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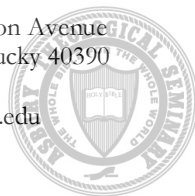
The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies intends to promote the hermeneutical approach to the study of the Scriptures generally known as Inductive Biblical Studies. By Inductive Biblical Study (IBS) we mean the hermeneutical movement initiated by William Rainey Harper and Wilbert Webster White that was embodied in the curriculum of the The Biblical Seminary in New York founded in 1900. This approach had precursors in the history of interpretation and has since the beginning of the twentieth-century enjoyed widespread dissemination, being taught at such institutions as Princeton Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, Fuller Theological Seminary, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Azusa Pacific University, and Asbury Theological Seminary, as well as hundreds of other institutions and organizations around the world.

The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies

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From the Editors

Fredrick J. Long

Major Structural Relationships (MSRs) are foundational for observation and interpretation in Inductive Bible Study (IBS). In *JIBS* 1.1 (2014): 22–58, I set forth a history and accounting of MSRs within the practice of IBS. In that article (pp. 25–26), I indicated a desire to return to investigate the relationship of MSRs to "Vital Relations" that described ways in which ideas and concepts are conceived within the field of Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT). After presenting a conference paper on this and with some additional editing, I am happy here to see this research published in the first article "Vital Relations and Major Structural Relationships: Heuristic Approaches to Observe and Explore Biblical and Other Discourse" (pp.92–128). After briefly orienting readers to CIT and IBS and the use of VRs and MSRs within each approach, the article concludes by investigating the presence of VRs and MRs within several New Testament passages.

Caleb T. Louden next in "The Chiastic Arrangement of the Lukan Temptation Narrative" (pp. 129–54) applies a rigorous method for assessing the viability of observed chiasms (from the dissertation of Craig Arnold Smith) working with the order of temptations in Luke 4:1–14a. It is customary to understand the difference in the order of the temptations between Matthew and Luke to be thematic differences of the two Gospels; Matthew's order ends with the temptation to gain all the kingdoms of the world whereas Luke ends with the temptation to be saved from death at the temple. However, Louden shows that each Gospel writer stresses the "all the kingdoms temptation" in different ways: Matthew ends climactically with it while Luke places it in the center of a chiasm. Louden first presented this research in my

NT901 NT Research Methods class, and it is great to see his excellent work published now for others to read.

Rick Boyd next presents his research on "The Role of Hebrews 1:1–4 in the Book of Hebrews" (pp. 155–81). This article reflects Boyd's deep knowledge of the book of Hebrews arising from his dissertation work under the supervision of David R. Bauer at the London School of Theology to be published as *Sonship as the Central Theological Motif and Unifying Theme of Hebrews*. Hence, the research in this article is deep and comes from the world's expert on the sonship of Jesus in the Book of Hebrews. One will not find an article more carefully researched and thoroughly grounded in Scripture than Boyd's welcome contribution to this issue of *JIBS*.

Next, IBS has applicability in various languages and cultural settings. Classes once labelled "EB" (English Bible) at Asbury Theological Seminary are no longer so called for good reason. Daniel Nii Aboagye Aryeh in his article "Contemporary Hermeneutics: An Examination of Selected Works of J. D. K. Ekem on Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics for the African Context" argues well that for the average Christian, the study of Scripture should take place in one's mother tongue. Following the work of Ghanaian scholar Ekem, Aryeh surveys the hermeneutical landscape of Africa and aptly articulates the need for "mother tongue biblical hermeneutics" (MTBH) which completely aligns with the foundation and viewpoint of IBS.

Finally, Brian D. Russell shares "The Story of My Work with IBS" (pp. 21–24). More than a story, Russell describes his missional approach of moving from Bible study to its missional application today. before each of us continued on to complete our doctoral work. Here we learn how Russell has come to his Missional Hermeneutics and his passion for teaching IBS in the light of God's mission in Christ. On a personal note, a very enjoyable time for me was working alongside Brian as Teaching Fellows of Hebrew and Greek at Asbury Theological Seminary in the early 1990s.

As editors we hope you enjoy this issue. We are particularly grateful for the editorial assistance and typesetting work of Joseph Hwang and Benjamin J. Snyder as well as the assistance of Michael Kuney.

Vital Relations and Major Structural Relationships: Heuristic Approaches to Observe and Explore Biblical and Other Discourse[1]

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Abstract

In their book, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (2002), Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner describe within Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT) a set of "vital relations" (VRs) at the core of meaning making that compress and blend ideas simultaneously. "Compression in blending networks operates on a surprisingly small set of relations rooted in fundamental human neurobiology and shared social experience. These vital relations, which include Cause-Effect, Change, Time, Identity, Intentionality, Representation, and Part-Whole, not only apply across mental spaces but also define essential topology within mental spaces" (xiii). Additional VRs include Role, Analogy, Disanalogy, Property, Similarity, Category, Intentionality, and Uniqueness. Taken as a whole, these VRs correspond quite well with Major Structural Relationships (MSRs) as used in Inductive Bible Study (IBS), which include Recurrence, Comparison, Contrast, Introduction, Causation, Substantiation, Generalization, Particularization, Summarization, Problem-Solution, Instrumentation, Pivot, and Climax. These MSRs are ubiquitous and observable across all types of human

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[1] The following article is a revision of a paper that I presented at the session of "Cognitive Linguistics in Biblical Interpretation" at the Annual SBL, Atlanta, Sunday, Nov 22, 2015.

communication. The observation of MSRs occurs at all levels of discourse (phrases, clause, paragraph, sections, units, and discourse as a whole). In written discourse, these relations are both explicitly marked through conjunctions and particles and implicitly indicated through literary arrangement and inference. This article explores how VRs and MSRs mutually inform one another, and illustrate through many examples how the application of VRs and MSRs may successfully instruct students of Scripture, not only to make acute observations of biblical materials, but also of all human discourse.

Key Terms: Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT), Inductive Bible Study (IBS), Major Structural Relationships (MSR), Vital Relations (VR), Blending Theory

Introduction

Biblical discourse, like other discourse, selectively and efficiently compresses notions using logical-semantic relationships explicitly or implicitly within and between units of discourse including words, phrases, clauses, paragraphs, and sections. Indeed, the processes involved in the conception, inception, and reception of communication are complex and can be described at multiple levels, from morphological components, surface level grammar, discourse organization, and pre-cognitive capacities. [2] For discourse organization and grammar, Inductive Bible Study (IBS) posits the existence of major structural relationships (MSRs) that students can learn as heuristic tools to depict and explain the relationships between discursive components of communication. Sometimes MSRs are grammatically marked explicitly in discourse through conjunctions and other semantic devices. For pre-cognitive

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[2] My discourse model depicting conception, inception, and reception is described in my *Koine Greek Grammar: A Beginning-Intermediate Exegetical and Pragmatic Handbook*, Accessible Greek Resources and Online Studies (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2015), 1–3.

capacities, Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner in their book, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (2002), have described a Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT) that accounts for meaningful blending of concepts in linguistic and non-linguistic expression. A core feature of CIT is the presence of Vital Relations (VRs) that both govern and are recognizable in the blending. The purpose of this article is to explore some of the conceptual commonalities between VRs and MSRs and what implications this may have for biblical interpreters. Time does not allow me to account for the full theory of IBS and CIT; however, a brief overview of each approach will be given before considering the similarities of VRs with MSRs. Then, I will provide specific examples of analyzing biblical materials by recognizing VRs and MSRs before concluding.

Vital Relations (VRs) within Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT)

VRs are integral to CIT. Since explicit language is underspecified and grammar does not fully explicate meaning relations, CIT "posits a system of backstage cognition that includes partitioning, mapping, structure project, and dynamic mental simulation."[3] The mapping occurs between mental spaces and involves the blending of notions. As summarized by Fauconnier and Turner, "Conceptual blending is a general cognitive operation" that may be seen in linguistics in "*conceptual change, grammatical constructions, construal and rhetoric, metaphor,* [and] *counterfactuals*"; this conceptual blending has multiple functions: "*compression of space, time, causality, change, and other vital relations; event integration, problem solving, novel action and design, scientific innovation, humor, literary and other artistic effects, transfer of emotions, conceptualization, rhetorical strategies....*"[4]

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[3] Seana Coulson and Todd Oakley, "Blending Basics," *Cognitive Linguistics* 11.3/4 (2000): 175–96 at 178.

[4] Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, "Analysis Versus Global Insight: How and Why Do We Blend Cause and Effect?" (n.d.) paper presented at the University
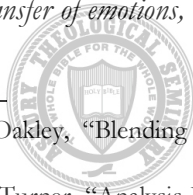
In brief, Fauconnier and Turner's model describes the blending of mental spaces to produce efficient, meaningful, human scale design for communication and action. Nihada Delibegović Džanić explains:

> Behind the possibilities for conceptual blending, there is an entire system of interacting principles. In order to explain one of the products of this system, it is necessary to tackle the entire system. This system rests on conceptual compression, which has an effect on a set of relations strongly influenced by shared social experience and fundamental human neurobiology. These relations are also referred to as vital relations.[5]

There are four core elements of the blending:

1. two or more input spaces with notional elements (I_1 and I_2);
2. a conventional framework (generic space) that functions as an interface to relate notions topologically from the two different input spaces;
3. a set of fifteen or more "outer-space" VRs that organize and connect notions between the input spaces (see these VRs listed below);
4. finally, a blended space in which "inner-space" vital relations are compressed and maximized into emergent structures that sustain reasoning.[6]

These basic constituents of spaces and VR connections are typically depicted as follows:[7]

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of California Berkley, accessed Nov 10, 2015 at http://markturner.org/ucbhandout.rtf.

[5] Džanić, "Conceptual Integration Theory—The Key for Unlocking the Internal Cognitive Choreography of Idiom Modification," *Jezikoslovlje* 8.2 (2007): 169–91 at 175.

[6] See Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 92–93.
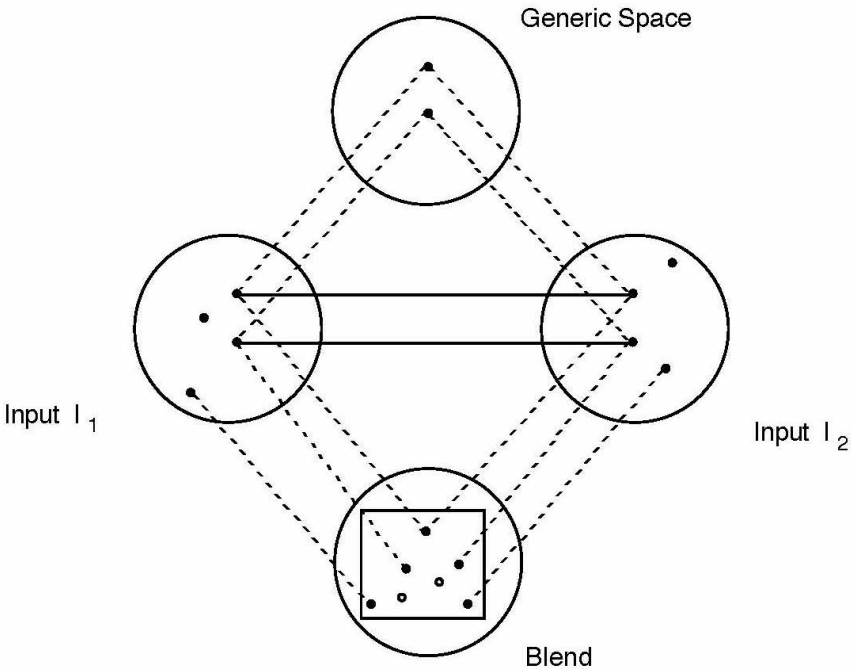
The solid lines moving between inputs (I_1 and I_2) are "outer-space" VRs and the dotted lines moving between spaces that move into the compressed blended space are "inner-space" VRs. Seana Coulson and Todd Oakley explain, "Because elements in one mental space often have counterparts in other spaces, an important component of mental space theory involves establishing mappings between elements and relations in different spaces. These mappings can be based on a number of different sorts of relations, including identity, similarity, analogy, and pragmatic functions based on metonymy [attribute represents whole], synecdoche [part represents whole and vice versa], and representation."[8] These are VRs and Fauconnier and Turner describe fifteen VRs: Change, Identity, Time, Space, Cause-Effect, Part-Whole, Representation, Intentionality, Role, Analogy,

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[7] E.g., Gilles Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 151 (figure 6.4).

[8] Coulson and Oakley, "Blending Basics," 177.

Disanalogy, Property, Similarity, Category, Intentionality, and Uniqueness.[9]

Originally called "[space-]connectors" in Mental Space Theory,[10] VRs were not always explicitly integral to Fauconnier and Turner's theoretical description of conceptual integration. In their lengthy 1998 article, which reads as an extended précis of *The Way We Think* of 2002, vital relationships are not named as such but are simply "connectors" and hardly play any role in their analysis.[11] A year earlier in 1997, Fauconnier in his *Mappings in Thought and Language* called them "mental space connectors" and "space mappings," yet does not treat them extensively but rather incidentally in his analyses; he identifies Identity, Value-Role, Analogy, Counterfactual, and Drama.[12] Importantly, these last two are not later listed as VRs; "drama" is rather a frame and "counterfactual" is a mode of argumentation that can be analyzed using mental space. But, in the book *The Way We Think* (2002), VRs obtain a very prominent function and robust description in multiple places (ch. 6 and *passim*) and five of the seven "governing principles for compression" directly concern them.[13]

Such blending occurs quickly in human communication and its reception. As Coulson and Oakley argue, "meaning construction is

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[9] The Way We Think, 93–102

[10] Gilles Fauconnier, Mental Spaces: Aspects of Meaning Construction in Natural Language (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985).

[11] Gilles Fauconnier and Mark B. Turner, "Conceptual Integration Networks," *Cognitive Science* 22.2 (1998): 133–87. When describing the optimality principles, connectors or vital relationships are not mentioned at all. All that is said is the following: Connectors and conceptual connections also operate at all levels, linking mental spaces and other domains for coreference, for metonymy (Nunberg, 1978), and for analogy and metaphor (Turner, 1991: Sweetser, 1990)" (134). This article was updated in 2001 and is available here at https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1292966.

[12] Fauconnier, *Mappings in Thought and Language*, 15–16, 57, 59, 61, 106, 108–9, 121–22, etc.

[13] Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 324–25.

successful because speakers utilize background knowledge, general cognitive abilities, and information from the immediate discourse context to help them decide when to partition incoming information and how to establish mappings among elements in different spaces."[14] Within an evolutionary model of human development, the ability to blend is an advantageous adaptation for survival. Within an instantaneous creation model, this ability to blend is part of the fabric of the human brain for optimal cognition, human communication, and flourishing. Instructive for how blending occurs quickly in animal cognition, one can find numerous YouTube videos that show cat owners secretly placing a cucumber or zucchini behind a distracted cat (often eating); the cat then turns to see the long green object behind them which often elicits an immediate scramble (jumping or scattering) in a panic.[15] Evidently, upon seeing the new object, the cats blend it with something life-threatening, perhaps a snake or lizard from their feral past. The mapping occurs rapidly as a survival response in the face of danger from which a fast escape is necessary. My dogs do something similar when they see a stranger approaching, even if it is me wearing a different shirt or having put on a hat. On one occasion, simply hanging my suit jacket on a doorknob prompted the same "danger" alert response (barking and hackles up) when the dogs first observed the humanlike shape newly present.

For humans, we commonly see blending and VRs at work through visual advertisements, although by no means is CIT and VRs applicable only to such. For instance, Turner and Fauconnier discuss among many other posters and ads the "Warning: Smoking Causes Impotence" ad. These words were placed above a cowboy holding a limp cigarette. The effectiveness of the ad is accomplished by mapping the "impotent man" space onto the "(Marlboro) virile smoking cowboy" space through the generic "sexual man" space all

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[14] Coulson and Oakley, "Blending Basics," 178.

[15] One such compilation is found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNycdfHEgBc

the while incorporating an important change (the limp cigarette) that compresses cause-effect, time, and analogy.[16] Although an anti-cigarette ad may appear somewhat trivial, in fact, this particular ad reflected "a multimillion-dollar campaign directed against rich and powerful industries"; moreover, the blending in human communication may entail matters of "spiritual life and death" as in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.[17]

In terms of methodology, blending theorists have described different governing constraints for the use and interrelation of VRs that include optimality principles as well as compression or decompression that tighten or expand VRs.[18] Importantly, VRs may or may not be explicitly signaled in the "immediate discourse context." A methodical procedure may be followed: An interpreter will, first, identify a proposed example of discourse; second, describe each space in the integration network, beginning with the input and generic spaces; third, identify mappings and relations between elements. Then, the blended space is analyzed respective to the input spaces: "In such descriptions, it is important to characterize the differences between the structure evoked in the blended space and each of the inputs… [which] is how the analyst justifies the claim that conceptual blending gives rise to the emergent structure that frequently sustains reasoning."[19]

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[16] For a brief analysis, see Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 81–82. My additions to their discussion was the "sexual male" generic space and the presence of the VRs time and analogy.

[17] Ibid., 82–83. Fauconnier and Turner briefly discuss a pericope in Dante.

[18] Coulson and Oakley summarize six governing principles ("Blending Basics," 186) while Fauconnier and Turner describe optimality principles (*The Way We Think*, 327–33).

[19] Coulson and Oakley, "Blending Basics," 180.

Major Structural Relationships within IBS[20]

The identification of MSRs and their utilization in the study of the Bible was prompted by the art theorist John Ruskin in his *The Elements of Drawing in Three Letters to Beginners* (1857), who described "compositional laws" of painting that he recognized also could be applied to musical and literary composition. The earliest practitioners of Inductive-Compositional Bible Study, namely, William Rainey Harper, Yale Semitist Professor and founder of The University of Chicago, and especially his pupil Wilbert W. White, a Yale-trained Hebraist who founded The Biblical Seminary in New York, began to develop Ruskin's compositional laws. White's students became professors and Inductive Bible Study has spread and been taught at such institutions as Princeton Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, Fuller Theological Seminary, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Azusa Pacific University, and Asbury Theological Seminary, as well as hundreds of other institutions and organizations around the world.[21] Subsequently, professors, students, and practitioners have continued to describe and apply these compositional laws as MSRs, which include Recurrence, Comparison, Contrast, Introduction, Causation, Substantiation, Generalization, Particularization, Summarization, Problem-Solution, Instrumentation, Pivot, and Climax. Supporting MSRs include inclusio (bracketing), chiasm, alternation, and intercalation (insertion).

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[20] For a survey of the history and nomenclature of MSRs, see Fredrick J. Long, "Major Structural Relationships: A Survey of Origins, Development, Classifications, and Assessment," *The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 1.1 (2014): 22–58 available at http://place.asburyseminary.edu/jibs/vol1/iss1/3. The most definitive description of inductive Bible study is by David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011).

[21] See David R. Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study: History, Character, and Prospects in a Global Environment," *The Asbury Journal* 68.1 (2013): 6–35 and the chart showing academic and other institutions that have connection with the IBS movement in Long, "Major Structural Relationships," 28.

In terms of methodology, since MSRs may be observed at all levels of discourse (phrases, clause, paragraph, sections, units, and discourses as a wholes) and since in written discourse these relations are both explicitly marked through conjunctions and particles and implicitly indicated through literary arrangement and inference, the workflow begins by identifying the unit boundaries. Next one observes and initially describes the structural breaks present in the unit; typically, there will be MSRs operative across such breaks. One then asks questions about the dynamics of the observed MSRs. Then as the process of IBS continues, students will select questions needing to be answered and collect evidence pertaining to answering them. Finally, after drawing inferences from the evidence to postulate plausible interpretations, one weighs the evidence to determine the best interpretation. Further steps after arriving at an interpretation include evaluation, appropriation, and constructing biblical theology. Thus, for example, after identifying the structural unit of Matt 5:13–16, one may depict and describe its MSRs as follows:[22]

A. First Section (5:13): Metaphor of Salt with *Comparison, Contrast,* and *Caused Question*

1. First Metaphor: "You are the salt of the earth." This entails Comparison between "you" and "salt." Since these two entities are not obviously comparable, we anticipate an explanation of some kind, which in fact follows.

2. This is elaborated by way of Contrast articulated as a question (how to be restored) indicating an underlying problem (Interrogation) that involves a move from cause to effect (Causation):

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[22] Fredrick J. Long, *In Step with God's Word: Interpreting the New Testament as God's People*, GlossaHouse Hermeneutics & Translation 1 (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2017), 154.

"<u>But</u> if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?"

Cause

Effect as a Question

"It is no longer good for anything,

    <u>except</u> to be thrown out and trampled by men."

Cause   **Effect**

B. Second Section (5:14–15): Metaphor of Light with *Comparison*, *Contrast*, and *Causation*

1. Second Metaphor: "You are the light of the world." Again, this entails Comparison.

2. This is elaborated by way of implicit Comparison (you are a city) within a statement of denial followed by another dual Comparison (lamp is to city as hidden is to being under a bowl) and a Contrast ("instead") that describes a positive Causation (lamp on stand → gives light to everyone in the house).

Denial: "A city on a hill <u>cannot</u> be hidden." (implicit Comparison)

Comparison: 15 "<u>Neither</u> do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl."

Contrast: "<u>Instead</u> they put it on its stand,

Cause   and it gives light to everyone in the house."

Effect

C. Third Section (5:16): Final Exhortation with *Comparison*, *Purpose*, and *Solution*.

16 "In the same way, let your light shine before men,

    (in order) that they may see your good deeds

Cause

    and praise your Father in heaven.

Effect

Means

↓

End

This third section has an explicit Comparison ("In the same way"), a move from means to end (Instrumentation), and an implied solution to the problem/question of 5:13 (Interrogation). Notice throughout that MSRs may often be graphically depicted.

At a paragraph level, Robert A. Traina has depicted Ps 23 as follows:[23]
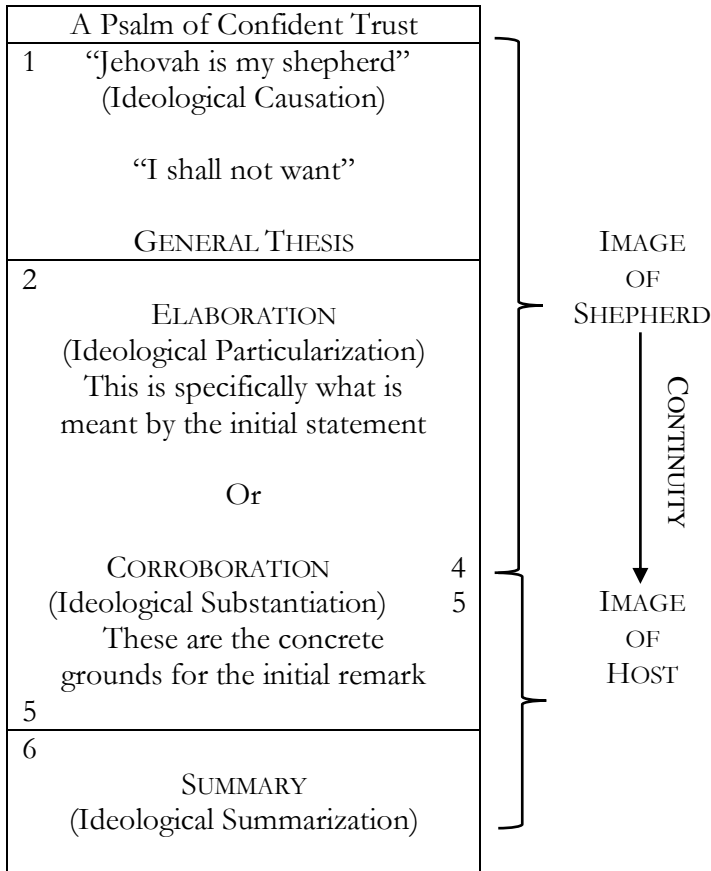
For book-level depictions and charts, see those by Traina as well as by David R. Bauer and Traina.[24]

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[23] Recreated from Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*, repr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 239 (Appendix A). For John 5 and Jas 2, see 240–41. For Ps 8, see Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 174 (Figure 25).

MSRs may be applied to any communication, including movies. For example, the movie *Saving Private Ryan* begins and ends with an elderly man with his family (including numerous grandchildren) in the cemetery of soldiers at a gravesite (this is called Inclusio, a supporting MSR). After this initial scene, the movie includes Recurrence of conflict (World War II), a Problem that needs resolution (Captain John H. Miller was sent to find and save Private Ryan since all Ryan's brothers have tragically died already in the war), and then builds to a Climax (Spoiler Alert: Captain Miller is shot and dying with a revolver in hand shooting at an oncoming German tank); then we return to the final cemetery scene (Inclusio) and understand more fully the Solution to the Problem: The elderly man at the cemetery is Private Ryan with his whole family and the gravesite is Captain Miller's. So, Problem-Solution, Recurrence of conflict, Climax, and Inclusio work powerfully together to convey the story.

Comparing Vital Relations and Major Structural Relationships

VRs are similar to MSRs in their nomenclature; this may indicate that the interpretive approaches of IBS and CIT may complement one another. However, in addition to similar nomenclature which can be substantially correlated (see Chart 1 below), substantial warrant for correlating the two models as modes of careful observation and analysis of communication comes from the fact that VRs and MSRs share at least seven significant similarities:

1) both work with an assumption that "[l]anguage implies more than it explicitly states";[25]

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[24] E.g., for the Book of Joshua and 1 Samuel, see Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*, 242–43; for 2 Timothy, see Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 137.

[25] As applied to mental spaces by Todd Oakley and Anders Hougaard, "Mental Spaces and Discourse Analysis," in *Mental Spaces in Discourse and Interaction*, ed. Todd Oakley and Anders Hougaard (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 2008), 1–50 at 5. The underspecification of language undergirds mental space theory and blending theory (Seana Coulson and Todd Oakley, "Blending Basics," *Cognitive Linguistics* 11.3/4 [2000]: 175–96 esp. 177–78).

2) both arise out of the conception and/or analysis of spaces; IBS drew upon seminal insights of John Ruskin about compositional laws related to art, music, and literature and indeed often depicts discursive observations by diagrams, etc.

3) both encourage and rely upon spatial configuration and conceptualization of the discourse spaces;[26]

4) both involve types of "relations" between elements within conceived or pre-conscious space that have analogy and immediate correlation to each other;

5) both allow for the existence of additional relationships than those listed and/or described;[27]

6) both allow for the combination of relations with one another. Within CIT, "Cause-Effect can be added to Analogy. Intentionality can be added to Cause-Effect. Representation can be added to Cause-Effect. Change usually comes with Uniqueness or Identity."[28] Robert A. Traina says, "structural laws are often used in combination";[29] and,

7) finally, both are concerned with "interpretation," i.e., reconstructing and understanding human communication (written or pictorial) via these relations. Performing CIT analysis is recreative: "constructing both the input spaces and the connections between them is often a highly creative act."[30] IBS is "Re-Creative Study."[31]

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[26] Passim within mental conception analyses; for IBS, see, e.g., Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*, Appendix A (235–43).

[27] Traina says, "the preceding list [of sixteen structural relations] is not all inclusive. For the types of arrangement used in some passages are difficult to categorize. In addition, there are variations of the relations which have been mentioned. But most of the laws are contained in the preceding list…" (*Methodical Bible Study*, 53). For CIT, this may be more inferred than stated outright. Before listing them, Fauconnier and Turner state, "The vital relations we will encounter repeatedly are these: …" (101) and then "Vital relations are what we live by, but they are much less static and unitary than we imagine" (*The Way We Think*, 102).

[28] Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 102.

[29] Traina, Methodical Bible Study, 53.

[30] Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*, 105.

[31] Ch.4 of Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 42–49.

Moreover, it is possible to map VRs and MSRs onto each other, that is, to create a blend with very little "left-over." The following chart briefly defines and correlates VRs and MSRs as well as includes standard interpretive questions for MSRs.

Chart 1: Comparison and Contrast of VRs[32] and MSRs[33] with interpretive questions
1. **CHANGE**: a vital relation that connects one element to another element and sets of elements to other sets; mental spaces are not static, and because of that this vital relation can be present within a single mental space.
→ entails **RECURRENCE**: The repetition of the same or similar terms, phrases, or other elements.   **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of this recurring element (specify what recurs)? <u>Modal</u>: How do the individual occurrences relate to and illumine one another? <u>Rational</u>: Why this recurrence? <u>Implications?</u>
2. **IDENTITY**: a product of complex, unconscious work; despite their differences, mental spaces are connected with relations of personal identity; objective resemblance and shared visible characteristics are not criteria for identity connections across spaces; it is not obligatory for the identity connectors to be one-to-one across spaces;
3. **TIME**: a vital relation connected to memory, change, understanding the relationship of cause and effect;
4. **SPACE**: a vital relation that brings inputs separated in input spaces into a single physical space within the blended space;
→ IDENTITY, TIME, and SPACE are not uncommon features of **INTRODUCTION**   **INTRODUCTION OR PREPARATION-REALIZATION**: The background or setting for events or ideas.   **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of this background material? <u>Modal</u>: How does it prepare for what follows? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer prepare for what follows in this way? <u>Implications?</u>
5. **CAUSE–EFFECT**: a vital relation that connects one element, as a cause, with another element that counts as its effect;

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[32] The descriptions of this summary are rearranged, but are from Džanić, "Conceptual Integration Theory."

[33] This summary is slightly modified from David R. Bauer lecture notes, but is essentially the same as in Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*.

=**CAUSATION**: The movement from cause to effect. (*Involves implicitly preparation/realization*.)
Key terms: **Therefore, Thus, So, Consequently**. **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What are the major elements involved in this movement from cause to effect, and what is the meaning of each? <u>Modal</u>: How does this cause produce this effect? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this causation? <u>Implications?</u>

=**SUBSTANTIATION**: The movement from effect to cause. (*Involves implicitly preparation/realization*.)
Key terms: **For, because, since**. **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What are the major elements involved in this movement from effect to cause, and what is the meaning of each? <u>Modal</u>: How does the substantiatory passage cause (i.e., support, or give reasons for) the preceding passage? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this substantiation? <u>Implications?</u>

→entailed often within **INTERROGATION**: A problem or question, followed by its solution or answer. (*Involves implicitly preparation-realization, and often causation. The problem-solution type involves contrast.*)
Questions for the Problem-Solution Type: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of the problem presented here? What are the major elements involved in the movement from problem to solution, and what is the meaning of each? <u>Modal</u>: How is this problem solved? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this interrogation? <u>Implications?</u>
Questions for the Question-Answer Type: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of this question? <u>Modal</u>: How does the answer address this question, and what is the full and precise meaning of this answer? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this interrogation? <u>Implications?</u>

6. **REPRESENTATION**: it is possible for one input to have a representation of the other; in the conceptual integration network one input corresponds to the item represented and the other to the element that represents it; <u>Comment</u>: This "counterpart" may simply be a function of mapping; it may be related to **COMPARISON**.

7. **PART–WHOLE**: a vital relation that fuses part–whole mappings across spaces into one;

=**GENERALIZATION**: The movement from particular to general. (*Involves implicitly preparation-realization*.)
Questions: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of the particular statement? <u>Modal</u>: How is the particular statement generalized in the material that follows? How does the general statement illumine the particulars? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this movement from particular to general? <u>Implications?</u>

= **PARTICULARIZATION** (See after 8., 9., and 10. below)

= **SUMMARIZATION**: An abridgment (summing up) either preceding

or following a unit of material. *(Sometimes very similar to a general statement, but contains more specifics than a general statement*.)   **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What elements are involved in this summarization? <u>Modal</u>: How does this passage summarize the material that precedes (or follows)? How does the preceding material illumine this summarization? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this summarization? <u>Implications</u>?
8. **ROLE**: within the conceptual integration network one element, as a role, can be connected to another element that is regarded as being its value;
9. **PROPERTY**: an inner-space vital relation that links certain elements with their property; an outer–space vital relation of some kind is compressed into an inner space vital relation of Property in the blend;
10.   **CATEGORY**: an inner-space vital relation that links elements with categories they belong to; Analogy as an outer-space vital relation can be compressed into an inner space vital relation of Category in the blend;
→ ROLE, PROPERTY, and CATEGORY entail **PARTICULARIZATION**: The movement from the general to the particular. (*Involves implicitly preparation-realization*.)   **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of this general statement? <u>Modal</u>: How is this general statement particularized in the material that follows? How do the particulars illumine the general statement? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this movement from general to particular? <u>Implications</u>?
11. **DISANALOGY**: a vital relation that is based on Analogy; Psychological research has shown that people find it much more difficult to tell the difference between two things that are completely different than between those that are similar in some way;
→ related to **CONTRAST**: The association of things whose differences are stressed by the writer.   **Key terms**: **But, however**. **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What major differences are here emphasized by the writer? What is the precise and specific meaning of each of these differences? <u>Modal</u>: How exactly is the contrast achieved? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer stress these differences, and why did he deal with them as he did? <u>Implications</u>?
12. **ANALOGY**: a vital relation that connects two different blended spaces that through blending obtain the same frame structure; → Related to COMPARISON (see below)
13. **SIMILARITY**: an inner-space vital relation that connects elements with properties they have in common;
=COMPARISON: Association of things whose similarities (likenesses) are stressed by the writer.   **Key terms**: **Like, as**. **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What are the major points of similarity here? What is the precise and specific meaning of each? <u>Modal</u>: How is the comparison achieved? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer stress these similarities, and why did he deal with them as he did? <u>Implications</u>?

14. **INTENTIONALITY**: a vital relation that includes vital relations connected with hope, desire, fear, memory, etc.; this vital relation is extremely important, because our every action, thought, feeling is based on relations it applies to;
→ closely related to **INSTRUMENTATION (MEANS TO END) OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**: The movement from means to end; a statement that declares the end, or purpose, and the means whereby the end is achieved. **Key terms**: **In order that, so that**. (Involves implicitly causation.) **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of the purpose statement itself? <u>Modal</u>: How does this purpose statement illumine the means? How does it illumine the end? How does the means cause/produce the end? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this purpose statement? <u>Implications</u>?
15. **UNIQUENESS**: a crucial vital relation because many vital relations are compressed into Uniqueness into blend.
16.–20.? Other Vital Relationships?
REMAINING MSRs **CLIMAX**: Movement from lesser to greater, toward a high point of culmination and intensity. (*Involves implicitly and element of contrast, and usually causation.*) **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What elements are involved in this climax? What is the meaning of each? <u>Modal</u>: How does this passage reach its climax in (specify the climactic passage)? How does this climactic development illumine the climactic passage, and how does it and the material leading to the climactic passage? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this climax? <u>Implications</u>? **CRUCIALITY**: The device of the pivot to produce a radical reversal or complete change of direction. *(Involves implicitly recurrence of causation and contrast.)* **Questions**: <u>Definitional</u>: What is the meaning of the pivotal passage, and how (specifically and precisely) does the pivotal passage produce this radical change of direction? <u>Modal</u>: How does this cruciality illumine the material on both sides of the pivot? <u>Rational</u>: Why did the writer include this cruciality? <u>Implications</u>?

One can see, then, a great correspondence in meaning, although several VRs and MSRs are outliers: the VRs Representation, Role, Property, Category, and Uniqueness and the MSRs Climax and Cruciality. This raises important questions: Is there room for each interpretive approach to adopt additional relationships? Which ones? Furthermore, what strengths might one approach in its relationships

have with respect to the other relationships? To help explore this latter question, in what follows I will give very brief analyses of biblical materials from the perspective of CIT and IBS while proposing important correspondences and the benefit of further considering the interrelation of VRs and MSRs.

Analyses of Biblical Texts using VRs and MSRs

Example from Ephesians 2:8–10

Within Biblical Studies, Fauconnier and Turner's work was introduced by Greg L. Bloomquist to the Socio-Rhetorical interpretation of Vernon K. Robbins and discussed among contributors in the Rhetoric of Religious Antiquities commentary writing group, of which I am a part.[34] We have spent a fair amount of time wrestling with the notions. Very quickly Robbins understood VRs as "Places of Mental Conception" and associated them with the ancient rhetorical tradition of *topoi*.[35] The chart below locates the VRs within Robbins' synthesis describing "Blended Spaces and Locations in Early Christian Rhetorolects" which has been found in several places, including commentary writing guidelines.[36] I have left out the specifics of Social, Culture, and Ideological Spaces/Places for the sake of space.

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[34] For a more general **"**Bibliography of biblical and theological works using cognitive linguistics," which does not recognize the contributions of the RRA group, see that compiled by John E. Sanders at http://drjohnsanders.com/bibliography-of-biblical-and-theological-works-using-cognitive-linguistics/.

[35] For a description of the various types of ancient Greco-Roman argumentative topoi, see Fredrick J. Long, *Ancient Rhetoric and Paul's Apology: The Compositional Unity of 2 Corinthians*, SNTSMS 131 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 62–70.

[36] This chart, slightly adapted here, is found in full in several locations, e.g. an unpublished paper by Vernon K. Robbins, "Conceptual Blending and Early Christian Imagination," August 18, 2005 and also his *The Invention of Early Christian Discourse Volume 1*, Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity 1 (Blandford Forum, Dorset, UK: Deo, 2009), 109.

Chart 2: "Blended Spaces and Locations in Early Christian Rhetorolects" (abbreviated) by Vernon K. Robbins
PLACES OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS (FIRSTSPACE) [intentionally omitted]
CULTURALLY CONFIGURED SPACES (SECONDSPACE) [intentionally omitted]
PLACES OF BLENDING OR LIVEDSPACE (THIRDSPACE)   [LATER IDENTIFIED AS IDEOLOGICAL] [intentionally omitted]
PLACES OF MENTAL CONCEPTION ○ **Vital Relations**: Cause-effect, change, time, identity, intentionality, representation, part-whole (Fauconnier and Turner, 2002, ch.6) ○ **Formal argumentative topics**: opposites, grammatical forms of the same word, correlatives, more and less, time, turning back upon the opponent, definition, varied meanings, division, induction, previous judgment, parts, consequence, contrast, openly and secretly, analogy, same result, before and after, purpose as cause, for and against, implausible probabilities, contradictions, cause of false impression, cause and effect, better, doing contrary to what has been done, mistakes, meaning of a name (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II.23.1-29 [1397a-1400b]; G. A. Kennedy, *Aristotle, On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* [New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991] 190-204).

In 2005, I presented papers at a Rhetoric of Religious Antiquities Commentary working session and then at the Midwest Region of SBL in which I argued that these topoi should be understood as "Ideational-Relational Topoi" that helped to organize and express the
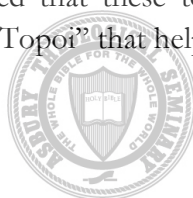
social, cultural, and ideological topoi that Robbins was describing (see figure below).[37]
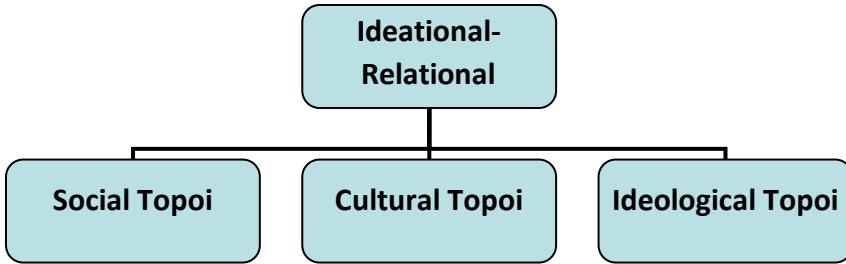
I analyzed various passages including Eph 2:10, Matt 5:16, and Titus 2:11–14; 3:3–7. This research allowed me to justify understanding the general social-cultural framework of Ephesians as Political Discourse that became the Generic Space for my conceptualization and visualization of Ephesians in ongoing research.[38] I began this research by 1) semantically diagramming Eph 2:10, 2) identifying the

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[37] Fredrick J. Long, "Created in Christ Jesus for Good Works" (Eph 2:10a): A Socio-Rhetorical Wisdom Topos in Ephesians, Paul, and Elsewhere" presented February 18-20, 2005 at the Midwest Region of the SBL at Trinity International University, Deerfield, IL.

[38] See Fredrick J. Long, "Ephesians, Letter to the, Critical Issues," ed. John D. Barry and et al., *Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2012); idem, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology in Greco-Roman Political Context," in *Christian Origins and Classical Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament*, ed. S. E. Porter and A. W. Pitts, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 9, Early Christianity in its Hellenistic Context 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 255–309; idem, "Roman Imperial Rule under the Authority of Jupiter-Zeus: Political-Religious Contexts and the Interpretation of 'the Ruler of the Authority of the Air' in Ephesians 2:2," in *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History and Development*, ed. S. E. Porter and A. W. Pitts, Linguistic Biblical Studies 6; Early Christianity in its Hellenistic Environment 3 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 113–54; idem, "Ἐκκλησία in Ephesians as Godlike in the Heavens, in Temple, in Γάμος, and in Armor: Ideology and Iconography in Ephesus and Its Environs," in *The First Urban Churches: Volume 3: Ephesus*, ed. James R. Harrison and Laurence L. Welborn (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2018), 193–234; and Nijay K. Gupta and Fredrick J. Long, "The Politics of Ephesians and the Empire: Accommodation or Resistance?," *JGRChJ* 7 (2010): 112–36.

ideational-relational topoi therein, and then, 3) conceiving of the blending of spaces in its articulation. Each step is explained below.

Step 1: Graphic Depiction of the Text (Initial Assessment of MSRs)

Diagram of Eph 2:10
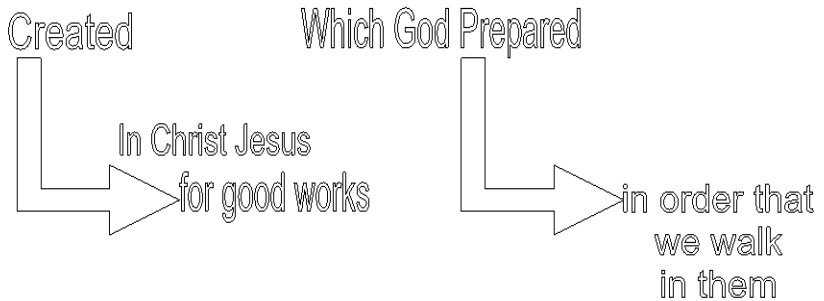
From the perspective of IBS, the MSRs present here would include Substantiation (2:10 supports 2:8–9) and double Instrumentation: in Christ (means) believers are created as God's workmanship (end) and believers are created (means) for good works (end) and in order to walk in good works (end). However, explicitly and implicitly much more is present once we identify VRs (as depicted below).
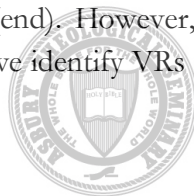
Step 2: Identify Ideational-Relational Topoi (including VRs)

Ideational Relationships/Topoi in Eph 2:10
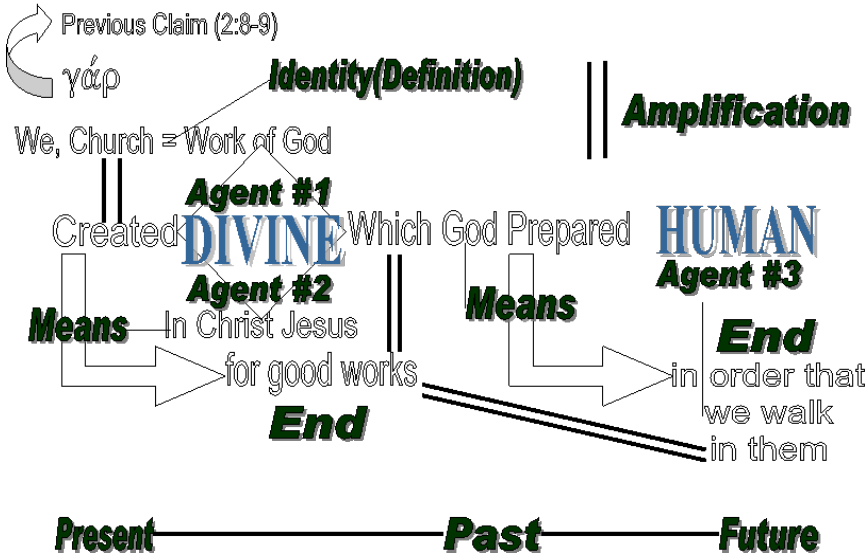
Ephesians 2:10 compresses much information through the use of multiple ideational-relational topoi (VRs) including Identity, Representation, Role, Amplification (Particularization), Intentionality (agencies to an end), and Time (present, past, future). From this compressed argumentation one discerns an underlying story. To retrieve this underlying narrative, we will need to decompress the various blended elements as follows: God (as primary divine agent) has created/founded the church (the "we") as God's own creation. The participle "created/founded" that follows this statement is post-positioned to explain more about what it means for the Church to be God's "workmanship."[39] This research then has caused me to look more closely at "for good works" that translates ἐπί with the dative, which, as suggested by English translations, I had taken to mean

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[39] On post-positioned (or post-nuclear) circumstantial participles, see my discussion in *Koine Greek Grammar*, 326, 333.

"purpose"; but then after further research I concluded that it signified "on the basis of good works" (a basis or cause). In this regard, I realized that the verb "to create" (κτίζω) had more the sense of "to found" as in the founding of a people, nation, colony, cult, association, etc.[40] On this basis, I conducted more research and concluded that 2:8–10 described the foundation steps for the establishment of a people and had significant similarities, e.g., with the narratives of the establishment of Rome as told by Vergil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, etc.—mercy, grace, sacrifice, political body founded as God's work, and a virtuous political leader performing justice and good deeds whose example the people follow.[41] In Ephesians, however, the story is that God has provided Jesus Christ as the secondary divine agent (political leader) as the means by whom the church body (as tertiary agent) would walk in good works in imitation of Jesus. These good works were previously prepared by/conceived of God. We might ask, When? Is this before the creation of time or within time (cf. 1:4)? Regardless, this whole picture of agents, relationships, purposes, and activities is used to support the previous claim in 2:8–9 (through the postpositive conjunction γάρ) that salvation by grace through faith is the sacrificial gift of God.[42] Looking at 2:10 from this perspective gains support as we understand that it continues the storyline begun at the very start of the discourse in 1:3–14, a storyline that blends God's choice of Israel with God's choice as affected in Christ Jesus.

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[40] The first two definitions of κτίζω in the standard Classical lexicon is "*people a country, build houses and cities in it*, … *of a city, found, build*" (LSJ). Classical inscriptions searched at https://epigraphy.packhum.org/ contain over a thousand instances of this verb and its cognate noun κτίστης ("founder").

[41] For details of this interpretation, see Fredrick J. Long, *In Step with God's Word: Interpreting the New Testament as God's People*, GlossaHouse Hermeneutics & Translation 1 (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2017), 177, 193–97, 276.

[42] For a careful and detailed walk through the underlying Greek, see my two contributions on Eph 2:8–10 in Paul Jackson, ed., *Devotions on the Greek New Testament, Volume 2* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 87–92.

So, in view of the advent of Jesus Christ, in 1:3–14 Paul describes the "blessedness" of God and believers through the recontextualization of central notions of God's choice to have a holy people as expressed in important OT passages such as Deut 7:6; 14:2 and Exod 19:5. Below are given the LXX of Deut 14:2 and the Greek text of Eph 1:4 with common ideas or words underlined.

> Eph 1:4 just as <u>He chose us for himself</u> before the foundation of the world, (so) that <u>we would be holy</u> and blameless <u>before Him</u> in love, (*my translation*)
>
> Eph 1:4 καθὼς <u>ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ</u> πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου <u>εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους</u> καὶ ἀμώμους <u>κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ</u> ἐν ἀγάπῃ,
>
> Deut 14:2 For you are a <u>holy</u> people <u>to the Lord your God</u>, and <u>the Lord your God chose</u> you <u>for himself</u> a people of <u>His own possession</u> out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth (*my translation*).
>
> Deut 14:2 (LXX) ὅτι λαὸς <u>ἅγιος</u> εἶ <u>κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου</u>, καὶ <u>σὲ ἐξελέξατο κύριος ὁ θεός σου γενέσθαι σε αὐτῷ</u> λαὸν <u>περιούσιον</u> ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν τῶν ἐπὶ προσώπου τῆς γῆς.

Key notions are 1) God's choice, 2) to have a holy people, 3) in His presence. Supporting this initial allusion to Deuteronomy/Exodus, the final verse of the opening benediction (Eph 1:14), which is one complete sentence in the Greek, concludes by identifying God's people as His "special possession" (περιποίησις). This word overlaps in semantic range with the word περιούσιος ("private possession" L&N 57.5) that is found in Deut 14:2 (LXX) as seen above. Essentially, then, Paul brackets the opening sentence of 1:3–14 with these central affirmations of God's covenantal purposes for Israel to be holy and His special possession among the nations. Now, in the Gospel of Jesus, God's covenantal purposes for His people are realized such that even the nations are invited into God's people.

Step 3: Blending Spaces of God's Covenantal Purposes

Returning to Eph 2:10, then, we may show how the storyline in Ephesians effectively blends Jewish scriptural political topics with distinctly Christian topics (see Chart 3).

Chart 3: Blending in Eph 2:10		
	GENERIC SPACE a. God b. Creation c. Humanity d. Image of God e. Purpose: Productivity	
DEUT 14:2 INPUT 1 a. Agent=God b. Action: Promise & Exodus c. Scope: Israel d. Identity=Holy Possession e. Purpose=Holy/Wise in Law		**INPUT 2 CHRIST EVENT** a. Agent: Christ b. Action: New Creation c. Scope: All Nations d. Identity= Family of God e. Purpose= Salvation
	Blended Space in Eph 2:10 a. God through Christ b. Created in Christ c. us (Jews and Gentiles) d. as God's Work e. to walk in Good Deeds	

The VRs present include Identity, Analogy, Representation, Role, Intentionality, and Uniqueness. Space limits further explanation of the dynamics of blending that are present. However, when looking at 2:10 only from the vantage point of MSRs, much implicit meaning was missed. Considering the presence of VRs led to further investigation and the discovery of a broader network of political topoi that are socially linked to Mediterranean "foundation narratives." So, it would seem that VRs may very well compliment MSRs when making observations and asking interpretive questions.

Example from 1 Corinthians 6:12

More recently, Robert H. von Thaden, Jr. wrote his dissertation under Robbins's direction in which he adeptly merged Robbins's Socio-Rhetorical Interpretive approach with CIT in his analysis of 1 Cor 6:12–7:7. In his analysis among other things, von Thaden describes the presence of the VRs of Analogy, Disanalogy, Part-Whole, Identity, and Similarity.[43] For example, in 1 Cor 6:13c (τὸ δὲ σῶμα οὐ τῇ πορνείᾳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κυρίῳ, "Moreover, the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord") he observes Disanalogy between the body and sexual immorality. The disanalogy, according to von Thaden, "seems to blend Paul's teaching in 3:23 with his instructions in ch.5."[44] Importantly, a careful reading of von Thaden's analysis of 1 Cor 6:12 reveals how his analysis of VRs entails MSRs unwittingly since he observes several MSRs apparently without knowing so (see Chart 4).[45]

For example, von Thaden recognizes Identity as a VR in each sentence. However, in his explanation he also describes Introduction, Contrast, and Comparative statements as well as observes the movement from general to particular scope (Particularization)—all of which entail MSRs. Additionally, in 6:12cd von Thaden observes the combination of Particularization with Comparison. What this indicates is that von Thaden's rich description of the sentences entailed not only VRs but also MSRs. On this basis, it reasonable to conclude that, had von Thaden been aware of and attempted to explicitly describe MSRs in his analysis, this would only have made his descriptive work that much better.

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[43] Robert H. Von Thaden, Jr., "Guiding Socio-Rhetorical Commentary with Conceptual Integration Theory (blending Theory)," *Conversations with the Biblical World* 31 (2011): 184–203; and *Sex, Christ, and Embodied Cognition: Paul's Wisdom for Corinth*, Emory Studies in Early Christianity 16 (Blandford Forum, Dorset, UK: Deo, 2012).

[44] Von Thaden, *Sex, Christ, and Embodied Cognition*, 229.

[45] Von Thaden, *Sex, Christ, and Embodied Cognition*, 208–25.

	1 Cor 6:12-17 (NASB95)	VRs in the Blend	MSRs "wording" of von Thaden *indirectly identified*	Notes
12ab	All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. [Topic-Comment]	Identity[46] (freedom & benefit)	"Introduction" ("opening," "framing," "contrast" "contrasting sub-topics" "comparative sub-comments" (lawful//profitable)	AB AB pattern is an auxiliary MSR called interchange or alternation
12cd	All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. [Topic-Comment]	Identity (freedom & self-mastery)	"contrast" (ἀλλά) "comparative sub-topics" that also move from *general→specific* = "τινος is a lesser group derived from the larger πάντα" verse 12 is "opening texture"	von Thaden here notices the combination of MSRs (comparison w/ general to specific)

Chart 4: Robert Von Thaden's Analysis Identifies VRs and also MSRs (unknowingly)

Example from Matthew 5:1–8:1

In our next example, consider the opening and closing verses of the Sermon on the Mount.[47] The blending and identification of MSRs and VRs are found in Chart 5.

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[46] Von Thaden explains, "the elements organized by the local frames of freedom and beneficial action compress to Identity and become functional equivalents–only those actions that are beneficial can now be described as a true expression of freedom" (*Sex, Christ, and Embodied Cognition*, 215).

[47] For translation, I will often use the NASB95 and then adjust it to more directly reflect the underlying Greek constructions and word order, where possible to do so without straining English sense.

	Generic (Teacher) Space	Questions: Should "posture" be an element in the generic space?
	a. Teacher b. Students c. Potential Students d. Location e. Teaching Activity	
Input 2: God Speaking Intermediary Speaking a. People Called b. Location (Mountain) d. Message (Covenant Call) e.	 <———————> <———————> <———————> <———————>	**Input 1: Event Remembered** a. Jesus b. Disciples c. Crowds d. Place e. Teaching
MSRs **CAUSE → EFFECT (?)** Seeing Crowds→ Jesus went up Jesus sat down → Disciples came **INTRODUCTION** (setting) **GENERAL STATEMENT** (teaching is particularized)	**Event Represented** a. Jesus <u>sitting</u> b. Disciples c. Crowds d. <u>Mountain</u> e. Teaching <u>with open</u> <u>mouth</u>	**VRs** **IDENTITY** **CAUSE-EFFECT** **ROLE → VALUE** **UNIQUENESS** **SPACE**

Chart 5: Blending in Matt 5:1–2

Matt 5:1a Then, seeing the crowds, He [i.e., Jesus] went up on the mountain;

Matt 5:1b and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

Matt 5:2 And opening His mouth, he was teaching them, saying,

Matt 5:3–7:27 … *the particulars of Jesus's teaching* …

Matt 7:28 And it happened, when Jesus had finished these words, that the crowds were being amazed at His teaching;

Matt 7:29 for He was teaching them as a person having authority, and not as their scribes.

Matt 8:1 After He came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him.

The narrative explicates that (only) the disciples went to him on the mountain (5:1b);[48] from this, one may presume that Jesus left the crowds (5:1a). However, the conclusion of the episode is populated with the crowds (7:28) who follow Jesus "after coming down from the mountain" (8:1).

Structurally, we observe a narrative framework in 5:1–2 and 7:28–8:1 that contains many MSRs and VRs which may be helpfully compared (see Chart 6). These verses form an Inclusio around the speech proper that is populated with spaces of Crowds, Jesus, Mountain as well as describes actions of Movement and Teaching. Moreover, both 5:2 and 7:28–29 contain Generalizing or Part-Whole relations since Jesus's teaching content (the Sermon proper in 5:3–7:27) is generalized as proceeding from his "mouth" and "teaching" in 5:2 and as "words" and "teaching" in 7:28–29. Finally, it should be said that the crowds obtained a Property of "being amazed" as a result of Jesus's words and teaching (7:28), which is given Substantiation (support) in 7:29 through affirming a Property of Jesus "having authority" in Contrast to the scribes of the people. In other words, one observes a Cause and Effect relationship. Jesus's teaching with authority (in Contrast to the scribes) is the Cause for the people's response (an Effect). Helpful VR categories that are not accounted for in MSRs include Identity, Role, Property, Uniqueness, and Space. Helpful MSR categories that are not strictly accounted among VRs include Introduction and Inclusio. Thus, it appears that the combined exploration of both MSRs and VRs would only help interpreters by broadening their observational repertoire.

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[48] In Matthew, a mountain may be a place of solitary temptation (4:8), prayer (14:23), special revelation with select individuals (17:1), and teaching/prayer/worship with the disciples (24:3; 26:30; 28:16), but also a place to which Jesus travels followed by crowds (15:29–30).

Chart 6: MSRs and VRs Compared in Matt 5:1–2 and 7:28–8:1			
TEXTUAL PHENOMENA		MSRs	VRs
5:1–2 – setting for speech event identifying participants and location		**Introduction**	**Identity Cause-Effect**
5:2 – Jesus's open mouth and teaching		**General Statement**	**Role → Value Uniqueness Space (Part-Whole?)**
5:3—7:27 Particular Teaching of Jesus		**Particularization** (Particulars)	**(Whole-Part?)**
7:28-29 – "These words" and "teaching"		**Generalization** (General Statement)	**(Part-Whole?)**
7:29 – Jesus obtains PROPERTY of "authority" → – Jesus is not like "their scribes" –Jesus achieves UNIQUENESS		**Contrast**	**Property Disanalogous Uniqueness**
8:1 "When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him."		**Inclusio**	**Space** "of Following"
5:1-2 -crowds -Jesus going up -into the mountain -mouth opened -teaching	**7:28-8:1** -crowds -Jesus going down -from the mountain -these words -teaching	**Inclusio** (Bracketing)	

Example Matthew 5:3–10, 11–12

Another helpful example to compare and contrast VRs and MSRs comes from the Matthean Beatitudes. I have separated 5:3–10 from 5:11–12 in the analysis because 5:11–12 shows a move to second person. Chart 7 describes MRSs in 5:3–10, 11–12.
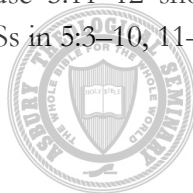
Chart 7: Major Structural Relationships (MSRs) in Matt 5:3–10, 11–12

5:3 "**Blessed** are **the poor in spirit**,
    <u>for</u> theirs is *the kingdom of heaven*.
5:4 "**Blessed** are **those who mourn**,
    <u>for</u> they shall be comforted.
5:5 "**Blessed** are **the gentle**,
    <u>for</u> they shall inherit the earth.
5:6 "**Blessed** are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**,
    <u>for</u> they shall be satisfied.
5:7 "**Blessed** are **the merciful**,
    <u>for</u> they shall receive mercy.
5:8 "**Blessed** are **the pure in heart**,
    <u>for</u> they shall see God.
5:9 "**Blessed** are **the peacemakers**,
    <u>for</u> they shall be called sons of God.
5:10 "**Blessed** are **the ones persecuted because of righteousness**,
    <u>for</u> theirs is *the kingdom of heaven*.

RECURRENCE: "**Blessed-ness**" is repeatedly ascribed as a predication belonging to **the ones possessing certain dispositions or attributes (in bold)**.

RECURRENCE OF SUBSTANTIATION by the use of "for" (ὅτι) providing support for the ascription of blessedness to these individuals.

COMPARISON & CONTRAST WITH SUBSTANTIATION: The individuals are comparable to God, in that they are called "sons of God" while also contrasted with the ones implicitly persecuting them, because of "*righteousness*" (5:6, 10), which specifies the **basis** of these ones being persecuted.

CLIMAX AND CRUCIALITY WITH INCLUSIO: The blessedness predications are bracketed by "*the kingdom of heaven*" (5:3 and 5:10) and culminate in a sudden reversal (cruciality) entailing conflict from persecution.

5:11 "**Blessed** are **you** when they insult **you** and persecute **you**, and falsely say all kinds of evil against **you** <u>because of Me</u>."
5:12a "**Rejoice and be glad**, <u>for</u> **your reward** *in heaven* **is great**;
5:12b <u>for</u> in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before **you**.

PARTICULARIZATION: The discourse moves from 3rd Person to 2nd Person in 5:11–16; such particularization continues with a shift to 1st Person starting at 5:17.

RECURRENCE OF SUBSTANTIATION: In 5:12a with "for" (ὅτι) and in 5:12b with "for" (γάρ).

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST (ELABORATED): The blessed ones are further compared implicitly with Jesus (the "me") and explicitly with "the prophets who were before you"; Moreover, the contrast with further developed specifying the antagonism in 5:11.

SUBSTANTIATION (ELABORATED): The basis of persecution is "righteousness" and "Jesus" (the "me")

CLIMAX, CRUCIALITY, & *HEAVEN* REPEATED (ELABORATED): Elaborating details of persecution and repeating *heaven*.

Likewise, Chart 8 describes VRs in 5:3–10, 11–12 and this is followed by a diagram depicting Generic Space, the two Inputs, and the resulting Blending Space.

Chart 8: Vital Relations (VRs) in Matt 5:3–10, 11–12

5:3 "**Blessed** are **the poor in spirit**, <u>for</u> theirs is *the kingdom of heaven.*
5:4 "**Blessed** are **those who mourn**, <u>for</u> they <u>shall be comforted</u>.
5:5 "**Blessed** are **the gentle**, <u>for</u> they <u>shall inherit</u> *the earth.*
5:6 "**Blessed** are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, <u>for</u> they <u>shall be satisfied</u>.
5:7 "**Blessed** are **the merciful**, <u>for</u> they <u>shall receive mercy</u>.
5:8 "**Blessed** are **the pure in heart**, <u>for</u> they <u>shall see God</u>.
5:9 "**Blessed** are **the peacemakers**, <u>for</u> they <u>shall be called sons of God</u>.
5:10 "**Blessed** are <u>**the ones persecuted because of righteousness**</u>, <u>for</u> theirs is *the kingdom of heaven.*

REPEATED COMPRESSION OF VRS: **Representation with Property, Identity, Uniqueness**, <u>Cause-Effect</u>, <u>Change</u>, and <u>Time</u>
SELECTIVE COMPRESSION OF VRS: *Space*, <u>Analogy</u>, and <u>Disanalogy</u>, <u>Cause-Effect (persecuted b/c righteousness)</u>

5:11 "**Blessed** are <u>**you** when they insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against **you**</u> because of Me."
5:12a "**Rejoice and be glad**, <u>for</u> **your** reward *in heaven* is great;
5:12b <u>for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you</u>.

REPEATED COMPRESSION OF VRS: **Representation with Property, Identity, Uniqueness**, <u>Cause-Effect</u>, <u>Change</u>, and <u>Time</u>
SELECTIVE COMPRESSION OF VRS: *Space*, <u>Analogy</u>, and <u>Disanalogy</u>, <u>Cause-Effect (persecuted b/c Me= Jesus)</u>

GENERIC SPACE
Ultimate Justice Space

<table>
<tr><td>Who: Righteous Suffers</td><td>How: by divine action.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Why: wronged by other people</td><td>Where: will this reward be given?</td></tr>
<tr><td>What: will be divinely rewarded?</td><td>When: eventually.</td></tr>
</table>

Input 1: *Jewish Prophetic Apocalyptic Space*		**Input 2**: *Divine Messenger (Jesus) of Jewish Prophetic Apocalyptic Space*
Who: God's people who suffer Why: wronged by ungodly nations and the unfaithful What: will be divinely rewarded. How: by divine action of Messiah Where: in an Earthly Kingdom When: imminently.		Who: Jesus and God's People Why: rejected and persecuted What: Rewarded as sons of God How: by divine action. Where: within the Kingdom of Heaven When: Now and not yet

BLENDED SPACE
Jesus's Prophetic Apocalyptic Justice Space (Matthean Beatitudes)

Who: Righteous Suffers who follow Jesus's teaching
Why: Those who oppose Jesus and his righteousness
What: Accounted as Sons of God and participate in the Kingdom of Heaven
How: Divine action by the Heavenly Father now and in the future.
Where: Inherit the earth and possess the Kingdom of Heaven
When: Now and Not yet; still awaits a future realization ("will be …").

Taking a step back from Charts 7 and 8 and their respective analyses, one could have approached 5:3–12 from a completely different "descriptive" or "interpretive" framework. For example, from a surface grammatical-syntactical viewpoint, 5:11 could be described as follows: an adjectival predicate main clause ("blessed are you") occurs with an attending compound temporal clause ("when they insult … persecute … falsely say …") containing a causal prepositional phrase ("because of me"). However, both IBS and CIT help us move beyond surface grammatical observation to underlying

relationships that are not explicitly marked syntactically, e.g., the build up to a Climax or consideration of Generic, Input, and Blended Spaces. However, from the framework of IBS and CIT, we observe many MSRs and VRs that have significant correspondences such as Cause-Effect, Analogy/Comparison, and Disanalogy/Contrast. At the same time, however, significant differences exist between MSRs and VRs. At places, MSRs allow greater specificity, as for example the ability to identify Recurrence of "blessed-ness, etc." and the Climax with Cruciality at 5:9–10 which is given greater Particularization in 5:11–12. It should be here noted that MSRs may allow for the analysis of larger chunks of discourse since these three MSRs take some significant discursive space to develop. In other ways, VRs allow greater specificity by identifying Representation, Property, Identity, and Uniqueness, which require significant reflection on the Generic Space and Cultural Frame (Input 1) of Divine Ultimate Justice and the Cultural Frame of Jewish Apocalyptic Prophetic Space, if I have properly identified these spaces. Using questions of who, what, how, where, and why were helpful in describing the generic and cultural frames and inputs. In this regard, the identification of Space was important since it allows us to understand that although a great reward in *heaven* (5:12a) awaits the persons described in the Beatitudes, *the earth* will also be inherited (5:5). With IBS one may have noted "Recurrence of spatial locations" in 5:3, 5, 10, but perhaps not. However, the identification of Generic, Input, and Blended Spaces reflects a step beyond the observations of MSRs and asking questions associated with each MSR. It may be that through the interpretive process involved in IBS such larger meta-cognitive schemas may have been discovered; however, these also may not have been altogether or as effectively. So, it appears that the approaches of IBS and CIT and their respective MSRs and VRs complement one another and would likely and mutually enhance the kinds of careful observations that should optimally be made to best interpret biblical materials.

CONCLUSION

Meaning making in human discourse involves not only the final expression of surface level grammar such as word endings and grammatical constructions, but also pre-cognitive abilities and implied relationships between discursive notions in their broader context. The careful observation of biblical materials using Compositional Laws or MSRs within Compositional Study and IBS has been occurring since the late 1890s. Furthermore, the method of IBS invites students to creatively present discourse using spatial representation (charts, diagrams, etc.). More recently, since the late 1990s CIT posits a theory of blending that involves VRs to correlate notions in conceived spaces to create a unique blend as represented in the final form of the discourse/media. It may have been that the use of MSRs within IBS has provided interpreters a "shorthand" approach for discovering how blended spaces are compressed into discourses without a firm knowledge of those spaces or a complete understanding of the cognitive basis for such blending that has been so richly described in CIT.

Both IBS and CIT posit the existence of "relations" (MSRs and VRs, respectively) to describe fundamental aspects of meaning making in communication, whether explicit or implicit. Since both CIT and IBS approaches appear open to identifying further "relationships" beyond MSRs and VRs, it seems that CIT and IBS may have much to benefit from each other in this respect. Specifically, IBS would benefit to consider including the VRs of Space, Time, Change, Property, Value-role, and Representation as MSRs since these concern fundamental roles of compression in the blends and may help students better consider the ancient social-cultural locations/ideologies of biblical texts. In this regard, also, what IBS may gain from CIT is the notion of the underspecification of language performance such that "frameworks" and social-cultural schemas indeed undergird the original construction of (biblical)

discourse. As readers, explorers, and interpreters of ancient texts, we must remember the existence of such frameworks that precede and transcend the surface textual representation and production. These schemas are often implicit and not explicit from the perspective of our modern social locations. When conducting IBS and teaching it to others, I have often been concerned that students miss important observations because they have come to the text with preconceived notions, but more especially because they do not have a suitable social-cultural "framework" within which to make these structural observations. Careful, yet singular, attention to surface structures and implicit MSRs within a modern mindset has misled them.[49]

Finally, CIT may learn from IBS greater specificity of relationships to aide in the analysis of blending. For example, Cause-Effect relationships may be described moving in either direction: cause to effect (Causation) or effect to basis (Substantiation), or more specifically as question-answer or problem-solution (Interrogation). Also, the Part-Whole VR may be given greater specificity by describing discursive movements from general to particular (Particularization), particular to general (Generalization), or Summarization (i.e., summative material either at the beginning or the end of a pericope). Relatedly, IBS may help CIT move past the analysis of singular expressions and their compressions to appreciate larger relationships of the unfolding discourse unfolding, e.g., moving from General to Particular, Recurring notions, or building to a Climax. In the end, however, CIT and IBS have much in common and will mutually benefit by learning about the use of MSRs and VRs in their respective interpretive approaches.

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[49] For example, a student in a doctoral seminar of mine began their analysis of Matt 24 from a certain eschatological framework that paid attention to certain aspects of the discourse at the expense of others. However, after I noted incongruities of their analysis and provided other suggestions related to the social-cultural framework, the student was able to better understand the text, wrestle with its ambiguities, and arrive at an interpretation that in my estimation aligns much better to the context of the first-century AD.

The Chiastic Arrangement
of the Lukan Temptation Narrative

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Abstract

What constitutes a chiasm is a debated area of research and more often neglected within biblical studies. In response to this, Craig Arnold Smith has produced a work that provides new insights into how to determine whether an author intentionally employs a chiasm. Working from Smith's method, this paper argues that the Lukan temptation in the wilderness narrative is structured as a chiasm. It also demonstrates how the temptation functions to emphasize certain Lukan themes. Furthermore, it demonstrates that the chiasm of Luke 4:1–14a enhances the interpretive significance of the passage by revealing a literary function that has consequences for the reading of the entirety of Luke-Acts. These functions in turn validate the chiasm of Luke 4:1–14a, illustrating the value of Smith's methodology.

Key Terms: chiasm, temptation, Luke, Luke-Acts, Pneumatology, Salvation-History, Lukan Themes, Gospels, Synoptic Gospels, Israel

Introduction

In their book, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics*, David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina provide a list of several emphases characterizing the Inductive Bible Study (IBS)
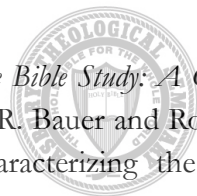
method.[1] The second emphasis is literary form, which relates to describing the text in terms of structure and genre.[2] They explain, "This emphasis upon structure and genre is supported by the consideration that communication never comes as pure content but that form and content are always inextricably bound together in the communicative process." [3] That is, a text's form inherently contributes to the meaning of a text. By extension, the structure of a pericope can significantly impact the conclusions of an interpreter.

One such structure is chiasm or chiasmus, a list of elements immediately followed by a list of those same elements in reverse order, (e.g., A-B-B′-A′). Chiasm can significantly impact how a reader should understand a passage in a few ways. First, it invites the reader to consider each element in view of its corresponding element (A/A′ to B/B′, etc.). Second, it often highlights the relationship of the first and last elements. Finally, with the concentric chiasm (e.g., A-B-C-B′-A′), the focus rests on the central element (C in this case).

Part of the reason for debate over chiastic structures relates to the often-exaggerated claims that chiasms are identified where no such structure exists. There are a variety of potential reasons to explain this. For instance, a chiasm provides an interpreter who desires to challenge the consensus view of a text an opportunity to do so with "hard data" since portions of a segment several verses apart may be linked in ways previously unnoticed. However, chiastic arguments frequently fail to convince many scholars due to the subjective criteria involved in identifying a chiasm. Thus, interpreters should take great care when assessing the validity of a chiasm previously unobserved and rely upon a rigorous methodology that curtails the risk of misconstruing the meaning of a text.

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[1] David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 2.

[2] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 4.

[3] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 4.

In response to this problem, Craig Arnold Smith has recently provided such a method to objectively distinguish between chiasms of design from accidental or false chiasms.[4] He draws comprehensively on prior scholarship on chiasms to produce a synthetic group of criteria and a method for determining a "chiasm of design."[5] The aim of this present study is to apply Smith's methodology to identify a previously unobserved chiasm of design in the gospel of Luke.[6]

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness is recorded in all three Synoptic Gospels (Matt 4:1–11//Mark 1:12–13//Luke 4:1–14). Mark records a comparatively terse account without mentioning the specific temptations that Matthew and Luke recount. The temptation narratives of Matthew and Luke also differ in numerous ways[7]—the most notable is their sequence. Matthew begins with the devil's challenge that Jesus command stones to become bread to satisfy his hunger. Luke also begins with this temptation but the ordering of the second and third temptations are reversed. Whereas Luke ends with Jesus at the highest point of the Temple, Matthew ends with Jesus on a high mountain.

Most scholars have assumed Matthew's order to be original, usually explaining the reversal by highlighting the importance of the Temple or Jerusalem in Luke—especially given Jesus's final test on the cross.[8] While scholars have rightly observed the importance of

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[4] Craig Arnold Smith, "Criteria for Identifying Chiasm of Design in New Testament Literature: Objective Means of Distinguishing Chiasm of Design from Accidental and False Chiasm" (PhD diss., University of Bristol, 2009). I am grateful to Fredrick J. Long for bringing this resource to my attention.

[5] Smith, "Criteria," 17. A chiasm of design means that the author of the pericope intentionally structured in this way.

[6] To my knowledge, this chiasm has not been addressed in any major commentary or academic journal.

[7] For example, the length of the quotation from Deut 8:3 is shorter in Luke's account, both accounts possess unique content, certain words are changed or omitted, and the devil tempts Jesus with a single stone in Luke whereas it is several in Matthew.

[8] Robert H. Stein observes that Matthew preferred the mountain motif, whereas "Luke was deeply concerned for Jerusalem" (*Luke*, NAC 24 [Nashville:

geography to Luke's message, the concentric chiasm of this temptation narrative highlights another key emphasis within the passage that has repercussions for the entirety of Luke-Acts.

The Chiasm of Luke 4:1–14a

Smith's method considers the following conditions for identifying a chiasm of design: (1) coherence with other structures, (2) significant correspondence, (3) significant symmetry, (4) discernible function, and (5) discernible authorial affinity. [9] Applying each of these conditions to Luke 2:1-14a reveals that Luke constructs the temptation narrative as a concentric chiasm.

Broadman, 1992], 145). I. Howard Marshall suggests that it is likely that Luke has altered the original order preserved by Matthew given that Luke's order concludes at the Temple (*The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC [Exeter: Paternoster, 1978], 167). According to Luke Timothy Johnson, the order change in Luke reflects his geographical concern for Jerusalem and an "even more delicate spiritual sensitivity" (*The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina 3 [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991], 76). Johnson explains that the third testing is the most severe, subjecting Jesus to a kind of "spiritual vertigo." This spiritual vertigo proves Jesus' authentic faith, a faith which will ultimately lead to the cross, where Jesus from the high place will leap and cry His own words from Psalm 30, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Johnson, in highlighting this "delicate spiritual sensitivity," points to another factor that many scholars say supports and explains a Lukan redaction.

According to John Nolland, Robert C. Tannehill, and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, the Lukan sequencing is indicative of the writer's desire to foreshadow through the final temptation Jesus' ultimate climactic scene. Fitzmyer writes that the most plausible explanations treat the difference between Matthew and Luke's temptations "in terms of the climactic scene"; Matthew preferring a climax in which Satan-worship is rejected and Luke preferring to finish in Jerusalem where Jesus will be crucified (*The Gospel According to Luke (I–IX)*, AB 28 [New York: Doubleday, 1981], 507). Tannehill also notes this correspondence between the Temple temptation and Jesus' ultimate testing at the cross (*The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986], 1:60). Again, Nolland agrees with Fitzmyer and Tannehill, however, he also notes that the sequence may also better function as a polemic against Hellenistic magic as Luke's sequence finishes with another instance of Jesus' rejection of the performance of a sign (*Luke*, WBC 35 [Dallas: Word, 1989]).

[9] Smith, "Criteria," 2.

Coherence with Other Literary Structures

According to Smith, "coherence with other structures"[10] means that a chiastic structure must not violate the implicit structure that scholars widely agree upon. Thus, if a clear section break exists, then a chiasm should not require the redrawing of agreed upon segment boundaries to accommodate the proposed chiasm.[11] Luke 4:1–14a meets this condition with one caveat: many scholars[12] and both the NA[28] and UBS[5] conclude the unit at v. 13. At issue is the question of where exactly the transition occurs from Luke's wilderness narrative to Jesus's Galilean ministry.

Not only is it a minor change to the include 4:14a with the temptation narrative, but the function and placement of Luke 4:14–15 is not clear. The temptation scenes occur at the end of the preliminary chapters of Luke 1–4, while the Galilean ministry begins with Luke 4:16. In fact, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and I. Howard Marshall both see 4:14–15 as an introductory summary to the Galilean ministry.[13] Yet, they also note the peculiarity of this "introduction" when compared to those found in Mark and Matthew, both of which associate the imprisonment of John the Baptist with the beginning of Jesus's ministry. This peculiarity has even led some to speculate that Luke is working from an independent tradition for the beginning of Jesus's Galilean ministry.[14] Fitzmyer concludes that these verses are an editorial summary from Luke that mimics those found elsewhere in Luke and Acts (cf. Luke 4:31–32, 40–41; 6:17–19).[15]

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[10] Smith, "Criteria," 2; Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 120.

[11] Smith, "Criteria," 121.

[12] E.g., Johnson, *Luke*, 77; Marshall, *Luke*, 174; Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 518; François Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002), 147.

[13] Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 521; Marshall, *Luke*, 176.

[14] Marshall, *Luke*, 176. He cites H. Schürmann as the source of this theory.

[15] Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 522.

This is sufficient justification to suggest that 4:14a should be treated with the preceding material rather than starting the subsequent section as the literary unit of the temptation narrative ends with Luke 4:15. In fact, Martin M. Culy, Mikeal C. Parsons, and Joshua J. Stigall treat 4:1–15 as a segment,[16] arguing that the shared language between Luke 4:1 and 4:14 indicates an inclusio.

Because of the summarizing statements made in Luke 4:14b–15 and their peculiarity when compared with these sections in Matthew and Mark, I argue that Luke 4:14b–15 stand apart from what precedes and proceeds after them. In UBS[5] and NA[28], these verses are treated as transitional between Luke 4:1–13 and 4:16. Since scholars have already noted their peculiarity, this proposal is neither novel nor forced and this proposal does not seriously alter the boundaries of either section. Therefore, the criterion of coherence with other structures is satisfied by viewing 4:1–14a as a chiasm contained within the larger segment of 4:1–15.

Significant Correspondence between Parallel Units

Verbal Correspondence

Smith's next criterion for a chiasm of design is that of significant correspondence. That is, the supposed connection between parallel units must be concretely demonstrated. Smith suggests that this is demonstrable in the following six different levels of correspondence: (1) verbal, (2) syntactical, (3) form, (4) scene, (5) conceptual, and (6) phonetic.

Within this order, the level of objectivity is arranged from greatest to least objective, with the verbal level being the most objective. Correspondence at the verbal level concerns the obvious correspondence or repetition of words or phrases. Again, this level of

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[16] Martin M. Culy, Mikeal C. Parsons, and Joshua J. Stigall, *Luke: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor, 2010), 121.

correspondence reflects the greatest level of credibility as correspondence is explicitly found in the choice of words made by the writer or redactor. In Luke 4:1–14a, we find the repetition of four elements, comprised of individual words and phrases. The table below illustrates this level of correspondence for the passage at hand, highlighting in red the recurrent words that are repeated verbatim or share the same root.

A		4:1	Ἰησοῦς δὲ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου
B	Table 1	4:1	ὑπέστρεψεν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου
C		4:2	πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου
D		4:3	εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ
E		4:5–8	Authority and Glory of the Kingdoms
D′		4:9	εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ
C′	Table 2	4:13	συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμὸν ὁ διάβολος
B′		4:14	ὑπέστρεψεν … εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν
A′		4:14	ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος

The most preferable kind of correspondence is exact verbal correspondence in which a word is repeated in precisely the same form as its first occurrence. Smith acknowledges that exact verbal correspondence will be rare in Hebrew or Greek because both languages are heavily inflected.[17] Therefore, it is preferential to speak of verbal correspondence in terms of parallel units being formed from the use of identical roots. As displayed in the table above, each parallel unit exhibits verbal correspondence and easily satisfies the

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[17] Smith, "Criteria," 152.

condition that each element of each parallel unit shares the same verbal root. In addition, B/B′ and D/D′ exhibit verbal correspondence with D/D′ also exhibiting syntactical correspondence.

Syntactical Correspondence

Correspondence at the syntactical level is established through the recognition of the repetition of "unusual" or "intricate" syntactical constructions or "the placement of constructions in the first panel that are later modified by constructions in the corresponding units of the second panel."[18] The Luke 4:1–14a chiasm satisfies this condition. Smith uses "unusual" or "intricate" to mean that a syntactical construction is unusual or intricate within the immediate context of the chiasm in question, not the NT at large.

The most explicit example of syntactical correspondence in this passage is that the verbal construction εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ is repeated in pair D/D′ and only found in this pair, indicating significant correspondence between the two elements. We also find significant syntactical correspondence in units A/A′ and B/B′. In elements A and B, the syntactical arrangement has πνεύματος (A) followed by ὑπέστρεψεν (B). This order is reversed in table 2 as ὑπέστρεψεν (B′) is followed by πνεύματος (A′). This observation may at first seem to be adhering only to the conditions for verbal correspondence, however this reverse arrangement in the syntax is evidence for intentional correspondence. For the sake of clarity, the following chart more explicitly shows this modification:

A–B	Ἰησοῦς δὲ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου ὑπέστρεψεν (4:1)
B′–A′	Καὶ ὑπέστρεψεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος (4:14a)

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[18] Smith, "Criteria," 157.

Finally, one finds syntactical correspondence in unit C/C′ of the two phrases composed of the cognates πειρασμός and πειράζω, both of which are followed by διάβολος. Thus, the condition of syntactical correspondence between the parallel units is also met by the concentric chiasm of 4:1–14a.

Form Correspondence

Form correspondence is the "repetition of methods of presenting the material." [19] Understanding the underlying form, from the oral tradition, may clarify or help identify certain parallelisms. Additionally, the use of OT quotations may constitute a form that helps organize a chiasm as well as author-intended structures or units that are composed of editorial comments.

Smith illustrates this kind of correspondence with this structure in Luke 1:57–2:21.[20]

A   Statement (1:57–58)
B   Scene of circumcision and naming (1:59–66)
B′   Scene of birth (2:1–20)
A′   Statement (2:21)

In Luke 4:1–14a, we find a unity of forms within the lexical parallelisms already addressed. The following table illustrates this correspondence of form:

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[19] Smith, "Criteria," 160.
[20] Smith, "Criteria," 161. He notes that Nolland tentatively suggests this chiasm.
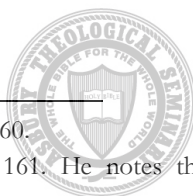
A	4:1	Pneumatological detail			
B	4:1		Geographical narration		
C	4:2			Statement about the proceeding events	
D	4:3				Divine sonship questioned
E	4:5–8				Authority and Glory of the Kingdoms
D′	4:9				Divine sonship questioned
C′	4:13			Statement about the preceding events	
B′	4:14		Geographical narration		
A′	4:14	Pneumatological detail			

This form correspondence strengthens the bonds of the parallels. One might object that most ancient people would have missed a chiasm at the level of form since it spans such a large section. However, when verbal and syntactical correspondences are taken into account with form level correspondence, these reinforce one another as visual (if reading) or aural cues, drawing attention to the deeper associations therein.[21]

Setting Correspondence

Next, Smith suggests that chiasms be evaluated according to their scene or setting. He observes, "character-in-focus, and spatial/temporal settings seem to be the most common elements used for developing correspondence at this level." [22] He uses Blomberg's proposal that Luke-Acts is organized as a chiastic whole on the basis of geographical indicators to illustrate this.[23]

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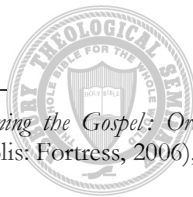
[21] Holly E. Hearon, in *Performing the Gospel: Orality, Memory, and Mark*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 5.

[22] Smith, "Criteria," 162.

[23] Smith, "Criteria," 163.

Luke	Rome		
	Jesus in Galilee		
		Samaria-Judea	
			Jerusalem
Acts			Jerusalem
		Judea-Samaria	
	Throughout the Gentile world		
Rome			

The correspondence of this chiasm is primarily based on correspondence of geographical setting. This kind of correspondence, according to Smith's method, is not the most compelling. Nonetheless, it is a valid condition, one that Luke 4:1–14a satisfies. Here, the writer organizes the chiasm according to the following changes in setting:

4:1a	Galilee (Implicit)		
4:1b	Wilderness (place of trial)		
4:5			All the kingdoms of the world
4:9		Jerusalem (place of ultimate trial)	
4:14a	Galilee		

This correspondence of setting follows Jesus as He enters and leaves Galilee to be tested in the wilderness. It can be assumed that Jesus leaves Galilee to be tested because, in Luke 4:14a, he "returned" to Galilee. Following His first temptation, Luke provides less detail as to Jesus's physical location than Matthew. In Matthew's temptation account, Jesus is taken to a mountain. Here in Luke we find Jesus is taken to a high place. This less nuanced description is intentional because Luke wishes to emphasize not the high place, but the global scope of the temptation; the devil shows Jesus in an instance all the kingdoms of the world. Whereas Matthew is concerned with mountain motif, Luke chooses to locate Jesus more figuratively.

After the second temptation, Jesus is then taken back to a concrete location, only this time He is at the highest point of the Temple. The wilderness and Jerusalem are correlative in that they both constitute places of trial. Jesus is driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested. Jerusalem is the location of Jesus's ultimate test as he is condemned and crucified there. The Temple is of course the epicenter of these events, especially in Luke's gospel. Then following the testing at the Temple, Jesus returns to Galilee. Thus, we find correspondence of setting unifying this chiasm.

The next condition to consider is the conceptual level, but I will address this when the semantic correspondence and meaning of this chiasm are ascertained.

Phonetic Correspondence

The final level of correspondence is phonetic and this chiasm does not seem to exhibit it. Phonetic correspondence would entail the use of homonyms, alliteration, or other kinds of word play. This condition is *not* satisfied by this chiasm.

Symmetry by Design

The use of chiasm in a given text is also verified according to its symmetry. Balance is an apparent concern for ancient writers, making a high degree of symmetry an important condition for the presence of a chiasm. According to Smith, a chiasm's symmetry can be assessed by concentrating on four loci of symmetry: (1) symmetrical arrangement of corresponding units, (2) balance between panels, (3) micro-variance of corresponding units, and (4) symmetrical distribution of corresponding verbal elements.
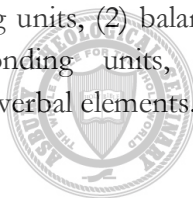
Symmetrical Arrangement of Corresponding Units

Assessing the symmetrical arrangement of corresponding units involves answering two basic questions. First, is this arrangement an inverse parallel structure?[24] While this is an essential feature of a chiasm, some have suggested that they can appear without an inverse parallel structure and that elements within a parallel unit do not need to occur in the same order (e.g., A-B-C-A′-B′). Smith contends that such chiasms are likely *not* chiasms of design.[25] In the case of our text, it is arranged in an inverse parallel structure, which was demonstrated in the previous section.

The more difficult question is the second: What is the likelihood that this arrangement could have been produced *accidentally*? Smith argues that the probability of accidental generation can be calculated by comparing the number of possible arrangements of a passage's constituent units with the number of these arrangements that would be chiastic. Having calculated the possible number of arrangements and the possible a of chiastic arrangements for various amounts of parallel units, Smith provided the following table:[26]

	Parallel Units	Total Units	Chiastic Arrangements	Possible Arrangements	% of Chiastic Arrangements
ABA′	1	3	2	6	33.33%
ABB′A′	2	4	8	24	33.33%
ABCB′A′	2	5	8	120	6.67%
ABCC′B′A′	3	6	48	720	6.67%
ABCDC′B′A′	3	7	48	5040	0.95%
ABCDD′C′B′A′	4	8	384	40320	0.95%
ABCDED′C′B′A′	4	9	384	362880	0.11%
ABCDEE′D′C′B′A′	5	10	3840	3628800	0.11%
ABCDEFE′D′C′B′A′	5	11	3840	39916800	0.0096%
ABCDEFF′E′D′C′B′A′	6	12	46080	479001600	0.0096%
ABCDEFGF′E′D′C′B′A′	6	13	46080	6227020800	0.00074%
ABCDEFGG′F′E′D′C′B′A′	7	14	645120	87178291200	0.0007%

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[24] Smith, "Criteria," 185.

[25] Smith, "Criteria," 186.

[26] Smith, "Criteria," 188. He reaches these figures using these equations: *Possible Arrangements (PA)=n!* (where n=number of units), *Possible Chiastic Arrangements (PC)=2ⁿ(n!)* (where n is the number of corresponding unit-pairs).

According to Smith's calculations, it is unlikely that the Luke 4:1–14a chiasm occurred accidently because, at four parallel units and one central unit observed, only 0.11% of all possible arrangements of the text are chiastic.

Balance between Panels

The next criterion of symmetry is a chiasm's balance between panels.[27] Here, one determines whether the panels of the chiasm are relatively equal in size. If one cannot demonstrate significant balance between to panels, then this argues against the text as a chiasm by design. Variance of size between panels can be approached in two ways.[28] The first is examining *macro*-variance (*Mv*), which considers the level of difference between the two panels of a chiasm. The second, is examining *micro*-variance (*mv*), which measures the level of difference between corresponding units.

Macro-variance can be determined by obtaining the simple percentage differential between the two panels. This figure is the result of dividing the word count of the smaller panel by that of the larger panel and subtracting the resulting figure from 1:[29]

Macro-Variance = 1 – (word count of smaller unit/word count of larger unit)

Next, the resulting number is multiplied by 100 to arrive at a percentage. Now, determining what constitutes significant enough macro-variance to preclude a chiasm by design is difficult since no body of universally recognized chiasms exists. With this difficulty in

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[27] A "panel" is another way of describing a list or set of units involved in a chiasm. Every chiasm has two panels as it is composed of a list of units followed by that same list in reverse order.

[28] Smith, "Criteria," 190.

[29] Smith, "Criteria," 190.

mind, Smith offers a grouping of false and valid chiasms to establish a range that could help validate chiastic symmetry represented in the following graph:

Macro-Variance (Mv)				
	Highly Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Highly Unfavorable	
Mv	0	20.89	33.81	52.38	100
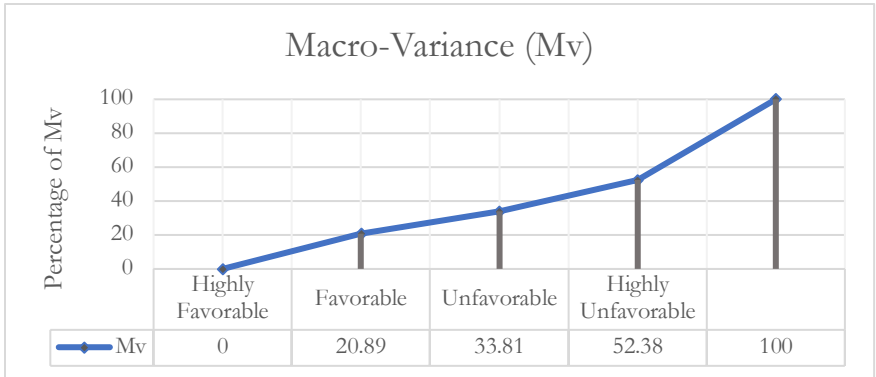
If a chiasm has a *Mv* that is less than 20.89% then it is highly favorable to suggest that it is exhibiting symmetry by design. Likewise, if the *Mv* of a chiasm is greater than 52.38%, then it is highly unfavorable to suggest that the chiasm has intentional symmetry, making it less likely that it is a chiasm by design. For Luke's Temptation account, one finds in the first panel sixty-seven words and in the second panel eighty-six words. Thus, the *Mv* differential for this passage is 22.09%, which indicates that it is favorable to assume that this chiasm in 4:1–14a is intentionally symmetrical.

In addition to calculating the macro-variance differential, balance should also be viewed through the lens of a passage's symmetrical distribution of units. This pertains to comparing the number of parallel units with those that exist without a pair. As previously indicated, a central unparalleled unit enhances the case for viewing a chiasm as one by design. However, other unparalleled units that might occur in the panels significantly diminish the case for a chiasm.

The proposed chiasm of this paper has several unparalleled units when seen purely from the vantage point of verbal correspondence

(i.e., there are words and phrases in table 1 not present in table 2). However, most of these unparalleled units occur within the first and third temptations, which technically constitute parallel units as both depict the same sequence of events: The context for the temptation, the Devil's temptation, and Jesus's response. Therefore, the actual number of unparalleled units is significantly lower, which I estimate as two sense units: καὶ ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι and ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ. Nonetheless, given how it correlates with its parallel passage in Matthew, it is apparent that the writer is working from some traditional material and has arranged it in a way to meet the rhetorical situation. Luke has provided a text that reflects that rhetorical situation while preserving the traditional materials (i.e. the basic plot with the Deuteronomistic quotations). Smith acknowledges that some larger differentials can be explained by the rhetorical situation of the writer and the macro-variance in Luke's Temptation in the Wilderness is explainable by the rhetorical situation.

Micro-Variance of Corresponding Units

Smith contends that analyzing the balance of a pericope also requires the examination of its micro-variance (*mv*); that is, the comparison of either the number of words or grammatical units between corresponding pairs.[30] This too can be calculated with a simple percentage differential. At times, analysis via word count seems to be too simplistic when assessing connections at the semantic level, leading a researcher to instead study the number of grammatical units.[31] Still, analysis at the level of grammatical units might be more suspect than that at the word count level because the researcher may make the mistake of contriving such units. Therefore, analysis of the micro-variance of grammatical units will not be attempted here.[32]

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[30] Smith, "Criteria," 191.

[31] Smith, "Criteria," 199.

[32] Smith, "Criteria," 199.

Again, Smith provides a helpful dataset against which *mv* can be assessed. This graph illustrates the different levels of favorability for determining chiastic symmetry according to the average micro-variance (*amv*):

	Highly Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Highly Unfavorable	
amv	0	26.5	37.38	53.01	100
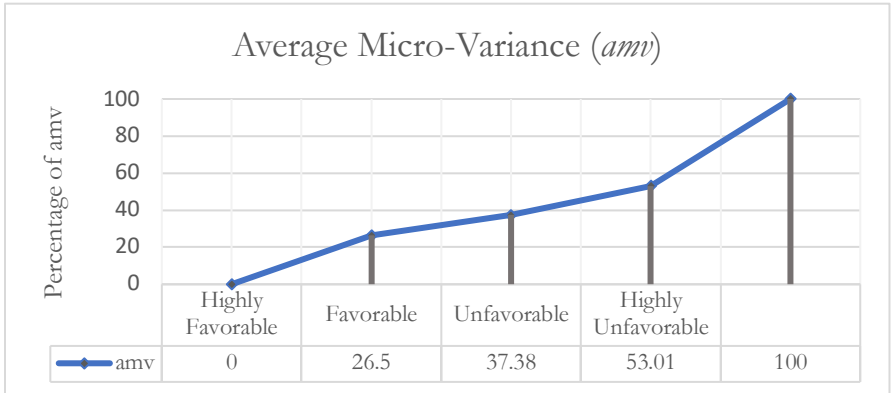
Using the word counts of units, the average micro-variance for the first three corresponding units in the temptation chiasm is 26.85% (leaving D/D′ out of the equation).[33] I have chosen to only measure the first three units because the fourth pair (D/D′) is characterized by Luke's use of traditional materials, which means authorial shaping was more restricted. This explains its artificially high degree of micro-variance. Moreover, since the phrase, εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, occurs without variation in each unit of D/D′, including only it in the micro-variance average would reduce the *amv* differential to 20.14%. The results for each unit are as follows:

A (5 words)   A′ (5 words)   = *mv* of 0
B (12 words) B′ (7 words)   = *mv* of 41.67
C (18 words) C′ (11 words) = *mv* of 38.89
D (33 words) D′ (66 words) = *mv* of 50

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[33] The *mv* of each pair was calculated by dividing the smaller value by the greater value of each pair. The result was then subtracted from 1 and multiplied by 100 to get a percentage. The *amv* was produced by taking the average of the *mv* values of A/A′, B/B′, and C/C′. If one factors in D/D′, the *amv* is 32.64%.

An *amv* of 26.85% is just outside of the "highly favorable" zone, at a percentage that Smith would find favorable for confirming chiastic symmetry. If we include D/D′, of course, favorability drops as the *amv* would be 32.64%. Yet, taking into account the use of tradition material, this figure is artificially high. Therefore, although not definitive by itself, this *amv* score suggests there is a symmetrical shape to Luke 4:1–14a and that it is as a chiasm by design.

Symmetrical Distribution of Corresponding Verbal Elements

The final locus of symmetry relates to the distribution of corresponding verbal elements. Here, analysis determines whether the verbally correspondent elements are positioned in approximately the same position on either side of the central element. Again, Smith provides a method for numerically ascertaining and representing this condition.[34] In order to most accurately represent Smith's method, it will be best to quote his work here at length. He writes:

> Variance in distribution of corresponding elements must be calculated with respect to the size of the whole passage. Consider two passages of text (X and V), both of which have a set of corresponding elements which are 6 and 9 words, respectively, from the center of their proposed structures. We might say that both passages have a distribution variance of their corresponding terms of 3 *(dv = 9–6 = 3)*. However, this number is meaningless unless it is fixed to the size of the passage under consideration. If passage X consists of only 20 words total, a distribution variance of 3 would obviously be more significant than in the case of passage Y which consists of 200 words. Along these same lines, there is a need to calculate distribution variance with respect to the distance each element occurs from

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[34] Smith, "Criteria," 200.

the hypothetical center. If a set of terms occurs at 6 and 9 words from the center, the 3 word variance is necessarily more significant than if the repeated terms occur at 106 and 109 words from the center. Both of these related considerations may be dealt with together by calculating distribution variance in the following manner:[35]

Dv = [(position of 1st occurrence – position of 2nd occurrence)/(position of 1st occurrence + position of 2nd occurrence)]

Smith also distinguishes between a verbal element's absolute and relative location. The distinction between absolute and relative location is that an absolute location accounts for a verbal element's position in relation to the entirety of its respective table as compared to its corresponding pair. A verbal element's relative position measures its place within its respective unit as compared to its pair. The relative location is also an important measure of symmetry as it can quickly discover the chiasm's syntactical symmetry within parallelisms. The relative differential is calculated with the following formula:

Relative Dv = [(pos. of 1st occ. w/in unit – pos. of 2nd occ. w/in unit)/(pos. of 1st occ. w/in unit + pos. of 2nd occ. w/in unit)]

Regarding the location of verbal elements, the chiasm of Luke 4:1–14a has an average absolute differential of 14.68% and an average relative differential of 39.75%. Given these numbers, it's clear that the absolute position of the verbal elements is more indicative of a chiasm by design here than is the relative position. While the average relative differential would seem to contradict this paper's central

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[35] Smith, "Criteria," 200.

claim, it should be noted that Smith does not provide clear instructions for determining the beginning and end of a parallel unit. Also, the average relative differential is an adequate alternative when repetition is used in a passage, which is not the case for the passage under examination. The best indicator, when unencumbered by repetition, of distribution is still a verbal element's absolute position.

Discernable Chiastic Function

Given the results from our analysis of the symmetry of Luke 4:1–14a, it is clear that the passage possesses a high degree of symmetry. It is now time to turn to the criterion of discernable function. Smith proposes that a chiasm can be used for the purpose of expressing one or more of the following four kinds of functions: (1) Mnemonic or organizational, (2) aesthetic, (3) rhetorical, or (4) semantic. To assess the mnemonic or organizational function would require an in-depth look into the oral tradition of the text of Luke. Such research, while important, is not ultimately crucial to the purposes of the present study. The aesthetic function of a chiasm is not easily determined except in view of a pressing contextual reason that would then elicit an aesthetically motivated response. It is unclear what contextual reason surrounding the composition of Luke, an inherently controversial issue itself, might have provoked the use of a chiasm for purely aesthetic reasons. Similarly, addressing the rhetorical function of the chiasm is challenging because the extent to which this chiasm makes the passage more persuasive is also unclear, especially since the goal of such persuasion is equally ambiguous (at least within the immediate context of this passage). Therefore, it is most profitable for our study to examine the semantic function of the chiasm (i.e., how the chiasm functions to convey meaning).
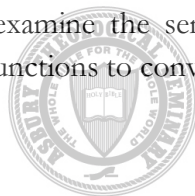
Discernible Authorial Affinity:
The Semantic Functions of Luke 4:1–14a

According to Smith, semantic function can be expressed in terms of emphasis or interpretive significance.[36] For example, the structure can be shown to emphasize a certain element or elements, or the chiasm might demonstrate the development of thought and/or clarify an otherwise ambiguous element. Regardless, determining how a chiasm functions must be done in conjunction with other hermeneutical considerations.

While a chiasm may lead to new interpretive possibilities for text, it should not totally contradict interpretations derived from other hermeneutics. To put it another way, it may contribute new insights, but should not rewrite past scholarship. When the interpretive significance of a given text is enhanced by a chiasm, it should do so by either enhancing our understanding of the development of an argument or by exposing how parallel elements complete or illumine one another. For example, when a chiasm creates emphasis, it might highlight OT quotes or allusions, or a theme found throughout a given work. In this respect, the researcher is not conducting an anachronistic enterprise. Rather, assessing the semantic function of a chiasm in light of other known hermeneutical data often provides further evidence for the chiasm and enhances our understanding of the pericope. I will now show that the Luke 4 chiasm is instrumental in emphasizing Lukan pneumatology through the parallel unit A/A′ and that the central element of the pericope emphasizes the universality of Jesus's ministry, enhancing the interpretive significance of the segment for the book and Luke-Acts as a whole.

Reading Luke 4:1–14a in view of its chiastic arrangement reveals semantic function in both the areas of emphasis and interpretive significance. This chiasm functions semantically to emphasize

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[36] Smith, "Criteria," 284.

prominent Lukan themes such as the role of the Spirit. Whereas Mark makes mention of the Spirit six times, and Matthew twelve, Luke mentions the Spirit at least seventeen times in the Gospel alone.[37] No Gospel is more concerned with the work of the Spirit than Luke's. His pneumatology is central to the portrayal of Jesus. Scholars have not always agreed as to how Luke portrays the role of the Holy Spirit. Since the appearance of E. Schweizer's *TDNT* article, the Holy Spirit has often been viewed as solely inspiring the ministry of Jesus in Luke.[38] Yet, given the role of the Spirit in many other activities such as in the repentance proclaimed by John the Baptizer and the conception of Jesus in the infancy narrative, M. Wenk argues that it is not representative of Lukan pneumatology to limit the Spirit's role to solely that of inspiration.[39]

In fact, Luke 4:1–14a reflects the broader pneumatology of Luke, a fact that many scholars have indicated without acknowledging the underlying chiastic formula. Christopher Francis Evans writes, "While the proximate agent of temptation is the Devil, behind it is the action of the Spirit of God, who not only allows it but brings it about."[40] Wenk sees the temptation narrative as indicating that Jesus was not only lead by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, but was lead through the wilderness by the Spirit and sustained through the struggle by the Spirit.[41] Similarly, Fitzmyer highlights the connection between the filling of the Holy Spirit in 4:1 and the descent of the Spirit at Jesus's baptism (3:22).[42] Having received the Spirit at His baptism, Jesus conquers the devil because He is filled with the Spirit. Nolland also observes that Stephen (Acts 6:5, 8; 7:55) and Barnabas (Acts

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[37] Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 227. He also sees a possible 18th instance of the Spirit in Luke.

[38] M. Wenk, "Holy Spirit," *DJG¹*, 389.

[39] Wenk, "Holy Spirit," *DJG¹*, 389.

[40] Christopher Francis Evans, *Saint Luke* (London: SCM Press, 2008), 257.

[41] Wenk, "Holy Spirit," *DJG¹*, 389.

[42] Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 513.

11:24) were filled with the Spirit.[43] Like Jesus in Luke 4, Stephen is filled with the Spirit in the face of persecution and sees a vision of God's glory and Jesus at His right hand. Thus, for both Stephen and Jesus, the Spirit aids the persecuted to remain faithful.

This pneumatological theme, that the Spirit enables and sustains individuals during temptation, is emphasized by the chiasm of Luke 4:1–14a. It begins and ends by referring to Jesus' relationship to the Spirit. In Luke 4, the unit A/A′ indicates that Jesus is not only guided by but also empowered with the Spirit. These chiastic bookends emphasize the theme of the Spirit in Luke and echo its importance in the rest of the gospel. This semantic function enhances the case for its validity. We should now assess the centerpiece of the chiasm to discern its intended function.

Just as the chiasm creates emphasis at its peripheral units by stressing the role of the Spirit, it also creates emphasis via the role played by the central unit, E. As the central unit, the second temptation occupies a place of prominence because concentric chiasms are often constructed to draw attention to their center. The zenith of this chiasm emphasizes the universal scope of Jesus's mission. In a moment of time, Jesus is shown all the kingdoms of the world. This universal scope is a hallmark theme of Luke's gospel.

Some scholars have misappropriated this theme to insist that Luke's intended audience was primarily gentile and that his goal was to explain their incorporation into the Church. Yet, this view neglects the extent to which Luke comes from Jewish tradition and his real eschatological viewpoint. Eric Franklin expresses it this way, "Luke is indeed interested in the universal spread of the gospel, but this is not necessarily the same as his having a universal concern which is directed primarily towards the Gentiles, which envisages a continuing mission to them, and which is concerned with the ongoing growth of

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[43] Nolland, *Luke*, 178.
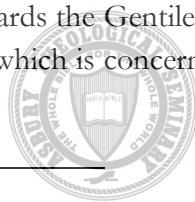
the Church and with their inclusion in its fold."[44] The theme of universality in Luke is defined by Luke's appeal to the reception of the gospel by the gentiles as a sign of the sovereignty of Jesus. Luke is not primarily directed toward the gentiles but sees in their conversion hope that the Jews might still come to claim Jesus as Lord.[45]

The second temptation places special emphasis on this theme of the universal validity of Jesus's lordship. The devil guarantees the kingdoms of the world in exchange for Jesus's praise. Jesus, of course, rejects this offer. This meeting follows the form of ancient benefaction, which was the primary means by which power was distributed in the Greco-Roman world, existing across the empire and even in Palestine.[46] John Barclay explains the system of Roman patronage in the days of the Senate, which allowed wealthy families access to the Senate and the skills necessary for social and political influence, in this way: patronage consisted of "a *reciprocal* exchange of goods and services, which is *personal, enduring,* and *asymmetrical.*"[47] The establishment of the Roman Empire did not undo this system, but flourished because of it. The state's goals were advanced through imperial benefaction, whether directly granted or mediated through brokers.[48]

Analogously, the devil is portrayed as a patron who can give Jesus that which is ultimately already his: authority and power over the kingdoms of the world. Jesus, of course, rejects the offer and responds with scripture: "You are to worship the Lord your God and serve only him" (4:8; NET). This deference to the OT reflects Luke's frequent couching of the Christ-event in the language and themes of the OT. It also reflects the Gospel's partiality to Israel, an aspect that is seen in features such as the infrequency with which salvation is

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[44] Eric Franklin, *Christ the Lord: A Study in the Purpose and Theology Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia : Westminster, 1975), 139.

[45] Franklin, *Christ the Lord*, 140.

[46] Jonathan Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons, and Benefactors: Roman Palestine and the Gospel of Luke*, WUNT 259 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 105–6.

[47] John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 36.

[48] Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 38.

offered to gentiles in the Gospel or the identification in the infancy narrative of Jesus's role as heir to David's throne.[49]

This temptation episode then reinforces the order of salvation-history that unfolds across the rest of Luke-Acts. Rather than giving into the devil in order to accelerate the universal impact of his mission, Jesus once again fulfills the OT and seeks the reconstitution of Israel by whom the gentiles would be saved.[50] As the focal center of the chiasm, the second temptation alerts us to the prominence of this salvation-history theme and even directs us to the end of Luke-Acts when Paul enters Rome (Acts 28:11). "Luke sees the arrival of Paul at Rome as the supreme example which guarantees the reality of the Christian proclamation of the lordship of Jesus, and what is true for Paul in particular is true also of the whole Christian enterprise which has caused the Gentiles to acknowledge this fact."[51]

By using a chiasm to emphasize this theme of universality, the temptation in the wilderness looks ahead to a time when the reality of Jesus's life, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension will be verified in the response of the kingdoms to the Gospel. Furthermore, this chiasm not only emphasizes a prominent feature of Luke-Acts, but also enhances the passage's interpretive significance. Ben Witherington suggests that Luke 1–4 is intended as a preface to both Luke and Acts because the books were written as a two-volume historiographical work.[52] If this is the case, then this chiasm advances the interpretive significance of the passage and Luke 1–4 since the temptation foreshadows the resolution of the two-volume work by pointing in the direction of Rome, even as thousands of miles and many years lie ahead of the Gospel's journey.

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[49] Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 188–89.

[50] Fitzmyer, *Luke (I–IX)*, 191.

[51] Franklin, *Christ the Lord*, 119.

[52] Michael F. Bird, "The Unity of Luke-Acts in Recent Discussion," *JSNT* 29 (2007): 432.
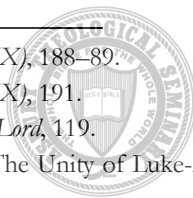
Conclusion

By viewing Luke 4:1–14a through Smith's methodology, this paper has determined that one does find a chiasm by design. Because of space, Smith's final condition of authorial affinity for chiasm was not pursued. However, there are a number of scholars who have demonstrated the frequent use of chiasm in Luke-Acts.[53] In closely following Smith's method, not only has the chiasm of Luke 4:1–14a been confirmed, but its theological implications have also been explored. These theological emphases explain why Luke's sequence of temptations differs from that of Matthew because, fundamentally, Luke does not emphasize the same themes and motifs as Matthew.

The Temptation in the Wilderness chiasm emphasizes the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, which reflects the broader work of the Spirit within the Lukan corpus. This chiasm also emphasizes the final universal reach of the gospel in its central elements. This emphasis points to the final validation of Jesus's lordship as the gospel takes hold around the known world, even in Rome. It also reveals a broader intention for the pericope as part of the introduction to Luke-Acts, namely that the end of the two-volume salvation-history is foreshadowed within its first four chapters. These semantic functions further confirm the existence of a chiasm by design within the segment of 4:1–15 that extends from 4:1 to 4:14a.

Smith's work has produced a groundbreaking approach to validating chiasms by design. This contribution to biblical studies is considerable as the criteria used to verify a chiasm by design were the matter of some debate and in need of further clarification. With a more critical method available for assessing chiasms in scripture, scholars may now more easily avoid anachronistic interpretations based on false chiasms and glean new insights still yet unobserved for the benefit of scholarship and the Church.

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[53] E.g., Kenneth R Wolfe, "The Chiastic Structure of Luke-Acts and Some Implications for Worship," *SwJT* 22 (1980): 60–71.

The Role of Hebrews 1:1–4 in the Book of Hebrews

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Abstract

This essay considers the complex structure of Hebrews, focusing on the role of the opening statement of the book. The study finds causation with parallel instances of particularization, the author providing general statements in both the cause (1:1–4) and effect (10:22–25) which are then subsequently unpacked through the rest of each main unit of material. Emphasis is placed on the role of 1:1–4 in the context of the author's argument regarding God's eschatological revelation in the Christ-event. This revelation is made ἐν υἱῷ (1:2a), an expression long undervalued by scholars but one that provides the basis for and understanding of the various themes in Hebrews.

Key Terms: Hebrews; Sonship; Superiority; Christ-event; Causation; Particularization

Introduction

The structure of Hebrews remains a subject of interest without consensus, even after millennia of consideration and study.[1] With

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[1] Many have attempted to explain the intricate arrangement of materials in Hebrews, including: Wolfgang Nauck, "Zum Aufbau des Hebräerbriefs," in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias*, ed. Walther Eltester

various major themes interwoven throughout the book, [2] understanding their relationship to one another and to the central motif is a major task. In addition to the convolution of themes, the author alternates between exposition and exhortation in an interchanging pattern, a key feature of the book. In this way, the author provides an explication of the Christ-event[3] and its meaning in

(Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 1960), 199–206; Albert Vanhoye, *La structure littéraire de l'épitre aux Hébreux* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963); George H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998); Cynthia Long Westfall, *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews: The Relationship between Form and Meaning* (London: T&T Clark, 2005); Barry C. Joslin, "Can Hebrews be Structured? An Assessment of Eight Approaches," *CurBR* 6 (2007): 99–129.

[2] For the theme of "Christology," see D. Friedrich Büchsel, *Die Christologie des Hebräerbriefs*, BFCT 27 (Gütersloh: 'Der Rufer' Evangelischer Verlag, 1922); William R. G. Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefes*, WMANT 53 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981); Angela Rascher, *Schriftauslegung und Christologie im Hebräerbrief*, BZNW 153 (Berlin: deGruyter, 2007). For "the High priesthood of Jesus," see Keijo Nissilä, *Das Hohepriestermotiv im Hebräerbrief: Eine exegetische Untersuchung* (Helsinki: Oulu-Oy Liiton Kirjapaino, 1979). For "Melchizedek," see Fred L. Horton, Jr., *The Melchizedek Tradition: A Critical Examination of the Sources to the Fifth Century A.D. and in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, SNTSMS 30 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). For "the use of the OT," see Susan E. Docherty, *The Use of the Old Testament in Hebrews*, WUNT 2/260 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009). For "Perfection," see David Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection: An Examination of the Concept of Perfection in the 'Epistle to the Hebrews'*, SNTSMS 47 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; paperback repr., 2005). For "Faith," see Erich Grässer, *Der Glaube Im Hebräerbrief* (Marburger theologische Studien 2 (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1965); Victor (Sung-Yul) Rhee, *Faith in Hebrews: Analysis within the Context of Christology, Eschatology and Ethics*, StBibLit 19 (New York: Peter Lang, 2001). For "the people of God," see Ernst Käsemann, *The Wandering People of God: An Investigation of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 17. For "eschatology," see Scott D. Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, WUNT 2/223 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); C. K. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 363–93. For "the new covenant," see Susanne Lehne, *The New Covenant in Hebrews*, JSNTSup 44 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990); Knut Backhaus, *Der Neue Bund und das Werden der Kirche: Die Diatheke-Deutung des Hebräerbriefs im Rahmen der fruhchristlichen Theologiegeschichte* (Münster: Aschendorffische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1996).

[3] By Christ–event, I mean the incarnation, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and ongoing ministry of Jesus. In Hebrews, that equates to the eschatological speaking of God ἐν υἱῷ.

a variety of ways including repeated comparison and contrast, frequent and strategic reliance on OT passages, and unique titles for Jesus including apostle (3:1), high priest (e.g. 2:17), and perfected son (7:28). The combination of content and arrangement make for a significant challenge to anyone who enters the literary world of Hebrews.[4]

In this article, I propose a possible solution to address some of the difficulties facing the study of Hebrews by considering the opening verses as a key to unlocking many of the complexities of the book. Specifically, I argue for a qualitative use[5] of the expression ἐν υἱῷ in the general statement in 1:1–4, which is then particularized in 1:5–10:18.[6] This first unit of material constitutes the main argument of the author, providing the cause for the effect expected in believers, or "us" (1:2a; 10:22–25)—to persevere in the reality of the new filial relationship the Father has pronounced and provided through the perfected son (10:22–13:21).[7]

Overview of the Challenge

In surveying the book of Hebrews, one must be able to follow the author's development of the discourse, especially considering the numerous themes and their relationship to one another. Themes

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[4] Barry Joslin concludes, "After a summation of these eight influential proposals, one can see that there is little consensus regarding the structure of Hebrews" ("Can Hebrews be Structured?" 122).

[5] I argue not only that God has spoken by means of His son but also in the form and with the qualities of sonship in the flesh.

[6] The author of Hebrews utilizes ideological particularization as 1:1–4 provides the general thesis for the argument of the book which is then given particular content in 1:5–10:18. See David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 100–3.

[7] I deal with this issue in greater detail in my doctoral thesis: George Richard Boyd, Jr., "Sonship: Central Theological Motif and Unifying Theme of Hebrews" (PhD diss., London School of Theology, Brunel University, 2012).

appear to overlap which make it difficult to break the material into distinct units. Albert Vanhoye observed certain notable aspects of the text including what he labeled *mot-crochet* (hook word), announcement of the subject (anticipating the subject of the next section), and various literary inclusions.[8]

The author appears to be communicating with the reader on multiple levels, especially when considering the interchanging pattern of exposition and exhortation throughout the first nine and a half chapters. The particular type of expression (exposition or exhortation) works with the manifold material content involving the various themes in order to create this "word of exhortation" (13:22), but determining main and subunits of material (structure) as well as discerning the literary devices the author is using (structural relationships) in developing the material into a coherent and consistent message challenges every student of Hebrews.

Over the past half-century numerous scholars have undertaken to analyze and attempt to determine the structure of Hebrews while addressing the unfolding of the message of the book with its various themes. Some have focused primarily on structure, while others on themes, and still others on a variety of issues including the setting for the sermon.[9] However, one key feature that has often been undervalued by scholars is the opening sentence of the book (1:1–4). I suggest that this Christological kernel forms the heart of the complex thematic cohesiveness of Hebrews and the key that unlocks its structure. The author intends this message to communicate encouragement to a weary and struggling people (e.g. 10:36; 12:1–3,

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[8] Vanhoye, *La structure*, 37–49.

[9] Many scholars see Hebrews as a sermon, based in part on the phrase used in 13:22, "word of exhortation" (τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως), which refers to 1:1–13:21. This expression is found one other time in the New Testament (Acts 13:15) in describing Paul's proclamation of the gospel of Christ (13:16–41). See e.g. Harold W. Attridge, *Hebrews*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 13–14; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 25–26; Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 11–16.

12–13) in order that these holy siblings (3:1; 10:19) might respond in faithful perseverance.

While 1:1–4 is recognized by most scholars as an eschatological and Christological declaration, immediately placing the focus of the book on the exalted son,[10] most scholars also tend to overlook the possibility that this relatively small unit of material might involve more than the message of Jesus or his sacerdotal accomplishment or his glorious exaltation to the right hand of God.[11] It might also include both the *mode and objective* of God speaking to his people with the expression ἐν υἱῷ. This is supported by the contrasts made in the first verse and a half (1:1–2a) as God's former speaking is contrasted with his eschatological speaking—"long ago" (πάλαι) is contrasted with "these last days" (ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων); the two audiences are contrasted between "the fathers" (τοῖς πατράσιν) and "us" (ἡμῖν); the means of God speaking is also contrasted with "by the prophets" (ἐν τοῖς προφήταις) and "in [a] son" (ἐν υἱῷ).

Perhaps the clue to the significance of the author's declaration is expressed through the vital initial implied contrast: the former speaking of God (Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως), which initiates the sermon, points to an implied contrasting complement, the eschatological speaking of God. This contrast suggests God's eschatological speaking ἐν υἱῷ is *complete* and *perfect*, a major theme throughout Hebrews.[12] In other words, that which God has spoken "to us" ἐν υἱῷ is his perfect and complete communication over

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[10] Guthrie observes, "Throughout the discourse the author keeps his hearers focused on the One first introduced in the book as υἱῷ (1:2)" (*Structure*, 91).

[11] Scholars understand 1:1–4 in various ways; e.g. Attridge (*Hebrews*, 19, 36), Cockerill (*Epistle to the Hebrews*, 63), and Craig R. Koester refer to it as the *exordium* of the book (*Hebrews*, AB 36 [New York: Doubleday, 2001], 174–76). John W. Kleinig refers to it as "a confessional proclamation about God's speaking to the congregation by his Son," but also as part of the overall introduction to the book: 1:1–2:4 (*Hebrews*, Concordia Commentary [St. Louis: Concordia, 2017], 23–25).

[12] Perfection is a significant theme in Hebrews, see 2:10; 3:14; 5:9, 14; 6:1, 11; 7:11, 19, 25, 28; 8:8; 9:6, 9, 11, 26; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:2, 23; 13:20–21.

against prior partial disclosures.[13] The implication is that when God spoke ἐν υἱῷ it was no longer "many parts" (i.e., it was complete) and "many ways" (i.e., it was singular, comprehensive, and ultimate) but rather a *perfect* revelation and one the author expected the audience to willingly receive.[14]

Structure of Hebrews[15]

In reading through Hebrews and attempting to observe the development of the message, including shifts of emphasis, a major break takes place at 10:18–19 where the author transitions from a primarily expository division to a primarily hortatory one.[16] The text reveals the author's use of *causation* with 1:1–10:18 containing the thrust of the argument (cause) and 10:22–13:21 urging the essential response of the recipients to the argument (effect), with the intervening verses, 10:19–21, briefly restating the cause in shifting the focus to the intended effect.

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[13] G. B. Caird argues that the main thesis of Hebrews is the full and final divine revelation spoken in a Son, over against the "avowedly incomplete" prior revelation through the prophets ("Just Men Made Perfect," *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* [1966]: 90). He claims that the author attempts to prove the thesis by "a detailed exegesis of his four main scriptural texts," which he identifies as Pss 8, 95, 110, and Jer 31. Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 65.

[14] Regarding "the prophets" as a reference to OT revelation, see Fred B. Craddock, "The Letter to the Hebrews: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," in *The New Interpreters Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 12:22; Donald A. Hagner, *Hebrews*, New International Biblical Commentary 14 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1990), 21; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 45–46, 65; William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, WBC 47A (Dallas: Word, 1991), 10–11.

[15] The following section presents my view of the structure of Hebrews. As previously noted, scholars lack consensus on the matter and this proposal is an attempt to better understand the structure and especially the role 1:1–4 plays in Hebrews. See Boyd, "Sonship," 2–123.

[16] The post-positive particle οὖν, although occurring thirteen times in the text of Hebrews (2:14; 4:1, 6, 11, 14, 16; 7:11; 8:4; 9:1, 23; 10:19, 35; 13:15), signals a major shift of emphasis from cause to effect at 10:19. The significance of οὖν at 10:19 is one of emphasis as argued above.

The author, in 1:1–10:18, lays out in detail the Christ-event and its effect on the relationship between the believer and God. He does so through a recurring contrast between the previously prescribed but ultimately imperfect cult of the Mosaic covenant, including a reference to the importance of the former "commandment" (7:18), the "faults" of the people in their relationship with God (8:8), and the new covenant sealed by the blood of Christ through his once-for-all self-offering (10:10). [17]

Following the reminder that the new covenant transforms the believer and provides perfect forgiveness for sin (10:16–18; cf. 8:8–12), [18] and following the general summary of what Christ accomplished in terms of the access Jesus's blood offers believers (10:19–21), the author then launches into full exhortation in response to the work of Christ. He offers consecutive hortatory directives to come into God's presence (10:22), hold on to the confession of hope (10:23), and consider other brothers and sisters with the purpose of love and good works (10:24–25). This is followed by an unpacking of the content of those three distinct hortatory directives (10:26–13:19) followed by a benedictory purpose statement at the end of the message (13:20–21).

The structure appears to involve parallel units of particularization arranged causally where 1:1–4 is unpacked and developed in the rest of the first main unit (1:5–10:18), and 10:22–25 is likewise particularized in the rest of the second main unit (10:26–13:19), [19] with 13:20–21 providing the intention for the entire "word

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[17] I refer to the author as 'he' on the basis of the self-reference in 11:32 and the masculine form of the participle (διηγούμενον).

[18] The author devotes 8:6–13 to the new covenant promised in Jeremiah, then reiterates the inner transformation of the new covenant that characterizes it in 10:16–17, highlighting the significance of the new covenantal relationship between believers and God. The new covenant relationship is not mere formality but actual transformation of the heart and mind (cf. 8:10; 10:16) that corresponds with *knowing* the Lord (cf. 8:11) in relationship with Him.

[19] Of particular note is the parallel use of the construction τοσούτῳ … ὅσῳ in 1:4 and 10:25, each one marking the end of a general statement. This construction

of encouragement" (13:22): that the recipients would be "set in order in every good thing in order to do God's will,"[20] with God doing what pleases him through Jesus (13:21). The concept of transformation with respect to the believing recipient seems to be foremost on the mind of the author, even in the benediction (being "set in order in every good thing"), with the progressive transformation taking place under the discipline of God as Father (12:1–13) as the believer perseveres in the race of faith (12:1) and is healed (12:12–13).

The argument that the author presents, the sustained contrast between the former imperfect cult of the Mosaic covenant and the perfect work of the new covenant sealed in the blood of Jesus, is an exposition of the two expressions of revelation.[21] This contrast includes the variety of themes contained in the first nine and a half chapters. The intermixing of the various themes becomes apparent as the reader of Hebrews moves through the book following the opening general statement (1:1–4) with the reader encountering theme after theme in the context of contrast. Among the widely recognized major themes are the superiority of the son to angels (1:5–2:18), the superiority of Jesus to Moses (3:1–6) and the warning to not be like those whom Moses led in the wilderness (3:7–4:13), the superiority of the high priesthood of Jesus to the Levitical priests and

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appears to be used in 1:4 to emphasize the full realization of God's intention for "son" (cf. 2:6–8; 6:17), perfected in Jesus (the Christ-event), and in 10:25 to emphasize the urgency of the intimate response of "sons [and daughters]" as "the day" draws near (cf. 9:27–28). The only two occasions of this construction in Hebrews are found in 1:4 and 10:25, respectively indicating the established superiority of the son and the need for sons (ἀδελφοί in 10:19; cf. 2:11) to endure in the faith of a son (10:32–12:13), pioneered and perfected in Jesus (12:2; cf. 2:10 and the use of ἀρχηγός).

[20] Doing God's will is the very purpose for the coming of the Son (cf. 10:7, 9) and the purpose for God speaking ἐν υἱῷ: Sonship as expressed through Jesus's faithfulness as son (3:6).

[21] Regarding the importance of the beginning of a text to the ensuing discourse in ancient rhetoric, see Klaus Berger, *Exegese des Neuen Testaments* (Uni-Taschenbücher 658; Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1977), 19.

priesthood (7:1–8:6), and the superiority of the new covenant to the first covenant, made possible with Jesus's self-offering as the superior sacrifice over the imperfect offerings of the first covenant (8:7–10:18). The author presents each of these themes as he develops the discourse. However, the basis for each of these themes in terms of superiority (contrast) is found in the identification of the superior one as son.

The emphasis of the first main unit of material involves both the content and the means of God's eschatological speaking to "us" ἐν υἱῷ in contrast with the piecemeal and imperfect disclosure of God "long ago to the fathers." The case the author makes throughout 1:5–10:18 sets the former revelation, sufficient though imperfect as it was,[22] over against the perfect revelation ἐν υἱῷ.[23] The argument the author makes in 1:1–10:18 is still present in 10:19–13:19 but is relegated to a supporting role in the call of the author to the recipients through the hortatory emphasis beginning at 10:22. The recipients are being urged to respond in persevering faith to the revelation of God in the perfected son, the pioneer and perfecter of the faith (cf. 12:2).

The major transition in the book takes place in 10:19–21, which provides a general summary of the author's contention to this point, moving from cause to effect, such that the necessary response to God's eschatological revelation ἐν υἱῷ generates new and living

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[22] See 11:1–40. The former speaking of God was sufficient for those who combined it with faith (4:2), but those who lived "by faith" under the revelation "long ago" did not receive the promise and were not made perfect apart from "us," we to whom God has spoken eschatologically ἐν υἱῷ. Their faith was forward-looking, awaiting the One referred to as the pioneer and perfecter of the faith (12:2). The perfect comes ἐν υἱῷ.

[23] The contrast is introduced in 1:1–2a, but the finite and therefore controlling verb in the contrast is found in 1:2a ([ὁ θεὸς] ἐλάλησεν) indicating that the real focus is God speaking "in a son." James W. Thompson writes, "The centerpiece of the author's persuasive effort is the claim that 'God has spoken in these last days by a Son,'" asserting the central place of this statement in the argument of the book (*Hebrews,* Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008], 20).

relationships with God (10:22), with the "world" (10:23), and with the family of God (10:24–25). The relationships are then addressed in greater detail in 10:26–13:19 before climaxing with the benediction of 13:20–21.[24] The shift at 10:19–21 is one of *emphasis*.

Scholars agree that one of the defining characteristics of Hebrews is the interchange between exposition and exhortation.[25] Some argue that this is a quality of a sermon with the "preacher" moving through his discourse and pausing to exhort the hearers along the way as he makes his argument.[26] However, the overarching emphasis in 1:1–10:18 is exposition, the author describing what God has spoken to us in these last days ἐν υἱῷ. At Hebrews 10:19–21 the author briefly and broadly generalizes the argument he has just made while introducing the causal movement from an expository emphasis to the hortatory emphasis with οὖν in 10:19.

Beginning with 10:22 the emphasis is on the recipients' response to what God has spoken to "us,"[27] even though the contrast, initially presented in 1:1–2a and emphasized in 1:5–10:18, is revisited occasionally in 10:22–13:19 when necessary for the author's hortatory purposes (e.g. 12:18–24; 13:10–13). The author stresses exposition in 1:1–10:18 and exhortation in 10:22–13:19 with a generalized causal transition in 10:19–21 and a multi-faceted general exhortation in 10:22–25 which is then particularized in 10:26–13:19, climaxing in the

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[24] This is really a telic benediction, where the author provides the *purpose* of the "word of exhortation": that the God of peace/wholeness "set [the recipients] in order in every good thing to do His will, doing in us what is pleasing before him through Jesus Christ…"

[25] See, e.g., Guthrie, *Structure*, 9.

[26] See, e.g., Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 11–16; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 10; William L. Lane, "Hebrews: A Sermon in Search of a Setting," in *SwJT* 28 (1985): 13–18; Albert Vanhoye, *A Different Priest: The Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. Leo Arnold (Miami: Convivium Press, 2011), 439–40.

[27] Note the consecutive first person plural verbs in 10:22 (προσερχώμεθα), 10:23 (κατέχωμεν), and 10:24 (κατανοῶμεν) addressing the three new relationships for those who receive what God has spoken ἐν υἱῷ.

benedictory purpose statement in 13:20–21. [28] The contrast introduced in 1:1–2a is present throughout the book but is a point of particular emphasis in 1:1–10:18.

Hebrews 1:1–4: A General Statement[29]

Hebrews begins with an ingressive statement of contrast between God's former revelation and his full and final revelation. [30] The complete disclosure is given ἐν υἱῷ, the subject of the description in 1:2b–4. The initial contrast is given particular content through a recurring pattern of contrast in 1:5–10:18, reiterating and expounding the perfect revelation of God "in one who is son."[31] The son is superior as messenger and message (2:1–3),[32] leader (3:2–6),[33] priest and priesthood (7:11–28), promises (8:6), and mediation of the superior covenant (8:6; 9:15). Each of these contrasts can be traced back to 1:1–2a.

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[28] In further support of the transition at 10:19–21 is the change in subject of the finite verbs in the two main units of material. God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is the subject of nearly half of all finite verbs in 1:1–10:18 (45% in contrast to the audience who are the subject 19% of the time) indicating an emphasis on what God has done in the Christ-event, whereas the recipients are the subject of more than a third of all finite verbs in 10:22–13:19 (35% in contrast to God/Jesus/Holy Spirit who are the subject just 12% of the time) indicating a switch in emphasis to the believers' response to God's eschatological revelation in the Christ-event.

[29] For a detailed consideration of the movement from the general-to-particulars in 1:1–10:18, see Boyd, "Sonship," 48–97.

[30] The practice of the opening words of a text providing orientation and serving as the general statement for the bulk of the writing is not unique to Hebrews. See, e.g., Deut 1:1; Ps 73:1–2; Hab 1:1; Mark 1:1.

[31] See Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 88–90.

[32] The salvation, referred to as "so great" in 2:3, is described in 5:9 as eternal salvation of which the source (αἴτιος) is the perfected son, Jesus (5:8–9).

[33] Jesus is called the "file-leader/pioneer" (ἀρχηγός) of the salvation of many sons (2:10) as well as apostle/sent one (3:1), whereas the generation of Israelites who were being led by Moses (*the one sent* by God to lead his people—Exod 3:10, 13, 14, etc.) and whose bodies fell in the wilderness (3:17), asked for a new leader (ἀρχηγός) in their rebellion (Num 14:4).

"Son" is the focal point of the general statement in 1:2b–4. It is significant that the particular son is not named until 2:9 indicating the primacy of the sonship relationship. The concept of Son, not the specific identity of the son, is the focus of the opening statement. The essence of God's eschatological revelation is identified by ἐν υἱῷ in 1:2a and described in 1:2b–4, but given historical specificity in 1:5–10:18 as a matter of emphasis.[34]

After setting the contrast between God's revelation "long ago" and "in these last days," the author expounds the qualities at the heart of the perfect revelation in 1:2b–4: "son."[35] The first reference to the characteristics of "son" is the relative clause "whom [God] placed heir of all things."[36] The relative pronoun refers back to "son" and describes him as the one who will inherit all things. The inclusive substantive adjective "all" seems to connect the inherent nature of son as heir to the use of Psalm 8 in chapter two, specifically the reference to God having subjected the "world-about-to-be" (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν; 2:5) to the object of the Psalm adaptation (2:5–9). The reference to "all things" is found in 1:2b as well as 2:8a and this appears to be a reference to Jesus who is the one "we see" crowned with glory and honor in fulfillment of the Psalm (2:9). However, according to 2:8b it is to the human (ἄνθρωπος), the indirect object of the Psalm (2:6), the one to whom God subjects all things, that we do *not yet* see all things subjected. This use of the adverb of time "not yet" (οὔπω) suggests a time to come when all things *will be* subjected to the human. Additionally, Jesus is referred to as the pioneer of the salvation of many sons (2:10) whom he leads into

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[34] Some historical content of the Christ-event and its effects is offered in the second main unit of the book (10:29; 12:2–3; 13:12–13, 20), but only in support of the hortatory emphasis of that particular unit of material.

[35] William L. Lane recognizes the anarthrous use of υἱός as qualitative (*Hebrews 1–8*, 11). Cf. Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 90; Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 36; Brook Foss Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 3rd ed. (repr. London: Macmillan, 1920), 7.

[36] Ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων.

glory, indicating that Jesus is not the only one entering this realm of glory and honor, but other sons (and daughters) follow him.[37]

This connection to 2:5–10 suggests that, indeed, 1:2b may not be limited to Jesus as the son who will inherit all things, but applies to sons (and daughters) who will follow their pioneer, those whom Jesus is not ashamed to call brothers (2:11). It is "son" whom God has placed heir of all things.[38]

The author continues to describe the attributes of "son" with the second relative clause, "through whom [God] also made the ages."[39] Although the standard translation points to the son's role in the creation of the world/universe,[40] the clause could be understood as follows: "he accomplished the ages."[41] The key term is τοὺς αἰῶνας. The noun αἰών is found fifteen times in Hebrews and, with the exception of 1:2b and 11:3, it can only be translated temporally in each occurrence. The most common use is as a reference to "forever."[42] The other occurrences refer to the "world-about-to-be" (6:5) and the completion of the ages (9:26). The author is consistent in his temporal use of αἰών with the possible exception of 1:2b and 11:3.

The occurrence in 11:3 bridges the gap between the author's general statement regarding the testimony of faith by the older ones

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[37] See L. D. Hurst, "The Christology of Hebrews 1 and 2," in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 151–57.

[38] Cf. 1:14 (in light of 2:3, 6–8); 6:17 (the phrase "the unchangeableness of [God's] purpose" once again points to the original intent of the text of Psalm 8 for the "human"); 9:15.

[39] Δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας.

[40] Among the translations that interpret τοὺς αἰῶνας as "worlds" or "world" or "universe" are KJV, NASB, RSV, ESV, NIV, NLT. Many commentators also agree with the interpretation of ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας in terms of the creation of the physical universe including, e.g., Attridge, *Hebrews*, 40–41; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 93; Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 96; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 66–68; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 12.

[41] The author uses ποιέω with the sense of "accomplishing" or bringing something to completion in 1:2; 7:27, 10:7, 9, 36; 11:28; 13:21.

[42] The expression εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is used in 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 28; 13:8; εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος is found in 1:8; and εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων in 13:21.

(11:1–2) and the particular roll call of the members, the faithful ones through the ages, from Abel (11:4) to the unnamed martyrs (11:33–38), each of whom looked forward to the perfection of the faith that Jesus would bring (11:39–40; 12:2).[43] The author seems to make clear that chapter 11 concerns the divine ordering of the Christ-event, that which required faith by those who, through the ages, had trusted God without obtaining "the promise" (11:39) which would eventually come in the Christ-event.

With that context, 11:3 could then be understood according to the following translation: "By faith we understand the ages to have been set in order (κατηρτίσθαι) by the word of God so that which is seen would not come about from [things] that are visible." In other words, the foundation of the life of the human is faith, specifically dependence on and trust in the God of wholeness (13:20). The chapter as a whole involves the witness of faith through the ages, the saints of long ago (1:1) who lived by faith without seeing what was promised.[44]

If 11:3 is understood as a reference to the word of God *setting the ages in order*, then perhaps 1:2b should be understood in terms of God *accomplishing the ages* through [the] son at the end of the ages (9:26). It suggests that "son" may be the culmination of the ages, the promise of the faith that led up to the Christ-event and the ultimate result of what Jesus has accomplished as delineated in 1:5–10:18.

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[43] Note the articular use of πίστις with reference to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of *the* faith (τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν).

[44] Of particular note is 11:26, which refers to Moses who "considered of greater riches than the treasures of Egypt the reproach of the Christ, for he looked away (ἀπέβλεπεν) to the reward." At the beginning of the following chapter the recipients are encouraged to run with perseverance their race of faith, fixing their eyes (ἀφορῶντες) on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of the faith (12:1–2). Considering 2:8 (ὁρῶμεν) and 2:9 (βλέπομεν), it appears the two Greek words for "seeing" are used interchangeably. This indicates that perhaps what Moses saw as being of greater riches/value than the treasures of Egypt was Jesus, the one the recipients are urged to focus on as they run their race of faith.

The next pair of qualities of "son" that the author describes are ontological in nature[45] in what may be a hendiadys. The son is defined as being the effulgence of the glory of God and the impress of the essence of God. Both expressions focus on the son *making visible* the ontological reality of God, and this appears to be an essential characteristic of a son, specifically the son of God. The author seems to be emphasizing the nature of the son as making manifest the divine reality and majesty. It is through the son that the glory and essence of God is expressed or revealed, and this further explains the perfect eschatological revelation of God ἐν υἱῷ.

The ontological relationship between God and "son" is in view in the other ontological statement of the son (5:8), made in reference to "the Christ" (5:5). As the author explains, the one who is the essential son[46] appeared in the flesh (5:7) and was described as suffering while being tempted (2:18), sympathizing with human weakness but without sin (4:15), learning obedience from what he suffered (5:8), and being perfected through sufferings (2:10; 5:8–9; 7:28).

The concessive clause in 5:8, introducing the ontological reference to Christ as son, points to the portrayal of "son" in the flesh, explaining how the incarnate son revealed the glory of God and the impress of his essence in a way that human senses could experience. The intrinsic filial relationship to God, the subject of 1:3a, is given particular content and expression in the "days of [Jesus'] flesh" (5:7) as he manifested the glory and essence of God through obedient suffering rooted in his reverent awe of God.[47] Even though he is the

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[45] Whereas 1:2b uses the finite verbs ἔθηκεν and ἐποίησεν to describe what God has done for and through the son, 1:3a uses the present participle ὤν to describe the son ontologically.

[46] The text of 5:8 reads, καίπερ ὤν υἱός, indicating that "the Christ" (5:5) is essentially the son of God.

[47] The ontological son (5:8), in the days of his flesh, is characterized in terms of his εὐλάβεια (5:7). This is the reason given for God hearing his agonizing prayers and supplications. This might suggest a primary quality of a son in the flesh in terms of reverence, specifically reverent obedience in the midst of suffering. This appears to be the incarnate revelation of God's glory and essence (1:3a).

essential son of God, he makes the glory of God and the reality of God[48] visible in his flesh, learning obedience from the things he suffered, specifically suffering through temptation (2:18; 4:15) and overcoming by faith (2:13; 12:2), with the author referring to the means of victory as reverent awe. Jesus, according to the author, is the embodiment of sonship in the flesh, the very effulgence of God's glory and the impress of the reality of him. The son is the one who makes God's glory and essence manifest in what amounts to worship.[49]

The description of the son in whom God has spoken eschatologically continues in 1:3b with the assertion that he is "carrying all things along by the word of his power." This statement refers to the apparent sustaining of "all things" by means of the ability of the son,[50] but the author may be using the present participle φέρων to indicate a dynamic rather than static situation. The son is not just sustaining all things, but he is moving them along, carrying them along in a dynamic, perpetual agency of life, and doing so by means of the word of his ability.

The verbal form δύναμαι of the noun δύναμις is applied to Jesus, either directly or indirectly, seven times in Hebrews. All seven are in the first main unit (1:1–10:18) where the author is particularizing God's eschatological speaking "to us" ἐν υἱῷ. The son is described as being "able to help those who are being tested/tempted" (2:18); "able to sympathize with our weaknesses" (4:15), which is once again tied to being tested/tempted;[51] "able to be gentle with those who are

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[48] Cf. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 99.

[49] The author, in the hortatory division (10:19–13:21), exhorts the recipients to worship God with "reverence and awe" (εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους; 12:28). Note, this comes at the end of the chapter focusing on the sonship of the believer and the need for perseverance. Sons (and daughters) live a life of reverent worship of the Father.

[50] The word typically translated "power" in 1:3b, τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, is the noun form of the verb δύνασθαι meaning "to be able." The noun might be best understood as "ability" indicating that all things are carried along by the word of the son's ability.

[51] The two passages are linguistically connected. Compare terms related to suffering—2:18 (πέπονθεν) and 4:15 (συμπαθῆσαι); being tested/tempted—2:18 (πειρασθείς) and 4:15 (πεπειρασμένον); and the declaration of the son's ability to help—

ignorant and deceived" (5:2); "able to save completely those who are coming to God through him, always living to intercede for them" (7:25); "able to perfect the conscience/consciousness of the one worshipping" (9:9), which by implication suggests that it is *not* possible through the Levitical priesthood; "able to perfect those coming to [God]" (10:1); and "able to remove sins" (10:11), another implied contrast between the Levitical cult and the reality of what Jesus has accomplished (cf. 9:26).

Each of these statements helps to fill in the meaning of the "ability" of the son. They all have to do with the ministry of Jesus, his work of cleansing, perfecting, and his ongoing help to those who are coming to God. They suggest that the "word of his ability" that carries all things along is the message of the efficacy of the Christ-event and his ongoing ministry. This particular understanding of 1:3b,[52] the word of his ability, could be expanded to include the time before the incarnation if the Christ-event is understood in some sense as the "good news" referred to in 4:2. The author, in that passage, writes of "good news" that was apparently given to the generation that died in the wilderness due to their lack of faith (3:16–19), good news that is also given to "us."[53] The author seems to be saying that the good news is not limited to the temporal realization of the Christ-event, but in fact was available going back at least to the Sinai-to-Canaan era, and this opens the door to consider chapter 11 and perhaps the "word of the ability" of the son carrying all things along from Abel to the present. It may be that the "good news" has always pointed to the trustworthiness of God that came to full

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2:18 (βοηθῆσαι) and 4:16 (βοήθειαν). The author even compares the perfected son with the many sons (2:10) in terms of being tested/tempted (τοῖς πειραζομένοις; 2:18).

[52] The typical understanding of this expression is the sustaining of the universe by the sovereignty of the son. See, e.g., Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 95; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 100–101; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 14; Alan C. Mitchell, *Hebrews*, SP 13 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 42–43.

[53] καὶ γάρ ἐσμεν εὐηγγελισμένοι καθάπερ κἀκεῖνοι.

realization (perfection) in the Christ-event, God speaking eschato-logically ἐν υἱῷ.

The author changes focus in 1:3c from the essence of the ontological son (1:3a–b) to what the son has accomplished.[54] The son has made purification for sins and "sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high."[55] The first statement is a dependent clause using an aorist participle (in contrast with the prior two present participial phrases in 1:3a–b) and points to the unique, once-for-all offering of Jesus.[56] The syntax and sense of the phrase indicates that *before* the son sat down he accomplished purification for sins. This simple statement carries a tremendous amount of exegetical weight as it becomes the declaration that is carefully and gradually unpacked, beginning in 2:9b, but then which becomes the focus in chapters 7 and 8, and is fully expressed in 9:10–10:18. Because of this one sacrifice that seals the new covenant (10:29 in light of 9:15–22) and provides for forgiveness and removal of sin (9:22–26), offerings are no longer needed (10:18) other than the offering of praise (13:15).

The author then declares that this son, who has completed his work (accomplishing God's will, according to 10:5–10), sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. This is the main verb of 1:3.[57] The session of the son takes place after accomplishing purification from sins, which suggests the son would not be seated until he had provided the cleansing from sins. This enthronement is tied directly to two aspects of Christ: his priesthood and his role as son, both of

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[54] This is another use of ποιέω (ποιησάμενος) with the sense of accomplishing something, in this case the purification of "the sins." This use of ποιέω may be directly related to the prior use (1:2b) due to the contextual proximity.

[55] *καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς.*

[56] Hebrews uses ἅπαξ (9:26, 28) and ἐφάπαξ (7:27; 9:12; 10:10) to describe the unique and comprehensive sacrifice of the son. Once again, all of the relevant uses of ἅπαξ and ἐφάπαξ occur in the first main unit (1:1–10:18), emphasizing the exposition of God's eschatological speaking ἐν υἱῷ. God's speaking ἐν υἱῷ has taken place once for all in the Christ-event.

[57] See Cockerill, *Hebrews,* 95.

which are stressed in 1:5–10:21. Christ is referred to as being a faithful high priest over God's house *as a son* (3:6; cf. 2:17; 3:1–2), and as great priest over the house of God (10:21).[58] As son and priest (note the explicit combination in 5:5–6 and 7:28), Jesus is enthroned. However, in the general statement of 1:1–4 the emphasis is on Jesus as "son." The author is establishing what God has spoken eschatologically in terms of "son."

Finally, in 1:4 the author extends the enthronement of the son description to make a surprising claim: this son has become (γενόμενος) as much greater than the angels as the name he has inherited is better than them.[59] The use of γίνομαι suggests the son became something he had not been previously, something superior to angels and tied directly to the name he now possesses. Many scholars understand this name to be "son," citing contextual evidence, while others believe this to be the divine name.[60] The evidence from the immediate context, specifically the movement from effect to cause in the transition from 1:4 to 1:5[61] with the author strongly contrasting "son" to angels, provides the strongest evidence in favor of the name "son."

The concept of the "son" becoming superior to angels and inheriting the name equally superior, which 1:5–14 clarifies as "son," suggests that the one whose very essence is described in ontological terms in 1:3a–b, actually experiences and becomes something new, yet in accord with the very nature of the son of God as already

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[58] Recall the function of 10:19–21 as the transitional summary from cause (1:1–10:18) to effect (10:22–13:21) such that the son/priest over God's house is a part of the author's expository emphasis in 1:1–10:18, and specifically in 1:3c.

[59] τοσούτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων ὅσῳ διαφορώτερον παρ᾽ αὐτοὺς κεκληρονόμηκεν ὄνομα.

[60] Among those who hold to "son" as the name, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 47; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 98; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 105–6; Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 17. Richard Bauckham is the leading scholar to take the position that the name inherited is the Tetragrammaton (*God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 34; cf. Johnson, *Hebrews*, 72–74).

[61] The text of 1:5 begins, Τίνι γὰρ εἶπεν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων, with the use of γὰρ signaling the movement from effect to cause (substantiation).

described. The author makes a complex assertion about God's eschatological speaking but one that he unfurls throughout the remainder of the first main unit of the book.

Hebrews 1:1–4 presents a general statement regarding God's eschatological revelation ἐν υἱῷ. The author describes what God has done for and through the son (1:2b), the essence of the son (1:3a–b), and both what the son has done (1:3c) and what he has become (1:4). The focus of the perfect revelation of God, as characterized by the author, centers on the Christ-event as expressed *in a son*, and this completion/perfection of incarnate sonship and its efficacy is particularized principally in 1:5–10:18.

Hebrews 1:5–10:18: Particulars of God's Eschatological Speaking in a Son

The author utilizes a rich catena of OT quotations in 1:5–14 to begin the particularization of the opening general statement (1:1–4). He begins by giving particular content to 1:4 by contrasting "son" with angels in 1:5–14, the contraposition of which is then carried over to 2:1–18, arguing for the incomparable relationship to God of *son* over *angels*. The author makes this clear through the repeated contrast between what God has said previously in Scripture pertaining to "son" and angels.[62]

Two interesting comparative expressions arise from the text, one in the general statement (1:1–4) and one in the second chapter, which together appear to complicate the argument of the author regarding the superiority of the son going back to the creation of heaven and earth (1:10–12). The first is the declaration that this son in whom God has spoken eschatologically (1:2a) has "become" (γενόμενος) as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is better

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[62] Cockerill notes the chiastic arrangement of the structure of 1:5–14 in terms of an emphasis on the position and nature of son over against angels (*Hebrews*, 100–2).

than them (1:4).[63] The statement appears to indicate a development of or transformation into one who is superior to angels, some kind of new position relative to angels.

The other expression is found in 2:7 with the author's use of βραχύ τι in the quotation from Psalm 8. Many translators and scholars understand this expression as temporal rather than qualitative or positional, translating 2:7 as follows: "[God has] made him *for a little while* lower than angels." While nearly all interpreters construe this as a Christological reference to the incarnation of Jesus (2:8–9),[64] the one "we see crowned with glory and honor," yet the antecedent of "him" ("you have made 'him' for a little while lower than angels") is ἄνθρωπος and the parallel reference υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (2:6).[65] The declaration is a reference to "the human" having been made *for a little while* lower than angels. If understood Christologically, it is a reference to the incarnation, the son being lower than angels for a little while as a human.[66]

Both passages present a challenge to the superiority of the son to angels, especially with respect to the son as the agent of creation (1:2b, 10–12). If the son was present and active in creation (1:10–12) and the son is incomparably superior to angels, which are created

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[63] Γίνομαι occurs twenty-nine times in Hebrews, but only one time such that it must be translated "to be" (6:12). The other twenty-eight occurrences can, should, or must be translated "to become," including 1:4. This suggests a new state of superiority of the son over angels. See, e.g., Attridge, *Hebrews*, 47; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 105; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 72–73; D. Eduard Riggenbach, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1913), 14–15.

[64] The first mention of Jesus by name is 2:9.

[65] Many scholars see the anarthrous quote from Ps 8, υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, as primarily a parallel reference to "human" and not the christological title of Jesus as Son of Man. See, e.g., Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 128; Harald Hegermann, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*, THKNT (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt Berlin, 1988), 66–67; Koester, *Hebrews*, 214–16; Lane, *Hebrews*, 46–47.

[66] For more see Rick Boyd, "The Use of Psalm 8 in Hebrews," in *Listen, Understand, Obey: Essays on Hebrews in Honor of Gareth Lee Cockerill*, ed. Caleb T. Friedeman (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 1–16.

beings (1:7), by nature of the filial relationship (1:5–14), how, in what sense, and at what point did he become superior to them?

The answers may be found in understanding the difference between the argument the author is making in 1:5–14 and 2:5–18. Clearly, 1:5–14 sets the *nature* of the filial relationship to God in contrast to that between God and angels. However, in 2:5–18 the author appears to not only argue for a temporary subordinate relationship of humans to angels, but also of the greater concern God has for humans than for angels (2:16) and for the eventual superior relational position of *sons* (2:10) to angels (2:7). This relational superiority also includes the "world-about-to-be," which God did not subject to angels (2:5). It is the son in whom God spoke eschatologically who is the one crowned with glory and honor (2:7, 9) and who leads many other sons into glory (2:10). Something appears to have taken place that actualized a positional, relational change between the human Jesus, for a little while lower than angels, and the angels. The event appears to be the son having been *perfected* through sufferings (2:10) and having been crowned with glory and honor (2:9).

The mystifying statement in 1:4 regarding the son *becoming* superior to angels and inheriting a name better than them is brought into focus and given specificity in 1:5–2:18. The author emphasizes the superiority of the messenger in 1:5–14 with the son proven to be greater than angels. He then elucidates the superiority of the message itself by contrasting the "word spoken through angels" (2:2) with the context of the eschatological speaking of God ἐν υἱῷ, referred to as "so great a salvation" (2:3). In fact, it is the perfected son who is identified as the pioneer of that salvation, leading many sons into glory (2:10). It is Jesus who is crowned with glory and honor, identified as the one to whom God has subjected the world-about-to-be (2:5).[67] Jesus, in the crowning with glory and honor, has become

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[67] Note 2:5 states that God has *not* subjected the world-about-to-be to angels, which indicates the superior position of the one (or ones) to whom the realm is subjected.

superior to angels as *the perfected son*, but he is also called the pioneer of the salvation of many sons including those "about to inherit salvation," those to whom angels are sent to minister (1:14).[68] Even though Jesus was lower than angels "for a little while," he is so no longer, having been perfected as "son"[69] and having become the pioneer of the glorious realm of salvation for many sons (and daughters).[70]

The author appears to be giving particular content to 1:4 in 1:5–2:9, but in 2:5–10 he gathers in other human sons, referred to as Jesus' brothers, those he helps in fraternal relationship in 2:11–18. The combination of Jesus as son with his followers as sons[71] in 1:5–2:18 adds another dimension to 1:4 and strengthens the understanding of the assertion of superiority: son is the superior name, available to followers of Jesus, and this appears to be encompassed and realized by the eschatological word spoken by God ἐν υἱῷ.

The crowning with glory and honor is also subtly echoed in 3:1–6 with reference to the superiority of *son* to *servant* as it relates to fidelity. The author refers to both Jesus and Moses as having been faithful (3:2). However, the author makes it clear that Jesus is worthy of as much more glory (δόξης) than Moses as the builder of a house has more honor (τιμήν) than the house itself (3:3). Jesus is worthy of

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[68] The use of μέλλω is found in 1:14 and 2:5 as well as other key verses to indicate an urgency regarding the need for perseverance of the recipients. The reader/hearers apparently needed to know that they are on the verge of the full realization of the world to come and they must keep running with perseverance (cf. 12:1). See also 6:5; 9:11; 10:1, 27; 13:14.

[69] Cf. 2:10; 5:8–9; 7:28.

[70] The use of the adverb οὔπω, translated "not yet" (2:8), is significant because it indicates that it is the human (ἄνθρωπος) and not just the pioneer who is crowned with glory and honor and to whom the about-to-be realm is subjected by the Father. Yet Jesus is consistently and repeatedly referred to as being preeminent over his brothers. Cf. 1:9; 2:3 where He is referred to as "Lord"; 3:6; 4:16; 5:9; 8:1; 10:12, 21; 12:2; 13:6, 20–21.

[71] Jesus is referred to as the pioneer of the salvation of many sons, leading them into glory (2:10). This implies the other sons, whom Jesus is not ashamed to call "brothers" (2:11), are followers as he leads.

greater glory and honor than Moses because of the superior relationship of a being a *son* (3:6) over God's house to a *servant* (3:5) in God's house. Once again, in the context of comparing Jesus to Moses in their faithfulness, the author draws the distinction in terms of relationship to God (servant versus son) and position with respect to the house of God, with the son over God's house. The author provides particular content to God's two epochs of revelation, with the former revelation in the prophets (1:1) set over against filial revelation (1:2a), again highlighting son as the superior relationship. Whereas the son has been shown to be superior to angels, now the son is shown to be superior to servants, even the faithful servant Moses through whom God spoke long ago.[72]

The author then conditionally declares, "we are [God's] house, but only if we continue to hold fast to the confidence and boasting of the hope" (3:6b).[73] As the passage (3:1–4:13) begins with the faithfulness of the son (3:2, 6a), so the faithfulness of sons (and daughters) becomes the issue of the warning in 3:7–4:13. The recipients are urged to listen to the voice of God (3:7) and make every effort to enter into God's rest (4:11), something done through faith (4:3; cf. 3:19). The journey to which the author refers and which the recipients must complete, avoiding the unbelief and disobedience of the wilderness generation (3:7–4:11), further particularizes the contrast between the former piecemeal revelation of God (and the tragic results as recounted in 3:7–4:11) and the eschatological

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[72] Moses refers to himself as a prophet in Deut 18:15 (προφήτην).

[73] This is the first mention of "hope" in Hebrews, a concept further addressed as requiring/characterizing faith (11:1). The specific hope to which the author seems to refer is lying before the believer (6:18) and requires making every effort (6:11), culminating in the very presence of God (7:19; cf. 10:19–20, 22; 4:16). Given the context of Hebrews as a whole, the "hope" appears to demand perseverance to the very end of the "race," being fully realized in the eternal celebration of the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22–24; cf. 6:4–5; 4:3, 9–10). This hope is proleptically experienced here and now but ultimately entered into at the completion/perfection of the race, and this realization appears to be what Jesus has pioneered and perfected as son.

revelation of God ἐν υἱῷ (and the perfect, ultimate outcome: entering God's rest).

The author provides another transitional passage, 4:14–16, in a movement from cause (the faithfulness of the great high priest and son of God) to effect (the sympathetic ministry of the son). Just as the word of God must be received into the heart (3:7–8), which it then uncovers (4:12–13), the effect is the realization of the need to approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace at the time of need (4:16). This extension of the ministry of help offered by Jesus (2:18; 4:16) is then developed further in 5:1–10 and 7:1–28, although even the interruption of the exposition for a strong word of admonishment (5:11–6:20) includes the gracious priestly ministry of Jesus as forerunner (6:19–20).

The background of Jesus' sympathetic ministry is provided in 5:1–10 through an emphatic reminder of Jesus' filial relationship as his primary identity.[74] Jesus' high priestly ministry, the main subject of 7:1–10:18, is established through Jesus' designation as son, specifically as perfected son (5:8–10; 7:28), and is clearly a substantial feature of God's eschatological speaking ἐν υἱῷ. The Christ-event, both in occurrence and consequence, is described as God speaking ἐν υἱῷ and given further illumination through his high priestly ministry. Jesus' eminent priesthood, including the superior order/quality (6:20–7:1–28), the better covenant (8:1–13), and his supreme offering (9:1–10:18), is based on his perfected sonship (2:9–10; 5:7–10; 7:28). God speaking eschatologically ἐν υἱῷ includes all that Jesus accomplished as high priest[75] according to the order of Melchizedek, but his priesthood is that of the son who was perfected.

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[74] Note the reference to Jesus as "son" preceding his appointment to the priesthood in 5:5–6, and the declaration of his sonship in the flesh, perfected through suffering, also preceding his priestly appointment in 5:7–10. His priesthood is established upon his filial relationship to God as the son who was perfected (5:8–10; 7:28).

[75] It is worth noting that, according to 7:25, his intercessory ministry continues.

In 1:5–10:18 the author focuses on unpacking his general statement through a carefully constructed explanation of the superiority of Jesus as son. The emphasis is not merely on Jesus and his accomplishment, but also on "son" and the establishment of that relationship through a new covenant. It has been sealed by the blood of the perfected son who has been appointed high priest, able to sympathize with our weaknesses, to help in our time of need, and to lead brothers (and sisters) into glory as they follow him into God's rest, their inheritance. The author provides a unique perspective of the Christ-event in 1:5–10:18, but the entire argument is a delineation of God speaking ἐν υἱῷ.

Conclusion

The perfect/complete revelation of God has been given ἐν υἱῷ, and while it has come in the person of Jesus Christ, the author of Hebrews asserts that the revelation has appeared in the *form* of sonship. The Christ-event is God's eschatological revelation and the author introduces this disclosure under the heading of "son." Both message and messenger fall under that category as does the intended outcome. This is the fulfillment of God's promise[76] going back at least as far as Abel: sonship.[77]

The author does not merely present the perfected son as the perfect offering and perfect priest. He also presents Jesus as the perfected son, the pioneer of many sons (2:10–11) and the forerunner for "us" into the presence of God (6:19–20; 10:19–21).[78] In essence the

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[76] See 10:23 (the exhortation to the recipients to "hold fast to the confession of the hope without wavering because faithful is the one who promised," one of the key exhortations of the second main unit) and 11:39–40 (joining the former and the eschatological revelations with the promise of perfection established in the Christ–event).

[77] See Boyd, "Sonship," 32–245.

[78] The brief transitional unit of material (10:19–21) from cause (1:1–10:18) to effect (10:22–13:21) places emphasis on what God has accomplished in His

perfected son has offered himself as the sacrifice that removes sin (9:26 in contrast with 10:4, 11) and establishes a new covenant relationship (8:6; 12:24), as well as the high priest who offers the sacrifice and the pioneer who blazes the trail for all believers to follow. It is this last aspect of God's filial speaking, in particular, that is generally marginalized when considering the function of 1:1–2a in Hebrews. God has not only provided forgiveness and purification through the Christ-event, but He has done so in the form of perfected sonship who acts as a paragon for every believer. The author makes his argument that God has provided full and final revelation through the Christ-event involving both equipping and exemplar in the perfected son, an argument declared in 1:1–4, elucidated in 1:5–10:18, and exhorted in 10:19–13:21.

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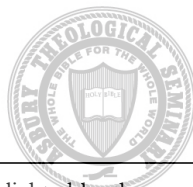
eschatological speaking, highlighted by the new and living way Jesus inaugurated. That way is referred to as entry into the presence of God (εἰς τὴν εἴσοδον τῶν ἁγίων; 10:19).

Contemporary Hermeneutics: An Examination of Selected Works of John D. K. Ekem on Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics for the African Context

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Abstract

This essay examines the mother tongue biblical hermeneutics (MTBH) of selected works of the Ghanaian scholar, John D. K. Ekem. Contextual principles, approaches, and methods have been advanced by biblical scholars to elucidate the meaning of Scripture. However, many of the principles, approaches, and methods do not adequately address the socio-cultural context of Ghana (or Africa) since they are products developed in and for another context. Hence, Ekem's assertion that biblical interpretation must critically engage and dialogue with local socio-cultural norms in the process of biblical interpretation in Africa. Not surprisingly, MTBH shares several principles with inductive biblical studies (IBS). Although MTBH faces numerous challenges, it has the potential to help African Christians to better apply the texts of the Bible to their existential situations. This essay honors the work of Ekem in an effort to bring awareness to MTBH and advance its growth in the African context.[1]

Keywords: Contextualization, Culture, Exegesis, Worldview, Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics (MTBH)

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[1] This is a revised version of "History of Biblical Hermeneutics and Contemporary Hermeneutics: An Examination of Selected Works of Prof. J. D. K. Ekem on Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics for the African Context" (paper presented at the Trinity Theological Seminary PhD Colloquium, Legon, Ghana, November 2016).

Introduction

In the wake of independence for many African countries, the establishment of theological seminaries and the creation of the department of the study of religions in public universities in the 1960s,[2] there were also demands for developing African biblical hermeneutics. The reason: Western biblical hermeneutics was perceived to be "part and parcel of a broader western ideological framework and, therefore, unsuited to the African situation."[3] George Ossom-Batsa argues that, until the 1960s, biblical interpretation in Ghana was performed according to western conventions, which do not adequately consider the African worldview.[4] This unique and multifaceted context requires contextual approaches, methods, and principles for interpretation because Africans interpret Scripture from within their context.

This scenario makes it difficult for the Ghanaian to apply the text to daily life and raises questions irrelevant to the Ghanaian audience.[5] In fact, the Bible is often viewed as an element of imperialism[6] because the tendency to associate its "proper interpretation" with western principles is regarded as a form of

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[2] Knut Holter, *Contextualized Old Testament Scholarship in Africa* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers. 2008), 92.

[3] Clifton R. Clarke, "In our Mother Tongue: Vernacular Hermeneutics within African Initiated Christianity in Ghana" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* 15 (2005): 52–68.

[4] George Ossom-Batsa, "African Interpretation of the Bible in Communicative Perspective," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 2 (2007): 91–104.

[5] While I make reference to the "African context," my focus is on the Ghanaian context since as Alan John Meenan observes, what one means by an "African context" is influenced by numerous factors such as "tribal biases, ideo-theological orientation, ecclesio-theological missionary heritage, engagement with territorial communities, accepted communities mores and a wide varieties of issues in Africa" ("Biblical Hermeneutics in an African Context" *Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 1 [2014]: 268–73 at 268).

[6] Musa W. Dube, "Reading for Decolonization (John 4:1–42)," in *Postcolonialism and Scripture Reading*, ed. Laura E. Donaldson and R. S. Sugirtharajah (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 37–60.

Westernization.[7] This impedes an African audience from making biblical principles central to life, which results in the notion that Christianity is a Western religion, when, in fact, "the Bible is the most important source for African Christian theological reflection and practice."[8] David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina concur that "the Bible, as we personify it, beckons us to hear its message on its own term; it wishes to speak a new word to us, challenging our presuppositions over against conforming to them."[9]

In the attempt to allow the Bible speak directly to the African context, scholars have proposed various contextual hermeneutical principles, methods, and approaches. These are commonly referred to as African biblical hermeneutics. These include: Enculturation hermeneutics (Justin Ukpong), Liberation hermeneutics (Gerald O. West), and Postcolonial hermeneutics (Musa W. Dube). Enculturation hermeneutics makes the socio-cultural context of Africa the major element in the interpretive process.[10] This ideo-theological orientation differs from the principles of Scripture interpretation inherited from Western missionaries.[11] Liberation hermeneutics emphasizes the economic and political liberation of Africans and highlights issues of "race and class"; however, religio-cultural elements are not entirely jettisoned.[12] The Bible is viewed as an instrument of liberation rather than of oppression and

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[7] Frederick Mawusi Amevenku, "Mother Tongue Biblical Interpretation and the Future of African Initiated Christianity in Ghana," *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* 18 (2014): 133–48.

[8] John D. K. Ekem, *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana): The Historical, Linguistic, and Theological Settings of the Gã, Twi, Mfantse, and Ewe Bibles* (Rome and Manchester, UK: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura and St. Jerome Publishing, 2011), 19.

[9] David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 17.

[10] Justin S. Ukpong, "Reading the Bible with African Eyes" *Journal of Theology for South Africa* 91 (1995): 3–14.

[11] Gerald O. West, "Biblical Hermeneutics in Africa" in *African Theology on the Way: Currents Conversations*, ed. Diane B Stinton (London: SPCK, 2010), 21–31.

[12] Gerald O. West, "(Southern) African Anglican Biblical Interpretation: A Postcolonial Project" *Journal of Anglican Studies* (2009): 1–25.

colonization.[13] Postcolonial hermeneutics deals with how ordinary Africans should read a Bible that was once used as a tool of colonization. In order to decolonize the Bible, it must be read against imperial influences, such as reading it against geography, universal tendencies, and suppression to mention but a few.[14]

John D. K. Ekem adds to these approaches through MTBH. Adapting the definition by B. Y. Quarshie, Ekem defines "mother tongue" as "the language one is born into" or the first language that one is able to speak naturally. He explains that, depending on the wider coverage of a mother tongue language, it could become a vernacular language of a people, a region or a nation.[15] He adds, "mother tongue is the language that affirms a person's identity and self-worth."[16] MTBH is the engagement of "viable tools for the scientific analysis of the phonetic, phonological, morpho-syntactical and semantic component" of a mother tongue in the process of biblical interpretation.[17]

MTBH shares some affinity to inductive biblical studies (IBS), such as: (1) making observations of the text (2) considering the context of the audience (presuppositions) and (3) studying the Bible in one's mother tongue even if one also consults the original

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[13] Itumeleng J. Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 41, 67.

[14] Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St Louis: Chalice, 2000), 3–21.

[15] John D. K. Ekem, "Jacobus Capitein's Translation of 'The Lord's Prayer' into Mfantse: An Example of Creative Mother Tongue Hermeneutics" *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 2 (July 2007), 66–79, at 67.

[16] John D. K. Ekem, "Professorial Chair Inaugural Address" *Journal of Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics* 1 (2015): 158–74, at 166. Of course, reasons such as war, disease, natural disaster, educational limitations, and work encourage one to neglect his or her mother tongue, which does not necessarily mean that his/her identity and self-worth is lost or devalued.

[17] Ekem, "Professorial Chair," 162. Alternatively, MTBH is an enterprise that requires proficiency in a mother tongue, a good understanding of the world of the Bible, an understanding of biblical languages, and knowledge of the African worldview (166).

languages.[18] The difference between the two hermeneutics is that IBS emphasizes the canon of Scripture while MTBH "may consult extra-biblical materials for interpretation."[19] Like many other hermeneutical approaches, MTBH also draws on the historical-critical method "to interpret texts in light of their *sitz im leben* (life setting/[situation])." In other words, it focuses on the text as "carrier of the text', the text's history and its originating circumstances."[20]

The goal of MTBH is to allow the Bible speak to/with indigenous issues such as poverty, marriage, barrenness, politics, education, etc., in Africa, thereby establishing Christianity in indigenous African life and thought.[21] In this respect, the objective of MTBH resonates the goal of IBS to equip English speakers with effective tools to study the Bible in their mother tongue.[22]

Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics

In this section, I examine selected works of a leading voice and proponent of MTBH, John D. K. Ekem. In his inaugural lecture as full professor at Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon Ghana, Ekem lists eight objectives that also serve as prerequisites for effective MTBH:[23] (1) the study of biblical languages (2) the production and

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[18] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 2, 72–73.

[19] Daniel Nii Aboagye Aryeh, "Inductive Biblical Interpretation and Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics: A Proposal for Pentecostal/Charismatic Ministries in Ghana Today" *Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 3 (2016): 140–60, at 148.

[20] W. Randolph Tate, *Handbook for Biblical Interpretation: An Essential Guide to Methods, Terms, and Concepts*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 197.

[21] In places where Christianity is perceived as foreign, it is not unusual for it to die out much more rapidly when it encounters severe trauma such as the Arab conquest of North African Churches in the 7th century. Because these churches remained Latin-speaking, known mainly by the elite, the Christian faith essentially disappeared. By contrast, the Coptic Church survived in part because they used both Coptic language and thought in the expression of faith (Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, 2).

[22] David R, Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study: History, Character, and Prospects in a Global Environment" *Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 68 (2013): 6–35.

[23] Ekem, "Professorial Chair," 164–65.

use of commentaries and study Bibles written in local languages (3) the study of the Septuagint (LXX) (4) the study of Targums (5) the study of scripture translated into various African languages (6) the dramatization of biblical passages in African contexts (7) reflection on religio-cultural, socio-economic, and political issues in mother tongues and (8) the equipping of local Christian communities to understand current issues confronting the church.

Some of these eight objectives/principles share resemblances with some Western biblical hermeneutics and will be discussed below. Rather than discuss the eight objectives/principles individually, I combine them into three groups of shared similarities: (1) the study of biblical and mother tongue languages, (2) Bible commentaries and study Bible aids in local languages, and (3) interpretive creativity and innovation.

The Study of Biblical and Mother Tongue Languages

Ekem identified the following key elements for MTBH: the study of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and mother tongues. In addition to standard research languages, each student is to also study his or her distinct mother tongue language. He states,

> Pastors/Ministers in training should also be given an opportunity to do part of their formal theological studies in languages used by communities among whom they are going to minister. This is particularly crucial in the area of biblical interpretation. It is in the light of the above consideration that the Seminary [Trinity Theological Seminary] has set up the Centre for Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics where the
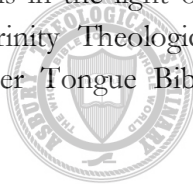
> Bible is interpreted in local Ghanaian (African) languages using very high standards of biblical scholarship.[24]

This comment underscores the fact that the English language is the medium of instruction in almost all schools and theological seminaries in Ghana. Indeed, assignments, examinations, and theses are written in English. For many urban students, English is their mother tongue because it is the main language used at home from childhood. According to MTBH, these students are expected to study their native/indigenous languages.

This mandate, while praiseworthy, is a challenge, for two reasons. First, many of the indigenous Ghanaian languages remain spoken languages only as they await literary development. Second, in Ghana, ministers are often re-assigned to other communities, which may require them to study the language of their new community. Although this policy will work to fulfill the goals of MTBH, the frequent re-assignment of ministers to new communities may not help the Ghanaian Church—it must be reexamined.

The study of indigenous languages is critical to consolidating the Christian faith in the Ghanaian life and thought. Missionaries to Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast) discovered that the receptor language is key in the communication of the gospel and its reception among indigenous groups. For example, David N. A. Kpobi notes,

> The few chaplains who sought to win converts among the Africans started by teaching the African children to read the Bible in the European tongues but soon realized the futility of such efforts. The alternative was to teach the African children in their own tongues and this called for a translation of the Scripture into those languages. This exercise however had to

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[24] John D. K. Ekem, *Interpretation of "Scripture" in Some New Testament Documents: Lessons from the Ghanaian Context* (Accra: African Christian Press, 2015), 20.

wait for many years until competent persons became available to work on the translations.[25]

In response to this problem, Ekem and Seth Kissi co-authored *Essentials of Biblical Greek Morphology (with an Introductory Syntax).*[26] The twenty-five lesson book focuses primarily on morphology with some discussion of syntax. They attempt to simplify the study of Koine Greek, which some African biblical students find challenging. Additionally, Emmanuel A. Obeng postulates that African biblical students have three challenges: (1) lack of lecturers in biblical languages (2) limited time for studies due to Church work, and (3) limited access to reference materials.[27] The work of Ekem and Kissi is directed at solving (2) and (3).

The uniqueness of this textbook lies in the exercises at the end of each lesson, because they require students to translate from Greek into their respective mother tongues.[28] It is an innovation on the four main sources the authors consulted,[29] wherein exercises are expected to be translated into English, which may not necessarily be the mother tongue of many African students. In this way, Ekem and Kissi encourage African students to become fluent and capable of theologizing in their mother tongues, in addition to English.

There is no reason that declensions, paradigms, vocabulary, and appendices could not also be translated into other mother tongues.[30] Aloo Osotsi Mojola agrees that African biblical scholars should be

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[25] David Nii Anum Kpobi, *Entrusted with the Word: A History of the Bible Society of Ghana 1965–2015* (Osu, Accra: Heritage Publications, 2015), 24.

[26] John D. K. Ekem and Seth Kissi, *Essentials of Biblical Greek Morphology (with an Introductory Syntax)* (Accra: SonLife Press, 2010).

[27] Emmanuel A. Obeng, "Emerging Concerns for Biblical Scholarship in Ghana" in *Interpreting the New Testament in Africa*, ed. Mary N. Getui, Tinyiko Maluleke and Justin Ukpong (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2001), 31–41.

[28] Ekem and Kissi, *Essentials of Biblical Greek*, 8, 50, 60, 72, 84, 92, 104, 110, 116, 124, 140, 148.

[29] Ekem and Kissi, *Essentials of Biblical Greek*, xii.

[30] Ekem and Kissi, *Essentials of Biblical Greek*, 153–75.

able to speak their native languages, understand its history and culture, and demonstrate competence in biblical languages.[31] In spite of this, translating the vocabulary into a particular mother tongue may be interpreted as giving undue advantage or preference to a given ethnic group and result in the book's rejection by others. Nevertheless, laying a good foundation in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and mother tongue languages is a minimum requirement for the translation of the Bible into local languages (mother tongues). As Bauer notes,

> Generally speaking, there should be an emphasis upon the study of the Bible in the student's own language. Harper recognized that people think in their native language and that consequently students should be saturated with the Bible in their own tongue.[32]

To this end, the Centre for Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics (CMTBH), of which Ekem is the director, organizes short courses in Hebrew, Greek, Gã, Akan, and Ewe designed to enable with limited time to study the biblical and mother tongue languages).[33] If the problem of study time (challenge 2 above) and the lack of available reference materials (challenge 3 above) is resolved, perhaps lecturers who can teach both the biblical and mother tongue languages (challenge 1 above) will naturally arise. This would also mitigate the need to use English versions for translation into Ghanaian mother tongues, since scholars would refer to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.[34]

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[31] Aloo Osotsi Mojola, "Outstanding Challenges for Contemporary Bible Translation and Interpretation in Africa," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 10 (2007): 31–37.

[32] Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study," 10.

[33] First Kwesi Dickson Memorial Lectures, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon Accra, 24 November 2015.

[34] For example, Ekem registers his dissatisfaction with the Mfantse New
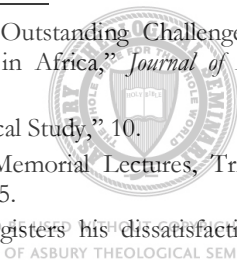
In an article titled "Early Translators and Interpreters of the Judeo-Christian Scriptures on the Gold Coast (Ghana): Two Case Studies,"[35] Ekem discusses the legacies and significance of the works of Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein and Augustine William Hanson's translation and interpretation of the Scriptures for the Mfantse and Gã communities respectively. Both men were educated in biblical languages and acquainted with the socio-religio-cultural norms of their communities. For Ekem, these illustrious sons of West Africa, who worked for different agencies in different periods, made the interpretation of the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4) very remarkable. He surmises that, although they had the "easier, superficial, option" of translating and interpreting the Lord's prayer, they "chose the harder, yet more productive way of finding appropriate local African terms through the process of 're-interpretation' and 're-semantization.'"[36]

By implication, Ekem suggests that the enterprise of MTBH is a much more demanding engagement that goes beyond finding mere equivalent words for the Greek text. According to Ekem, Capitein and Hanson's translation of Matt 6:9a, Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοις οὐρανοῖς, "Our Father in heaven," as "Jijena Jinnadja endi owwasúr" in

Testament translated by Parker, saying, "it is probable that [the] Mfantse New Testament translation was, unlike the Akuapem-Twi, Ewe, and Gã, not based on the Greek text in use at the time. It is likely that Parker did not know Greek and therefore had no choice but to fall back on the English Revised Version. This would not be surprising, since emphasis in the schools was on the English language, and the Scriptures provided by the BFBS and Christian literature provided by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, through the Wesleyans, was in English" (*Early Scriptures*, 84).

In contrast, he commended the work of J. Zimmermann and J. Nikoi, which drew on Hebrew, Greek and mother tongue in the first full Gã Bible published in 1876 (Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, 25, 42.).

[35] John D. K. Ekem, "Early Translators and Interpreters of the Judeo-Christian Scriptures on the Gold Coast (Ghana): Two Case Studies" *Journal of Africa Christian Thought* 13 (2010): 34–37, at 34.

[36] Re-interpretation refers to earlier translations by western missionaries who did not critically consider the socio-cultural context of Ghana. Re-semantization refers to the meaning of key words as used in earlier translations and how they relate to each other in meaning. See Ekem, "Early Translators and Interpreters," 37.

Mfantse, and "Wa Tshe ni ia Nüngma mli" in Gã, and ἀμήν, "amen" in the doxology as "Ojendãm" in Mfantse and "hiao" in Gã, shows that the Scriptures cannot be translated in a vacuum.

Although Ekem did not explain the impact of the translation and interpretation of Capitein and Hanson's work on the Lord's Prayer on the target audience, he highlighted the competence and creativity of Capitein and Hanson as an example to emulate and improve upon. In this way, Ekem expressed his support of "dynamic equivalence or functional equivalence" over a "literal," word-for-word approach because the latter fails to fully consider the concepts and ideologies of the Ghanaian context.[37] The work further shows that MTBH has precedents in the early 17th and 18th centuries unexplored by contemporary scholars.

In his book, *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana)*, Ekem surveys the history of Bible translations into Gã, Twi, Mfantse, and Ewe.[38] The rationale for choosing these four languages was due to the fact that they were the earliest translations completed in the Gold Coast and Togoland.[39] The work describes the impact of these translations documents the history of Bible translation into Ghanaian languages. Solomon S. Sule-Saa also documents Bible translations into Dagomba and Konkomba. Sule-Saa observes that these translations resulted in the full integration of Christianity, which the indigenes originally viewed as foreign.[40]

Many missionaries to the Gold Coast were knowledgeable in Hebrew and Greek. Some of them even studied the mother tongue so that they could translate and communicate the gospel in the local Ghanaian languages. Those who could not achieve this proficiency employed indigenous linguists to assist in translating the Bible into
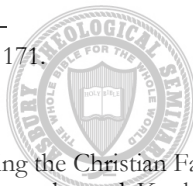
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[37] Ekem, "Professorial Chair," 171.

[38] Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, xvii.

[39] Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, xvii.

[40] Solomon S. Sule-Saa, "Owning the Christian Faith through Mother-Tongue Scriptures: A Case Study of the Dagomba and Konkomba of Northern Ghana" *Journal of Africa Christian Thought* 13 (2010): 47–53.

mother tongues. For Ekem, Samuel Quist is an example of someone whose expertise of a mother tongue enabled the Ewe bible translation.

It is probable that Ekem's insistence on studying mother tongues in addition to biblical languages was based on his research showing the difficulty of finding local mother tongue experts to assist in translation. For this reason, it is better for biblical scholars to also understand the mother tongues. This helps fast-track the process of translating the Bible into all the languages of Ghana. In addition, it facilitates the retranslation of the Bible completed by missionaries centuries ago, which do not appear to follow proper indigenous linguistic rules.[41]

Bible Commentaries and Study Bibles in Local Languages

For Ekem, once a Bible translation in a local language is complete "efforts should also be made to help the communities interact effectively with the translated Scriptures through the provision of local language Bible commentaries, local language Bible dictionaries and other study aids."[42] According to him, the purpose for having commentaries and study Bibles in local languages is to encourage dialogue between the local African religious, cultural, and social norms and the Bible without having to go through a foreign language and worldview.[43]

Ekem states that the creation of Bible commentaries and study Bibles in local languages should include …

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[41] Ernst R. Wendland, "Study Bible Notes for the Gospel of Luke in Chechewa" in *Biblical Texts and African Audiences*, ed. Ernst R. Wendland and Jean-Claude Loba-Mkole (Nairobi, Kenya: Acton Publishers, 2004), 103–49.

[42] Ekem, *Interpretation of "Scripture"*, 19.

[43] This does not require the devaluing of foreign reference works such as English theological dictionaries and commentaries, but it highlights their inherent limitations for African contexts.

re-packaging the thought embedded in an "original revelation/message" for speakers of other languages, taking cognizance of relevant theological, linguistic and cultural factors …. [H]ere we see the crucial importance of mother tongue theologies derived from solidly grounded Bible translations as well as context-sensitive Bible study aids in local African languages.[44]

Complementing the views of Ekem, A. M. Howell argues that the enterprise of writing local language resources is not intended to ignore commentaries in English because they serve as a resource for Africans who want to undertake commentaries in local languages. He further explains that the lack of local language commentaries and study Bibles is due to the widespread preference for globally or regionally spoken languages.[45] This tendency, while understandable, renders less popular languages less influential in theological discourse.

As a scriptural and historical precedent, Ekem points to the fact that although Jesus likely used Aramaic as his mother tongue, and that (in Ekem's view) the Gospels were initially written in the minority language of Aramaic, these were later translated into Koine Greek, the lingua franca of the time.[46] While the Gospels could have gone to other Aramaic speaking territories, the Gospels had to be translated into the mother tongue of the receptor audience, which for many was Greek. As Kwame Bediako notes, God does not have a sacred language; rather, He speaks all languages so that the gospel is

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[44] John D. K. Ekem, "Interpreting the Lord's Prayer in the Context of Ghanaian Mother-Tongue Hermeneutics" *Journal of African Christian Thought* 10 (2007): 48–52; cf. "Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, 19.

[45] Allison M. Howell, "Beyond Translating Western Commentaries: Bible Commentary Writing in African Language" in *Journal of African Christian Thought* 13 (2010): 21–33.

[46] Ekem, *Interpretation of "Scripture"*, 21. Actually, scholarly consensus holds that the Gospels were written in Greek, though there is evidence that Matthew was originally written in Hebrew.

not limited to a selected few based on language. The "gospel is about us and that we have been invited to join."[47]

In an article titled "A Dialogical Exegesis of Romans 3:25a"[48] Ekem explains that the writing of local language commentaries and study Bibles involves dialogical exegesis, which is comprised of (1) cross-cultural hermeneutics, which brings the "biblical and other worldviews face to face on the principle of reciprocity"[49] (2) inter-cultural dialogue, which seeks to have discourse between the translated text and the "original" text to establish their points of "convergence and divergence" as well as their influence on the community of Christians, and (3) applied hermeneutics, which combines (1) and (2) for mother tongue study Bibles and commentaries for local communities.

As his example, Ekem explores how to best express the meaning of ἱλαστήριον in the Ghanaian context. He first observes that Paul's use of ἱλαστήριον was influenced by his Jewish background via the כפרת or lid of the ark of the covenant (also referred to as the mercy seat).[50] Then, he considers Paul's statement that God "put forward" Jesus, the Messiah, "as a sacrifice of atonement [ἱλαστήριον] by his blood"[51] suggesting that since ἱλαστήριον is both the "place and means of atonement,"[52] it is appropriated through faith in *Jesus* and not his blood as some versions imply.

Third, he examines a few Ghanaian translations. Ekem criticized the 1861 Akwapim-Twi translation of ἱλαστήριον as *mpata* (the pacifying event) but supported the revised Akwapim-Twi 1964 rendering, *mpatade* (pacifying sacrifice), as well as the equivalent

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[47] Kwame Bediako, "Scripture as the Hermeneutic of Culture and Tradition" *Journal of African Christian Thought* 4 (2001): 2–11.

[48] John D. K. Ekem, "A Dialogical Exegesis of Romans 3:25a" *JSNT* 30 (2007): 75–93.

[49] Ekem, "Dialogical Exegesis," 77.

[50] In fact, ἱλαστήριον is the LXX translation for כפרת.

[51] NRSV.

[52] Ekem, "Dialogical Exegesis," 81.

renderings *mpatadʒe* (1896 Mfantse NT), *mpatadeɛ* (1948 Mfantse Bible), *kpatamɔnɔ* (1907 Gã Bible and 1977 Gã NT), or *avulénu* (sacrifice of reconciliation) (1877 Ewe NT and 1898 Ewe NT).[53]

Appealing to the legendary example of Agya Ahor who offered himself to be sacrificed to avert calamity in the community, Ekem further explains that in the context of Abura-Mfantse, ἱλαστήριον comes close to *ahyɛnanmuadʒe* (representative revelatory sacrifice) as the suffering servant in Isa. 53:10.[54] He adds:

> It … underscores the open-ended nature of translation and exegesis, reminding us that "any translation is 'selective' in the sense that it cannot re-produce all aspects of form, content, and/or function of the original text; therefore, an evaluation and a selection in terms of priority has to be made."[55]

However, the criteria and reasons for a selection must be clearly stated, and the original meaning of biblical words and concepts must not be distorted.

In chapter two of *Priesthood in Context*,[56] Ekem indicates that the difference between *ɔkomfo* (priest) and *asɔfo* (attendant) is that an *asɔfo* is instructed by the *ɔkomfo* to perform only certain rituals. Additionally, he or she is not possessed in the same manner as the *ɔkomfo*. By contrast, some missionaries believed that both *ɔkomfo* and *asɔfo* were synonymous words meaning "priest."[57] For Ekem,

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[53] Ekem, "Dialogical Exegesis," 87.

[54] This is debatable since the socio-historical contexts of Isaiah, Romans, and that of Agya Ahor are different. There *may* be similarity across them, but these connections must be made cautiously.

[55] Ekem, "Dialogical Exegesis," 91.

[56] John D. K. Ekem, *Priesthood in Context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother-Tongue Biblical Interpretation* (Accra: SonLife Press, 2008), 43–57.

[57] Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, 47–50.

[T]he old order would realize how inappropriate it is to approach the institution of traditional priesthood with a prejudiced mind, full of negative foregone conclusions. In view of its profound implications for the concept of Christian priesthood or Christian ministry, it is legitimate to ask whether European Christian Mission-founded Churches in Ghana have taken serious note of important values within *Akan* traditional priesthood that could help to enrich their own understanding of priesthood/ministry.[58]

Therefore, Bible commentaries and study Bibles written in local languages are designed to engage the indigenous worldview of Africans to appropriate the gospel in a way foreign works do not. The priesthood as found in traditional African religions is an institution in which aspiring priests were critically trained as the custodians of spirituality in the community. This is one example of a socio-religious concept that could be adapted to explain Christian ministers. Ekem finds Immanuel Quist's commentary worth emulating when he says, "it goes to the credit of Quist that, in addition to his translations, he was able to produce an impressive commentary on Matthew's gospel in the *Ewe* language. This commentary is a real masterpiece, reflecting the standard biblical scholarship and hermeneutical application of the time."[59]

Yet, one must be cautious in engaging the African context in translation or interpretation. For example, Ekem claimed that ἐπιούσιος (daily bread) in Matt 6:11/ Luke 11:3 should not be translated as "daily bread" because Africans do not need mere survival "but a leap from mediocrity to economic and moral excellence … optimal use of resources, trust in God for wisdom to develop modest but dignified lifestyles that will not make us perpetually dependent on other people's benevolence."[60] While this

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[58] Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, 57.

[59] Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, 123.

[60] Ekem, "Interpreting the Lord's Prayer," 51.

latter point may be true, it does not justify allowing contextualization to dictate interpretation to the point that the original meaning of ἐπιούσιος is ignored. In the context of Matt 6:11//Luke 11:3, and in keeping with normal Koine usage, the term indisputably refers to what is necessary for daily existence or survival. Thus, its use with ἄρτος (bread)[61] requires a translation of "daily" whether or not Africans need more than survival.

In a seminal work, *Krataa a Pɔɔl Kyerɛwee dze Kɛmaa Faelimɔn: ne Nkyerɛnkyerɛmu fi Griik Kasa mu kɔ Mfantse Kasa mu,*[62] Ekem provides a commentary of on the Greek text of Philemon in Mfantse. Additionally, Greek expressions used in Philemon are listed at the end of the book and translated into Mfantse.[63] This work shows how a Mfantse biblical scholar is not limited to theologizing in English language but could also theologize in his mother tongue—Mfantse. In the words of J. O. Y. Mante, this is "a Scholar [Ekem] who knows his subject and is able to bring it home to African (Ghanaian) context. From *Greek* to *Hebrew* to *Mfantse* to *English*, Prof. Ekem demonstrates in this work exceptional versatility."[64]

In his chapter, "Developing Akan Study Bible Material on 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,"[65] Ekem engaged an "open-minded" approach regarding the issue of "head coverings" and its implications for the preparation of study Bibles in the Akan context. He argues that Paul was addressing the issue of "propriety in worship." In view of the heterogeneous nature of the Corinthian congregation, Paul was not likely enforcing one cultural norm over others;[66] rather he was

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[61] Verlyn D., ed., *NIDNTT*, abr. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 197.

[62] John D. K. Ekem, *Krataa a Pɔɔl Kyerɛwee dze Kɛmaa Faelimɔn: ne Nkyerɛnkyerɛmu fi Griik Kasa mu kɔ Mfantse Kasa mu (An Mfantse Commentary on Paul's Letter to Philemon Based on the Greek Text)* (Accra: SonLife Press, 2009).

[63] Ekem, *Krataa a Pɔɔl*, 32–35.

[64] Ekem, *Interpretation of "Scripture"*, v, emphasis original.

[65] John D. K. Ekem, "Developing Akan Study Bible Material on 1 Corinthians 11:2–16" in *Interacting with Scriptures in Africa*, ed. Jean-Claude Loba-Mkole and Ernst R. Wendland (Nairobi, Kenya: Action Publishers, 2005), 102–22.

[66] In the Second Temple Period, Jewish, Greek, and Roman women covered

addressing the problem of the loose and undressed hair of women associated with Greco-Roman mystery cults. On this reading, Paul neither wanted "pneumatic women worshippers" to emulate this practice nor Christian men to copy the hairstyles of Corinthian homosexuals.[67] While Ekem's explanation is plausible, hair and head coverings in antiquity communicated diverse messages in various contexts among different people groups, so determining the exact meaning of Paul is both challenging and highly debated.

Regardless, the uniqueness of this work is that, in addition to explaining the complex socio-religious worldview of first-century Corinth, Ekem's commentary on the passage is written in both Akan and English. He took advantage of the availability of Akan Bible and Greek to exegete the passage. It is a prime example of mother tongue commentary in Akan for both clergy and lay people.

Ekem's motivation to have commentaries and study Bibles in local languages is to (1) maintain the status of Africa as "the cradle of Bible translation"[68] (2) encourage communities adhere to Christian principles contextually since "language as vehicle of culture is intricately intertwined with beliefs, values, and the worldview of its speakers"[69] and (3) produce African biblical scholars capable of theologizing in their mother tongues in addition to the other languages they know.

This effort will hopefully prevent future generations from following the historical examples of some African Early Church fathers such as Clement (ca. 150–220), Origen (ca. 185–254), Athanasius (ca. 295–373), Tertullian (ca. 160–225), Cyprian (ca. 200–258) and Augustine (354–430). Although some of them spoke Berber, Coptic, and Punic, they wrote primarily in Greek and Latin.[70]

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their heads for a variety of reasons, one of which was to communicate their married status.

[67] Ekem, "Developing Akan," 107–8, 115.

[68] Ekem, *Early Scriptures*, 2.

[69] Howell, "Beyond Translating," 23.

[70] G. A. Oshitelu, *The African Fathers of the Early Church* (Ibadan: Sefer Books

An obvious reason for this is that they desired to have maximum impact, but this was to the detriment to these other important languages.[71]

Writing commentaries and study Bibles in mother tongue will promote the academic study of the Bible in mother tongues. On this note, Ekem cautioned,

> [T]his should not be misconstrued as a deviation from the core message of Scripture, but rather as an attempt to re-package the latter in such a way as to make it relevant to receptor audiences. This point can be illustrated by means of the techniques employed by some New Testament writers to interpret a variety of texts to their first century CE audiences.[72]

In "Biblical Exegesis in an African Pluralistic Context: Some Reflections,"[73] Ekem deliberates on the chance connections between Christianity, traditional African religion, and African worldviews in biblical exegesis. He observes that, in view of the influence of traditional worldviews and Christianity on African communities, there is the need for dialogical exegesis "whereby traditional African worldviews are brought face to face with Judeo-Christian biblical thought"[74] without neglecting the original meaning of the text. Ekem argues that it is not enough to establish the *sitz im leben* of a passage without also examining the world-views of the contemporary audience.

Ltd, 2002), preface.

[71] According to Benhardt Y. Quarshie, Athanasius possibly wrote in Coptic or his works were translated ("Doing Biblical Studies in the African Context—The Challenge of Mother-Tongue Scriptures" *Journal of African Christian Thought* 5 [2002]: 4–14).

[72] Ekem, *Interpretation of 'Scripture'*, 20.

[73] John D. K. Ekem, "Biblical Exegesis in an African Pluralistic Context: Some Reflections" *Journal of Africa Christian Thought* 6 (2013): 31–34.

[74] Ekem, "Biblical Exegesis," 31.

For example, in answering the question of the concept of priesthood in traditional religion, one must also ask, how should the atoning and reconciliatory role of priests in the book of Hebrew be understood in the Roman Catholic Church in Africa? Can the God who revealed Himself in Jesus be equated to the "Supreme Being" who manifests in African deities? Using אשם (offering for sin) in Isa 53:10b as a case study, Ekem postulates that, in view of the fact that Jews could offer their lives as ransom to save their nation, and taking account of the popular legend among the Abura Mfantse concerning Egya Ahor who offered his life to avert calamity to attain reconciliation between the community and the gods, Isa 53:10b should be better translated as "*Edze no bɔ ahyɛnanmuadze afɔr wie a* [When you have offered him as a representative atoning pledge]."[75]

Ekem also acknowledged the difficulties surrounding the translation and interpretation of πρωτότοκος (first born) in Col 1:15. He suggests that since Paul was responding to the religiously pluralistic situation in Colossae, πρωτότοκος means something like the "ontological superiority" of Christ over all creation. In Mfantse, Jesus can better be described as *abɔdze nyina farbaa*, therefore *ɔkandzifo* (pioneer).

In this work, Ekem clearly illustrates the need for and how to do dialogical exegesis between the biblical text and African traditional worldviews. These two case studies from the Old and New Testaments also show how one can do dialogical exegesis without being syncretistic. That said, Ekem again seems to privilege the contemporary Ghanaian concept in the way he understands πρωτότοκος (first born), which appears to distort the meaning of Scripture. Dialogical exegesis must begin with the original meaning of Scripture in its context and only then move to contextualizing it in a contemporary context.

Interpretive Creativity and Innovation

In an article titled "Jacobus Capitein's Translation of 'The Lord's Prayer' into Mfantse: An Example of Creative Mother Tongue Hermeneutics," Ekem argues that Capitein's translation and interpretation of the Lord's Prayer is a creative pioneering work in MTBH.[76] Capitein translated and interpreted the Lord's Prayer (cf. Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4; Did 8:2) from Dutch into the local 18th century Mfantse language (Elmina) using concepts school children could understand. Ekem built upon this by translating the Greek of Matthew and Luke into both modern Mfantse and English. Although Capitein was criticized for not being faithful to the Greek text because he did not provide a word-for-word translation, Capitein appealed to the "open-ended nature of cross-cultural communication"[77] in which God is a universally ontological, majestic, and provident Being who deserves the reverence of His creation.[78] It is a complex exercise that requires the interpreter to understand the needs of the community and the significance of cross-cultural hermeneutics as it varies from one community to another.[79]

In an article titled "The Use of Archiereus 'High Priest' as a Christological Title: A Ghanaian Case Study,"[80] Ekem discusses how the priestly Christology in Hebrews can best be interpreted and translated into Akwapim Twi, Asante Twi, and Mfantse, while underscoring interpretive issues that may arise. He asserts that the author of Hebrews might have been a Hellenistic Christian who used the Jewish concept of priesthood to creatively communicate

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[76] Ekem, "Jacobus Capitein's Translation," 66–79.

[77] Ekem, "Jacobus Capitein's Translation," 68.

[78] Ekem, "Jacobus Capitein's Translation," 68.

[79] Lalsangkima Pachuau, "Intercultural Hermeneutics: A Word of Introduction" *The Asbury Journal* 70 (2015): 8–16.

[80] John D. K. Ekem, "The Use of *Archiereus* 'High Priest' as a Christological Title: A Ghanaian Case Study" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* 11 (2001): 57–67.

Christology to diverse audiences of his community.[81] According to Ekem, in the OT, the high priest was referred to as *hakkohen haggadol* (the great priest; cf. Lev. 21:10), *hammashiah* (the anointed priest; cf. Lev. 4:3) or *kohen harosh* (or head priest). The use of the title ἀρχιερεύς (the Greek translation of *hakkohen*) was not at term unique to Israel as many religious intermediaries in the ANE carried this title. For example, Herodotus uses the term to describe the high priest in ancient Egyptian and Tyrian religions.[82] On this reading, the author of Hebrews uses this concept, which transcends not only Hebrew and Greek, but also diverse religious contexts, to communicate something about Jesus.

This is, perhaps, an early example of MTBH as translation of "high priest" in Hebrews involved both its meaning in a prior text and in various contexts of contemporary society. It is precisely at this complex intersection, however, that caution is required because the meaning and significance of parallel narratives, phenomena, or religious titles may vary from community to community. Ekem suggests that in view of the mediatory role of *ɔkomfo* in Akan religion, *archiereus* is better interpreted and translated as *ntamugyinafopanyin* (most senior or chief mediator or intercessor) rather than *sɔfo panyin* in Akwapim Twi, *sɔfo panin* in Asante Twi, or *sɔfopanyin* in Mfantse.

In chapter four of Ekem's book, *New Testament Concepts of Atonement in an African Pluralistic Setting*,[83] he discusses the concept of πλήρωμα (fullness) in a community where there were competing understandings of how to procure salvation. One alternative was that salvation could be achieved through Gnosticism. Ekem suggests that πλήρωμα, a Jewish and Hellenistic concept[84] was creatively re-interpreted Christologically to mean ἀπολύτρωσις (redemption) and καταλλαγή (reconciliation) for a cosmos affected by sin. However, Ekem neither indicates the process

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[81] Ekem, "Use of *Archiereus*," 58.

[82] Zürich Gottlob Schrenk, "ἀρχιερεύς," *TDNT* 3:266.

[83] John D. K. Ekem, *New Testament Concepts of Atonement in an African Pluralistic Setting* (Accra: SonLife Press, 2005).

[84] Verbrugge, ed., *NIDNTT*, abr. ed., 469.

nor the theological principles underpinning the creative interpretation and translation of πλήρωμα to mean ἀπολύτρωσις and καταλλαγή. Nevertheless, according to him, Gustav Aulen's notion of *Christus Victor* speaks to the African worldview where belief in the presence of evil spirits necessitates the need for protection and victory over evil spirits through the works of Jesus.[85]

In chapter five, Ekem again considers the priestly Christology of Hebrews. Although the author presents Jesus's ministry in terms of the Levitical priesthood, his priestly authority derives from the order of Melchizedek.[86] In the Greco-Roman context, a hereditary priesthood was not the norm as it was for the Israelite cult. The example of Melchizedek, thus, offered a bridge to contemporary society. Ekem further argues that since the author of Hebrews creatively used Jewish cultic imagery, concepts, and language to address and dialogue with other religious persuasions in his community, this should serve as biblical motivation for African interpreters to dialogue between Scripture and the modern African context.

In the final analysis, Ekem's hermeneutical principles appear to be an amalgamation of reformation exegesis, which emphasized the study of the Scriptures in their original languages, and a midrashic form of interpretation, which seeks to show the relevance of Scripture to the contemporary audience and in a way easily understandable to them.[87] Although Ekem is not the first to promote such an approach—for example, compare the earlier attempts by Kwesi A. Dickson for MTBH in Ghana and proponents of IBS—he has advanced the discussion in the many ways expressed above.[88]

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[85] Nevertheless, no single theory exists that fully captures every nuance of the concept of atonement.

[86] Ekem, *New Testament Concepts*, 94–122.

[87] Henry A. Virkler, and Karelynne Gerber Ayayo, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 45.

[88] Kwesi A. Dickson, *Theology in Africa* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1984); *Uncompleted Mission: Christianity and Exclusivism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991).

Nevertheless, significant challenges exist for MTBH, which we will consider next.

Challenges of Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics

Like any other human accomplishment, MTBH faces significant challenges: (1) a lack of or use of mother tongue Bibles (2) the continual draw towards employing a common language (3) limited readership and citation rate, and (4) a lack of a mother tongue academic body.

Lack of Patronage and Use of Mother Tongue Bibles

Although new languages are still discovered in Africa, Mojola observes that Africa, the "Babel of languages" and dialects, has around 2,000 languages.[89] He adds,

> as of 31 December 2005, 159 of Africa's languages had a Bible, 301 had the New Testament (NT) and 223 had a portion or a book of the Bible. This makes a total of 683 African languages into which the Scriptures have been translated to varying extent.[90]

This deficit of about 1,317 mother tongues awaiting translation may be reduced to 881 if we use the most current figure of 2,144 known languages and take into account translation work after 2005 until the present.[91]

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[89] Mojola, "Outstanding Challenges," 31. The Wycliffe Global Alliance specifies that the most current figure is 2,144 known languages (https://www.eth nologue.com/guides/how-many-languages). The variation in these figures depends in part on the period in which the research/counting took place and the research agent(s) used.

[90] Mojola, "Outstanding Challenges," 31.

[91] http://africa.wycliffe.net/index.htm; cf. http://www.wycliffe.net/world? continent=AFR.

Ghana alone has around 50 languages and numerous dialects.[92] Allison M. Howell remarks that as of February 2010, the Bible had been translated into thirteen Ghanaian languages and the New Testament into twenty-six.[93] According to the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation (GILLBT), as of 2014 the Bible has been translated into seven languages, and the New Testament and other books of the Bible into twenty-three.[94] Despite this progress, much work remains to be done.

Research evaluating use of mother tongue Scriptures in Kumasi conducted in December 2009 revealed that Ghanaian Christians under 40 exhibit very low usage of mother tongue Bibles compared to those older than 40.[95] Unfortunately, this research did not indicate the reasons why those under 40 prefer English over the translations of the Bible in the local languages. Similarly, Jonathan E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor observes that only "old people read the mother tongue Bibles in the Kumasi Metropolis."[96] Not surprisingly, literacy trends offer some insight into why most prefer English. The 2010 Population and Housing Census shows that 67.1% of the population of Ghana could read and write in English, and the majority of them are youth.[97] Only 53.7% of the population could read and write a Ghanaian language, and the majority who could were aged 40 or older.

Unfortunately, while scholars are convinced of the need for mother tongue Bibles, younger generations are unaware or

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[92] Lawrence Kwadwo A. Boadi, *Linguistic Barriers to Communication in the Modern World* (Accra: Ghana Academic of Arts and Sciences, 1994), 51; see also, Kwesi Yankah, *Education, Literacy and Governance: A Linguistic Inquiry into Ghana's Burgeoning Democracy* (Accra: Ghana Academic of Arts and Sciences, 2006), 15.

[93] Howell, "Beyond Translating Western," 21.

[94] http://www.wycliffe.net/organizations?continent=AFR&country=GH&en tity=GHD.

[95] According to Jonathan E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor, only 12.8% of youth between the age group of 10 and 40 use mother tongue Bibles, whereas the figure jumps to 87.2% for adults aged 41 and above ("Patronage and Usage of the Mother-Tongue Bibles in Kumasi, Ghana" *Prime Journal of Social Science* 2 [2012]: 121–29).

[96] Kuwornu-Adjaottor, "Patronage and Usage," 125.

[97] *2010 Population and Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results* (Accra: Ghana Statistical Service, 2012), 6.

unpersuaded by this need. This suggests that if MTBH is to survive, promoting mother tongue Scriptures and educating the youth in Ghana may be necessary.

Promotion of a Common Language

Globalization is a second area of challenge for MTBH. For example, the desire to establish a common *lingua franca* to facilitate communication at international conferences of the UN, European Union (EU), and other Regional Organizations after World War II, discouraged the use of local languages. Esperanto[98] drew from many European languages and was created to offer easy pronunciation and grammatical structure, making translation from Esperanto to other languages relatively painless.[99] This choice made sense in light of the cost of translating into all the mother tongues of participants.

Despite these laudable reasons, the unintended consequence is the discouragement of using other languages at international fora. Lawrence Kwadwo A. Boadi states,

Today, Esperanto is used at international conferences and in several newspapers and journals. It has been the medium of translation of important pieces of world literature including the Bible and the Koran. Several countries continue to transit radio broadcast in the language. In the seventies it was reported to be

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[98] Esperanto was invented for international use by a Polish ophthalmologist, Ludwig Lazarus Zamenhof. It was published under a pseudo name Docktoro Esperanto. For further discussion see, Pia Vanting Christiansen, "Language Policy in the European Union European/English/Elite/Equal/Esperanto Union?" *Language Problems and Language Planning* 30 (2006): 21–44; *Esperanto as a Starter Language for Child Second-Language Learners in the Primary School* (Barlaston, UK: Esperanto UK, 2013); Lawrence Kwadwo A. Boadi, *Linguistic Barriers to Communication in the Modern World* (Accra: Ghana Academic of Arts and Sciences, 1994).

[99] Boadi, *Linguistic Barriers,* 13–22.

taught in over 600 schools and 31 universities. In 1970 the World Esperanto Association had around 31,000 members.[100]

In confirmation of these observations, Angela Tellier showed that as recently in 2011 many European children prefer the study of Esperanto to their national language.[101] Sadly, this is antithetical to mother tongue promotion and makes other languages appear to be second class languages. In principle, all languages ought to be given equal attention and importance in biblical hermeneutics because every language is a mother tongue of a particular people.

Globalization and urbanization have permanently affected languages worldwide. English is not only a second language for people all over the globe,[102] it is even the official language for instruction in Ghanaian schools. In fact, program proposals must be written in English when submitted to the National Accreditation Board (NAB). This is understandable, however, because Ghana does not have any mother tongues as an official, national language, and choosing one mother tongue over others would unintentionally result in ethnic tension. Yet, if course curricula required the study of mother tongues in addition to biblical languages, this might boost the level of recognition and use of mother tongues. However, because most students employ a variety of different mother tongues in the same classes, this makes implementation extremely challenging, not to mention expensive since it would require the engagement of additional lecturers to teach in the mother tongues.

On the other hand, urban dwellers who often do not speak or understand Ghanaian mother tongues would be at a disadvantage,

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[100] Boadi, *Linguistic Barriers*, 17.

[101] Angela Tellier, ed., *Esperanto as a Starter Language for Child Second-Language Learners in the Primary School* (Barlaston, UK: Esperanto UK, 2013), 37–38.

[102] Patrick Plonski, Asratie Teferra, and Rachel Brady, "Why Are More African Countries Adopting English as an Official Language?" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, 2013), 3.

thereby relegating the study of mother tongues to rural dwellers who are more prone to speaking a Ghanaian language. Nonetheless, the recent requirement of the Ghana Education Service (GES) offers hope for MTBH in that it requires teachers to use the local language of the community in which a given school is located for instruction during the first three years of education.

Limited Readership and Citation Rate

Since mother tongues are spoken by members of mostly rural communities, materials published in mother tongues will remain limited compared to those in English. The 2010 Population and Housing Census indicates that 7% of Ghanaians aged 11 and above only speak a Ghanaian mother tongue, while 45.8% speak English *and* a mother tongue.[103] While the majority of people who speak English also read it, the same is not the case with persons who only speak mother tongue languages. This situation will certainly affect the promotion of scholars who would consider using mother tongues because there is little incentive to do so.[104]

Lack of a Mother Tongue Academic Body

The lack of a body to develop and to offer academic support for material produced in a mother tongue is a significant disincentive to even begin the process.[105] Establishing such a body would provide the much-needed impetus to publish in and use mother tongues in education.

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[103] 2010 Population and Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Result (Accra: Ghana Statistical Service, May 2012), 41.

[104] H. Johnson Nenty and Idowu Biao, "The Professor within the Context of African Universities" *Contemporary Journal of African Studies* 1 (2013): 1–20.

[105] Philip T. Laryea, "Letting the Gospel Re-shape Culture: Theological Creativity Mother Tongue" *Journal of Africa Christian Thought* 4 (2001): 27–32.

Conclusion

An educational policy that encourages foreign students to undertake studies in the local language of the area where their school is located is very helpful. On this note, Ekem was encouraged by the educational policy in Germany, which encourages research to be conducted in German. The main elements of MTBH for African Christians that Ekem advocates includes: (1) the study of biblical and mother tongue languages, (2) the writing of commentaries and Bible studies aids in local languages, and (3) creativity and innovation in guiding Africans to understand the Bible in their own context through the engagement of Scripture. Using a second language to theologize in the African context is an inadequacy that MTBH seeks to rectify. In this way, MTBH shares a close resemblance to IBS. Although MTBH faces serious challenges, it will go a long way in helping Africans to make the Bible their daily rule for life and nurture.

The Story of My Work with IBS

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Introduction

I've taught Inductive Bible Study (IBS) on Asbury Theological Seminary's Florida–Dunnam campus (Orlando) and online since the 2000–2001 academic year. I dedicate this essay to David Bauer and David Thompson who were my principal instructors and mentors in IBS methodology. As I look back at my journey with learning and teaching IBS, I've seen it intersect with my passion for biblical studies, preaching, and the mission of the church.

Early Years (1969–1987)

I grew up in Hope church, a medium sized United Methodist congregation in Akron, Ohio. My parents were adult converts to the Christ following movement. Fortunately, Hope church valued Bible study. My parents to this day remain students of Scripture and I recall them reading the Bible together when I was young.

Two of the three pastors who served Hope church during my early years had attended either Asbury Seminary or Asbury College (now Asbury University). Looking back, I can see the influence of

IBS in their teaching and preaching. These pastors taught and preached from both the Old and New Testaments. They encouraged the congregation to read Scripture daily and recognized members who completed the annual challenge to read the Bible cover to cover.

I made the Christian faith my own during my sophomore year in high school. One evening in early March 1985, I consciously took the decision to embrace the challenge that my youth pastor, Steve Miller, had given our youth fellowship a few months earlier on New Year's Eve. He had exhorted us to read the entire New Testament. I remember picking up my Bible and praying, "If you are real, Lord, reveal yourself to me." This simple prayer altered the course of my life. I began the habit of reading Scripture daily, and a couple of weeks later I surrendered my life to God.

Scripture came to life for me; I was hungry to learn. By the time I graduated high school, I had read the entire Bible three or four times. I attended morning and evening worship, youth group, and even started a bible study at my house for a small group of my friends. To learn more, I listened to AM radio (this was the pre-internet era in the 1980s) to hear Bible teachers such as J. Vernon McGee, Chuck Swindoll, Haddon Robinson, and D. James Kennedy. All of these teachers referred frequently to the original languages. This spawned a desire in me to learn Hebrew and Greek so that I too could gain a deeper understanding of the Bible.

During the early years of my faith, I was looking for certainty and struggled with parts of the Bible that didn't fit together seamlessly. For example, the different accounts of Judas's death or the number of angels present at Jesus's tomb raised questions for me about the truthfulness of the accounts. When I asked my pastor about the tensions in the text that I observed, he offered harmonizations that I found forced and unconvincing. When I pressed him for better answers, he said, "Don't ask questions; just believe." This statement disappointed me, but ultimately drove me to look for answers inductively.

I was academically gifted from childhood. Although I grew up in blue collar, hardworking, post-industrial Akron Ohio, I gravitated to books and study. I was particularly good at mathematics and science. My post-high school plan had been to study engineering. At the same time, I had begun to sense a call to pastoral ministry. Feeling this tension, I enrolled in the University of Akron in electrical engineering. This was my hometown university, so this decision allowed me to stay active in Hope church. Little did I know that this choice of school would be pivotal in preparing me for a vocation involving the study of Scripture.

University of Akron (1987–1991)

In the spring of my freshman year, I responded to my call to ministry by changing my declared major from a B.S. in electrical engineering to a B.A. in history. This shift opened space for coursework in ancient history and in classical languages. Principally, this allowed me to take six semesters of Classical (Attic) Greek as well as multiple courses in ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman history. The opportunity to study Classical Greek at an advanced level was pivotal in my success in biblical studies upon my arrival at Asbury as I was able to navigate the Koine Greek of the New Testament with ease. The history classes provided me with key background information about the world that produced the Bible.

Also, during my freshman year, I became a candidate for ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church. My pastor Paul George invited me to serve as his intern during the summer of 1988. He gave me the opportunity to preach three sermons. These were my initial attempts at the public interpretation of the Bible. These first sermons marked the beginning of my love for preaching and teaching in local churches. I also recognized my need for more training in interpretation. I graduated in May 1991 with a B.A. in history and began my studies at Asbury Seminary in September 1991.

Asbury Theological Seminary (M.Div. 1991–1994)

I took my first IBS course during the Fall 1991 semester under the instruction of Dr. David Bauer. Without a doubt, Matthew (IBS) was worth the price of my entire M.Div. Bauer astonished me with his ability to leverage a rigorous methodology in the service of rich and deep insight into the meaning of the Bible. I remember one of our initial assignments was to do a simple segment survey of the genealogy of Matthew's Gospel (1:1–17). I went to his office and joked that I had always skipped the genealogy to get to the "good stuff" in Matthew. Bauer responded in his matter of fact yet humble way, "Brian, you shouldn't skip any part of the Bible. In fact, I published an essay on the Christology in Matthew's genealogy." I can only imagine the look on my face as his words sunk in. As I listened in awe to his in-depth presentation in class on Matthew's genealogy, I thought, "I want to work with Scripture at Dr. Bauer's depth of engagement." I was hooked.

As a teacher, Bauer was systematic and clear in his presentations. He presented substantive readings of portions of Matthew's Gospel that often astonished me with their comprehensiveness, nuance, and depth of understanding. I remain grateful for the rigorous application of IBS method that Bauer modeled class after class. Moreover, Bauer was generous with his time and always maintained an open-door policy regarding office hours. I learned as much from Dr. Bauer outside of the classroom as I did inside it.

Dr. Bauer also modeled the use of Greek in interpretation even though IBS in those days was called "English Bible." He met with interested students weekly in the dining hall to read Greek during the lunch hour. Following Bauer's example, I did most of my interpretive work for Matthew using the Greek New Testament. I had only one additional course with Dr. Bauer ("Historical Books"), but he served as my advisor, frequent conversation partner, and guide for the three years as an M.Div. student. He has not only remained a friend

through the years, but I am now his colleague. His landmark work with his mentor Robert Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Baker Academic: 2001), remains the definitive presentation of IBS methodology for students and teachers.

Dr. David Thompson was the second major influence in my work in IBS. I had Thompson for two IBS courses (Pentateuch and Minor Prophets). If David Bauer convinced me of the necessity and value of a rigorous methodology especially in the stages of Survey and Interpretation, Thompson helped me to understand how to channel rich insights from the biblical text into profound teaching for contemporary audiences. I appreciated specifically the time that he spent in class on Evaluation and Application. He offered two key insights that have impacted me. First, for evaluation, he taught a process that he called canonical dialogue.[1] Second, he illustrated possible avenues for application through use of a diagram of a wheel with the spokes representing various spheres of life that we should be mindful of when appropriating Scripture in the modern world. In addition, Thompson was an outstanding preacher and he inspired me to become a better communicator.

Last, I had the privilege of taking Dr. John Oswalt for Isaiah (IBS). This course gave me the opportunity to hone my understanding of IBS methodology and apply it to the entire book of Isaiah. Also, like Thompson, Oswalt was an outstanding preacher and I experienced the end product of IBS methodology by listening to many of his sermons.

Asbury Theological Seminary:
Teaching Fellow (1994–1996)

While teaching biblical languages and OT survey during the 1994–1995 and 1995–1996 school years, I continued to read widely in academic

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[1] See David L. Thompson, "My Pilgrimage in Inductive Bible Study," *JIBS* 3 (2016): 172–75, http://place.asburyseminary.edu/jibs/vol3/iss2/7/.

biblical studies and I simultaneously served a small United Methodist congregation (Lawson's Chapel). The latter kept my studies firmly connected with the life and questions found within a local church. The necessity of bringing the Bible to life in a worshipping community forced me to focus on Evaluation and Application.

Union Presbyterian Seminary (1996–2000)[2]

In the fall of 1996, I moved to Richmond, Virginia to follow in the footsteps of David Bauer and Joseph Dongell who both studied at Union. During my residency at Union, I met and became friends with James Miller. Jim is now my Orlando based colleague and teaches IBS and New Testament.

At Union, I studied under S. Dean McBride, Jr. He was a classic historical critic who also showed a keen eye for literary structure. I primarily used my training in IBS for my exegetical work at Union, but McBride showed me ways to enhance a text-centered approach with insights from the world behind the text. Also, I preached regularly in Presbyterian and United Methodist congregations and served as a local pastor during my final three years in residency at Union. Throughout my adult life, my frequent preaching and teaching in local congregations has provided a vehicle for putting to test the fruits of my academic work.

Asbury Theological Seminary (FL, Dunnam): Professor of Biblical Studies (2000–Present)

I began teaching on the Orlando campus in fall 2000 and have taught a wide range of courses: OT and NT introduction, biblical narrative,

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[2] Union Presbyterian Seminary is the current name for the former Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, then Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education. I began my studies when it was Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, but it had changed to Union–PSCE by the time I graduated.

OT and NT exegesis, biblical languages and of course IBS (Matthew, Pentateuch, Psalms, and Minor Prophets). My role in Orlando is distinct from my colleagues in Wilmore who typically teach within the OT, NT, or IBS departments without much crossover. The opportunity to teach both OT and NT exegesis as well as IBS has helped me to forge a synthesis between the disciplines.

Dr. Joel Green was a professor of NT and Dean when I began teaching. Although not trained in IBS, I found him to be a fruitful conversation partner regarding hermeneutics and he pushed me to become a more effective instructor. One of his critiques of IBS was that students were often better at pointing out "interesting things about the Bible" than actually interpreting it in ways that spoke to 21st century people. He suggested that some students substituted IBS technical language, especially the structural labels, in place of digging deeper into the text to draw out its full meaning and implications. We can debate the fairness of this criticism, but I chose to allow it to serve as an opportunity for my growth by reflecting on ways of motivating students to learn not only to discover "interesting things about the Bible," but also to provide a vision for dynamic application and appropriation of the text for life. Thanks to Green, I was poised to make a big leap in my thinking and teaching.

Missional Hermeneutics and IBS

My scholarly career shifted to a focus on the relationship between God's mission and biblical studies during the 2004–2005 academic year. The rest of this essay will explore experiences, questions, and people that have contributed to my growth as an IBS professor and briefly discuss some specific examples of how I leverage these in the classroom.

During the 2003–2004 academic year, I reconnected with Rev. Eric Hallett whom I had met during my M.Div. days. After leading a successful church plant in Maine, Eric took a year to retool in Asbury's Beeson D.Min. program under Dale Galloway. During this

iteration of the Beeson program, the emphasis was on leadership and preaching for church planters. Eric then moved to Orlando to serve as an executive pastor while completing his dissertation. Eric and I began meeting for breakfast and talking about our work. He introduced me to the literature of church planting and the missional church movement. He invited me to serve as part of a team exploring the possibility of a new church plant in Orlando.

To facilitate this, in October 2004, Eric and I attended a dynamic conference hosted by Willow Creek Community Church called "Communicating in Today's Reality." The presentation that most impacted me was by Erwin McManus (pastor of Mosaic in Los Angeles). In a talked entitled "Speaking from Mar's Hill," he taught about the need to read the Bible not merely for the church but also through the eyes and ears of unbelievers. I believe that this was the first time that I had heard about reading Scripture "missiologically."[3] Given the brevity of his talk, he did not present any concrete methodology, but my ears perked up. How does one read Scripture missiologically? What did it mean to read and teach the Bible for persons who didn't already know the basic Gospel message? How can I leverage my Ph.D. in biblical studies to maximize my ability to communicate the Gospel in the 21st century in which there are 5,000 fewer Christians in the Western world every day?

In January 2005, I had the opportunity to connect with Erwin's brother Alex McManus during a visit to Orlando. We met for coffee at a local Barnes & Noble. This was a pivotal encounter for me. It was life changing and unforgettable in the same way that my conversation with David Bauer about Matthew's genealogy had been. Almost as soon as we sat down to talk, Alex asked, "What business do you have training pastors at a seminary if you've never planted a church?" Of course, he was being provocative, but this question served as an impetus for a lasting shift in my priorities and thinking. Alex's inquiry

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[3] McManus also briefly mentions this concept in his book, *Unstoppable Force: Daring to Become the Church God Had in Mind* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2001), 72.

led me to ask more new questions: What is the relationship between academic biblical study and God's mission in the world? How can IBS serve church planters and communities of faith actively engaging the world with the Gospel? How can a commitment to active participation in the *missio dei* contribute to the teaching of IBS?

My conversion to the centrality of mission led me to work on helping IBS students to make more specific applications of biblical truth.[4] With this background, I will sketch out its growing edges.[5]

My comments here assume that a student has already moved through the process of Survey/Observation, Interpretation, and Evaluation. The evaluation phase ends with an evaluative synthesis, which is a statement rooted in the interpretation of the text in conversation with a broader canonical analysis and assessment of the contemporary context.

There are three main areas in which I believe a missional hermeneutic can enhance the work of Application/Appropriation: (1) the role of social location and mission, (2) our conscious intention to read Scripture for both church and world, and (3) the use of new heuristic questions.

Social Location and Mission

When doing the work of application, it is critical for students to recognize the impact of their reading context or social location on the process.[6] A missional approach assumes the centrality of the *missio dei* to the ongoing work of the church.[7] To read Scripture faithfully

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[4] I sketched out a method for this in a preliminary way in the chapter, "Learning to Speak Human" in my book on missional hermeneutics *(re)Aligning with God: Reading Scripture for Church and World* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 107–38.

[5] I plan to address the specifics in more detail in a future publication.

[6] Michael Barram offers a helpful introduction to the relationship between mission and social location in reading Scripture ("The Bible, Mission, and Social Location: Toward a Missional Hermeneutic" *Interpretation* 61 [2007]: 42–58).

[7] See especially Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004); Dean Flemming, *Recovering*

involves locating ourselves as readers in the *missio dei*. Michael Barram wrote, "Ultimately to read the Bible from a missional perspective is not an eisegetical enterprise but merely an honest acknowledgement of our primary interpretive location as we seek to read the Bible more faithfully today."[8] Practically, this means that interpreters must read Scripture for the missional reality of their local context.

One of the most significant experiences for me was my involvement in the church plant that became Awaken Orlando (2005–2008). I do not believe that my growth in IBS would have been possible without my concrete weekly experiences of preaching and teaching within a missional community in which I regularly engaged, lived among, and taught. This diverse community included longtime Christ followers, college students, large numbers of homeless men and women, curious members of other faiths (Muslim and Hindu) and secular professionals. How did I need to change as an interpreter to be able to present Scripture in compelling ways to all who gathered for worship? How could I simultaneously spur longtime believers to a life of holy love while inviting persons not yet following Jesus to align themselves with the Gospel for the first time? As I studied Scripture weekly to prepare messages, this dynamic context forged a new understanding of the process of Application/Appropriation. I have become convinced that for the 21st century we must take serious consideration of our social location for reading and make certain that we listen to Scripture from a vantage point that is most helpful for advancing God's mission in our day.

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the Full Mission of God: A Biblical Perspective on Being, Doing, and Telling (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013); Michael Goheen, ed., *Reading the Bible Missionally* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016); Brian D. Russell, "What is Missional Hermeneutic?" *Catalyst Resources: Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives for United Methodist Students.* Posted April 1, 2010: http://www.catalystresources.org/what-is-a-missional-hermeneutic/; and Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 2006).

8 Barram, "Bible, Mission and Social Location," 58.

Reading Scripture for the Church and World

If readers of Scripture locate their reading within the *missio dei* in order to explore their role in the sanctification of believers and the proclamation of the Gospel to those who do not yet follow Jesus, the task of reading the Bible expands from a traditional position that "preaches to the choir" to one that also "preaches to the street."[9] As I pondered this reality, I began to think of appropriation as always involving two audiences. Scriptures calls believers (insiders) to realign continually with its message while simultaneously inviting not-yet-believers (outsiders) to align themselves with the Gospel. The key in application is to recognize that there is always a word for both *insiders* and *outsiders*.[10]

Asking New Questions

One of the areas that I appreciated most about the teaching of David Thompson was his ability to make profound applications from Scripture. In his classes he used a diagram of a wheel with spokes to illustrate the potential range of application. He listed various categories to consider when applying the text. I found this a helpful guide because it encouraged specificity from students, but as I've worked to leverage Thompson's insights, I've adopted a modified approach using some broader categories. These have emerged from my reflection on missional hermeneutics.

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[9] Russell, *(re)Aligning with God*, 110–13. Cf. Walter Brueggemann, "First Retrospect" in *Renewing Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig Bartholomew, Colin Greene, and Karl Möller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 346.

[10] Of course, care must be taken during the Evaluation process to assess the range and limits of the original text's application. Nevertheless, once this is understood interpreters still must reflect critically and missionally on the message of text for *insiders* and *outsiders* if both will be present for the teaching or proclamation.

I utilize two acronyms to serve heuristically for achieving compelling, specific, and formationally rich applications and appropriations of biblical truth: GPS and MAP.

The first acronym is **GPS**:

> **G**lobal/local Mission (Mission)
> **P**ersons in Community (Community)
> **S**pirit-Transformed (Holiness).

I use GPS as a means of helping students to find substantive applications for both insiders and outsiders.[11] GPS relates to three broad categories: Mission, Community, and Holiness.[12] I do not make any claim that every text will address all (or even any) of these themes and I warn students against making this assumption. However, I have found that GPS and its related questions have raised the level of application in my own work and the impact of my teaching and preaching. Likewise, it has helped my students to produce more dynamic and substantive work.

Here are the questions that I share with students. Note that I explicitly ask for reflection on how a text speaks to an insider as well as an outsider.

Global/local Mission

Insider/Believer: How does this text envision God's work in the world? Where do God's people fit into this mission? How do God's people need to change to participate more effectively in God's work? How does this text inform our present engagement in our local community of faith as well as with culture and those outside of the Christian faith?

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[11] Thompson's "Wheel of Application" functions within the GPS rubric quite well, but space limitations will necessitate leaving this discussion for another time.

[12] See Russell, *(re)Aligning with God,* 9–11 and 107–38.

Outsider/Seeker: What sort of world is this text inviting me to spend my life working to create? What would my life look like if I joined this mission? How does this text give me a "why" for joining the Christ following movement?

Persons in Community

Insider/Believer: How does this text envision the corporate life of God's people? How does this text shape an ethos for the people of God to embody in its witness to the world? How do God's people need to change in order to embody the portrait of community assumed in this text?

Outsider/Seeker: What type of community is this text inviting me to explore? How is this text inviting me to participate in a community that exists for something greater than my own wants and desires? How do the community ideals of this text compare/contrast with my present understanding and experience of community outside of the Church?

Spirit-Transformed (Holiness)

Insider: What does this text tell us about the character or ethos of God and God's people? What are God's people supposed to become? How do God's people need to change in order to reflect more profoundly the character of God as exhibited in this passage? What sort of person(s) do I/we need to become in order to live out this text?

Outsider: What type of lifestyle/character is this text inviting me to embody? How would my life be transformed by aligning my character with the vision of this text?
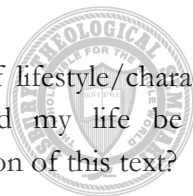
The second acronym that I've introduced in teaching is **MAP**:

Missional Insight
Attitudinal Alignment
Plan of Implementation

MAP is designed to help an IBS student work at applying the text concretely in ways that transform a person's inner life and outward actions. MAP is the end product of application and seeks to make specific and tangible the insights gained from the questions asked in the GPS step. Each of these steps corresponds to a key element of a formational encounter with Scriptural truth. My growing conviction is that Application/Appropriation involves changing our thinking, changing what we care about, and then putting skin in the game through conscious (and *immediate*) action.

Missional Insight

What is the specific insight that I/we must embrace and work into my/our thinking theologically, ethically, and missionally?

Attitudinal Alignment

How must I/we shift my/our allegiances or the persons/things that I/we care about most deeply?

Plan of Implementation

What concrete actions steps must I/we take now?

I've found these two acronyms to be helpful supplements that build on the seminal work produced by my forerunners in the IBS movement. I look forward to continuing to reflect critically on method, to developing and honing my presentation of IBS to students, and to realigning my life with the good news of the Gospel through my study of Scripture.