plunge seem to imagine that they are simply following a path to success, but the effects of this great change in the evangelical soul are evident in every incoming class in the seminaries, in most publications, in the great majority of churches, and in most of their pastors. It is a change so large and so encompassing that those who dissent from what is happening are easily dismissed as individuals who cannot get along, who want to scruple over what is inconsequential, who are not loyal, and who are, in any case, quite irrelevant."

To set the record straight, he defines theology in its broadest sense as "the cogent articulation of the knowledge of God." He asserts that the place of theology is in the church, on the lips of preachers, and in the lives of the saints. In the introduction, he prepares the reader to deal with such ideas as modernity, post-modernity, secularization, privatization, consumerism, and culturalization.

Wells writes, "My central purpose is to explore why it is that theology is disappearing. . . . It is not theology alone in which I am interested, but theology that is driven by a passion for truth. And it is not evangelicalism alone in which I am interested, but evangelicalism as the contemporary vehicle for articulating the historical protestant orthodoxy." He pursues that purpose in two major sections of the book. In the first (chaps. 1-2), he analyzes the history and culture of the United States as a background for past influences on current experience. He argues that secularism is restructuring Christian

ministry.

In part two (chaps. 3-8), he assesses the current time. He notes, "The disappearance of theology from the life of the church, and the orchestration of that disappearance by some of its leaders, is hard to miss today but, oddly enough, not easy to prove. It is hard to miss in the evangelical world in the vacuous worship that is so prevalent, for example, in the shift from God to the self as the central focus of faith, in the psychologized preaching that follows this shift, in the erosion of its conviction, in its strident pragmatism, in its inability to think incisively about the culture, in its reveling in the irrational." In chap. 4, "Self-piety," he treats the lineage of anemic evangelicalism that, according to Wells, finds its roots in Harry Emerson Fosdick, was carried forward by Norman Vincent Peale, and is now popularized by Robert Schuller. Also, he discusses the psychologizing of Christianity.

His brief but cogent discussion of Christian leadership (214-17) is worth the price of the book. He pleads strongly for leaders who will lead in place of leaders who research the direction of their charge and then jump in front to give the appearance of leadership.

Chapter 6, "The New Disablers," is worth more than the price of this volume. These few pages (218-57) contain the clearest analysis of the current crisis among pastors that this reviewer has read. He discerns two models of pastoral ministry that are vying for recognition by seminarians and pastors (1) the biblical model and (2) the modern professional model. This is must reading for anyone in ministry. It helps explain the turmoil and the less than enthusiastic response to biblical ministry that currently prevails. He elaborates on the privatization of Christianity, the psychologizing of the church, and the professionalization of the pastor, and then on how all of them have brought a debilitating impact on "evangelicalism."

Wells' last two chapters point the church back to God, His character, and His revelation. The concluding chapter summarizes his ideas and looks ahead to a solution. Though the author does not provide a full-blown remedy for the abandonment of presuppositional theology that characterizes evangelicalism today, he does recognize that criticism alone will not bring positive change. He plans another book that will build on this analysis and call for a new reformation and the recovery of biblical dissent against intrusive modernity in the church and the seduction of evangelicalism by a man-centered theology.

We commend David Wells for his forthright historical analysis and profound evaluation of evangelicalism. He suggests that such "untouchable" entities as *Christianity Today*, *Leadership*, Christian publishers, the church growth movement, seminaries, and pastors who are more interested in being professional than being a prophet for God, have all contributed to the decline of evangelical impact. Wells, better than most, has addressed the question, "Why is evangelicalism

larger than ever today but having a dramatically reduced influence on both the church and society?"

In this reviewer's opinion, *No Place For Truth* is mandatory reading for anyone interested in evangelicalism's future. Every Christian could profit from this superlative diagnosis of an anemic Christianity that sometimes is more American than Christian and which has seemingly lost its biblical/theological reference point in God and the Scriptures.