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Opposing Satan, the Counterfeit Word

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Abstract

A primary goal of this journal article is to explore how Satan (especially through his minions) strives to undermine the will of the Saviour (particularly through his followers). A correspondent aim is to deliberate how to oppose the devil's attacks. One major finding is that Lucifer uses spurious forms of verbal communication to tempt, deceive, and accuse people, including believers. Also, Satan's decision to operate in this way is a deliberate perversion of how God used his powerful, creative decree to bring the entire universe into existence and sustain it in all its manifold wonder. A case study analysis of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (cf. Matt 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–11) indicates that he relied on the Word of God to thwart the devil's attacks. Similarly, an examination of Ephesians 6:10–20 (the premier Pauline passage dealing with the subject of spiritual warfare) shows that Jesus' followers should make full use of scripture to parry the attacks made by Satan, the counterfeit word.

1. Introduction

In 2 Corinthians, Paul defended his ministry by making explicit statements about himself and his detractors. While the apostle Paul

[1] The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

never specifically identified these antagonists, a portrait of them can be created from the epistle. For instance, the spiritual frauds came from outside Corinth and needed letters of recommendation (3:1). One possibility is that they were from Judea. Paul complained about the pretenders invading his sphere of ministry (10:13–16). Above all, he was alarmed that they preached a false gospel—one that may have de-emphasized the Messiah's role in the salvation of believers (11:4). The deceivers apparently also claimed their spiritual authority exceeded that of Paul (v. 5).

There is an insidious issue connected with the preceding observations. Specifically, in Paul's day, the devil's minions portrayed themselves as Jesus' ambassadors (v. 13), heralds of truth (v. 14), and ministers promoting 'righteousness'. Even more fiendish is the reality that Lucifer actively and persistently disguised himself as God's premier spiritual emissary, when in reality the evil one was the Messiah's archenemy. Though Paul took note of the devil's antagonistic agenda, the apostle did not detail in his letter the ways in which the devil presented himself as a counterfeit to the Son. Even today, a larger unanswered question concerns how the deceiver strives to undermine the will of the Redeemer, especially what he accomplishes through his followers.

While the devil seems powerful enough to use a brute force approach, Treat, in *The Crucified King* (2014:199–200), offers an alternative method that is far more subtle and seductive. In particular, 'Satan rules over his kingdom of darkness through his deceitful word'. Moreover, his stratagems are at least threefold, including the use of 'temptation', 'deception', and 'accusation' (cf. Eph 6:11 and the analysis appearing in section 4.0 below). Admittedly, on the surface, what Treat puts forward seems relatively clear-cut; yet, as he observes, the significance

and details of this basic truth have been largely 'overlooked' in the academic literature. Expressed differently, there is room for further research concerning how the devil 'rules through … his tempting, deceiving, accusing word' with the goal of exercising 'power over sinners' and bringing about their eternal, spiritual 'death'. Arguably, an opportunity remains to address the preceding gap in the theological dialogue. The goal, then, of the current journal article is to advance the discussion in a modest and meaningful way by exploring this pivotal issue further.

2. An Analysis of What Scripture Reveals about Satan, His Minions, and How the Devil Operates Through Them

In any deliberation involving Satan and his minions,[2] it is clarifying to recognise that they are spirit creatures, along with the rest of the angels who are loyal to God (Heb 1:14). Concerning the latter group, while they live in heaven (Matt 22:30), at times God dispatches them to earth as his messengers. Angels are mighty and powerful beings (Ps 103:20; 2 Thess 1:7) who possess great wisdom (2 Sam 14:20). Ordinarily, angels are invisible to people (2 Kings 6:17), though they have appeared as humans (Ezek 1:5; Luke 24:4). Angels do not marry or reproduce (Matt 22:30). Also, because angels are not subject to death (Luke 20:36), they will live forever and remain constant in number. Angels have the ability to fly (Dan 9:21); yet, contrary to popular belief and artistic portrayal, few angels in the Bible are explicitly stated to have wings. In fact, Isaiah 6:2 and Revelation 4:8 may be the sole instances. The elect angels exist as an organised hierarchy (Eph 6:12;

[2] In addition to the following discourse, cf. the discussion in Bell (2013); Benoit (1983); Bietenhard (1986); Bietenhard and Brown (1986); Erickson (2013:403–19); Fletcher-Louis (2013); Funderburk (2009); Grudem (1994:397–436); Hamilton (1992); Hiebert (2009); Horton (2011:406–7); Mueller (1934:196–204); Newsom and Watson (1992); Robbins (2007:60–9); Treat (2014:199–203).

Col 1:16). Their duties include serving God by ministering to believers (Heb 1:14), protecting them (Dan 6:22), guarding them (Ps 91:11), guiding them (Acts 8:26), and helping them (Dan 10:13).

As noted in the preceding paragraph, in addition to the elect angels—who worship and serve God (1 Tim 5:21; Heb 1:6)—there are fallen angels who serve the purposes of the devil (cf. Isa 14:12–14; Rev 12:7–9). In the Old Testament, he is referred as 'Satan' (1 Chron 21:1; Job 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 12; 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; Zech 3:1, 2). This transliterates the Hebrew noun *śāṭān* that means 'adversary', 'opponent', or 'accuser' (Koehler, Baumgartner, and Stamm 1994–2000; Swanson 2001). Other names used in the New Testament for Satan reveal his diabolical character, which is illustrated as follows:[3] 'Beelzebul, the prince of demons' (Matt 12:24); 'a murderer from the beginning … a liar and the father of lies' (John 8:44); 'the prince of this world' (12:31; 14:30); 'the god of this age' (2 Cor 4:4); 'Belial' (meaning 'the wicked one'; 6:15); the 'ruler of the kingdom of the air' (Eph 2:2); 'the tempter' (1 Thess 3:5); 'the evil one' (2 Thess 3:3); the 'enemy … a roaring lion' (1 Pet 5:8); 'Abaddon' (meaning 'destruction') and 'Apollyon' (meaning 'destroyer'; Rev 9:11); 'the great dragon … that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the world astray' (12:9); 'the accuser of our brothers and sisters' (v. 10); and the 'devil, who deceived them' (20:10).

Admittedly, specialists within academia, along with many sceptics in popular culture, tend to dismiss Satan and his wretched horde as nothing but a myth or fantasy. In contrast, the above passages depict these entities as real beings who, through the use of guile and subversion, interfere in historical events. Succinctly stated, the demons are fallen angels who joined with Satan in rebellion against the Lord.

[3] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture citations are taken from the 2011 NIV.

While the Bible does not discuss the origin of evil spirits, the New Testament does speak about the fall and later imprisonment of a group of angels (cf. 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6). The traditional view is that the demons' insurrection occurred at some time before God created the world. Then, after he had brought the human race into existence, Lucifer and his assailants contaminated people with wickedness (cf. Gen 3; Matt 25:41; Rev 12:9).

As stated above, Satan is the premier deceiver who pretends to be an agent of God (cf. John 8:44; 2 Cor 11:3, 14; 2 Thess 2:9–10; Rev 12:9; 20:3). While the Prince of Darkness could use a variety of methods to tempt, deceive, and accuse believers, he most often leverages verbal communication in a variety of furtive ways. The earliest example of the latter is recorded in Genesis 3, in which the Satan-inspired serpent employed subterfuge to convince Eve to doubt God's Word and disobey his command. In turn, Eve persuaded her husband to do the same. The couple had been blinded by the snake's insidious promise, and in return they received shame and alienation. Such was the wretched end of the once-blessed relationship Adam and Eve had enjoyed with their Creator in the ancient Eden orchard. For Adam, Eve, and all their physical descendants, the sobering aftermath of the Fall was that physical and spiritual death became a permanent part of the human experience (cf. Rom 5:12, 14, 18; 6:23).

The preceding way in which the evil one behaved represents a cunning perversion of how God operates.[4] Specifically, as Genesis 1 discloses, at the dawn of time the Lord used his powerful decree to create everything in the cosmos from nothing (i.e. *creatio ex nihilo*). Furthermore, during each of the creation days, God progressively formed and filled the world. In doing so, he tamed what was wild and

[4] In addition to the following discourse, cf. the discussion in Lioy 2005:23–55; Lioy 2010:5–15; Lioy 2011:13–23.

brought to life what was desolate. These observations do not necessarily rule out God's use of intermediate processes (including cosmological, geological, and biological means) stretching over long expanses of time to bring the material realm into existence and sustain it in all its manifold wonder.

Along the way, God declared what he brought into existence to be 'good'. *Ṭôḇ* is the Hebrew adjective rendered 'good' in the Genesis creation narrative (cf. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31) and concerns both the intrinsic nature and instrumental functionality of the material realm. Here, the notion of creation is portrayed as an action of the triune God alone in which he commands into existence that which had no reality prior to the issuing of his actualizing edict (cf. Gen 1:1–2; John 1:3; Heb 1:2; 11:3; 2 Pet 3:5). The portrait Genesis 1:2 paints is not one in which God sets the universe in motion and passively allows natural forces to operate, but one in which he is directly involved in every aspect of creation through his Word. The sevenfold occurrence of *ṭôḇ* ('good') in the primeval account does not mean that the unspoiled creation was an idyllic paradise of unlimited perfection. Expressed differently, the divine assessment is aesthetic, not ethical. Accordingly, what the divine Artisan brought into existence was superbly suited for its God-ordained role and purpose. The implication is that from the beginning, every aspect of the cosmos had functional integrity.

3. A Case Study Analysis: Jesus' temptation in the Wilderness (Matt 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–11)[5]

Scripture portrays the devil as a ravenous lion which constantly prowls around in search for an unsuspecting victim to 'devour' (1 Pet 5:8). It is not a question of *whether* an attack takes place, but rather *when* it occurs. Not even the Saviour, during his earthly sojourn, was exempt from Satan's assaults. With respect to the latter, Jesus' temptation in the wilderness provides a useful case study to analyse how to overcome the archenemy's enticements. An examination of the Synoptic Gospels (i.e. Matt 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–11) reveals that the Messiah, as the believers' High Priest (cf. Heb 2:18; 4:15), did not triumph by using a brute force approach; instead, the Son relied on the Word of God to thwart the devil's counterfeit verbal communications.

Jesus' temptation draws attention to his unique status as the divine Messiah. Immediately prior to this episode, he was anointed with God's Spirit (Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:51), which signified the Son's inauguration into his public ministry (Acts 10:37–38). Matthew 4:1 and Luke 4:1 both say that the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness in order that the devil could put him to the test (the latter being the primary lexical emphasis of the Greek verb *peirazō* in these verses, the secondary notion of temptation or enticement notwithstanding; cf. Danker 2000; Louw and Nida 1989). Mark 1:12 literally says that the Spirit 'thrust [Jesus] into the wilderness' (in which the main verb, *ekballō*, appears as an historical present; cf. Runge

[5] The following representative, scholarly works were consulted in the case study analysis of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness: Blomberg (1992); Bock (1994); Culpepper (1995); Edwards (2002); Fitzgerald (1972); France (2002); France (2007); Garlington (1994); Geldenhuys (1983); Gibson (1994); Johnson (1996); Just (2003); Keener (1999); Lane (1974); Marshall (1978); Mathewson (2011); Morris (1972); Nolland (2005); Oden and Hall (2005); Simonetti (2001); Stegner (1990); Stein (2008); Strauss (2007); Taylor (2001); Turner (2008).

2008). One is left with the impression that this event occurred by divine necessity and with urgency (cf. Deut 8:2). The adjective *erēmos*, which is rendered 'wilderness' (Matt 4:1), denotes an uninhabited region, though not necessarily a parched or arid locale (such as a desert; cf. Danker 2000; Louw and Nida 1989). The identity of the specific area near the Jordan River to which this verse refers remains unknown.

At various times in Jesus' earthly life, he experienced events that paralleled important episodes in Israel's history. For instance, the nation, as God's corporate 'son' (Exod 4:23), was led by Moses into the desert (15:22). Then, for the next four decades (cf. Deut 1:3), the Lord tested his people as they wandered in the wilderness (cf. Exod 15:25; 16:4; 20:20; Deut 8:2–5). Tragically, as scripture reveals, that generation of Israelites failed the divine test, even though they enjoyed the provision of the Father (cf. Deut 2:7; Neh 9:21; Ps 78:17–22) and the presence of the Spirit (cf. Neh 9:20; Isa 63:7–10). The people's unbelief led them to transgress against the Lord repeatedly (cf. Num 14:33; 32:13; Ps 95:10–11; Heb. 3:7–19). In contrast, Jesus, as the ideal Israelite and representative of the human race (or second Adam; cf. Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:45), not only endured real testing, but also triumphed over it in the power of the Spirit through the efficacious use of God's Word.[6]

Matthew 4:2 discloses that during Jesus' time in the wilderness, he fasted 'forty days and forty nights', which in turn left him famished. 'Forty' is a number to which some scholars assign sacred significance. Various Old Testament luminaries also had life-shaping experiences

[6] This writer considers Jesus to be the substitute and representative for the true Israel, namely, the church (cf. Gal 6:16). Whereas ancient Israel as a nation failed in its arrogance and rebellion, the Messiah made up for this by his perfect life and atoning death on the cross. Humankind's sins were placed on him and believing sinners receive his pardoning grace.

that lasted 40 days, including Moses (Exod 34:28; Deut 9:9, 18), David (1 Sam 17:16), and Elijah (1 Kings 19:8). Jesus' temptation episode is a reminder that he, as the 'pioneer and perfecter of faith' (Heb 12:2), inaugurated a new exodus to provide redemption for the people of God (cf. 1 Cor 10:1–5). In the present episode, when Satan launched his final attacks, the Saviour was at an extreme disadvantage; yet, despite the devil's repeated efforts, he failed to lure the Son to transgress against the Father. As a result of this encounter, the Messiah proved that he truly is the Father's loyal and beloved Son (cf. Isa 42:1; Matt 3:17; 12:18; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35; 2 Pet 1:17).

In Satan's first attempt to entice Jesus to sin,[7] the 'tempter' (Matt 4:3; perhaps in human form) said that since (*ei* begins a first-class conditional Greek clause) Jesus is the 'Son of God' (cf. 3:17), he should turn some of the stones that were lying about into bread (as would a sorcerer). 'Son of God' is an eschatological, royal, and messianic title that the New Testament writers applied to Jesus of Nazareth (cf. Acts 13:33; Rom 1:4; Rev 2:18). The phrase not only emphasises the

[7] The discourse in this section follows the chronological sequencing of the temptations presented in Matthew 4:1–11 (cf. the use of the Greek adverb *tote*, 'then', in vv. 1, 5, 10, 11), rather than the topical arrangement of events appearing in Luke 4:1–11, in which the ordering of temptations two and three are the reverse of what is recorded in Matthew; nonetheless, the analysis takes into account pertinent information appearing in each of the Synoptic Gospels (cf. Blomberg 1992:84; Bock 1994:374; Culpepper 1995:97; France 2007:126; Garlington 1994:293–4; Geldenhuys 1983:161; Keener 1999:142–3; Marshall 1978:166–7; Morris 1972:102; Nolland 2005:161; Stegner 1990:6; Strauss 2007:269; Turner 2008:124). In connection with the latter observations, it is important to recognise that the Synoptic Gospels are not structured as biographies or history in any general, or contemporary, sense; rather, they are *interpreted* histories. In addition, the narratives they record are not raw facts, as though readers were viewing electronic recordings obtained from surveillance cameras; instead, the accounts are carefully directed, arranged, and structured presentations of historical incidents. Moreover, the concern of the gospel writers was not to document history for history's sake; rather, they offered a *theological* explanation of the episodes they recounted in an objective and reliable manner, including Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

equality of the Son with the Father (as well as the Spirit; cf. John 5:18), but also the special and intimate relationship that exists between them (cf. Matt 16:16; Luke 1:35).[8] Jesus, while being put to the test in the wilderness, could have used some bread after a gruelling 40-day fast, just as the Israelites needed manna to sustain them in the wilderness (cf. Exod 16:13–36); but it would have been wrong for the Messiah to utilise his divine power for a purely selfish purpose. Jesus' power was meant to accomplish his redemptive ministry.

Doubtless, Lucifer was attempting to get the Son to show distrust in his Father's provision. He designed the fast for his Son, and would provide for him at the proper time. Satan, however, wanted the Son to rebel by taking matters into his own hands. Rather than yield to the tempter's proposal, Jesus quoted from the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 8:3. This verse teaches that the redeemed live not only by consuming food, but also (and more importantly) need to take in God's Word for spiritual nourishment (Matt 4:4; cf. John 4:32–34). The Son could do without bread, but he must not jettison his responsibility to obey the Father (cf. Luke 4:3–4). The section of Deuteronomy 8 that Jesus quoted deals with the Israelites and the test that the Lord put them through in the wilderness. The passage indicates that the relationship between temptations and testing is quite close. Like the Israelites, Jesus faced the temptations in the wilderness, but unlike those who refused to enter the Promised Land (cf. Num 13–14), the Son effectively used Scripture to pass his test and remain faithful to the Father.

Next, the adversary supernaturally escorted Jesus to Jerusalem and positioned him on the pinnacle of the 'temple' (Matt 4:5; in which the

[8] For a concise yet substantive treatment of the divine sonship of the Messiah, cf. Cole (2009); Fossum (1992); Michel and Marshall (1986); Robbins (2007:95–101); Win (2013).

main verb, *paralambanō*, appears as an historical present; cf. Runge 2008). In all likelihood, this was the southeastern portion of the sanctuary complex, where there was a steep drop-off to the Kidron Valley over 30 metres below. The tempter invited Jesus to prove in a spectacular way that he was God the Son (cf. the use of *ei* to begin a first-class conditional Greek clause). Supposedly, he could throw himself down from the apex of the sanctuary and trust the Father to protect him (v. 6). Within Second Temple Judaism, a common interpretation of Malachi 3:1 held that the Messiah would appear in the sky, descend to the temple, and proclaim deliverance (cf. Wis of Sol 2:18). Apparently, Satan wanted Jesus to combine such an appearance with a sensational descent, complete with angels, to win popular approval for his kingdom.

The antagonist cleverly misquoted the Septuagint version of Psalm 91:11–12 by leaving out the phrase 'to guard you in all your ways'. This passage teaches that God provides his angels to watch over his people when they live in accordance with his will (cf. Exod 19:4–5; Deut 32:10–11). Satan claimed that the Father would protect the Son as he plummeted to the ground; but since such a stunt would not be within the will of God, the promise of divine protection would not apply. Rather than yield to the devil's underhanded suggestion, Jesus quoted from the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 6:16, saying, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test' (Matt 4:7; cf. Luke 4:9–12). The Saviour realised that the redeemed cannot dictate the terms of divine intervention by arranging situations of need. To do otherwise would be a foolish presumption, that is, an attempt to deny the mutual accountability and responsibility woven into their covenant relationship with God; yet, he freely grants what his people need in order for them to grow in their relationship with him.

In the third and final temptation, Lucifer supernaturally transported Jesus to a 'very high mountain' (Matt 4:8; in which the main verb, *paralambanō,* appears as an historical present; cf. Runge 2008). Its location remains uncertain, leaving open the likelihood that this experience (along with that narrated in v. 5) could have been visionary in nature. If the stated possibility is valid, then, according to Mathewson (2011:89), Jesus' 'visionary experience' would be comparable to what various 'apocalyptic seers' experienced (e.g. Enoch, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; cf. Isa 6:1; Ezek 2:2; 3:12, 14; 8:1–3; 11:1; 37:1; 40:1–2; 43:5; Dan 7:1; 8:1; 10:1–2; 1 Enoch 75:1; 2 Bar 6:3; 3 Bar 2:1; Apoc Abr 15:2–3; Apoc Zeph 2:1; 3:2; T Abr 10:1; Rev 1:10; 4:1–2; 17:1–3; 21:9–10).

All the same, this writer maintains that Jesus' temptation, as recounted in the Synoptic Gospels, actually occurred within space-time history. The latter stands in contrast to the view espoused by Schiavo (2002:142, 145), who thinks the use of 'symbolic-mythological language' in the biblical text indicates that Jesus merely had a 'transcendental experience of religious ecstasy'. Robbins (2007:157) goes even further when he claims that a 'quest for historical specifics enfeebles the narrative'. The emphasis in this essay on the inherent historicity of the temptation narrative also is in contrast to the supposition put forward by Stegner (1990:27), who maintains that the account is 'essentially the literary creation of the evangelists and their sources', who allegedly fabricated the episode as a 'polemic against the Herodian king Agrippa I' and his 'severe persecution' of the 'primitive church'.

Returning to the synoptic pericope, the devil in an instant paraded before the Son all the nations of the world and their splendour, promising them to him if he would fall prostrate before his antagonist in

'worship' (v. 9; cf. John 12:31; 16:11; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2; 1 John 5:19). Through the Messiah's death and resurrection, the Father intended to free the world from Satan's oppressive control (cf. Heb 2:14–15) and give the Son the nations throughout the earth as his rightful inheritance (cf. Ps 2:8). Therefore, rather than oblige his archenemy's enticements, Jesus commanded him to depart at once (Matt 4:10). Jesus explained that, based on the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20, worship and service were to be given only to God.

In summary, throughout the series of devil-inspired inducements, the Son adroitly used scripture to demonstrate his unwavering commitment to do the Father's will (cf. Luke 4:5–8; John 5:19, 30; 6:38). When the Prince of Darkness had completed every temptation, he departed from the Lord (Matt 4:11; in which the main verb, *aphiēmi*, appears as an historical present; cf. Runge 2008). Even so, when the next opportunity came, Satan would tempt Jesus again, especially by using a variety of counterfeit verbal communications (cf. Luke 4:13). Matthew 4:11 notes that angels promptly came (cf. the use of the Greek interjection *idou*) and attended to Jesus' needs (as well as throughout his 40-day sojourn in the wilderness; cf. Mark 1:13). The Synoptic Gospels do not state how these heavenly emissaries ministered to the Saviour, though in all likelihood they brought nourishment as well as encouragement. Previously, angels offered care and support to the Israelites during their wanderings in the wilderness (cf. Exod 14:19; 23:20, 23; 32:34; 33:2) and food to Elijah when he fled to Horeb for safety from Ahab (cf. 1 Kings 19:3–8).

Mark 1:13 reveals that during the Messiah's sojourn in the wilderness, he was out among the 'wild animals' (rendering the Greek noun

thērion; cf. Danker 2000; Louw and Nida 1989).[9] In the Saviour's day, far more wild animals roamed the countryside than today, including lions that prowled the wooded areas along the Jordan River (cf. Jer 5:6; 49:19). The mention of these beasts adds drama to the Markan account of Jesus' confronting evil (cf. Test Ben 5:2; Test Iss 7:7; Test Naph 8:4).

Another reason for mentioning these creatures is that the author of the second Synoptic Gospel possibly wanted to emphasise the divine protection Jesus received in the midst of the danger he faced (cf. Ezek 34:25; Dan 6:22).

A third reason for mentioning wild animals may be that untamed beasts were associated with evil powers. The historical episode, in a sense, became a symbol of the cosmic struggle of good and evil in which the Son was engaged. Likewise, the wild beasts might be connected to the hope of the messianic era, when animal enemies such as the wolf and the lamb would live in peace (cf. Isa 11:6–9; 32:14–20; 65:25; Hos 2:18).

A fourth reason may relate to Mark's audience. If the author was writing his gospel primarily for Gentile Christians about AD 64–67, particularly those living in Rome (cf. 1 Pet 5:13), they would be facing persecutions from Nero that often included being thrown to the lions for refusing to worship the emperor. The early Christians could take comfort in the fact that Jesus also had confronted wild animals.

[9] In addition to the following discourse, cf. the discussion in Edwards 2002:40–2; France 2002 86–7; Garlington 1994:288–90; Gibson 1994:19–23; Heil 2006:64–77; Lane 1974:61–2; Stein 2008:63–6;

4. A Biblical Response to Satan's Diabolical Schemes (Eph 6:10–20)[10]

The previous section analysed how Jesus, during his time of temptation in the wilderness, relied on the Word of God to overcome Satan's counterfeit verbal communications. The present section shifts the focus to the way in which Jesus' disciples can effectively leverage a biblical response to the archenemy's diabolical schemes.[11] The basis for the following discourse is an exegetical and theological examination of Ephesians 6:10–20, which this writer considers to be the premier Pauline passage dealing with the subject of spiritual warfare. Verse 10 records the apostle's opening admonition, while verse 11 indicates the way in which the directive is accomplished. Verse 12 provides additional explanation concerning why believers should heed Paul's injunction, and verse 13 states the result of doing so. Then, verses 14–17 detail the individual components of the believers' spiritual armour, followed by an emphasis on the importance of prayer in verses 18–20.

The general premise is that like the Saviour, believers do not triumph over the Prince of Darkness by using a brute force approach; instead, it is necessary for them to make full use of God's instruments of war—

[10] The following representative, scholarly works were consulted in the biblical and theological analysis of Ephesians 6:10–20: Abbott (1979); Asher (2011); Bruce (1984); Calvin (1854); Cohick (2013); Edwards (2005); Foster (2008); Foulkes (1979); Guelich (1991); Hendriksen (1995); Hoehner (2002); Kitchen (1994); Lenski (1961); Lincoln (1990); Lincoln (1995); Neufeld (1997); Perkins (2000); Robinson (1979); Smillie (1997); Thielman (2007); Wenkel (2007); Wild (1984); Wood (1978).

[11] Throughout this section, plural nouns are intentionally chosen to refer to believers as the corporate Church or universal body of Christ. This is because, as Asher (2011:745–6) has clarified, 'every verb or noun' Paul used in Ephesians 6:10–17 to denote the Saviour's disciples is 'plural, illustrating what the ancients rightly and widely understood: success on the battlefield' depended upon a 'cooperative and unified effort'. In similar fashion, Hoehner (2002:853–4) points out the necessity of Christians, 'as a body', remaining 'united under their commander-in-chief' and standing 'against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places'.

particularly, scripture—to counter the devil's 'tempting, deceiving, accusing word' (Treat 2014:200). As the following analysis maintains, scripture (especially in connection with the incarnate, efficacious Word; cf. John 1:1, 14, 18) is the predominant, controlling idea in verses 10–20. Throughout much of Paul's discourse, he exhorted believers to take a defensive stance against Satan (cf. 1 Cor 16:13). Even the 'sword' (Eph 6:17) given by the Sprit—namely, the 'word of God'—is not primarily intended to launch a direct attack against Lucifer, but rather to protect Christians in the midst of their spiritual battles (cf. Jude 1:9).

The undertaking begins with believers drawing strength from their union with the Saviour (cf. Rom 13:12, 14; Phil 4:13). In turn, it is through the provision of his 'mighty power' (Eph 6:10) that Jesus' followers can withstand the assaults made by the devil, especially through his minions (cf. Zech 4:6; Eph 1:19; Rev 12:11). Victory is possible only when Christians clothe themselves with every piece of spiritual 'armour' (Eph 6:11) God supplies (cf. the use of the Greek noun *panoplia*). As a result of doing so, they are able to remain unwavering in resisting the adversary's machinations. Perhaps more than any of his peers, Paul understood from experience the power of evil. After all, he had often been the object of satanic efforts to hurt him and hinder his work. Also, the apostle knew his readers were on Satan's list of targets. So, in bringing Ephesians to a close (cf. the use of the Greek adjective *loipos* at the beginning of v. 10),[12] Paul focused on the intense, ongoing spiritual struggle (cf. the use of the noun *palē*) that lay before believers.

[12] Cohick (2013:153) regards Ephesians 6:10–20 as the 'final section' in which the writer 'pulls together the important concepts he has articulated throughout the letter'. Based on a rhetorical analysis of the epistle, Lincoln (1995:100–1) favours categorising 6:10–20 as a *peroratio*, in which the writer recapitulates the key themes of his treatise and makes the latter the basis for his emotional appeal to his readers to take decisive action.

The battle the apostle described is not a human one, namely, involving flesh-and-blood combatants; rather, the fight is a supernatural one, namely, involving a hierarchy of malevolent powers. The apostle used three Greek nouns to denote these metaphysical entities: *archē* ('rulers'; v. 12), *exousia* ('authorities'), and *kosmokratōr* ('[world] powers'). Together, these terms indicate that demons exercise a certain amount of control and influence in the present era; yet, it is limited by God in scope and duration. One of the major themes of Ephesians is that Jesus is the ultimate power in the universe. He enables those who trust in Him to triumph over the despotic forces operative in this sin-cursed age (cf. 1:21; 2:2). Moreover, Paul disclosed that Satan's henchmen are literally characterised by 'darkness' (*skotos*; 6:12). The latter noun indicates these fallen angels masquerade as agents of what is good, when in fact they are emissaries of what is evil. The preceding truth is reinforced by the apostle's declaration that these rogues are supernatural in origin (cf. the use of the adjective *pneumatikos*), are morally depraved, and strive to achieve malicious objectives (cf. the use of the noun *ponēria*). Even though the 'heavenly realms' (*epouranios*) are the demons' domicile, they have made earth their principal battleground.

Verse 12 reflects the language of astrology used in Paul's day. Ancient observers taught that wicked entities inhabit the celestial objects seen in the nighttime sky (i.e. the sun, moon, and stars), and from there control the fate of people and governments. Elsewhere, the Bible describes cosmic forces that are at work in the world to destroy the relationship between God and humanity (cf. Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 15:24; Col 2:15; 1 Pet 3:22). The underlying reality is that Satan rules a potent demonic horde. Also, in this conflict, the devil and his subordinates use whatever devices and tactics they have to achieve their destructive ends. The spiritual struggle is no less acute today than it was when Paul lived. While the Prince of Darkness has adapted his strategies to current situations, his depraved goals have not changed. Specifically, he wants

to do the following: (1) prevent unbelievers from hearing the gospel; (2) undermine the faith of believers; and (3) thwart Christians from advancing God's redemptive programme in the world.

As noted earlier in this section, believers cannot prevail by making a direct, frontal assault against the cosmic powers of this fallen age. Indeed, no matter how hard Christians try, they are powerless to defeat their spiritual foes; instead, they must fight the vile entities by utilising God's Word. Because of the critical nature of the battle and what is at stake, Paul urged his readers not to delay in making full use of the spiritual resources God supplies. As a result of doing so, believers would be ready in the time of wickedness and immorality to actively oppose Satan when he launches his attack (whether in the present moment or at the eschatological end of the age; v. 13; cf. Jer 30:7; Dan 12:1; 1 Enoch 50:2; 55:3; 63:8; 96:2; 99:4; Jub 23:16–25; Test Dan 5:4–6; Test Lev 5:5; 2 Apoc Bar 48:31; Apoc Abr 29:9; Matt 24:21; Mark 13:19; 1 Thess 5:2–4; 2 Thess 2:3–12). Paul was convinced that with the right preparation (alongside courageous fighting), his readers would still be standing, and retain their ground when the battle was over. According to traditional military doctrine, the army in possession of the field after a battle is the victor.

As a prisoner in Rome, Paul was chained to an imperial guard at all times (cf. the use of the Greek prepositional phrase *en halysei* in Eph 6:20). So, it was appropriate for the apostle to view his guard as a model and to think about the believers' spiritual struggle in military terms (cf. Acts 28:16, 20). The Old Testament also significantly influenced Paul, especially since the Hebrew Scriptures utilised military images to depict spiritual realities, including the truth of the Creator, as the divine Warrior, defending and protecting the righteous remnant (e.g.

Isa 11:4–5; 52:7; 59:17–20; Wis of Sol 5:15–23).[13] Most likely, Paul's guards did not wear full battle dress; nonetheless, they could easily bring to the apostle's mind the times he had seen Roman soldiers fully armed. As every seasoned legionnaire of the empire knew, the time to put on his armour was not when the projectiles were hurled. He prepared himself before the battle ensued by taking up armour and weapons.

For the preceding reason, in Ephesians 6:10–13, Paul urged his readers to be prepared. Then, in verses 14–17, he described the six items that believers should carry into spiritual battle. According to Lincoln (1995:100), a 'major *crux interpretum*' is whether the various 'pieces of armour' in these verses 'represent objective soteriological benefits bestowed by God or subjective ethical qualities required by believers'. The discourse put forward in this section places greater stress on the first interpretive option, for it does a superior job of explaining Paul's overall martial analogy. On one level, within this passage the apostle made his foremost concern the believers' acquittal from sin in union with the Saviour (i.e. forensic righteousness); yet, on another level, this does not rule out the value of Christians relying on the Spirit to maintain rectitude and piety in their daily lives (i.e. ethical righteousness), especially as they parry the attacks launched by the forces of darkness. As Reinhard (2005:532) affirms, the preceding

[13] As the assessment of Thielman (2007:830–1) indicates, there is no scholarly consensus regarding the extent of 'Paul's indebtedness' to martial imagery found in the Old Testament (particularly the Septuagint version) and Second Temple 'Jewish Wisdom literature'. For a substantive treatment of the divine Warrior motif in Scripture, cf. Ames (2012); Emery (2003); Hiebert (1992); Kelle (2008); Klassen (1992); Longman (2009); Neufeld (1997).

'emphasis' helps maintain the dynamic 'tension between sovereign provision and human responsibility'.[14]

Paul listed the six items in the order in which Roman soldiers would don their hardware to get ready for armed conflict. Regardless of what transpired, believers were commanded to stand fast and never surrender any ground to the enemy (cf. the use of the Greek verb *histēmi* in v. 14). The means for doing so are connected with each piece of spiritual equipment the Lord made available.

The first hardware item is 'truth', which believers are to fasten, as they would a 'belt', around their 'waist'. A Roman soldier's sash held in his tunic and breastplate, and became a place to hang his sword. On a primary level, 'truth' (the noun *alētheia*) refers to the gospel message and apostolic teaching (cf. 1:13; 4:15–25; 5:9); on a secondary level, 'truth' denotes one's virtue. As long as believers remain in vital union with the Son, Satan cannot undermine the believers' integrity (cf. Ps 28:7; John 15:5; Phil 4:13).

The second martial item Paul listed is the 'breastplate of righteousness' (Eph 6:14). Roman soldiers wore over the entire front of their torso a large protective corselet made out of bronze, or, if they were wealthy, of chain mail. The Christians' vestment is their upright standing with the Father through their faith in the Son. On a primary level, it is through the proclamation of the gospel that the believers' acquittal is made possible (cf. Rom 1:16–17; Eph 4:24; 5:9); on a secondary level, as they draw on the Saviour's righteousness, they are able to live devout

[14] For a different analysis of the possible merits and demerits of each hermeneutical option, cf. Bruce 1984:407–12; Calvin 1854:338–40; Hendriksen 1995:276–80; Hoehner 2002:838–50; Kitchen 1994:119–126; Lenski 1961:665–74; Lincoln 1990:447–51; Lincoln 1995:105–6, 112–4; Reinhard 2005:522–6; Wenkel 2007:277–87.

and holy lives. They have the assurance of knowing that not even Lucifer can succeed in impugning them before the Lord.

In Ephesians 6:15, Paul did not specify the third piece of equipment; nevertheless, his use of the Greek verb *hypodeō* ('bind underneath') leaves little doubt that he had in mind sandals and other shoes Roman soldiers would fasten to their feet. While marching, imperial troops wore strong, leather-soled half-boots studded with nails to give them traction. Similarly, Christians are to be fully prepared, like a sure-footed legionnaire, to proclaim the 'gospel' (*euangelion*; cf. Isa 52:7; Eph 1:13; 3:6, 8; 5:26). The good news of salvation discloses the basis for 'peace' (*eirēnē*; Eph 6:15) existing between God and repentant sinners (cf. Eph 1:2; 2:14–18; 4:3). Indeed, the believers' reconciliation with the Father, won by the Son at Calvary, enables them to remain steadfast in their spiritual battle with Satan.

Paul declared in 6:16 that at all times and in every circumstance involving the use of the previous items, it is imperative for Christians to take in hand their 'faith' (the Greek noun *pistis*) in the Son, as they would a 'shield' (the noun *thyreos*). As noted earlier, God's Word, especially the gospel, is the means by which believers are enabled to trust in the Saviour and stand firm in their commitment to him (cf. 1:1, 13, 15, 19; 2:8; 3:12, 17; 4:5, 13). Roman soldiers carried large rectangular shields made of wood covered with hide and bound with iron. These one-and-a-half metre long shields provided effective protection from blows and even from the flaming projectiles (including arrows, darts, and javelins) hurled at them by their enemies. These incendiary objects were often used in the siege of cities. Bows and arrows would effectively hit targets from long range (about 275-350 metres). If a soldier became terrified of flaming arrows stuck in his shield, he might throw it down and become more vulnerable to attack. Therefore, shields were sometimes dipped in water to extinguish

burning projectiles. Paul revealed that gospel-inspired faith in the Son empowers believers to deflect Satan's attacks.

The fifth piece of equipment is the believers' 'salvation' (the Greek adjective *sōtērios*; v. 17), which they are to wear like a 'helmet' (the noun *perikephalaia*; cf. Isa 59:17; 1 Thess 5:8). Their deliverance from divine judgment is not something they earned by performing a subjective litany of pious deeds; instead, as the gospel objectively reveals, salvation is freely received (the verb *dechomai*; Eph 6:17) by trusting in the Son. Roman soldiers wore helmets of bronze and leather to protect their heads. Just as imperial troops received their helmets from their armour-bearers, so Christians take hold of salvation from the Lord to use in their conflict with Satan. Moreover, believers look forward to a future day when Jesus will bring their salvation to completion and utterly vanquish the devil.

The sixth and last piece of equipment in the Christian's armoury is the 'sword' (the Greek noun *machaira*) provided by the Spirit. Paul did not mention the long spear or lance that was the Roman soldier's chief offensive weapon; instead, he referred to the short two-edged sword Roman legionaries carried and used to defend themselves in hand-to-hand combat with their enemies. The apostle equated this item with the 'word of God' (perhaps inclusive of both the incarnate and written Word). In using the noun *rhēma* to refer to scripture (cf. Luke 3:2; John 3:34; 8:47; Heb 6:5), Paul had in mind more than just its content; he was especially emphasising the effective communication of divine truth (cf. 2 Cor 10:5). As noted in the preceding section of this essay, when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he adroitly used scripture to defend himself against the tempter. Likewise, the Spirit can help believers use God's Word to protect themselves when the same foe attacks them.

Ephesians 6:18 reveals that whenever believers make full use of God's instruments of war, they need to undergird their efforts with prayer. Simply put, praying is talking to God (i.e. a consecrated form of verbal communication). Admittedly, prayer is not a piece of spiritual armour Christians wear; yet, regardless of the time or circumstance, when the Prince of Darkness attacks, believers are to keep in touch with God constantly through a variety of petitions (cf. the use of the Greek noun *proseuchē*) and supplications (cf. the use of the noun *deēsis*). The prepositional phrase *en pneumati* means to pray in communion with and in the power of the Spirit; cf. Rom 8:26–27). With the preceding goal in mind (cf. the use of the prepositional phrase *eis autos*; Eph 6:18), Jesus' followers are to remain 'alert' (cf. the use of the verb *agrypneō*), patient, and steadfast in their efforts (cf. the use of the verb *proskarterēsis*). Perhaps the most unpopular concept regarding the practice of prayer is persistence. Whatever the misgivings Jesus' followers may have about coming before the all-knowing, all-powerful God with the same specific petitions over and over, tenacity is scriptural (cf. Luke 18:1–8).

Furthermore, Christians do not just pray for themselves, but just as importantly make requests to God (cf. the use of the noun *deēsis*; Eph 6:18) on behalf of their fellow believers (cf. Phil 2:4). Paul referred to the latter using the noun *hagios* (Eph 6:18), which implies that Christians are God's holy people. He chose and set them apart to live for him and serve others. In the midst of intense spiritual warfare, a cooperative effort among believers is imperative, especially as they lovingly and humbly uphold one another verbally in prayer. As an example of a saint for whom the Ephesians could pray, Paul offered himself. He did not ask his readers to petition for his release from prison; instead, he requested prayer for a courageous spirit in proclaiming the gospel while imprisoned (v. 19).

In contrast to verse 17, where the apostle used the Greek noun *rhēma* to refer to scripture, in verse 19, he choose the synonymous noun *logos* to denote both the content of the message and the act of communicating it to others. The latter emphasis is reinforced by Paul's reference to the literal 'opening' of his 'mouth'. He further developed this thought by asking his readers to pray that the Spirit would literally give the apostle 'boldness' (cf. the use of the noun *parrēsia*). He did not have in mind a brash, arrogant disposition; rather, Paul wanted to remain fearless, especially as he explained (cf. the use of the verb *gnōrizō*) to the unsaved the 'mystery of the gospel'.

The Greek noun *mystérion* generally denoted what was once obscured or concealed. From time to time, Paul dealt with false teachers (e.g. adherents of the mystery cults and advocates of pre-Gnostic doctrines) who promoted the belief that only a few select people were privy to the deepest knowledge about God and his truths. They often called this awareness a 'mystery'. In contrast, Paul meant an eternal, redemptive truth that was either once hidden from or ambiguously understood by humankind, but had now been fully disclosed through the Messiah (cf. 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 1:9; 3:2–10; Col 1:26–27). The message of redemption was most cogently articulated in the 'gospel' (Eph 1:19; cf. the use of the noun *euangelion*; lit. 'good news').

In verse 20, Paul explained that it was for the sake of (cf. the use of the Greek preposition *hyper*) the gospel that he was incarcerated (literally, 'in chains') as an 'ambassador' (cf. the use of the verb *presbeuō*). When Paul arrived in Rome as a prisoner about AD 60, he was not kept in one of the civil or military prisons; instead, he was permitted to rent his own home, to receive visitors, and to preach the gospel (Acts 28:30–31). Soldiers of the Praetorian Guard, the emperor's protective entourage, took turns watching the apostle while chained to him. Despite Paul's

confinement, he requested prayer from his readers for the opportunity to share the good news in an unfettered manner (cf. the use of the verb *parrēsiasōmai*; Eph 6:20). The apostle believed he was divinely obligated to do so (cf. the use of the verb *dei*).

According to Philippians 1:12–14, Paul was able to share the gospel openly and candidly with the soldiers guarding him, as well as others associated with the apostle's case. His first imprisonment (of two) lasted about two years. During this period, Paul wrote Philemon, Colossians, Philippians, and Ephesians. This remarkable evangelistic activity suggests that in the apostle's estimation, his imprisonment was a God-given opportunity. Specifically, it enabled Paul to convey the good news to officials high in the Roman government (perhaps including the emperor, Nero). These were people the apostle would not otherwise have had occasion to meet. Since the government officials had the power of life and death over Paul, he most likely felt some anxiety; yet, he did not want either unease or attacks from Satan to prevent the apostle from fulfilling his divinely-ordained ministry. We can imagine Paul, during moments of doubt or duress, making efficacious use of the God's instruments of warfare—particularly scripture—to remain victorious over Satan, the counterfeit word.[15]

5. Conclusion

A primary goal of this journal article has been to explore a relatively under-researched issue, namely, how Satan (especially through his minions) strives to undermine the will of the Saviour (particularly through his followers). A correspondent aim has been to deliberate how to oppose Lucifer's attacks. An examination of relevant, representative

[15] Perkins (2000:463) extends the pastoral emphasis to believers, whom Paul enjoined to 'hear sermons, read scripture, talk with other Christians, engage in regular prayer, sing the praises of God, and so on'.

passages of scripture indicates that the devil does not resort to a brute force approach; instead, his methods are far more subtle and seductive. Specifically, the conclusion of this essay is that Satan is the counterfeit word, who uses spurious forms of verbal communication to tempt, deceive, and accuse people, including believers. The goal of the Prince of Darkness is nothing less than to bring about the eternal, spiritual death of his targets.

To establish a context of understanding, a concise yet substantive analysis was undertaken of what scripture reveals about Satan, his minions, and how the devil operates through them. It was determined that all of them are fallen spiritual beings who seek to thwart the will of God. Though in contemporary thought Lucifer and his wretched horde are nothing more than a myth or fantasy, the Judeo-Christian canon depicts these entities as real beings who assail humanity through guile and subversion. Furthermore, an examination of scripture indicates that God used his powerful, creative word to bring the entire universe into existence and sustain it in all its manifold wonder. It was also established that the Prince of Darkness imitates God by leveraging verbal communication in a variety of furtive ways to manipulate people.

The preceding backdrop of information was followed by a case study analysis of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (cf. Matt 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–11). The intent was to discern how the Saviour overcame the archenemy's enticements. It was determined that the Messiah did not triumph over Lucifer's specious verbal communications using a brute force approach; instead, the Son relied on the Word of God to thwart the devil's attacks. Indeed, it was discovered that despite the adversary's repeated efforts, he failed to lure the Son to transgress against the Father. Similarly, an analysis of Ephesians 6:10–

20 indicates that Jesus' followers can effectively leverage a biblical response to the diabolical schemes utilised by their spiritual foe.

The decision to examine the preceding passage is based on the author's conviction that it represents the premier Pauline text dealing with the subject of spiritual warfare, including how to combat the devil. It was concluded that believers do not triumph over the Prince of Darkness by using a brute force approach; rather, they must make full use of God's instruments of war to counter Lucifer's attempts to tempt, deceive, and accuse them. Also, based on an exegetical and theological analysis of Ephesians 6:10–20, it was determined that scripture is at the heart of the Christians' spiritual armour (i.e. it is the predominant, controlling idea in these verses). Moreover, it was ascertained that they are to use God's Word to stand fast and not surrender any ground to the enemy. The objective is not to launch direct, frontal attacks against the antagonist, but rather to protect themselves against his spiritual assaults. Even in moments of intense doubt and duress, Jesus' followers should make full use of scripture to parry the attacks made by Satan, the counterfeit word.

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The Nature of Christ in the Valentinian Sources from the Nag Hammadi Library and Its Relationship with the Fourth Gospel

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Abstract

This article analyses the nature of Christ in the Valentinian Sources from the Nag Hammadi Library and its relationship with the fourth gospel. Both the origin of Christ and the human and spiritual components of the nature of Christ are included. While the Valentinian Sources include both a heavenly and earthly origin and spiritual and human components of the nature of Christ, the earthly seems to be continually qualified in some way. At the same time, the Valentinian myth, through which the Valentinians filter their theology, demands an incarnation at some level. This tension between the spiritual and human Christ is analysed in order to better understand the development and variation of the nature of Christ in Valentinian theology.

1. Introduction

Concerning the nature of Christ in the Nag Hammadi Library (NHL),[2] four options exist: (a) a heavenly form that allows for human contact,

[1] The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

[2] List of abbreviations on page 56.

(b) a human form that complements his heavenly form (two-natures) (Harnack 1909:286, n. 1; Rudolph 1977:162), (c) a Jesus who abandons part of his heavenly form so that he can be more of a human in some sense, or pneumatic human being (Franzmann 1996:71), and (d) Jesus appears solely as a human figure (Bock 2006b:97–98). The Valentinians would have repudiated the last three and found the first option the most congenial, but would have felt the need to qualify the statement. The Valentinians believed that Christ had a spiritual body, but the psychic Jesus was a point of contention. The Eastern concept of mutual participation—where the spirituals co-incarnate with the saviour, ultimately reuniting with the Pleroma—may have been at the heart of the debate. This Eastern doctrine demands a human body so that Christ could release the spirituals. Hence, Hippolytus insists that in the Eastern view, Jesus took 'shape' (διαπλασθῆ) in Mary's womb and left that body at the cross (*Ref* VI:35, 5–7).

Franzmann nuances the discussion by adding that the nature of Christ in the NHL should be seen as a three-dimensional graph. The more the text necessitates an earthly connection, the greater the need to split Jesus' nature into two. Conversely, the less human contact required, the less the author needs to split these natures. Debate exists over the degree to which the Valentinian Sources (VSS) describe Jesus as human. There seem to be passages that clearly describe his spiritual nature, while others also allow for a human nature. Yet, to what degree do VSS describe the humanity of Jesus? The following sections will analyse both the heavenly and earthly origins of Christ, as well as the spiritual and human components of Christ in the VSS from the NHL with an emphasis on their relation to the fourth gospel (FG) in order to get a clearer glimpse of the nature of Christ in the VSS.

2. The Origin of Christ

The VSS characterise Jesus as a spiritual being that descended from the Father and took on spiritual flesh. Yet, passages exist that seem to indicate that Jesus also had an earthly origin. The Valentinians employed allegorical interpretation in light of their views on the Pleroma, Kenoma, and Cosmos, which leads to the question: should the earthly origin of Christ be understood allegorically, or did the Jesus of the VSS from the NHL truly originate on earth? The following section looks at the heavenly and earthly origins of Jesus in those sources.

2.1. The heavenly origin of Christ

The Gospel of Truth (GT) describes Jesus, the *logos*, and the Son coming forth from the Father (GT 16:34–35, 20:15–23, and 26:1–27). The *logos*, who came forth from the *plērōma*, is addressed as *sōtēr* in GT 16:34–38. The missional purpose of the saviour's descent seems to parallel the FG (Attridge and MacRae 1985:40). The purpose of the saviour's descent was 'to become the fruit of knowledge' (*afšōpe nnoutah mpisaune*) in a soteriological sense through his crucifixion (18:21–31) (Ménard 1972:50–51), to reveal (20:15–23), and to 'instruct' (*eftamo*) them (psychics/spirituals) about the 'Father' (*piōt*, 30:30–37). Fecht and Ménard both suggest that the author begins describing the crucifixion in orthodox terms, but will later turn to more of a gnostic interpretation (Fecht 1961, 1962, 1963:(31), 103 (32), and 319; Ménard 1970:130). The Saviour was the 'mouth of the Father' (*rōf mpiōt*, 26:34–35) involved in the reception of the Holy Spirit, the revelation of the Father, and the aeons (see GT 16:34–35; 18:21–31). Like the FG, the descent of the Saviour in the GT emphasises the Saviour's missional and soteriological purpose. Through his redemption, those who are ignorant of the Father will come to the

knowledge of the truth—the purpose of the book (16:31–17:4). This revelatory purpose is not unique to the GT. The VE (*A Valentinian Exposition with Valentinian Liturgical* Readings) describes the descent with the purpose of revealing the Father (24:25–29) and anointing the spirituals (40:11–14).

The other VSS in the NHL also attest to the descent of Jesus. The Gospel of Philip (GP) describes Christ as bringing bread in order to bring life, which implies the incarnation (55:6–14; 73:23–25). It also serves as an allusion to the FG where Christ metaphorically became 'the bread of life' (ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς). Jesus is also described as coming (*ei*) into the world at a certain time (GP 52:19) to unite Adam and Eve (GP 70:9–22) and to redeem and lay down his life (GP 52:35–53:14). TR (The Treatise on the Resurrection) 44:21–35 states that the Son of God was 'originally … from above' (*nšarp … psa ntpe*). The word *nšarp* comes from ἀρχή, explaining that the Saviour and the elect were originally from the perfect pleromic state (Attridge and MacRae 1985:154). This seems, once again, to be a Johannine reference. GT 20:33 also applies this to Jesus' descent from the Pleroma. The Saviour's mission was to restore the elect to the Pleroma, where they both originally (*nšarp*) resided (see TR 46:27, 35ff). Also, the phrase 'imperishable [descends]' (*tmntatteko* [*shetie ahrēi*], TR 48:38–49:9) seems to echo 1 Corinthians 15:53–54 and Heracleon's explanation of John 4:47. Heracleon understood Judea as from above or signifying a higher level of spiritual insight. TT (The Tripartite Tractate) 116:1–5 also talks about the descent of Christ to unite with the church (Thomassen 2006:323–324). The church that unites with the Saviour is the spiritual seed of Sophia. As in the FG, the descent of the Saviour is purposeful. He descends from the Father with the purpose of returning from whence he originated, but only after his co-incarnation with the church. The ultimate purpose of the Saviour demonstrates his heavenly origin.

The heavenly origin of Jesus can also be seen in his pre-existence; his spiritual form existed prior to his psychic form. The GT 16:36–37 describes the *logos* as in the mind and thought of the Father. The *logos* is an emanation from the Father (Grobel 1960:35; Attridge and MacRae 1985:40–41; Ménard 1972:43). The creation of the son in VE 22:31–39 also comes from the mind (*nous*) and thought of the Father. The will, mind, and thought of the Father are all related to the son (Thomassen 2006:237–238). He is the 'first born' (*oušrp mmise*, TT 57:18), and he 'existed from the beginning' (*šoop jin nšorp,* 33–34). In TT 58:15–16, the son was 'without beginning' ([*at*]*arkhē*) and 'without end' ([*at*]*haē*). The Valentinians use both 'first born' (*oušrp mmise*) and 'only son' (*oušēre nouōt*). The former most likely translates the Greek πρωτότοκος (Attridge and Pagels 1985:238). Irenaeus' account of Valentinian views describes the firstborn, or λόγος, who created humanity (*Haer* I:12,3). Theodotus uses λόγος as a name for Christ, offspring of the aeons (*Exc* 33:1). The latter is most likely the same as μονογενής. Ptolemy uses it to describe the aeon νοῦς. Jesus is also equated with the *monogenēs* in VE 40:33–34. Furthermore, VE 24:25–29 refers to Jesus as the *monogenēs*, which seems to be a Johannine idea that connotes the relationship between the Father and the Son. The Sahidic New Testament uses 'the only son' for μονογενής in John 1:18. The pre-existent relationship of Jesus and the Father and the revelatory nature of the μονογενής can also be seen in the context of VE 24.

Jesus' close relationship with the Father also implies his divine origin. The relationship between the Father and the Son in the GT is characterised by oneness. In fact, the author notes that they are one—'the name of the Father is the Son' (*prende mpiōt pe pšēre*, GT 38:7). Jesus claims to be one with the Father in John 10:30. Thus, this passage may have been influenced by the FG. Theodotus also referred to the invisible part of Jesus as the name or the only begotten son (*Exc* 26). In

addition, Philo equated Logos, God's firstborn, and the name of God in *Conf* 146. By wearing his name in GP 53:8–10, the Son actually became the Father. Jesus was the hidden name, and Christ was the revealed name (GP 56:3–4). Because the Son shares the name and being of the Father and at the same time is in some sense distinct, he can be sent to reveal the Father. The Son's pleromic origin shows his close relationship with the Father. Another indication of their close relationship is the use of the Trinitarian formula in VE 23:35–37: the Son, the Father of all, and the mind of the Spirit. The chiastic structure in TR 44:21–23 pairs Son of God with divinity and vanquishing death (Attridge and MacRae 1985:150; Layton 1981:198, n. 36). The relationship between the Father and the Son signifies divine status. Death could not have been vanquished by anyone less than God. The heavenly origin of Jesus is demonstrated by his close relationship with the Father and the fact that they both share the same name. This shows that they both originated from the heavenly abode.

Until this point, the VSS have much in common with how the Logos and Sophia would have been viewed in Jewish and Hellenistic literature. However, neither would have seen the Logos as a separate entity from the godhead. Rather, the Logos was the transcendent God's approach to man. Furthermore, the fact that the Logos is equated with the Saviour and Jesus demonstrates that the FG clearly influenced the VSS's view of the nature of the Logos. The Logos as Jesus, with the parallels that will be analysed in a future article, is also a strong argument for seeing an intertextual connection between the FG and the VSS.

2.2 The earthly origin of Christ

The VSS do include descriptions of Jesus' earthly origin. Yet, the references must be viewed through a Valentinian lens. While the VSS

do describe Jesus as having an earthly father and mother and inhabiting a body, Valentinian theology and its allegorical hermeneutic should not be overlooked.

In order to understand the theology of the incarnation in the TT, the wider Valentinian theology must be taken into account. The Logos produced the Saviour and its spiritual flesh (114:7–10). This flesh came from a seed (114:9–22). The spiritual flesh is shared with the church (122:12–18), but this is not the same flesh as the incarnation. For this reason, he can be described as 'begotten' (*najpaf*, 113:31–34) and 'unbegotten' (*natjpof*, 113:36–38) in the same context. In TT 115:9–11, Jesus was 'conceived and born as an infant in body and soul' (*mm[a]s auō aftroumestf nnoulilou n-cōma psukhē*). He was conceived without 'sin' (*nobe*), 'stain' (*mntattōlm*), and 'defilement' (*atjōhm*, 115:15–17). Yet, in the same section, the Saviour and the spirituals are said to have 'mingled' with him (*moujč*, TT 116:5). In other words, even in this passage, the idea of mutual participation and co-incarnation can be seen clearly. The TT was most likely written in the third or fourth centuries and evidences some softening in Valentinian doctrine (Edwards 1995:78). Thus, the inclusion of a human body of sin in TT 115:9–11 and 15–17 could have been included to make Valentinian doctrine more acceptable to Catholic Christians. Just as those that he came to save had a body and soul, Jesus did as well. Yet, the Saviour is still the image of the unitary one and 'the Totality in bodily form' (*pteērf kata psōma*, TT 116:28–30). Jesus and the spirituals have co-incarnated (116:5), yet he is indivisible and impassable (116:31–33). As Theodotus explained, the body of Jesus is the same substance as the church (*Exc* 42). Jesus put on the psychic Christ, but was still invisible, so a visible body was spun out of invisible psychic material (*Exc* 59). Furthermore, the soul of Christ ascended to the Father while the body suffered on the cross (*Exc*

62). In some sense, Jesus had earthly origins, but the psychic substance that made up his flesh was worn like a garment—a temporary form.

GT 20:3–34 and 31:4–9 seem to describe a physical body in that it describes Jesus suffering (20:11), appearing (20:23), being nailed to a tree (20:25), dying (20:29), and appearing in fleshly form (31:5–6), but without being seen by 'the material ones' (31:1). Thomassen and Segelberg both suggest that the latter passage might contain an allusion to baptism (Thomassen 2006:154–155; Segelberg 1959:7). Thomassen believes that there is a connection with 1 Corinthians 15:53–54. Ménard, along with others (i.e. Attridge and MacRae 1985:88) believes that the phrase *nousarks n-smat* (31:5–6) should be translated 'fleshly appearance'. Yet, it would be a mistake to label this passage merely docetic. In some sense, Jesus had to have a physical body. As noted above, Theodotus describes the body as suffering apart from Christ (*Exc* 62) and fashioned out of invisible psychic substance (*Exc* 59). Jesus received the spiritual form from Achamoth, the psychic Christ from the Demiurge, and through a special dispensation (*oikonomia*), he received a psychic body that was visible, tangible, and capable of suffering (*Haer* I:6,1). Hippolytus complicates it further. He explains that the Western view was that Jesus was born with a psychic body and then joined with a spiritual component at his baptism. In the Eastern view, he explains, Jesus was given shape (διαπλασθῃ) in Mary's womb. In other words, Hippolytus was attributing a psychic element to both Eastern and Western views. Thus, Hippolytus, assuming there was a clear-cut distinction between Western (Jesus had both psychic and spiritual forms) and Eastern theory (spiritual form only), would only be describing the Western school (*Haer* I:6,1) (Thomassen 2006:43–45). GT 31:4–9 ('For he [Jesus] came by means of fleshly form…') should be viewed through the lens of the Eastern idea of mutual participation. This translation is consistent with *Ref* VI:35 and 7, where Hippolytus asserts that Axionicus and Ardesianes both belong to the east and 'say

that the body (σῶμα) of the Saviour was spiritual (πνευματικόν). For the Holy Spirit, that is Sophia and the power of the Most High—the art of creation—came upon Mary in order that shape (διαπλασθῃ) might be given to Mary by the Spirit (πνεύματος).' While the VSS repeatedly refer to the body as a garment (IK 11:26-39; GP 51:20–58:10; 68:26–29), in some sense, Jesus was born into a physical form.

The GP states that Jesus had two fathers. The Father in heaven appears in GP 55:23–36, and Jesus' earthly father appears in 73:8–19:

> Philip the apostle said, 'Joseph the carpenter planted a garden because he needed wood for his trade. It was he who made the cross from the trees which he planted. His own offspring hung on that which he planted. His offspring was Jesus and the planting was the cross.' But the tree of life is in the middle of the garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we get the chrism, and from the chrism, the resurrection.

The author of the GP most likely intended a deeper understanding than Joseph planting the tree that would ultimately be used to kill his son. Joseph, in 73:8–19, most likely stands for the Demiurge and the wood then becomes Jesus' physical body (Thomassen 1997:268–269). Just as Adam had two mothers in GP 71:16, Jesus seems to have two mothers as well. GP 55:23–36 states: 'Some have said that Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit. They are mistaken.' This verse alludes to Luke 1:35, which was explained by Theodotus in *Excerpta ex Theodotus* 60 as referring to the formation of Jesus' body. From GP 55:23–36, it can be presupposed that Mary was Jesus' earthly mother. In GP 70:34–71:21, the 'virgin who came down' would most likely correspond to Sophia in Valentinian thought. Mary provided the virgin, uncorrupted womb for his psychic body, and Sophia provided his spiritual body (GP 71:8). Thus, Jesus has two sets of parents—spiritual and physical. The Father

and Sophia are his spiritual parents, and Joseph (Demiurge) and Mary are his physical parents. The purpose of his birth was to 'rectify' (*efna[s]ehōf*) the fall (71:18–22) through bringing the spiritual seed and sharing it with the spirituals. Thus, the Saviour did have both a spiritual and physical (psychic) body.

One important point to consider before this analysis moves forward is whether the Logos is equated with Jesus in the VSS. Theodotus explained that the spiritual flesh of the Logos is the Saviour's flesh (*Exc* 1:1). He gave flesh to the Logos (Thomassen 2006:167). Ptolemy also saw unity between the Logos and the Son (*Haer* I:8,5). If they are clearly connected through the incarnation, the nature of Christ in the FG evidently influenced the VSS. Are the Logos and the saviour seen as separate beings in the VSS? Thomassen argues that the VSS do not distinguish between Christ, or the son of Sophia, and Jesus, the Saviour (1989:233). Franzmann too does not see any differentiation between the Logos and the Saviour in IK 3:26–28 nor in the GT (1996:29). This is consistent with GT 30:27–32 and 31:4–8; Jesus is linked with the Logos/Son who came in fleshly form. Furthermore, they both have many similar activities. For example, they both reveal the Father (18:24–29; 24:14–16). Also, they are both connected with truth and have imperishable existence. Rewolinski believes that the issue is complex and imprecise. He writes: 'While the stance of the GP with regard to God and God as Father is relatively clear, the posture of the Son, the Logos, Jesus (and) Christ is as complex as the several designations used to describe the nature and function of the Son' (1978:76). Theodotus may hold the key to this issue. He explained that there were two forms of the Logos. The Logos of John 1:14 was the lower form (*Exc* 19:1), and the Logos in John 1:1–4 would correspond to the higher, spiritual form. The GT clearly equates the Logos with the saviour in GT 16:31–38 and explains that he 'became a body' (GT 26:4–8). Since the Valentinians viewed the Saviour's body as a shell,

they were forced to distinguish between these two forms of the Logos in order to harmonise their myth with the FG. Thus, the differences can be explained through the Valentinians' desire to fit the FG into their myth, but the fact that the Logos, who became a body, is associated with a fleshly Jesus can only be explained through the prior influence of the FG on the VSS.

3 The Human and Spiritual Components of Christ

The understanding of Jesus' body should be seen as bifurcated: (a) Jesus' body was spiritual and originated outside this world, and (b) Jesus' body was in some sense psychic and originated both within the earthly realm and the heavenly realm. Much of the evidence for a bodily incarnation seems to contain language consistent with mutual participation—the co-incarnation of the Saviour with the spirituals in order to reunite with the Pleroma.

3.1. Christ as principally spirit

Mutual participation is a key Valentinian doctrine that sheds light on the spiritual nature of Christ. Therefore, any discussion of Christ as principally spirit must include this concept. The co-mingling of bodies is found in *Excerpta ex Theodotus* 17. Jesus and the church co-incarnated with Sophia. Jesus' body is made up of spiritual seeds, planted by Sophia (*Exc* 26) and carried on Jesus' shoulders back to the Pleroma (*Exc* 42). Thus, Jesus' spiritual body is made up of the church (*Exc* 12, cf. TT 116:5–117:8). The spiritual body of the Saviour consists of the Saviour and the elect.

In the The Tripartite Tractate 113:31–37, Jesus is portrayed as one who was begotten and will suffer (vv. 33–34) and who was previously

eternal, unbegotten, and impassable from the Logos. He 'came into the flesh' (*en<en>tahšōpe hn sarks*). Attridge and Pagels clarify this apparent contradiction by explaining that the author is distinguishing between the psychic Christ who suffered and the spiritual Christ who did not (1985:433). Yet, they explain, 'The *Tri. Tac.* approaches closer to orthodoxy than did Ptolemy by maintaining the unity of the Saviour and by insisting on the reality of his suffering' (1985:433). The Tripartite Tractate was most likely written late, and evidences some softening of doctrine. The author of the The Tripartite Tractate established the order between the psychics and hylics (98:12–23). They are associated with right and left respectively (see GT 32:4–15). Concerning the relationship of the soul and the body, TR 48:38–49:9 describes 'imperishability' (*tmntatteko*) descending upon 'the perishable' (*pteko*), echoing 1 Corinthians15:53–54. Given 47:5–8 and 47:22–24, Peel believes that this is a reference to a spiritual, resurrected flesh replacing the corruptible, earthly flesh (1985:200). TR 47:5–8 states: 'You received flesh when you entered this world. Why will you not receive flesh when you ascend into the Aeon?' This is consistent with Heracleon's commentary on John 4:47. When talking about the soul, he writes of 'the perishable which puts on imperishability' (τὸ ἐνδυόμενον ἀφθαρσίαν φθαρτόν). The spiritual, imperishable flesh was placed on top of the corrupted, earthly flesh.

The GT notes that the Father 'begot him as a son' (*afmestf nnoušēre*, 38:10). This is reminiscent of Ptolemy's commentary on the FG, as recorded by Irenaeus (*Haer* I:8, 5). Irenaeus quotes Ptolemy:

> John, the disciple of the Lord, wishing to set forth the origin of all things, so as to explain how the Father produced the whole, lays down a certain principle,—that, namely, which was first-begotten by God, which Being he has termed both the only-begotten Son and God, in whom the Father, after a seminal manner, brought forth all things.

Van Unnik believes that there are allusions to Psalms 2:7 (1955:121), and Giversen sees allusions to Acts 13:33 and Hebrews 1:5 (1959:88–91). All of these are possible. One thing remains clear; Jesus was the Father's son and had a spiritual and divine nature.

The author of the GT also explains that the material ones 'did not see him' (*neuneu apefeine en*, 31:1–3). If the phrase in 31:5–6 is translated 'fleshly form', this could be seen as a reference to his psychic reality. In GP 57:28–58:10, Jesus appeared in different manners so that he could be seen, which may be an allusion to the transfiguration (Smith 2005:28). However, some even thought they were seeing themselves. Also, while Jesus was on the cross, Christ had departed (68:26–29). This is consistent with the bifurcated Jesus Christ that Mahé attributes to Valentinianism (Mahé 1975:51). It is also consistent with Theodotus's account of Jesus suffering while Christ departed to the Father's hand (*Exc* 62). In TT 105:29–106:12, in the creation of man, the Logos provided the spiritual part (Attridge and Pagels 1985:410–411). Theodotus believed that Jesus placed upon himself the psychic Christ like a garment. He is also the image, a spiritual copy (*hikōn*) (Attridge and Pagels 1985:441), of the unitary one (116:28–29) and the Totalities in bodily form (116:30). He forms a garment (91:35) wrapped around the Totalities (87:34). Jesus' spiritual reality, juxtaposed with his physical reality remains quite clear in the VSS.

Jesus did have a spiritual nature in the VSS, but it would be a mistake to differentiate between the spiritual and human components of Jesus in the VSS as simply spiritual versus corporeal. Jesus had two bodies, one spiritual and one psychic. Theodotus believed that the Saviour had a spiritual body: the church (*Exc* 26). He was a mixture of spiritual bodies, namely the church, Jesus, and Sophia (*Exc* 17). The Western view attributed a psychic body to Christ as well (*Exc* 59 and 61). Thus,

Irenaeus's assessment that there were two forms to the saviour proves accurate (*Haer* I:6, 1). The spiritual came from Sophia/Achamoth, like Theodotus's spiritual seed, and the psychic consisted of the psychic Christ, born of the Demiurge, and the psychic body that came through a special dispensation (*oikonomia*), which was visible, tangible, and capable of suffering.

3.2. Christ as primarily human

GP 57:20–22 and 82:6–7 speak pejoratively of the nature of the flesh. The former describes the worthlessness of the body apart from representing Christ. (Smith 2005:26) The latter contrasts the 'fleshly' (*sarkikon*) with being 'pure' (*tbbēu*). This clearly has implications for their view of the nature of Christ. This following section analysed the humanity of Christ in the VSS from the NHL. One important distinction should be made between various descriptions of the body of Christ. As was discussed earlier, Jesus' body is described as human and at the same time as the church, the spiritual seed of Sophia, and a group of angels (Thomassen 2007:793). At the same time, the incarnation was essential in order to release the spirituals from their bodies.

TR 45:13–19 explains that Jesus 'swallowed up death' (*ōmnk m-mou*). The verb *ōmnk* may translate the Greek word καταπίνω—the same verb that Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 15:54 and 2 Corinthians 5:4. Peel explains that the author of the TR uses this phrase four times in order to 'denote divine conquest over/destruction of death, corruptibility, and ignorance. In this passage it especially underscores his role in transforming death into nothing more than a transition stage to the spiritual resurrection (cf. 44.27–29; 46.7–8)' (Peel 1985:159). Nonetheless, one should not understand this passage as describing a literal, bodily death. The passage goes on to explain that the Saviour transformed himself into an imperishable aeon, raised himself, and

swallowed the visible. This passage contains clear indications that mutual participation is in view. The swallowing of the visible or the spirituals leads to being drawn to heaven. It is a spiritual resurrection (TR 45:40). This doctrine is also contained in Valentinus's writings (*Strom* IV:13.89,1–3) (Haardt 1970:254).

The TT states that he 'came into being in the flesh' (*tahšōpe hn sarks*, TT 113:38), 'became a man' (*prefšōpe n-pōme*, 125:1–2), was 'incarnated in flesh' (*entahšōpe hn sarks*, 125:15), and 'appeared in the flesh' (*netahouōnh hn sarks*, 133:16–18). Nonetheless, the flesh in TT 114:4–10 comes from the Logos and his spiritual children: 'They say that it is a production from all of them, but that before all things it is from the spiritual Logos who is the cause of the things which have come into being, from whom the Saviour received his flesh.' Theodotus's account in *Exc* 1 and 26 agrees with the author of the TT. The flesh, or spiritual seed, is distinct from the Saviour in TT 114:9–22. Furthermore, TT 114:30–115:23 seems to indicate a psychic incarnation—the Saviour accepted their death and the smallness that they received when they were born in body and soul. Thomassen believes the Valentinians saw the Saviour as superhuman but as in some sense experiencing a real incarnation (2006:49). Accepting the smallness of those he came to save was soteriologically necessary. The VSS seem to at least nominally include the idea of a human body.

GT 23:30–24:2 describes the Logos as having a body. Both Schenke and Haardt believe that this should be taken as figurative (Schenke 1959:40; Haardt 1962:35). While the previous passages use the word *sarks*, GT 26:8 uses the word *sōma*. The way in which the VSS use these two terms could shed light on how they viewed the body. GT 26:8 states that 'he became a body' (*afr ousōma*). It is possible that the author had John 1:14 in his mind. Nonetheless, the translators very well

could have used *sarks* instead of *sōma* (Attridge and MacRae 1985:77). *Sarks* is used 43 times in VSS (GT 31:5; TR 44:15; 47:5 [x2], GP 56:29, 30, 33; VE 32:35; 38:20, 36, etc.). *Sōma* is used 35 times (GT 23:31; 26:8; TR 47:17, 35; TT 54:18; 66:14 [x2], GP 56:26; 71:8; IK 6:30; 17:15; VE 33:33; 38:19, etc.). Three passages exist where the usages are juxtaposed: (1) TR 47, (2) GP 56–57, and (3) IK 6. In TR 47, *sōma* is used in the context of corruption (47:19) and what has been left behind (47:34–35) while *sarks* is used to explain that the spirituals received flesh when they entered the world, and they will receive flesh when they ascend to the aeons as well. In GP 56, the author describes the shell that holds the soul as the contemptible *sōma*. The author then contrasts that with the *sarks*, which Jesus instructed his disciples to eat, which brings life, and will rise in the end (57:10, 18). In IK 6, *sarks* is described as 'bound' (*mour*) in a 'net' (*abē*) and the *sōma* is described as 'a temporary dwelling' (*m[a] nšōp[e]*). Concerning the GT's use of *sōma*, Williams suggests that the difference could lie in the fact that 'Valentinus focuses on the body as the centre of human life and emotion' (1988:95). Attridge and MacRae, as well as Ménard (1972:126), believe that the use of *sōma* could have been influenced by Plato (*Tim* 32D) (Attridge and MacRae 1985:77). TR 47:18 juxtaposes *sōma* with old age. Also, in GP 56, the soul is hidden in the *sōma*. The *sōma* in *The Interpretation of Knowledge* (IK) is described as the place where the rulers live. Thus, the *sōma* does seem to connote the concept of life (TT 135:10–17) and corruption, whereas *sarks* is more of the inner being that will eventually rise. Likewise, GP 75:22–24 also seems to equate the living man with the *sōma*. Ménard sees the reference to σάρξ in John 1:14 and pneumatic Christology of other writings were too primitive for the author of the FG. Because of this, he preferred to use the Platonic term σῶμα, which includes the idea of unity (1972:125–126).

Thus, *sōma* denotes unity and the totality of the living, material man. *Sarks* seems to have more of a pneumatic or psychic connotation. If the *sōma* has more to do with material man, GT 26:8 may indicate that the Logos truly inhabited a body. There is no parallel in Hellenism or Judaism. A hypostatised Logos is absent from both. Thus, the influence of the FG can clearly be seen in the Logos concept in the GT. Although the Valentinian myth calls for the Logos to repent and return to the Pleroma, creating the flesh of the Saviour, Heracleon in *In Jo* 6:108, Theodotus *Exc* 1:1, and GT 16:31–38 all equate the Logos with the Saviour, clearly influenced by the FG. In fact, the Logos is incarnated in GT 26:4–8: 'When the Word (*šeje*) appeared the one that is within the heart of those who utter it—it is not a sound alone, but it became a body (*sōma*).'

GT 31:5–6 states that the Son had fleshly form. Yet, consistent with Eastern Valentinian theology, the GT states that he 'stripped himself of perishable rags' (*eafbōš mmaf nniplče ettekait*) and 'put on imperishability' (*afti hiōōf ntmntat teko*, 20:15–39). Segelberg understands this as a reference to baptism (1959:7). Ménard sees allusions to 2 Corinthians 5:4 (1972:101). In this passage, Paul describes the release from this 'tent' (σκήνει), a temporary dwelling, as being 'clothed' (ἐπενδύσασθαι). In fact, the 'mortal' (θνητόν) will be 'swallowed' (κατεπόθη) by life. The concept of swallowing the mortal finds an echo in TR 45:14–33, a passage that describes the Saviour's mutual participation. IK 5:30–6:34 describes the Saviour as inhabiting a temporal or fabricated body, being crucified, suffering, and dying. Nonetheless, IK 12:22–38 (Bock 2006:180–181) reads: 'the flesh is an Aeon that Sophia has emitted' (*[tc]arks ouaiōn pe ntahatsophia*, IK 12:32–33). This corresponds to the spiritual body and finds a parallel in TR 45:13–19 where the context of swallowing death includes the idea of mutual participation. However, Jesus also has to be disguised by a

'carcass' (*šel*, 12:37). Because of the doctrine of mutual participation, the Saviour has a spiritual body but also must be a model to those that will be saved. Thus, he must take on a carcass, an animal nature (psychic) like those he has come for (*Val* 27). GP 57:2–7 states that Jesus was flesh and blood. Yet, he came in 'stealth' (*njioue*, 57:28). The Saviour's psychic body was temporary and perishable but in some sense real. As Bock notes, 'He is not human, but much more. The heavenly and spiritual takes precedence over the human. The human is an accommodation to humanity' (2006:102).

Jesus' humanity also becomes evident in the VSS when looking at the physical activities of Jesus. Jesus was 'born as an infant in body and soul' (*aftroumestf nnoulilou n-soma psukhē,* TT 115:10–11). While the verb is hard to make out, Attridge and Pagels believe that it is probably *mise* (Crum 1939:184b). The TT seems to be quite orthodox at this point (Attridge and Pagels 1985:437). However, once again, the TT includes evidence that it was penned late and, thus, its Valentinian theology could have been softened due to outside pressures. Jesus was also 'persecuted' (*pōt nsōf,* GT 18:21–31) and 'nailed to a tree' (*auaftf auše,* cf. GT 20:25). The author of IK 10:27–34 describes Christ as becoming small. Thomassen believes that this is a reference to the incarnation and the idea of substitution (2006:86–87). Christ accepts both the death and smallness of those that he came to save, just as they received them when they were born in body and soul. Yet, IK 10:23–26 contrasts *skhēma* or 'shape' with *katadikē* which comes from the Greek καταδίκη or a 'sentence of condemnation'. This would most likely correspond to the hylics who are destined for destruction. Thus, the shape could be psychic or spiritual.

GP 63:31–64:5 also describes Jesus' love for his companion Mary and the fact that he kissed her. Rather than a reference to the humanity of Christ, this should probably be viewed in light of TT 58:21–29 (Smith

2005:36). The word 'kiss' (*aspaze*) comes from the Greek verb ἀσπάζομαι. It was used by Ptolemy (*Apotel* 1.3.17) and Philo (*In Flacc* 38) (Danker and Bauer 2000:144). Its use should be viewed as a customary behaviour in the context of a greeting. In VSS, it often refers to the creative acts of the Father and Son (Attridge and Pagels 1985:242). In TT 58:21–29, it occurs in the context of the creation of the church. The union of the emanations of the Father is referred to through an embrace or 'kisses' (*aspasmos*) in GT 41:23–34. Attridge and Pagels explain that the kiss in GP 59:2–4 refers to 'a spiritual procreation' (1985:242). The spirituals 'receive conception from the grace' (*enji mpō ebol hn tkharis*) through the kiss (Smith 2005:34). In addition, in the Gospel of Thomas 108, when someone drinks from the mouth of Jesus they will become like him and what is in Jesus will be revealed. Thus, the kiss between Jesus and Mary 'Magdalene' (*magdalēnē*) in the GP most likely is a reference to the fact that she was elect or a spiritual and received teaching from the mouth of Jesus. Additionally, using 'kiss' as a metonym for 'teach' makes sense within an oral culture and between a disciple and her teacher in the first century.

As this section demonstrates, the human component of Christ in the VSS involves many complexities. This may be due to the debates between Eastern and Western schools as well as the apparent debate within the Western school (*Ref* VI). Thus, the VSS in the NHL seem to side with the Eastern school while at times displaying Western tendencies. Due to the soteriological necessity of the incarnation, the authors of the VSS had to include the incarnation in some sense. One thing is certain; the body of Christ in the FG and the body of Christ in the VSS are two completely different concepts.

At the same time, echoes of the nature of Christ in the FG can be seen in the VSS in the fact that the Logos became flesh (TT 113:38) and the saviour/son was Jesus (TT 87:1–17). No better parallel to the VSS exists than the FG. Although the Valentinians allowed for the incarnation, influenced by John 1:14, they continually qualified the humanity of Christ as a carcass or garment, a notion originating with Middle Platonism and Stoicism, and viewed the primary Logos as that of John 1:1 and his lesser form as the one who became a body in John 1:14 (*Exc* 19:1).

4. Conclusion

The heavenly origin of Christ can be seen in the Logos's descent from the Pleroma as revelation of the Father and in order to redeem those who came to save, in his pre-existence and his close relationship with the Father. All three of these concepts give a glimpse of the close intertextual relationship between the VSS and the FG. The earthly origin of Christ shares clear parallels with the FG as well. Although the VSS picture Jesus as appearing in bodily form, they always qualify or explain that Jesus' flesh should not be seen as hylic or material. Although Jesus had a mother and father, the earthly Mary only provided an uncorrupted womb for his psychic flesh.

Although the VSS contain passages that seem to indicate that Jesus had a human nature, Jesus, according to the Eastern view, in fact had two bodies, a spiritual body and a psychic body. The spiritual body was a combination of the Logos and the seeds of his spiritual offspring. Thus, the purpose of the incarnation was to carry the seeds on his shoulders back to the Pleroma. The psychic form consisted of the psychic Christ, born of the Demiurge, and the psychic body that came through a special dispensation (*oikonomia*), which was visible, tangible, and capable of suffering. The incarnation, in some sense, is essential to Valentinian

doctrine. Even the passages that seem to indicate that the VSS attribute human flesh to Jesus qualify the flesh of Christ in some sense. Because accepting the smallness of those he came to save was soteriologically necessary, the VSS seem to at least nominally include the idea of a human body. More consistently, the flesh of Christ in the VSS is described as a carcass, perishable rags, clothing, or a fleshly form.

How can one reconcile these seeming contradictions? Both the FG and Platonic thought influenced the Valentinians. In an attempt to reconcile their myth with the FG, amidst competing factions which viewed the nature of Christ differently, the VSS seem to describe the body of Christ as a psychic reality, avoiding the material or hylic essence, which Valentinians viewed pejoratively. Because of these competing groups, eastern and western Valentinians, as well as outside orthodox pressures, Valentinian doctrine was a work in process.

Abbreviations

Exc	*Excerpta ex Theodotus* (Clement of Alexandria)
FG	The Fourth Gospel
GP	The Gospel of Philip
GT	The Gospel of Truth
Haer	*Against Heresies* (Irenaeus)
IK	*The Interpretation of Knowledge*
NHL	Nag Hammadi Library
Ref	*Refutations of all Heresies* (Hippolytus)
Strom	*Stromata* (Clement of Alexandria)
Tim	Timaeus (Plato)
TR	The Treatise on the Resurrection
TT	The Tripartite Tractate

Val *Against the Valentinians* (Tertullian)
VE *A Valentinian Exposition with Valentinian Liturgical Readings*
VSS The Valentinian Sources

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Wealth and Poverty in Luke's Gospel and Acts in Terms of Brewer's Analysis and its Challenge for Today's Church

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Abstract

In recent times, there has been a great deal of controversy surrounding the issue of wealth and poverty. The article describes the Lukan theology of wealth and poverty in the Gospel of Luke and Acts in terms of Brewer's analysis and indicates its implications for today's Church and the individual Christian. In terms of Brewer's analysis, the Gospel of Luke focuses largely on the condition of the poor, the way that God views poverty, the attitudes, actions and teachings of Jesus relating to the poor, and his warnings regarding their abuse and neglect. Brewer's analysis of the Book of Acts reveals that Luke seeks to exemplify the theological principles found in his gospel in the circumstances and responses of the Early Church. When one applies the Lukan theological concepts *to the present day*, it can be concluded that the church has a particular obligation to acknowledge and address the problem of poverty effectively.

[1] The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

1. Introduction

In recent years, numerous Bible scholars have debated the responsibility of the church towards the poor, and 'how that responsibility should affect the individual believer's economic policy … The current economic crisis has encouraged interest in the Christian response to financial responsibility as well' (Brewer 2009:2).

Brewer (2009:2) maintains that 'The evidence of research supports the view that Luke does in fact possess a consistent theology regarding the poor in both his Gospel and in Acts based on the teachings of Christ'. Based on this evidence, this article examines Brewer's analysis of 'wealth and poverty in Luke's Gospel and Acts' and its implications for today's church. It presents 'an historical and exegetical overview of Luke's economic theology' (Brewer 2009:4) and its practical implications for today's church (and the individual Christian) regarding its moral obligation to the poor.

2. A Concise Contextual Analysis of the Rich and the Poor in Scripture

2.1. The generosity of wealthy followers of God in the Old Testament

Brewer (2009:5) claims that, 'Many significant biblical examples of wealthy followers of God can be found throughout Scripture'. For example, Davids (1992:703) indicates that 'Abraham, Solomon, and Job illustrate the connection between wealth and the blessing of God'. However, Davids adds the following regarding their generosity: 'Thus in Jewish tradition Abraham and Job were singled out as being wealthy persons who were righteous because they excelled in generosity' (p. 703). Re-emphasising this point, Pilgrim (1981:19) states: 'There is a

continuous tradition running throughout the Old Testament that regards possessions as a sign of God's favour … Along with this, goes an emphasis upon their generosity and hospitality to friends and foes alike.'

2.2. God's instructions concerning the poor in Israel in the Old Testament

Brewer (2009:4) claims that to fully understand Luke's theology regarding the poor, it is important to study the concept of the poor in the Old Testament in terms of God's instructions. Myers et al. (1987:341) explain that 'God made special provisions for specific groups of poor people within the giving of the law'. These provisions are illustrated in the following scriptures:

- 'Do not deny justice to a poor person when he appears in court' (Exod 23:6, GNT)
- 'There will always be some Israelites who are poor and in need, and so I command you to be generous to them' (Deut 15:11, GNT).

When God gave instructions regarding sacrifices, he bore in mind the plight of the poor: 'If you cannot afford a sheep or a goat, you shall bring to the LORD as the payment for your sin two doves or two pigeons…' (Lev 5:7, GNT).

Myers et al. (1987:341) further point out that 'The regulations regarding the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee were meant to keep any individual or group from oppressing another group.' God addressed the issue of poverty to Israel as a nation, rather than to individual people. He promised Israel that, if they obeyed his instructions, 'Not one of your people will be poor' (Deut 15:4–5, GNT).

2.3. The plight and status of the poor in the New Testament

Brewer states that in the first century, the 'vast majority of the population was considered of poor status from both an economic and religious standpoint'. There was a 'large gap between the religious elite and the "people of the land" living in poverty' (Brewer 2009:6).

Davids (1992:703) indicates that the poor were frequently unable to observe the requirements of the Jewish Law, because of their dire poverty. Hence, Davids concludes that the religious elite looked down upon them as being religiously poor. He says that 'While the Pharisees and wealthy classes often viewed the poor as religiously and spiritually poor, Jesus' sayings contrast the poor with the rich, instead of the greedy or wicked as in the Old Testament' (Davids 1992:703).

3. Wealth and Poverty in Luke's Gospel

3.1. God's perception of the poor

3.1.1. Luke 1:46–55: The magnificat

Brewer (2009:6) describes how at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke, Mary sings a beautiful song of thanksgiving to God, known as the Magnificat, after hearing that she would be the mother of the Messiah. Pilgrim (1981:79) adds that 'Mary praises God for choosing her as an instrument of blessing in her lowly estate.' She continues her song as follows: 'he has … exalted those of humble estate' (v. 52, ESV) and 'he has filled the hungry with good things (v. 53, ESV)'. Hence, Brewer (2009:7) indicates that 'in the first chapter of Luke the reader is already given a clear indication through Mary's song that the poor are chosen of God and are promised His rewards'.

3.1.2. Luke 4:18–21: Jesus' announcement in the synagogue in Nazareth

Brewer (2009:7) argues that one of the most significant passages, in which the poor are specifically mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, is Luke 4:18–21, where Jesus preaches in the synagogue in his hometown in Nazareth. He had just returned from being tempted in the desert for 40 days. While reading from the scroll of Isaiah, Jesus quotes from Isaiah 61:1–2 and identifies himself as God's Suffering Servant:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people (Luke 4:18–19; Isa 61:1–2, GNT).

Jesus then tells those listening, 'This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read' (v. 20, GNT). Davids (1992:706) claims that Jesus' statement is the first indication that God gives priority to the poor in the message of the gospel. Furthermore, Hertig (1998:172) indicates that Jesus' pronouncement 'confirms His fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy', when he says: 'This holistic deliverance of the Messiah includes spiritual (v. 1), physical (vv. 3–4), socio-political (vv. 3–4), and psychological (v. lb) dimensions. Jesus expresses and practises this holistic mission in Luke 4:18–19 and 7:20–23.'

Pilgrim (1981: 64–65) claims that the phrase 'good news to the poor' in Luke 4:18–19 could be understood as introducing the concept of the 'poor' in terms of the captives, blind, and oppressed.

Brewer indicates that 'Although this passage does not specifically address the economically poor, one can conclude that people burdened financially were of high priority in Jesus' message of freedom and deliverance' (2009:7).

3.2. Contrast between the rich and the poor

According to Brewer (2009:7), a good example of Jesus contrasting the rich and the poor can be found in the 'the Beatitudes' in Luke 6:20–24, where he encourages the poor by stating in verse 20 (ESV), 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God'. By contrast, in 24 (ESV), he warns the rich as follows: 'But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation'. In the light of these verses Brewer (2009:7) explains God's attitude towards the rich and the poor in Lukan theology as follows: 'Due to God's overarching love for all people, one cannot conclude that Christ despises the rich; however, one can see His displeasure with the oppression of those who base their status on riches and squander their wealth on personal gain.'

Frank Thielman (2005:42) concludes as follows: 'God's saving purposes involve, to some extent, an economic leveling so that the disparity between rich and poor is not as great among God's people as it is among those outside his people'.

In the book of Luke, Jesus seems to show a special interest in the poor. However, Brewer points out that the main purpose of Jesus is the salvation of both the rich and the poor:

> Jesus expresses obvious concern for the salvation of the economically rich, as well as the poor … Salvation through Christ is not dependent on the economic status of an individual. Giving to the poor and to the causes of Christ rather than living a life of greed

> will accomplish Christ's purposes in significant ways (Brewer 2009:8).

Luke records a good example of the dangers of the rich, living a life of greed, in the 'parable of the rich fool' (Luke 12:16–21, GNT):

> Then Jesus told them this parable: 'There was once a rich man who had land which bore good crops. He began to think to himself, I don't have a place to keep all my crops. What can I do? This is what I will do,' he told himself; 'I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, where I will store the grain and all my other goods. Then I will say to myself, Lucky man! You have all the good things you need for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself!' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night you will have to give up your life; then who will get all these things you have kept for yourself?' And Jesus concluded, 'This is how it is with those who pile up riches for themselves but are not rich in God's sight.'

Davids (1992:705) says that 'This parable clearly reveals Jesus' assessment of greed. This "fool" had not given to the poor; this hindered him from becoming "rich towards God."' Instead, the rich man gathered wealth for himself.

Brewer (2009:8) describes Jesus' message to a Pharisee in Luke 14 as follows: 'Jesus, while at the home of a Pharisee, emphasises the importance of humbling oneself … Jesus implores the host to invite the poor to dinner, rather than his "rich neighbours," who are fully capable of repayment' (vv. 12–14).

Jesus states, 'you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just' (v. 14, ESV). Jesus' statement clearly indicates that 'blessing the poor results in heavenly

blessings' (Brewer 2009:8). Pilgrim (1981:140) adds that the reward for showing (*agape*) love towards the poor is 'the eschatological reward of salvation and doing the will of God'.

3.3. Eschatological implications in Jesus' teachings regarding the poor

3.3.1. Luke 14:15–24: The parable of the great banquet

In Luke 14:15–24 Jesus tells the story 'There was once a man who was giving a great feast to which he invited many people' (v. 16, GNT). However, when it was time for the supper to be served, 'they all began, one after another, to make excuses' (v. 18, GNT), as to why they could not come. Pilgrim (1981:140) argues that all the excuses focus on matters relating to wealth, such as 'the purchase of a field, the purchase of an ox, and marriage'. Finally, the servants were ordered by the host to 'Hurry out to the streets and alleys of the town, and bring back the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame' (v. 21b, GNT). When these did not fill up the room, 'the master said to the servant "Go out to the country roads and lanes and make people come in, so that my house will be full"' (v. 22, GNT).

Brewer (2009:9) indicates that this parable shows a great concern for the poor and illustrates the obedience displayed by them. According to Pilgrim (1981:141), it appears that Luke's parable confirms that, while the rich reject the generous offer of God, 'the poor become grateful guests at the banquet, displaying the eschatological reversal of the poor and rich'. This parable shows that wealth could easily serve as a hindrance to the rich, since it could prevent them from receiving their heavenly reward and from entering the kingdom of God. As Pilgrim (1981:140) concludes,

> This hindrance is created by selfish greed instead of unselfish, agape love that is essential to the gospel … Thus the parable as a whole serves to warn the rich to accept God's invitation. And that means to invite the poor and maimed and blind and lame to their tables, lest God leave them out of the heavenly banquet.

3.3.2. Luke 16:19–31: The rich man and Lazarus

Brewer (2009:9) points out that in chapter 16, Luke provides 'another story that emphasises the importance of taking care of the poor'. Wiersbe (1992:186) notes that 'The rich man used his wealth only to please himself … He did not use it to care for the poor and needy, not even the poor man begging at his very door.' According to Brewer (2009:9), 'When both die, the rich man finds eternal torment in hell while Lazarus resides in heaven at Abraham's side.' The rich man tries to beg Lazarus for water, 'but Abraham said, "Remember, my son, that in your lifetime you were given all the good things, while Lazarus got all the bad things. But now he is enjoying himself here, while you are in pain"' (Luke 16:25, GNT). According to Brewer (2009:9), this narrative is one of the best examples in which Jesus emphasises the need to give to the poor and 'the difference one's generosity on earth makes in eternity'. Kim (1998:189) states that in the context of the passage, it is clear that 'the rich man does not deserve the torment in hell based on what he did on earth, but rather on what he failed to do.' During his lifetime, the rich man did not show love to God and his neighbour, as commanded in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. It can be concluded that this story makes it clear that 'the way in which one deals with worldly finances significantly impacts the afterlife' (Brewer 2009:9).

3.3.3. Luke 19:1–10: The story of Zacchaeus

In Luke 19:1–10 'while passing through Jericho, Jesus spots Zacchaeus, a wealthy tax collector, perched in a tree—trying to get a good view of Jesus' (Enter the Bible 2014). Jesus welcomes him, despite his crooked lifestyle and selfish greed. Brewer (2009:10) remarks that Zacchaeus shocks the crowd by announcing, 'I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!' (v. 8, NLT). Jesus responds by declaring, 'Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost' (vv. 9–10, NLT).

Shoemaker (192:188) concludes that, to a certain extent, Jesus connects salvation with the passion to give to the poor. However, Luke uses Zacchaeus as a good example of anyone who first experiences God's salvation, and then gives generously to the poor. Brewer (2009:10) argues that, if the 'chief tax collector' (v. 1) was willing to provide 'for the needy, surely the wealthy elite could learn to generously care for others'.

4. The Church's Historical Response in The Book of Acts

The book of Acts is a follow-up of Luke's writing to Theophilus, as if he were writing a sequence of a story. The book is not a recipe book, but shares with us a number of principles that emerged within the Early Church based on their theology, their faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Regarding the book of Acts, Brewer (2009:10) comments as follows: 'Luke not only focuses on concern for the poor in the teachings of Christ in his Gospel, but he continues this theme in Acts as well. Throughout Acts, one can see concern for the

poor exemplified in the Early Church and in the lifestyle of the apostles.'

In the next section, we shall take a closer look at some communal and individual examples presented in the book of Acts of those who showed concern for the poor within the faith community (the church), as they adhered to the principles that they had been taught by the apostles, including the apostle Paul.

4.1. Historical examples of communal benevolence commended

4.1.1. Acts 2:44–45: The fellowship of believers

Brewer (2009:10) claims that in the book of Acts, Luke tried to illustrate the 'theological principles in his Gospel' within the context of the Early Church. In this context (v. 42–43), the new faith community 'devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer'. The outcome of their new-found faith in Jesus Christ was that the people would devote themselves in what today we would call liturgical activities: teaching or preaching, fellowship, Holy Communion, and prayer. Another outcome of their new-found faith in Christ, whether from the apostles' teaching or from their fellowship, was that they shared their belongings; 'selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need' (Acts 2:45).

The giving to the poor stems from the teaching, and their fellowship was with one another. The sharing was amongst each other depending on the needs that occurred (Was this perhaps an in-house arrangement?).

4.1.2. Acts 3:1–10: Peter heals the crippled beggar

In this passage, not discussed by Brewer, Peter and John were confronted by 'a man crippled from birth', as he was sitting at the temple gate begging for money. In their response they told the man: 'Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk' (v. 6) and then they helped him up.

The principle here is that their giving was not limited to the giving of material goods; it also involved the sharing of the gospel and the ministry of healing with the people in need. Although this was at the temple gate, it was not directly part of the community of God, the church; it was a spontaneous act of love and caring of someone along the day's journey. Here, the giving extends to people outside the faith community—a beggar on the street. Wiersbe (1992:283) elaborates: 'Peter performed the miracle, not only to relieve the man's handicap and save his soul, but also to prove to the Jews that the Holy Spirit had come with promised blessings.'

4.1.3. Acts 4:32–37: The believers share their possessions

Brewer (2009:11) refers to another instance in which believers shared their possessions. As in the previous instance (Acts 2:44–45), it is again evident that their sharing was the consequence of what had happened in their lives: 'they prayed', 'they were all filled with the Holy Spirit', 'they spoke the word of God boldly', they 'were one of heart and mind', and 'they shared everything they had' (v. 31).

Marshall and Peterson (1998:487) indicate that the early Christians 'did not neglect the poor and needy'; they 'looked for ways to accommodate' the needy, 'including the selling of property'. They created a community with 'not a needy person among them' (Phillips 2007:12).

The sharing came as a result of what God was doing in their lives. Again, the emphasis is not only on the sharing of their material belongings, but also on the sharing of the Word of God and the unity that was developing among the faith community.

4.1.4. Acts 6:1: Care for the widows by the deacons

The needs among the widows in the local community were so great that the leaders had to develop a ministry to the poor, by people who would need to dedicate their time to visiting the poor, and to ensuring that they were treated justly. According to the Brewer (2009:11), 'This story confirms that taking care of the needy was of utmost priority in the minds of the apostles'. In terms of church history, this was the establishment of the office of a deacon. The modern view of what a deacon is or should be, that is, his (or her) required role and responsibilities, is sometimes far removed from the requirements in this passage of scripture.

Kim (1998:246) claims that several passages in the book of Acts (6:1; 2:45; 4:35) confirm the existence of 'a common fund of the Jerusalem community in Acts with the sole purpose of distributing money or food to the poor and widows'.

What we gain from this passage is the principle of developing ministries that would take care of a specific need within the congregation or within the local community.

4.1.5. Acts 11: 27–30: Help for the brothers in Judea

Brewer (2009:11) provides another example of 'a communal understanding of benevolence' as portrayed in the church at Antioch. The Early Church had been challenged by the news that a severe famine

was going to 'spread over the entire Roman world' (v. 28). The reaction of the Early Church was that 'the disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gifts to the elders by Barnabas and Saul' (v. 29–30). The church's response to the famine could be regarded 'as a form of almsgiving in which benevolence is provided from an institution with wealth towards an institution in need' (Kim 1998:221).

Being aware of an upcoming disaster, the church mobilised themselves to become involved in the possible needs of people, fellow-believers, who were going to be affected by the famine. In today's context, a disaster could easily be described in terms of a tsunami, tornado, or a war-stricken country!

4.1.6. Acts 20:35: help for the weak

Another significant verse, not discussed by Brewer, is Acts 20:35. As Paul was ending his ministry in Asia Minor (the area currently called Turkey), he highlighted the fact that he did not rely on their financial support, but was willing to work for his and his companions' needs. He also laid down a principle that believers should not only work to support themselves, but also to support the 'weak'. He reminded them and us of another principle that he had received from the Lord, namely, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' (v. 35). In this regard, Wiersbe (1992:337) gives the following advice: 'Christian servants should seek to minister to others rather than having others minister to them'.

It is clear from this passage that this principle emphasises that the income from our work is not merely to support our own needs or to accumulate our own possessions, but it should be shared with the weak and those in need. God frequently blesses us when we care for the poor and needy people around us.

4.2. Historical examples of individual benevolence commended

4.2.1. Acts 9:36: doing good and helping the poor

Brewer (2009:12) includes some examples provided by Luke of individuals in the book of Acts who cared for the poor. Here, (in Acts 9:36) one disciple (Tabitha) is highlighted. Tabitha (Dorcas) was described as someone 'who was always doing good and helping the poor' (v. 36). In the context of the passage, readers are told that the widows showed Peter 'the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them' (v. 39). Kim (1998:219–220) speculates that Luke might have provided this story to emphasise the importance of helping the poor, since 'Tabitha got her life back because of her good works and alms she had contributed towards the poor'.

The first principle that can be derived from this passage is that not all deeds of helping the poor need to be done in collaboration with the faith community. In this case, Tabitha as an individual, out of her own conviction, helped the widows in the local community. A second principle is that her helping had to do with the making of clothes for the widows. Helping does not have to involve the giving of money or food. In this case, she provided clothing. A third principle was her focus on the widows. There may have been other needs in her community, but she focused on the making of clothes for the widows.

4.2.2. Acts 10:2, 4 and 31: Cornelius' prayers and gifts to the poor

Brewer (2009:12) refers to Cornelius, as another significant example (used by Luke) of an individual who demonstrated care for the poor. Cornelius was 'a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment' (v. 1). He and his family are described as 'devout and God-fearing' people (v. 2). It is further indicated that 'he gave generously to those in

need and prayed to God regularly' (v. 2). According to Kim (1998:219–220), this verse is significant, because, when Cornelius received 'a vision from God, the angel told him that his prayers and gifts to the poor had "come up as a memorial offering before God."'

In the context of this passage, the prayers and the generous giving are the result of Cornelius' devout and God-fearing characteristic. This is confirmed by an angel (vv. 31)—his prayer was answered prayer, as a result of his generous giving to the poor. Does this mean that we can 'bribe' God by doing something for the poor? Not at all! The principle of giving to the poor lies embedded in the devout, God-fearing prayer life of Cornelius.

5. A Challenge to the Christian Church: Worthwhile Opportunities

5.1. Surrendering possessions

How should the Church 'respond to the idea of surrendering one's possessions'? Throughout the Bible, there are many examples 'in which heroes of God were those of high and wealthy status' (Brewer 2009:17). Generally, in the gospels possessions are identified 'as both necessary and good gifts of God' (Pilgrim 1981:124). However, in Luke 14:33 Jesus mentioned that the true disciple should be willing to give up all his possessions. Brewer (2009:17) elaborates: 'Luke's understanding of this concept seems to encourage an introspective look on the sacrifice made for the sake of Christ and how this affects one's own possessions.' This principle became very evident in the Early Church when believers sold their property and shared their belongings with those in need. This probably included the sharing of food, clothing, money, property, and so on. The surrendering of their possessions

depended on the need that confronted them and what they already owned.

5.2. Dangers of wealth

A second aspect highlighted by Brewer (2009:17) deals with the dangers of wealth in Luke's gospel. According to Pilgrim (1981:122), in Luke's writing the concepts of wealth and discipleship seem to conflict with each other. 'In the story of the Rich Ruler (Luke 18:24–30), the man becomes disheartened over the idea of giving up his wealth' (Brewer 2009:17). The outcome: 'Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God"' (vv. 24–25). Luke consistently reminds God's people of the danger of wealth. Hence, he frequently emphasises that it is important to guard one's heart against the spirit of Mammon: 'Christians must recognise the ease with which material temptations might overtake a person who finds dependence on his or her own ability regarding finances' (Brewer (2009:17).

When Simon the sorcerer (Acts 9) saw the miracles that God had performed through the apostles, he wanted to have the same gift (that is, to be filled with the Holy Spirit); he was even willing to pay for it. The assumption is that he wanted to make money from the 'gift'.

Although there may be dangers in wealth, we cannot conclude that acquiring wealth is completely ruled out of a Christian's life. 'Members of the body of Christ should always regard themselves as under the sovereignty of God and his purposes when approaching financial obligations' (Brewer 2009:17).

5.3. Instruction in the correct use of wealth

Another theme of Luke's writings is that he 'heavily focuses on Jesus' exhortations regarding the right use of possessions' (Brewer (2009:17). In Luke 3:11–14, John the Baptist instructs the crowds as follows: 'John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." Even tax collectors came to be baptised. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay"'.

John's first instruction confirms 'the principle of almsgiving'. However, his next two responses relate to 'the financial circumstances' of the individual (Kim 1998:179). In this regard, Pilgrim points out that 'throughout Luke's writings, he attempts to define and encourage a discipleship of one's material gifts in the service of love' (1981:123).

In the book of Acts, Luke also uses specific examples regarding the obligation of Christians to provide for needy people. Luke shows that possessions are 'good gifts from God when used correctly' (Pilgrim 1981:146). In general, Luke challenges Christians 'to change their selfish ways by sharing their wealth with others' (Pilgrim 1981:123).

6. Conclusion

Brewer's analysis of Luke's gospel and his book of 'Acts reveals a clear message regarding the poor'. The Gospel of Luke clearly calls upon believers to 'aid the physically, and economically weak and to welcome them into the community' (Brewer 2009:12–13). However, 'this actually happens in Luke's second volume' (Thielman 2005:137). The

Acts of the Apostles supports the principles presented in Luke's gospel and demonstrates 'the true nature of Christian benevolence' (p. 13). It is clear that in the book of Acts, the Early Church provided a specific and ongoing ministry to the poor that demonstrated a concern 'for the overall well-being of those in need. In fact, they often sacrificed their own financial status in order to aid others' (Brewer 2009:13).

In the light of the above research, the contemporary church should challenge herself to revisit its ministry to the poor. It needs to meet the challenges of the day and consider how it can make a difference in the lives and circumstances of the needy. In particular, we, the church should give attention to the following:

- Redefine our view of who is poor. We need to ensure that, when we are challenged by the need of the poor in the area of our local church, we address the matter based on biblical principles.
- Focus much more on the spiritual growth of both the individual and the faith community as a whole. By providing worthwhile opportunities for addressing the material needs of the poor in context of the local church, it will have an effect on the spiritual growth of each member of the congregation.

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Diakrinō and Jew-Gentile distinction in Acts 11:12

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Abstract

A textual analysis of the word *diakrinō* in Acts 11:12 was undertaken to establish whether the verse contradicts the theory that Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus remain distinct in a theologically significant manner, as some English translations imply. The study finds no clear evidence in the text to sustain the translation that there is 'no distinction' between the two. *Diakrinō* in Acts 11:12 is very unlikely to denote distinction in the sense of differentiation, and even less likely to indicate wavering or doubting on account of the distinction which observant Jews like Peter made between fellow Jews and Gentiles. Instead, *diakrinō* in this text is most likely intended to denote contestation or dispute: Peter was told to obey *without dispute*, not *without making distinction* between Gentiles and Jews.

1. Introduction

In the book of Acts, Luke made use of the word *diakrinō* in the negative to express that there is 'no distinction' between Jewish and Gentile believers. This denial of distinction occurs in Acts 15:9 and, depending on the English Bible used, sometimes also in 11:12. It is not surprising,

[1] The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

therefore, that these texts have been used to support the teaching that the former distinction between Jews and Gentiles, found throughout the Old Testament, is erased among those who believe in Christ. That is, there is no essential difference between a Jewish believer and a Gentile believer; their ethnicity and prior faith traditions are inconsequential. (The same conclusion may be reached by one or a combination of other New Testament texts which appear to refute intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction: Ephesians 2:15; Romans 3:22; 10:12; Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11, each in its context.) Cultural differences may persist, but these are not of any theological importance. Given the background of biblical evidence that Israel is to retain a particular role in God's purposes (e.g. Jer 31:35–37; 33:25–26; Rom 11), and the evangelical[2] assumption that the canon is consistent (see the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, 1978), one is faced with a dilemma: how can we reconcile these apparently contradictory claims? If the Bible is wholly true,[3] the texts supporting one or other side of the argument must have been misinterpreted. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the phrase 'no distinction' in Acts 11:12 has been accurately understood by Christian faith tradition, or if it may be reasonably interpreted in a manner that allows for intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction. The case of 15:9 will be considered separately elsewhere.

Acts 11:5–18 tells of Peter's defence against certain circumcised believers in Jerusalem who criticised (*diakrinō*) him for visiting, and eating with, uncircumcised men (11:1–3). In his response, in 11:12, Peter recounted the words of the Holy Spirit to him, which Luke had already recorded in Acts 10:20. Peter said that 'the Spirit told me to

[2] I use 'evangelical' in the sense indicated under the headings 'purpose' and 'doctrinal basis' of the Editorial Policy of *Conspectus* which affirms the inspiration and authority of the Bible.

[3] This is another evangelical axiom expressed, for example, in the Lausanne Covenant (1974), the Chicago Statement (1978) and the Cape Town Commitment (2011).

accompany them, not hesitating *at all*' (11:12).[4] However, some English translations including the RSV (1971), NRSV (1989) and ESV (2001) state that the Spirit instructed Peter to accompany the men from Cornelius 'making no distinction', meaning that Peter should not be prejudiced against them on account of their uncircumcision. The broad semantic range of *diakrinō*, as well as the plausibility of various meanings it may denote in this context, account for the differing English translations. However, questions may be raised about why *diakrinō* (albeit in a different inflection) is translated one way in Acts 10:20 and another way in 11:12 when both texts speak of the same event. The translation of *diakrinō* in 11:12 and its use in 10:20 are the topics explored below to see whether 11:12 does indeed refute the theory of distinction.

2. No distinction in Acts 11:12

In traditional Christian interpretation, the vision of 10:9–16 served both to declare to Peter that he should not regard Gentiles as unclean, and that all foods have been cleansed (see also Mark 7:19). In a previous paper (Woods 2012),[5] I presented textual, contextual, and historical evidence to demonstrate that the interpretation of Peter's vision ought to be restricted to the former only (the cleansing of the Gentiles), and that it had no bearing on Jewish food laws nor applicability of Jewish Law in general. (See also Miller [2002] on Peter's vision, and Rudolph

[4] Unless otherwise specified, scriptural quotes are taken from the LEB in which the convention of italicising words supplied by the translators is used.

[5] In this paper concerning the interpretation of Peter's vision in Acts 10, I overlooked acknowledging Daniel Juster as the source of the interpretation, being an oral presentation. The missing reference is: Juster, D 2009. *Interpreting the New Covenant from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*. 23–25 October 2009; Beit Ariel Messianic Jewish Congregation, Sea Point.

[2003], Furstenberg [2008] and Eby [2011] on Mark 7:19 and the Pharisee's errors concerning the purity laws.)

If this is the case—that Gentile believers have been cleansed yet the Law still stands—it begs the question of how Peter was to make 'no distinction' between Jews and Gentiles in Acts 11:12, since observance of the Law is what outwardly distinguishes Jews from Gentiles. However, it was not Torah that prohibited Jews from associating with Gentiles (as one might infer from Acts 10:28), but the *halakhah* of some Jewish sects including the Pharisees (Woods 2012:182; Tomson 1990:230–236).[6] In such a theological framework, the Law continues to be binding on Jewish life, but is not to be extended by *halakhah* in a manner that restricts fellowship with Gentiles who have forsaken idolatry in order to worship the God of Israel—most especially those baptised into Christ and in the Holy Spirit. However, the question remains concerning the Spirit's instruction to Peter (11:12) to make no distinction between his Jewish brethren and the Gentile household of Cornelius, since Torah consistently differentiates between Israel and the nations. How could God require Torah observance for all Jews (whether they believe in Jesus or not) whilst simultaneously instructing the Peter not to distinguish between Jews and Gentiles? The first step in answering this question is to examine the key word, *diakrinō*, and its use in Acts 11:12.

[6] *Halakhah* is a code of conduct for daily life in the tradition of a particular sect; the observance of *halakhah* ought to keep members of the community from breaking the Law though in some cases it was so abused as to defeat this purpose (e.g. Matt 15:1–9). Often, the requirements of Pharisaic *halakhah* exceeded those of Torah by far, resulting in onerous legalism. For more on *halakhah* in Jewish and Christian contexts, see Kessler and Wenborn 2005:174–175 and Bockmuehl 2003.

2.1. Textual analysis: Word study on diakrinō

2.1.1. Semantic range

The word in question as it appears in Acts 11:12 is *diakrinanta*, though some variant readings say *diakrinomenon*.[7] These variants both come from the same root word, *diakrinō*, which means to 'judge', 'dispute', 'contend, 'distinguish', 'evaluate', or 'discriminate', or, when applied reflexively, to 'doubt', 'waver', or 'hesitate' (Mounce 2006; Logos 2011; Louw and Nida 1996; Swanson 1997; Strong 2009; Thomas 1998). *Diakrinō* was not an uncommon word in the period, appearing four times in Acts and another fifteen times in the rest of the New Testament. It also appears twenty-eight times in the LXX (including Apocrypha) where it most commonly means 'to judge' or 'to distinguish'. Notably, de Graaf (2005:736–737) provides Ezekiel 20:35–36 in the LXX as an example where *diakrinō* in the passive means to distinguish between members of a faith community, and separating them based on that distinction. The supposed meaning 'to doubt', 'waver' or 'hesitate' is not recognised in any ancient literature prior to the New Testament.

2.1.2. Parsing

The parsing of the textual variants in Acts 11:12 is as follows, with differences underlined:

[7] The Westcott and Hort, Tregelles, and NIV editions of the Greek New Testament have διακρίναντα, whereas the Robinson and Pierpont edition has διακρινόμενον (Holmes 2010).

- *diakrinanta*: verb, aorist, active, participle, singular, accusative, masculine.
- *diakrinomenon*: verb, present, middle/passive, participle, singular, accusative, masculine.

A third textual tradition omits the phrase '*mēden diakr–*' (whether *diakrinanta* or *diakrinomenon*) altogether (Spitaler 2007:87). In that case there is nothing to discuss, as that reading cannot be construed as refuting the distinction theory. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the phrase (in either form) is original, since it was used to recount the same event in Acts 10:20. In 11:12, the word used is in reported (indirect) speech, while in Acts 10:20 (*diakrinomenos*) is included in a quotation (direct speech.) The parsing there is:

- *diakrinomenos*: verb, present, middle, participle, singular, nominative, masculine.

The parsing and usage may provide some clues for interpreting *diakrinō* in 10:20 and in the variants of 11:12.

2.1.3. Interpretation

Most editions of the critical text of 11:12 opt for *diakrinanta*, so that the preceding word negating it, *mēden* ('nothing', 'not at all'), becomes its direct object. As an active participle, the lexical connotation more likely has a sense of 'judging,' 'distinguishing' or 'discriminating' than the 'doubting,' 'wavering' or 'hesitating' sense. In 10:20, on the other hand, *diakrinomenos* is in the middle voice, suggesting the latter sense as a better option.[8] This creates some tension, since both texts report the same event. One might consider the possibility that Luke deliberately

[8] I gratefully acknowledge Kevin Smith's insights in establishing the nuances implicit in the different Greek forms discussed above (pers. comm. 10 February 2012).

used different voices in these two instances in order to create an ambiguity in which both senses apply. However, it is invalid to draw any theological inference—in this case one of 'no distinction' between Jews and Gentiles in Christ—on such conjecture. Moreover, such a proposal has been opposed in the literature—de Graaf (2005:739) states the opposite: 'It is probably significant that the author of Acts does not appear to have thought that the difference in voice between the two occurrences signalled a significant difference in meaning.' I prefer to make no conclusion about implications of the voice of *diakrinō* in the two verses, and turn our attention to the textual variant in Robinson and Pierpont's (RP) Byzantine Textform (2005).

In the RP edition of the Greek NT, the verb in question in Acts 11:12 is in the same middle voice as that of *diakrinomenos* in 10:20; only the case differs. In this case, the 'discriminating' might seem the intended meaning, and it would be fully consistent with 10:20 and the historical context: Peter was to go with the Gentiles without discriminating against them (on account of their being non-Jews). David de Graaf (2005), however, argues that *diakrinō* in Acts 10:20, 11:12 and in seven other places in the New Testament should be 'rendered with words that express *divided loyalty* or *disunity*' (emphasis added) (p. 733). This interpretation creates rhetorical irony if *diakrinō* in 11:2 is also interpreted in the same way—the so-called circumcision party 'kept their distance from' Peter for associating with Gentiles (de Graaf 2005:740). In that case, the division indicated by *diakrinō* nevertheless relates to that between Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus. In fact, even the less likely but more commonly used sense of 'doubting' also suggests making ethnic distinction for the purpose of preserving purity, which was indeed a concern for Peter (10:14, 28). For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to accept that the text in 11:12 may have indicated that Peter was not to discriminate against Gentiles—

regardless of the original form of *diakrinō* therein. Due to the uncertainty involved, the key question must change from asking whether the text refutes the theory of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction to whether it *could* do so. However, there is an additional interpretation that must first be considered.

In 2007, Peter Spitaler published his doubts about interpreting *diakrinō* to mean 'doubt,' 'hesitate' or 'waver' in Acts 10:20 (and elsewhere in the NT) owing to lack of evidence for this new semantic sense. He argued that 'contextual, grammatical, linguistic and semantic markers' necessary to identify a new 'NT meaning' not found in prior or contemporary literature are absent (p. 92). He noted the inconsistent use of the authors of Acts, James, and Jude if 'doubting' is indicated by *diakrinomai* in Acts 10:20; James 1:6 and Jude 22 whereas the older Hellenistic Greek meaning—to 'contest' or 'dispute'—is used in Acts 11:2; James 2:4 and Jude 9. Further, Spitaler objects to the reliance of the 'doubting' interpretation on a conjectural 'faith-doubt' antithesis (p. 85). He posits that an older and established sense of the form, to *dispute* or *contest*, fits the context better, especially in the light of Peter's triple objection or disobedience to the voice in the vision (10:9–16). This established semantic option links 10:20 with 11:2 (p. 90) (where 'those of the circumcision' *disputed*, *contested*, or *contended* [YLT and LITV] with Peter) in a similar irony as that noted by de Graaf (2005:740) who preferred the lexical sense of *separation*. De Graaf's point is that in Acts 10:29, Peter said he went with Cornelius' messengers 'without raising any objection' (*anantirrētōs*) surely strengthens Spitaler's case that the Spirit's instruction was to go without *contention* (against the Spirit), rather than to go without 'doubting' (within himself.) Spitaler's interpretation may also be used comfortably in 11:12: Peter was not to contest with the Holy Spirit who commanded him to go with Cornelius' men. If Spitaler is correct, the sense of *diakrinō* in 10:20 and 11:12 relates to uncontentious obedience, not to Jew-Gentile distinction. In

that case, Acts 11:12 *does not* indicate that 'no distinction' is to be made between Jews and Gentiles. The sound rationale of Spitaler's opposition to an assumed new meaning of *diakrinō* in the New Testament undermines the inference that Acts 11:12 provides concrete evidence against the theory that Jews and Gentiles remain distinct in the New Covenant era.

Adding weight to Spitaler's proposal is the fact that Luke (and Peter and the Holy Spirit) had viable alternatives for expressing another concept rather than employing a new meaning of *diakrinō*. *Diastolē* would have been ideal for the sense of 'making a distinction', just as it was used in Exodus 8:23 (LXX), when God said, 'I will put a distinction between my people and your [Pharaoh's] people.'[9] *Diastolē* is also used to denote distinction in the Psalms of Solomon 4:4 (LXX Apocrypha), Romans 3:22; 10:12 and 1 Corinthians 14:7. Similarly, *diapherō* might have been used to denote 'differentiating' (see its use in 1 Cor 15:41; Gal 4:1; 2:6; and Diognetus 3:5). If 'doubting' was the concern, *apisteō* was an option. If 'wavering,' then *adiakritos* ('impartial' or 'unwavering') or perhaps *aklinēs*, ('without wavering') might have been used in place of '*mēden diakr–*' ('*mēden diakrinanta'* or '*mēden diakrinomenon*,' Swanson 1997). In fact, *adiakritos* may have been ideal because it can carry both senses (that is, both 'impartial' and 'unwavering'). Surely these alternatives would have provided Luke a better option than to use a new and inconsistent semantic shift of *diakrinō*?

A brief note is warranted regarding the 'hesitating' interpretation: if Peter was instructed in Acts 10:20 to go 'not hesitating at all,' then he was disobedient. Instead, he invited Cornelius' messengers for a meal

[9] The corresponding Hebrew text, Exodus 8:19, uses the word *pᵉḏûṯ* which denotes redemption.

and accommodated them overnight (10:23) before setting out. (Contrast Claudius Lysias' response to the news of the planned ambush on Paul, 23:12–31.) The temporal sense of hesitating (i.e. delaying) is clearly not intended in 10:20.

Finally, the interpretation 'making no distinction' does not specify what Peter was speaking about; it assumes the reader will mentally insert the phrase 'between us [Jews] and them [Gentiles]'. By contrast, Peter explicitly inserted that phrase in Acts 15:9: '*metaxy hēmōn te kai autōn*'. In fact, at the time the Spirit spoke to Peter (10:19–20), Peter did not know that the men of whom the Spirit spoke were Gentile. Spitaler's option, 'without dispute', works better on both counts: there is no need to identify who is to obey without contention, since it is Peter to whom the Spirit spoke; and there is no assumption that Peter already knew the ethnicity of the men seeking him.

In summary, there are at least two possibilities in which the distinction issue may be invalidated in Acts 11:12. One is the variant reading which omits the phrase '*mēden diakr–*' altogether. The other is Spitaler's strong argument that the issue at hand is obedience without dispute or contest. Moreover, Luke could have chosen another word, like *diastolē*, to convey the message that Peter was instructed to 'make no distinction' among the two groups concerned. However, to provide more comprehensive coverage of the options, a response to the traditional interpretations of *diakrinō,* that state or imply that Peter was not to make any distinction between his Jewish kin and the Gentiles, is necessary.

2.2. Could Acts 11:12 possibly refute distinction theory?

If *diakrinō* is interpreted in some way as differentiating between Jews and Gentiles in Acts 11:12, whether it is taken as making distinction, doubting or hesitating (for ethnic reasons), or having a sense of disunity

(as per de Graaf 2005), does this undermine any basis for distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the church? Certainly not on its own. Consider the ESV translation: 'And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house.' It is hardly reasonable for Luke, with a passing phrase, to expect his readers to eradicate the key doctrine of Israel's election established in Torah and maintained in the Prophets, the Writings and even his own gospel. The gist of Peter's vision (10:9–16) was that the Gentiles had been cleansed (Woods 2012) and his defence (11:4–17) hinged on this; he did not argue that Jew-Gentile distinction among Jesus-believers had been eliminated altogether, but rather that believing Gentiles were demonstrably acceptable to God (11:15. Also see 15:8–9).

Moreover, while the discrimination *against* Gentiles by Jesus-believing Jews was done away with (see 10:34–36), the discrimination *between* (i.e. differentiation of) Jews and Gentiles was never eradicated, not even in the early church. Both ancient literature and archaeological evidence indicate that the distinction between the two groups remained firmly established even within the church for several hundred years (Kinzer 2005:197–209; Rudolph 2013:24–25).[10] The mosaic at the Church of Saint Sabina in Rome, dating to the fifth century, demonstrates this most effectively with two figures that it explicitly names. One figure, representing the church of the circumcision, stands on one side while on the other side stands another figure representing the church of the Gentiles (Skarsaune and Hvalvik 2007:216). Hence, even if the technical objections regarding the meaning of the keyword, *diakrinō*, were resolved such that it may mean 'distinction,' both its

[10] Skarsaune (2002:436–442), among others, even discerns that 'philo-Semitism' among Christians at grassroots level was the background to Chrysostom's anti-Semitic sermons.

context and subsequent church history would nevertheless weigh substantially against this interpretation.

3. Conclusion

This paper examined the word diakrinō in Acts 11:12, which some English Bible translations interpret as ‘distinction’. Others imply an element of distinction by opting for a sense of doubting, hesitating or wavering to interpret *diakrinō*. Some commentators, such as the contributors to the ESV Study Bible, have taken the verse to mean that Peter was to make ‘no distinction’ between Jews and Gentiles. This reading supports the prevailing Christian view that there is no essential difference between Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus; some cultural differences may remain, but the particularity of Israel is a purely historic phenomenon—its role in the redemption of humanity has been completed—and thus Israel has no on-going theological significance in the Christian era or within the church. However, some key biblical texts appear to contradict the notion that Jews and Gentiles, or Israel and the nations, are ultimately to become members of an ethnically undifferentiated mix in the messianic kingdom—a homogenisation of the two groups. Thus, the question arises as to whether Acts 11:12 and other ‘no distinction’ texts identified in the NT have been interpreted correctly. That is, how robust are interpretations of *diakrinō* which implicitly contradict the theory of distinction? Can Jew-Gentile distinction safely be discarded as a vestige of things past among members of the Body of Christ?

The use of Acts 11:12 to support the case against intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction is compromised by a number of concerns: (i) primarily the controversy surrounding the interpretation of *diakrinō*, (ii) its apparently inconsistent use in three instances in close proximity (10:20; 11:2; 11:12), including a recounting of the same event (10:20

and 11:12), and (iii) the contention that it suddenly has a new meaning for the first time in all of previous Greek literature, when other suitable words were available to denote 'distinction'. Furthermore, it is questionable that a major biblical premise, the election of Israel, would be undone in a brief episode without warning or further clarification.

The lexical study discovered that 'without dispute' is a better translation of '*mēden diakrinanta*' than 'no distinction'; Peter was to obey the command of the Holy Spirit without dispute. Combining this insight with the concerns listed above, it is evident that Acts 11:12 cannot be taken as a renunciation of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction. The text does not support, let alone prove, the case against distinction (in the sense of differentiation) of Jews and Gentiles within the church. What remains for further research is whether other key texts in the NT (particularly Acts 15:9; Rom 3:22; 10:12; Gal 3:28 and Col 3:11) are sufficient to uphold traditional Christian stance that the ancient categories of Jew and Gentile—Israel and the nations—are inconsequential in the present and future ages. This has particular relevance within the church in the present time, as Messianic Jews seek to maintain traditional Jewish practice (invariably including some degree of Torah observance) within their communities whilst promoting equality and close fellowship with Gentile Christians.[11]

[11] The following books demonstrate progression of Messianic Jewish theology in which Jew-Gentile distinction among Jesus-believers is pivotal: Kinzer (2005); Stern (2007); Harvey (2009); and Rudolph and Willitts (2013).

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Jew-Gentile Distinction in the *One New Man* of Ephesians 2:15

David B. Woods [1]

Abstract

Two contradictory views of the 'one new man' metaphor in Ephesians 2:15 are presented, one arguing that it denies any distinction between Jewish and Gentile Jesus-believers, and the other insisting that it confirms the theory of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction. This paper explores the meaning of the 'one new man' with special attention to the question of making distinction between Jews and Gentiles within the *ekklēsia*. The study focuses in turn on each of the three keywords in the metaphor, reviewing their meaning and use in the canon and providing some theological commentary alongside. Supply of the phrase, 'in place of,' in some translations is evaluated. Internal evidence in the form of personal pronouns is examined to determine whether it sustains or contradicts distinction theory.

The study concludes unequivocally that the 'one new man' in Ephesians 2:15 is a composite unity of Jews and Gentiles who retain their ethnic identities even after spiritual regeneration in Christ. The classification of individuals as believers or unbelievers in Jesus does not erase the biblical distinction

[1] The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

between Israel and the nations, even within the *ekklēsia*. The mixed usage of personal pronouns in Ephesians confirms this finding. To assert that the 'one new man' is created 'in place of' Jews and Gentiles is therefore misleading. Major theological implications include the validation of Jewish tradition and practice among Jewish Jesus-believers, and their recognition as the living connection between the nations and Israel. The peace Christ made by creating Jew and Gentile in himself into 'one new man' is currently most evident in Messianic Jewish synagogues where members of each party worship together and have table fellowship in unity, whilst retaining their own distinctive faith traditions.

1. Introduction

1.1. The text and historical interpretations

In Ephesians 2:14–16, Paul wrote:[2]

> For he himself is our peace, who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of the partition, the enmity, in his flesh, invalidating the law of commandments in ordinances, in order that he might create the two in himself into one new man, *thus* making peace, and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in himself.

This text indicates that the two, identified in 2:11 as Gentiles and Jews, have become one in Christ. Jesus broke down the barrier dividing the two in order to create 'one new man' in which there is peace and reconciliation. 'One new man' is a metaphor for the church[3] but, in

[2] Using the Lexham English Bible except where otherwise specified.
[3] The following section, '1.2. The *ekklēsia* and the church,' explains what is meant by 'church' in this paper.

spite of its apparent simplicity, two diametrically opposing views of its nature appear in the literature. Each of these views is underpinned by antithetical perspectives on Israel (by which I mean Jewish people) in the present era inaugurated by the Christ-event.

In the Christian faith tradition ('religion'),[4] Jesus-believers (whether Jewish or Gentile in lineage) are not bound by obligation to Mosaic Law (though yielding to the 'moral Law' is often promoted, those being the timeless moral principles of the Law). An array of texts in the NT, including that quoted above (Eph 2:14–16), is used to justify this orientation. Consequently, Christian theology often dissolves the ancient biblical categories of Israel and the nations, reclassifying all humans into another binary system comprising those who believe in Jesus and those who do not. The church is thus widely understood to be a people of faith whose spirituality transcends their ethnicity, such that the latter lapses as irrelevant or immaterial. Consequently, Paul's 'one new man' is interpreted as the Christian church comprising former Jews and former Gentiles, who are now undifferentiable from any theological perspective. Two witnesses, one ancient and one modern, will suffice to testify to this interpretation of Paul's 'one new man.'

Late in the fourth century, John Chrysostom described Jews and Gentiles as 'two statues, the one of silver, the other of lead,' which are then 'melted down' to produce one new statue that comes out gold, not a mixture of silver and lead (Schaff 2014:71). In Chrysostom's words, Christ 'blended them together,' declaring that 'so long as they continued still as Jews and Gentiles, they could not have been reconciled' (p. 72). A similar interpretation was propounded by Martyn Lloyd-Jones last century. He wrote, 'The Jew has been done away with as such, even as the Gentile has been done away with, in Christ. …

[4] See Mason 2007:480–488 for a discussion on the anachronistic term, 'religion.'

nothing that belonged to the old state is of any value or has any relevance in the new state' (1972:275).

Lloyd-Jones went on to state that 'there is no such thing as a Jewish section of the Christian Church' (p. 277). Citing 1 Peter 2:9–10, he insisted that the church is 'not a mixture of Jew and Gentile, but a new man; Jew finished, Gentile finished, a new creature' (p. 277).

At two separate seminars I attended in 2009, two speakers presented a different interpretation of Ephesians 2:15; they both claimed that the unity of the 'one new man' does not imply, let alone require, a flattening of its Jewish and Gentile members into homogeneity. Instead, the unity spoken of in Ephesians 2:14–16 strengthens the case that Jewish identity of Jews who believe in Jesus is fundamental. The seminars were presented by John Atkinson[5] and Daniel Juster,[6] and seeded the research presented in this paper. Their interpretation of the text leads to the conclusion (further explained below) that Gentile Jesus-believers are joined to (or added to) Israel, rather than replacing (or displacing) Israel.

The Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC 2010:24) similarly states, 'One new man does not mean that the distinction and mutuality between Jews and Gentiles are obliterated. Instead, it means that Jews as Jews and Gentiles as Gentiles, with their differences and distinctions, live in unity and mutual blessing in Yeshua.'

[5] *Whose Law is it anyway?* Roots and Shoots Conference. 25 July 2009; Christ Church Kenilworth, Cape Town. See Atkinson (2008) for his earlier published article containing similar content.

[6] *Interpreting the New Covenant from a Messianic Jewish Perspective.* 23–25 October 2009; Beit Ariel Messianic Jewish Congregation, Cape Town. The essence of Juster's Messianic Jewish theology, in which intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction is pivotal, is available on the internet at http://youtu.be/zH8xi_dz6hI (accessed on 1 August 2014).

A seemingly growing number of modern scholars support this view, which might be called 'unity with distinction' or something similar.[7] Markus Barth did so forty years ago:

> Ephesians 2:15 proclaims that the people of God is different from a syncretistic mixture of Jewish and Gentile elements. The members of the church are not so equalized, levelled down, or straightjacketed in a uniform as to form a *genus tertium* that would be different from both Jews and Gentiles. Rather the church consists of Jews and Gentiles reconciled to one another by the Messiah who has come and has died for both (1974:310).

Barth's words are, in part, a reaction against the notion that the church is the 'third race' which transcends and succeeds the first two, namely Israel and the nations. 'Third race' was a term used by opponents of Christianity as early as AD 200, the first race being the Gentiles, and the second being the Jews (Harnack 1972:273). The oldest extant reference to it is in the Latin Church Father, Tertullian *(Marc.* VII 10), and it is still commonly used in self-designation by the church today. It is possible that the concept of Christians as a race originates from the *Epistle to Diognetus* (1:1), dating to c.AD 170. There, the writer refers to *kainon touto genos:* 'this new race,' a term which I posit was equated with Paul's 'one new humanity' in Ephesians 2:15. Unlike Paul, however, the author of *Diognetus* was patently anti-Jewish (see ch. 3–4), inconsistent and sometimes downright incoherent (e.g. by suggesting that Jewish observance of Jewish Law is unlawful, 4:1–2.)

[7] These usually being post-supersessionist in orientation and roughly fitting into a school called the 'radical new perspective on Paul,' or 'beyond the new perspective on Paul.' Examples (to my mind) are William Campbell, Mark Kinzer, D. Thomas Lancaster, Derek Leman, Mark Nanos, David Rudolph, R. Kendall Soulen and Brian Tucker. (Some of those listed are members of the UMJC.)

The *genos* referred to above may have meant the human race generically rather than an ethnic race or racial grouping (as 'Gentile' denotes all nations excluding Israel), though later literature has stressed the ethnic sense. Thus, 'third race' or 'new race' terminology can be used to emphasise the *renewal* of humanity (as 'new human race' does in Crossway Bibles 2008:2265), or it can be used to express the *replacement* of the former humanity (including ethnic Israel) as in the examples from Chrysostom and Lloyd-Jones above. Hoehner expresses the latter interpretation eloquently: 'A new race that is raceless! … They are not Jews or Gentiles but a body of Christians who make up the church' (2002:379). In contrast, Hardin (2013:232) reaches the opposite conclusion: Ephesians 2:14–18 does *not* signify the formation of 'a raceless people.' Similarly, Soulen responds to the notion to the church's self-perception as 'a third and final "race" that transcends and replaces the difference between Israel and the nations' by arguing that 'the church is not a third column of biblical ontology next to that of the Jews and that of the Greeks…' (1996:169–170). 'They do not become a new *generic, uniform* humanity', according to the UMJC (2010:24, emphasis added).

One is compelled to ask which of the two possible meanings Paul intended. Does the 'one new man' Christ created *replace* the elements of which it is constituted, or does it signify a *renewal* (or *transformation)* of humanity? Does the resultant peace, also mentioned in Ephesians 2:15, depend on the elimination of the categories of Jew and Gentile, or is it a peace that triumphs over their differences? This study seeks to answer these questions. Subsequently, I shall briefly discuss the ESV and RSV-NRSV translations' supply (insertion) of the phrase 'in place of' to produce: 'one new man [NRSV: humanity] in

place of the two'.[8] These clearly favour the replacement paradigm, but is their addition a helpful clarification of the text, or an unintentional obscuration of it?

1.2. The *ekklēsia* and the church

For the purpose of this paper, 'church' is intended to denote all believers in Jesus regardless of whether they are Jewish or Gentile, that is, the *ekklēsia* (or ecclesia) in general. I ask the reader to bear with the difficulties inherent in this loose and uncomfortable denotation (not a definition), given that I am writing for Gentile Christians who are most familiar with this sense of the word—even with its vagueness. While some scholars prefer to use the term 'church' to denote the Gentile Christian majority of the *ekklēsia,* distinct from the *ekklēsia's* minority Messianic Jewish membership, to do so here would be to assume a particular conclusion before undertaking the study.

The following are some of the manifold difficulties in using the word 'church' as I do in this paper, in keeping with most of Christian literature. Firstly, the defining criteria for membership are unclear. I refer to Jesus-believers, but what does it mean to believe in Jesus, and how do other key components such as repentance and baptism contribute? Secondly, the denotation does not specify whether or not pre-incarnation believers (like Abraham, see John 8:56) are included. Thirdly, many Messianic Jews dislike being referred to as members of the church (or as Christians) because of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism, past and present, in the Christian church (see Stern 2007:25–26). Finally, 'church' may connote institutionalised Christianity foreign to the NT's presentation of the *ekklēsia.*

[8] Note that these particular translations do not italicise words supplied by the translators.

1.3. Jew-Gentile distinction and related issues

Distinction theory is my term for the theological framework which understands Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus as distinct in certain significant theological senses, including identity and function (role, service) in the economy of God's kingdom. That is, a biblical differentiation exists between Israel and the nations *within the church* similar to that which existed more visibly before Christ. This distinction results in a twofold structure within the church that I label *intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction.* In this framework, the 'one new man,' or 'humanity' as I shall explain, comprises Jews and Gentiles who together are devoted to Jesus. My choice of the word distinction is based on its common use in English Bibles to translate *diakrinō* in Acts 11:12 and 15:9, as well as *diastolē* in Romans 3:22 and 10:12. It is not intended to suggest a superior-inferior relationship in any sense. The concept has already been given several other names, including 'unity and diversity in the church' (Campbell 2008), 'bilateral ecclesiology' (Kinzer 2005:151–179), or 'Torah-defined ecclesiological variegation' (Rudolph 2010).

In contrast to distinction theory, church teaching for most of Christian history has denied that there is any theologically meaningful distinction between Jews and Gentiles in Christ (Soulen 1996:1–2; 11–12, based on a number of NT texts). In my reckoning, the most striking of these texts are Acts 11:12 (in some English translations) and 15:9, Romans 3:22 and 10:12, Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 2:15, and Colossians 3:11. I refer to these as the 'no distinction' texts, as merited by a cursory reading of them. However, I question whether any of these texts individually, or all of them collectively, provide sufficient evidence to overturn the prevailing Jew-Gentile distinction of the pre-Christian era. My research agenda is to examine each of these verses individually to see if they substantiate the Christian tradition. If so, then they refute

distinction theory; if not, it stands. This paper focuses Christ's creation of 'one new man,' mentioned in Ephesians 2:15, which has already been shown above to yield diametrically opposed interpretations with regard to intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction.

A major obstacle in the distinction discourse is that it is inextricably intertwined with numerous theological concerns such as the election of Israel (and thus replacement theology),[9] 'nomology',[10] and eschatology. Wide differences of opinion in these principal issues profoundly impact the discussion, since distinction theory interacts with, and is dependent on, a particular view of them. For example, the same verse in which we find 'one new man,' Ephesians 2:15, also speaks of Christ 'invalidating the law of commandments in ordinances'. It is not possible in this paper, however, to present an interpretation of these words that reconciles with distinction theory (i.e. one which does not regard the Law as annulled).[11] The reader is asked, therefore, to bear in mind that this study is a miniscule component of a rapidly growing body of literature, a little of which I cite, that addresses all the related and interdependent issues mentioned.

[9] Replacement theology, or supersessionism, is the notion that the church has replaced, or superseded, Israel as God's chosen people. An alternate (non-supersessionist) view is expressed in a recent expression by Mark Kinzer of 'the one two-fold people of God and of the Messiah,' which says, '*The Jewish people and the Christian Church together form the one people of God…'* (Kinzer 2014:3).

[10] An uncommon term which, within theology, denotes the doctrine of biblical law (primarily Mosaic Law). A consequence of denying intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction is the downplaying of legal obligations (deprogramming Jewish Jesus-believers' orientation to Torah) and, therefore, very limited development of nomology by Christian scholars. For illustration, contrast the amount of Jewish literature on the Law with that of Christian literature, as well as the proportion of each to the total corpus of its own faith tradition.

[11] See Woods 2012 for just one of many publications challenging the traditional Christian view of the Law, specifically the dietary laws in relation to Peter's vision in Acts 10:9–16.

1.4. Approach

This study is at once biblical and theological. The method used is to examine each of the three words in the phrase 'one new man' in turn to see in what ways they contradict or support distinction theory. Examples of how these words are used in other biblical texts are presented in order to evaluate the two views (which could be called *no distinction* and *pro-distinction).* By juxtaposing these radically different theological viewpoints, I have sought to highlight areas of disagreement and to illustrate the significance of the 'one new man' as a key concept in the New Testament. Some theological discussion is included *in situ* with each word study, but the main implications are left for the conclusion. A brief study of the use of personal pronouns in Ephesians is made to see if they provide evidence either against or for the theory of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction.

On a personal level, this study has been applied—theology should not happen in a vacuum. While continuing to worship regularly in Christian churches, I have over the past five years also worshipped in synagogues of Reform Judaism, in Messianic Jewish synagogues, and mixed congregations of the Jewish roots movement. Such experience has challenged and shaped my own understanding of Christ's 'one new man,' and when I write of Jews (or Israel), I have real, living individuals in mind whom I regard as representatives of the whole people. Similarly, when I mention the Jewish faith tradition, I have at least a sample of it to relate to. Nevertheless, the study presented is not dependent on my own experience; it is anchored in the biblical text—in spite of unintentional bias it may contain.

2. Textual analysis

Paul wrote that Christ sought to create in himself *'hena kainon anthrōpon'* ('one new man') in Ephesians 2:15. What exactly did he mean by this? Though there is little dissention in terms of translation, the interpreted meaning of the phrase is disputed. Each of the three words is discussed individually below with special attention to whether or not they speak against intra-ecclesial distinction of Jews and Gentiles. Subsequently, the translators' supply of the phrase 'in place of' in some translations is critiqued. Finally, a literary test is applied to the epistle for a possible validation of the interpretation of 'one new man' that emerges from the analysis.

2.1. One

The first notable observation about 'one' in 'one new man' is its deliberate placement in the text. Paul could have written 'a new man' *(kainon anthrōpon)* more simply, since Greek has no indefinite article. Why did Paul specify *one?* It appears he wanted to identify a particular new man, yet could not use the definite article for an entity which he had not yet referenced. Moreover, he wanted to be clear that it was one and not plural. Paul emphasised this unity in innovative ways as he prefixed the preposition *syn* with various verbs and nouns in Ephesians 2:19–22; 3:6; 4:3, 16 (Barth 1963:7). (English Bibles usually translate the Greek prefix *syn* with the English prefix 'co–' or with 'fellow' e.g. 'co-heirs' or 'fellow heirs' in 3:6.) Notably, these *syn* compounds do not merely pertain to interpersonal relationships; they relate to the two groups, Jews and Gentiles in Christ (Campbell 2008:21).

Hena assuredly means one, but Jewish and Christian scholars alike are aware that the word is laden with theological import. God, says Deuteronomy 6:4, is one *(ʾĕ·ḥāḏ*—hereafter *echad*—or *heis* in the LXX,

where *heis* and *hena* are inflections of the same word). The *Shema*, as the verse is known in Judaism, is the ultimate proclamation of Jewish faith: 'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one' (NIV). The main translation concern here is whether the LORD is 'one' or 'unique,' as the LEB translates *echad.* The 'oneness,' or unity, of God is often used by Jews as to argue against the Christian doctrine of the trinity, though it may also be translated 'unique' or 'alone' (e.g. Wyschogrod 2004:173–174). The ISV, JPS; NABRE; NLT; NRSV all render *echad* as 'alone.' Doing so 'reads the verse not as making a metaphysical statement about God, namely, that he is one and indivisible, but rather that God alone is to be worshipped to the exclusion of all other gods,' Wyschogrod explains (2004:174). His aim is not to demonstrate whether God is, or is not, a composite unity but rather, that Israel, like God, is unique; Israel has only one God, Yahweh, and Yahweh has one people alone, Israel, whom he will never divorce (Isa 50:1) or lose compassion for (Jer 31:3–4, 9, 20; Hos 2:16, 19–20; 11:1–6, 8–11; Zech 10:6). Yet, he accepts that composite unity in the godhead is not disproved by Deuteronomy 6:4—a crucial element in Christian theology. Even the renowned Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, acknowledged that the singularity of *echad* with reference to God implies the possibility of a plurality (Atkinson 2008:2).

The concept of 'one' meaning the unity of differing elements is native to the Bible, with the word being used of well-known composites such as daytime and night time forming 'day one' *(yom echad,* Gen 1:5), and man and woman forming 'one flesh' *(basar echad,* Gen 2:24). The fact that Ephesians was written in Greek is no barrier to employing the concept of composite unity found in these two examples, with 'day one' translated as *hēmera mia,* and 'one flesh' as *sarka mian* in the LXX. *(Mia* and *mian* are feminine inflections of *heis,* as is *hen* in the following example.) The marriage relationship is dependent on the distinction between husband and wife; thus, 'unity implies

distinctiveness and yet complementarity' (Atkinson 2008:14). The distinctiveness and complementarity Atkinson mentions are crucial for the united couple to represent the image of God, as Genesis 1:27 expresses so clearly. The image is distorted if both members of the couple are of the same sex, or if they are both neuter.

Similarly, the Greek text of John 17 uses the same word for the unity of Jesus' believers with each other, and the unity of Jesus with God: 'so that they may be one *[hen],* just as we *are'* (17:11); 'that they all may be one *[hen],* just as you, Father, *are* in me and I *am* in you, that they also may be in us…in order that they may be one *[hen],* just as we *are* one *[hen]*—I in them, and you in me, in order that they may be completed in one *[hen]'* (17:21–23).

Paul also provided a good example of the compound unity in the body of Christ in Romans 12:4–6: 'For just as in one *[heni]* body we have many members, but all the members do not have the same function, in the same way we who are many are one *[hen]* body in Christ, and individually members of one another, but having different gifts according to the grace given to us'.

The same metaphor appears in 1 Corinthians 12:12–30, where Paul stressed the simultaneous unity and diversity of the one body of Christ. He pressed that 'the body is one' (12:12); it is 'one body' (12:12, 13, 20) but its members are 'many' (12:12, 14, 20) and diverse in nature, in function, and in honour. In fact, greater honour is given to some parts than to others 'in order that there not be a division in the body' (12:25). Evidently, the unity of the members of the body is not at the expense of their differences. Rather, the healthy functioning of the body is dependent on its members being different and fulfilling different kinds of roles: 'And if they all were one member, where *would* the body *be?'* (12:19). In both texts cited above, from Romans and 1 Corinthians, Paul

stressed simultaneously the unity and diversity of the members of the body of Christ. This is the same body, the church, which he referred to repeatedly in Ephesians (1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30).

Ephesians 2:15–16 unequivocally identifies this same 'one body' as the 'one new man:' 'that he might create the two in himself into one new man … and might reconcile both in one body.' By this equation, and with the support of the other epistles cited above, we can deduce that the 'one new man' comprises members who are united yet distinct in various significant ways. These distinctions are not arbitrary to God's purposes, but are deliberate for producing a whole, fully functioning church. Therefore, they are not erased 'in Christ,' but the diversity of the members is for mutual blessing within the body, to the glory of God. Moreover, Ephesians 2:11–22 notes that the principal distinction between members of the body is their status in Israel: they are either members of Israel (Jews), or they are drawn from among the nations (Gentiles/non-Jews) into fellow citizenship with Israel—yet without becoming Jews. Thus, the distinction between Jew and Gentile is not at all altered by the unity Christ brought about between them.

The First Council of Nicaea in AD 325 used the word *homooúsios* to describe Jesus and God, the Father, as being of the 'same substance' and equally divine in spite of being differentiable. Later, the First Council of Ephesus in AD 431 adopted the term *hypostasis*, or hypostatic union, to express the unity of Jesus divinity and his humanity. Both these truths are examples of composite unities, and are accepted as foundational to Christian theology. Certainly the notion that the unity of the saints suggests in no way that they are, or will be in the age to come, the same in every way, stripped of their unique identity. The Bible even maintains ethnic identities in for those united in Christ

after the appearance of the new heaven and the new earth (e.g. Rev 21:3[12]).

From these examples, it is apparent that the biblical use of 'one' in both Hebrew and Greek allows for a kind of unity comprising diverse elements.[13] In fact, such unity seems to have been God's goal from the beginning; the creation account tells of God making two, Adam and Eve, from 'singular' one, Adam, with the intention that the two would be united in 'composite' one, (Gen 2:21–24). Is it not therefore reasonable to consider that God's separation (sanctification) of Israel from the nations was so that the two may ultimately be reunited (not just reconciled), yet remain distinct for the purpose of mutual blessing indefinitely?[14] Soulen (2013:285) summarises God's agenda for mutual blessing like this:

> The church of Jesus Christ is a sphere of mutual blessing between Jew and Gentile where the distinction between them (like that between male and female) is not erased, but recreated in a promissory way, as the eschatological sign and foretaste of messianic peace and mutual blessing among all the peoples of the world.

In a similar vein, the UMJC (2005) stated, 'Together the Messianic Jewish community and the Christian Church constitute the *ekklesia,* the

[12] Most translations prefer the singular collective noun, *laos* ('people'), as per the Robinson-Pierpont edition of the GNT, but the Westcott-Hort, Tregelles and Nestle-Aland 28 all bear the plural *laoi* ('peoples').

[13] Contrast my findings with Lloyd-Jones' emphatic statement: *'The unity of this new body is an absolute unity'* (1972:277). He did not provide any support from how the cardinal number, one, is used in the Bible.

[14] On the theme of mutual blessing of Israel and the nations, see Soulen 1996; 2013 and, with Paul's letter to the Romans in view, Keener 2013. The concept emerges from God's covenant with Abraham, which purposes that 'all the families of the earth' will be blessed through Abraham, and they ought to bless him also (Gen 12:2–3).

one Body of Messiah, a community of Jews and Gentiles who in their ongoing distinction and mutual blessing anticipate the shalom of the world to come.'

The 'one new man' of Ephesians 2:15 may indeed comprise Jews and Gentiles who are united yet distinct. Accordingly, Barth (1963:5) wrote,

> There is 'no distinction' but full solidarity between all men, whether Jewish- or Gentile-born, when the judgment and the grace of God are described (Rom 3:22f., 3:28f.; 10:12). But the following passages [Eph 2:11–20; 3:5–6] reveal that within the equal treatment of Jews and Gentiles a decisive distinction must still not be forgotten.

Hardin (2013:231) explains that Paul's language of 'oneness' is part of his 'metaphor of warring parties, which had come to an armistice through the work of Jesus,' resulting in a new peace in place of enmity—but '"oneness" and "ethnic collapse" are two very different things'. When the metaphor of 'one new man' is recognised as such, the text in Hardin's study (Eph 2:14–18) 'cannot be interpreted literally to mean that ethnic distinctions have deteriorated' (p. 231). He points out that the two parties, Jew and Gentile, indicated by the 'both' of Ephesians 2:14 are still two in 2:18 where the same word, 'both,' is used again.

The Israel to which Paul generally refers in his writings, the people to whom Gentile believers in Jesus are to attach themselves, is 'actual Israel' (Barth 1963:9)—including both Jewish Jesus-believers *and* Jews who do not believe in Jesus. In speaking of the 'one new man,' Paul means 'both Jews and Gentiles just as they are' *(ibid.).* Similarly, Zetterholm (2003:158) writes, 'They are certainly "one in Christ", but it is precisely as "Jews" and "Gentiles" that they constitute this unity.' This notion is also evident in Romans 9–11, in which Paul wrote that

God's election of Israel stands in spite of Israel's stumbling. Also in Romans, Paul referred to the *Shema* (3:30), deducing that the unity, or oneness, of God himself actually requires ongoing distinction between Israel and the nations in the new covenant era: 'His oneness has been compromised if he is *only* the God of Israel, *only* the God of the circumcised, *only* the God of Torah, and not *also* the God of the nations, not *also* the God of the uncircumcised, and not *also* the God of those outside the Torah' (Nanos 1996:184).

Accordingly, Paul's rationale is that, if the nations have to become Israel to come under God's reign, then God is not the God of every nation but only the God of Israel (Rom 3:29; Nanos 2008:33–34).

Simultaneously, if Israel has to lose its unique biblical identity in order to submit to Messiah, then the God of Israel has changed his identity, since he affixed Israel to his personal name in Exodus 5:1. God is referred to as the 'God of Israel' about 200 times in scripture, often in apposition to the Tetragrammaton. Consequently, for Israel to assimilate entirely into the nations is theologically extremely problematic in regards to God's unchangeable nature. Similarly, if Israel were exterminated, or if another people took its place (as in replacement theology), the faithfulness of the God of Israel would be called into question; the God of Israel 'is identified by fidelity to the Jewish people through time' (Soulen 1996:xi). Thus, Israel's identity must be fixed in order for God's identity to remain constant. On the other hand, Ephesians indicates that Gentile believers are to appropriate a Jewish identity (Campbell 2008:22)—at least to some extent. 'The church is not equated with Israel', but Israel in Ephesians is central to the believers' identity and therefore cannot simultaneously be undermined (p. 23). Indeed, 'one cannot be a joint heir with Israel if Israel is an entity only of the past' (p. 24).

These truths, therefore, are to be held in tension: Israel's unique identity prevails; Gentile believers are not to become Jewish, but they are to identify with the Jews, or Israel, as they cleave to Israel's Messiah and are thus brought into the commonwealth of Israel as co-citizens (but never co-Israelites! Campbell 2008:24). Gentile Christians have an especially close relationship with Jewish believers, who are likewise renewed in Messiah and bind the Gentiles to the life of Israel. Gentile believers must 'remember' their dependence on Israel for their relationship with God (Barth 1963:12, commenting on Eph 2:11ff). This is the unity of the 'one new man' which Christ created: not a unity which erases the differences between Jew and Gentile but one which removes the enmity between the two (Eph 2:14).

Paul makes a similar Jew-Gentile distinction not only in Romans and Ephesians, but in his other writings as well. Rudolph (2010:8) points out, for example, that 'the distinction between Jewish and Gentile identity in Christ is so fundamental that Paul can speak of "the gospel of the foreskin" … and "the [gospel] of the circumcised" … (Gal 2:7).' In 1 Corinthians 7:17–24, Paul published his rule for all the churches: each believer is to remain as he was when he was called (to faith in Jesus). Verse 8 of chapter 7 states that Jews ('the circumcised') are to remain Jews ('he must not undo his circumcision') and Gentiles (the 'uncircumcision' or 'foreskin') 'must not become circumcised'. A number of other scholars concur with Rudolph concerning the retention of Jew-Gentile distinction within the church (e.g. Campbell 2008:15; Nanos 2008:17–23, and Tucker 2011). Further, 1 Corinthians 9:20–21 can be aligned with this reading of 7:17–24, as Rudolph does most eminently in *A Jew to the Jews* (2011). These modern readings of Paul provide a consistent, coherent model in which Jewish and Gentile believers are united in Christ while remaining distinct such that the particularity of Israel is retained. In other words, they harmonise with the interpretation that the 'one new man' in Ephesians 2:15 is a

compound unity of differentiated peoples, most essentially of Jews and Gentiles.

The salient point of this discussion is that being 'one' in Christ does not mean being homogeneous; the notion of a compound unity is native to the Bible. Christ's making Jew and Gentile one in himself—as Paul expressed in Ephesians 2:15—by no means proves that their respective distinctions become erased as they are drawn into undifferentiated membership in the church. 'The "one new man" is apparently not an international, intercultural, sexless or historical superman' (Barth 1963:6). Rather, the evidence suggests that 'one new man' is a metaphor for the state of unity with distinction achieved by Christ. This leads to the question of whether the *newness* of the 'one new man' refutes distinction theory, or if it can accommodate old identities in a new body.

2.2. New

What did Paul mean when he wrote that the one man Christ created was *new?* The word refers to something that did not exist before, yet surely elements of the new man did, such as the head (Christ himself) and the Jews and Gentiles who comprise the members of his body (cf. Eph 1:22–23; 2:11–16; 4:15–16; 5:23 for use of the head and body metaphor). Does 'new' simply mean that the members are spiritually regenerated? This seems plausible considering the transforming work of the Holy Spirit since the Pentecost of Acts 2 and 10, but the noun modified by 'new' in Ephesians 2:15 is clearly the corporate entity ('man'), not the individual members. One needs, therefore, to identify that which is new about the 'new man.' Various answers appear in the literature, of which two diametrically opposing interpretations will be presented. These interpretations have greatly differing implications for Jewish believers in many ways (including their particular ethnicity,

their election and roles, their territorial heritage, and their faith tradition and practice.)

Given that the 'man' Christ created according to Ephesians 2:15 is 'new,' and that this new man comprises Jew and Gentile, are not these categories relegated as old and to be discarded in favour of a new binary classification: those 'in Christ Jesus' (1:1) and those not 'in Christ Jesus?' After all, is not every person's ultimate destiny determined by his faith, or faithlessness, in Jesus? Casting this differently, does membership in the New Covenant not become so all-important that membership in the Mosaic Covenant becomes irrelevant, even as the New Covenant replaces the old one? Framing the question this way obfuscates the issue by over-exploiting the discontinuity between the eras before and after Christ's atonement: before Christ, individuals were categorised as Jew or Gentile; since Christ, individuals are categorised as Christian or non-Christian. This one-dimensional approach is not biblical, for the NT abounds with references to Jews and Gentiles of both believing and unbelieving varieties. That is, a two-dimensional cross-classification system is evidenced in the Bible, as the examples in the following table demonstrate:

	In Christ	**Not in Christ**
Jewish	Paul (Acts 22:3); James (Acts 21:18–25)	Gamaliel (Acts 5:34–39); Elymas Bar-Jesus (Acts 13:6–8)
Not Jewish	Cornelius (Acts 10); Titus (Gal 2:1–3)	King Agrippa (Acts 26); Demetrius (Acts 19:24–27)

Table 1: Two-dimensional cross-classification system of individuals with biblical examples

Jewish believers in Jesus continued to live as Jews after the Holy Spirit was poured out in Acts 2. This Pentecost event did not terminate their Jewishness. Moreover, the Gentiles who received the gospel did not convert to Judaism; they continued to live as non-Jews (see Acts 15:22–29). The examples provided in Table 1 demonstrate that one should not let an artificial and overly simplified classification framework—*either* in Christ *or* not—dictate the interpretation of 'new' in Ephesians 2:15, but should rather identify the possibilities from real people described in the NT.

If that which was new about the 'one new man' was spiritual rebirth, then the prevailing Jew-Gentile classification might be *subordinated to* their identity in relation to Christ without being *eliminated by* it. In other words, one may have a dual identity, both being equally valid simultaneously. This is indeed the witness of scripture clearly portrayed in Acts (15:1–29;[15] 21:17–26) and Romans (1:5–7, 13; 1:16; 3:29–30; 9:22–24; 11:13–15; 15:8–12, 15–19), for example. Thus, in spite of the newness of the 'one new man,' his members are really 'something old, something new,' as the wedding rhyme goes. Mark Kinzer's critique of *Lumen Gentium*, a publication of the Second Vatican Council, is helpful:

> The biblical concept of newness usually connotes eschatological renewal of an already existing reality. The new heavens and new earth are the old heavens and old earth, glorified and transfigured. The new humanity is the old humanity raised from the dead and transformed. This understanding of eschatological newness is supported by its paradigmatic case—the resurrection of the

[15] The claim of 'no distinction' in verse 9 refers to the manner of salvation—by grace (v. 11)—and is not an elimination of Jew-Gentile distinction, as will be argued in a separate article.

> messiah. The risen messiah is new, different, yet the same human being as the one born of Mary (Kinzer and Levering 2009).

Campbell (2008:15) also finds Ephesians 2:15 to indicate transformation rather than re-creation: 'Pauline transformation in Christ does not mean the creation of a new group without ethnic identity but rather the transformation of those who are Greeks into transformed Greeks, and of Judeans into transformed Judeans in Christ.'[16]

The transformation described above—one that retains Jewish and Gentile (or 'Greek') identity—directly contradicts the interpretation of what I regard a more common interpretation of the newness of what Christ created. I selected Chrysostom and Lloyd-Jones as well-known representatives of the latter view to demonstrate the great period which it has spanned in Christian history (about sixteen centuries). Chrysostom (Schaff 2014:72) argued that Paul's choice of the word 'create' *(ktizō)* rather than 'change' is significant in that Jews and Gentiles are not merely *changed*, they are *created* anew. His argument hinges on the use of *ktizō* in the LXX and NT which typically portrays God creating something out of nothing. Lloyd-Jones (1972:271–272) presented a similar case: 'There was nothing there before God created. Creation … is making something out of nothing.' He insisted that: 'It's not by modification of what was there before; it is not even by an improvement of what was there before. God does not take a Jew and do something to him, and take a Gentile and do something to him, and thereby bring them together. Not at all! It is something entirely new' (p. 272).

[16] Campbell included a note on the discourse concerning whether Jews should rather be referred to as Judeans—a notion which, in my view, has considerable evidence but some difficulties.

Thus, for these two famous preachers of very different eras, Chrysostom and Lloyd-Jones, spiritual regeneration is not enough to account for the newness of Christ's creation in Ephesians 2:15. For them, the prior identities of the members of Christ's body are blotted out in his work of creating them newly. The juxtaposition above of two interpretations of *ktizō* (create) and *kainos* (new) in the text shows them to be polar opposites, and thus warrants further investigation.

Psalm 51:10 and 104:30 appear to support Kinzer's reference to eschatological renewal. Notably, in the Septuagint (where they are Ps 50:12 and 103:30 respectively), they both use forms of the words *ktizō* and verbal cognates of *kainos* (Anon. 2011: ἐγκαινίζω; ἀνακαινίζω): 'Create *(ktizō)* in me a clean heart, O God, and renew *(egkainizō)* a right spirit in my inward parts (Ps 50:10).[17] You will send forth your spirit, and they will be created *(ktizō),* and you will renew *(anakainizō)* the face of the earth' (Ps 103:30).[18]

In both cases, both words imply a renewal, not an entirely new creation *ex nihilo.* The former objects are renewed and continue to exist; they are not replaced with completely new ones.

Furthermore, it might be reasonable to harness another interpretation of *ktizō* found in the Septuagint where it can mean 'to form' (e.g. Isa 22:11; 46:11 LXX, aligning with Hebrew *yā·ṣār)* or 'to found' (i.e. to establish, e.g. Exod 9:18 LXX, aligning with Hebrew *yā·sāḏ.* Anon. 2012: κτίζω.) Though speculative, Paul may have implied that nuance in Ephesians 2:15 to mean either, '…that he might *form* the two in himself into one new man…' or '…that he might *establish* the two in himself into one new man…' (emphasis mine). These options permit

[17] Using *The Lexham English Septuagint* with LXX verse numbering.
[18] *ibid.*

the 'new man' to be something new, yet made from pre-existing entities (namely, Jews and Gentiles) by their transformation or re-arrangement rather than by elimination. They both fit comfortably with the biblical concepts of 'one' and 'new', and neither requires creation *ex nihilo.*

Another biblical example of renewal is lunar: the Hebrew word for 'new moon' is not at all related to the word for 'moon' *(yā·rēʾḥ)* but rather is derived from *ḥōdeš,* meaning to 'make new, restore, renew' (Swanson 1997; Mounce 2006:470–471). When the Bible speaks of a new moon, it is not a newly-created object but rather one that has been 'renewed'; it waned, disappeared, then re-appeared as new, yet it was old. For a comparison with something 'new' yet 'not new' in NT Greek, see Jesus' commandment on loving one another in John's writings: John 13:34; 1 John 2:7–8; 2 John 5. The commandment to love one another was not new (Lev 19:18), but Jesus renewed it by adding a requirement: the love commanded must be 'just as I have loved you' (John 13:34).

The context preceding Ephesians 2:15 emphasises that Gentiles were formerly 'alienated from the citizenship [or commonwealth: *politeia]* of Israel' but are now brought 'near by the blood of Christ' (2:11–13).[19] Gentile believers are incorporated into the citizenship of Israel; Juster (2014) refers to this as 'addition theology'—Gentiles are 'added' to the household of Israel through their faith in Israel's Messiah. This change is part of the newness that Paul meant in 'one new man.' Accordingly Kinzer writes,

[19] Chrysostom switched the order, stating that 'the Jew is then united to the Gentile when he becomes a believer,' (Schaff 2014:73). This may have been incidental, but readers of Ephesians will note that it is not Israel that is joined to the Gentiles, but rather that the Gentiles are joined to Israel. Paul taught the same principle to the congregations in Rome (see below).

> …the Church should be seen as a renewed Israel, a renewed people of God. It is an eschatological form of Israel, anticipating the life of the world to come by the gift of the Spirit. As an eschatological reality, it is also an expanded Israel, including within its ranks people from all the nations of the world (Kinzer and Levering 2009).

The idea of a 'renewed Israel' fits well with the biblical concept of newness, as demonstrated by the examples above. Elsewhere, Kinzer described the Gentile component of the church as *'a multinational extension of the people of Israel'* (2005:15, emphasis original). This is apt wording to express the non-supersessionist perspective, because (i) an extension is not a replacement, and (ii) an extension depends on that which it is extends for support—it cannot function independently. As Paul expressed it, 'you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you' (Rom 11:18). In fact, Paul referred to the Israelites (presumably only those in right standing with God) as 'holy ones' or 'saints' (Eph 2:19; c.f. Col 1:12). While Paul in Ephesians emphasised the contrast of what Gentile believers were (pagans) with what they now are (e.g. 2:12–13, 19–22), he did not make a corresponding contrast between Jewish believers and 'Israelite culture and identity' (Campbell 2008:16). These points collectively make it very difficult to imagine how the 'one new man' can replace Israel as God's people.

Returning to Paul's olive tree metaphor (Rom 11:13–24), we see that Gentiles are as branches of a wild olive tree (neither schooled in, nor governed by, Torah), but by faith in Jesus they are 'grafted in' to the cultivated olive tree, Israel. (See Stern 2007:47–59 on 'olive tree theology'). Likewise, Gentile believers 'became a sharer of the root of the olive tree's richness,' (11:17). While this imagery is congruent with the notion of the 'one new man' being Israel being renewed and enlarged by the attachment all the nations of the world (as presented

above), it is incongruent with the complete disjunction of the church from Israel, as some interpret the newness to mean. Ryrie (2010:72), for example, stated the church ('new man') is 'not a continuation or remaking of Israel, but something new and distinct from the Israel of the Old Testament.' He stressed a *discontinuity* between the redeemed of this era who are 'in the body of Christ and not some sort of Israel,' going on to explain that 'today redeemed Jew and Gentile belong to God's family of saints without being members of any kind of Israel' (p. 72). My assessment of the biblical data above suggests the opposite of Ryrie's claims. 'Renewed' is not only a permissible interpretation of *kainos* in Ephesians 2:15, but also the best way of understanding it. Yes, the church is a new entity that Christ has created, but not by *replacing* Jew and Gentile (as in replacement theology); rather, it is by restoring, reconciling, and spiritually regenerating them.

There is yet another facet of newness in the 'one new man:' the peace between Jew and Gentile which Christ made by destroying the enmity between them and reconciling them both to each other and to God (Eph 2:14–16). For Lloyd-Jones (1972:278), Christ's peace required the binary Jew-Gentile classification to be discarded: 'the moment we begin to bring in those categories there is no longer peace; there is division, separation, enmity.' However, neither the peace nor the reconciliation calls for eradication of either Jewish or Gentile identity.[20] The unity in Christ that results from bringing 'near' Gentiles, who 'once were far away' (2:13), as God's people does not trigger an 'ethnic collapse' (Hardin 2013:232). Indeed, it is the peace between the

[20] Lloyd-Jones and others who oppose the continuation of Jew-Gentile distinction within the body of believers appeal to Galatians 3:28 and similar statements in the NT which I identified above as the 'no distinction' texts. These require careful investigation as to the rhetoric Paul employed. Suffice it to say that Galatians contains strongly-worded instructions to Gentile Jesus-believers to retain their non-Jewish identity, and Galatians 3:28 is hyperbole intended to stress the irrelevance of one's social status *in comparison to* one's standing in Christ, which eclipses the former.

church's principal differentiated elements, namely Israel and the nations, which is the eschatological sign of God's sovereignty over the whole world. This peace is not an abstraction, nor a future-only reality; it is a present day sign of the fullness of the peace to come.

'It is a real political and social peace that Christ enables and demands of those who truly belong to his kingdom. As Ephesians 1–2 indicates, through the power of Christ hostility arising from difference can be turned into a cause of celebration of the blessings of God in Christ' (Campbell 2008:15). Paul may have been comparing this peace with that Solomon brought between the northern and southern kingdoms when both those 'far' (Israel in the north) and 'near' (Judah in the south) worshipped together in the then-new temple, as various similarities suggest (p. 17, with citations to Kreitzer 2005:500–501).[21] But the peace and reconciliation brought about by Christ in Ephesians 2:14–16 is not described as a general peace between all nations; it is *specifically* a peace between the nations and Israel, Gentiles, and Jews. Such a peace is somewhat meaningless if, as some writers I have cited claim, there is no more particularity to Israel and Jews 'in Christ' are no longer fully Jewish.

The argument presented above shows that ongoing intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction is permissible and even probable in the 'one new man' metaphor of Ephesians 2:15. Inasmuch as the 'one new man' is not a Jewish man, neither is he a Gentile; he is a new humanity comprising Jewish and Gentile members 'in Christ Jesus.' Before testing that conclusion with other internal evidence, the least

[21] Kreitzer LJ 2005. The Messianic Man of Peace as Temple Builder: Solomonic Imagery in Ephesians 2:13-22. In Day J (ed.) *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*. London, New York: T&T Clark International: 484-512.

controversial word in the phrase *hena kainon anthrōpon* needs a brief discussion: *anthrōpos*.

2.3. Man

It is generally accepted that the 'man' whom Christ created in Ephesians 2:15 is not an individual human being, but a people. Paul did not use the word *anēr* but *anthrōpos;* both words can mean 'man,' 'human' or 'husband,' but the latter can also mean 'people' as a collective noun, which fits the context best. Paul's choice of words is remarkable, because humanity itself is a compound unity comprising differentiated elements (members of the human population), often viewed in subgroups according to gender, race, or family. Thus, *anthrōpos* reflects well the kind of entity represented by the body of believers in Jesus. This nuance may not have been conveyed if Paul had chosen another word like 'creature,' 'vessel', or 'being.' Recall the metaphor (already presented above) in which Paul described the church as a 'body' comprising distinct members (1 Cor 12:12–30 and Rom 12:4–8). Once again, the theme of *unity with distinction* is a paradigm native to the apostle's writings.

It is therefore surprising that so few English translations use 'humanity' (e.g. NIV 2011, NRSV) or 'people' (e.g. NLT) to translate *anthrōpos* in Ephesians 2:15. In this instance, 'humanity' appears best, especially when taking into consideration Paul's reference to Christ as the 'last Adam' in 1 Corinthians 15:45. In that context (15:42–49), Adam is the ancestor of natural humanity, but Christ is the ancestor of a regenerated (renewed!) humanity. Inasmuch as Christ's divinity did not displace his humanity—indeed, he was *bodily* resurrected—the spiritual quickening of his followers does not replace their natural bodies. The 'one new man' does not displace its members from their current, natural identity. Jews remain Jews, and Gentiles remain non-Jews. This point touches on

a much larger topic, but we should not lose sight of the fact that those who are in Christ are also the sons of Adam.

2.4. 'In place of' the two?

As stated above, some Bible translations explicitly say that the one new man is created 'in place of' the two (Jews and Gentiles) in Ephesians 2:15. If this is the case, then replacement theology has an anchor in the biblical text, but where do these words originate? The answer, quite simply, is in the translators' theology. There are no textual variants in any of the ancient sources that witness to these words; they are 'a gratuitous addition,' as Campbell calls them (2008:19). The Bible translators supplied 'in place of' in order to clarify the meaning, but the meaning they assume does not correspond with the evidence I have presented. Unfortunately, their insertion also serves to validate their theology, though I do not suggest any ill intent—all Bible translators have to make difficult decisions and will naturally favour wording that conforms to their understanding of the 'right' interpretation. Moreover, the English is awkward without the phrase, seemingly needing 'smoothing.' Following the Greek word order, a literal translation of the clause may be '…in order that the [accusative] two [indeclinable] he might create in himself into one new man…' (Harris 2010). There are no significant variant readings. If the logic of the argument presented above is valid, then the critical text does not indicate replacement but rather a new state of unity. I submit that the phrase 'in place of' in some English translations of Ephesians 2:15 is misleading and best omitted.

The discussion above already touched on the profound theological implications of the message of Ephesians that emerges from my (and others') reading of 'one new man,' which is all the more meaningful if the phrase 'in place of' is not supplied to 2:15. Markus Barth (1963:5) made a drastic statement concerning the message of the letter:

'Ephesians makes its readers aware that it is *wrong and suicidal* for the church … to claim that she alone is the true, the new, the spiritual Israel—at the expense of the old or fleshly Israel' (emphasis added). Later, he wrote that 'it is the distinctive message of Ephesians that no Gentile can have communion with Christ or with God unless he also has communion with Israel' (1974:337). Though matters of supersessionism and Jewish-Christian relations are too vast for this article, it is important nevertheless to mention the theological significance—the applied meaning—of 'one new man' in Ephesians.

2.5. A test

Is there an objective test for my finding that the newer identity categories of believers and unbelievers in Jesus do not erase the older ones of Jews and Gentiles? Does the letter to the Ephesians itself offer any internal evidence in this regard? If the two-dimensional identity cross-classification scheme portrayed in *Table 1* is valid, then we might expect potential confusion in the personal pronouns used in the letter, such as 'we' and 'you' (especially in the plural). That is, the writer, who certainly is to be regarded as a Jesus-believer of Jewish origins, might at times use 'we' to denote 'we Jews,' or 'I and the Jews among you [the audience],' whilst at other times using 'we' to denote 'we believers in Jesus, regardless of our identity as Jews or Gentiles.' Similarly, 'you' might denote either 'you Jews and Gentiles to whom I am writing,' or it may refer to 'you Gentiles,' excluding the Jews in the audience.

A study of the personal pronouns in Ephesians reveals that this is, in fact, exactly what appears, and the modern reader needs to be particularly careful in interpreting them. The greeting and opening praises appear to include the whole audience of believers, Jew and Gentile, in the pronouns 'we,' 'us,' and 'our.' But at some point there is a switch in usage such that, by 1:12 'we' must refer to Jews, who

'hoped beforehand [i.e. BC] in Christ,' and 'you'—the Gentiles who 'also when you believed were sealed in the promised Holy Spirit' in 1:13. Again, in 1:19, the phrase 'us who believe' clearly places Gentile believers together with Paul and his believing Jewish kin in the first person plural pronoun, 'us'. Yet by 2:1, 'you' refers to Gentile believers and 'we' in 2:3 refers to Jewish believers, each group being differentiated from their unbelieving counterparts. And in 2:4–8 once again, 'us' refers to the whole body of believers, Jewish and Gentile, whom God loved, made alive, raised together, seated together for a demonstration 'in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus'.

The evidence grows stronger still in 2:11, where Paul uses an overspecification (in discourse terminology, Runge 2008a) to explicitly identify 'you' as 'the Gentiles in *the* flesh.' Such overspecification 'prompts the reader [to] conceptualize the referent in a specific way' (Runge 2008b); Paul sought to emphasise that 'you' meant 'the Gentiles in *the* flesh' and *not* 'the circumcision in *the* flesh' (2:11). Note that Paul does not refer to them as formerly Gentiles, or formerly 'the uncircumcision,' but rather as formerly alienated (2:12). Instead, 'you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens of the saints' (2:18) whilst yet continuing to be distinct from Jewish believers, as 'you Gentiles' in 3:1 indicates.

Though the difficulty of identifying the referent of personal pronouns in Ephesians has often been noted in the literature, I have sought to use it as an objective test of the letter's internal evidence. The test results clearly support the notion of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction.

3. Conclusion

Conclusions and related theological issues have been noted throughout the textual analysis above. This section serves to summarise the findings and point out theological implications for the church and several of its doctrines.

3.1. Summary

The traditional Christian interpretation of the NT is that, after coming to faith in Jesus, no distinction remains between Jewish believers and Gentile believers. That is, within the church there is to be no differentiation between Israel and the nations. The purpose of this study was to determine whether Paul's reference to the 'one new man' in Ephesians 2:15 supports this claim. That is, does the text inform us that Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus are no longer distinct in any significant way because of their common membership in the community of Christ? I have presented multiple arguments rejecting that notion based on a study of each of the three words, *hena (heis), kainon (kainos)* and *anthropōn (anthrōpos),* concluding that 'one new man' is, in fact, an assertion of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction. Other keywords in Ephesians 2:14–16, namely 'body,' 'create' and 'peace,' proved to be congruent with this finding.

The study firstly found that the biblical concept of 'one' does not necessarily mean a singularity or homogeneity, but it allows for the unity of distinct elements. Some examples, such as the unity of man and woman, suggest that God's purpose was one of mutual blessing. The oneness of God in the *Shema* and NT references to it are proof texts that the nations are not to become Israel, nor is Israel to assimilate into the nations, in order to signify God's sovereignty over all, thus demonstrating that his kingdom has come. Ephesians identifies Gentile

believers *with* Israel, not *as* Israel; Paul retains distinction between the two as he does in his other writings.

The 'new man' of Ephesians 2:15 is not created *ex nihilo*. While there are aspects of newness to the body of Christ, not all that is old is discarded. The Christ event did not erase the biblical classification of individuals as Jews or Gentiles. Rather, the NT classifies people according to their faith in Jesus *and* according to whether they are Israelites—yet without any prejudice against Gentile believers who are welcomed as fellow citizens, a kind of extension to Israel. Christ's body is a *new* man because its members are spiritually regenerated. That which is called new in the Bible is often what we today would call *renewed*. Israel is renewed in Christ, not replaced by the church but expanded to encompass Gentile Christians as co-citizens. Another facet of the newness is the actual peace that Christ brought about between Israel and the nations, which ought to be evident among Jews and Gentiles who, through their faith in Jesus, have become members of his body.

The 'man' whom Christ created is clearly a corporate entity, the church, or body of Christ. 'Humanity' is probably a more helpful translation than 'man,' as it expresses the fact that the body of Christ comprises many human members. Inasmuch as individual saints are not homogenised in this age—or beyond the eschaton—the identities of Jews and Gentiles are not washed away in the waters of baptism. Persistence of Jewish identity in particular is not only defined by ethnicity and culture, but also by faith tradition (including Torah-obligation in a manner not required of Gentile Christians) and a unique function (or service) within the body.

While some Christian commentators have argued that the phrase 'one new man' in Ephesians 2:15 refutes Jew-Gentile distinction within the

church, my analysis reaches the opposite conclusion from the same text. The reconciliation of the two groups *as they are* (yet with their members transformed in Christ) is a pledge of Christ's ability to bring peace to bitterest enemies. God's astonishing work of reconciliation loses this significance if Jews and Gentiles are homogenised or blended in Christ, if it becomes 'a mere historical remembrance rather than a miracle that is continually renewed' (Kinzer 2005:171). One may thus understand the church to be a mix of Jesus-believing Jews and Gentiles; they are united in Christ but distinct in their ethnic identities.

The test for mixed use of personal pronouns in Ephesians validates this conclusion by providing internal evidence for a cross-classification of individuals according to two binary classifications: i) either Jew or Gentile *and* ii) as either in Christ or not. Notably, some English translations such as the ESV assert that Christ sought to 'create in himself one new man *in place of* the two…' (Eph 2:15, emphasis added). However, based on my interpretation of 'one new man', I suggested that the translators' supply of the phrase, 'in place of', is misleading. I further suggested that 'establish' might bear Paul's nuance better than 'create', and concur with others who prefer 'humanity' to 'man'. Thus, I propose that the clause in question might best be interpreted, 'in order that he might establish the two in himself into one new humanity…'

The Christian tradition that there is 'no distinction' between Jews and Gentiles in Christ is based on a number of NT texts. In my opinion, the most important of these are Acts 15:9 (and sometimes 11:12); Romans 3:22; 10:12; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 3:11. This paper has only addressed one of these key texts, concluding that Paul's calling the church 'one new man' in Ephesians 2:15 does not by any means prove that its members are no longer Jewish and Gentile. Instead, the text allows, and even requires, retention of the Jew-Gentile

classification—even among the members of Christ's body—in a theologically meaningful way, not merely ethnically or culturally. The other key texts pertaining to the 'no distinction' argument remain for further investigation.

3.2. Implications

The implications of viewing the church as a unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, rather than a unification that blends the two parties homogeneously, are immense. I shall mention two major ramifications of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction. The first is that it permits and even promotes the practice of Judaism by Jewish believers in Jesus—as long as such practice does not contravene NT teaching. (Distinction theory regards cautions in the NT against taking on the whole Law as being addressed to Gentile Jesus-believers. Such differentiation is not possible in the dominant 'no distinction' position.) The modern Messianic Jewish movement thus expresses its Jewish identity through Torah-observance and the development of *halakhic* standards, worship in synagogues following Jewish liturgy and norms, participation in traditional Jewish ceremonies (including circumcision and *bar mitzvah,* for example) and festivals. Typically, all of these expressions are adapted to some degree to include key elements of the NT, especially regarding Christology. Good examples include *Standards of Observance* (a guide to Messianic Jewish *halakhah;* MJRC 2012), *Zichron Mashiach* (Messiah's Remembrance Meal—a liturgy; Kinzer 2013), and *The Sabbath Table* (prayers, blessings, and songs for the Sabbath; Anon. 2014).

A second important consequence of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction is that Jewish Jesus-believers form a nexus between Israel and the nations, being both members of the people of Israel and members of Christ's body. Karl Barth discerned this even before the

modern Messianic Jewish movement developed; he recognised that, corporately, Jewish Jesus-believers 'fulfill their appointed role when they are the ekklesia in Israel and Israel in the ekklesia' (Kinzer 2005:176; see pp. 174–177 on 'Karl Barth and bilateral ecclesiology'). Following on closely, his son, Markus Barth, wrote, 'Brotherhood with Israel is the very essence, not the possible consequence, of the peace Christ has made' (1963:7). The textual analysis on Ephesians 2:15 presented in this paper concurs with both Karl and Markus Barth on these matters. Therefore, I deduce (as others have done before me, e.g. Rudolph 2013:14) that Jewish believers in Jesus are a bridge that joins the nations to Israel and, furthermore, that the Messianic Jewish synagogue is exemplary as the locus of the peace that Christ initiated, he being their paragon himself.

Messianic Jewish synagogues did not exist when Karl and Markus Barth wrote, but today they flourish as places where Jews and Gentiles express their devotion to Jesus in unity, yet with distinction.[22] All participants who have repented and been baptised are invited to the communion table, while typically only the Jewish members wear *tzitzit* ('tassles', see Num 15:37–41; Deut 22:12) and observe other commandments issued specifically to the children of Israel. Messianic Jewish synagogues are a place where representatives from the nations *actually attach* themselves to the faithful remnant of Israel, remembering with gratitude and humility that the new covenant was formed with 'the house of Israel and with the house of Judah' (Jer 31:31), not with Gentile nations. Such congregations *observably apply* the theory of intra-ecclesial Jew-Gentile distinction; they offer *concrete evidence* that the 'one new man' Christ created (Eph 2:15) is a regenerated humanity comprising Jews as Jews and Gentiles as

[22] Practices vary, together with the degree of distinction made, but I am presenting what I perceive (through personal experience and extensive reading) to be the dominant model.

Gentiles—all at peace with one another in spite of objections by expositors, like Lloyd-Jones, who have declared this impossible.[23]

Unity and distinction must go hand-in-hand. Neither unity nor distinction of Jesus-believing Jews and Gentiles should be emphasised at the expense of the other (Atkinson 2008:17). The interplay between these two aspects of their relationship creates a tension of interdependence which results in mutual blessing. 'Just as husband and wife have distinct roles within God's ideal of a unified, joyful whole, so it is with his calling of Israel and the nations' (UMJC 2010:24). In fact, the intimate composition and mutual dependence of Jews and Gentiles is essential to the church

> *because the church is a prolepsis of Israel and the nations in the eschaton*. Interdependence and mutual blessing between Jew and Gentile reflects the *raison d'être* of the church and anticipates the consummation when Israel and the nations, in Torah-defined unity and diversity, will worship ADONAI alone (Rudolph 2010:15).

Finally, if there are doctrinal implications, there ought to be a corresponding response in theological education. What I view as a central theme of Ephesians—the unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ as a sign or 'firstfruits' of the promised eschatological peace between Israel and the nations—is largely overlooked in seminary training and, consequently, in church preaching. To me, it seems that Christian training and preaching generalises Ephesians' central motif of reconciliation, unity, and peace *between Jews and Gentiles* by presenting instead *all believers in general* as the parties in focus.

[23] I am not recommending that Gentile Christians leave their churches for a local Messianic *schul*, which would result in the problem of Gentile dominance in numbers in most parts of the world. Church-hosted table fellowship and special worship events could equally demonstrate Jew-Gentile unity with distinction.

Without denying the importance of peace among all Jesus-believers, I suggest that such generalisation results in a diluted and compromised reading of the letter, since Paul specifically identified Jews and Gentiles as the primary parties of Christ's peace accord.

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Una Eclesiología de Cuidado en la Misión Urbana: La Capellanía de Prisión y los Derechos Humanos Según el Evangelio de Cristo[1]

Angela Durigan[2]

Resumen

Esta disertación hace un estudio analítico de los derechos humanos en la vida de los encarcelados, que son cuidados a través de la Capellanía de Prisión del Proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares, bajo dos diferentes dimensiones: el humanismo y el cristianismo. Involucrando los derechos humanos en Brasil, la iglesia como lugar de refugio e seguridad, la realidad de la evangelización en las prisiones brasileñas y lo qué hacen las iglesias en ese contexto.

Este proyecto, con visión de misión urbana y el discipulado, se involucró en la misión de cuidar de la vida de otros y siempre que posible, ayudarlos con sus derechos. En el caso de los encarcelados, sus derechos humanos son respetados

[1] As the South African Theological Seminary continues to expand into many parts of the world, we have forged a number of significant ministry partners in several languages. This has enabled us to encourage scholars to submit articles and research for publication in other languages.
This edition of *Conspectus* contains the first foreign language article, written in Spanish. It was submitted by Angela Durigan, from The Latin American Doctoral Program in Theology (PRODOLA).

[2] The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

cuando se les trata como ciudadanos y no como escoria de la sociedad. Todo ser humano tiene derechos y deberes, pero debe ser consciente de ellos a vivir en paz en la sociedad donde está ubicado.

An Ecclesiology of Care in the Urban Mission: The Prison Chaplaincy and the Human Rights According to the Gospel of Christ

Abstract

This dissertation makes an analytical study of the human rights in the life of the prisoners, who are cared through the Prison Chaplaincy of SOS Family Dramas Project, under two different dimensions: the humanism and the Christianity. Involving the human rights in Brazil, the church as a place of refuge and safety, the reality of evangelization in Brazilian prisons and what churches do in this context.

This project, with a vision of urban mission and discipleship, became involved in the mission of taking care of the life of others and whenever possible, help them with their rights. In the prisoner's case, their human rights are respected when they are treated as citizens and not as scourge of the society. All human being has rights and duties, but must be aware of them to live in peace in the society where it is located.

1. Introducción

La iglesia del siglo 21 debe estar preparada para ser la rescatadora y cuidadora del bienestar de la familia para que la Iglesia de Cristo cumple su misión de evangelización en la tierra. Puesto que vivimos en una sociedad que ha perdido sus valores éticos y morales, muchas familias han sido devastadas por el divorcio, la adicción al alcohol y las drogas, por los abusos sexuales de menores, por la prostitución, por la enfermedad emocional, las crisis relacionales e incluso la pérdida de la libertad de sus hijos que están en la cárcel. Por lo tanto, a través de la experiencia de la investigadora en la consejería pastoral y el cuidado en la vida de las personas en la Iglesia del Nazareno de Itatiba[3] y del pueblo de la ciudad de Itatiba[4] que buscan ayuda, nació el Proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares. Este trabajo se puso en marcha a partir de marzo de 2011 y cuenta con doce consejeros laicos dispuestos a ayudar a individuos y, o familias en situación de crisis. Ellos fueron entrenados por un buen tiempo para cuidar, orientar y monitorear a estas personas que acuden a la iglesia.

Con el proyecto SOS, nació la Capellanía de Prisión para asistir a los encarcelados de la ciudad de Itatiba que buscan ayuda y asistencia espiritual. Por lo tanto, la capellanía de prisión comenzó con una carta recibida de un recluso de la ciudad de Itatiba en una prisión en Casa Blanca, SP. Él fue arrestado y condenado por los crímenes cometidos

[3] La iglesia del Nazareno en la ciudad de Itatiba cuenta con unos 1.250 (mil doscientos cincuenta) miembros, todavía hay dos congregaciones más pequeñas en dos barios más pobres, pero las mismas hacen parte de lo todo de la Iglesia del Nazareno de Itatiba. (Informaciones de la oficina de la Iglesia del Nazareno en Itatiba en 2013). La investigadora sirve en esta iglesia por más de siete años como asistente de pastor.

[4] La ciudad de Itatiba se encuentra cerca de 26 kilómetros de Campinas, SP, y cuenta con una población estimada en el año 2005 de 93.447. Datos extraídos de la monografía de Angela Durigan (2010). p.8. http://www.explorevale.com.br/circuitodasfrutas/itatiba/index.htm.

como resultado del uso de 'crack'. Uno de sus crímenes fue robar R$ 15,00 para comer porque tenía hambre.

Según el evangelio de Lucas, Jesús fue enviado a pregonar libertad a los cautivos[5] (la libertad de alma), y desde esta perspectiva, este proyecto con visión de misión urbana y el discipulado, se involucró en la misión de cuidar de la vida de otros y siempre que posible, ayudarlos con sus derechos. Entonces, el proyecto lleva a la cárcel, no sólo la esperanza y la dignidad a través de Jesucristo, sino también ayuda a soportar las consecuencias de sus malas acciones. Por otro lado, el grupo se esfuerza por hacer que se sientan amados, cuidados y por medio de la iglesia de Cristo, y sus derechos humanos son respetados cuando se les trata como ciudadanos y no como escoria de la sociedad.

Así, esta disertación propone mostrar un poco lo que es posible hacer para ayudar a la persona que vive en sociedad, qué es lo que le provoca dolor y sufrimiento en su vida y familia, cuando pierde su libertad al no respectar al otro ser humano, y no cumple las reglas establecidas por una sociedad organizada y qué es lo que la iglesia puede hacer en ese contexto.

2. El Humanismo y el Cristianismo

El ser humano es un ser creado a imagen y semejanza de Dios, por lo que es: alma, espíritu y cuerpo. Sin embargo, él tiene una voluntad y esto hace que también tiene diferentes sentimientos y pensamientos de otros seres humanos, que se sociabilizan con él. Entonces, tiene que adherirse a las normas y respetar los derechos de los demás. Entre tanto, él es el responsable de su destino, lo que significa que es responsable de sus acciones y elecciones. Así, la sociedad está formada por la igualdad

[5] Lucas 4:18.

de derechos y deberes, donde el ser humano debe cumplir su parte para sí mismo y seguir su camino sin afectar a los derechos de los demás, respetando una sociedad que se organiza para vivir en paz.

De acuerdo a Romualdo Dropa (2003:1): 'El principal deseo del hombre es la búsqueda de la paz interior, haciendo una vida plena en armonía. El humanismo es la forma en que el hombre tiende a ser verdaderamente humano, haciéndolo adquirir la riqueza interior y proporcionar una mejor visión del mundo.'[6]

Cuando las personas no respetan los límites de unos a otros, y actúan de forma muy desastrosa y violenta causando trastornos en su medio, trayendo consecuencias a sus vidas y a sus familias. La violencia no debería hacer parte de una sociedad que es compuesta por reglas, límites y respecto. Sin embargo, las personas a menudo por falta de condiciones morales y materiales, de vivir en la pobreza, no actúan de acuerdo a los principios éticos y morales necesarios para que una sociedad tenga orden. Cometen crímenes, o adquieren los vicios que conducen a una dependencia de sustancias químicas, lo que provoca, a veces, la pérdida temporal de su libertad. Por otro lado, las clases sociales más altas, también han sido afectadas por la delincuencia, cuando sus hijos son igualmente víctimas de las drogas y, a menudo para mantener su adicción, se convierten en ladrones y o asesinos.

Según Romualdo Dropa (2003:1–2):

> El hombre está dotado con la capacidad de elección y puede elegir y planificar su futuro, y le permite la libertad entre el bien y el mal, la complacencia o la renuncia, etc. El mal que impregna el mundo

[6] Romualdo F. Dropa (2003). Direitos humanos no Brasil (p. 1). Capturado el 01.07.2012 de: http://www.advogado.adv.br/artigos/2003/romualdoflaviodropa/—direitoshumanosbrasil.htm.

> se manifiesta desde el momento en que el hombre niega la libertad natural de su semejante por la manipulación de su libre esencia con el objetivo de satisfacer sus intereses personales. Por lo tanto, afecta a la libertad y los derechos naturales del hombre desde la violencia física, social, económica, racial y religiosa. Esta agresión no es más que una lucha por las intenciones humanas, la búsqueda de la satisfacción de intereses particulares en detrimento de otros. Surgen de esta manera, opresores y oprimidos, débiles y fuertes, ricos y pobres. Ante esta situación de opresión que existe en el mundo fenomenal, donde hay una invasión, perturbación y la negación de los derechos fundamentales, específicamente, la libertad, se entiende, en consecuencia, una ética social que trata de las contradicciones que generan dolor y sufrimiento.[7]

A la persona que está pasando por el dolor y el sufrimiento, es necesario dedicar tiempo y cuidado para que pueda reconstruirse a sí mismo y volver a su vida normal. Pero debe desear este cambio de vida, y especialmente el cambio de carácter, dejando atrás la vieja manera de vivir y vivir la vida nueva que Cristo ofrece.[8] Por esa razón, se le puede ayudar y llevar a su familia a un nuevo comienzo. Mientras que las personas no acepten cambios en sus vidas, la sociedad se ve afectada en su conjunto. La sociedad de Brasil, vive hoy en un contexto de violencia urbana, tanto por parte de civiles, como policías. Por lo tanto, por medio del evangelio se puede lograr la transformación y la paz en la vida humana que clama por la justicia y derechos humanos, porque en el cristianismo, las personas pueden reconciliarse con Dios y pueden vivir un humanismo teocéntrico, enraizado en la fe y dependencia de su creador.

[7] Romualdo F. Dropa (2003). Direitos humanos no Brasil (p. 1–2). Capturado el 01.07.2012 de: http://www.advogado.adv.br/artigos/2003/romualdoflaviodropa/direitoshumanosbrasil.htm

[8] Vea Efesios 4:22–24, el nuevo hombre creado según Dios en la justicia y santidad de la verdad.

3. Los Derechos Humanos en Brasil

La carta Magna de Brasil, de 1988, comienza con el individuo y fue escrita para la persona humana, es un documento que refleja en los principios de la Carta Universal de los Derechos Humanos y tiene por objeto proteger tanto como sea posible los derechos y garantías las personas y del ciudadano.[9] Entonces, todo ser humano tiene derechos y deberes, pero debe ser consciente de ellos a vivir en paz en la sociedad donde está ubicado. Acá, sus deberes se les recuerda constantemente, pero sus derechos no siempre son accesibles dentro de una realidad social que clama por la justicia o sea a los derechos humanos en las cárceles.

El sistema penitenciario en Brasil está en crisis, el número de defensores públicos en Sao Paulo es insuficiente[10] y las cárceles están saturadas. En el estado de São Paulo, hay casi un tercio de la población carcelaria del país: 158.000 presos para 99.000 vacantes disponibles. Hay un déficit de 59.000, lo que significa que en el sistema de 72 prisiones en régimen cerrado, sólo cuatro no están superpobladas. Una lista publicada con el número de vacantes en las cárceles, muestra por ejemplo que en la cárcel "Desembargador Adriano Marrey - Guarulhos II, SP, que tiene capacidad para 1.200 internos, cuenta ahora con 2.111, es 1,759 superior a su capacidad normal. Es decir, casi dos personas ocupan un lugar en la celda de la prisión.[11]

[9] Del trabajo de Ronaldo Dropa, Los derechos humanos en Brasil (p. 9–10).
[10] Datos extraídos de la Folha.com—Cotidiano - Número de defensores públicos em SP é insuficiente, (p. 1), capturado el 05.07.2012 de: www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/1096562.
[11] Datos extraídos de la Folha Online—Cotidiano—Penitenciárias de São Paulo estão superlotadas, p.1, capturado el 05.07.2012 de: www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/cotidiano

El proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares, asiste a 54 encarcelados en dieciocho cárceles en el Estado de Sao Paulo donde hay superpoblación en acuerdo al cuadro 1 abajo:

Nombre de las Prisiones	**Número de**		**Población Peniten-Ciaria**[12]
	encarcelados SOS	celdas disponibles	
01. Penitenciaria de Casa Branca, SP	17	852	1.968
02. Penitenciaria II Itapetininga, SP	2	804	1.637
03. Penitenciária II Hortolândia Campinas, SP	11	804	1.702
04. Penitenciária Feminina São Bernardo, Campinas	1	528	1.004
05. Penitenciaria Odon R. Maranhão Iperó, SP	1	1.218	2.325
06. Penitenciaria de Andradina, SP	1	792	1.655
07. Penitenciaria de Marília, SP	1	500	1.190
08. Penitenciária Flórida Paulista, SP	2	768	1.732
09. Penitenciária II de Guareí, SP	8	768	1.877

[12] Datos extraídos de la página del gobierno del Estado de São Paulo en la web. Capturado el 08.10.2013 y 28.11.2013 de: www.sap.sp.gov.br

10. Penitenciária I de Guarulhos, SP	1	216	449
11. Penitenciária Feminina Carandirú, SP	1	2.400	2.417
12. Penitenciária CDP Belém II Vila Moreira, SP	1	768	2.595
13. Penitenciária de Marabá Paulista, SP.	1	768	1.741
14. Penitenciária C.D.P. de Jundiaí, SP.	2	768	1.601
15. Penitenciária de Balbinus, Bauru/SP	1	768	1.573
16. CDD Parque Itália – Campinas	1	768	1.787
17. CPP Prof. Ataliba Nogueira – Campinas	1	960	1.749
18. Penitenciária Capela do Alto, Capela do Alto	1	768	1.299
Total	**54**	**15.218**	**30.301**

Cuadro 1: Prisiones donde SOS asiste a los que buscan ayuda

Romualdo Dropa (2003), habla de las condiciones carcelarias en Brasil y de la visión acerca de los criminales de la siguiente manera:

> Las condiciones de reclusión: las cárceles brasileñas están super-pobladas, sin las mínimas condiciones de vida decentes, lo que

> contribuye aún más a desarrollar el carácter violento del individuo y de su rechazo de la sociedad que lo puso allí. La visión acerca de los criminales es que comenzando con el crimen lo convierte en un individuo aparte de la sociedad, y su aislamiento dentro de la prisión, significa la pérdida de toda su dignidad humana y debe, por tanto, ser olvidado como una persona humana, se ignora que los derechos humanos se aplican a todo el mundo, ya sea penal o no. Por desgracia, en Brasil, las vidas de los pobres o criminales tienen menos valor (p. 13–14).

En ese contexto, como observadora participante, la autora notó que los presos pasan por necesidades tales como: falta de informaciones de sus abogados, porque no pueden pagarlos, muchos están ubicados lejos de sus familias, la alimentación es precaria—solamente tres al día, donde hay un desayuno, almuerzo y cena. En la mayoría de las cárceles no cuentan con agua caliente para bañarse, hay falta de medicamentos, productos de higiene personal y el tratamiento de los funcionarios hacia los encarcelados es inhumano, así como lo es la propia prisión. Los presos no son tratados con dignidad moral, porque una vez declarado culpable, es un criminal y una vez en la cárcel, no tiene derecho a ser bien tratados, incluyendo el acceso precario a la supervivencia básica, como se ha mencionado anteriormente.

Es un cuadro terrible, especialmente de las familias de los presos que pasan por necesidades materiales e emocionales. Ellas no pueden, por sí solo, superar el trauma y se enferman, como es el caso de algunas madres de mayor edad y por consiguiente no van a visitar a sus hijos. Sin contar con las esposas que se quedan embarazada en la cárcel, cuando hacen sus pocas visitas. Son los hijos generados tras los barrotes de una celda de la prisión, que a menudo nacen en un futuro incierto.

A través de esta imagen del sufrimiento humano, la iglesia de Cristo trabaja en favor de los necesitados, del huérfano y la viuda, pero que también trabaja para el consuelo de los encarcelados.

4. Iglesia, Lugar de Refugio y Seguridad

La labor de asistencia de la Iglesia del Nazareno de Itatiba en la Capellanía de prisión, se realiza a través de algunas de las visitas iniciales en las cárceles y luego a través de cartas a los presos y sus familias. En un primer momento, algunos presos escribieron cartas a la iglesia para pedir ayuda espiritual y emocional, por lo que comenzó este trabajo, como ya se mencionó. Otros llegaron a la iglesia con el asesoramiento de personas que han venido a conocer esta obra, y otros más fueron designados por los presos. Por lo tanto, no todos son de la ciudad Itatiba.

Como iglesia, lo que hacemos es asistirlos emocionalmente y espiritualmente, pero cuando necesitan de alguna información al respecto de sus procesos, recurrimos a un abogado dispuesto a donar su tiempo en busca de las informaciones solicitadas.[13] Por otra parte, cuando necesitan alguno medicamento, también les enviamos. Así como les enviamos productos de higiene personal o vestimentas cuando sea necesario. La iglesia del Nazareno de Itatiba, a partir de agosto del

[13] Generalmente, los más pobres no pueden pagar un abogado, entonces el estado lo designa, así que el abogado comparece solamente en las audiencias. Después del juicio, el condenado no sabe más al respecto de su proceso. Su familia puede acceder a través de Internet, pero muchas familias no pueden hacer esto, o no tienen acceso a Internet o no tienen interés en hacerlo. Dentro de la prisión, pueden solicitar beneficios, por ejemplo, el semi-abierto y el resultado se da dentro de la prisión. Sin embargo, hay casos en que, por falta de información o la presencia de un abogado, no pueden obtener algunos beneficios. Sin embargo, el SOS no puede hacer nada, porque no es un abogado constituido, únicamente la de informar al prisionero su situación procesal, para que el prisionero, busque sus derechos.

2012 empieza una campaña mensual para recoger los productos ya mencionados para una donación efectiva a los presos.

Este trabajo se inició en dos cárceles. Hoy en día, el Proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares asiste a 54 presos de dieciocho instituciones mencionadas en el Cuadro 1 y sus familias y, a ocho ex encarcelados y sus familias, como se muestra en el cuadro abajo:

Encarcelados y Familias Participantes del Proyecto	**Número**
Presos de dieciocho cárceles	54
Familias de los encarcelados contactadas y, o en el monitoreo	34
Familiares y amigos contactados y, o en el monitoreo	7
Ex encarcelados en el monitoreo	8
Familia de ex encarcelados en el monitoreo	8

Cuadro 2: Capellanía de Prisión SOS Dramas Familiares[14]

El Proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares, tiene como objetivo la reestructuración de la familia de los presos, para que cuando salgan de la cárcel, no regresen al mismo ambiente que los llevó allí. Por lo tanto, el trabajo con las familias se desarrolla a través de visitas, reuniones en la oficina pastoral, en los grupos de apoyo del Proyecto SOS, y a través de cartas mensuales. También se proporciona la canasta básica de alimentos, si la familia necesita.

[14] Informaciones extraídas de los registros del Proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares—Capellanía de Prisión el 28.11.2013.

Sin embargo, se observó que las familias no son conscientes de la necesidad de un cambio en su contexto creyendo que el problema es sólo del prisionero y sólo él debe buscar el cambio. Así que muchas familias no quieren participar en el proyecto porque lo creen innecesario. Sin embargo, el equipo de SOS no se desanima y la supervisión continua con esas familias, a través de cartas mensuales para llevar una palabra de consuelo en el amor de Cristo Jesús.

5. La Realidad de la Evangelización en los Prisiones Hoy y lo Que Hacen las Iglesias en Nuestro Contexto

Muchas iglesias evangélicas están trabajando en las cárceles en Brasil, especialmente en el estado de Sao Paulo y desarrollan un trabajo maravilloso de la Capellanía de prisión, centrada en la persona de Jesucristo. El gobierno del estado de Sao Paulo, permite a las iglesias evangélicas poner en la cárcel un proyecto para la regeneración de los presos que confiesen a Jesús como Señor y Salvador de sus vidas. A partir de estos proyectos, se llevan a cabo en las cárceles: los servicios religiosos, bautizos en el agua, bodas y otros eventos relacionados con el evangelio de Jesucristo. Entonces, fue permitido por el sistema penitenciario, 'las iglesia de celdas,' donde los reclusos se separan y son tratados con más dignidad moral y afecto, porque han demostrado cambios en el comportamiento y carácter.

En la continuación de ese trabajo, se observó que los presos que aceptan a Jesucristo en la cárcel y van a la iglesia celda (cuando hay esta opción dentro de la prisión, no son todo los que tienen), conocen el evangelio, son conscientes de sus pecados y de la necesidad de transformación de sus vidas. Así que se arrepienten de sus crímenes y comienzan a vivir una nueva vida en Cristo Jesús. En la iglesia celda, empiezan a caminar con Jesús, comprenden que cuando se vayan, deben dar su testimonio y

ganar almas para Cristo. Así piensan y creen que va a ser misioneros de la obra del Señor a tiempo completo y que será muy fácil de hacerlo.

Esta opinión generalizada dentro de las cárceles trae inquietud a nuestros corazones, porque no se les enseña sobre el rechazo y la discriminación que se encontrarán fuera de la prisión. Es como el apóstol Pablo en el Nuevo Testamento, cuando perseguía a los cristianos y fue visto por la gente como una amenaza, cuando comenzó a hablar acerca de Jesús.[15]

Los presos están entusiasmados y esperanzados con la posibilidad de una nueva vida fuera de la cárcel. Sin embargo, hace falta una obra educativa con ellos, así que no se debe a esperar ganar el mundo predicando el evangelio, pero primero a la vez tienen que reconciliarse con la sociedad y demostrar a la casa que son dignos de confianza. Muchas familias de los presos no los quieren de vuelta, porque han sufrido mucho, entonces, la propia familia denigra la imagen de aquel que está siendo transformado por el amor de Jesús. Por lo tanto, el ex preso, por lo general no encuentra la compasión de su familia, y mucho menos de una sociedad que excluye a aquellos que fueron condenados. Por esta razón, hay una incidencia de recaídas y vuelven a su vida de delincuencia, que son causadas generalmente por adicción a las drogas, como ya se ha mencionado anteriormente.

El Proyecto SOS Dramas Familiares a través de la Capellanía de Prisión, tiene como objetivo cambiar la visión de los presos y sus familias[16], para que puedan encontrar en el Evangelio de Jesucristo, la

[15] Vea Hechos 9:21–26.

[16] El febrero de 2011, durante un curso de Capellanía de prisión, la investigadora habló con el coordinador de las prisiones de la región central de São Paulo, con 42 prisiones bajo su comando, (hoy no más), Dr. José Reinaldo Silva, sobre el proyecto SOS dramas familiares y la visión para la Capellanía de Prisión. El Dr. José Reinaldo fue muy favorable para el proyecto y dijo que el gobierno del estado de Sao Paulo ha

verdadera paz, la esperanza de una vida mejor y ser una familia de fe, reestructurado y fortalecido emocionalmente para ser sal y luz en la tierra.

6. Conclusión

Las ciencias sociales estudian la vida social de los individuos y grupos humanos[17], la sociología estudia el comportamiento humano en función del medio y de los procesos que interconectan a los individuos en asociaciones, grupos y instituciones,[18] la eclesiología—*ekklesia*—trata también del papel social de la iglesia y de su forma de relacionarse con el mundo.[19] Entre tanto, para la investigadora, una eclesiología de cuidado, trata del papel de la iglesia como acción de cuidado en el mundo. Por ese motivo, el papel de la iglesia es fundamental para que la sociedad reciba el amor de Dios a través del comportamiento de cuidado de uno hacia los otros, especialmente a los que sufren y pasan por las crisis existenciales, emocionales o familiares.

El papel de la iglesia frente al mundo es importante, por eso, involucra la responsabilidad social en la vida de todo creyente, principalmente de aquellos que están en ministerio. Así, el amor al prójimo debe ser

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buscado la asociación con las iglesias que quieren ayudar a que la sociedad brasileña sea mejor. Él dijo también que no hay proyectos realizados en los 42 centros penitenciarios, bajo su comando, que incluyen la familia, sólo a los reclusos. Así que animó al equipo de SOS para seguir adelante, ya que la visión del proyecto es alcanzar, principalmente las familias de los reclusos.

[17] Ciencias Sociales, extraído de http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ci%C3%AAncias_sociais Capturado de la web el 09.07.2012.

[18] Sociología, extraído de http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sociologia Capturado de la web el 09.07.2012.

[19] Eclesiología, extraído de http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eclesiologia Capturado de la web el 09.07.2012.

llevado a todo lo que necesita ayuda, porque en el papel social de la iglesia está incluido en su misión de salvación.

La familia es especial para Dios y su bienestar, pero falta tomar consciencia del amor de Jesús en la sociedad que vive las intemperies de los tiempos. En Brasil, como hay mucha violencia es necesario un movimiento por parte de la iglesia para la concientización de las familias de la importancia del ser humano para Dios, de sus derechos y del cuidado de unos hacia los otros. Los derechos humanos sólo pueden ser respectados si existe respeto por los seres humanos como personas. Así, que la iglesia puede a través de la acción social promover el amor de Cristo Jesús en el reino de Dios y por toda la tierra de Brasil.

Las personas tienen necesidades, por eso trabajan, para obtener una vida mejor. Entre tanto, el problema se presenta cuando hay grandes mayorías que no tienen la posibilidad de satisfacer sus necesidades básicas[20], y son oprimidas por un sistema injusto que les quita el derecho de igualdad. La iglesia debe promover en la sociedad los frutos buenos y a través del amor de Cristo Jesús igualmente ayudarla a eliminar los frutos malos, para que el ser humano recupere la imagen y semejanza del Creador afectada por el pecado original.

Sabemos que el proyecto SOS es una gota de agua en el océano, pero la misión de amor y cuidado de Jesús nos impulsa a proseguir por este camino en busca de las vidas que necesitan de cuidado, porque pasan por las aflicciones en un mundo que se pierde por falta de amor. El ser humano es importante para Dios y la asistencia social y moral debe ser prioridad de la iglesia de Cristo hoy.

[20] Ruiz, A. C. (s.f.). Las ciencias sociales en el quehacer pastoral de América Latina, (p. 28).

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Doctrinal Basis

In doctrine, the South African Theological Seminary is broadly evangelical. We believe in the inspiration of Scripture, the doctrine the Trinity, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the sinfulness of man, the need for salvation through the atoning death of Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit in and through believers, and the centrality of the local church to the mission of God. SATS stands on the triune doctrinal foundation—Bible-based, Christ-centred, and Spirit-led. *Conspectus* reinforces these three core theological tenets by means of scholarly

research that deliberates their meaning and application for the modern church.

Submitting an Article

The author of an article that is submitted for review is required to submit the names and contact details of three potential referees. The entire review process is completely anonymous from the perspective of both the reviewers and authors.

The Review Process

The article is provisionally evaluated by the senior editor or assistant editor of the journal to determine whether it is in line with the type of articles the journal publishes and is of sufficient academic quality to merit formal review. If in the opinion of the editor the submission is not suitable, the author is notified and the article is not sent to reviewers. If the editor sees some potential in the article, he proceeds with the remainder of the review process.

The senior editor advances the submission to two referees with appropriate expertise on the particular topic. The editor removes the name of the author from the submission. The potential reviewer receives an electronic copy of the submission, together with a Conspectus Review Form, which contains three sections: (a) the review criteria, (b) the recommendation, (c) developmental feedback (i.e. comments).

Each reviewer is required to make a recommendation, which must be one of the following four options: (a) publish without changes, (b) publish with minor changes, (c) publish with major changes, and (d) do

not publish. The reviewer is also expected to provide qualitative on aspects of the article that he/she believes could be improved.

The review process is developmental in nature; reviewers provide in-depth assessment of both the strengths and weaknesses of the article. If they recommend ‘publish with minor changes’ or ‘publish with major changes’, they are expected to explain the perceived deficiencies and offer possible remedies.

Based on the recommendations made by the reviewers, the editor compiles the feedback for the author, indicating any changes that are required prior to publication. The final decision as to which changes are required lies with the senior editor. When the required changes are substantial, the revised submission is returned to the reviewers so that they can confirm that the deficiencies which they raised have been adequately addressed.

In the case of conflicting reviews, the decision to publish or not publish lies with the senior editor. If the senior editor sees merit in the recommendations of both reviewers, he may forward the article to a third referee.

Before publication, the author receives a proof copy of the article in PDF format for final inspection and approval.

Closing dates for submissions:

- 28/29th of February for the March issue
- 31st of August for the September issue