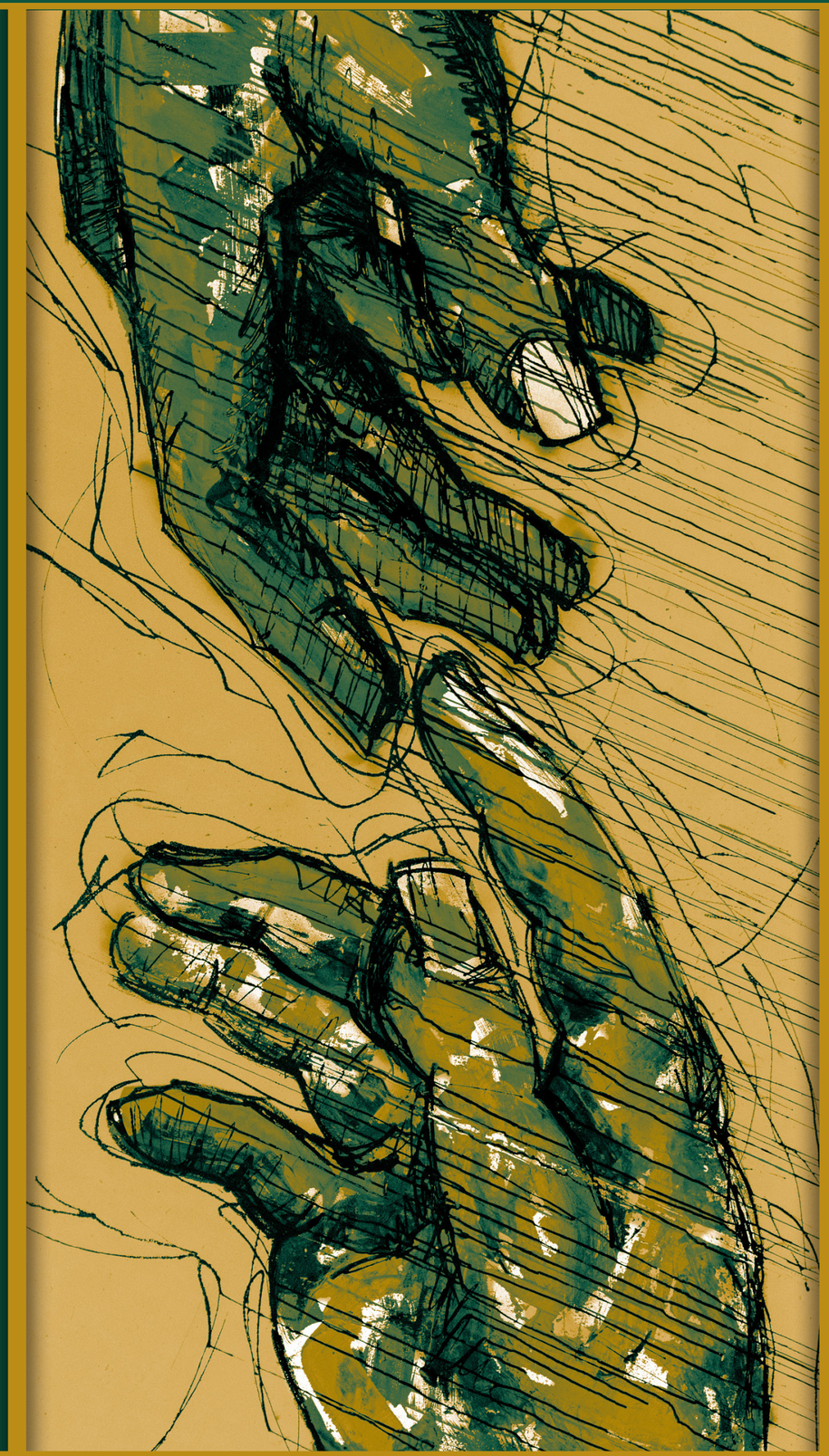

Conspectus

The Journal of the South African Theological Seminary

Volume 33
April 2022

SATS

Bible-based. Christ-centred. Spirit-led.

ISSN 1996-8167

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Editorial

Conspectus publishes content marked by three distinctives: first, like the seminary, the journal is broadly evangelical with the aim to ultimately serve the Church; second, the journal brings together various theological sub-disciplines; finally, it is a journal that foregrounds the Global South and Africa in particular. These three distinctives are well on display in *Conspectus* 33. The volume boasts seven well-written articles, spanning Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, Practical Theology, and even Psychology. The authors have done well to foreground the Church and, where appropriate, to situate theological concerns within African realities.

Conspectus 33 articles

In the first article, "The Rhetoric of Rejuvenation: Restoring the 'Weak' and 'Wanderers' according to James 5:13–20," Prof. Ernst R. Wendland analyzes the aforementioned pericope, paying special attention to the nature of the "weakness" (ἀσθενέω) that James's readers are encouraged to pray about. Wendland argues that the portion serves a climactic role in an epistle that communicates persistent purity of faith and life. He offers useful suggestions for a translation that faithfully conveys its tone and meaning.

In another New Testament article, "Metonymic Conceptualization of Body Parts in the Greek New Testament," Prof. Charles Owiredu examines the metonymic structure of body parts in the Greek New Testament within the framework of Conceptual Metonymy Theory. Owiredu aptly demonstrates that, in the New Testament, body parts are metonymically conceptualized as "body part stands for the person," "body part stands for activity," and "body part stands for its content."

Next, in an article titled, "Coherence in Ecclesiastes 3:16–22," Dr. Kimmo Huovila and Prof. Dan Lioy argue that the pericope ought to be understood as a coherent whole. They affirm the passage's two-fold response to injustice, namely, guaranteed justice through an afterlife judgement and God's action of revealing human limitations as he allows injustice.

Moving on to Systematic Theology, Mr. Aku Stephen Antombikums presents John Calvin and John Sanders as examples of the ongoing debate on the nature of divine control and human freedom in his article titled, "Is Divine Providence Risky? A Dialogue Between John Calvin and John Sanders." Using dialogical hermeneutics, Antombikums argues that divine providence is risky to us but not to God.

In his article, "Toward *Shalom* as a Radical and Transformative Conceptual Framework for Post-Apartheid Social Justice in Namibia," Dr. Basilius Kasera proposes the concept of *shalom* for a thicker theological and conceptual framework for Christian praxis in the Namibian post-apartheid context. Kasera employs critical analysis and suggests critical participation as a way of embodying Christian values and the gospel in the public sphere.

Next, in his article, "Is the Prosperity Gospel, Gospel? An Examination of the Prosperity and Productivity Gospels in African Christianity," Mr. Joshua R. Barron undertakes a hybrid of an integrative literature review and narrative literature review to evaluate the Prosperity Gospel, pointing to the Productivity Gospel as a viable, contextually-relevant alternative to the former.

Finally, in her article, "The Influence of Forgiveness on Radicalization into Violent Extremism among the Youth in Eastleigh Area, Nairobi County, Kenya," Dr. Florence Wamahiga investigates whether forgiveness can be used

as an intervention to curb radicalization of youth into violent extremism. Employing Relative Deprivation and Rational Choice Theory, Wamahiga underscores the importance of forgiveness and the teaching thereof in both church and society.

The issue concludes with two book reviews: Dr. Dustin Burlet reviews *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*, by William R. Osborne and Russell L. Meek (2020) and, in an extended review, Mr. Christopher J. Lovelace evaluates the second edition of *A Guide to Bible Translation: People, Languages, and Topics*, edited by Philip A. Noss and Charles S. Houser (2020).

My gratitude to the contributors, Editorial Board, Review Board, Editorial Team, and seminary for the successful publication of this issue. As you read through it, our prayer is that you will be inspired by theological engagement that takes both text and context seriously and that you will be well-served in your respective ministries.

In Christ,
Dr. Cornelia van Deventer
Editor

The Rhetoric of Rejuvenation: Restoring the "Weak" and "Wanderers" according to James 5:13–20

Ernst R. Wendland
Lusaka Lutheran Seminary

Abstract

The passage of Scripture under consideration in this study, James 5:13–20, is important for several reasons. First, this pericope occurs at the very end of the letter, which is normally a position of topical prominence in the epistles—providing some information that the writer, in closing, did not want his readers to forget. Second, both the form and the content of this text draw attention to its significance, that is, being composed in a very dynamic rhetorical style and dealing with personal sin and forgiveness. Finally, this section includes a selection of words, phrases, and even some complete statements that may have been misunderstood, mistranslated, and hence also misapplied in the history of biblical interpretation, namely, with reference to the nature of the apparent "weakness" (ἀσθενέω) that James's readers are encouraged to "pray" (προσεύχομαι) about (vv. 14–15). In order to lay the necessary foundation for the present examination of this concluding portion of the letter, an initial survey of some of the main contours of its inductive, oratorical organization is provided. This discourse overview provides intratextual support for the hypothesis that the passage concluding chapter five may be viewed as the climax of James's powerful epistolary exhortation, not simply an afterthought or an apostolic "PS." Individual spiritual sickness is indeed a serious issue and needs to be dealt with proactively by fellow faith-motivated members of the Body of Christ (5:19–20).[1]

This article: **https://www.sats.ac.za/rhetoric-rejuvenation-restoring-weak-james**
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.1

1 I greatly appreciate the detailed editorial feedback that I received in response to my original submission of this study.

Conspectus

Keywords
James, rhetoric, restoration, church discipline, pastoral theology

About the Author
Prof. Ernst Wendland obtained a Ph.D. in African Languages and Literature (1979, University of Wisconsin, USA) and has been teaching and writing at Lusaka Lutheran Seminary since 1968. He is affiliated with the Department of Ancient Studies at Stellenbosch University and several other tertiary educational institutions. A former translation consultant for the United Bible Societies, he still presents periodic training workshops at the Jerusalem Center for Bible Translators and online for other areas in the world. He is on the editorial review board of several academic journals.

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1. Discourse Structure—Deductive or Inductive?

> There is no theme or controlling purpose in this little book. (Kee and Young 1957, 319)
>
> The insights…used in our structural analysis of other texts in the New Testament simply do not apply to the homily of James. (Perrin 1974, 256)
>
> This man was a preacher before he was a writer. (Motyer 1985, 11)

The early scholarly critical assessment of the compositional style as well as the spiritual character of James was not very positive. For example, in the opinion of Martin Luther, not only was James "an epistle of straw" in terms of content because its emphasis upon the believer's works "mangles the Scriptures and thereby opposes Paul," but it was also deemed deficient with regard to style, since the author appeared to have a penchant for "throwing things together…chaotically" (Engelbrecht 2009, 2131).[2] Approaching James form-critically in the first half of the last century, Martin Dibelius too was not impressed with the seemingly jumbled character of the book's many proverbial-like sayings and smaller pericopes (Cargal 1993, 12–20; Davids 1982, 23), and even more recently Moo (2000, 7) comes to this conclusion about "the letter's lack of clear organization" (cf. Perrin 1974, 276; Loh and Hatton 1997, 2):

> The author moves quickly from topic to topic, and the logical relationship of the topics is often not at all clear.… [T]he letter has no obvious structure, nor even a clearly defined theme. Moral exhortations flow closely upon one another without connections and without much logical relationship. (Moo 2000, 7)

Although recent scholarship does discern more of a conceptual than a formal unity in the epistle of James,[3] there is little agreement as to how this is reflected in terms of major and minor themes or the letter's overall structural organization. One commentator typically presents a thematic outline that is quite different in significant respects from another, a fact that appears to support the text's general lack of cohesion and coherence, a discourse that "illustrates a structure based on 'stream of consciousness'" (Nida et al. 1983, 116).[4] But could there be a possible alternative explanation for this rather broad range of diversity, a reason that is closely linked to the type of "logic" which is being applied in assessment of this text? The following is a hypothesis that needs to be more fully explored.

2 Luther did appreciate the practical value of James's hortatory appeals, however, and comments, "I cannot include him among the chief books, though I would not prevent anyone from including or extolling him as he pleases, for there are otherwise many good sayings in him" (Engelbrecht 2009, 2132).

3 However, according to Fee and Stuart (2003, 57), the epistle of James "completely lacks a formal argument." Johnson (2002, 24), too, concludes that James is "the least theological and the most loosely structured of New Testament writings," and adds: "The concerns of this document are far removed from much of the New Testament." A comparison with the writings of James's two brothers, however (e.g., the Hillside Sermon of Matt 5–7 and 1 John), would lead me to disagree with the preceding assessment.

4 "[T]he term *stream of consciousness* in literature refers to the depiction of the thoughts and feelings which flow, with no apparent logic, through the mind of a character. To create the effect of the chaotic stream that we recognize in reality, the writer presents the seeming random mingling of thoughts, feelings, and sense impressions of a character at a specific time" (Beckson and Ganz 1975, 240). A close (re)reading of James will reveal, I think, a much more stable, structured, and purposeful arrangement of content than the stream of consciousness technique.

Based upon earlier studies of Chewa popular vernacular preaching (2000) and oral (radio) narratives (2004a),[5] I would suggest that instead of a typical Western, sequentially unfolding, deductively outlined development, the text of James appears to be arranged quite differently. Thus, the letter manifests a more "circular," iterative, intuitively associative, inductive style that is common in many non-Western cultures and verbal traditions, both ancient and modern, especially in the case of public oral discourse. *Deductive* reasoning and its characteristic manner of argumentation tends to proceed from general, abstract principles to more specific implications, or from established premises to logically valid (syllogistically fashioned) conclusions. The text, usually written (though it may be articulated orally), is rhetorically organized with explicit reference to certain major themes or topics, under which are listed two or more related sub-points. The discourse thus proceeds from, and may be conveniently summarized by, a formally ordered, multi-layered outline; and it normally presents a more prosaic, information-heavy (facts-based) style of verbal expression.

An *inductive* text, on the other hand, manifests a mode of expository or hortatory reasoning and composition that features particular facts, concrete cases, or individual examples, and the text builds on these in iterative fashion to develop a central theme or a general petition, exhortation, conclusion, or implication. In the case of a religious admonition, we have the additional characteristic of a sequence of specific requests that are based upon some important ethical motivations or accepted theological truths, which tend to be revealed only after the salient petitions have been made. Inductive discourse is characterized by a more energetic, colorful verbal style, frequently incorporating dramatic devices such as these: mini-narratives or parables, personal anecdotes, familiar analogies, vibrant, sense-related imagery, sharp contrasts and antitheses, real or rhetorical questions, maxims and proverbial lore, citations or allusions to well-known authorities, periodic snatches of direct speech, patterns of repetition, and other forceful rhetorical techniques that are especially suited to a vocal presentation, like hyperbole, irony, and enigma (Wendland 2000, 44–62).

Even a cursory overview of the complete discourse of James exhibits a distinctly inductive character that is accordingly well-suited for, and indeed seems to stem from an initial oral proclamation (perhaps recorded by a scribe). However, one cannot conclude that the text is entirely inductive, for it is obviously based on important theological facts and moral principles that the author assumes his audience (readers) are cognizant of.[6] They are simply taken for granted and normally left implicit (though often supported by a variety of intertextual scriptural allusions). This presupposed religious ideology then provides the foundation for the author's periodic assertions about the nature of God as well as his many appeals concerning the divine will for his hearers to adopt a transparent lifestyle that is distinguished by sincere humility, a mutual respect for one another, and the demonstrated service of believers who are serious about living their faith. Furthermore, it would not be correct to say that the form of James in terms of its discourse structure and stylistic features is completely oral-based and inductive in

5 Chewa (technically, *Chi*chewa, also known as *Nyanja* in Zambia) is a major southeastern Bantu Language of Wider Communication spoken as a first or second language by some 15–20 million people in the neighboring countries of Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.

6 I will assume in my argument an "audience" of listeners as being James's primary target group, though certainly readers would have been able to access the text as well. To me it seems, however, that the author's argument in the original is much less effective when mutely read to oneself. I regard the so-called "species" of rhetoric in James as being a varied mixture of the "deliberative" and "epideictic" sub-types, that is, a persuasive confirmation or refutation according to what is generally deemed beneficial or expedient (e.g., 1:2–11) coupled with the emotively-toned promotion or condemnation of basic communal beliefs and values (e.g., 1:12–18) (Wendland 2002, 173–174).

nature; rather, it is an expert mixture and interaction of both.[7] This sort of a blended compositional quality is typical of what Robbins (1993) terms an interactive "rhetorical culture":

> Performing oral and scribal activity in this way creates a rhetorical culture—one in which speech is influenced by writing and writing is influenced by speaking. Recitation, then, is the base of a rhetorical culture.... This interaction characterized their thinking, their speaking, and their writing.... In practice this means that *writing in a rhetorical culture imitates both speech and writing*, and speech in a rhetorical culture imitates both speech and writing. (113, 120–121; emphasis added)

The structural organization of James, when carefully examined according to the principles of linguistic, as well as literary analysis and studies of oral as well as written texts, reveals a rather more sophisticated discourse arrangement than many (mainly older) commentators give the original author credit for.[8] However, one must not go too far in the other direction and postulate neatly symmetrical, but ultimately artificial and reductionistic compositional patterns that cannot be solidly supported on the basis of a holistic, inclusive study of the original text. Motyer (1985, 12), for example, suggests that "[t]he introduction and conclusion [of James] balance each other in this way:

Introduction (1:2–11) The need for **patience** (1:2–4) and **prayer** (1:5–8) in all the contrasting circumstances of life (1:9–11)	*Conclusion* (5:7–20) The need for **patience** (5:7–12) and **prayer** (5:13–18) and **care** (5:19–20) in all the contrasting circumstances of life."

The problem with such schemes is not with the parallels that they reveal, but instead with the material that they very often leave out—at times, some very salient thematic elements, for example, the essential connection of "patience" with *testing* and *faith* in 1:2–4, but contrasting with the Lord's *judgment* and the making of *oaths* in 5:7–12. For Davids (1989, 8), on the other hand, the "conclusion" of James is found only in 5:7–11, and the rest of the letter is what he terms a "closing," which "covers three topics normally discussed in a Greek letter: oaths (5:12), health (5:13–18), and the reason for writing (5:19–20)." However, what distinguishes 5:7–11 as being the letter's "conclusion" (later said to be a summary, 118) is not made clear, and while it is handy to designate the several paragraphs that follow (vv. 12–20) as an "epistolary conclusion" (118), this perspective does require somewhat more substantiation than a mere title. Most thematic outlines of a typical Western, balanced or symmetrical nature are thus rather unconvincing, for example, Martin's (1988, ciii–civ) proposal that "[a]rranged in sections, the entire letter falls into the following pattern: I. Address and Greeting (1:1), II. Enduring Trials (1:2–19a).... III. Applying the Word (1:19b–3:18).... IV. Witnessing to Divine Providence (4:1–5:20)." Such simplified summaries are not very helpful in offering one some insight into the much different, more intricately organized and powerfully argued epistle of James.

7 Certain stylistic questions in this regard are difficult to answer with certainty—for example: To what extent did a NT writer attempt either to "compensate for" or to "cue in" features pertaining to the subsequent oral performance of his document, such as gestures, facial expressions, and the suprasegmental features of sound (pitch, stress, volume, tone, etc.)? I tend to think that these were left up to the skill and inclinations of his emissary as well as those designated to orally proclaim the texts of Scripture for a given worshiping community.

8 For a survey of those commentators who are critical of the discourse structure (or rather, the lack of it) demonstrated in James, see Cargal (1993, 9–11). For a summary and application of my literary-structural approach to the analysis of NT rhetorical discourse, see Wendland (2012).

More in keeping with an inductive, orally-conceived and conveyed discourse is a progressive, but at the same time recursive arrangement that features an initial treatment of a set of key topics, all of which are subsequently developed and enriched from a manifold, diverse perspective.[9] Crucial to the organization of this type of text is the *recycling* of a corpus of core concepts that are related by correspondence, synonymy, contrast, and/or metonymic association. The composition, as a whole, does not fit into a neatly patterned thematic outline, but it nonetheless reveals its own compelling logic. In James, then, we have an iterative articulation of the author's crucial pastoral concerns, expressed in a manner that he felt would best convey the various appeals to his addressees despite the lack of his personal apostolic presence. Repetition, antithesis, positioning, patterning, and the judicious use of assorted rhetorical markers thus act as important clues to help us discern and connect the author's main ideas and emphases along with his chief exhortations (involving consolation, encouragement, warning, prohibition, and so on).

Thus far, my description of the discourse structure of James has been rather general and abstract; we turn now to a closer examination of the text itself in order to see what this demonstrates with respect to either confirming or contradicting the preceding descriptive hypotheses. This takes the form of a sequential categorization of the principal topics that are manifested in each paragraph of the epistle.[10] This is a *paradigmatic* as well as a *syntagmatic* schematic display, for as the individual topics are specified in a linear order vertically down the page, those that appear to semantically correspond in a significant way elsewhere in the epistle are indicated alongside horizontally on the same topical line according to paragraph units of text. Thus, I have demarcated the epistle into what appear to be coherent thematic-functional units, largely based on notable shifts in subject, speech-act (function), the breaking of a chain of repeated lexical elements, plus standard disjunctive devices such as asyndeton and a vocative phrase, often coupled with a distinctive imperative.[11] This is admittedly a rather crude, highly subjective, impressionistic procedure, but at least it is testable with regard to both the initial selection of topics and also the subsequent interpretation of the data at hand as well as my conclusions made on that basis.

1.1 General Theme: Passing the tests of faith is a matter of life and death for the body of believers

Key topics	**Interrelated paragraph (text) units**
God, Lord Jesus Christ	1:1, 16–18; 2:18–19; 5:1–6, 7–9, 10–11
brothers/sisters—fellow believers	1:1, 9–11; 4:4–6 (opposite!)
trials—tests	1:2–4, 12
faith-works/faith dead	1:2–4; 2:5–7, 14–17, 18–19, 20–24, 25–26 (Rahab)

9 This recycling of key concepts naturally has important exegetical significance. For example, "[the] word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) in 1:18 clearly refers to the life-giving gospel, and hence it is very likely that the abbreviated expression, "the truth" (τῆς ἀληθείας) in 3:14 and 5:19, has reference to the same divine, saving message.

10 I define a "topic" as a discourse-specific subject or idea having reference to a significant person, thing, action, quality, or event about which a speaker or writer makes one or more substantive predications. Put together, a topic plus a related predication form a "theme."

11 I arrived at 34 "paragraph" units in contrast to Fry's (1978, 428) 18; obviously, we were reading the orally inscribed "signs" of the text differently. For an explanation and exemplification of this method of discourse analysis, see Wendland (2020).

Christian perseverance—maturity	1:2–4, 12; 3:1–2; 5:7–9, 10–11 (Job)
wisdom	1:5–8; 3:13–18
prayer	1:5–8; 4:1–3; 5:13–16, 17–18 (Elijah)
doubt—instability	1:5–8; 4:1–3
rich—poor conflicts	1:9–11; 2:1–4, 5–7, 14–17; 5:1–6
pride—humility	1:9–11; 4:4–6 (opposite!); 4:7–10
eternal life	1:12, 16–18; 4:4–6 (opposite!)
God's blessing—gifts	1:12, 16–18, 22–25
temptation—lust	1:13–15; 4:1–3
deception	1:13–15, 26–27
birth	1:13–15, 16–18
sin—sinners	1:13–15; 3:13–18; 4:7–10
death	1:13–15; 3:3–8; 4:11–12
God's Word—"do it!"	1:16–18, 19–21, 22–25; 3:1–2, 13–18; 4:13–17; 5:19–20
truth	1:16–18; 3:9–12 (opposite!); 3:13–18 (opposite!)
listen—control speech	1:19–21, 26–27; 2:12–13; 3:1–2, 3–8, 9–12; 4:11–12; 5:12
avoid anger—sinful passions, fighting/strife among Christians	1:19–21; 3:13–18; 4:1–3
salvation	1:19–21; 4:4–6 (opposite!); 4:11–12; 5:19–20
righteous life/good fruit	1:19–21; 3:13–18
law of love	1:22–25; 2:5–7, 8–11
freedom	1:22–25; 2:12–13
true religion	1:26–27; 5:1–5 (opposite!)
pollution by world	1:26–27; 5:1–5
care for the disadvantaged	1:26–27; 5:1–5 (opposite!)
discrimination	2:1–4, 5–7; 5:1–6
God's Kingdom	2:5–7
disobeying God's Law	2:8–11
God's judgment	2:12–13; 4:11–12; 5:1–6, 7–9
mercy	2:12–13; 5:10–11
demons—Satan	2:18–19; 3:13–18
Father Abraham (cf. Rahab)	2:20–24 (2:25–26)

faith "justified"/ vindicated	2:20–24, 25–26
church teachers and leaders	3:1–2
praise God	3:9–12
peace-makers	3:13–18; 4:1–3 (opposite!)
repent!	4:4–6, 7–10; 5:1–6, 10–11 ("sick" brother); 5:19–20
false judging	4:11–12
God's will, future planning	4:13–17
Lord's (second) coming	5:1–5 (implicit); 5:7–9
"healing"—physical/ spiritual	5:13–16, 19–20 (implicit)

2. Discourse Structure—Discussion

There are several interesting items of information that the preceding topicalized chart of the text of James provides us with.[12] So as not to extend the scope of this study, I have simply summarized some of the more salient points in the paragraphs below:

In the first place, the chart suggests that the epistle of James is not as loosely or haphazardly organized as some commentators would lead us to believe. To be sure, the discourse does exhibit a perhaps unfamiliar, *non-deductive* form of arrangement, but a purposeful pattern is evident nonetheless, one that would be quite effective when presented orally, as in a sermon. This mode of structuring is constituted by exact as well as correspondent (synonymous and contrastive) conceptual reiteration, both adjacent and remote. It is a richly interwoven, spiral-like compositional texture in which periodic theological assertions serve as warrants for the author's related moral exhortations (Johnson 1998, 181).

The structure of the discourse gradually unfolds in terms of *topic*—that is, interrelated subjects (to the author's mind) being considered one after the other, with a certain amount of reiteration and overlapping—up to and including the lengthy medial passage of 2:14–26.[13] The latter features a sequence of four paragraph units all more or less devoted to the same general *theme*: "A believer's faith must be manifested and matured through action!"[14] Thereafter, from 3:1 to the end of the letter, previously

12 Terry (1992, 124) employs a much more sophisticated method of lexical discourse analysis of James and arrives at the following conclusion: "First, the book is marked by a fairly complex macrostructure that maps onto eighteen sections which are lexically linked. These sections are tied together by the use of lexical chains. Their boundaries are defined by a lack of lexical chaining between adjoining sections.... All eighteen sections are lexically linked together in a 'webbing' relationship between nonadjacent sections."

13 This pericope occurs at the virtual center of "the constituent organization of James" according to the "semantic and structural analysis" of Hart and Hart (2001, 8). James 2:14–26 is an "expository" text that is regarded as being the structural and thematic motivational "[b]asis of 1:21–2:13 and 3:1–5:11" (10). "James' purpose is to clarify the readers' understanding of the true nature of faith in order to provide motivation for obeying all the exhortations in the entire division [*Body*]" (73). Viewing the strong lexical correspondence between 1:12 and 5:11 as structural markers of unit "closure" (Wendland 2004b, 123–130), I would outline the overall structure of the letter as follows: 1:1–12 [185 words], *Opening*; 1:13–5:11, *Body*; 5:12–20 [174 words], *Closing*.

14 Welch (1981, 212) has suggested a similar structure in much more general terms; in fact, he diagrams the first half of the epistle in the form a chiastic arrangement (A-L, with the midpoint,

discussed topics are taken up again in reordered fashion and considered from a conceptually and/or emotively amplified viewpoint. For example, the trials and testing of faith in 5:7–11 (cf. 1:2–4, 12) is considered from the perspective of many different types of "temptation" (cf. 1:13–15) with respect to unrighteous attitudes and behavior (cf. 1:19–5:6). To give another example, issues pertaining to one's use of "the tongue" are discussed broadly in 1:19, but later in graphic detail in the descriptive argument of 3:1–12. The tension between rich and poor believers in the Christian community is broached rather gently in 1:9–10 but then developed with increasing severity in several subsequent sections (e.g., 2:1–13 and, picking up the notion of "judgment," again in 4:11–5:6). The topic of "wisdom," too, turns out to be quite a bit more important to the author than its initial brief mention (1:5) would suggest (3:13–18); in fact, James teaches that wisdom must be expressed in one's life (i.e., through "deeds") in very much the same way that "faith" is (3:13, cf. 2:26).[15] A few new topics are introduced in conjunction with the others after chapter 1—most notably, God's abundant grace/mercy, on the one hand, and the errant or hypocritical person's great need for repentance on the other (e.g., 4:6–11).

The adjacent themes of "allow trials to test your faith and work endurance" and "persevere in faith-ful prayer" are featured at the beginning of the letter (1:2–4, 5–8, 12) and again at the end (5:7–11, 13–18) to form an extended double *inclusio*. The opening paragraphs (1:2–18) enunciate an interlocking set of key concepts: *trials; faith; endurance; works; maturity; completeness; wisdom; prayer; humility; God's Word; truth; birth; life!* One or more of these topics, or their antitheses and complements, come to the fore in each successive paragraph throughout the remainder of the text to the very end, in other words, working in faith to restore someone who has wandered from the life-giving principles of God's Word.[16]

Using a somewhat different approach, we might construe this introductory section as setting forth the epistle's governing notion (macro-theme): "*Testing in life demonstrates the genuineness (or 'maturity') of a professor's faith.*"[17] All the paragraphs in the letter may thus be related in one

M, located at 2:14–26), which apparently deconstructs in the second half (L'–A'). This proposal suffers, however, from a number of interpretive difficulties with regard to both form and meaning, and over- as well as under-specification. For example, 1:21 is listed as an independent unit (G) entitled, "Save your souls," so as to match with an allegedly corresponding section so-named in the letter's second half (G'), namely 5:19–20. Section L (2:10–12), "One either keeps all of the law or none of the law," is somewhat arbitrarily paired with L' (3:9–12), "One either produces good fruit or bad fruit." In addition, several verses are omitted from the scheme (probably accidentally, i.e., 2:13 and 5:13), while a number of key concepts are not mentioned, e.g., "true religion" in 1:26 and 1:27 (which constitute separate sections) and the notion of "strife" in 4:1–5 ("Lust in your members"). Welch rightly points out that "the obvious parallelisms and the abundance of Hebraisms throughout the letter provide *prima facie* evidence that the letter was not composed in haste or without substantial literary precedents" (211). But one might contest the assertion that these "precedents" were indeed "literary"; they could as well have been orally composed—hence *oratorical* in nature.

15 One could argue that this close connection between "wisdom" and "faith-works" relates in turn to the OT sapiential concept of "the fear of the LORD" (e.g., Prov 1:7; Job 28:28; Eccl 12:13), which is thus equivalent to an "active" faith (faithfulness to God) in the sense that James is using it throughout his set of hortatory mini-essays (cf. Matt 7:24).

16 Note in the chart above how each of the broad range of topics found in chapter one is reiterated elsewhere in the epistle.

17 Terry (1992, 118) argues that "Since James is a series of exhortations regarding different topics, the overall macrostructure cannot be summarized as a single sentence. Rather, it is a combination of the key ideas found in the individual macrostructures of the several sections and major paragraphs." Terry proposes the following as the macro-structure (or theme?) of the entire epistle of James: "*Brothers, show the true wisdom of submitting in faith to God (who gives good gifts, including wisdom, and not temptations) rather than trusting in self or in riches so that you will not be judged by him. This wisdom is shown by patient endurance in good words and works. The good words include using the normally evil tongue for singing, praying, confessing sins, weeping, submitting to the Lord's will, and turning the sinner to God, rather than for being angry, being prejudiced, criticizing, grumbling, swearing, boasting, and being false. The good works of clean religion involve doing what God's word says, helping the weak, and keeping oneself from sin*" (119, original italics). In any case, one can conclude that "James uses his themes to point out the spiritual problems of the readers and to encourage them toward spiritual maturity" (Hart and Hart 2001, 17).

respect or another, positively or negatively, to this central notion, which is a common way of organizing an inductive religious homily. Even the text's final segment (5:19–20), sometimes viewed by commentators as being either out-of-place or an odd way to end the letter, manifests a clear relationship to this general theme: This is in fact the ultimate test of faith, and also of biblical "wisdom" (σοφία, 1:5; 3:13; cf. Prov 8:1–21)—namely, to restore a brother or sister who has fallen or strayed from the path of patient discipleship. In a metaphoric sense, such a person, having "wandered" away from the faith (πλανηθῇ), is part of that great spiritual "diaspora" (διασπορᾷ, 1:1), who need to be "brought back" (ἐπιστρέψῃ).[18] The final admonition thus "serves as an excellent conclusion, recommending that the reader do for others what the author has tried to do for the readers" (Johnson 1998, 179).

Several topical complexes that reappear with diverse specifics in the text serve to group the epistle's main ideas and appeals paradigmatically into sets of interrelated concepts: For example, we have the "rich-poor" socio-economic contrast that forms an important aspect of the letter's interpersonal, or rhetorical exigency—a crisis that can only be dealt with by means of an extra dose of "humility," the need to "control one's speech" within the community, and the imperative to put one's "faith into action" in a spirit of merciful "love." There are also the repeated admonitions to avoid "unrighteous behavior" by attending to the saving, liberating "Word of God" and by heeding the closing explicit and implicit calls to "repentance" in order avoid a critical "judgment" when the Lord returns (e.g., 5:9). The prominent faith/works paradigm noted above may be viewed as forming an even larger coherent section of the letter's body on the basis of an *inclusio* that links 1:22 ("Be doers of the word, and not hearers only") and 2:26 ("so faith apart from works is dead").[19]

Those who regard James as a "straw-like" epistle in relation to others in the NT undoubtedly come to this conclusion because of the letter's apparent lack of a strong theology, a prominent Christology in particular. This characteristic can be explained on other grounds,[20] but a close examination of the text, like that attempted above, clearly reveals that "God," for one, does play a rather prominent role throughout the text (θεός appears 17x), and that some significant truths are spoken about the deity—from being the powerful "Father" Creator of every good thing (1:17) to being the personal "friend" (φίλος) of one of his saints (2:23).[21] "Christ" is referred to only twice in the five chapters, but both times in a significant structural position and

18 James 5:19–20 also presents the *climax* of three little case-studies of typical members of the fellowship, each marked by the initial phrase τις ἐν ὑμῖν, "someone among you" (structural "aperture"): (a) the ordinary person, either "suffering misfortune" or in "happy" circumstances (5:13); (b) the spiritually/morally "weak/sick" member, someone requiring the elders' encouragement, prayer support, and anointing (5:14–18); and (c) the worst off, a fallen apostate, in urgent need of active evangelistic intervention by a fellow member (5:19–20).

19 Cargal (1993, 52) posits "four major discursive units" in James based on "inverted parallelisms and thematization," that is, 1:1–21, 1:22–2:26, 3:1–4:12, and 4:11–5:20. While credible in certain respects, this scheme suffers in general from an apparent tendency both to force the data to fit a preconceived pattern (e.g., the obvious overlap between sections three and four) and also to ignore certain important text-structural data (e.g., the major break at 1:19 [asyndeton + imperative + vocative] coupled with the continuative δὲ in 1:22).

20 If James were an early epistle, as argued above, and written to Jewish Christians scattered abroad, away from Jerusalem, it is likely that a lot of Christology could have been left implicit, that is, presupposed as being well-enough known to the primary addressees. In any case, the author's main purpose was not to teach theology, but rather to urgently build upon known moral and doctrinal principles in order to effect a more mutually humble, harmonious relationship among fellow Christians who were being physically, psychologically, and spiritually tested to the limit by various adversities and challenges, both within the community of believers and without.

21 "James is clearly less christocentric than theocentric. It would be difficult to find a New Testament writing with as rich a collection of statements concerning the nature and activity of God. …[*these are then summarized with reference to 36 passages in James*]…Such characterizations are not random but fit within a coherent understanding of God as the source of all reality…who calls humans into a life shaped according to the gifts given them and a community of mutual gift-giving and support" (Johnson 1998, 181).

with the full title "the Lord Jesus Christ" (*κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*—1:1; 2:1). The term "Lord" (*κύριος*) is used ambiguously to designate God in general (1:7), Jesus Christ specifically (5:8), or perhaps both together (e.g., 5:14–15) as a referential reflection of Christ's assumed deity and equality with the Father (1:1).

It is rather difficult, then, to demarcate the epistle of James into coherent and distinct macro-sections—that is, larger than the core pericope of 2:14–26 giving the exhortation to put faith into action. Most other proposals, like those listed earlier, violate either the letter's form (e.g., by indicating a primary structural boundary where clearly none exists) or its content (e.g., by omitting certain relevant "facts" in their thematic sectional designations or in their classification of the data).[22] In his detailed charting of major and minor "themes," Fry (1978, 430) makes a more concerted attempt to discover such a principle of organization and on that basis concludes:

> The book seems to divide into three major sections: 1.2–1.18, 1.19–4.12, and 4.13–5.18.... It can be seen that the same themes come into focus in the first and third sections, the themes of testing, patient endurance, prayer, riches and poverty, humility, and God's character. And there is no other theme which comes into a major position of focus in either of these sections. Then, as far as the second section is concerned, although there are theme links with the rest of the book, none of the major themes discussed in this section come into focus in either of the other two sections. So we see a fairly simple overall structure in the book as a whole, in terms of the themes that come into focus throughout. We may express this structure in writing as A—B—A'....

A major difficulty inherent in this type of analysis (and, indeed, my own charted above) is the decision as to what constitutes a "major" theme—one that "comes into focus" and accordingly gets noted in this system of classification? In any case, there are other problems with Fry's proposal, for example: the need to manage one's speech with reference to boasting (4:13–17), making an oath (5:12), and prayer coupled with confession (5:13–16) all occur in section A'; "God's character" does come into focus within section B in 4:4–6; similarly, the A topic of "riches and poverty" certainly becomes prominent in B at 2:1–4.

Fry (1978, 435) seems to be on surer ground later in his study as he essentially ignores his prior attempt to classify themes according to the letter's structural divisions and instead suggests that "there is a unity of thought, organized around the main theme, which is the testing of faith and patient endurance in trials" which extends throughout the epistle. This jibes with my macro-theme for James proposed above: "*Passing the tests of faith is a matter of life and death for the body of believers*." Thus, the author's inductively arranged epistolary homily presents one tense scenario or challenging situation after another involving faithful discipleship that reflects upon this hortatory theme by way of a recurring, alternating cycle of encouragement, admonition, instruction, rebuke, and consolation. These motivations pertain to a wide range of reiterated spiritual issues and moral concerns that affect the believer's life, both individually and within the sociocultural context of the wider fellowship of faith. The letter ends

22 Here is another reductionistic example of "the argument of James" (Wall 1997, 557–559): Thematic Introduction (Jas 1:1–21 [*note especially 1:19*]); The Wisdom of "Quick to Hear" (Jas 1:22–2:26); The Wisdom of "Slow to Speak" (Jas 3:11–18); The Wisdom of "Slow to Anger" (Jas 4:1–5:6); Concluding Exhortations (Jas 5:7–20). In support of an essentially non-deductive analysis of the discourse structure is the sequential discourse "outline" given for the book of James in the *TransLine New Testament* (Magill 2002, 869).

dramatically with a short but serious case study—on the need for restoring a fellow "brother" who has fallen into an obvious sin. Such matters are as relevant in the transnational global village of today as they were in the Jewish-Christian religious setting of first-century Palestine (and beyond). The problem is how to best convey them to what is typically a multicultural audience in a modern world that has moved from a primary communication situation of orality to print and more or less back again.[23]

3. The Principal Pericope and Its Translation

The Greek text of James 5:13–20 is given below, but it has been segmented into hypothetical "utterance units" that reflect how the original might have been orally articulated in public transmission. The Greek is accompanied by the more formal correspondence rendering of the *English Standard Version* for an additional frame of textual reference. Indented lines represent carry-overs from the preceding colon. Some of the key thematic terms and conceptually related reiterated expressions are emphasized typographically in various ways. The Greek text is followed by an oratorical rendering of this passage in Chewa, which is accompanied by an English back-translation. The vernacular version seeks to reproduce the oral dynamics of James's original discourse idiomatically in terms of meaning and also to make it more aurally perceptible by a listening audience.

13 Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν; προσευχέσθω· εὐθυμεῖ τις; ψαλλέτω.	Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.
14 ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν; προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἀλείψαντες αὐτὸν ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου·	Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.
15 καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα, καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος· κἂν ἁμαρτίας ᾖ πεποιηκώς, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ.	And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.
16 ἐξομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἁμαρτίας καὶ εὔχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων, ὅπως ἰαθῆτε. πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη.	Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

23 There is of course a movement between these two ages along a communication continuum ranging from "primary" to "secondary orality." According to Ong (1982, 11), the former is represented by "a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print" in contrast with the latter, the "present-day high-technology culture, in which a new orality is sustained by telephone, radio, television, and other electronic devices that depend for their existence and functioning on writing and print." Nowadays the "telephone" has been replaced by multifunctional cell ("smart") phones, and the primary example of "other electronic devices" is the personal computer, or "notebook," with its manifold hypertext capabilities, often involving audio and visual access via the internet to the virtually unlimited information reservoir of the "world-wide web."

17 Ἠλίας ἄνθρωπος ἦν ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν, καὶ προσευχῇ προσηύξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι, καὶ οὐκ ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐνιαυτοὺς τρεῖς καὶ μῆνας ἕξ·	Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.
18 καὶ πάλιν προσηύξατο, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑετὸν ἔδωκεν καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐβλάστησεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς.	Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.
19 Ἀδελφοί μου, ἐάν τις ἐν ὑμῖν πλανηθῇ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἐπιστρέψῃ τις αὐτόν,	**My brothers,** if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back,
20 γινωσκέτω ὅτι ὁ ἐπιστρέψας ἁμαρτωλὸν ἐκ πλάνης ὁδοῦ αὐτοῦ σώσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου καὶ καλύψει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν.	let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Kodi wina akudwala? Aitanitse akulu a mpingo. Iwowo adzampempherere ndi kumdzoza m'mafuta pochula dzina la Ambuye.	**14** Is someone sick? Let him (her) call for the church elders. They will pray for him (her) and anoint him (her) with oil while speaking the Lord's name.
Akampempherera pokhulupirira, wodwalayo adzapulumuka, ndipo Ambuye adzamuutsa. Ngati munthuyo anali atachimwa, Ambuye adzamkhululukira machimowo.	**15** If they pray for him (her) while believing that sick person will be saved, and the Lord will raise him (her) up. If the person has sinned, the Lord will forgive those sins.
Motero muziwululirana machimotu, ndipo muzipemphererana kuti muchire. Zoona, pemphero la munthu wolungama limakhala lamphamvu— silipita pachabe, ai!	**16** So you should confess sins to one another and pray for each other for healing. Truly, the prayer of a righteous person is powerful—it is not useless at all!

Mneneri Eliya anali munthu monga ife tomwe. Nthawi ija iyeyo adaapemphera kolimba kuti mvula isagwe pansi pano, ndipo mvula siidagwedi pa dziko zaka zitatu ndi miyezi isanu ndi umodzi.	**17** The prophet Elija was a human being just like we are. At that time he prayed strongly that the rain would not fall down below, and the rain indeed did not fall on the land for three years and six months.
Koma atapempheranso, mvula idagwa, nthaka nkuyambanso kumeretsa mbeu zake.	**18** But after he prayed again, the rain fell, and the soil resumed sprouting its crops.
Abale anga, wina mwa inu akasokera pa kusiya zoona cha chipembedzo chathu, pomwepo mnzake wampingo azimubwezadi.	**19** My brothers, if any one of you goes astray by leaving the truths of our religion, immediately a fellow member should bring him (her) back.
Dziŵani kuti wodzambweza wochimwayo ku njira yake yosokera yauchimo ija, adzapulumutsa moyo wake ku imfa yauzimu. Zoonadi, chifukwa cha olanditsa oterewo, machimo ochuluka adzakhululukidwa.	**20** Know that the one restoring that sinner from that sinful, lost way of his, he will save his life from spiritual death. In truth, because of rescuers like that, many sins will be forgiven.

4. The Contextual Co-text

The topically contrastive, iterative compositional style of James continues to be quite evident in what is arguably the final section of his epistle, 5:7–20. As noted earlier, it is rather difficult to divide this letter up into neat portions or paragraphs that manifest a clear, deductively arranged outline because that is not how the author presents his instructive and corrective thoughts. James had his own cyclical, orality-oriented logic in mind as he undoubtedly composed his text aloud or with oral articulation in mind, introducing virtually all of the topics that he wished to discuss in one way or another in his very first major section, which was only much later designated as "chapter one." Many of these same principal subjects then recur in this concluding section, for example, the need for "patience" in view of the imminent "Lord's coming," which headlines the unit, 5:7–9 (cf. 1:3, 12). Such encouragement, including "perseverance," was necessary on account of the external "suffering" and trials that the addressees were enduring (5:10–11; cf. 1:2, 12) as well as the internal tensions and perhaps divisions caused by undisciplined speech by members of the community (5:8, 12; cf. 1:19, 26). In contrast, the crucial necessity of "prayer" and pastoral discipline is stressed, including the letter's keynote emphasis on the need for putting genuine "faith" into practice for the spiritual good of the entire fellowship (5:13–20; cf. 1:6–8, 22–25, 27).

Hayden (1981) provides the following cogent observations on the wider intertextual context of James 5:1–20 (cf. the earlier study of Amerding 1938):

> The interpretation of any verse of the Bible must fit with the thought of the context in both the immediate passage and the overall understanding of Scripture. If James 5:13–18 is a reference to the special healing of physical illness, then it is totally unique to the teaching of the New Testament Epistles and disruptive to the argument of the Book of James. Where in the Epistles, from Romans through Jude, is there emphasis on a special divine healing of the sick through the ministry of church elders? It is not found in the writings of Paul, who gave thorough instructions to the elders regarding their spiritual qualifications and responsibilities.... In fact, in the opinion of this writer, the words and contextual thoughts of James 5 do *not* support the view that "sickness due to sin" is intended in the passage (although there does seem to be an allowance for certain physical ramifications as a part of the individual's problem). The emphasis of James is clearly on the *emotional* distress and *spiritual* exhaustion experienced by God's people in their deep struggle with temptation and their relentless battle with besetting sin. (Hayden 1981, 261–263)

Structurally, the discourse unit covering 5:7–20 appears to be divided into three topically related sub-sections according to the following formal and semantic criteria:

A. On the need for *patience in general* (5:7–9)
1. *Reason*: the Lord is coming soon, with an example of patience (vv. 7–8)
2. *Contrary behavior involving speech*: mutual grumbling, plus warning (v. 9)

B. On the need for *patience in suffering* (5:10–12)
1. *Reason*: the blessing of perseverance, with an example of patience (vv. 10–11)
2. *Contrary behavior involving speech*: frivolous swearing, plus warning (v. 12)[24]

C. On the need for *patience within the fellowship of faith* (5:13–20)
1. *General case*: suffering "misfortune"; solution: "pray/praise" (v. 13)
2. *Specific case*: suffering "weakness"; solution: "pray/anoint/confess" (vv. 14–16)
3. *Classic case*: Elijah's example of persistent, earnest prayer (vv. 17–18)
4. *Special case*: saving "wanderers"; solution: "bring back/turn" (vv. 19–20)[25]

24 Note that each of the A and B units begins with a vocative aperture "brothers" (ἀδελφοί) and manifests an internal enclosure ("inclusio") in the corresponding initial sections delineated by four distinct references to "the Lord" (κύριος).
25 Each of the three types of "case" presented by James in this section is marked by an initial formulaic expression (aperture): "[if] anyone among you [pl.]" (τις ἐν ὑμῖν) in vv. 13, 14, and 19. The third instance is preceded by the familiar example of Elijah's persistent and effectual prayer (vv. 17–18).

The following chiastic structure that appears to traverse most of this pericope (vv. 13–18) presents a progressively narrowing central focus on the forgiveness of sins (Heil 2012, 186), a topic which is again strongly reinforced by the epistle's climactic final two verses:

A. Pray for those suffering among members of the church (13–14)
  B. A prayer in faith will lead to the Lord's positive response (15a–b)
    C. If a person has sinned (15c)
      D. *He will be forgiven* (15d)
    C' Therefore, confess sins to one another (16a)
  B' Pray for healing since the prayers of the righteous are powerful (16b–c)
A' Follow the effective prayer model of Elijah in Israel (17–18)

5. A More Detailed Analysis of the Text

In this section, we will explore the concluding segment of James's epistle (5:13–20) more fully, to reveal how the author employs "the rhetoric of rejuvenation" in order to personally instruct, advise, encourage, and warn his unseen addressees. This is not a detailed exegesis of this passage; however, I hope to cursorily point out several critical aspects of the Greek text that would suggest how James employs a rhetorical strategy featuring reiteration, contrast, allusive imagery, vivid language, progressive development, and end-stress to communicate a message that differs in some significant respects from what one typically reads in contemporary commentaries.

James leads off with a "general case" scenario (v. 13) that introduces his primary biblical "solution" for the several related "problems" within the fellowship of believers that he discusses in this pericope. In striking contrast to the improper use of speech condemned in v. 12, flippant oath-making, he provides the twofold but all-inclusive instruction that applies to whatever happens to be the believers' condition in life—whether they are "experiencing trouble/distress" of some kind (κακοπαθέω) or "enjoying" (εὐθυμέω) their current circumstances. The answer is, as he advised already at the very beginning of the letter (1:2–7), to pray [in faith—implied] to the Lord, with a particular emphasis, depending on the situation, either on "petition" (προσεύχομαι) or "praise" (ψάλλω).

In vv. 14–16, the apostle turns to a specific case study involving serious prayer—and more, as the situation being described unfolds. This concerns a fellow member who is "weak." Now the verb used here (ἀσθενέω) is contextually interpreted by virtually all commentators (e.g., Heil 2012, 191; Richardson 1997, 231) and versions as a reference only to physical "sickness" (e.g., NIV, NLT, NET, GNB).[26] The argument usually goes something like this (Loh and Hatton 1997, 189; italics added):[27]

> James mentions a third circumstance needing prayer, namely sickness. The theme of sickness is most likely suggested by the theme of suffering in verse 13. The verb "to be sick" in Greek can include any kind of

26 For example: "Physical weakness because of sickness is clearly the intended meaning here (cf. τὸν κάμνοντα in 5:15)" (Varner 2017, 365). "Ασθενεῖ, lit. 'without strength,' here (and always in the Gospels) means physically 'sick,' 'ill' (all major EVV and almost all commentators; see G. Stählin, TDNT 4.490-93)" (Vlachos 2013, Kindle Loc. 5935–5936). With regard to v. 15: "σώσει.... The immediate context, with its instructions for how to treat a patient and the subsequent reference to recovery, suggests that the verb σῴζω here refers to being delivered from physical afflictions more than to its eschatological sense" (Adam 2012, 102).

27 After completing my analysis, I found only one exception among the dozen or so commentaries that I consulted on this passage, namely, the essay referred to above by Hayden (1981). In his commentary on James 5:14, Douglas Moo (2000, 236–237) calls attention to this "alternative meaning, 'to be spiritually weak'..." and astutely observes: "An exhortation to pray for such a situation would fit very well at the end of a letter that has regularly chastised its readers for just such spiritual lassitude." However, he quickly retreats from this interpretation in favor of "the usual view, adopted in virtually all modern English Bibles, that James is speaking here of physical illness."

> weakness (compare Rom 14.2; 2 Cor 12.10). However, the obvious contrast with "to be suffering," calling on the elders to pray and to anoint, and the verb "to save" in the sense of "to heal" (verse 15), all suggest that in this context "to be sick" is the intended meaning.

I do not claim that v. 14, in particular, has no reference or relevance, in view of James's associated instructions, to some serious illness or medical condition, but I think that this is not the primary problem that the apostle had in mind. Rather, I believe that he uses this situation, which may well have been a common one in the early church (as it is even today!) as a topical spark, or jumping-off point, in order to make a *metaphorical application* to what he saw as a much greater, even deadly malady within the communal fellowship, namely, the *sickness of unforgiven sin*. I simply note below some of the main points in this section that would argue in favor of such an understanding:[28]

(1) As noted above, the initial verb ἀσθενέω does not automatically refer to physical sickness in the NT; quite frequently, especially in the epistles, some sort of *spiritual* infirmity is being referred to (e.g., Matt 26:41; Rom 5:6; 8:3; 14:1; 1 Cor 8:9).[29]

(2) The same non-medical condition may be applied to the second, less common verb normally translated as "sick" in v. 15: κάμνω. For example, the writer of Hebrews encourages his readers not to "grow weak" in their "struggle against sin" (12:34).

(3) Elders praying over the "weak person" and anointing him "in the name of the Lord" would appear to suggest a sickbed scene, but again, the Greek verb used here, ἀλείφω, is not limited to medicinal usage (e.g., Mark 6:13). Rather, it can also refer to personal acts of consecration (Luke 7:38) and refreshment, even rejuvenation (Matt 6:17).[30]

(4) As we proceed to v. 15, we soon get the sense that *more than* just a healing from illness is being referred to.[31] The prayers offered in faith on behalf of the "weak one," James says, will "save" (σῴζω) him, a verb which "as used elsewhere in the New Testament, often refers to deliverance from sin and spiritual death" (Loh and Hatton 1997, 192).[32] Furthermore, "the Lord

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28 For a detailed socio-symbolic analysis of the text of James 5:14–16 in its cultural setting, see Albl (2002). For example: "James's description of the sick person calling for the elders (5:14) implies a separation between the sick person and the rest of the community. Sin, associated with illness (5:16), manifests itself in division among community members. Both the gathering of the elders (as representatives of the community) and the mutual prayer and forgiveness of sin among all community members (5:16) serve to restore the unity of the corporate body" (2002, 132).

29 "'**ἀσθένεια**'.... This group of words is formed from its opposite *sthenos*, strength, with the *Alpha*-privative prefixed. It conveys the meaning of powerlessness, weakness, lack of strength.... In prophetic texts [LXX] the vb. is found chiefly in prophecies of judgment, describing in a figurative sense the people [who have] rebelled against Yahweh and will therefore stumble and fall (Hos 4:5, 5:5; Jer 6:21, 18:15).... In Paul [*James too?!*], the terms in this group have undergone far-reaching theological reflection, and are developed in relation to man's sinful nature, to Christology, and to ethics" (Brown 1978, 993–994).

30 The symbolic significance of a vegetable oil applied in conjunction with communal prayers for a sick person, or even someone who has made a public confession for some serious, well-known sin, will be more immediately apparent and meaningful in some cultures (e.g., Africa) than others. Furthermore, "[t]he eschatological dimension of anointing in Hellenistic Judaism should not be overlooked. In Second Temple Jewish writings roughly contemporary with James, anointing signifies not only the transition from physical illness to physical health but also the movement from the ills of ordinary human eschatological salvation" (Albl 2002, 138).

31 "In contrast to Jas 5:15 and the unequivocal promise of healing, the Biblical record implies that God does not always heal: Trophimus is probably best known to us for having been 'left sick at Miletus' (2 Ti 4:20). At the very least, all Christians before the Parousia will succumb to final illness and death. Christians are guaranteed final healing in the resurrection, and are also assured of God's concern to heal in this age" (Shogren 1989, 106). However, if James has already shifted to a spiritual frame of reference and the forgiveness of sins in v. 15, then his assertion is correct: God always heals such moral "sickness" through sincere confession and faith in his Son.

32 "[T]he eschatological horizon of James, together with the fact every other occurrence of σῴζω in James refers to ultimate salvation (1:21; 2:14; 4:12; 5:20), confirms that James sees an integral connection between present bodily healing and eschatological salvation: the two cannot be separated" (Albl 2002, 138).

will raise him up"—the verb (ἐγείρω) also being applied with reference to human as well as Christ's own "resurrection" (Matt 27:52, 63). And finally, the closing conditional assertion offers convincing proof that more than a mere healing from sickness is involved in the scene that James is portraying for us: "If he has *sinned*, he will be *forgiven*" (κἂν ἁμαρτίας ᾖ πεποιηκώς, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ).

(5) Verse 16 continues then either to clarify what has been described in v. 15 or to suggest another scenario where a definite spiritual "healing" is being referred to. In this case, in addition to "prayers" (εὔχομαι) for one another, there is a mutual "confession" (ἐξομολογέομαι) of sins. The verb used for "healing" here (ἰάομαι) is also employed in several significant passages with reference to the forgiveness of sins (Acts 28:27; Heb 12:13; 1 Pet 2:24).

(6) Again, as in the opening verses of James (1:6–7), the nature and prospective potency of the prayers being offered is underscored, for they must be uttered by "righteous" (δίκαιος) persons. And who might these be? In the immediate as well as more remote context of this very letter, they would be people who have confessed their sins and have been forgiven (v. 16)—or more generally in keeping with the main theme of the epistle as a whole, those individuals whose faith is regularly manifested in actions (cf. 1:22; 2:8, 13, 17, 26). The example of Elijah both illustrates and substantiates the point about the nature of "powerful and effective" prayer (vv. 17–18; cf. 1 Kgs 17:1; 18:16–46). In this connection, it is interesting to observe that James does not refer to the presumably well-known faith-healing story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath's son (1 Kgs 17:7–24).

(7) As we proceed through this pericope then, it becomes clear that the letter's final two verses (19–20) are not dealing with a completely different subject at all (to be abruptly separated by a distinct topic heading, e.g., NIV). Instead, they take the theme of spiritual healing metaphorically to the next, and arguably ultimate level[33] with reference to a "brother" who is so "weak" in faith that he has actually "wandered (πλανάω) away from the truth" of God's Word and is thus under divine judgment. How can this, the weakest "sinner" (ἁμαρτωλός) be "turned back" (ἐπιστρέφω)—"turned back…from the error of his way" and "saved" (σῴζω) from [spiritual] "death" through God's merciful "covering" (καλύπτω) of his sins? James's evangelical answer promoting a faith-that-works was already overtly detailed in vv. 15–16 (cf. 1:22). And by this point in the passage, presumably every reader/hearer of these words would have grasped the potent pastoral message of Christ's apostolic brother!

6. Contemporary Application and Conclusion

Here then at the end, the epistle of James leaves its addressees with a powerful question and a challenge that affects the entire Christian community, which was going through some serious internal conflicts and struggles.[34] Obviously, if the danger of "wandering," back-sliding

33 This thematic climax in v. 18 is indicated by the cluster of central soteriological terms that this verse includes: turn back, sinner, save, soul, death, cover sins—with "the Lord" (vv. 14–15, Jesus Christ!) being the implied active agent of this personal series of events pertaining to salvation, the believer being the overt, indirect agent.

34 The various paragraphs and larger pericopes in James frequently manifest a similar rhetorical progression and build-up that climaxes in "end stress"—a concluding passage or even a single utterance that exhibits some key topical notion, often accompanied by a perceptible degree of graphic language, verbal emphasis, and/or emotion. Examples that traverse chapter 1 alone are as follows: "…so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" (1:4); "He is a double-minded man—unstable in all he does!" (1:8); "In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business" (1:11); "…and sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death!" (1:15); "He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created" (1:18); "…and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you!" (1:21); "But the man who…continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does!" (1:25); "Religion…is this…to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (1:27, NIV).

members were not a potentially serious matter, he would not have left his readers with this brotherly obligation ringing in their ears.[35] However, in the light of this letter as a whole, a final warning against lukewarm, even hypocritical, participation within the Body of Christ does not really appear as an unexpected, out of place appeal. James obviously knew personally of, or had been informed about, so-called "Christians," who were not living out their faith in congregation-building behavior. In addition to the examples found in chapter one (e.g., 1:8, 13, 21, 26), we hear the apostle contrastively (i.e., in relation to any actions contrary to "the word of truth"—1:18) and sternly "call-out" these spiritually "weak" or "wandering" members of the fellowship. This occurs not only in the familiar "faith-works" chapter two, but also in some prominent chunks of text throughout the remainder of this epistle: 3:10–12, 14–16; 4:1–6, 8–9, 11–12, 13–17; 5:1–6, 9, 12—with the appropriate "solution" to the gravest of problem cases given in the group-challenging conclusion of 5:9–20. As Peter Davids (1982, 198) aptly notes:

> James concludes with a final exhortation which on the one hand flows out of the theme of confession and forgiveness of the preceding section (5:13–18) and on the other gives what must have been the author's purpose in publishing the epistle, i.e., turning or preserving people from error.

Thus, the "misfortune" mentioned in v. 13 and the "weakness" referred to in v. 14 deeply concern the community of believers since, in James's thinking, they are not mere maladies affecting the body's physical health. Rather, if any underlying or associated spiritual problems are not dealt with as outlined in these final verses, he warns, "the Judge is standing at the door!" (v. 9)—and there is no need to spell out for readers what that means. On the other hand, when appropriate corrective or disciplinary action is taken prayerfully and confessionally "in the name of the Lord" (vv. 14–16), then individual and corporate "healing" will take place as promised, and a "multitude of sins [will be] covered" in keeping with God's abundant "compassion and mercy" (v. 11).

I will conclude this short study with two suggestions regarding the salient translation-related implications of James 5:13–20 that obviously concern our efforts to communicate his pastoral message in a rhetorically corresponding manner today:

First of all, the vibrantly emotive verbal rhetoric of James's sermonic epistle needs to be reflected in a corresponding, "functionally-equivalent" rendering of the Greek text.[36] Why should the brilliant, persuasively engaging style of the biblical author be dulled, eclipsed, or completely left behind by a literalistic, linguistically "weak" contemporary translation? Furthermore, the text also needs to be expressed and formatted in an oral-aurally perceptive way so that the dynamic dialogue between James and his distant "brothers and sisters" may also be conveyed appropriately with similar vigor and vitality by those proclaiming this passage in a public setting of study, correction, or worship.

Second, the essential contextual and extratextual background necessary for more fully understanding this pericope should be made available in footnotes or sectional introductions for those who desire such supplementary information. This would include a brief description of the thematic development of this epistle which leads up to this climactic passage

35 We find a similar, somewhat unforeseen, and mildly confrontational conclusion to the message of 1 John: "Dear children, keep yourself from idols!" (5:21; cf. also Jude 22).

36 For further suggestions, see Wendland (2011).

as well as notes which explain the biblical and related contextual references that are associated with the main terms and concepts[37]—for example, the near-eastern medicinal and/or symbolic practice of anointing with olive oil; the importance of personal confession within the Christian community; expounding the Old Testament prayer references to Elijah in 1 Kings.

The burning concern of James for a persistent purity of faith and life that preserves the unity and harmony of the Christian community shines brightly throughout this epistle from beginning to end. Thus, whenever repentance or rejuvenation is needed within the fellowship of reborn believers (cf. 1:18), as it inevitably will be, the proper scriptural approach for dealing with such spiritual "weakness" has been patently set forth in an epistolary location where it may readily be found and applied. Thus, James invites the Lord's faithful followers of every generation—"elders" as well as the laity—to frequently review his urgent pastoral encouragement and apostolic admonition, above all, expending every effort to put these foundational principles into practice both patiently and prayerfully, for indeed, "the Lord's coming is near!" (ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ἤγγικεν, 5:8).

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37 The distinct perspective of the present study might also be supplied as a hermeneutical option at least with reference to 5:13–20.

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Metonymic Conceptualization of Body Parts in the Greek New Testament

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Abstract

This paper examines the metonymic structure of body parts in the Greek New Testament within the framework of the Conceptual Metonymy Theory. The question is, "How are body parts conceptualized in the Greek New Testament?" The aim is to explore the ways in which body parts and their functions are conceptually used in the New Testament in reference to the whole person. Data are drawn from the New Testament Greek text, and qualitative analysis is conducted. The data reveal that in the New Testament Greek language, metonymically, body parts are conceptualized as "body part stands for the person," "body part stands for activity," and "body part stands for its content."

1. Introduction

This article investigates the body metonymies applied in the body terms in the New Testament from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. The New Testament Greek text was chosen as the data for the study. The article analyzes the BODY PART STANDS FOR PERSON, BODY PART STANDS FOR ACTIVITY, and BODY PART STANDS FOR ITS CONTENT metonymies.

The body plays a crucial role in our meaning construction (Gibbs 2003). Various terms for body parts have been understood as productive sources of figurative and lexical meaning (Deignan and Potter 2004; Niemeier 2003) and grammatical meaning (Hollenbach 1995; Matsumoto 1999). Metonymy, as a figure of speech, is a common literary device found in almost any text, and the Bible is no exception. Since some of the metonymies found in the New Testament are referenced in many other texts and repeated in

https://www.sats.ac.za/conspectus/
This article: https://www.sats.ac.za/metonymic-conceptualization-body-parts
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.2

Conspectus

Keywords
body parts, New Testament, Greek language, metonymy, Conceptual Metonymy Theory, cognitive linguistics

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sermons preached, it is important to be familiar with them and understand what they mean, conceptually as well. Metonymy, a cognitive phenomenon, is a process in which a given entity or event is employed to refer to another related entity or event. In the New Testament, it is common to come across a metonymy in which (a) part of the body is used for the whole body, person, life itself, or even human nature. One question is, "How do parts of the person and body parts function metonymically in New Testament Greek?"

The paper examines the semantic extensions of body part expressions with the objective of examining how parts of the person and body parts have been lexicalized in texts to instantiate a PART OF THE BODY FOR THE BODY metonymy. However, it will extend discussions to a few intangible parts of the human person such as the soul, spirit, and voice. The paper seeks to provide a linguistic description of the ways in which the human being is represented in Greek. It brings to the attention of linguists and translators the nature of metonymy in the New Testament Greek, with special focus on the parts of the person. In this paper, various New Testament examples will clarify what may be included in metonymy. Translations of Greek passages are mine. The paper contributes to the ongoing academic discussion on metonymy in the construction of meaning.

The study is limited to human body parts mentioned in the Greek New Testament. In the examples mentioned below, the following person-parts and body parts, categorized as tangible and intangible parts, are used in reference to the whole person in the New Testament. The intangible parts of a person are: ψυχή (soul), πνεῦμα (spirit), and φωνή (voice). The tangible parts of the body/person are: καρδία (heart), σῶμα (body), σάρξ (flesh), αἷμα (blood), κεφαλή (head), τράχηλος (neck), πρόσωπον (face), ὀφθαλμός (eye), οὖς (ear), στόμα (mouth), γλῶσσα (tongue), χείρ (hand), κοιλία (womb), μαστοὶ (breasts), γόνυ (knee), and πόδες (feet). The aforementioned body parts can also be put in two segments, namely, the internal body parts (heart, blood, womb, and tongue) and the external body parts (head, neck, face, eye, ear, mouth, hand, breast, knee, and feet).

What makes this study significant is the detailed discussion of metonymy related to body part terms and expressions in the Greek New Testament. Previous studies of metonymy have not looked at the body part expressions in the Greek text of the New Testament. Therefore, the present study will contribute to the existing body of literature of New Testament Greek studies in cognitive linguistics.

We will begin by considering the meaning of metonymy. We will then look at the mode of analysis of the data collected in the Greek language of the New Testament. Finally, we will establish and discuss how person-parts are used conceptually in the Greek text.

2. Metonymy in Cognitive Linguistics

This section deals with previous studies and theoretical issues on the concept of metonymy, the metonymic domains, and vehicle entities. Since the 1980s, metaphor and metonymy have been extensively explored topics. Metaphor and metonymy are the basic structure of human speech (Ullman 1979, 223). From the traditional point of view, both are mere figures of speech. However, cognitive linguistics observes that, like metaphor, metonymy is a cognitive instrument and a way of thinking about people.

Traditionally, metonymy has been understood as the use of a word to replace another if both words are contiguously related. From the cognitive point of view, metonymy is conceptual, its function being to provide mental access through one conceptual entity to another. Metonymy entails speaking about a salient reference point that permits us to access another entity, which may be referred to as the target. Metonymy involves a simple domain mapping of one entity onto another. It can be understood in terms of the conceptual relation "A stands for B."

Until recent decades, conceptual metonymy had not been given much scholarly attention in the field of cognitive linguistics. Prominent scholars in the field such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Taylor (1989), Langacker (1993), Radden and Kövecses (1999), and Barcelona (2002), have suggested some definitions of conceptual metonymy.

For Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 35), metonymy is the usage of "one entity to refer to another that is related to it." They observe that metonymy, being part of everyday ways of thinking, is grounded in experience, subject to general and systematic principles, and structures our thoughts and actions. Rather than a merely rhetorical device, metonymy can be understood as a cognitive tool for conceptualization. Hence Lakoff and Turner (1989) regard it as a type of conceptual mapping. Metonymy is regarded as an important process whereby mental categories are extended to form new concepts (Taylor 1989, 122). Expressing the cognitive nature of metonymy, Langacker (1993, 30) defines metonymy as a process that consists of mentally accessing one conceptual entity via another entity. Gibbs (1994, 321) defines metonymy as a process by which "people take one well-understood or easily perceived aspect of something to represent or stand for the thing as a whole." Another definition by Blank (1999, 174) presents metonymy as "a linguistic device based on salient conceptual relations within a frame network."

Barcelona (2002, 246) thinks of conceptual metonymy as a source to target conceptual domain mapping, in which the target domain is mentally activated by the pragmatic function that links the two domains. Barcelona (2003, 4) observes that metonymy is basic to language and cognition. Kövecses (2002, 145) defines metonymy as a cognitive or a perceptive process that allows conceptual entities, targets, or vehicles to be mentally accessible to one another within the same Idealized Conceptive Model (ICM) of domain. Radden and Kövecses (1999, 21), from a cognitive perspective, explain metonymy as "a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same idealized cognitive model." Thus, the vehicle gives access to another entity (the target) in a single domain (Barcelona 2002; Radden and Kövecses 1999). According to Radden and Kövecses (1999, 31), there are two general conceptual patterns for metonymy-producing mapping relationships, namely: (i) whole ICM and its parts, and (ii) parts of an ICM. Lakoff (1987, 78) defines metonymy as a stand-for relation which exists in only one particular ICM. Metonymies may be understood in two ways: (i) A PART STANDS FOR A WHOLE or A WHOLE STANDS FOR A PART; (ii) A PART FOR ANOTHER PART (Kövecses 2002, 150). The PART AND PART metonymy is a type of metonymic configuration which relates to conceptual entities that function as parts with respect to a whole ICM. This type of metonymic relationship is composed of production, control, possession, and containment ICMs.

Metonymy is an important cognitive process which helps us perceive human-related terms. Though these aforementioned cognitive linguists and many others may have different viewpoints, they seem to agree that metonymy is not a mere figure of speech, but it consists of mentally accessing one conceptual entity via another entity. Apart from having a function of achieving some artistic purpose, it is a tool that helps us to better understand concepts and conceptualize the world.

Traditionally, the PART FOR WHOLE and WHOLE FOR PART metonymic variants have been referred to as synecdoche. In metonymy, part of the body can be used as a reference to the whole body, the person, human nature, or life itself. The BODY PART FOR THE WHOLE PERSON is a common metonymy in many languages (Kövecses and Szabó 1996, 341). An example is, "He had to feed his family on the equivalent of four hundred pounds a month, and with five mouths to feed, he found it very

hard" (Sinclair 2006, 935). This example implies that he had five people to feed. The mouth, the organ through which one is fed, is only a part of the whole body, yet it can represent the whole body. Thus, the "mouth" stands for the "body" or "person" in English. Consider this example of the PART FOR WHOLE metonymy, in relation to the body or a person as found in Shakespeare's work: "Take thy face hence" (Shakespeare, Raffel, and Bloom 2005, 4.3.19). Here, Macbeth tells someone to leave. In other words, "take thyself hence." The word "face" is employed to refer to the "entire body" of the person who is being addressed. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 38) also give note to some everyday examples: "We need some new faces around here," meaning, "we need new people around here." This may also be referred to as a synecdoche, which many linguists consider a subtype of metonymy (e.g., Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 36; Koch 1999, 154).

A biblical example of the PART FOR WHOLE metonymy is "to have you come under my roof" (Matt 8:8). Here, ROOF stands for HOUSE in the sense in which "part of an object stands for the whole of it." One mentally accesses a whole BUILDING via a salient part, ROOF. Another example is where an object in a class stands for the whole class. Consider the passage, "give us today our daily bread" (Matt 6:11), in which bread stands for food in general. Another biblical example of THE PART FOR THE WHOLE can be represented by one individual for the whole group. For example, Jacob for his descendants: "he will banish ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom 11:26). Here, Jacob refers to the Israelites.

In a reverse example, WHOLE FOR PART metonymy, a whole serves as a reference point for accessing one of its parts. Consider the example: "Ghana beat Nigeria in soccer." Ghana and Nigeria refer to the football teams of these countries. Here the whole group stands for a part of the group. In a biblical example, "all the world should be enrolled" (Luke 2:1), the term "world" refers to the Roman Empire known to Luke, the writer. Thus, the inhabitants of the world stand for the inhabitants of the Roman Empire. Therefore, "world" becomes a conceptually salient reference point in that it is a permanent location, and the Roman Empire becomes an independent part of the world.

Consider the expression, "The buses are on strike," which evokes the domain of public transportation (Hilpert 2006, 125). Here a part of this domain, "the buses," substitutes another domain, namely "the bus drivers." This can be understood in terms of the INSTRUMENT FOR ACTIVITY metonymy or CAUSE FOR EFFECT, which is a PART FOR PART relation.

There is also the Containment ICM, which refers to an image-schematic configuration that holds between a container and what is in it. Even places may be conceptualized as containers (Kövecses 2002). Niemeier (2003, 207) observes that in the English language, the heart is sometimes seen as a container filled with positive emotions. The container ICM generates several metonymic relationships, one of which is "container for content" which is relevant in the present study. In this CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED/CONTENT arrangement, it is the container that is highlighted and not its content.

Several studies have been conducted to explore how body parts have been conceptualized to generate metonymic expression (Sharifian 2011; Yu 2004; Nissen 2011; Maalej and Yu 2011; Wambui 2019; Gwarzo 2020). With regard to the human body, metonymies for physical domain parts include head, face, hand, leg, and so on, for the whole person (Kövecses 2002, 152). Yet, the focus has not been on metonymy in the biblical texts.

3. Language, Method, and Data Analysis

This section presents the language, the cognitive approach to the study of metonymy, research design, source data collection, and mode of analysis.

3.1 *Language*

The text from which the data was collected is the Greek New Testament. The Greek text of the New Testament consulted in this study is Koine Greek. Much like the English language today, Koine Greek became the most common and pervasive language of the Eastern Mediterranean world from the conquest of Alexander the Great (335–323 BCE) until the evolution of Byzantine Greek (CE 600). In the first century, when the New Testament was written, Koine Greek was a common language in the Roman Empire. During this period, this language was spoken in Greece, Macedonia, the Middle East, and parts of Africa that had come under the influence of the Greeks or Hellenized rulers. The educated, the working class and peasants, and other common people could speak Koine Greek. However, there was also Classical Greek then, which was the language used by the educated class and the philosophers. Modern Greek contains a very large amount of Koine, with the difference appearing in syntax rather than vocabulary and grammar. Koine is also the language of the Septuagint.

3.2 *Approaches to metonymy, research design, and source data collection*

There are two approaches to the study of metonymy: the non-cognitive approach and the cognitive approach. The non-cognitive approach views metonymy as merely a figure of speech used in decorating language. This approach does not view metonymy as part of human cognition. The other approach, which emerged in the 1980s, is the cognitive approach. According to this approach, all innate cognitive structures are based on bodily experience as well as recurrent patterns of interaction with the environment (Gwarzo 2015).

Regarding the theoretical framework, the present study adopts the conceptual metonymy theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Radden and Dirven (2007). This theory covers metonymy and the Idealized Conceptive Model (ICM). Lakoff (1987, 78) defines metonymy as a stand-for relation which exists in only one particular ICM. He introduces the Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM) as structures involving a speaker's conceptual knowledge (1987). There are four types of ICMs: propositional structures, image-schematic structures, metaphoric mappings, and metonymic mappings.

There is no one generally accepted method in cognitive linguistics for the analysis of metonymy. However, Schmitt (2005) suggests that the best way to present an empirical study of metonymy is to use a qualitative method to analyze the data. Therefore, the present study employs a qualitative research design. The data collection procedure is that the body part terms were gathered from the Greek text. In presenting the examples of each expression, a Greek sentence (a portion of a verse) is given first. This is followed by this author's own English translation of the Greek passages.

3.3 *Mode of analysis*

The body as a cognitive tool helps us understand the abstract world. This study investigates the different types of body metonymy in the New Testament. The Greek text of the New Testament was read to identify the body part terms and expressions that are believed to have been metonymically used. These terms were then grouped into metonymic mappings for analysis. The metonymic expressions identified relate to the following body parts: soul, spirit, voice, heart, body, blood, head, neck, face, eye, ear, mouth, throat, tongue, hand, womb, breast, knee, and feet. The metonymic structures of the body parts are then described. In this paper, all the conceptual metonymies are shown in capital letters. The abbreviations GRK and ENG stand for Greek and English respectively.

In the ensuing part of this study is a list of many biblical Greek linguistic expressions which may be conceived as vehicles for various conceptual metonymies which make up a good cognitive model for interpreting body part expressions in the New Testament.

4. Metonymic Conceptualization of Body Parts in the Greek New Testament

4.1 A PART FOR WHOLE metonymies

The metonymies discussed in this section are instantiations of the general metonymy, PART OF THE BODY STANDS FOR THE WHOLE BODY. What is realized here is the BODY PART FOR PERSON metonymy, which is a subset of the general metonymy, A PART FOR WHOLE. The following examples illustrate the BODY PART STANDS FOR PERSON metonymy:

4.1.1 Intangible parts for the whole person

a. Soul as a metonymy for the person

In both Greek and English, the idea of the soul representing the whole person is clear, as expressed in the examples below.

[ex. 1] GRK: καὶ ἐρῶ τῇ ψυχῇ μου (Luke 12:19)
ENG: I will say to my soul
[ex. 2] GRK: καὶ προσετέθησαν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρα ἐκείνῃ ψυχαὶ ὡσεὶ τρισχίλιαι (Acts 2:41)
ENG: and there were added that day about three thousand souls

In the Greek example [1], τῇ ψυχῇ μου, "my soul," can be expressed using the pronoun, "myself." Although the word ψυχή can be translated as "life," in the context it is "soul," referring to the whole person. The passage can be rendered, "I will say to myself." In example [2], ψυχαὶ means "souls," in the sense of people or persons. Thus, in both Greek examples we have a metonymy SOUL STANDS FOR PERSON, which is also a synecdoche.

b. Spirit as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 3] GRK: καὶ ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου (Luke 1:47)
ENG: and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior

In example [3], πνεῦμά μου, "my spirit," could be represented by the pronoun "I." Thus, πνεῦμά stands for the person rejoicing. Another way of reading this passage in [3] is, "I rejoice in God my savior." In this example, we have the metonymy SPIRIT STANDS FOR A PERSON.

4.1.2 Tangible part for the whole person: Internal body parts

a. Heart as a metonymy for the person

In Greek and English, as in many other languages, "heart" stands synecdochically for the whole person. Let us take the following example:

[ex. 4] GRK: καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν (Eph 6:22)
ENG: and that he may encourage your hearts

In example [4] the heart stands for the inner being or self which defines a person. The expression τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, literally "your hearts," stands for the person. Thus, the passage can read "that he may encourage you." In [4], we have the metonymy HEART FOR THE PERSON.

b. Blood as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 5] GRK: ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματός πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων (Acts 17:26)
ENG: he made out of one blood every nation of men
[ex. 6] GRK: ἥμαρτον παραδοὺς αἷμα ἀθῷον (Matt 27:4)
ENG: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood

In example [5], αἷμα, "blood," stands for the "human being" and in example [6], αἷμα stands for a person's life. In [5], ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματός can also be translated "out of one man" or "from a single person." There is a sense in which αἷμα in this passage refers to "Adam," the first human being to be created. In [6], the passage can be rendered, "I have sinned in betraying an innocent life." This example instantiates the metonymy BLOOD FOR PERSON.

4.1.3 Tangible part for the whole person: External body parts

a. Body as a metonymy for the person

In many cultures and religions, the whole "person" is believed to be composed of spirit, soul, and body. While the spirit and soul are intangible and invisible, the body is the tangible physical structure of the human being. However, this person-part is normally used in Greek and English to refer to the whole person as the examples below indicate:

[ex. 7] GRK: παραστῆσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν
ENG: to present your bodies as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1)

In example [7], τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν, literally reads as "your bodies." The body can also stand for the person's life. In example [7], we have the metonymy THE BODY STANDS FOR THE PERSON.

b. Flesh as a synecdoche for the person

[ex. 8] GRK: οὐκ ἂν ἐσώθη πᾶσα σάρξ (Matt 24:22)
ENG: there should no flesh be saved
[ex. 9] GRK: διὰ τοῦ καταπετάσματος, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ (Heb 10:20)
ENG: through the curtain, that is, through his flesh

In example [8], σάρξ, "flesh," means "the human being, and his/her motives, or standards." The word also means the "body," "human nature," "materiality," or "kindred." Normally, flesh is understood as the soft substance of the living body of both the human being and animal, which covers the body and is filled with blood. However, in [8], σάρξ refers to the "human being." The passage could be translated, "there should not anyone be saved." In other words, "there should no person be saved." Other examples include: "life" as in Hebrews 5:7 (ὃς ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, in the days of his flesh) and "mortal life" as in John 6:51 (ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω ἡ σάρξ μού ἐστιν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς, the Bread that I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh).

In example [9], σὰρξ refers to "his physical body" or the pronoun "himself." The synecdoche here is FLESH FOR THE BODY. In both examples [8] and [9], we see a FLESH STANDS FOR THE PERSON metonymy.

c. Head as a synecdoche for the person

[ex. 10] GRK: τὸ αἷμα ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ὑμῶν (Acts 18:6)
ENG: your blood be upon your heads

In example [10], τὴν κεφαλὴν ὑμῶν, "your head" implies "your own heads." This expression can be rendered with the reciprocal pronoun, "yourselves." Thus, the passage in [10] can be translated "your blood will be on yourselves." The head is significant here in its use as a figure of speech indicating the whole person. We can see that in both Greek examples the metonymy HEAD FOR A PERSON is present.

d. Neck as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 11] GRK: οἵτινες ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὸν ἑαυτῶν τράχηλον ὑπέθηκαν (Rom 16:4)
ENG: who risked their necks for my life

Example [11] means some people risked their lives for Paul's life. Here, the body part τράχηλος, "neck," stands for the lives of the people. This instantiates the synecdoche THE NECK FOR THE PERSON, which is part of the general synecdoche, THE BODY PART FOR THE WHOLE PERSON. The word "neck" can also mean "life." Thus, the passage can also read, "who laid down their lives for my life." It is the neck that joins the head to the rest of the body. Besides, it carries the vocal cords, the speech organ for the voice, a metonymy for the person. Additionally, the voice can also denote the speech of a person, which instantiates another metonymy, VOICE STANDS FOR THE PERSON. The neck is often the location where executioners separate the head from the body. Though Paul was happy to comment that some others risked their necks for his sake, tradition has it that he was eventually beheaded under Nero.

The neck is the long narrow part of the body which joins the head to the rest of the body. When you say someone is risking their neck, you mean they are engaging in something very dangerous to gain something. Example [11] indicates that in Greek we have a metonymy THE NECK FOR THE WHOLE PERSON.

e. Face as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 12] GRK: ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου (Matt 11:10)
ENG: Look, I send my messenger before your face

In example [12], πρὸ προσώπου σου, "before your face," the singular pronoun "you" is implied here. Thus, the passage in [12] can be translated, "Behold, I send my messenger ahead of you." We have here the metonymy FACE FOR A PERSON. The word "face" is employed to refer to the "entire body" of the person who is being addressed. There are similar metonymic expressions in current everyday English such as, "We need some new faces around here" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 37), meaning, "we need new people around here." In the Greek New Testament, the body part "face" could stand for the entire person in certain contexts. The expression in [12] instantiates a metonymy THE FACE FOR THE PERSON.

f. Eye as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 13] GRK: ἃ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν (1 Cor 2:9)
ENG: what an eye has not seen

In example [13], ὀφθαλμὸς means "eye," which stands for "one," that is a "person." The passage in [13] can be read "what a person has not seen" or "what no one has seen." The metonymy here emphasizes THE EYE FOR THE WHOLE BODY. Thus, we see in [13] an example of THE EYE STANDS FOR THE PERSON metonymy.

g. Ear as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 14] GRK: καὶ οὖς οὐκ ἤκουσεν (1Cor 2:9)
ENG: and ear has not heard

In [14], οὖς means "ear," which stands for the person. The passage in [14] can be reread, "and a person has not heard." Here we see the synecdoche, THE EAR FOR THE PERSON. Thus, we have in the Greek text of the New Testament, the metonymy THE EAR STANDS FOR THE PERSON.

h. Tongue as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 15] GRK: καὶ ἠγαλλιάσατο ἡ γλῶσσά μου (Acts 2:26)
ENG: and my tongue rejoiced

In example [15], the expression ἡ γλῶσσά μου means "my person." It can be represented by the pronoun "I." Thus, the passage can be interpreted as "and I rejoiced" as well as "and I rejoiced in speech/singing." Example [15] produces the metonymy THE TONGUE FOR PERSON.

j. Voice as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 16] GRK: καὶ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν λέγουσα (Matt 3:17)
ENG: and behold a voice from heaven saying

Example [16] gives us an understanding of a φωνὴ, "voice," referring to "God." The passage in [16] could be rendered "and lo, someone from heaven saying." A person's voice is part of the person. Here is a synecdoche VOICE FOR THE PERSON. Another example of synecdoche similar to the example in [16] is: καὶ ἤκουσα τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου λέγοντος, "and I heard the altar cry" (Rev 16:7), which refers to someone speaking.

k. Hand as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 17] GRK: οὐχὶ ἡ χείρ μου ἐποίησεν ταῦτα πάντα; (Acts 7:50)
ENG: Did not my hand make all things?

Example [17] has ἡ χείρ μου, meaning "my hand." This is synonymous with the pronoun "I." Thus, the passage could be read, "Did I not make all these things?" Here we have the hand, a body part, representing the whole person. In this example, we see a metonymy in which the "hand" stands for the "person." In Greek New Testament language there is a metonymy HAND FOR THE PERSON.

4.1.4 Tangible part for the whole person: Internal-external combination of body parts

a. Flesh and blood as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 18] GRK: ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι (Matt 16:17)
ENG: because flesh and blood has not revealed to you

In example [18], σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα, "flesh and blood," means "human being." In this saying of Jesus, when he contrasted "flesh and blood" with his Father in heaven, he meant that it was not a human being that gave the revelation to Peter but rather God. That is humanity in contrast with divinity. The Greek example in [18] points to the metonymy FLESH AND BLOOD STANDS FOR THE PERSON. In the New Testament metonymy associated with the head alone are head-parts including the face, eyes, and ears.

b. Womb and breasts as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 19] GRK: Μακαρία ἡ κοιλία ἡ βαστάσασά σε καὶ μαστοὶ οὓς ἐθήλασας (Luke 11:27)
ENG: Blessed is the womb that bore you and the beasts that you sucked

The κοιλία (womb) and μαστοὶ (breasts) in example [19] stand for, specifically, the woman or mother. Thus, these female organs of reproduction and nourishment represent the feminine human being. Interpreting ἡ κοιλία… καὶ μαστοὶ, "the womb…and breasts," as the woman and expression "the woman who," we can have [19] reread as "Blessed is the woman who bore and nursed you." In that case we have the metonymy THE WOMB AND BREASTS FOR THE PERSON, or more specifically WOMB/BREAST FOR WOMAN/MOTHER. Another example similar to [19] is: Μακάριαι αἱ στεῖραι καὶ αἱ κοιλίαι αἳ οὐκ ἐγέννησαν καὶ μαστοὶ οἳ οὐκ ἔθρεψαν, "Blessed are…the wombs that never bore and breasts that never gave suck" (Luke 23:29), which refers to women.

c. Knee as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 20] GRK: ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ (Phil 2:10)
ENG: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow

In example [20], πᾶν γόνυ, "every knee" means "everyone." This implies, "that at the name of Jesus every person should bow," thereby equating "knee" to "person." This supports the synecdoche KNEE FOR PERSON.

d. Feet as a metonymy for the person

[ex. 21] GRK: ὀξεῖς οἱ πόδες αὐτῶν ἐκχέαι αἷμα (Rom 3:15)
ENG: their feet are swift to shed blood

In example [21], οἱ πόδες αὐτῶν, "their feet," can be replaced by the pronoun "they." If so, then the passage could read, "they are swift to shed blood," which means these people are quick to kill. Since "they" represents "people," we can have the metonymy THE FEET FOR THE PERSON.

5. Metonymic Conceptualization of Activities

5.1 Instruments for action metonymies

In everyday life, several human actions are performed by using body parts. An action performed by a body part can represent a specific action

performed by a part of the body or the whole body. These actions conducted by the body parts automatically qualify the body parts to stand for the activities of the whole person. The metonymy, BODY PART STANDS FOR THE ACTIVITY is part of a more general metonymy, THE INSTRUMENT USED IN THE ACTIVITY STANDS FOR THE ACTIVITY (Kövecses and Szabó 1996, 340). Hence, the body part may be viewed as an instrument. Consider the following examples:

5.1.1 Intangible part for activity

a. Voice for what is spoken

[ex. 22] GRK: *οὐ δι' ἐμὲ ἡ φωνὴ αὕτη γέγονεν* (John 12:30)
ENG: this voice has not come because of me
[ex. 23] GRK: *τοσαῦτα εἰ τύχοι γένη φωνῶν εἰσίν ἐν κόσμῳ* (1 Cor 14:10)
ENG: there are many voices in the world

In examples [22–23], the voice is conceptualized as an instrument of speech. Thus, we have a general metonymy VOICE STANDS FOR SPEECH. Specifically, example [22] instantiates the metonymy VOICE FOR MESSAGE, while example [23] instantiates VOICE FOR LANGUAGE.

5.1.2 Tangible part for activity: External body parts

a. Mouth for what is spoken or eaten

[ex. 24] GRK: *τὸ ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκ τοῦ στόματος* (Matt 15:11)
ENG: what goes out of the mouth
[ex. 25] GRK: *οὐ τὸ εἰσερχόμενον εἰς τὸ στόμα* (Matt 15:11)
ENG: not what goes into the mouth

In both example [24] and [25], the mouth stands for its two main functions, speaking and eating. Thus, the mouth stands for what it does and what it says. The example in [24] instantiates the metonymy THE MOUTH STANDS FOR SPEAKING and [25] represents THE MOUTH STANDS FOR EATING.

b. Lips for what is spoken

[ex. 26] GRK: *ὁ λαὸς οὗτος τοῖς χείλεσίν με τιμᾷ* (Matt 15:8)
ENG: this people honor me with their lips
[ex. 27] GRK: *τοῦτ' ἔστιν κάρπον χείλέων* (Heb 13:15)
ENG: that is, the fruit of the lips
[ex. 28] GRK: *ἐν χείλεσίν ἑτέρῶν λαλήσω* (1 Cor 14:21)
ENG: with other lips will I speak

In our human experiences, the lips are a pair of instruments of speech because this pair is associated with other members of the body, such as the mouth, the tongue, and the throat in speech-making. In examples [26–28], we have a common metonymy LIPS STAND FOR SPEECH. All three examples indicate that the lips stand for their action or activity. In examples [26] and [27], the lips stand for what is spoken: LIPS FOR WORD(S). In example [27], the metonymy explains the lips as a pair of instruments used in adoration, a worthy activity. In example [28], the lips stand for foreign languages, which instantiates the metonymy LIPS FOR LANGUAGE. Our encyclopedic knowledge about the lips and what this pair does helps us understand the general metonymy BODY PART FOR ACTIVITY.

c. Tongue for what is spoken

[ex. 29] GRK: καὶ ἤρξαντο λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις (Acts 2:4)
ENG: and they began to speak in other tongues
[ex. 30] GRK: παυσάτω τὴν γλῶσσαν ἀπὸ κακοῦ (1 Pet 3:10)
ENG: let him keep the tongue from evil

In examples [29] and [30], the tongue is employed as an instrument of speech. In example [29], the tongue is depicted as an instrument for speaking a language. Here, we have the THE TONGUE STANDS FOR LANGUAGE metonymy. Example [30] suggests that the tongue, as a tool of communication, is capable of committing a sinful action; therefore, it needs to be guarded or held in control, or else it can cause damage. Another example is ἀνεῴχθη δὲ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ παραχρῆμα καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα αὐτοῦ, "and his mouth was opened immediately and his tongue [loosed]" (Luke 1:64). Here, a "loosed tongue" implies the ability to speak. Thus, we have the metonymy THE TONGUE STANDS FOR SPEAKING.

d. Eye for what it sees

[ex. 31] GRK: ἐπάραντες δὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν (Matt 17:8)
ENG: and having lifted up their eyes
[ex. 32] GRK: καὶ εἰ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου σκανδαλίζει σε (Matt 18:9)
ENG: and if your eye offends you

The eye, as a body part, is used for the function or activity, seeing. In example [32], the eye is conceptualized as an instrument of sight, a body part with the potential to cause the whole body to sin when it looks at what is forbidden to see. This instantiates the metonymy THE EYE FOR WHAT IT SEES OR DOES.

e. Ear for what it hears

[ex. 33] GRK: ἀπερίτμητοι καρδίαις καὶ τοῖς ὠσίν (Acts 7:51)
ENG: uncircumcised in heart and the ears
[ex. 34] GRK: σήμερον πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ἐν τοῖς ὠσίν ὑμῶν (Luke 4:21)
ENG: This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears

In examples [33] and [34], we see a metonymy THE EAR FOR WHAT IT HEARS OR DOES. The reference to "uncircumcised ears" in example [33] designates a spiritual condition in which the ear is deaf to God's speech.

f. Hand for what it does

[ex. 35] GRK: χείρ κυρίου ἐπὶ σε (Acts 13:11)
ENG: the hand of the Lord [is] upon you
[ex. 36] GRK: εἰ δὲ ἡ χείρ σου...σκανδαλίζει σε (Matt 18:8)
ENG: if your hand...offends you
[ex. 37] GRK: τότε προσελθόντες ἐπέβαλον τὰς χεῖρας ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν (Matt 26:50)
ENG: then they came [and] they laid hands on Jesus

In examples [35–37] we have the metonymy HAND FOR WHAT IT DOES. In this case the context determines what is done. This is INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION metonymy. This metonymy explains the hand as an instrument used to punish [35], do evil [36], or effect arrest [37].

g. Foot for what it does/where it goes

[ex. 38] GRK: *εἰ δὲ…ὁ ποὺς σου σκανδαλίζει σε* (Matt 18:8)
ENG: but if…your foot offends you
[ex. 39] GRK: *Ὡς ὡραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένον τὰ ἀγαθά* (Rom 10:15)
ENG: how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news

In example [38], we have the metonymy THE FOOT FOR WHAT IT DOES and in [39], THE FOOT FOR WHERE IT GOES. This is another INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION metonymy. This metonymy explains the foot as an instrument used in committing evil [38] or used to deliver welcoming news [39]. Thus, the foot's activity could either be for good or evil.

5.1.3 Tangible part for activity: Internal body parts

a. Throat for what is spoken

[ex. 40] GRK: *τάφος ἀνεῳγμένος ὁ λάρυγξ αὐτῶν* (Rom 8:13)
ENG: their throat is an open grave

In example [40], we have the metonymy THE THROAT FOR WHAT IS SPOKEN. The throat is associated with speech. In this example the throat is conceptualized as a body part with the potential to spew evil that leads to death. Thus, in example [40], we have an instantiation of the metonymy, THE THROAT STANDS FOR DEADLY SPEECH.

This section has outlined examples of the BODY PART STANDS FOR ACTIVITY metonymy. The next section discusses the metonymies noted so far.

5.2 Containment ICM

The examples in [22], [24], and [25] illustrate the containment ICM. In example [22], we notice the CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED metonymy, which presents the voice as a container for a message. Thus, we have here an example of the containment ICM which shows a relationship between the container and the thing(s) it contains. Therefore, in New Testament Greek, voice, an intangible part of the body, conceptually stands for its main activity, that is, speaking.

Example [24] also supports the concept of the mouth as a container and can be expressed in the metonymy THE MOUTH STANDS FOR WORDS. There is a sense in which the mouth stands for what is eaten. In other words, example [25] suggests the CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED metonymy, specifically, THE MOUTH STANDS FOR FOOD. Thus, we have a general metonymy, BODY PART FOR ITS CONTENT.

6. Discussion

In our study, with particular reference to the Greek text of the New Testament, the person can be conceptualized in two senses: the intangible (spirit, soul, and voice) and the tangible (body, flesh, head, face, eye, ear, mouth, lips, tongue, neck, throat, heart, blood, womb, breasts, knee, and feet). Regarding the tangible part of the person, which is basically the body, there are two divisions, namely the internal (blood, heart, tongue, and womb) and the external, easily visible parts (the flesh, head, face, eye, ear, mouth, lips, neck, breasts, hand, knee, and feet).

Dividing the human body into upper-section, mid-section, and lower-section, it also appears that in the Greek language, greater prominence is given to body parts of the upper section, namely the head, neck, face, eye, ear, mouth, lips, throat, and tongue. In the Greek New Testament, the head

appears to be the part of the body richest in metonymy, with many other body parts directly part of it. The middle section of the body comprises the heart, hands, breasts, and womb. The lower section of the body includes the knee and the foot.

As shown in examples [1] to [21], body parts stand for the whole body or person. Also, in examples [22] to [40], a body part is clearly understood as referring to the activity performed by the whole person. The examples in [22], [24], and [25] indicate that certain body parts can be conceptualized as containers. The study reveals that Greek metonymies for the person in the New Testament are basically A PART FOR WHOLE, INSTRUMENT FOR ACTION, and CONTAINMENT ICM.

We could say that the data reveals how the Koine Greek used in writing the New Testament conceptualizes a person through his/her body parts. A striking finding of this study is that body part terms are employed in producing metonymies in the Greek New Testament. The speakers and writers of the New Testament made use of body part expressions as sources of figurative conceptualization of a person. In view of the findings in this study, it becomes appropriate to suggest that in the study of linguistic concepts in the New Testament, Greek metonymic terms and expressions relating to body parts cannot be taken for granted. Thus, cognitive linguistic analysis of metonymy has a significant role to play in Bible interpretation and translation.

6. Conclusion

This paper has explored the metonymic conceptualizations of body parts in the Greek New Testament. The New Testament conceptually uses body part terms in the PART FOR WHOLE metonymic sense. Figures of speech employing body parts are frequently used in these ways. In this study, various expressions have been conceptualized, evoking metonymical meaning of body parts. Metonymic expressions identified in the analysis include BODY PART STANDS FOR PERSON, BODY PART STANDS FOR ACTIVITY, and BODY PART STANDS FOR ITS CONTENT (CONTAINER FOR CONTAINED). It is evident from the findings that many human body parts are metonymically used in the New Testament in reference to the whole person or a person's actions. This conclusion has been drawn from the analysis of body part conceptualizations based on the figurative statements in New Testament relating to anatomical and physiological features. The findings add to the existing body of knowledge in cognitive semantics, specifically in the area of the study of biblical languages.

The study of metonymy in the New Testament, from the cognitive viewpoint, will be of immense help for readers of the text to understand the cognitive and conceptual nature of metonymy. It also throws new light on the teaching of New Testament Greek vocabulary. Greek teachers can illustrate the cognitive nature of metonymy and guide their students to explore the metonymic motivation of a Greek word. This can help students understand the internal relationship among different meanings of one word and facilitate relevant cognitive reasoning. The study will also help Bible translators identify the meanings of metonyms associated with human parts in the Greek language in which the New Testament was originally written.

However, there remains the question: Why did the New Testament writers use metonymy instead of the literal references? This is not discussed in this paper and therefore future research may consider responding to it.

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Coherence in Ecclesiastes 3:16–22

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Abstract

Ecclesiastes 3:16–22 has been interpreted as an incoherent text or as having unresolved tension. This article seeks to explain the flow of thought in the text. Various exegetical options are evaluated in light of the text and the theology of the book. To trace the flow of thought, different views on the coherence of the text are surveyed and evaluated on the basis of the exegesis. This article argues that the text can be understood as a coherent whole discussing two reactions to observing a corrupt court. One is an affirmation of an afterlife judgment and the other is an expression of human limitations. The concept of human limitations is offered as an argument to renounce futile pursuit of permanent profit in this life and to pursue joy as a gift given by God.

1. Introduction

> And again I saw under the sun a place of judgment and there was wickedness there, a place of justice and there was wickedness there! I thought that God would judge the just and the wicked as there is a time for every matter and for every deed there. I thought that this is on account of human beings that God would expose them and show them that they are [just as] quadrupeds by themselves. The lot of the human and the lot of the quadruped is the same lot to both of them. As one dies, so does the other, and they both have the same spirit and the human has no advantage over the quadruped, for all is futile. Both go to the same place. Both are from the soil and both return to the soil. Who knows whether the spirit of humans goes up and the spirit of quadrupeds goes down to the earth? And I saw that there is nothing better than that one has joy in his work, for this is his portion, for who will bring him back to see what will be after him? (Translation of Ecclesiastes 3:16–22 slightly modified from Huovila 2018, 177)

https://www.sats.ac.za/conspectus/
This article: https://www.sats.ac.za/coherence-in-ecclesiastes
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.3

Conspectus

Keywords
Ecclesiastes, coherence, judgment, afterlife, joy

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Bible-based. Christ-centred. Spirit-led.

Ecclesiastes 3:16–22 has generated a number of interpretations. Some interpreters do not see a coherent thought expressed in these verses. For example, Crenshaw (1987, 102) considers 3:17 to possibly be a gloss because it would make the text incoherent in his interpretation. Qohelet's view, as presented by Longman (1998, 127–128), is incoherent in that there is divine retribution but no time for it. Finally, according to Bartholomew (2011, 177–179), Qohelet juxtaposes two contradictory views with no resolution in the passage. The passage argues for joy from corruption, judgment, mortality, and direction of spirits after death. The purpose of this article is to explain the flow of thought in the passage. To do so, exegetical options are evaluated in light of the text and the theology of the book, and the relationship of the main ideas in the passage to each other is examined. This is needed because many interpretations assume some incoherence in the passage or Qohelet's view, or do not explain how the ideas in the passage relate to each other as part of a coherent argument. It is assumed that, other things being equal, a coherent interpretation is to be preferred over an incoherent one and is thus more likely to capture the meaning intended by the author. Qohelet's views on determinism, afterlife, and divine judgment are discussed. This helps exclude some interpretive options on the basis of assumed consistency by Qohelet. Various interpretations are surveyed and evaluated in section 3. In section 4, the interrelationships of the different parts of the text are discussed in light of the surveyed options. This leads to a coherent view of the argument presented in the text.

2. Theological Preliminaries

2.1 Introduction

Some views on Qohelet's[1] theology have greatly influenced the interpretation of Ecclesiastes 3:16–22. Four are discussed here. They are Qohelet's view on determinism, the meaning of *Sheol*, his view on an afterlife, and his view on divine judgment. These are discussed in this order. Also, a brief explanation of futility in Ecclesiastes is given.

If Qohelet believed that God will judge every person in the afterlife, and if he was coherent, then the interpretation of Ecclesiastes 3:17 that Qohelet referred to an afterlife judgment is a possibility. If he did not believe in a divine judgment in the afterlife, such an interpretation results in an incoherent reading. Therefore, his view on a divine judgment in the afterlife is relevant to the interpretation of Ecclesiastes 3:17.

If Qohelet did not believe in an afterlife, neither could he believe in a judgment in it. In this case, he would not refer to the afterlife in 3:17. In Ecclesiastes 9:10, Qohelet claims that there is no knowledge in *Sheol*. If this view is incompatible with the idea of a conscious afterlife judgment, and if he was coherent, Ecclesiastes 3:17 cannot refer to such an afterlife judgment. Thus, the concept of *Sheol* is relevant for interpreting Ecclesiastes 3:17.

Qohelet's view on determinism is relevant because it may undermine Lohfink's (2003, 66–67) and Samet's (2019, 587) interpretation of Ecclesiastes 3:17 as referring to God judging in the judgment by the corrupt human judge. This discussion of theological preliminaries follows mostly Huovila's (2018, 176–212) argumentation.

1 In this article, the name Qohelet refers to the literary character by the same name in the book of Ecclesiastes. The debate about Qohelet's identity is not relevant to this article. By referring to what Qohelet believed or did not believe, reference is made to beliefs or lack of them attributed to him in the book of Ecclesiastes, and to what can reasonably be inferred from these.

2.2 *Qohelet's view on determinism*

Murphy (1992, 39) considers that Qohelet teaches determinism in Ecclesiastes 3:1. Fox (1999, 194–206) argues that the passage should not be understood as teaching determinism and that Qohelet did not believe in determinism. Murphy (1992, 39) stresses that the times in the catalogue of times of Ecclesiastes 3 are God's times, not our times, and that they happen to us under divine control. He (1992, 31) also claims that "all times are *fixed* by God, and over them humans have no control" (emphasis in original).

Samet (2019) argues for a thorough determinism in Qohelet's theology. She notes two hints of determinism in the catalogue of times, but she does not consider them decisive. They are "a time to give birth and a time to die" in 3:2, and the use of זמן ("appointed time") in 3:1 (Samet 2019, 578, gloss hers). Interpreting the catalogue of times as a catalogue of appropriate times rather than determined times, a time to give birth and a time to die seem rather natural. Samet understands זמן to mean "appointed time" in biblical Hebrew, being the late biblical Hebrew parallel of מועד, "appointed time." As appointed times are often appropriate times, the extension of the meaning is natural. The corpus of late biblical Hebrew has only four instances of זמן. This is not sufficient to exclude the meaning of "appropriate time." Fox (1999, 200–201) thinks the word is used to complete the parallelism (see also Huovila 2018, 184).

Samet (2019) considers the stronger arguments for determinism to relate to the appendix to the catalogue, in Ecclesiastes 3:9–17. Her view of the structure of the text is discussed in section 3.1. She interprets three verses referring to God's deeds (3:14, 15, 17) in a deterministic context, thereby attempting to solve exegetical difficulties in them. In her interpretation, Qohelet argues for the idea that "God's predestination is absolute and eternal.... Human conducts that are usually ascribed to free will are in fact God's actions" (Samet 2019, 588).

Samet (2019, 582) understands Ecclesiastes 3:14 as saying that God causes people to fear him. She interprets this to mean that "everything is in the hands of God, *including* fear of God. Not only are humans unable to choose their actions, they cannot even decide their thoughts and beliefs" (Samet 2019, 583, emphasis in original). She explicitly rejects the interpretation that the verse is saying that God has done something (referring to a fixed time system expressed in the catalogue of times) so that people would fear him. The argument is based on the basic meaning of עשה ש ("God has caused that"), which she thinks can hardly mean "he has done X so that Y would happen." The object is not missing but it is the subordinate clause. Seow (1997, 165) thinks, on the contrary, that the relative clause is a result or purpose clause.

Samet's reading of Ecclesiastes 3:14 is syntactically natural and straightforward. However, it is not clear that the fact that God causes people to fear him excludes people's free will. Some people will fear him and God has caused it. However, in causation there is a degree of control. God may well have made the world so that he makes people fear him by hiding his deeds and timing from them (3:11), and people thereby losing ability to control the appropriate times. God making people fear him need not be considered to negate the free will. There may be causality without implying complete control.

Samet (2019, 584–587) argues that a difficult expression יבקש את־ נרדף ("he seeks the persecuted") in Ecclesiastes 3:15 implies that the one responsible for persecution is actually God, not the evildoer who persecutes the oppressed. In her interpretation, נרדף ("persecuted") refers to the persecuted. It does not refer to cyclical events. Persecution or oppression is a well-established meaning for the verb. The word יבקש ("he seeks"), in connection with נרדפים ("the persecuted") can mean, in her interpretation, either looking after the oppressed, that is taking vengeance on their behalf,

or seeking to oppress them. She prefers the latter. She notes that the words occur together in contexts of hostile persecution.

The third statement Samet (2019, 586–588) discusses in support of her thesis is Ecclesiastes 3:17. She understands the verse to claim that it is not the mortal judge who causes injustice, but God. He does it through human courts. In this interpretation the word שם ("there") in verse 17 refers to the corrupt court of verse 16. This makes sense in a deterministic text but it is not the only way to read it. An alternative is discussed in section 3.3.1. In the alternative, the word refers to the occasion of God's judgment.

Fox (1999, 200–202) argues that Qohelet did not believe in determinism. He notes that determinism is incompatible with Ecclesiastes 7:17. The verse records an admonition by Qohelet not to die before one's time. If the time of death is predetermined, it is impossible to die before it. In a deterministic worldview one cannot influence the time of one's death. The imperatives imply that one can influence it. Samet (2019, 588–590) notes that Qohelet makes statements that assume free will. She explains this lack of consistency by drawing a parallel to apocalyptic literature with traditional biblical categories of free will coexisting with a deterministic agenda. Its authors allowed the two views in apparent logical contradiction to coexist. The basic concepts of free will theology were too intuitive and too deeply rooted to be removed from deterministic discourse.

There is no need to understand Ecclesiastes 3 as teaching determinism. As Fox (1999, 197–204) argues, the times in the catalogue of times can be understood as appropriate times. This is supported by the claim in 3:11 that God made all things appropriate in their time. While Samet's (2019) argument is thought-provoking and well written, it is not conclusive. In this study, a non-deterministic interpretation of Qohelet is preferred to a deterministic one as more coherent with the book's overall argument.

2.3 The meaning of Sheol

The word *Sheol* is used to refer to a location associated with death. There is debate about what is in *Sheol*. One view considers that it is the spirit of the deceased. This referent may be called the netherworld. This view is argued for by Johnston (2002, 73–75). Another view considers that *Sheol* refers to the place of the body after death. This referent may be called the grave, though it should be noted that an individual grave is never referred to. This view is argued for by Harris (1962). Bar (2015) gives support to the view that it can be used to refer to both. For a detailed discussion, see Huovila (2018, 213–221), who argues that it can refer to both. He also argues that the distinction between body and spirit is relevant for the book of Ecclesiastes. This is because Ecclesiastes 12:7 makes a distinction between them, even though the text does not describe the state of the departed spirit. The possibility that *Sheol* can refer to the physical realm makes it possible that when Ecclesiastes 9:10 claims there is no knowledge in *Sheol*, the reference is to the body. This is relevant to the text, as it discusses opportunities to act in this world rather than opportunities to act in the realm of spirits.

2.4 Qohelet's view of the afterlife

There are a few passages that have been used to argue that Qohelet did not believe in an afterlife. They are Ecclesiastes 9:5, 9:6, 9:10, and 3:21. These are discussed in this order. The last verse is not discussed in this section but in section 3.5, because it is part of the passage of central concern to this article. The discussion follows Huovila (2018, 218–221).

Ecclesiastes 9:5 claims that the dead know nothing. Apart from the context, the claim is easy to understand as a claim of no conscious afterlife, denying the concept of a conscious spirit that survives death. This interpretation seems quite natural because it is not so easy to see why a statement that a corpse knows nothing is relevant.

This argument is not strong in a context that discusses bodily activity on earth, and the fact that the window of opportunity for it closes at death. This is the case in Ecclesiastes 9:5. Knowing is mentioned as something the living do, as they know they will die. That means they know their opportunity to act will end (see Eccl 9:10). They can act on this information now, knowing that whatever they want to do, they have limited time for. The dead do not know anything they can act on. The knowing that is relevant in the text is knowledge that can be acted on. The discussion is not about the state of the dead in the abstract but only in its relationship to activity in this life. The next verse (9:6) mentions the dead as not partaking of this life anymore. Understanding the dead in Ecclesiastes 9:5 as referring to the corpse is no more trivial than 9:6 mentioning that the dead no longer have a portion in this life. This interpretation means that Ecclesiastes 9:5 makes no claim about the existence of an afterlife. It only implies that there is a separation between this life and any possible afterlife.

Ecclesiastes 9:6 claims that love, hate, and jealousy have already disappeared among the deceased. Huovila (2018, 84–86) notes three possibilities for understanding the meaning. They are that the dead do not experience these emotions, the dead do not act in these manners, and the dead do not experience others acting in these manners. The last option is quite possibly the right interpretation, because in that interpretation the statement is closer in meaning to the latter part of the verse claiming that the deceased will never again have a portion in what happens under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 claims that in *Sheol* there is no work, no thought or planning, no knowledge, and no wisdom. Therefore, one should do all one can while one is alive. The concern is the separation of the deceased from all activity in this life. He cannot participate in it anymore. It is irrelevant to this concern whether the deceased has a spirit that survives death and can work, think, plan, know, and have wisdom, as long as the deceased cannot thereby continue his opportunity to have an influence in this life. Thus, the non-action of the corpse is very relevant in this text. There is no necessity to interpret the reference to be the spirit rather than the corpse.

The texts allow for an interpretation where there is no conscious spirit after death. Such a view would even add some depth to the statements. However, these texts do not require such an interpretation. Therefore, one should be open to the possibility that Qohelet believed in conscious afterlife and in a divine judgment in it.

2.5 Qohelet's view of a divine judgment in the afterlife

Few interpreters think that Qohelet believed in a just divine judgment in the afterlife (see Huovila 2018, 67–70, 178–180 and the references there). One argument against that being his view is that Qohelet insists that people cannot know the future (Seow 1997, 166–167). This argument is weak in that Qohelet believed one can know something about the future even though he claimed one cannot know the future in general. Crenshaw (1987, 192) considers the view too optimistic for Qohelet. This argues for a view of Qohelet's theology of divine judgment on the basis of the interpreter's general understanding of Qohelet's level of optimism with little further argumentation.

The epilogist clearly believed in the judgment of all deeds (Eccl 12:13–14). This is best understood as an eschatological judgment. This is because "there is no observable judgment of all deeds in this life," because "Qohelet has argued against all things receiving a proper judgment on earth," and because "there is no textual support for the idea that the judgment of all deeds is not just" (Huovila 2018, 231–232, quotations on page 231).

This view is not shared by all. Seow (1997, 395) thinks that the judgment referred to by the epilogist is probably eschatological. Fredericks (2010,

250) thinks it is not necessarily the final judgment. Murphy (1992, 126) is uncertain. The locus of this article, Ecclesiastes 3:18–22, is attributed to Qohelet. So, the question is whether Qohelet believed in this view. If the epilogist believed in it, it makes it more probable that Qohelet also did.

If the theological preliminaries discussed above are correct, there is no necessary reason to deny Qohelet the view that there is a personal divine judgment in the afterlife. Ecclesiastes 3:18–22 is interpreted in this article based on the assumption that Qohelet's worldview allows for such a possibility and the assumption that Qohelet did not believe in determinism. It is argued that the assumption that Qohelet believed in a personal divine judgment in the afterlife makes the best sense of the passage. Therefore, it is Qohelet's view. The argumentation follows Huovila (2018, 176–212).

2.6 The meaning of הבל *"futility"*

The thematic word for Ecclesiastes, הבל ("futility"), has received a number of interpretations. According to Huovila (2018, 114–156), it means futility, often measured by the standard of achieving permanent profit in this life. A more technical expression of his view is as follows:

> [T]he meaning of the word הבל in the book of Ecclesiastes (with possible exceptions when there is good reason to believe that the use is unrelated to the summary statement) falls within the general sense of "futility," and in most occurrences within the meaning "that which is associated with failure to gain permanent profit, (1) as that which fails to accomplish this, or (2) as the cause or (3) circumstance of the failure." (Huovila 2018, 153)

The view is also defended by Huovila and Lioy (2019). The three sub meanings in the definition are metonymically related to each other as an extended prototype category. This understanding of futility in Ecclesiastes gives a single unified meaning for all occurrences related to the summary statement.

2.7 Summary of theological preliminaries

Arguments for Qohelet's determinism are not considered decisive. A non-deterministic reading makes the book somewhat more coherent. *Sheol* can refer to the place of dead bodies as well as the place of the spirits of the dead. Qohelet's view is not incompatible with life after death. The thematic futility is measured relative to the standard of achieving permanent profit in this life.

3. Key Elements in Ecclesiastes 3:16–22

3.1 Structure

Huovila (2018, 178) notes that the section 3:16–22 "is linked to verse 10 (ראיתי 'I saw') by ועוד ראיתי 'and again I saw' (Eccl 3:16) and delimited by ושבתי אני ואראה 'and again I saw' in 4:1." This makes it a section that is meaningful to discuss as a whole. The section begins by recording an observation of an evil court in verse 16. It mentions two conclusions by Qohelet, both introduced by אמרתי אני בלבי ("I said in my heart"; vv. 17, 18). This is followed by a discussion of the common death of humans and animals, or more specifically of some animals (בהמה "quadruped") in verses 19–21. The section is concluded by a note on the importance of joy in verse 22. The purpose of this article is to examine how the thoughts expressed in these verses cohere. This is done by examining the meaning of these verses and their mutual relationships.

The internal structure of the passage contains a setting (3:16), the first reaction (3:17), the second reaction (3:18–21), and the conclusion (3:22).

The second reaction can be further divided into a summary statement (3:18), further explanation (3:19–20), and a question about directions of spirits in death (3:21). The rhetorical question of verse 21 is given a subsection of its own due to its importance in this article.

Samet (2019, 579–582) argues that Ecclesiastes 3:16–17 does not start a new section after 3:1–15 but rather belongs to the same section. She has two arguments. One is that it is unclear why a passage dedicated to the mechanism of death should begin with a discussion of injustice in courts. This is discussed in section 4.1.2. The other argument is that a reference to the determined times seems out of place (3:17 referring back to 3:1). But the parallel may be more verbal than conceptual (Huovila 2018, 178–185). Because Ecclesiastes 3:17 and 3:18 both express Qohelet's reaction, it makes sense to consider them part of the same section. This is not to deny cohesive links to Ecclesiastes 3:1–15.

3.2 Setting 3:16

> And again I saw under the sun a place of judgment and there was wickedness there, a place of justice and there was wickedness there![2]

There is little disagreement about the setting. Qohelet observes a court (place of judgment) "under the sun," that is "in the realm of the living" as opposed to the netherworld (Seow 1997, 104–105). In the court, which is supposed to be a place of judgment, there was wickedness. The court is called a place of judgment and a place of justice. The latter term highlights the wrong: wickedness is in the very place that is supposed to be a place of justice. Fox (1999, 214) explains why a corrupt court can be called a place of justice by analogy to English. In English, one "can call a law court a 'court of justice' in the same way, even if the particular one is corrupt."

3.3 Qohelet's first conclusion: God's judgment 3:17

> I thought that God would judge the just and the wicked as there is a time for every matter and for every deed there.[3]

Verse 17 has generated a high number of interpretations. Interpreters have struggled to reconcile the idea of God judging the just and the wicked and the view that Qohelet did not believe in an afterlife judgment. For example, Crenshaw (1987, 102) notes that Qohelet "complains repeatedly that the same fate befalls evildoers and good people." Because of tension with other statements of divine judgment by Qohelet, he thinks that the verse may be a gloss. Seow (1997, 166) thinks the judgment is potential, signifying that the judgment is in God's hand. Longman (1998, 127–128) thinks Qohelet believes in divine retribution but has no time for it. This makes Qohelet incoherent. Gordis (1951, 225) thinks the reference is to an afterlife judgment, but he understands the intent to be satirical.

The view that the book of Ecclesiastes contains no argument that Qohelet did not believe in an afterlife divine judgment was discussed and argued for in section 2. In light of this, there is no need to avoid the implication that 3:17 refers to one. This does not solve all the difficulties in this verse. The word שם ("there") has received a vast number of interpretations, including textual emendations. Also, the possibly elliptical nature of the text presents its own challenges.

2 Translation slightly modified from Huovila (2018, 177).

3 Translation from Huovila (2018, 177).

3.3.1 The meaning of שם (“there”) in 3:17

Huovila (2018, 178–188) discusses six views on how שם is to be understood. This discussion follows his, elaborating on some details and summarizing others. Five of the views do not understand the word שם to mean “there.” These are briefly mentioned last.

(1) The word is to be pointed as שָׁם, and it means “there.” This is supported by the Masoretic pointing and the Septuagint translation as ἐκεῖ, “there.” There are various suggestions about what place is referred to. These include the place of judgment in verse 16 (Fox 1999, 215; Lohfink 2003, 66–67; Samet 2019, 587) and the period after death (Gordis 1951, 225). One way to understand it is that its referent is the occasion of divine judgment, and that the expression is elliptical, possibly expanded as “there is a time [of judgment] for all things [where and when God judges] and time [of judgment] over all deeds there [where and when God judges]” (Huovila 2018, 180).

It is not plausible that שם refers to the expression תחת השמש (“under the sun”) in verse 16. There are two references using שמה (“there”) in the same verse. These refer to the corrupt court just introduced rather than the more remote “under the sun.” Otherwise, the introduction of the corrupt court is awkward. Because of the two anaphoric references to the corrupt court, it is a more active referent than תחת השמש (“under the sun”) and thus more likely understood by the reader as the referent of שם in 3:17.

Samet’s interpretation that God judges all deeds at the corrupt court makes good sense of the text, but only assuming a deterministic view where God does not judge justly. Fox (1995, 215) and Lohfink (2003, 66–67) think that שם refers to the corrupt court. Because of the rarity of the use of שם as an attribute, it is better to understand the place to be the place of divine judgment and not of the deeds to be judged. If it were to be assumed that it refers to the corrupt court as the place of the deeds to be judged, the author is still very vague as to how this is supposed to be understood in any meaningful sense. Assuming God’s judgment to take place at the corrupt, earthly court presupposes a view of God as an imperfect judge.

Furthermore, it is not clear how all deeds would be judged in the earthly court. Not all deeds are judged at any earthly court but only actual court cases. If the reference to all things is seen as a reference to the catalogue of times, the parallelism appears weak. This is because the catalogue of times does not appear to be a list of things that have a time in court. Even if the reference to all things is diluted to all kinds of deeds, it is not clear why God’s judgment is manifested especially in the corrupt court, apart from a claim that it is God judging at the corrupt court. Understanding a reference to the occasion of divine judgment in the afterlife is superior in that it treats the reference as fully comprehensive, and it makes the statement clearly relevant and understandable in the context. It gives a natural reason for why there is an occasion for all things and deeds there. It is that all things will be judged there. Understanding a reference to the earthly court would require more processing to understand how the “all deeds” is to be qualified and how God judges at the corrupt court. Understanding the judgment to take place in the afterlife is more in line with the idea of God as a righteous judge, it provides a clear occasion for the fulfilment, it is highly relevant for the text, and it does not contradict Qohelet’s ideas about the afterlife.

Based on these considerations, it is best to understand the passage as affirming a divine judgment of all deeds in the afterlife, and שם as referring to the occasion of divine judgment in the afterlife. This interpretation allows for the judgement to be just, with the consequence that this passage is consistent not only internally but also with the Jewish idea of God as a righteous judge. The other views to be mentioned do not understand שם to mean “there.”

(2) The word is to be pointed as שָׂם, "appointed," "established," or "set." The word order with the verb last is peculiar enough to call this interpretation into question.

(3) The consonantal text is to be emended. This is unnecessary as the text makes sense as it stands.

(4) The word שם is a noun or gerund from שים or שום, meaning "destiny" (Seow 1997, 166–167). The existence of such a meaning is speculative.

(5) The word שם is to be repointed as שֵׁם, "name, designation" (Seow 1997, 167). If the understanding is that for all things there is a name, preposition ל ("to") is more natural than על ("on").

(6) The word is an asseverative particle (Whitley 1979, 34–36 tentatively). All her examples for this meaning are more plausibly understood as extensions of the basic meaning "there," as is argued in detail in Huovila (2018, 186–187).

Because alternatives for the meaning "there" are weak and because a reference to an afterlife judgment is more relevant and semantically more natural than a reference to the earthly court of 3:16, the interpretation of a reference to an afterlife judgment is preferred. It also allows Qohelet to consider God as a righteous judge.

3.3.2 The meaning of ישפט ("judges") in 3:17

Seow (1997, 166) argues that the imperfect form of ישפט indicates potential ("may judge"). Huovila (2018, 178–188) argues that שם means "there" in this text, and that a reference to a judgment in this life is not natural. If the reference is to an afterlife judgment, there is no reason to understand the judgment as only potential. Therefore, the imperfect form is not to be understood as indicating potential. The basic argument against Huovila's view is that it is incompatible with Qohelet's worldview. This was discussed in section 2.

3.4 Qohelet's second conclusion: Similarity of humans and animals 3:18–20

In the second conclusion, Qohelet discusses the purpose or the result of God allowing injustice in court and the similarity of humans and animals in death.[4] Huovila (2018, 188) translates Ecclesiastes 3:18 as "I thought that this is on account of human beings that God would expose them and show them that they are [just as] quadrupeds by themselves." The verse raises a number of exegetical questions. Huovila (2018, 188–194) discusses four of them besides the connection to the injustice mentioned in 3:16 and to Qohelet's first reaction to it. The following is a summary of his conclusions.

(1) על־דברת, translated above as "on account of," introduces the divine purpose or the result of the wickedness in court. It is for the sake of human beings, and specifically so that or in order that God would expose them or reveal what they are like.

(2) לברם, translated above as "expose them," is to be understood as an infinitive. It is "quite probable that the meaning in Ecclesiastes 3:18 is related to this [meaning 'to make clear'] in that God makes clear what people are. This is related to people being exposed as to how they behave in circumstances like when the court is corrupt." God is better understood as the subject of the verb rather than the object (Huovila 2018, 191–192).

(3) לראות, translated above as "show," is a qal form referring to humans seeing. He considers emendation of vocalization to hif'il unnecessary. A more literal translation is "they would see."

(4) המה להם, translated above as "by themselves," has an ellipsed בהמה, "quadruped" (המה בהמה להם), unless the text is to be emended. In either case, the sense is roughly the same: it qualifies the equality of humans with

4 How these two thoughts are related is discussed in sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3.

the animals. It may be used to create a contrast: "humans are animals *in themselves*, but not necessarily with respect to divine judgment" (Huovila 2018, 194, emphasis in original).

Huovila (2018, 177) translates 3:19–20 as follows:

> The lot of the human and the lot of the quadruped is the same lot to both of them. As one dies, so does the other, and they both have the same spirit and the human has no advantage over the quadruped for all is futile. Both go to the same place. Both are from the soil and both return to the soil.

Here Qohelet denies that the event of death is different for humans and animals. Because of death, humans cannot make any more permanent profit than animals. This makes all things futile in Qohelet's sense. The human corpse and the animal corpse decompose the same way.

In this passage, Qohelet argues that a purpose or result of God allowing corruption at court is that people see they are like animals with respect to death, and more specifically that they cannot gain any more profit than animals.

3.5 Rhetorical question on the different directions of spirits in 3:21

In Ecclesiastes 3:21 Qohelet asks who knows whether the human spirit goes up and the animal spirit goes down. Though some understand the question as presupposing the idea that the human spirit goes up and the animal spirit goes down (Kaiser 1979, 70–71; Fredericks 2010, 110–111, 123), the clause that is the object of knowing is really a polar question. This is so because of the resumptive pronoun הִיא, which requires the ה to be understood as an interrogative particle rather than an article. The interrogative particle in turn requires the question to be understood as a polar question. Therefore, the question really is about who knows whether the human spirit goes up and the animal spirit goes down.

Bryson (2011, 95) thinks that the rhetorical question seems to indicate that the human spirit goes up and the animal spirit goes down. Huovila (2018, 198) argues that the function of the rhetorical question could be to "draw attention to a possible state of affairs as a potential basis for an action or thought," or "to the lack of knowledge of a state of affairs as strengthening the basis for an action or thought." It is used to serve as the basis of the exhortation to have joy in 3:22. As argued elsewhere (Huovila 2018, 198–200), it is not likely that Qohelet affirms the worldview presupposed by the question. Rather, Qohelet questions a specific view of the afterlife. The view rather weakens Qohelet's argument for having joy now in Ecclesiastes 3:22, and therefore Qohelet questions it.

As argued in Huovila (2018, 204–212), it is possible that Qohelet refers to the Egyptian view of the afterlife or some similar view. Much of what we know about the Egyptian view of the afterlife comes from books of the dead. They were produced from the seventeenth century to the first century BC, pointing to the existence of a perception of the afterlife. This covers the whole range of suggested dates for the book of Ecclesiastes.

The concept of coming forth by day was an important element of the Egyptian view. For those with a good lot in the afterlife, part of the deceased (the *ba*) was considered to be able to depart the netherworld in the morning and return in the evening. At least the king was believed to be able to travel across the sky with the sun-god. It is less clear whether the peasant could expect the same. The evidence of an afterlife for animals is not quite as clear. It is quite possible that an afterlife was ascribed to animals. Huovila (2018, 209) is not aware of any evidence that the prospect for animals might include the concept of coming forth by day.

The Egyptian view fits Ecclesiastes 3:21. Huovila's arguments include the following claims: (1) The human spirit ascending (by going forth by the day) and the animal spirit descending (to the netherworld) may well be sufficient for the original readers to identify the particular view; (2) In the view, the ascending human spirit is in a more privileged position than the animal spirit descending; (3) The view would undermine Qohelet's argument for having joy. In Egypt, the better lot was considered dependent on, or at least enhanced by, the use of magic. "There were skeptical views on whether the elaborate preparations for afterlife were worth making as opposed to enjoying the pleasures of life (Taylor 2001, 44–45)" (Huovila 2018, 209).

The function of Ecclesiastes 3:21 is to undermine a possible objection to Qohelet's argument of enjoying life now. Belief in the objected view might cause some of the original readers of the book to lose joy in life because of pursuing a better afterlife. The pursuit implied following an expensive system of afterlife preparations, for some requiring overwork to fund it.

3.6 Qohelet's final conclusion: The superiority of joy in 3:22

Ecclesiastes 3:22 contains three clauses beginning with כִּי ("that"). The first one claims that there is nothing better than having joy in one's work. The second one is that the joy is one's portion. The third one is a rhetorical question about who will bring one to see what would be after him, questioning the possibility. The expression "after him" has been understood as referring to what happens to the individual after his death, what happens on earth after his death, or what happens later in the person's life on earth (Fox 1999, 217; Huovila 2018, 82).

The connection to the preceding text on death is weaker if the reference is to the time before death. This argues for the reference to be to the time after death. There are two basic arguments why the reference is to what happens on earth rather than to the individual after his death. One is that it is more consistent with the flow of thought when a belief in an afterlife judgment has been expressed in 3:17. The other is that there is no need to bring anyone to himself. The idea is that another expression would be more appropriate if the idea was to show his own future to himself (for example מִי יַרְאֶה, "who will show"). If one is considered to have departed to the afterlife, the idea of bringing him to see what there is after his time makes more sense (Huovila 2018, 82).

The three clauses together form an argument for joy. It is the best thing, it is a portion to be enjoyed, and one cannot know what will happen on earth after one's death. The last one undermines a possible counterargument to Qohelet's argument for joy. The counterargument is that one should ignore opportunities to enjoy legitimate joy now in pursuit of a better (but highly uncertain) future of enjoying in the afterlife a portion of earthly life. The counterargument is similar to the argument from the direction of spirits after death.

3.7 Key elements summarized

The setting in Ecclesiastes 3:16 records an observation of a corrupt court. This observation triggers two reactions by Qohelet. The first is about God judging the just and the wicked. It has received many interpretations, but there is no need to avoid the idea that it is an afterlife judgment. The word שָׁם has generated many interpretations. A good option is that it refers to the occasion of divine judgment in the afterlife. The second reaction is that the injustice reveals what people are like. They are mortal. The position that the direction of spirits of people and animals differs is questioned. The function may be to undermine a possible counterargument to Qohelet's

argument for the importance of joy. The argument is that there is nothing better, joy is one's portion, and one cannot see what is after him.

4. The Main Proposals for the Flow of Thought

4.1 Key questions on the flow of thought

The following questions about the flow of thought in Ecclesiastes 3:16–22 are discussed:

(1) How are Qohelet's two reactions to injustice related to each other?
(2) How does understanding mortality serve as a result of injustice?
(3) How is the death of animals related to injustice?
(4) How does mortality support the argument for joy?
(5) How does lack of certainty about the direction of spirits in death relate to the argument for joy?
(6) What is the main point of the passage as a whole?

The preceding discussion has touched on some of these questions from a rather narrow, exegetical point of view. Here the purpose is to discuss these questions as they relate to the flow of thought. The questions are discussed in this order with a presentation of different solutions. Many of the arguments in this section are based on Huovila (2018, 176–212).

4.1.1 Interrelationship of Qohelet's two reactions to injustice

Qohelet reacted to injustice in two ways. First, that God will judge, and second, that the divine purpose or the result of the injustice is that God will reveal what humans are like (though there is a variety of interpretations for both reactions). Many scholars see the two reactions as incompatible or at least in conflict with each other. For example, Crenshaw (1987, 102) thinks the first comment may be a gloss. Bartholomew (2009, 176–178) considers Qohelet to juxtapose two reactions, the confessional one and the enigmatic one. In the confessional one, he affirms that God has a time for judgment. In the enigmatic one, he notes that the observable fate of humans and animals is the same. Human limitations may bring one to espouse the enigmatic view or to push one to approach life in the light of verse 22. In verse 22, Qohelet commends joy. Thus, Bartholomew contrasts two alternative approaches to the question of injustice.

According to Bryson (2011, 94–95), Qohelet thinks that God will make things right, but does not seem to think about "God's final judgment at the end of time" in 3:17. In 3:21 he seems to conceive of life after death for humans. He views this as Qohelet's inner struggle. This approach is rather similar to Bartholomew's, though he considers the rhetorical question of 3:21 to imply a possibility for an afterlife rather than a denial of the different directions of human and animal spirits.

Longman (1998, 127–128) thinks that in the verses, there is a tension or a contradiction in that Qohelet asserts a belief in divine retribution, without allocating time for it. Longman considers that Qohelet did not believe in an afterlife. Enns (2011, 59) understands Qohelet as rejecting the concept of an afterlife or at least any way of knowing it for sure. What is known is that death makes all labor pointless, and therefore the "lamentable conclusion" is that there is nothing better than to enjoy one's work. Qohelet notes that God judging in verse 17 is a shallow consolation or an outright taunt as the injustice is also in God's control.

Seow (1997, 175–176) considers 3:17 to teach that judgment is entirely in God's hands. Qohelet in another place affirms the view found elsewhere in the Bible that when a person dies, the dust returns to the earth and the life-breath returns to God, but in this passage he "refuses to entertain any

notion of separate destinies for the life-breaths of people and animals." This is perhaps a reaction to a speculative view in Qohelet's generation. Seow does not see the first reaction as any certainty that God will set things right in judgment. The ultimate point Qohelet makes is that people should enjoy their work. It is not quite clear how Seow relates the ideas to each other.

Fox (1999, 214–215) understands Qohelet to think that God will execute judgment, but death may intervene or, if the judgment is death, its universality makes the sentence meaningless. Thus, divine judgment does not rectify the wrongs of this life. He finds the שם at the end of the verse as difficult, preferring to emend it. A reference to the afterlife would presuppose its existence. Therefore, Fox does not believe שם to refer to it. Without emendation, it refers to the court of justice. In light of death eliminating distinctions, pleasure is commended.

The common understanding of placing the two observations Qohelet makes at tension with each other may not be the best understanding of the passage. While they are two distinct reactions to injustice, the author is using these to support his flow of thought. The tension-maximizing approach tends to view the main theme of the book as a struggle of faith (Bartholomew 2009, 93), or collapse of meaning (Fox 1999, 133). There is little textual evidence for this (Huovila 2018, 17–30). According to a different understanding of the text, the commendation of joy is considered a genuine commendation of real joy (Huovila 2018, 101–114) rather than a commendation of pleasure as a best option when real meaning has collapsed (Fox 1999, 113–115, 127–131, 138–145). The text is understood as creating an argument to it from injustice.

4.1.2 The relationship between injustice and understanding mortality

Many commentaries make no explicit comment on how the injustice of 3:16 is related to the theme of mortality in 3:18–21. These include Fox (1999, 214–217),[5] Seow (1997, 175–176), and Provan (2001, 92–101).

Fredericks (2010, 121–122) connects the humiliation of humans being at the level of the beast to them respecting God as creator and judge. Bartholomew (2009, 177) understands Qohelet to say that the purpose of injustice is to remind humans of their mortality. Huovila (2018, 193) thinks that "the result or divine purpose of corruption in court is that God uses it to expose what people are like." He suggests that the connection between injustice and understanding mortality is based on human limitations. Seeing one's limitations as a recipient of injustice can remind one of the limitation of mortality (194–195). While there is some contrast between Fredericks's connection of humiliation to respecting God as a judge, and Bartholomew and Huovila's view of human limitations as the common theme, the views are close. Understanding one's limitations can lead to respecting God as creator and judge.

4.1.3 How is the death of animals related to injustice?

If the purpose of comparing the death of animals to that of humans is to humiliate them so that they respect God (Fredericks 2010, 121–122), the connection is easy to make as suffering injustice can also have the same impact. Likewise, if the concept of human limitations is the connecting thought, the similarity of animal death to human death is a reminder of human limitations. An underlying thought is probably that these, injustice

5 Fox notes that the observation of injustice leads to thoughts of death.

in court and the common death of humans and animals, are examples of futility, as all these may cause profit to be temporal (see section 2.6).

4.1.4 How does mortality support the argument for joy?

Fox (1999, 217) considers the most likely interpretation of 3:22 to be that ignorance of what happens on earth after one's death is a reason to seize the present moment. Qohelet "concludes that pleasure is the only recourse" because of death, which eliminates distinctions (Fox 1999, 214). Longman (1998, 131) understands the support from mortality to the argument of joy in a similar manner. He notes that death makes justice uncertain, and this leads Qohelet to assert the value of enjoying the present. Both Longman and Fox share the assumption that the support mortality offers to joy is through injustice. Fredericks (2011, 123) relates verse 22 to ignorance about how one's accomplishments will be valued or built on after death. This ignorance is a basis to enjoy one's activities now.

A view that gives a better explanation of why the specific phraseology was chosen is that Qohelet addresses a possible counterargument to his exhortation to value joy. This counterargument consists in the possibility to enjoy in the afterlife the profit one has toiled for in this life. Thus it would make sense to overwork for profit and lose joy now, in order to gain it in the afterlife. Mortality supports the argument for joy by undermining the profit-centered approach to life by making the achieved profit temporal.

4.1.5 How does lack of certainty about the direction of spirits in death relate to the argument for joy?

Crenshaw (1987, 104) understands Qohelet's point to be that speculation about humans enjoying a favorable status after death is a waste of time. Fredericks (2010, 122–123, 126) thinks that the thought is that because of the brevity of life, one should enjoy one's work and accomplishments. Qohelet's exhortation is to be happy and not worry about what happens on earth after death.

We can understand better why the specific expression was chosen if the lack of certainty to refer to a specific view would undermine Qohelet's argument (see section 3.5). In this view, one's toil now enhances one's afterlife experience. Qohelet argues against overwork and prefers work coupled with joy. If one knew for certain that the view is correct that the human spirit would go up and the animal spirit would go down, overwork could also make sense. The argument for joy is not refuted by this argument, because the view itself is suspect. Thus, Qohelet questions the potential counterargument to support his call for joy.

4.1.6 What is the main point of the passage as a whole?

The answers to the five questions above paint a picture of the argument as a whole. If the two responses to the observation of injustice stand in stark contrast to each other, the commendation of joy can be regarded as the best available option when the truly best option is not available (Fox 1999, 127–131; Longman 1998, 131; Bryson 2011, 93–96), or as one of two options to react to human limitations (Bartholomew 2009, 178). If they are in harmony with each other, then they address the same question from different viewpoints. This is Huovila's understanding of the passage. The first observation deals with theodicy and the second with providing a basis for joy through the recognition of human limitations.

Injustice and mortality are both reminders of human limitations. These limitations are examples of futility. Mortality supports joy as a best option

in light of futility. Futility and joy are understood in different ways. Joy is reduced to pleasure by Fox (1999, 113–115), and argued to be true joy by Huovila (2018, 101–114). The resulting picture is either a rather resigned view for pleasure because of futility (Fox 1999, 113–115, 127–131, 138–145; Longman 1998, 131) or finding deep joy when a futile attempt to gain some permanent profit in this life is given up. Some leave the tension unresolved at this stage of the book (Bartholomew 2009, 179–182).

The lack of certainty about the direction of spirits is understood as agnosticism about what happens after death in general (Longman 1998, 129–133) or in some specific, rather orthodox view (Enns 2011, 58–59), resulting in appreciation of pleasure. This article argues that it questions a particular point of view that could serve as a counterargument to Qohelet's argument for joy. Some commentators do not connect the thoughts together.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Not connecting the lack of certainty of the direction of the human and animal spirits to the observation of injustice and the commendation of joy makes the text less cohesive and likely misses the original intent of the paragraph. It is more likely the thoughts are interconnected.

The idea that Qohelet questioned an orthodox view suffers from the problem that the particular view cannot be identified as a specific view within the orthodox Judaism of the time. The language is too specific for the view to be an expression of general agnosticism. These attempts to understand the text result in a view of Qohelet where he struggles with his faith and recommends joy in that context. The problem for this view is the specific language used to question the particular view.

The passage gives a two-fold response to injustice. One is to affirm that God will guarantee a just end-result in an afterlife judgment. The other is to draw attention to what God is doing as he allows injustice in this time. He is revealing human limitations. Understanding them well can free one to enjoy life by taking away the burden of trying to get profit out of life. There is a potential counterargument to this. If suffering now enhances the afterlife, it could well be worth not valuing joy over profit. Qohelet undermines this argument in the specific case of a view that has human and animal spirits departing in different directions. This view may be a reference to the Egyptian view of the afterlife, in which one could toil a lot to be able to afford elaborate funeral arrangements to enhance one's afterlife.

If Qohelet affirms a divine judgment in the afterlife, it is quite conceivable that he would affirm a different form of the argument. In line with the ending of the book (Eccl 12:13–14), obedience to God is to take precedence over joy. In Qohelet's view, however, joy is accepted by God in general, and thus the counterargument is not valid for his concern here. He is more concerned with people losing joy because of overwork (Eccl 4:4–8).

Qohelet wants to teach about life, specifically about human limitations as a reason to give up an obstacle that hinders receiving joy as a gift from God. The obstacle is the attempt to find permanent profit in life. This attempt is bound to fail. This is relevant, as people who intellectually understand their mortality fail to live accordingly in their lives, trying to hoard wealth that they will lose anyway, and losing their joy in the process. They may attempt to gain security through wealth, but wealth is incapable of providing such security, as it is lost in earthly life or at death at the latest.

If an opportunity to have joy is God's gift, it honors God to receive the gift. Overwork that takes away the joy God wants to give does not respect the divine gift-giver. Qohelet argues for his theology of joy on the basis of injustice and death as human limitations.

This way of reading the passage explains why Qohelet used such an otherwise strange way to refer to a question of the afterlife, namely

discussing the direction of spirits. It also implies this passage discusses theodicy in a rather direct way, giving two answers: ultimate justice in the afterlife, and a divine purpose, or at least use, of injustice to teach people. When interpreted this way, the text coheres well.

A coherent reading is to be preferred to an incoherent one, unless there are good arguments to the contrary. An important argument against a coherent reading has been that Qohelet could not refer to an afterlife judgment. The support for the view was evaluated and found weak. All this argues for the view that Ecclesiastes 3:16–22 can be read as a coherent text, and that a coherent interpretation does not do violence to the text as it stands.

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Is Divine Providence Risky? A Dialogue Between John Calvin and John Sanders

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Abstract

This study presents John Calvin and John Sanders as an example of the ongoing debate on the nature of divine control and human freedom. Given the time gap between Calvin and Sanders, the study uses a dialogical hermeneutics methodology. The former upheld a "no risk" while the latter propagates a "risky" conception of providence. However, the concept of providence as "risk" or "no risk" is not distinctively biblical. It has not been conceived in such a manner. Despite this, providence can be both risky and risk-free. Seemingly, the notion of divine providence constitutes a paradox, namely: as an omniscient creator, God controls everything, yet humans are free. For humans to be free, their future contingent actions must not be foreknown, because whatsoever God foreknows happens necessarily. Since both Scripture and human history show that humans are free, it follows, therefore, that God does not know all future contingent actions. In that case, divine providence is risky. This explains why God changes and repents of his earlier decisions. However, this study argues that this paradox may be softened if divine ignorance is understood from a contextual point of view. Further, libertarianism, as advocated by Sanders, is overemphasized. Lastly, divine mutability and relenting denied by Calvin are part of divine sovereignty, without which there can be no forgiveness of sin.

1. Introduction

Given the problem of evil, the nature of how divine control relates to human freedom is an age-old debate among philosophers and theologians. The issue continues to be particularly pressing as it relates to the

https://www.sats.ac.za/conspectus/
This article: https://www.sats.ac.za/is-divine-providence-risky-calvin-sanders
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.4

Conspectus

Keywords
creation, providence, risk-taking, foreknowledge, divine repentance

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problems of evil and suffering. Due to dissatisfaction with the explanations provided for these problems, some have come to doubt the existence of a good, loving, and powerful God. In contrast, others seek a redefinition of the classical conception of God. About three decades ago, open theism, which also refers to itself as freewill theism, took the debate to a further dimension. In this new dimension, divine relationality, openness, vulnerability, divine self-limitation, and divine risk-taking are upheld because of God's love and respect for human freedom. One of the proponents of the Openness of God is John Sanders. The risk-taker model of divine providence is espoused in his *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Divine Providence*, first published in 1998 with a second edition issued in 2007.

In this book, Sanders engages Calvin extensively in his understanding of divine providence, divine immutability, divine accommodation, and divine repentance. The open model critiques the Augustinian-Calvinist model claiming that it is corrupt with the virus of Greek philosophy (Pinnock, Rice, Sanders, Hasker, and Basinger 1994, 8–9). This study is limited to Calvin and Sanders as an example of the intense interactions between the Augustinian-Calvinistic model of God and the Open model. This study is not comparative nor an assessment. The study aims to situate Calvin and Sanders in the global debate on divine sovereignty and human freedom to illustrate the continued persistence of the discussion in philosophy and theology. I will do this through dialogical hermeneutics. In doing so, I will allow the literature belonging to Calvin and Sanders to freely flow without interruption in an imaginary way as if to say Calvin and Sanders were currently responding to each other. In the end, I will point out a few areas of concern from both.

2. Understanding Risk

2.1 What is risk?

In this section, I will examine the meaning of the term "risk," give a few examples of risk-taking attitudes, point out a few theories of risk, and point out which among them applies to the current study. The term "risk" has been understood from the following points of view:

- Risk is an unwanted event that may or may not occur.
- Risk is the cause of an unwanted event that may or may not occur.
- Risk is the probability of an unwanted event that may or may not occur.
- Risk is the statistical expectation value of unwanted events which may or may not occur.
- Risk is the fact that a decision is made under conditions of known probabilities (Hansson 2018).

The fourth proposition is asserted based on statistical expectations, meaning based on the cloud of witnesses either from experiences or deductions, there is a tendency of an unwanted outcome. The third and fourth propositions see "risk" from a probable point of view. This means that "risk" may be defined as an unwanted event that, given its probable nature, may occur or may not occur based on statistical analysis. The basis for this hypothetical conclusion is a lack of accurate knowledge with absolute material certainty of the occurrence of such an event.

A few examples of risk-taking attitudes may include the following: 1) It is proven that smokers are liable to die young as a result of the effect of smoking. However, suppose one combines smoking and addiction to

cocaine, regular partying, and drinking lots of liquor despite knowing its medical implication; in that case, such a person has "risked" her life by herself willingly and knowingly; 2) There are also types or levels of risk that may not be determined entirely from the onset. For instance, take the example of someone who ventures into the business of producing a new product that is not yet known and produces the same in a large amount. Of course, the producer knows this is a new brand that is not yet known. She is also aware that it might be sellable and it might not. However, from a positive note, after a careful examination with the view that there could be a 50+% chance of success, the producer may go ahead with mass production of such brand, hoping that the result will turn out to be positive (Helm 1994, 40).

2.2 Theories of risk-taking

There are several theories of risk depending on the context. However, since the current study is not directly connected to financial management, risk in that aspect will not be dealt with here. Risk, as understood above, focuses more on epistemology. However, the two examples of risk above may involve "moral" and utilitarian risks. Besides these, there is also the sociological/socio-cultural theory of risk. The moral theory of risk argues that a risky decision may be taken based on moral grounds in an in-deterministic context. Also, there is a distinction between *wilful* risk and *imposed* risk. If God takes a risk, it cannot be an *imposed* risk; otherwise, it will mean that he is not free. In the case of the smoker above, she has the choice to wilfully subject herself to the risk that comes with smoking and addiction to alcohol and other hard drugs. It will be a different thing altogether to subject her to tobacco and a state of addiction un-willfully.

On the one hand, the utilitarian theory looks at the benefit of the outcome of the said risk (Hansson 2018). On the other hand, the sociological/cultural theory examines the risk involved in society, ranging from industrialization, science/medicine, and governance. Lastly, the epistemological theory of risk, which seems more relevant to the current study, is interested in the relationship between time and the future and our ability to know it. Since our decisions that have futuristic implications are made today, it follows that our inability to understand their outcome with material certainty means that we take risk not minding whether the outcome turns out negatively, or at best, positively. Another crucial aspect of the epistemological theory of risk is the relationship between the less knowledgeable and the more knowledgeable. In such a relation, the less knowledgeable will doubt the outcome of a decision presented by the knowledgeable. The knowledgeable may also decide given their sufficient knowledge, but the end may be negative (Chicken and Tarma 1998, 9).

The definition of risk above presupposes that risk is based on insufficient knowledge of the expected outcome of an event. This outcome may be positive or negative. However, if "risk-taking" is based on the limited knowledge of the nature of the future, does it also apply to God since he is omniscient? It is generally agreed that God is all-knowing and knows more than anyone can ever know. However, the extent of God's knowledge has always been a subject of debate. Sanders (2007a, 15) argues that "open theism affirms what I call dynamic omniscience. This means that God knows the past and present with exhaustive definite knowledge and knows the future as partly definite (closed) and partly indefinite (open)." *Dynamic omniscience* to Sanders is synonymous with current omniscience. God only knows what exists now and does not know that which is not (206).

Helm (1994, 39–40) also argues that divine providence may be conceived both from the perspectives of "risk" and "no risk." He clarifies that there are different ways risk may be understood. This involves a lack of knowledge of the outcome of our decisions, especially when there is a definite expectation. However, there is another perception of risk, which

involves lesser risk. This is a situation where one is merely expecting a general outcome. No preference is involved. Helm concedes that the language of Scripture presupposes divine ignorance, divine mutability, divine self-limitation, and, in fact, divine risk-taking in governing creation. However, Helm hesitates in accepting this notion of the divine being. He argues that it will result "in a theological reductionism in which God is distilled to human proportions" (52). Helm argues that the best way to avoid this distillation is to say that divine ignorance, divine self-limitation, and divine mutability as deduced from the Bible are anthropomorphic. This is because God desires that humans should respond to him; and so, therefore, he must appear as one who is responsive, acting in space and time in his response to humans. After all, they are in space and time. Helm (1994, 53–55) argues that the "risky" view of divine providence has its supposed benefits: human freedom is exalted. However, does Scripture teach the freedom advocated for in this model?

3. Calvin and Sanders on Divine Providence Involving Risk or no Risk

In this section, I will interact with Calvin and Sanders on whether divine providence involves risk-taking or not. To understand how both arrive at their conceptions of divine providence, I will examine how both conceive the doctrine of creation, divine providence, human suffering, divine foreknowledge, and divine repentance.

3.1 Creation

To understand the nature of divine providence in both Calvin and Sanders is first to locate their doctrine of creation. For Calvin, since God is the creator of the universe, he cannot do otherwise than to uphold his creation perpetually. Writing on Calvin's theology, Hesselink (2006, 85) states that one of Calvin's contributions to theology is his appreciation for creation. Hesselink noted that Calvin argues that the revelation of God in the Church and especially in Christ should not deter us from seeing the glory of God revealed in the creation. Because God wrapped himself in the creation, he perpetually upholds it.

Calvin (1960, 1.2.1) asserts that the orderliness in the creation is a pointer to God's constant involvement in it. This involvement reveals God as the fountain of every good. Because God founded the creation by his might, regulates it by his wisdom and goodness, including mercy and judgement, "no drop will be found either of wisdom and light, or righteousness or power or rectitude, or of genuine truth, which does not flow from him, and of which He is not the cause."[1]

For Calvin, creation and providence cannot be separated. Conceiving God as a one-time creator who finished the work of creation and abandoned it adds no value to the doctrine of creation, and it would be profane to think in this manner. Instead, Calvin argues that we should conceive the doctrine of creation so that God's presence is continually felt in the creation as it was in the beginning. Calvin (1960, 1.16.1) sees it as an act of impiety to assert that God finished the work of creation on the seventh day and abandoned it.

1 Another translation, by Beveridge (1863, 1.2.1), states thus: "My meaning is: we must be persuaded not only that as he [God] once found the world, so he sustains it by his boundless power, governs it by his wisdom, preserves it by his goodness, in particular, rules the human race with justice and judgement, bears with them in mercy, shields them by his protection; but also that not a particle of light, or wisdom, or justice, or power, or rectitude, or genuine truth, will anywhere be found, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause; in this way we must learn to expect and ask all things from him, and thankfully ascribe to him whatever we receive." I have adopted Battles's translation for the purpose of this study.

Calvin argues that God is actively involved in what goes on in this life. He explicates that even those who are not pious are compelled to look up to God after gazing at the artistic nature of creation. Even though they may not live piously, they cannot deny that God exists by merely gazing at the theatre of creation. However, natural revelation without faith will not ascribe the glory for the work of creation to God, to whom glory belongs properly. "[F]aith has its own peculiar way of assigning the whole credit for Creation to God" (1960, 1.16.1).

However, Sanders (2007a, 43) believes that creation is open and ongoing. God left some aspects of the creation open for humans to actualize the divine project. According to Sanders, God made it so that creation is not closed, nor does everything depend on God. Humans, in particular, contribute significantly to the divine project. Sanders argues that although God established the structures within which the creatures will operate, he does not limit them. He allows them room for self-development. God is willing to share power with humans. He sovereignly decides that not everything works the way he wants. Some fundamental aspects of creation are left open to humans to execute as co-creators with God. Sanders explains that the privilege given to humanity to play crucial roles at the dawn of creation shows that God did not close the work of creation. There were things he left open for his human associates to complete.

In granting the creation and humans the ability to procreate, God creates a world in which he does not alone bring about new states of affairs. God has willingly restricted himself from being the sole governor of the creation. He has also opened the possibility to include new things that were formerly not in the creation plan. The openness of the creation implies that God's absolute divine sovereignty has been relinquished. Because of this openness, creation may prevail against God (Sanders 2010, 142–143).

Because creation is open and ongoing, God exposed himself to the possibility of failure in the divine project. Not everything will turn out as he expects. The open nature of creation and the general nature of divine sovereignty determines the nature of providence as involving risk-taking (Sanders 2007a, 225).

Even though Calvin does not use the term "risk," reading through Calvin's struggles in life reveals that he was conscious of risk even amidst divine guidance. He uses "danger" instead of risk. His life as he sees it was under the divine providential governance of God. Despite this awareness, Calvin notices that life is full of "deaths" and "dangers." He exclaims that we are "surrounded by [a] thousand deaths" every day beginning at birth. There are stumbling blocks, wild beasts, snakes, pits, and swords everywhere. He argues that: "If you step onto a ship, you are already one step away from death. If you climb onto a horse, your foot only needs to slip and your life is in danger. Just walk through the city streets one time, and there are as many dangers as there are many roof tiles on the houses. If you or your friend are carrying a weapon, injury lies in wait" (Herman 2009, 36).

3.2 Providence and suffering

The foremost tension of divine control is its nature. Does God control everything, many things, or a few things? Does he unilaterally control every detail of what happens or works in collaboration with humans? In examining the difficulty Calvin faces with respect to the nature of divine providence in his writings, Gerrish (2011, 11) states that Calvin construed that everything is under the providence of God. However, because of the difficulty involved in reconciling divine sovereignty and human responsibility without contradicting Scripture or making God morally culpable for human actions, Calvin concedes that the plans of God are sometimes hidden from our basic understanding. This conclusion leads

to another unique subject of discussion, namely, the hiddenness of God. Deducing from Deuteronomy 29:29, some things are kept secret while some are not. The former ones belong to God, while the latter ones belong to humans. Because some things are kept secret, their occurrence may look accidental. Gerrish argues that Calvin explicates that nothing is accidental, as shown in the Bible. Not only this, the Bible is clear and emphatic that God does not idly watch what goes on in this life, and he does not just know events as they will happen in advance, nor does he merely allow them. On the contrary, God is deeply involved in everything. Gerrish (2011, 11) states that Calvin denies that human life is determined by fate.

God controls every detail of what occurs unilaterally and with humans. God is the primary cause, and humans are the secondary causes. Calvin infers that because we are receivers and beneficiaries of God's goodness, we should also receive adversity and afflictions with thanksgiving. He argues that the apostle Paul taught that God's divine plan had destined those who are called his children to conform to the image of Christ. Conforming to the image of Christ includes sharing in his sufferings, so that just as Christ went through the cross into heavenly glory, we too might be glorified after overcoming our tribulations (1960, 3.8.1).

According to Calvin (1960, 1.16.9), God's providence governs individuals, has a particular way of relating to humans, and "regulates natural occurrences." Calvin sees an apparent enigma in conceiving divine providence from the human point of view. This enigma is primarily demonstrated in our engagement with what may be regarded as prudentially governed by God. Some situations do not appear to us in that manner but, most often, in the manner of fortune or luck. From the foregoing, the true cause of everything is hidden from us.

Calvin (1960, 1.16.2) extrapolates that "there is no such thing as a fortune or chance." As taught in the Scriptures, he argues that divine providence expressly shows that providence does not involve fortune or fate despite some events and happenings appearing fortuitous. Whatever happens, there is always an underlying divine providential finger of God. This understanding is contrary to what was obtainable in traditional ancient religions. To clarify, Calvin illustrates that if there were two people and one fell into the hands of robbers, or got into an accident, but the other escaped these calamities, "Carnal reason ascribes all such happenings, whether prosperous or adverse, to fortune. But anyone who has been taught by Christ's lips that all the hairs of his head are numbered [Matt 10:30] will look farther afield for a cause, and will consider that all events are governed by God's secret plan."

In our context, the man mentioned above will be regarded as being "unlucky." Calvin denies that it should be so. Instead, it should be understood from the point of divine providence in which God, by his secret plan, governs the universe, including both goodness and adversities. Calvin rejects the idea of general providence where God's providential control is restricted to the overall plan and positive outcome of the divine project without considering every detail in the process. In dealing with the extent of providence, Calvin states that inanimate objects are governed by God's secret decree so that nothing happens unless God willingly and knowingly decrees its occurrence. He (1960, 1.16.3–7) further states that arguing for a general providence is an error, and it makes no sense to state that divine providence is selective.

Contrary to Calvin, while commenting on the exact text mentioned above, Sanders (2007a, 114) argues that the knowledge of the hair on our heads, the exhortation not to worry about food and clothing, is not an indication of meticulous providence. Instead, it is a call to trust in God, who knows all our worries. It means since God cares for the sparrows and the hairs on our heads, he cares about everything that concerns us. Therefore,

providence does not mean protection from evil, but that nothing can separate us from God's care.

Sanders states that the word "control" is used in a determinative sense in our day-to-day impersonal relations, and the act of control may not turn out otherwise. That is, what is being controlled may not act contrary to the dictate of the one in control. He argues that the word has two meanings: control and accountability. According to general sovereignty, when it is stated that God is in control, he is in the sense that he is accountable for creating this *kind* of world and the nature of the strategy he adopted in executing it. From the review of the biblical divine *pan-causality* texts, Sanders clarifies that God is not in the business of controlling everything that takes place. As seen in Calvin above, the notion of divine pan-causality argues that God controls everything, including inanimate objects, fortunes and adversity, and the like. Some of these texts include Exodus 4:11, where God says he gives the ability to speak, to make deaf and dumb, including blindness and sight. According to Isaiah 45:7, light, darkness, prosperity, and disaster are all from the Lord. In Isaiah 29:16, God is the potter, and creation, including humans, is clay. In Jeremiah 18:6, the potter and clay analogy is re-enacted. Amos 3:6 notes that peace or blessings and calamity come from nowhere except God. Lamentations 3:38 notes that both calamity and good come from the Most High. According to Proverbs 16:9, humans may plan, but only God establishes their plans. Proverbs 21:1 states that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he directs it as he wishes. However, Sanders (2007a, 227–228) argues that these texts do not really mean that God controls everything. They mean that God is in control because God and he alone, is solely responsible for commencing the divine project and determining the game's rules "under which it operates." "Within the rules of the game God makes room for indeterminacy or chance. Though God sustains everything in existence he does not determine the results of all actions or events even at the subatomic level."

The tension that arises from the conclusion that God controls everything is the logical deduction of what follows: he is culpable for immoral human acts. This explains why Sanders and other philosophers reject the notion that God controls everything. William Hasker (2004, 131–132), another open theist, argues there is no way God will not be morally culpable for immoral human actions if he controls everything. To illustrate, Hasker differentiates between the transfer of responsibility (TR) and the non-transfer of responsibility (NTR). In TR, Hasker states the following:

> If agent A deliberately and knowingly places agent B in a situation where B unavoidably performs some morally wrong act, the moral responsibility for the act is transferred from B to A, *provided that* the morally wrong act results exclusively from A's actions and is not the result of an evil disposition in B which preceded A's actions. (Hasker 2004, 131–132)

By applying this understanding to the concept of divine control, God is morally responsible for human actions.

Contrarily, Calvin holds that God is not the author of sin because of meticulous providence and his knowledge of future contingencies. Calvin (1960, 1.17.1) asserts that three things should be noted to arrive at the true concept of divine providence. First, he argues that divine providence must be considered in relation to the past and the future. Secondly, the providence of God is the "determinative principle" governing all things, so that at times it works through intermediaries, but sometimes it works without them. Even, in some cases, it works against intermediaries. "Finally, it strives to the end that God may reveal his concern for the whole human

race, but especially his vigilance in ruling the church, which he deigns to watch more closely."

Calvin (1960, 1.17.3) argues further that "God's providence does not relieve us from responsibility." To eliminate all prospects of carelessness and folly, Calvin states that "*God's providence does not excuse us from due prudence*" (1.17.5; italics in original). As much as providence does not excuse our lack of prudence in the same manner, our wickedness cannot be justified due to providence. We cannot claim that because everything is under providence, therefore it must follow that God is morally culpable for our evil. Calvin argues that "*God's providence does not exculpate our wickedness*" (1.17.6; italics in original). This is so because there is "*No disregard of intermediate causes!*" (1.17.9; italics in original).

Sanders rejects Calvin's assertion that divine meticulous providence does not render human freedom ineffective. Sanders (2007a, 235) states that, based on the wealth of scriptural passages that support human freedom, another view of human freedom aside from the compatibilist perspective has emerged. This view affirms that "an agent is free with respect to a given action at a given time if at that time it is within the agent's power to perform the action and also in the agent's power to refrain from the action." The most common line of reasoning in schematizing this view, Sanders argues, must include: (1) we can have a genuine love relationship with one another; (2) we are expected to be rational in our thoughts; and (3) we are morally responsible both for our good and evil actions.

Because of the nature of humans, "God has sovereignly established a type of world in which God sets up general structures or an overall framework for meaning and allows the creatures significant input into exactly how things will turn out" (Sanders 2007a, 225–226). God made it this way for the sake of a genuine relationship based on freedom. Both good and bad things take place within this general structure.

Contrary to this conclusion by Sanders, Calvin (1960, 1.17.11–12) argues that such an opinion does not bring joy or confidence in God. Arguing against the futility of general providence, Calvin rhetorically asked, "For, of what use is it to join Epicurus in acknowledging some God who has cast off the care of the world, and only delights Himself in ease? What avails it, in short, to know a God with whom we have nothing to do?" (1.2.3).

In that way, Calvin means that everyone is created by God for a purpose and he sovereignly guides each person to achieve such a purpose. However, Sanders (2008, 298) denies that God has a list containing what every person should do or be in life; some of the things that occur either come by chance or as we trust God to give us wisdom daily to become what he wants us to be. Even in this, God only wants us explicitly to be like Jesus in this life as we love God and one another.

Sanders (2007a, 42) argues that it is God who decides how he governs the creation and what sorts of conditions and relationships he has established. He chooses to exercise general rather than meticulous providence. No one can deduce what kind of sovereignty God has adopted in handling the divine project from their notion of God or from the nature of creation.

> When a two-month-old child contracts a painful, incurable bone cancer that means suffering and death, it is pointless evil. The Holocaust is pointless evil. The rape and dismemberment of a young girl is pointless evil. The accident that caused the death of my brother was a tragedy. God does not have a specific purpose in mind for these occurrences. (Sanders 2007a, 272)

3.3 Divine foreknowledge

Both Calvin and Sanders hold that God is omniscient. However, the dividing line is what constitutes divine omniscience and how much God must know. Also, whether God's knowledge has implications for the nature of divine control or not is another issue. Further, because of the infallibility of God's knowledge, what he knows will surely come to pass. In that case, humans will not be free. A few passages in the Bible portray God as being deficient in knowledge. To tackle the above difficulties, Sanders (2007a, 15) elucidates that open theism holds a *dynamic view of omniscience* because God exhaustively knows the past and present but knows the future as partly definite (closed) and partly indefinite (open). In *dynamic omniscience*, God only knows what exists now (207). Sanders (2007a, 14) clarifies that "the free will tradition affirms that God takes risks even if God knew before the creation that humans would sin. This is made clear by how divine foreknowledge is explained."

Sanders (2007b, 39) uses the "if" and "perhaps" passages (Jer 26:2–3, Ezek 12:1–3, and Jer 7:5) of the Bible for this purpose. Besides, the destruction of Tyre and Nineveh, which did not come to pass, indicates that predictive prophecies are conditional. As far as Sanders is concerned, divine foreknowledge has no providential relevance. In his reply to Wood (*The Eternal Now and Theological Suicide*), Sanders argues that it is contradictory to assert that God knows an event will come to pass and also to assert that God prevents that event from coming to pass. It does not make sense. Since God already knows that it will happen, how can he stop it from happening? Sanders argues that since whatever God knows will happen, and he believes it will, how can God hold a false belief? He argues that it is logically impossible for God to know with material certainty that an event will indeed happen and that God at the same time will prevent that event from happening.

> It does God no good to have either simple foreknowledge or the eternal now because God cannot change what God knows for a fact will happen. God cannot use knowledge of what we call the future to guide us in the best ways, or to prevent horrible events from happening or to give predictions about the future to the prophets. (Sanders 2010, 78–79)

For the sake of freedom, Sanders (2007b, 35) argues that God could have created a world in which everything is exhaustively known and controlled from A to Z. However, because God is wise, he has chosen to govern creation through general providence. God adopted a general and flexible strategy by allowing space for humans to operate and for God to demonstrate his inventiveness in working with uncertainties. By so doing, God adjusts and adapts the divine plan to his human associates to take into account what they will contribute to the divine project. In doing that, God has what it takes to handle every eventuality in working toward the project's ultimate goal. God sometimes unilaterally decides how to accomplish these goals. However, in most cases, he does that through human cooperation, and the end is decided by God and humans.

That God only knows some things but does not know others raises a few questions and objections. However, as noted above, the extent of divine knowledge divides not only Sanders and Calvin, but also philosophers and theologians generally. Contrary to Sanders's notion of divine ignorance, Calvin (1554, 162), in his commentary on Genesis 22:12, debunks the idea that God does not know contingent acts. He construes that instead of saying God came to learn a new fact concerning Abraham, it should be understood the other way round. Abraham is the one who came to know that God is a provider as a result of the exercise of taking Isaac to Mount Moriah to sacrifice him. The theory of accommodation in which God reduces himself

to a lowly and finite level is played here. Humans lack the cognitive apparatus to interact with God at the level of his *Godness*, especially after the Fall. Therefore, for God to relate with humans, he willingly lowered himself. In this case, he speaks as if he is just coming to know that Abraham fears him. God has always known that Abraham fears him.
To Calvin (1960, 3.21.5),

> [w]hen we attribute prescience to God, we mean that all things always were, and ever continue [perpetually remain], under his eyes, [so] that to his knowledge there is no past or future, but all things are present, and indeed so present, that it is not merely the idea of them that is before Him…but that He truly sees and contemplates them as actually under His immediate inspection. This prescience extends to the whole circuit of the world, and to all creatures.

In dealing with the same passage, Sanders (2007a, 50–51) contends that there would be no need for the test if God knew its outcome. But because he did not know the outcome beforehand, he genuinely learned something: Abraham feared him. Sanders argues that "God's intention is not the death of Isaac but the testing of Abraham's faith (22:1). The test is genuine, not a fake…. God's statement, 'now I know,' raises serious theological problems regarding the divine immutability and foreknowledge."

4. Divine Repentance

Another essential issue in divine control is the biblical notion of divine repentance. If God governs everything because he is the creator and knows everything, as argued by Calvin, why does he have to repent? A few scholars, for instance Peels (2016, 294–295), hold that God can repent. Peels argues that *S* finds out that Σ is bad or less than ideal at a time. Σ should have not been actualized in the first place. Because Σ is not ideal, it follows that it was not necessary. And since it is not essential, *S*, at a different time, will seek to undo Σ because it is less beneficial. Peels extrapolates that divine repentance is biblical, and serious exegetical studies reveal that such passages that have been read to mean that God does not repent (Num 23:9, 1 Sam 15:29, and Jas 1:17) do not deny divine repentance. Instead, these passages deny that God can lie.

Sanders (2007a, 73) argues that because the creation is open and God exercises general providence, he is ignorant of future contingencies. As a result, God sometimes regrets his earlier decisions to the extent that he "*repents*" of such decisions. But how can God repent? To repent means to turn from an earlier decision that was not right. In the modern understanding of the word, it will mean God committed some wrong actions and, therefore, repents of such actions. However, Sanders argues that "A better approach is to see all of these expressions [divine ignorance and repentance] as metaphorical abstract concepts based upon our physical experiences."

Contrary to Sanders, Calvin (1960, 1.17.12) states that "divine repentance" is anthropopathic and falls under the theory of accommodation. This is because God cannot repent since he does not hastily make decisions he will later regret. Repentance to Calvin is the mode of speaking that describes God in human terms because of the ontological distinctions between God and humans. Due to this distinction, God "accommodates" himself so that we can understand him. However, divine accommodation does not present God as he is in himself, but "as He seems to us" (1.17.12). Calvin argues that the references to God having mouth, ears, and other human descriptions in the Bible are not the true nature of God.

> For who even of slight intelligence does not understand that, as nurses commonly do with infants, God is wont in a measure to 'lisp' in

> speaking to us? Thus such forms of speaking do not so much express clearly what God is like as accommodate the knowledge of him to our slight capacity. To do this he must descend far beneath his loftiness. (Calvin 1960, 1.13.1)

In his response to Calvin, Sanders (2007a, 30, 72–73) argues that one will need to ask Calvin how he got the right knowledge of God even beyond what is revealed in the Scriptures. He wonders how Calvin knows that God was accommodating himself in the test of Abraham and the other scriptural passages cited where he is said to change, repent, or not. How does he know that God is accommodating himself as a nurse lisps to a young child? He argues that one must know the nurse's everyday speech to distinguish between her normal speech and lisping. It logically follows that if the Scripture is God's babytalk, we will need to know God's normal speech. Sanders rhetorically asked, where does Calvin get such knowledge from, by a special revelation? And if he claims that it is not based on special revelation, then where does he get his criterion which determines that the texts that argued that God would not change his mind refer to how God *is*, while those texts that show that God will change his mind demonstrate how God *appears* to us? Sanders concludes that Calvin and other classical theologians read the Bible through a "theological control belief of an immutable and wholly unconditioned deity" (2007a, 74–75, 158).

5. Critical Observations

The interaction between Calvin and Sanders is fascinating. It shows the nature of every Christian philosopher and theologian's struggle to reconcile apparent paradoxes in the Scriptures while formulating Christian doctrines. A few things to note from this interaction include the following.

5.1 Libertarianism

Helm (2008, 242) argues that the Augustinian-Calvinistic model of God accepts libertarianism.[2] It upholds both libertarianism and compatibilism. Compatibilism coheres with divine decrees and the biblical notion of grace, while libertarianism is not entirely out of place. However, what constitutes libertarianism is the dividing line. Another crucial issue to understanding human freedom in Sanders's view is whether libertarianism is taught in the Bible. It seems this notion is at variance with the Scriptures. For instance, Acts 4:27–28 seems to teach that Pontius Pilate, Herod, the Gentiles, and the Israelites did exactly what God intended them to do (see also Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 3:17–19). Other passages of the Bible also support this notion. For instance, Proverbs 21:1—"The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will" (cf. Ezra 1:1; 6:22; Dan 4:34–35)—implies that God predestines all human decisions. It will inevitably follow that humans are not free as understood in the libertarian sense of freedom (Talbot 2003, 80–81).

According to Edwards (2000, 4), although it is believed that an external determinant causes the will, and its subsequent action is causally determined, careful observation reveals the contrary. The cause of an action does not lie externally to the doer of the action. It is within; it is "motive." He clarifies, "By motive I mean the whole of that which moves, excites, or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly." It means everyone is a slave to one thing or the other. Sanders's (2007a, 235) assertion that "an agent is free with respect to a

2 Adherence to the philosophical doctrine of compatibilism has recently come under critical assessment by a few defenders of classical theism (CT). It seems it may lose relevance in the near future. Paul Helm and Richard Muller have reservations about using the term in the Augustinian-Calvinistic understanding of the divine-human relationship. See Muller (2019).

given action at a given time if at that time it is within the agent's power to perform the action and also in the agent's power to refrain from the action" will likely not be tenable in the light of the foregoing.

Caneday (1999, 148) argues that Sanders misinterprets Calvin and other classical theologians. He argues that while addressing God's exhaustive divine sovereignty, classical theologians also struggle to maintain that creatures, whether human, angelic or demonic, have significant freedom, responsibility, and free choices. These classical theologians claim that both divine sovereignty and human freedom are true, and both propositions must be affirmed. Caneday further argues that Sanders is inconsistent in interpreting anthropomorphism, as he accused earlier theologians of reading the Bible through specific lenses while doing the same; rejecting Calvin's notion of secondary causes while utilizing the same in his interpretation of predictive prophecies (149, 153, 157).

The enormous challenge for Calvin here is his attempt to prevent God from becoming the ultimate author of sin. To not make God culpable, Calvin tries to distinguish between God and intermediaries. By doing this, Calvin comes right behind Aquinas and Aristotle in applying causality to the doctrine of providence. He believes that by distinguishing between primary and secondary causes, the tension of divine control and human freedom will be eradicated (1994, 179). Yet, the point at which intermediaries or God determine the outcome of an event is not something to be quickly pointed out. It seems the Bible teaches *cooperationism*, where humans cooperate with God in governing creation rather than libertarianism or determinism.

5.2 The nature of divine providence

Sanders (2007a, 43) argues that creation is open and ongoing. This is contrary to Calvin's opinion. According to Calvin (1960, 1.16.1), God constantly preserves, sustains, and nourishes what he completed and perfected in six days. However, I think Sanders's argument that the creation is "open" and "ongoing" to allow space for us to contribute and for God to demonstrate his ingenious nature and inventiveness in handling the divine project looks appealing. But, it becomes problematic when Sanders argues that God did adopt a general strategy in governing creation and that God accepts our contributions and adapts the divine plan to what we supply. Suppose God adapts the divine plan to human inputs and takes responsibility for the divine project's overall outcome. In that case, it must follow that he is responsible for the evil we as his associates will bring into the divine project.

Sanders's insistence that there are no blueprints for the divine project may not be a good option. Since God does not have blueprints or a list for the divine project, it follows that there are no specific means for bringing the divine project into fruition. Thus, it follows that the means of getting to the climax of the divine project does not matter. Sanders's open and ongoing nature of creation could be problematic when overstretched. It seems that understanding the nature of creation and our role as *stewards* will be jeopardized if it turns out that there are no maximum divine plans and blueprints for the project. Creation will groan excessively when there are no blueprints, as our different opinions will rather mishandle creation for our selfish gains. But, if there is some level of direction, we will be held accountable if such directions or blueprints are overlooked.

The notion of divine control traditionally understood as meticulous is "roomy" to contain meticulous and general providence, including determinism and libertarianism (Crisp 2019, 23). The Bible reveals that God governs some events meticulously, ensuring that every detail goes as he wishes. For instance, the making of Saul and David kings of Israel, the Ark of the covenant, the incarnation of the Lord, among many others.

However, there are instances where he does not insist on detail. The casting of lots in the Old Testament may apply to this understanding.

We may not deny that divine providence involves some level of risk. This is because no matter the level of our faith in God as humans, since we do not know the future with absolute material certainty, we often wonder whether we are on the right track or not. However, where and how divine providence involves some level of risk begs for an answer. Though Scripture did not state that Abraham doubted God, the exhortation to Abraham "walk before me faithfully and be blameless" in Genesis 17:2, after mating with Sarah's slave girl, is an indication that Abraham was having a trying moment. The possibility of questioning God's promise at this time could be high. The terms "risk" or "no-risk" have not existed in the Church's vocabulary of providence from the beginning. The Church did not need to think of providence in such a manner. What the Church has been wrestling with is the reconciliation of the paradox of divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

Lastly, since Sanders (2007a, 73) insists that God repents, yet he does not change for the best nor for the worst, one will easily notice that this conclusion has numerous shortcomings. That God repents or relents of his earlier decisions or plans is part of Yahweh's nature, as seen in Exodus 34 and Joel 2:3–14. It is an essential ingredient in the nature of Yahweh, without which there will be no forgiveness of sin. However, the Bible also shows that Yahweh does not relent (Frame 2001, 164–165).

5.3 Divine ignorance

Another challenge for Calvin is whether we should understand passages like Genesis 22 in terms of accommodation; why not think that God accommodates himself all the time? And how does it not follow that we cannot truly know God, but only a human construction of God?

Ware (2002, 195) extrapolates that the open theistic view of divine ignorance, especially future contingencies, has several implications. He argues that divine ignorance jeopardizes faith in God. His character cannot be trusted, and neither his purpose nor work can be guaranteed. Selective nescience connotes that God does not have plans for any of us. This is contrary to Scripture. Open theism strives hard to free God from believing falsely. However, as seen above, Sanders believes that predictive prophecies sometimes do not come true. It follows that God believes falsely that, for instance, Nineveh, Tyre, and the like will be destroyed. Therefore, God's wisdom is questionable.

Further, the assertion that God foreknows only a few things for the sake of human freedom does not bring the amount of comfort supposed by open theism. It has serious pastoral implications and brings little comfort amid suffering. Such a God may not be worthy of human trust (Wood 2010, 66).

In the binding of Isaac, since Sanders argues that it was at the time of the testing that God knew that Abraham feared him, then God's knowledge of Abraham's spirituality was in doubt (Hall and Sanders 2003, 23–24). It means God had doubted Abraham's relationship with him. However, the track record of God's relationship with Abraham does not show that God doubted Abraham, even once. Genesis 12 and 15 substantiate this. Other scriptural passages (1 Chr 28: 9; Psa 139) attest that God knows humans' thoughts and intentions, both present and future. But the insistence that God did not know that Abraham feared him until the test connotes that God does not have present knowledge either. This issue is addressed by Ware (2002) in his article cited above.

For Augustine, God's knowledge of contingent actions does not imply that God causally determines such actions, thereby rendering them necessary actions. This would entail that such actions cease to be contingent.

However, Augustine (1968, 193) argues that God's knowledge of free actions guarantees that the actions are free and contingent upon human volition for their existence.

5.4 Contextual application

A careful study of God's responses to humans in the Bible reveals that he responds to situations differently and individually. In that case, one is justified to extrapolate that God knows human contingent actions. However, because he did not preordain human free actions, he has also not predetermined his responses to such actions. This explains why he will respond differently based on the *context*. Christ did the same thing during his earthly ministry, especially in healing. At times, he commanded the sickness to leave. On other occasions, he either said "your faith had made you well," or "your sins are forgiven," and the sick person was made well. The disciples wanted to generalize about the man born blind in John 9. Jesus corrected them and stated that it was in that manner *so that the work of God might be displayed in his life*. Here, it is a matter of context. Scripture does not teach us that there are some things that God does not know. However, it is apparent in the Scriptures that God does not respond in the same way to every situation. At times, he allows mercy to prevail over judgment; he will not change at other times. God's approach in dealing with creation is not *monolithic* but is *diversified* based on contexts.

Both Calvin and Sanders are a bit normative in their expressions. For instance, as seen above and substantiated by Caneday, Sanders challenges Calvin and the Augustinian-Calvinistic model of conceiving God, and believes that the open view is better than classical theism in dealing with the problem of evil. What makes it that Calvin is correct while Sanders is not, or vice versa? Since Calvin has gone to be with Lord, my word for Sanders would be: "For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears" (1 Cor 13:9–10 NIV). There is a place for epistemic humility in dealing with complicated Christian philosophy and theology doctrines. This is an issue that each Christian philosopher must consider in their philosophical or theological engagements. Since Christian philosophy and theology are done in the flesh for humans using human languages, it is impossible to assume that one's concept is the best concept. One may be faithful more than the other in some aspects. Of course, I am aware that the way I am applying 1 Corinthians 13 in this context is contested by Calvin (1948, 360–361) in his commentary on this passage. However, it does not change the fact that the reasons we provide for why God permits evil in the world may not necessarily be correct in every situation.

6. Conclusion

The study, from its inception, is hermeneutical in a dialogical manner. The debate on divine sovereignty is complicated and calls for epistemic humility. Because of our limitations, providence is *risky to us but not to God*. Divine providence may involve some level of risk because we do not know the outcome of every decision we make when there is a definite expectation. It also seems that no matter the level of trust and experience one may have, delegating a task confers some level of risk on the one embarking on the delegation. But, I think the appropriate term to use in qualifying how divine providence involves some level of risk as applied to God has not yet been invented.

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Toward *Shalom* as a Radical and Transformative Conceptual Framework for Post-Apartheid Social Justice in Namibia

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Abstract

Social justice has become a deeply contested subject among Christians. These disagreements indicate an ongoing process of discernment and reflection regarding Christian participation in transforming the social order. For the post-apartheid context, the need to reformulate our vision and approach is crucial to cementing our witnessing. This article seeks to explore how the concept of *shalom* could provide for a thicker theological and conceptual framework for Christian praxis in the Namibian post-apartheid context. It seeks to provide a theological basis for Christian participation in the social ordering and what role the church can play to ensure more positive social outcomes. The paper engages in critical analysis and suggests critical participation as a way of embodying Christian values and the gospel in the public sphere. This engagement is an attempt to answer the question: *In what ways could the notion of shalom provide for a new, radical, and transformative vision for taking part in minimizing the effects of post-apartheid social injustice?*

1. Background

Namibia, like many other African states, experienced colonialism, briefly under British, then German rule, and finally South African apartheid rule. This paper deals with the effects of the third entity—the apartheid system. This was an intentional and systematic cultural, political, social, and economic disadvantaging of Namibians based on their social grouping (Black Africans). Its effects continue to be seen, even decades after it was abrogated *as a legal and political system* (this

https://www.sats.ac.za/conspectus/
This article: https://www.sats.ac.za/toward-shalom-radical-transformative
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.5

Conspectus

Keywords
shalom, social justice, post-apartheid, gospel-centered, Namibia

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SATS
Bible-based. Christ-centred. Spirit-led.

is also the sense in which I use post-apartheid, as apartheid at social and economic levels continues to prevail).

Although Namibia is now an independent country, its narrative of independence is still "concentrated mainly on the political culture and ideology cultivated since…independence" (Melber 2007, 7). Its political culture is not transforming society to rid itself of the effects of inherited socio-economic injustice. Those with proximity to power are fixating on setting up a new "hegemonic public discourse to reinvent themselves within the heroic narrative that was already being constructed during the anti-colonial struggle" (5). The result is a disturbing manifestation of socio-economic disparity in the absence of a radical vision for social justice. This is evidenced by half of the citizens living in shacks, skyrocketing unemployment and unemployability, increasing disparity of income, administrative corruption, growing classism, and increasing cost of living.

From this grim image of the socio-economic conditions, we can deduce that there is a deficiency of both prophetic and faithful witness to God's social order. It is a society devoid of God's *shalom* in which Christians have acquiesced with the surrounding culture instead of being counter-cultural; or, as Botha (2016, 28–32) calls it, a church of political expediency instead of being a principled opponent of injustice. While the pre-independence church took part in the liberation struggle for independence, today we cast doubt upon the kind of vision they embraced. We feel disconcerted that their vision only aimed at White oppression. But its theological roots and convictions have waned from an uncritical marriage with a political culture to sustain it. As such, the church has become a social institution that enables (through its silence) social injustice to prevail.

From this background, this paper seeks to introduce a new way of rethinking the Namibian social context, not in the tradition of Black liberation theology, but from a biblical and gospel-centered concern. It asks, in what ways could the notion of shalom provide for a new, radical, and transformative vision for taking part in minimizing the effects of post-apartheid social injustice? It advocates for a Christian vision that seeks to strive towards justice as corresponding to a God who is just and concerned with his creation. Our mission of the gospel, as people who have found a new identity in Christ, embodies social responsibility and unashamed materiality. Christian epistemology ignites in us renewed compassion, empathy, and abiding participation which seeks to see the Lordship of Christ manifested in all spheres of human life. We do not believe our faith is only a spiritual activity but one that informs and transforms the way we see the world, making us part of the makers of the social culture. We feel with renewed hearts that are awakened towards love for God and love for our neighbor. Thus, embracing *shalom* is nothing less than a vision for a radical and transformative way of thinking or defying our culture's denial of justice to God's image-bearers.

2. Methodology

This article engages the concept of *shalom* as a method for critical analysis and Christian participation in the public sphere. As a method, it challenges our vision of life, refocuses our epistemological framework, and re-examines the philosophical anthropology that informs our view of the good life. To bring Christian participation that speaks in the public sphere requires a unique and authentic framework that bears witness to the kinds of values we hold, and also reflects the nature of God in human affairs. The Christian faith thrives on the premise of embodiment, as it speaks of God who made himself known in human form, created the physical world, and sustains it. Engaging this as a method provides critical insight on the prophetic role and praxis to humanize society. This method reinvites us to a renewed social

concern and to embrace a paradigm that embodies our confession in the reality of the risen Christ and God's Kingdom in the world (Meek 2011, 15).

As a method, it does not dismiss everything else, but seeks to take heed of our gospel responsibility; this is the way to reshape our belief of the world. *Shalom* in this paper is a knowledge framework that seeks to embody social realities from the perspective of understanding God. I write to dialogue for a social framework for Christian participation in the world (against the prevailing socialist-Marxist analysis of Black theology of liberation). I seek to offer an alternative way of thinking about human happiness based on God's vision, rather than social and political analysis. Such a vision is not to simply communicate popular ideas such as social justice and peace; instead, as Forster (2010, 166) argues, we do this as

> a way of bearing witness to these realities in God's person and nature, and an uncovering and explicating of these realities in history and creation—this is a deeply Biblical theology. It does not preach Biblical truth for the sake of comparing ideas or evaluating measures of truth. No, it is prophetic Biblical theology [that] offers a prophetic, political, orientation for life.

It is not my intention to provide an exhaustive systematic biblical or theological trace of the concept of *shalom*; this article serves as a tentative discussion starter for alternatives to theological approaches that seek social dialogue. The use of Brueggemann is to provide a context of *shalom* as a dialogical framework and social reading thereof. Towards the end of the article, I draw upon several voices that demonstrate what shalom-driven participation should look like in the post-apartheid context.

3. A Radical Conceptual Framework

Aristotle conceived a *polis* that would reflect the meaning of a happy life or what the ancient Greeks called *eudaimonia*. It is a concept which philosophers in applied ethics use as a cluster concept to address various human concerns in society, particularly issues of social justice. But the *eudaimonia* envisioned by Greek philosophers and many modern philosophers is based on a vision of social discrimination, a mismatch against the biblical understanding. For example, the advocates of *eudaimonia* speak of happiness at the exclusion of persons based on their race, sex, social status, nationality, and so on. Or, their *eudaimonia* promotes continued misery and oppression as a natural order, and breaking from it would deprive society of its intended happiness. Implicit in this form of *eudaimonia* are "visions of human flourishing—that are antithetical to the biblical vision of *shalom*" (Smith 2019, 117).

The philosophical anthropology embedded in Greek *eudaimonia* is not rooted in the principle of the covenant. A concept of the covenant is found in God and expressed in humans as God's image-bearers (Gen 1:26). This notion of covenant is a philosophy of life that is opposed to embracing or being silent about human misery. Thus, the biblical narrative of creation provides a conceptual framework that refuses to negotiate for policies, structures, and programs that advocate for "reconciliation without justice, forgiveness without repentance and morally unacceptable compromises" (Koopman 2017). This is a radical notion of *shalom* that stands starkly opposed to the social framework of Athenian thinking and culture. The concept expresses God's desire for humanity, not just in the eschatological future, but also in the *here and now*. It starts *with* God's plan towards Israel:

> Then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. 'Indeed, your

> threshing will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land.' I shall also grant *peace* in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land. (Lev 26:4–6, emphasis added)[1]

Brueggemann (1982, 15) argues that "all of creation is one, every creature in community with every other, living in harmony and security towards the joy and well-being of every other creature." This resembles the Genesis (1–2) creation narrative and a language of covenant. God created a good world which experienced God's peace on all levels. God has not abandoned the world (regardless of people's religious convictions, sexual orientation, political affiliation, and social hierarchy) to utter chaos, even with the presence of sin. This reality of a fallen world should motivate us to have more sweeping visions of God's presence in human affairs, including social justice. However, Longman III and Dillard (2006, 366), citing Ezekiel 48:35, ground the concept of *shalom* in God's promised Messiah and that the "transcending experience of God's presence that brought with it peace and justice would occur when God incarnate would walk the streets of Jerusalem and build his church as a new temple. The presence of Immanuel would mark the day that 'the LORD is there.'" Luke presents us with this prophetic fulfillment that places the *shalom* of God not in a system or political ruler, but in God's promised Messiah, citing Isaiah:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:8–9)

It is worth noting that the promise of God's *shalom* is not made to a perfect, sinless people but to an imperfect group of persons. It is "a state of right order prevailing within the man whose highest powers are subject" to God's will for the world (van Roo 1955, 57). While it is conditional to Israel and their obedience to Yahweh, it expresses God's eternal desire for humanity. While the giving of peace is said to be a reciprocation of obedience to God, it tells us something about God's eternal vision for God's world. As such, God's vision for humanity looks beyond the various social identities and labels to a world in which justice should be the norm of human life and not a privilege to be given by those with proximity to political, economic, and social power. Ancient Israel, we argue, was to reflect what God's people should be like. The Law, if anything, stands for God's intended order of peace and justice different from the social order they experienced in Egypt. *Shalom* becomes a theoretical framework, hermeneutical tool, and paradigm for resisting injustice among God's people.

There is a Christological reality behind the vision for social justice. It lies in the promise of Christ that "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). The framework of *shalom* is not satisfied with mere concepts, but seeks to see symbols that resemble an abundant life in the post-apartheid settings. Abundant life does not only refer to eternal life but to a life that gives dignity and honor to the person. Christ's coming into the world was to restore God's order in creation (Isa 9:6–7). As such, those who trust in Christ's redeeming work are called to be light and salt (Matt 5:13–16) and express their "inheritance of the fullness of blessing, both in this world and the world to come" (Sagovsky 2004, 157).

1 All Bible texts are based on the New Revised Standard Version.

This vision of human flourishing calls on Christians to find new ways of conceptualizing and expressing their concerns, combined with new ways of theologizing that are aware of the socio-political dialogues but deeply rooted in God's Word for understanding the world (Forster 2020, 16–18). It is not necessarily a political conceptualization, even though it may touch on this, but an expression of a new ethic of humanity. *Shalom* lays the premise for a new way of empathizing with the victims of injustice as we come to grips with the suffering of our neighbors. It offers a new intra-human relationship not to accept injustice as a normative social condition, and refuses alternative etiologies that seek to ignore, spiritualize, politicize, or philosophically justify injustice and unjust conditions (Taylor 2007, 11). Through such radical participation, we show what it means to be a community that embraces God's vision of human co-existence in which they would share God's resources (blessings) to forge communal harmony.

If the Christian community is the community of God's covenant people, then how we interact with the world is crucial. How do we take part to ensure the receiving of God's blessing and God's gifts to the whole human community and not just for the few elites of our society? *Shalom* stands for the well-being of a personal kind that is material, physical, historical, and seeks to address needs of real-life struggles with injustice, worry, poverty, and suffering. To be concerned for human spiritual well-being finds a new framework that is not divorced from the material. The biblical vision of human salvation is not divided into the spiritual and material; they are co-existent and both matter in the sight of God.

Because God's vision is wholeness for his creation, this implies that God's vision also becomes our vision to advocate for a society in which there is justice for all persons. This cosmic understanding presumes participation in what Brueggemann (1982, 20) refers to as "the historic political community." In this community, we see the effects of social in justice through socio-economic inequity (the concern of this paper), which are evidence of the absence of God's vision of *shalom*. Such a manifestation provokes the wrath of the Creator upon perpetrators and beneficiaries that accept injustice as the way to self-centered peace and prosperity. The prophet Micah, among others, pronounced this judgment that "Alas for those who devise wickedness and evil deeds on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in their power. They covet fields, and seize them; houses, and take them away; they oppress householder and house, people and their inheritance" (2:1–2; cf. Amos 4:1).

This search for God's justice expressed in the notion of *shalom* becomes a different framework of thinking. It seeks social engagement with an eternal vision in mind, starting in God and not human systems. It creates a new conceptualization that challenges post-apartheid conceptions that are neither far-reaching nor demanding justice. Moreover, it refuses to compromise with what Boesak (2017) calls "pharaohs: in political, economic, social, and cultural settings that continue to disadvantage the poor." It presents with it a different social ethic of society for both victims and perpetrators. This is rooted in the notions of reconciliation and forgiveness:

> When these two characteristics are brought together, the outcome is a more robust theological understanding of the necessity, and conceptualisation, of notions and processes, of forgiveness that honours the convictions of the Christian theological tradition (ontologically), while also taking concrete social and historical realities (structural elements) seriously. (Forster 2019a, 78)

Such an understanding of *shalom* makes it a radical or disruptive conceptual framework that seeks covenant, neighborliness, community, and justice.

4. Disrupting the Social Order

If *shalom*, as described above, begins in our conception of God and his vision for his creation, then the present effects of apartheid disrupt God's intention for *shalom*. This makes it a sin against God, the self, and the neighbor. Such a society cannot thrive or prosper, for it is devoid of true peace. Social and economic inequality, caused by historical structures and systems of injustice, although they may appear to be displaying prosperity, are structures and systems of conflict and restlessness. This is where theology becomes a tool of God's voice to call for far-reaching notions of post-apartheid reconciliation (Villa-Vicencio 2004, 8; Boesak and DeYoung 2012, 2, 51). This is a practical embodiment of God's vision for the world, which seeks to make social justice more possible by breaking social and political hostility: especially, to foster an environment in which both Black and White people recognize each other as equals.

That millions of people in Namibia and South Africa live in squalid and inhumane conditions, reveals the reality of the absence of God's *shalom*. Living in poverty and all other dehumanizing conditions disrupts God's *shalom*, which no person informed by God's vision of righteousness can simply sit and watch. It is admirable that evangelicals for years have called upon spiritual repentance from sin, but sin should be seen in a much more holistic view. When the Psalmist cries "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" (Ps 34:14; cf. Ps 37:27; Isa 1:16–17), he is referring to both the heart and actions of humans. This includes systems and structures which this sin has enabled, and which should be transformed or destroyed, to allow human flourishing as God intended.

Shalom, then, extends beyond mere believing in God's vision of justice or proclamation. It is a motivation to action. It is a framework of thought which cannot be realized by mere speech; it must be embodied by biblically-informed action. If the present effects of apartheid are an affront to God and God's image-bearers, then we are duty-bound to proclaim this truth, in the most radical and disruptive manner until such structures and systems are removed to pave for true and sustainable human flourishing.

When Brueggemann calls for a vision of *shalom*, for those of us in a post-conflict society, this should waken us from the slumber of modern life which would have us believe that we do not have to long for some vision of fullness that goes beyond this corrupt setting. If our social imaginations stay captive to individualized understandings of progress (in which those of us with proximity to economic power have access to decent housing, quality healthcare, an abundant supply of food, and various forms of social security), we still are part of those who entrench the progression of social injustice. A vision of *shalom* would disrupt our self-centeredness and the false comforts we have acquired. With *shalom* as a framework of thought, the search for social justice no longer becomes a mere choice left to cultural interpretations but something profoundly rooted in God's self-revelation.

As such, we acquire a new way of reflection and dialogue that bears witness to God's truth and contingency of life in a way that challenges false notions of justice. Even in an age that would have us reject the necessity of the existence of a God, when we gather ourselves and respond to God's call for a just order, our disruptive and prophetic witness will gain an audience (Noble 2018, 106). This form of a disruptive witness by Christians is yet to be seen in post-apartheid Namibia, where Christians, informed by a vision of God, would draw lines that challenge the present culture experience that embraces inequity and dehumanization. Generating participation in socio-economic redemption is a missional activity that expresses the Kingdom of God.

A word of warning: I do not want to portray *shalom* as an achievement for the this-worldly effort of justice. I refer to justice in this world only

to the extent it is humanly possible. The reality of the Fall will continue to hinder all our efforts. Yet, this awareness, instead of discouraging us, should be the very motivation why we need to do our ultimate best to resist injustice and advocate for justice. We also need to be fully aware that the human condition will only be redeemed at the return of Christ. To hope for a perfect manifestation of peace and justice through human efforts, would only lead to frustration. On the other hand, a true vision of the transcendent would not have us be relaxed.

The concept of *shalom* as revealed through the Law and the Prophets calls us to take the godhood of God seriously (Williams 2020, 30) in our vision of social justice. While we may be opposed to certain stances of liberation theology, especially on matters of spiritual salvation and hermeneutics, it stands as a rebuke to an evangelical vision known for "opting out of our social and political responsibilities" (Stott 2008, 222). For the Namibian Church or Christian community, we need to heed John Stott's call to repent of our fear to challenge the current post-apartheid structures. And we should "not be afraid to challenge ourselves and each other that God may be calling many more Christians" (222) who would hear God's call to take part in various activities of social justice where the Kingdom of Christ is expressed.

With a vision of *shalom*, we do not look to substitute the Great Commission in favor of a socio-political or socio-economic transformation. The Great Commission is carried out as we take part in social activities with virtuous deeds accompanied by the proclamation of the gospel that calls sinners to Christ. Where God's *shalom* is disrupted by the sin of greed, injustice, selfishness, inhumane individualism, and classism, the gospel becomes a tool of socio-cultural disembedding. It resists false, classist, and elitist solidarities that keep people captive and subject to inhuman social conditions. *Shalom* understood within the context of the gospel becomes an alternative way of resisting what Taylor (2004, 66) calls "the present sacralized order of things and its embedding in the cosmos." It is a notion of the vision of God's justice and desire for the well-being of humanity that is not ashamed "to be at odds with the world."

5. Critical Participation in the World

Shalom is a theological concept with deep socio-political, socio-theological implications. It is not a mere theory but seeks a praxis that bears witness to covenant reality through community and neighborliness. The biblical notion of justice is not to speak of lofty ideas but to engage in redressing the injustice that produces the less advantaged as an acceptable side-effect. Leading to embracing a covenant language and action which leads "to a care for the commons, care for the well-being of the whole, that which we hold for the sake of all" (Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight 2016, 49). In search for human flourishing in the post-apartheid context,

> it begins with a belief that the Trinitarian God has a claim upon creation in general (and human persons in particular). This understanding of human dignity moves from a position of conviction (thought or belief) towards action; thereby giving both content and expression to what it means to be truly human and even humane. (Forster 2018, 5)

This political and social implication of such thinking calls for discerning the kind of future and society God desires, and how we should become committed to working towards such a future. When we see people living in squalid conditions resulting from poor leadership and the effects of history, does it reflect what God wants for people in Namibia or Southern Africa?

If our understanding of God's vision for human well-being would be applied to its logical conclusion, the post-apartheid Namibian community

would become part of a Great Disembedding Movement of God's people. With a radical way of thinking comes a revolution in our understanding of socio-economic order—creating an alternative social imagination (Forster 2019b, 73–76). God's new moral order of justice would go with us to confront unjust social arrangements and systems. It is a creation of a new social imagination that provokes righteous anger against social justice measures and concepts that are not far-reaching in redressing the dehumanizing effects of the apartheid system. A biblically sound and socially rooted understanding of *shalom* "disembeds us from the social sacred and posits a new relation to God as designer. This new relation is eclipsable, because the design underlying the moral order can be seen as directed to ordinary human flourishing" (Taylor 2004, 65). However, our notions of "flourishing remain under surveillance in our modern moral view: they have to fit with the demands of the moral order itself, of justice, equality, nondomination, if they are to escape condemnation" (Taylor 2004, 65).

This slow pace of justice in the post-apartheid setting implies the privation of *shalom*. As a result, we cannot speak of true peace and reconciliation; and this absence of justice will only continue to wield "turmoil and anxiety with no chance of well-being" (Brueggemann 1982, 19). Reconciliation as we presently know it carries no meaning on the level that allows for socio-economic thriving. Perpetrators and beneficiaries have continued to thrive with their ill-gained wealth and resources. Together with the post-apartheid elite who have proximity to political power, they now control the economic, social, cultural, and political systems. This describes a tumultuous social context that is "opposed to God's powerful will for orderly fruitfulness" (20).

Our proclamation of the gospel requires holding the powerful and well-off of our society accountable for their role which continues to further social injustice. For God does hold them accountable (Jer 6:13–14). Christian pursuit for justice will not produce any effects if it is divorced from the historical reality. *Shalom* is introduced to the people of Israel amid the historical reality that had distorted the meaning of human dignity and identity. We assume that part of God revealing himself as a God of *shalom* was to inform Israelites how God's people should live, as people of covenant and neighborliness. When justice was perverted by the wealthy and powerful, God's people were all to rise to confront such violations of the covenant. The covenant of God was to lay a new path for social order and alternatives to unjust value systems (Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight 2016, 47).

Jesus's incarnation in human form has come to create a new humanity—reaffirming the covenant of God's created order. His mission was two-fold: 1) to restore our relationship with God; 2) to take part in our social-historical realities. The promised Prince of Peace came to offer an alternative and renewed desire for the cultural mandate. It begins in the call for repentance, the transformation of the human heart. Simply calling for political and structural reforms is not enough; we need an alternative message—the gospel—through which we can seek tangible transformation. The gospel comes with its radical way of thinking and praxis. Our social structures need a new way of covenanting and being human, which cannot be produced from the present greedy and corrupt structures. Covenant opens new possibilities of envisioning society. *Shalom* through Christ brings our relatedness as humans into a conversation; together we resist all practices that violate the humanity of our neighbor. The gospel leads to covenantal justice or "a commitment we make to our neighbors all around us for its own sake" (Block, Brueggemann, and McKnight 2016, 46).

The gospel creates new ways of covenanting with fellow humans and an alternative narrative that confronts the presence and appearances of injustice. It makes us aware of all forms of sin that assault God's image

in men and women. As such, it refuses that God's people should be silent and complacent with practices and living conditions that dishonor God's creation. This creates a new understanding of the world and how God's people can truly take part in "societal transformation endeavors" (Horn 2010, 61). Such participation stands opposed to anything which idolizes greed, power, and wealth that set up social and economic structures that cannot be replicated as normative expressions of human flourishing. Thus, it stands opposed to false notions and practices of prosperity (Jer 17:11; 22:13) that do not shield God's image-bearers from harsh, unequal, and dehumanizing socio-economic conditions.

Shalom, as a vision for social justice does not look at people as White offenders and Black victims. Seen through the framework of the gospel, injustice is a manifestation of sin, a deviation from God's will, an offense against God's holiness and the dignity of our neighbor. Where justice is being needed, it is to put right how historical events have resulted in generational disadvantages among those whom the apartheid system disadvantaged. Reconciliation between social groups cannot be considered genuine unless it is far-reaching to require socio-economic amendments which are the first visible manifestations of social justice. This is the understanding in which *shalom* is expressed among the people of Israel: a peaceful society is a society in which needs are met. The ultimate vision of *shalom* of God's new heavens and new earth also tells us that it is one in which needs are fully met (Sagovsky 2008, 79; DeYoung and Gilbert 2011, 202–206). It is not justice when we cannot receive the life-enhancing goods to flourish and be fully human. The *shalom* vision is equally material in as much as it is spiritual, in which being more is not detached from having more. It is a response to apartheid's dehumanizing effects that continue to deny many people access to life-enhancing goods (Goulet 2006, 26–27).

Such theological participation, however, will need to find legal and political structures and stand in solidarity with them to administer social justice. Thus, theology needs to become more acquainted with the socio-political language, structures, and systems with which it can dialogue. Such a dialogue would hold accountable both perpetrators and beneficiaries of apartheid and those who presently "infringe the standards of conduct laid down" in the system of democracy (MacIntyre 1988, 241). *Shalom*, in this way, enhances a new way of how we imagine society, politics, and culture, not as enemies of the gospel but as realms in which God's Kingdom is expressed. By taking part we become instruments and vessels of God's Kingdom wherever it is manifested, to be part of ensuring the manifestation of *shalom* motivated by a high vision of the transcendent that takes an interest in all human life.

This vision for a radical and transformative theological framework revolutionizes the way the church thinks of itself as salt and light in the world. Both at a collective and individual level "the church can participate in being a bearer of hope in society" (Forster 2015, 11). This is a way of thinking that would allow, as Forster argues, Christians "to be intentional about their ministry in working for God's will in the world" (11), not as activists and lobbyists but because we understand that with accepting the gospel demands upon our lives comes the responsibility to be bearers of God's peace and hope in society. Understanding this role of the church, informed by a vision of God's will for his world, places a demand upon church leaders and theologians. As those at the forefront of Christian thinking, understanding the social circumstances to engage the church to take part in the social transformation is crucial. Not only by engaging the socio-economic structures that further social injustice but also by being able to confront theological notions and confessions that are damaging to Christian witness in the public sphere. This includes false understandings

of withdrawal from the world and false theologies that offer quick fixes to socio-economic conditions.

For example, the growth of the prosperity theology which portrays itself as a solution to masses who are socio-economically disadvantaged cannot be countered with a mere social analysis. It requires a theology that is committed to Scripture, the gospel, and social action. A dichotomized theology that pitches salvation against social justice embraces only part of God's vision for his creation. The Christian faith (like the Jews in the Old Testament) has historically been concerned with actual issues of survival and well-being (Acts 6:1–7; Jas 2:14–17). Their awareness of the social conditions shaped their language, faith, and liturgies in ways that sought God's will and answer to their social circumstances (Rev 20–21). The outcome of this theological reflection embodied a holistic theology of salvation (spiritual and material). And the vision of God's coming ultimate *shalom* has throughout generations moved people of faith to take part to advance, among other things, modern education, set up orphanages, fight racism and racist policies and structures, and further inheritance rights of women; not with a false utopian notion of looking to end the world's present evils, but with the knowledge that while we wait for the final day of redemption, we must be part of the human communities in which God has placed us. By this participation, we embrace the reality of our need for God to deliver us from evil caused by fellow humans and to curb the further spread of dehumanizing conditions. It is participation, as Brueggemann (1982, 29–30) argues, born out of "a vision of survival and salvation" for both the present and eternal future.

As people motivated by the gospel, participation informed by an understanding of God's *shalom* for his creation, there is no salvation history without material concern. There is no mission without engaging with social movements, systems, ideas, and practices that seek justice. *Shalom* does not allow room for withdrawal into a spirituality that is empty of meaningful engagement with human conditions. The less-advantaged are both in the church and outside it. That is, they live among us. The church is part of the society in which we look to see transformation and removal of the effects of post-apartheid injustice. By turning away from our withdrawal, we are making a public statement "that God has a vision of how the world shall be and is not yet. And the faith affirmed in the church is the twin resolve to that we mean to discern God's vision of what the world shall be and that we mean to live toward that vision" (Brueggemann 1982, 39). With a gospel-centered focus understanding of *shalom*, we are made to avoid what Miguez-Bonino (1983, 20) calls "the idealistic fallacy.". That is using the *shalom* framework to derive from it "a political ethics or, even worse, a political ideology and program" (20). Neither is this a pursuit to refurbish Black liberation theology's socialist analysis and present it as an answer and framework of Christian thought. It is not a political agenda or a quick fix to rescue our stranded socio-economic structures.

Instead, *shalom* is the search to break from social epistemologies which do not capture the place of the church or the gospel to create a new space for social imagination or prophetic imagination. It is a way of envisioning a change in basic assumptions informed by the vision of God. To shift from a withdrawn spiritual practice to one that engages the social order that affects the lives of so many people would need a profound change in our theological assumptions about the world. We do not look to replicate another sociological model by simply baptizing it in Christian language. We look for a truly gospel-centered rethinking that is fully aware of the spiritual realities of the human condition, that knows that humans are sinful, and that injustice is a manifestation of humanity's broken relationship with God and one another. Yet it is also fully aware that God is at work even in the present order building his Kingdom and that the church is being called

to take part in the proclamation and expression of God's Kingdom, for the healing and restoration of human relations and socio-economic conditions.

Unlike the approaches of Black theologies of liberation that begin from a social analysis of social participation (Cone 1990; Kameeta 2006; Maluleke 2008; Niitenge 2013; Boesak 2019), this is a call to begin from the context of Scripture. Even the very notions of social justice and call to participation are bound in God's self-revelation. Thus, they should not be given independent status, for such thinking leads only to secularized religion in which God becomes but one who is subject to conform to human limitations. Instead, as Goldsworthy (2000, 443) notes, "the biblical picture is the opposite. God reveals what he is like and in so doing shows us what justice and goodness are…God is not a creature subject to a higher independent principle called [social] order." Our longing for right ordering and social justice is because of what God is; from him flows all true virtue of justice. The notion of *shalom*, I argue, can only take the true meaning that affects our hearts when we base it on the person and activity of God, rather than as human action trying to change the world.

That we begin in God, makes this an activity of worship, and social justice then becomes something much higher than mere social activism. Here, through the faithful preaching of God's word, we are encouraged to create a new culture of the covenant. The kind of culture in which our humanity is tied to that of one another because we all carry the mark of one Creator. This culture extends to everything else that we do. As Smith (2019, 152) writes,

> When we gather, we are responding to a call to worship; that call is an echo and renewal of the call of creation to be God's image bearers for the world, and we fulfill the mission of being God's image bearers by undertaking the work of culture making. For such cultural unfolding to be done well, it must find its animus and direction in a covenantal relationship with the Creator.

We are not social activists; the responses we generate to confront dehumanizing and unjust conditions are reflections of the new community's ethos shaped by faith in Jesus Christ. Even responding to unjust practices requires dependence on God, and our calling of systems, persons, and structures to just ordering, is an attempt to call fellow humans to be ordered to the Creator. In our gathering to worship God and seek his will of how we can make him known through faithful witnessing and presence we dispel human self-confidence. Implicit in the search of *shalom* in post-apartheid Southern Africa is the "understanding that human flourishing requires a dynamic relationship with the Creator of humanity; in short, worship is at the heart of being human" (Smith 2019, 152). It is thus a missional task since injustice is because God is not worshipped in our social, cultural, economic, and political systems. These cannot serve the full purpose of human flourishing and the common good unless human hearts are transformed to behold the vision of God for this world as revealed in Christ Jesus. This approach considers our theological commitments to justice and the common good and how the Christian community can contribute effectively to the healing of society (Horn 2010, 61).

However, this reality of God in human society must reflect or begin in the church. This must be evidenced by: 1) a clear break with complacency about corrupt and unjust political structures by the liberationist churches; 2) a move from the withdrawn attitude of many evangelical churches that feel that their role is only spiritual; 3) clear cultural social integration of the White/Afrikaner churches that continue to exclude other people with their use of language policy that caters only to Afrikaans speakers; 4) a drive to familiarize with the language of the various public spheres to be

truly present witnesses of God's love and social ordering; 5) active but critical participation in activities and programs that contribute towards the undoing of existing patterns and practices of socio-economic injustice.

6. Conclusion

We do not live in a deistic realm of reality. The Bible tells us that God has made himself known in human historical settings and has revealed his will through the Law, the Prophets, and finally through his Son. The concept of *shalom* does not shy away from embracing this other-worldly vision, to take part in this-worldly activities. It is not merely a socio-political framework but says something about our understanding of God. It is a high view of God who would not sit back and watch the continuation of injustice in post-apartheid Namibia. For such silence is an affront to God's vision for his creation. There is nothing necessarily strange about embracing this new framework of the gospel to confront unjust systems, structures, and social arrangements. It expresses our search for what God is doing in the world and how we can be part of it. This search implies calling to repentance those who transgress God's standards, including the church that has been politically and culturally co-opted into complacency and continued social and cultural discrimination. *Shalom* calls for repentance from habits that violate covenant and neighborliness, and the church must lead by confronting its failure which enables unhealthy socio-political practices.

I would like to conclude by asking, what if, while we wait for "the kingdom of the world" to "become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah" in which "he will reign forever and ever" (Rev 11:15), we generate and embrace a gospel-centered notion of *shalom* to take part in the social transformation of post-apartheid Namibia and Southern Africa? Could we embrace this as a notion, even tentatively, through which God could work in the church for decision-making, working through our various gifts and efforts to bring about the transformation of our unjust socio-economic structures?

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Is the Prosperity Gospel, Gospel? An Examination of the Prosperity and Productivity Gospels in African Christianity

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Abstract

The teaching of the Prosperity Gospel is widespread throughout African Christianity—especially within African Initiated/Independent Churches (AICs) and Pentecostal churches. For many, it is only a natural expression of biblical teachings on abundant life from the viewpoint of Africa's holistic worldviews. For others, it arises as an extension of the deliverance theology of Pentecostals. Why should God not deliver us not only from sin and sickness, but from poverty as well? Others look at what seem to be the clear abuses of certain well-known (and financially well-off) prosperity teachers and cry, *heresy*! But are African expressions of the Prosperity Gospel heretical? Or are they orthodox, or perhaps heterodox? Both Scripture and historical Christian tradition reflect an ambivalence toward material wealth, at times seeing it as a blessing and at times as a danger. Reflecting on Scripture in the context of years of pastoral experience in Africa and recent discussions with scholars, missionaries, and local church leaders, this essay is built upon a hybrid methodology of integrative literature review and narrative literature review. After reviewing biblical teachings on wealth and possessions, it reviews the literature on the Prosperity Gospel in Africa and discovers that in some African contexts an adaptation of prosperity teachings, the Productivity Gospel, has arisen to address the same set of questions. Borrowing emphases from Prosperity theology on abundant life and Pentecostal theologies of empowerment, with the accountability of a Weberian work ethic in the context of a holistic African worldview, the Productivity Gospel provides a message of hope and an opportunity for a redemptive (and economic) uplift while avoiding problematic praxis.

https://www.sats.ac.za/conspectus/
This article: **https://www.sats.ac.za/prosperity-gospel-african christianity**
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.6

Conspectus

Keywords
prosperity gospel, productivity gospel, African worldviews, culture of envy, hope

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SATS
Bible-based. Christ-centred. Spirit-led.

1. Introduction

Prosperity preaching is prevalent throughout Africa, especially within neo-Pentecostal and neo-Charismatic churches. This prosperity teaching is built on a particular interpretation of the biblical promises of abundant life in Christ. "I have come," Jesus says, "so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (John 10:10b NET). Most scholars read this as a reference "to eternal life, that is, the life of the coming age which…begins in the present with a divine birth" (Keener 2012, 811). Eternal life is often understood to be merely an eschatological promise—something that will only be realized when Christ returns—and hope for life after death. Although "if in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Cor 15:19 ESV), many keenly feel the obverse: if in Christ we have hope in the afterlife only and not also in the present life, we are truly in a pitiable position. However, abundant life in Christ does indeed begin in this life. Because Jesus is the source of life, the "life to the full" which he promises in this verse "refers to everything from the kind of natural exuberance that is suggested by the wine at the Cana wedding to the suggestions in chaps. 5 and 6 of giving life to the dead" (Brodie 1993, 369). While this primarily refers to the quality of life in the Spirit and certainly includes spiritual blessings, it does not necessarily exclude material blessings.

Ordinary African Christians, and especially those whose life is full of economic uncertainty or health concerns, bring a particular set of questions to biblical texts. *If I will not give my child a snake for a fish or a stone for bread, then how much more must the Father delight to give good gifts to us his children? Does God desire to bless or to curse? Does God desire for us to die or to live?* Many African Pentecostals and Charismatics have responded to the questions asked by holistic African worldviews by developing a theology of deliverance. Believing that God can deliver from sin, from demonic influence, from the curses of witchcraft, and from various illnesses and injuries, they are moved to ask, *cannot God also deliver from poverty?* Or to start from the other side, "If I can't trust God for my money, why would I trust him with my salvation?"[1] Obvious biblical answers to these questions have led many to embrace the Prosperity Gospel.

What is the Prosperity Gospel? The phrase "abundant life," taken from John 10:10, is one of the cornerstones of Pentecostal theology in sub-Saharan Africa (Prosén 2020, 307). Building on this verse and OT promises of covenantal blessings, at its most simple the Prosperity Gospel "portrays wealth and riches as a covenant and the fulfilment of the divine promise of God to his people" (Gbote and Kgatla 2014, 1). The words of 2 Corinthians 8:9 are taken literally in a material sense by prosperity teachers: "Jesus was rich but because of you he became poor, so that by his poverty, you may be rich" (Mbamalu 2015, 3). The Prosperity Gospel proclaims that "God wills spiritual and material prosperity for all believers" as an appropriation of "the victory that Christ has won over sin, sickness, curses, poverty and setbacks in life" (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007, 349). Influenced by the "health and wealth" television preachers of North America, the Prosperity Gospel teaches that "a believer has a right to the blessings of health and wealth won by Christ, and he or she can obtain these blessings merely by a positive confession of faith" (Gifford 1998, 39). Because "whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (2 Cor 9:6 ESV), "tithes and offerings become instruments of prosperity" (Griffith 2007, 20)—especially, it seems, when given as a "seed of faith" which serves to immediately enrich the prosperity preacher!

1 So Mike Murdock (b. 1946), an American "Health and Wealth" preacher whose prosperity teachings—especially his development of the "seed giving" idea first popularized by Oral Roberts (1918–2009)—have been particularly influential among African Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Quoted in Gifford (2004, 68).

But is this teaching truly *gospel*? Or is it just another heresy? Most literature related to the Prosperity Gospel is either written by wholehearted proponents (e.g., David Oyedepo of Nigeria and Duncan Williams of Ghana) or by fierce opponents (e.g., Obadare 2016). Moving beyond the Scylla of salesmanship and the Charybdis of polemics, this essay examines whether, and to what degree, the Prosperity Gospel might be orthodox, heretical, or heterodox. Building on years of teaching pastors and elders in Africa (2000–2001 in South Africa and 2007 to the present in Kenya), and ongoing discussions with fellow academics, missionaries, and African church leaders, I have adopted a methodology which combines the approaches of integrative literature review and narrative literature review. I start by briefly reviewing the biblical teachings on wealth and possessions. Next, I review the literature on prosperity teachings in African Christian contexts and critiques of the Prosperity Gospel. As part of this examination, this essay also explores an offshoot from this form of Christianity known as a "Productivity Gospel." This Productivity Gospel refers to doctrine and praxis that has arisen from within Pentecostal and Charismatic settings in the Global South, with a focus on its African expressions.[2] In conclusion, I will propose that the Productivity Gospel may offer helpful correctives both to the excesses of Prosperity teachings and praxis and also to the limited scope of Western theologies which lack Africa's holistic worldview.

2 As such, this "Productivity Gospel" should not be confused with what has been called the American "gospel" of productivity, which refers to the international politics and economics regarding the perceived superior efficiency of U.S. manufacturing and industry in the years following WW2 when the U.S. had an active interest in rebuilding Europe after the devastation of that war (e.g., see Tiratsoo and Tomlinson 1997).

2. The Biblical Voice on Wealth and Possessions

Scripture has much to say about wealth and possessions. Throughout the OT are repeated promises of material blessings. The Promised Land is repeatedly called "a land flowing with milk and honey." One of the names of God is *Yahweh-Yireh* (less accurately rendered "Jehovah Jireh"), Yahweh-who-provides. This covenant promise of Deuteronomy 15:4–5 is striking:

> There must, then, be no poor among you. For Yahweh will grant you his blessing in the country which Yahweh your God is giving you to possess as your heritage, only if you pay careful attention to the voice of Yahweh your God, by keeping and practising all these commandments which I am enjoining on you today. (NJB)

But just a few sentences later, the covenant people are told, "Of course, there will never cease to be poor people in the land" (15:11). Proverbs 30:7–9 offers a prayer for balance:

> Two things I ask of you; deny them not to me before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God. (ESV)

This ambivalence toward wealth continues in the NT. Jesus affirms that our Father will provide our needs (Matt 6:25–33) but warns—in the previous verse—against trying to serve both God and the pursuit of wealth (v. 24). It is worth noting, of course, that praying for provision for our material needs (Matt 6:11; Luke 11:3) are in no way to be equated with the greedy materialism of building "bigger barns" to store hoarded wealth (Luke

12:16–21). Yet Paul could not have learned the secret of being content with plenty (Phil 4:12) if it were wrong to have plenty. Still, Paul has strong words for those who desire to be rich, castigating those who imagine "that godliness is a means of [material] gain" as conceited and ignorant teachers of "a different gospel" (1 Tim 6:3–5):

> But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. (1 Tim 6:6–11a ESV)

While prosperity preachers focus on those made wealthy like Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon, Hebrews 11:36–39 commends those who were by faith imprisoned, murdered, or destitute; and Hebrews 10:34 encourages those who had joyfully accepted the confiscation of their property. Whereas prosperity preachers treat the *kenosis* of Christ (Phil 2:5–8) as the source of physical riches, the NT does not present the "riches of salvation" as either "exclusively or even chiefly material riches" (Coulibaly 2006, 1407).

Historically, World Christianity has continued this ambivalence regarding material wealth and its spiritual value. In public teaching Christianity has typically renounced excessive wealth while seeking to promote lifestyles of modesty and sacrifice, though of course this has not always been carried out in practice (Ehioghae and Olanrewaju 2015, 74; see also González 2002 and Brown 2012). The message of the Prosperity Gospel, as I will demonstrate below, is admittedly not as nuanced as these biblical and historical voices. It primarily emphasizes passages about blessings.

3. The Prosperity Message

What is the Prosperity Message emphasis in Christianity? The description given by Nigerian scholar Nwankwo (2001) is worth citing at length. The central tenet of the Prosperity Gospel

> is that God has met all the needs of human beings in the suffering and death of Jesus. Every Christian should therefore share in Jesus' victory over sin, death, sickness and poverty. Thus, it is the will of God for people to prosper or succeed in every area of life. Prosperity here includes health, wealth, wholeness. Some elements are strikingly new.
> - First is the focus on the resurrection and not on the cross; on the fruits of the suffering and death of Jesus rather than on Jesus' call for all to take up their cross and follow him.
> - Second is that material poverty is included in what Jesus redeemed humanity from. This means that life of prosperity and comfort is the vocation and destiny of Christians thanks to the Jesus event.

This life of blessedness starts here on earth and reaches consummation in the afterlife. What is needed to activate the divine blessing is faith. This has to be combined with the religious practice of tithing which, according to a particular interpretation of Malachi 3:10–12, is what is needed so that God opens the floodgates of heaven and rains down blessings. The blessings mentioned in the pericope of Malachi include protection against pestilence and increase in the fruitfulness of the land and the vine. This is translated into contemporary values such

> as cars, fat bank account, employment, fertility, visa to emigrate, and protection from witchcraft. (Nwankwo 2001, 1)[3]

Thus, if one both has faith and demonstrates that faith through the practice of regular tithing (often accompanied by generous giving), the prosperity preachers proclaim, one is bound to prosper both spiritually and physically. Before moving to a critique of this message, it is worth noting its biblical basis on the power of the resurrection of Christ, the sufficiency of Christ's victory over sin and death for believers in the here and now, and the desire of God to bless God's children.

Does not Jesus tell us that he came that we might have life, and that in abundance? As we remember, Jesus does not here refer to βίος (mere biological life of the body) but ζωή. And he did not say that he came that we might have this abundant life in the distant future after the judgement, that abundant life is the reward for enduring suffering and hardship now. He rather speaks plainly in the present tense–that we may have life even now, and that in abundance.

In addition to these biblical foundations, many proponents of the Prosperity Gospel consider prosperity to be part of the atonement (e.g., Mbamalu 2015). Paul Gifford (1998, 3) explains that, in this understanding of the gospel, all human needs have been met by God through the redemptive passion and death of Jesus because Christ's victory over death is extended to believers in the here and now as victory—not only over sin but also over poverty and sickness. Thus, in prosperity churches, the victory we gain from the blood of Christ is not so much victory over sin and death but rather victory over the physical world in which we live (Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011, 14). Within this hermeneutic, Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is understood to refer not only to spiritual resurrection and the future resurrection from the dead but also "to the resurrection of dead finances, businesses, marriages here and now" (Gifford 2004, 74). This could not be more holistic, but the logic eventually becomes problematic: there is simply no room for theologies of suffering, poverty, or martyrdom.

Theologians often discuss the tension between the "already" and the "not yet." However, the Prosperity Gospel frequently insists that Christ's resurrection means for believers "all aspects of death that affect life on earth—poverty, sickness, barrenness, broken relationships—have" *already* been undone (Haynes 2014, 359). This results in victim-blaming and victim-shaming of any believer who is not experiencing all the marks of "a victorious life" such as "success, prosperity, health, and strong social ties." Any Christian who lacks such blessings, it is argued, clearly lacks faith, is immature, or spiritually ignorant; once a Christian truly knows what blessings belong to her by faith, God is necessarily required and even forced to give those blessings. In the next section, I will examine the problems inherent in this theology.

Magezi and Manzanga (2016, 4–5), who admittedly show less sympathy to the Prosperity Message than Nwankwo, identify the "tenets of the prosperity gospel" as:

- faith (which "is exercised in order to get things from God")
- positive confession (on the grounds that "the spoken word has the power to translate things into reality")

3 I have added the "bullet point" formatting for increased readability.

- the seed faith principle (sow big to reap big)
- the deification of man as a "little god."[4]

Faith and positive confession simply mean that each Christian is rightfully entitled to the blessings won by Christ; these blessings—both spiritual blessings and the material blessings of health and wealth—can be obtained by any believer who makes "a positive confession of faith" (Mbe 2004, 47–48). This results in the "name it and claim it" approach to material possessions. Because God intends *shalom* for all Christians, including success, health, and wealth, believers only need "to claim these gifts as his or her right as a child of God because a true Christian will inevitably enjoy wealth and success"; the necessary corollary, of course, is that "poverty and suffering" are assumed to "indicate sin, or at least an inadequate faith or understanding of God's law" (Soothill 2007, 41).

The "seed of faith" is a material gift given to God—or to God's chosen representative, the soliciting prosperity teacher—as an act of "sowing" that must result in a harvest, based on Luke 6:38. For evangelists of health and wealth, inviolable spiritual laws of cause and effect make prosperity inevitable as the reaping of bounty follows righteous sowing (Gifford 1994, 243, 246). This teaching proclaims that "faith leads to tithing, and tithing ignites prosperity. A gratified Almighty will respond by opening the windows of heaven, pouring out blessings so rich that believers will not have room to store them all" (Jenkins 2010, 45). In orthodox forms of Christianity, spiritual transformation "is mandatory for the born-again individuals" (Obadare 2016, 1). The Prosperity Gospel promises that "material prosperity" is "the necessary aftermath" of that spiritual transformation (Obadare 2016, 1). Magezi and Manzanga (2016, 4) note that "it is difficult to distinguish between the praxis of Prosperity Gospel preachers who promote this *seed faith principle* and magicians."

According to Gifford, "prosperity gospel preachers have moved beyond traditional Pentecostal practices of speaking in tongues, prophesying, and healing to the belief that God will provide money, cars, houses, and even spouses in response to the believer's faith—if not immediately, then soon" (quoted in Ehioghae and Olanrewaju 2015, 69). In short, the prosperity message,

> is taken to include prosperity in economic and material terms. It also involves prosperity in body, soul and spirit, which has to do with issues such as healing ability, peace of mind, victory over Satan, blessed children, protection and deliverance. According to the gospel, God has met all the needs of human beings in the suffering and death of Christ, and every Christian should now share the victory of Christ over sin, sickness and poverty. (Mbe 2004, 47)

Thus, the major motif of the Prosperity Gospel is success and (financial) victory. Duncan Williams is an influential Pentecostal church leader in Ghana. One of his books is entitled, *You are Destined to Succeed!* Gifford (1994, 243) lists some of its thematic teachings: "God never planned for (us) or any of mankind to have sickness, fear, inferiority, defeat, or failure.... The Word of God is a tree of life that will produce riches, honor, promotion and joy." Quoting American health and wealth televangelist Casey Treat,

4 By "deification," Magezi and Manzanga are not referring to the patristic (and biblical) teaching of θέωσις (theosis), but rather to deification in the worst of possible senses, the exaltation of humans which results in their being equated with God. And yet this over-identification of believers with God obviously touches something deep within African cultures. I propose that a re-exploration of the patristic development of theosis (particularly in the Greek and Syriac traditions) within the context of African cultures could prove fruitful for African Christianities while potentially avoiding the pitfalls and excesses of the Prosperity Gospel which so concern writers like Magezi and Manzanga.

Williams equates the image of God in which we were created with success: "God is the most successful Being in the universe. He's the Only One who's never had to cut back, lay people off, take out a loan or a lease, and has never rented anything. God is successful" (quoted in Gifford 1994, 243).

In Prosperity churches in Ghana, members sing songs like: "The Lord can make your way prosperous"; "Jesus is the Winner Man"; and even simply "I'm a winner" (Gifford 1994, 263). As with much of African Pentecostalism, the theme of Winners' Chapel (aka Living Faith Church Worldwide) is "victorious living" (Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011, 13, 20–21)[5] and "the stress is all on success," with sermon titles like "Prosperity is my Identity" and "Prosperity is my heritage" (Gifford 2004, 57). It is not unusual to hear Bill Gates—a billionaire entrepreneur who epitomizes success—mentioned twice in a sermon and Jesus mentioned not at all as the focus of many growing Pentecostal congregations is material success and, as a result, a believer's lack of success indicates that something must be wrong (20).

4. Critiques of the Prosperity Gospel

The Prosperity Gospel is not without its flaws nor its critics. Prosperity theology chooses proof-texts so selectively that it often engages in eisegesis more frequently than exegesis. It has little if any room for a theology of suffering and has nothing to say to those who are undergoing persecution or facing martyrdom. Ehioghae and Olanrewaju (2015, 74; cf. Zulu 2014, 27) note that prosperity theology "emasculates the formation of Christian character. A serious implication of prosperity gospel is that it leaves no room for brokenness and suffering." When confronted by the reality of persecution and martyrdom from the New Testament period up until today, proponents of the Prosperity Gospel have nothing to say. It is telling that the Prosperity Gospel is not growing in areas like Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia where Christians have been subjected to severe persecution. In such areas, African believers have developed theologies that are strikingly different from the Prosperity Theology, such as the Dinka Theology of the Cross (e.g., Nikkel 1995, 160–185).

Precisely because the Prosperity Gospel has no room for a theology of either poverty or of suffering, Prosperity Theology's eisegesis can suggest that the material impoverishment or sickness of believers is proof of their lack of faith, thereby placing the burden of responsibility for suffering on the sufferers. In Zimbabwean Pentecostalism, the doctrine of the Spirit of Poverty explicitly correlates a believer's poverty or wealth with her spiritual condition (Maxwell 1998, 357). If a believer is poor, it has nothing to do with structural injustice but can only be due to the demonic influences of his ancestral traditions and inherited spiritual bondage (358). As Ehioghae and Olanrewaju (2015, 73–74) explain,

> [the] prosperity gospel makes the poor to unnecessarily bear the weight of guilt. Though there is no inherent virtue in being poor it is equally wrong to regard poverty as a reflection of one's spiritual status. There is a serious implication when God's blessings are reduced to material gain: those who are not rich are either guilty of sin or unbelief. In other words, if God's will is for everyone to be healthy and wealthy, then anyone who falls sick or remains poor is suffering from his own unbelief or disobedience. This places a terrible burden on the poor for it is unfair and unbiblical. It makes them victims of their unsavory circumstances.

5 Winner's Chapel is based in Nigeria under the leadership of founder David Oyedepo.

Instead of a message of hope, this places the weight of blame on those who are poor or sick or oppressed for their poverty or lack of health or oppression.

The Prosperity Gospel's "seed of faith" teaching can further be characterized as a "God is my ATM" theology. While blessing can certainly be found within giving, the transactional giving taught by the Prosperity Gospel serves to undermine the sovereignty and power of God (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013, 100). Moreover, in such transactional forms of giving, disciples of the Prosperity Gospel can treat God as a commercial partner who is contractually obligated to meet the demands "of those who have fulfilled their side of a bargain" through the payment of tithes and by giving bigger offerings (99). Prosperity Gospel church leaders have often (with reason!) been accused of lining their pockets at the expense of poor church members who remain poor—including grassroots-level pastors and evangelists (Maxwell 1998, 367).

In addition to being ill-equipped to deal with suffering and persecution, the Prosperity Gospel tends to neglect both the cross and also the vocation of Christians to provide a prophetic voice (Nwankwo 2001, 2). Concernedly, it often lacks any emphasis on "deliverance from sin" (Folarin 2007, 74). The Prosperity Gospel has been criticized for these reasons from within African Pentecostalism. In West Africa, "Bishop Joseph Ojo, national secretary of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria and pastor of Calvary Kingdom Church, says certain pastors have 'invaded the pulpit but do not have the calling. Their god is their belly'" (Maxwell and Phiri 2007, 28). Ojo thinks that preaching prosperity is as distorted as preaching poverty. In East Africa, "David Oginde, senior pastor of the 10,000-member Nairobi Pentecostal Church, believes he could triple his membership by promising wealth. 'But if that is all I am teaching, then I have lost the message,' he says. 'The kingdom of God is built on the Cross, not on bread and butter'" (28).

The focus of the Prosperity Gospel yields a human-centered religion in which faith is but a tool to manipulate God into giving blessings (Nwankwo 2001, 2) and has much in common with the cargo cults of Melanesia (5). Popular preachers like Joel Osteen—an American who is widely read with approval in Africa—seem utterly ignorant of biblical doctrine and seem to have a soteriology that is limited to "name it and claim it." As a result, many proponents of the Prosperity Gospel run their congregations like a pyramid scheme, fleecing their flock. Rather than biblical exegesis, these preachers make their own experiences of success the focus and heart of their preaching (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005, 16). For this reason, the Prosperity Gospel has been fairly criticized for serving to enrich its preachers from the sacrificial giving of members (Togarasei 2011, 349). In an even harsher indictment, "Asonzeh Ukah identifies an instrumental usage of prosperity theology by founders of megachurches in order to 'transform them into economic, financial and entrepreneurial empires which are completely controlled by their families.' What he basically describes is a Pentecostal kleptocracy" (Heuser 2016, 5).[6]

According to Gifford, the advocation of the Prosperity Gospel persuades its adherents to benefit from current economic systems instead of prophetically evaluating them and calling for remedies to social ills (see Maxwell 1998, 351). This is precisely because it often "promotes materialism, sometimes of the kind that Jesus attacks in the Gospels," does not address difficult contextual realities, and can fail "to provide pastoral care" for the those who are struggling economically (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013, 107). In addition to the inability of the Prosperity Gospel to provide a cogent theology of either poverty or suffering, it often "blinds its proponents to

6 Heuser cites Asonzeh Ukah (2013).

the realities of sin as their desire for health-and-wealth prosperity becomes a consuming focus" (Kunhiyop 2019, 107).

Asamoah-Gyadu (2013, 102) allows that the "general tenor of the teaching of the New Testament is that we give to God faithfully and trust him for his grace in life, knowing that if we sow sparingly, we reap sparingly and if we sow bountifully, we reap bountifully." But he continues to emphasize—against certain Prosperity Gospel proponents—that this "is not a magical formula, because God's hand cannot be twisted in our favor; to think otherwise is to challenge God's sovereignty. The promises of God come true by his grace and we can only trust him to fulfill these promises through his own indescribable gift, Jesus Christ who is Lord and Savior."

So, is the "Prosperity Gospel" a heresy? With all of these problems, some Christians are convinced that the Prosperity Gospel must indeed be the arch-heresy of our day. In the critique above, it is clear that some prosperity preaching is full of heretical elements. But what is a heresy? It is not simply a false teaching, but it is a false teaching which is based upon a kernel of truth. That kernel is nurtured until it grows out of proportion with other balancing truths.[7] I have already briefly touched on the truths upon which the Prosperity Gospel is based. The flaws I have mentioned come primarily from the lack of balance. No doubt some proponents of the Health and Wealth Gospel are indeed either heretics or wolves in sheep's clothing, though this is certainly not true of all. But the polemical approach of asking "in what ways is this wrong?" is not the most helpful.

7 E.g., Arianism took the truth of the full humanity of Jesus and emphasized it to the exclusion of his divinity.

5. The Prosperity Gospel as Inculturation, or "How is God at Work?"

A more beneficial approach begins with two questions: 1) What cultural questions or problems does this theology or movement try to answer? 2) What is God doing through this movement? So, what *is* God doing through the Prosperity Gospel? In the African context, it speaks into our holistic African worldview, allows believers an opportunity to escape from the culture of envy,[8] and thereby opens a door to hope.

The Prosperity Gospel thrives in our holistic African worldview which "can be defined as a harmonious interaction between the physical and spiritual world…between the visible and invisible worlds" (Anyanwu 2004, 38–39). Africans recognize that "the majority of Africans live in a cosmos that is spiritually charged: a cosmos in which the physical and the spiritual intersect" (Ngong 2009, 2). In this milieu, to become a Christian within the context of the Prosperity Gospel assumes that the believer will obtain "power to overcome those forces that diminish life" resulting in a realized eschatology in which material well-being in the here and now is the pinnacle of salvation (13–14). In that context, the Prosperity Gospel acknowledges the interplay between the spiritual and the material, thereby avoiding dualistic heresies (e.g., Gnosticisms, Manichaeism, the false dichotomy between the sacred and the secular) and also correcting the excesses of European Enlightenment thinking.

8 I owe this insight to Professor Mark Shaw, private comments, Nairobi Evangelical School of Evangelism, September 2016. See also the Lausanne Theology Working Group Statement on the Prosperity Gospel (2010), which notes "We recognize that Prosperity Teaching flourishes in contexts of terrible poverty; and that for many people it presents their only hope, in the face of constant frustration, the failure of politicians and NGOs, etc., for a better future, or even for a more bearable present." Quoted in Magezi and Manzanga (2016, 5).

Ngong (2009, 1) notes that in an act of inculturation, "African Christianity in general, and this neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in particular, have uncritically appropriated the salvific discourse of African Traditional Religions." In the worldview common to African traditional religions, realities in the material and spiritual worlds are interconnected and activities in one influences events in the other (Soothill 2007, 10). African traditional religion values healing and prosperity and communication with the supernatural; in this context, prosperity preachers emphasize dreams in a way that resonates with African culture (Maxwell and Phiri 2007, 28). Maxwell (1998, 359–370) observes that the Prosperity form of Pentecostalism answers several questions that Zimbabwean culture is asking: it enables "ordinary Zimbabweans to face painful social and economic transitions"; it provides them "a framework with which to respond to the pressures of modernisation"; for many "it offers guidelines for material success" and hope for a better future and "a chance to increase their livelihoods"; for those on the edge of poverty, the "emphasis on renewing the family" and protection from substance abuse and sexual promiscuity keeps them from slipping into destitution. Thus, the Prosperity Gospel is able to speak into African cultures, offering answers to the questions which are being asked in this context.

While "traditional African values frown upon laziness" (Boaheng 2020, loc. 942), many Africans are trapped within a culture of envy that functions as a systemic oppression, preventing individuals from attempting to improve their lot. Why should you be better than anyone else? Who do you think you are? What are you, the *bwana kubwa*?[9] But the Prosperity Gospel allows believers to attribute their improving prosperity to God's blessing which cannot be gainsaid. It thereby allows for the opportunity to experience economic advancement. By replacing traditional kinship and community ties with their material obligations with those of just the nuclear family and the extended family of Church, believers can be freed from community and familial financial demands (or even extortions), which enables individuals to achieve economic progress (354). The idea of moving from poverty—whether spiritual or material—to abundance and of being liberated from various forms of oppression—whether economic, social, or political—has given rise to theologies of empowerment. These theologies of empowerment are an essential element of African Pentecostal theology because the gospel proclaims the possibility of restoration. Understood holistically, this includes both the physical and spiritual realms. Thus, as a believer experiences transformation, he or she experiences increasing *shalom* and abundance in both spiritual and in physical terms (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007, 354–355). So, the Prosperity Gospel is founded, at least in part, on biblical orthodoxy. Through a theology of empowerment, the Prosperity Gospel provides a way "to overcome the existential pathos of impotence and pessimism" (Nwankwo 2001, 5).

These are a number of fruitful ways in which the Prosperity Gospel can speak into African cultures. Other cultural aspects of the Prosperity Gospel in Africa are less healthy. Manipulation of the object of worship—when God is treated like an ATM which is obligated to dispense cash whenever the right conditions are met—has much similarity with African Traditional Religions, when "the ancestors are manipulated by speaking the right words, performing the right rituals and acting appropriately" (Magezi and Manzanga 2016, 5). It is easy for believers to unduly exalt prosperity-peddling pastors as African "cultural history tells them to put stock in 'Big Men'" (Maxwell and Phiri 2007, 27).

9 KiSwahili for "big man" or "big boss."

6. Productivity Gospel

Within the Prosperity Gospel there have been at least two major streams. The first is a primarily orthodox theology which needs some correction or rebalancing in places. The second is heretical and deceitful practice; this latter has rightly been the subject of much critique. But a third stream has developed, the Productivity Gospel. At the risk of oversimplification, this can be described as the empowerment theology of the Prosperity Gospel combined with personal accountability and the Protestant work ethic. It has inherited Martin Luther's understanding of vocation, the sanctity of work. Work hard and be rewarded.[10] This expected and nurtured experience has been called "redemptive uplift" (Maxwell 1998, 354). Whereas the Protestant work ethic is built on the "belief that work honors God," the Prosperity Gospel is built on the "belief that God promises prosperity to the faithful" (Neubert et al. 2014, 141). The Productivity Gospel combines these two themes and builds on the reality that frequently there is a "success that comes with the stability of a Christian life" which can potentially yield relative prosperity through ordinary sociological processes (Gitau 2018, 149).

While it is generally recognized that "prosperity theology contributes positively to the socioeconomic well-being of some of its followers and countries in general" (Boaheng 2020, loc. 2569), one of its obvious faults is that it "has the tendency of impoverishing some of its adherents, despite the economic progress it offers to others" (loc. 2572). Preachers of the Productivity Gospel, however, have shown a greater concern for their congregants. Habarurema (2017, 260) lists three positive contributions of the Prosperity Gospel: "a genuine quest for the fullness of life promised by the Scriptures," an "audacity to address real-life problems [and the] existential needs of people by drawing upon their traditions and biblical resources" (263), and "a reverential attitude to the Bible as God's Word" (266). These first two contributions serve to gain a hearing for the gospel. Many economically challenged Africans have found that "being a member of a church offers life-saving access to social networks of mutual aid and support, which teach essential survival skills [while] peer pressure helps believers avoid the snares of substance abuse"—this is perhaps especially true for rural Africans who have moved to urban settings (Jenkins 2010, 45). According to my research, the offering of practical solutions to existential needs is fully realized in the context of the Productivity Gospel rather than by the flashy panhandlers of prosperity who have grown fat on their flock.

For the Productivity Gospel, success is not achieved simply by following laws nor by tithing legalistically, but through "self-confidence, pride, determination, motivation, discipline, application, courage—and by skills and techniques" that the pastors take care to impart (Gifford 1994, 246). It has been observed that "the prosperity gospel in an African context" offers "a cogent formula for economic development" (Obadare 2016, 2). Moreover, "it is apparent that the prosperity gospels also include teachings on spiritual prosperity, the prosperity of the individual so that he or she becomes a blessing to others, and the prosperity of the church in order to engage in the business of the kingdom" (Golo 2013, 375). These observations, however, upon closer examination are more aptly applied specifically to the Productivity Gospel.

While I examined Ojo and Oginde's criticisms of the Prosperity Gospel above, they both recognize that many prosperity teachers do good—they "inspire members to aim high, work hard, and avoid vices"—and prosperity

10 Although they use different terminology, also see Miller and Yamamori (2007), which applies Max Weber's "protestant work ethic" theses to this form of the Prosperity Gospel. See also Drønen (2012).

ministries engage in humanitarian work such as building schools and colleges, supplying food and medicine to the poor, and supporting HIV/AIDS prevention programs" (Maxwell and Phiri 2007, 28). The doctrines of a balanced and responsible Prosperity Gospel free of abuses, which I distinguish as the Productivity Gospel (though I retain the usage of others in the following quotations), "have engendered social mobility for some" and provides for others "a code of conduct which guards them from falling into poverty and destitution. For all they provide a pattern for coming to terms with, and benefitting from, modernities' dominant values and institutions" (Maxwell 1998, 351). The improved morality of Pentecostal men makes them into better providers and protectors. Instead of spending their money on addictive substances and on other women, they now use those funds "for purchase of consumer goods, education, and savings" (353). Because the believers dress sharply, are hardworking and trustworthy, they have more and better opportunities for employment. In addition to this, within the Pentecostal churches, believers "also benefit from the material support of the church community" (354). Much like the church of the first three centuries, "pentecostals…care for the sick, orphans and widows, and often provide housing in an urban environment where it is scarce and expensive" (355). In these ways, "the prosperity gospel's holistic approach to life can contribute to poverty alleviation" (Togarasei 2011, 349) as well as "self-reliance, to self-worth, to dignity and to motivation to succeed" (Zulu 2014, 29). This is especially true because "among many Africans, prosperity means having food on the table and affording the basic life needs" (Togarasei 2014, 119). The practice of the Productivity Gospel thus does not bring fabulous riches to a few, but rather works to bring about greater equity (Paul's word in 2 Cor 8:14 is ἰσότης) among believers.

By leveraging the Pentecostal prosperity "teaching that God wants his children to live successful lives," the Productivity Gospel "gives many Africans a positive mindset that they can make it in business through God, rather than by waiting for a Western donor to extend a helping hand" (Togarasei 2014, 123). Mensa Otabil, the Senior Pastor of the International Central Gospel Church in Accra, Ghana, is happy to be called a "prosperity preacher," but Gifford suggests that label is misleading. Instead, Otabil's sermons tell believers not to ask God for money or other material possessions—"God will not give you money," he says—but to ask God for wisdom. "Your God won't give you wealth," Otabil preaches, "he gave you *power to create wealth*" (Gifford 2004, 120). In addition to his sermons, Otabil explicitly develops a practical emphasis on empowerment for productivity within his prosperity theology in his *Four Laws of Productivity: God's Foundation for Living* (Habarurema 2017, 290–291; Anim 2021, 90, 214).[11] His productivity teaching promotes "empowerment of believers" perhaps precisely due to its insistence upon "the ethics of responsibility" (Habarurema 2017, 291). Togarasei (2014, 122) notes that "entrepreneurship teachings"—a crucial element of what I refer to as the Productivity Gospel—"have led a sizeable number of Pentecostals to start their own businesses, thus contributing to poverty alleviation through employment creation." The Productivity Gospel can thus teach "an entrepreneurial spirit" by which "Pentecostalism helps believers to discover the operative for wealth creation and financial intelligence" (121). Similarly, Zulu (2014, 27–28) notes that "a holistic view of prosperity in the Zambian context could help people in the extreme poverty levels to start to view themselves positively and work towards liberating themselves from…demeaning situations."

If you are rewarded, Productivity Gospel pastors preach, use your reward to make opportunities for others. Are you a businessperson? Grow

11 There are two editions of this book, the first published by Vincom in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1991 and the second published by Pneuma Life Publishing in Lanham, Maryland in 2002.

your business not just for self-enrichment but so that you can hire more employees: we are blessed to be a blessing. In congregations of Winners' Chapel in Nairobi, for example, congregants are asked, "If you were unemployed, have you gotten a job? If you were an employee, have you become an employer? If you were an employer, have you increased the number of your employees?"[12] This is clearly no mere matter of selfishness and greed for gain but a desire to address systemic socio-economic injustice and to bring blessing to others. Indeed, in all of their congregations across Africa, "Winners' Chapel strongly encourages and fosters entrepreneurship" (Gifford and Nogueira-Godsey 2011, 20). This type of exhortation is common within many Pentecostal congregations in Africa (for Kenya and Ghana specifically, see Mugambi 2020).

There are two further things to note. The first is that this is arguably done in obedience to Deuteronomy 15:11, "Of course, there will never cease to be poor people in the country, and that is why I am giving you this command: Always be open handed with your brother, and with anyone in your country who is in need and poor" (NJB). Secondly, this is evidence of the accountability which is necessary to Christian discipleship. Togarasei (2011, 349–350) has noted "five ways by which the gospel contributes to poverty alleviation: encouraging entrepreneurship, employment creation, encouraging members to be generous, giving a positive mindset and encouraging a holistic approach to life." Proponents of the Productivity Gospel have turned away from the greed all too often exhibited by prosperity preachers, and actively adopted each of these five practices. The culture of congregations which teach the Productivity Gospel seems similar to the *koinonia* described in Acts—"a total sharing that includes the material as well as the spiritual" (González 2002, 83).

Typical prosperity teaching within African Pentecostalism has "generated…more broadly an incredibly high sense and spirit of generosity, unparalleled in the history of the church in Africa" as the result of "a call to stewardship, which means Christians must have a holistic sense of giving" generously (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013, 94). Thus, the Productivity Gospel also offers a foundation upon which to build what Habarurema (2017, 284) refers to as "a theology of stewardship and giving" in African contexts. Whereas the Prosperity Gospel can operate as an attempted "manipulation of a rather mechanical God" (Kroesbergen 2014b, 82), the Productivity Gospel can more easily make room for expressions of gratitude through generosity. While many are convinced that "one's wealth increases by hoarding one's possessions," Habarurema (2017, 287) explains that prosperity preachers like Matthew Ashimolowo[13] teach that actually "blessings come by releasing what one possesses."

7. Conclusion

It is clear that "a Jesus who is narrowly concerned about the saving of the soul for the future but neglects the holistic issues of life, including incumbent wellbeing, is not welcome in Africa" (Banda 2014, 56). Both the Prosperity Gospel and the Productivity Gospel address the holistic concerns which are an intimate part of African worldviews. Evidence abounds that the "health and wealth" emphases of the Prosperity Gospel can lead to heresy and corruption. But some of its core tenets are—even though acknowledgement

12 According to Dr. Kyama Mugambi, Assistant Director of the Centre for World Christianity at Africa International University in Nairobi and Editor of Africa Theological Network Press, private conversation. For a similar example to this, see Gifford (2007, 20).

13 Ashimolowo is a Nigerian serving as senior pastor of Kingsway International Christian Centre, a megachurch in London.

of this fact may make some uncomfortable—biblical. When the Prosperity Gospel is used to manipulate and to support the self-aggrandizement and material enrichment of so-called pastors who are peddlers of their own personality cults rather than purveyors of the Good News about Jesus, this should be firmly rebuked and repudiated as heretical and anti-Christian. But, on the other hand, the prosperity churches—and especially those who teach and practice the Productivity Gospel—have captured a biblical emphasis that speaks into the local cultures of Africa and provides a message of hope to the people.

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The Influence of Forgiveness on Radicalization into Violent Extremism among the Youth in Eastleigh Area, Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

Radicalization continues to pose a serious threat to security in the contemporary world. Youth are at risk of radicalization and recruitment to militant groupings. Therefore, this study was carried out to investigate whether forgiveness can be used as an intervention to curb radicalization of youth into violent extremism. The study was guided by two theories: Relative Deprivation and Rational Choice Theories. Mixed method sequential explanatory design was adopted in the study. The target population was 460 people, aged 19–35 years, and 10 key informants. Purposive sampling was used to select St. Theresa's Catholic Church and Riyadha Mosque. Census sampling was used to select 10 key informants. A sample size of 212 participants was used. Data was collected using Heartland Forgiveness and Extremism Scales. Data was analyzed using correlation analysis. The study found a weak, negative, and insignificant correlation. The study recommended close evaluation and monitoring of the teachings of certain institutions.

https://www.sats.ac.za/conspectus/
This article: **https://www.sats.ac.za/influence-forgiveness-radicalization-kenya**
https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.7

1. Introduction

An inspiring area of research that made an appearance in the 1990s is the empirical investigation of forgiveness as an intervention in a variety of circumstances. Although the concept of forgiving is prehistoric, it has not been consistently investigated until relatively recently. It is important to radicalization and violence because of its personal and interpersonal nature. Forgiveness issues are relevant to the contexts of interpersonal relationships and are essential to such constructs as anger, resentment, and hostility which are likely to lead to violence.

Conspectus

Keywords
radicalization, extremism, forgiveness, violence

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Bible-based. Christ-centred. Spirit-led.

Koehler (2019, 23–27) defines radicalization as an inactivated hostility and violent extremism as a manifestation of resentment and violence. This implies that one cannot readily see radicalization except through the likelihood of violence that may erupt as a result; violent extremism becomes its manifestation.

Radicalization is in this way taken to be violence which is present; this could easily manifest as extremism and terrorism. This may be the case with young people when exposed to overt information from social or mainstream media that could easily confuse them, even into radicalization to violence. Additionally, Devine (2016, 612) defined radicalization as a procedure through which a person or group of persons get to gradually embrace extreme governmental, social, or belief ideals and urges that weaken or sabotage current ideas and declarations of freedom to choose. Radical behavior in itself is not necessarily a bad thing. Non-violent radical behavior, particularly if undertaken solely in the political, economic, cultural, or even spiritual aspect, can help to promote constructive change. Violent extremism comes into play when radical behavior starts making use of non-selective violence as the means of expression.

Radicalization has been found to be common among the youth (International Institute for Strategic Studies 2015, 3–7). Studies show that youths are getting radicalized because the majority of them are jobless, resentful, idle, and they become potentially vulnerable when faced with a variety of social problems (Friberg and Martinsson 2017, 83–90). Similarly, Moghaddam (2005, 4–17) links youth with radicalization due to the perception of unfairness and injustice. Moghaddam further reported that when persons feel that their group does not have the same advantage as others, they build resentment which could easily translate to radicalization and violent extremism. Krueger and Malečková. (2003, 1–8) observe that absolutistic demands of fairness and the rigid "us" versus "them" leads to displaced aggression. This is supported by the Integrated Theory (see Stephan and Stephan 2000). This theory postulates that members who share interests and identity expect that those who do not belong to this group will behave in ways that are harmful to them. This implies that a group of radicalized members expects their perceived opponents to undergo an extremely harsh treatment in order to bring out a strong element of sadism in them. Ellis (2003, 4–10) reports that radicalization makes perpetrators feel worthless and powerless. This makes them punish others who are perceived as powerful, in order for them to gain a sense of justice and an increased self-esteem. It is, therefore, evident that radicalization is perpetuated by unresolved resentment and feelings of isolation and stigmatization.

Radicalization activities and violent extremism have been linked to terrorist attacks. As reported by the National Congress for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START 2017, 3–5), statistics show that in 2017, 10 900 terrorist attacks globally killed 26 400 people, if not more. Specifically, after the September 11th attack in 2001, there has been an escalation of similar attacks from 33 in 2002 to 65 in 2017 (START 2018, 3–6). It is noticeable that the number and lethality are escalating at a disturbing rate both in the United States and elsewhere.

2. The Local Situation

In Eastern Africa, just like the rest of the world, both radicalization and violent extremism have been witnessed. For instance, Botha (2014) found that 57% of the youth of Somali origin in Eastleigh, Nairobi joined the al-Shabaab warring group. Similarly, a study by Muhsin (2012) found that five of the fifteen youths interviewed admitted that they had joined al-Shaabab. This shows youths continue to be radicalized to join extremist groups. In Eastern Africa, it is apparent that this can be concluded from diverse examples extending from attacks on the Tanzanian US Embassy

and Kenyan businesses run in Uganda, the attack on Nairobi's Westgate Mall, the murders of students at Garissa University in Kenya, and most markedly, in the ongoing obvious antagonism in Somalia.

Kenya is no exception, and is similar to the rest of the world, as the nation continues to experience rising levels of radicalization and violence. Radicalization has manifested in Kenya in the recent past in terms of the emergence of separatist groups demanding the secession of some of the regions in Kenya, showing xenophobic tendencies, religious and political intolerance, and violent extremism, among others. According to Aronson (2012), radicalization of youths in Kenya can be attributed to persecution of minority groups, seen in extrajudicial killings by the state and military campaigns in suppressing dissent among affected people. Secondly, as reported by the Kenya media, there are several instances of young men embracing warring groups. The young men are enticed by the warring group purely by wealth, promises of food, shelter, and women to marry if they follow through in fighting for them (Mukinda 2016, 1–5). The newly recruited may not exactly agree with the claims of these warring groups, but the promises made are sufficient to persuade them that being on the warring side offers more opportunities than remaining in deprivation and accepting their current status. In addition, Kenya, being home to a large number of international organizations associated with Western countries, has been targeted by militant groups like Al-Shabaab which are targeting youths to join them and help in accomplishing their missions.

3. Efforts Put in Place

Due to this problem of radicalization of the youth into violent extremism, different global organizations such as the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism recognize the significance of averting violence and radicalization at the origin, and have persuaded various sectors of society to be part of this process (European Parliament COM 2013). Further, the European parliament declared that EU national policies tend to prevent radicalization and build *trust within and among the communities, advancing more understanding of each other's awareness and challenges*, involving all levels of society.

Secondly, while trying to address the problem of radicalization in Kenya, perceived reactions by security forces have been seen, especially following a terrorist attack. These responses have at times ended in tribal and racial reporting or particular categorizing of Somali young people. For example, at the time of the "Operation Usalama (peace) Watch" in April 2014, 4 005 Somali-resembling persons were apprehended in a move of mass actions whose intention was to remove al-Shabaab at the source. As reported by Chitembwe (2014), a total of 3 010 of them were freed after establishing they were Kenyan citizens without criminal information while the ones believed to be in the country illegally were deported. Such actions seem to be highly unproductive. They result in embarrassment, elicit anger and mistrust of the administration, and reinforce feelings of rejection, leaving the youth exposed to being hired as they search for an exit from their desperation and a sense of attachment to wherever else. Equalizing rights and justice therefore remains a major challenge, especially when common expectations of security personnel become intensified.

Despite all the efforts to counter radicalization among the youths, more are still being radicalized as predicted by the current study. Some studies have revealed that among the reasons why radicalization has continued to thrive among the youth is that radicalization has a lot to do with perpetrators' bottled-up emotions such as anger, resentment, and failure to forgive themselves and others.

4. The Role of Forgiveness

The current study examined alternative ways of addressing the rising tide of radicalization of the youth in Kenya. One of the ways examined was how forgiveness could be used as an intrinsic approach to dissuade the youth from being radicalized. Studies have indicated that forgiveness could be used to alleviate many psychological and emotional problems that face humanity. Forgiveness as we know it today first began as a religious ritual that people embraced when in need of forgiveness from their creator. In actual fact, it was not until the 1930s that some minor interest was shown in forgiveness as a construct in psychology. The construct of forgiveness was accorded serious and sustained recognition in empirical research in the 1980s (McCullough 2000).

Research has demonstrated that forgiveness has positive outcomes on measures of well-being. Accordingly, experiencing gratitude has been associated with extraordinary levels of mental contentment amongst young people (Wood, Froh, and Geraghty 2010, 50). A recent systematic assessment, conducted in the US, reports that forgiveness predicts the presence of future subjective well-being; it similarly activates mental health (Dickens 2017, 75). A study done in Brazil by Cunha (2019, 1–8), advances that forgiveness has the ability to enhance positive feelings and emotions, an individual's mental and emotional evaluation of self, and a favorable attitude towards life, hence lessening negativity and depressive indications. Therefore, it is against this background that this study was carried out to investigate whether forgiveness can be used as an intervention to curb the radicalization of youth into violent extremism in Kenya.

5. Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design. Correlation is the ability to sort out unrelated variables and form a link with regards to a particular subject, in this case, forgiveness and radicalization. The human mind, a gift to humanity from God, is an invaluable tool that allows one to relate forgiveness and radicalization. This ability is the one that comes into play when we discuss correlational research. The aim of correlational research is to pick out variables that have some sort of association to the extent that a change in one creates some change in the other one. The correlational approach utilized in this study measured the relationship of forgiveness with radicalization and drew conclusions, depending on results.

The study was carried out in three phases. Phase one involved interaction with the selected sample of young men and women, aged between 19 and 35 years. This elicited incidental information that could not be captured by the research instruments. This progressed to collecting quantitative data by administering the forgiveness and radicalization scales to the selected sample (referred to as the initial group) as a pretest. The pretest was the baseline measure for a treatment to be administered later to the experimental group; the difference between baseline and post-test phases was the effect of the treatment. The data was then analyzed.

In phase two, the group was divided into experimental and control groups, where the participants were assigned randomly. The experimental group was psycho-educated on forgiveness as a treatment for a period of two months once every week for a period of two hours. The individual members in the experimental group were encouraged to interact for one month based on the forgiveness awareness. They were encouraged to learn how to forgive themselves, others, and situations that hurt them and were out of their control. This was the treatment that distinguished the experimental from the control group. The control group was released and was called again after two months.

In phase three, after the two groups were reassembled, both experimental and control groups were given the forgiveness and

radicalization scales to fill in. Thereafter, correlation analysis was run on the two groups, and the initial group, in order to find out whether the forgiveness taught had had any effect on radicalization. The initial group referred to here is the group before splitting it into the experimental and control group. Similarly, the two (experimental and control) groups were put into four focus-group discussions where open-ended questions were provided in an effort to collect qualitative data. In addition, the experimental group was subjected to extremism scale screening to identify and capture radicalization to violence. By extreme case sampling the participants with high scores in radicalization were selected for further interviews and focus group discussions which provided qualitative data. This ended the steps of the research method in the field.

6. The Locale of the Study

This investigation was executed in Eastleigh area of Nairobi County, Kamukunji sub-county. This location has a large Somali Muslim population, bringing in an aspect of potential radicalization. The well-known history of terrorist attacks in Kenya by a variety of militant groups created a seedbed of fear and suspicion of Muslims as people and Islam as a religion. It was a given that most terrorists arrested were of Islamic origin. It is, however, untenable to argue that all Muslims are terrorists, hence the need to include Muslims in this study to debunk this myth.

The presence of a large number of radicalized youths who have previously attracted confrontation with government agencies in the area over time makes Eastleigh a suitable location for this study as well. Eastleigh is nicknamed "Little Mogadishu," after the unruly capital of Somalia from where many Somalis had fled to settle in Kenya for a peaceful business life. However, many attacks taken to be the responsibility of Islamic militants had invited the wrath of the Kenyan police, leading to crackdowns to flush out hard-core agitators from the area (Momanyi 2015, 25).

This study targeted 450 young adults (19–35 years) in one mosque and one Catholic Church found in Eastleigh area of Kamukunji sub-county, and 10 key informants. Preference was given to this mosque since the mosque was once raided by Kenyan government forces in the process of searching for violent extremists in 2015. Similarly, the church was chosen because a grenade had exploded outside of the building and it was thus considered a target for terror attacks.

Yamane's (1967) sampling formula was used to determine the sample size for the youth as shown below:

$$\mathbf{n} = \frac{\mathbf{N}}{\mathbf{(1+Ne2)}}$$

Where: n = minimum sample size

N = population

E = precision set at 95% (5% = 0.05)

Hence, n = 450/ 1+ (450 x 0.0025)

n = 211.7

Therefore, the sample size for the study was 212 respondents

7. Data Collection Research Instruments

One of the instruments used in collecting data was the Heartland Forgiveness Scale. This is an 18-item, standardized questionnaire advanced by Thompson et al. (2005, 150). Every item was measured on a seven-point scale that extends from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Respondents were requested to indicate the option which fitted appropriately for them.

During scoring, "Forgiveness" was classified in three subscales: forgiveness of self, of others, and of situations. The scores were summarized

with the lowest possible score being 18 and the highest possible score being 126. The findings were interpreted to mean that higher scores implied a higher-level tendency for forgiveness.

The scores for each subscale were summarized and the average computed. The least possible mean was 10 while the highest possible mean was 42. The results were interpreted that, if a respondent scored a mean of above 20, it meant that their level of forgiveness was above average. On the other hand, if a respondent scored a mean of below 20, it would be interpreted to mean that their level of forgiveness was below average.

The second part of the instrument used was the Extremism Scale. This is a 21-item, standardized questionnaire developed by Ozer and Preben (2018, 14). Every item was measured on a 7-point Likert Scale, starting from "strongly disagree" which was coded 1 to "strongly agree" which was coded 7. The respondents were requested take a position on declarations of the statements given concerning existence, community, and the individual's different perspectives to them, varying from 1 to 7. Scoring was done by obtaining the sum of all the items, with possible total scores varying from 21 to 147. The findings were interpreted to indicate that higher scores suggested higher degrees of radicalization.

To measure the different levels of radicalization to extremism, the total scores (0–147) on the extremism scale were transformed into four categories and analyzed. Those who scored 0–35 were classified as normal levels of extremism, 36–70 were classified as mild extremism, 71–106 were classified as moderate extremism, and those who scored 107–147 were classified as being severe extremists. Youth men and women participants and the key informants were put into four focus group discussions. This is a qualitative approach and a data collecting technique, using interview guides which helped gain an in-depth understanding of forgiveness and radicalization.

8. Results

8.1 Correlation between Forgiveness on Radicalization of the Youth into Violent Extremism (Experimental Group)

The study was seeking to establish the Influence of Forgiveness on Radicalization of the Youth into Violent Extremism among respondents trained on forgiveness. Pearson correlation analysis was used to establish this relationship and findings presented in Table 1.

8.1.1 Table 1: Influence of Forgiveness on Radicalization of the Youth into Violent Extremism (Experimental Group).

		Extremism	Self-Forgiveness	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situations
Extremism	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	25			
Self-Forgiveness	Pearson Correlation	-.163	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.437			
	N	25	26		

		Extremism	Self-Forgiveness	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situations
Forgiveness of Others	Pearson Correlation	-.141	.597**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.500	.001		
	N	25	26	26	
Forgiveness of Situations	Pearson Correlation	-.411*	.636**	.498**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.000	.010	
	N	26	26	26	26

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The study findings in Table 1 indicate that there was weak, negative, and insignificant correlation between self-forgiveness and extremism (r= -.163; p>0.05). This was similar in the correlation between forgiveness of others and extremism (r=-.141; p>.500). However, the study found that the correlation between forgiveness of situations and extremism was found to be weak, negative, and significant (r=-.411; p<.005). This implies that the issues that push people into extremism would be mostly extrinsic, and that when individuals develop strong forgiveness towards these situations then low extremism would be realized. On the other hand, if situations are not processed they could become sources of historical injustices which in return would fuel extremism.

8.2 Correlation between Forgiveness and Radicalization of the Youth into Violent Extremism (Control Group)

The study sought to establish the Influence of Forgiveness on Radicalization of the Youth into Violent Extremism among respondents not trained on forgiveness (control group). Pearson correlation analysis was used to establish this relationship and findings presented in Table 2.

8.2.1 Table 2: Influence of Forgiveness on Radicalization of the Youth into Violent Extremism (Control Group).

		Extremism	Self-Forgiveness	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situations
Extremism	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	10			
Self-Forgiveness	Pearson Correlation	.058	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.874			
	N	10	10		
Forgiveness of Others	Pearson Correlation	.405	.321	1	

		Extremism	Self-Forgiveness	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situations
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.246	.366		
	N	10	10	10	
Forgiveness of Situations	Pearson Correlation	-.490*	.083	.269	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.151	.819	.452	
	N	10	10	10	10

The study findings in Table 2 indicate that there was weak, positive, and significant correlation between self-forgiveness and extremism (r=.058; p>0.05). This was similar in the correlation between forgiveness of others and extremism (r=.405; p>.500). However, the study found that the correlation between forgiveness of situations and extremism was found to be weak, negative, and significant (r=-.490.411; p>.005). This would imply that the issues that push people into extremism would be mostly extraneous, and that when people develop well-built forgiveness tendencies towards these situations, then low extremism will be experienced. On the other hand, if situations are left unaddressed, they could become origins of a lasting impact of abuse which in return would become "push factors" to extremism.

9. Theological Reflection

The theological reflection of this reality leads the author to a transformed understanding of embracing dispositional forgiveness to deter radicalization of youth to progression to violence. As it should, the process begins at the stage of an experience of the reality. This is not just any experience, but one that touches this author deeply as a human being: young people being recruited, radicalized, and exploited to execute violence on innocent citizens of the world, created in the image and likeness of the Creator (Gen 1:26). This is a phenomenon that could not be ignored.

The above stage lays the foundation for the next, that is, one of exploration which shows that Kenya, just like the rest of the world, continues to experience rising levels of radicalization and violent extremism. This is because Kenya generally, and in particular its capital city Nairobi, is a main hub for diplomatic actions, tourism, and other dealings. In addition, Kenya is home to quite a number of international organizations associated with Western countries. The aim of Al-Shabaab, a militant group, is to target interests associated with these Western countries.

This implies that unless and until Al-Shabaab is completely eradicated, attacks on Kenyan soil will continue. This is the reality on the ground. Theological reflection encourages the use of soft power such as a religious persuasive approach in churches and mosques to fight extremism at the roots to deter the youth from joining terror groups, as opposed to mastering the tactics of the war.

10. Discussion

As empirical studies were being undertaken, many tools to measure were developed to gauge forgiveness. Many of these tools gauge non-dispositional, or episodic forgiveness, meaning forgiveness of specific offences, persons, or circumstances. The current study gauged dispositional forgiveness, meaning the inclination/tendency to forgive anytime, and over various types of social and other occurrences, a more enduring type of forgiveness. The scores of dispositional forgiveness are powerful because they tend to relate to people's mental health (McCullough and Witvliet 2002, 13). Therefore,

results of dispositional forgiveness are for the most part significant for understanding mental links to forgiveness.

Forgiveness is the procedure of dealing with nursed resentment toward a wrongdoer with better, pro-social affect such as understanding (Worthington and Wade 1999, 385). It is not merely the reduction of resentment or removing the desire to take revenge, though that is part of the process. Escalated resentment and bitterness have been associated with considerable violence. For instance, over a number of inquiries, males who recorded more resentment and bitterness were more probable to be initiators of partner violence (Norlander and Eckhardt 2005, 9).

Pillay (2017, 6) examined the influence of faith in modifying, enlarging, and altering society, establishing that the modifying nature and the attributes of the present Church are not about what she believes but what she does. Accordingly, group modification is essential in the contemporary society. The proposed study holds that churches and mosques in Kenya can be instrumental in curbing misbehavior, instilling forgiveness, hence transforming the community.

Goldman and Wade (2012, 40) did a study to compare forgiveness and anger-reduction group treatments. A total of a hundred and thirteen (113) leaners from a vast Midwestern university were part of the study. They were randomly assigned to one of two treatments, one aimed at advancing forgiveness and the other at minimizing anger for previous hurts, or to a queuing list—a waitlist used as a control in this study. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups: an intervention designed to help manage and reduce anger (anger reduction), an established intervention designed to promote interpersonal forgiveness, and a waitlist (queuing) control condition

Treatment consisted of six one and half hour sessions conducted in small groups led by one (1) facilitator for 3 weeks. Results of three-level (time within participants within groups) in a hierarchy linear modelling indicated that the forgiveness treatment (n=41) resulted in higher cutbacks in hostility and mental symptoms and more understanding for the wrongdoer than the alternative treatment (n=39) and the waitlist (queuing) (n=32). Participants in both treatment conditions reported more cutbacks in inclinations for revenge than those in the waitlist (queuing) condition. All participants reported significant cutbacks in contemplation about the wrong done.

11. Forgiving Differently

In the current investigation, the concept of forgiveness considered a radical forgiveness influencing the fundamental nature of transformational and long-lasting change in people's behaviors and their lives. Forgiveness, which is a focal concept in this study, can be defined as construction of a viewed offence in such a manner that a person's response to the offender, offence, and weight of the offence are all transformed from pessimism to being harmless or even being beneficial. The origin of an offence, and thus where forgiveness is directed, could be the self, another individual, or a situation that one perceives to be out of one's control (McCullough 2009, 185). What this implies is that forgiveness transforms the way an individual reacts to the offender, to the offence itself, and to the destructive results or outcome of the offence.

Reactions of the individual, for example the offended, are his or her offence- and offender-linked thinking, feelings, and actions. These reactions have two facets to them. One is that they can range from being gloomy or defeatist, they can be unbiased or impartial, and they can also be optimistic and hopeful. The other facet is that these reactions can be intense depending on an individual's understanding of the potential injury as a result of the offence. A person who has a tendency to forgive or forgives is likely to

transform his or her gloomy or defeatist reactions to either unbiased or impartial to something better such as optimistic or hopeful reactions, or changing the intensity of the reactions (McCullough 2009, 188).

It goes without saying that forgiveness is important in social interactions, yet this concept seems to have been mostly obscure. However, in the last decade, forgiveness has received definite scientific observation/investigations from multidisciplinary perspectives. A number of studies and researchers show that social scientists are progressively becoming fascinated by the possible applicability of forgiveness for holistic health (McCullough 2009, 125). Nevertheless, a lot of work is yet to be done on this captivating and significant construct.

Forgiveness advocates positive progression or perpetuity of interpersonal relationships by addressing the unavoidable bruises and wounding that naturally occurs in any social situation as human beings interact. This is very much like the upward thrust and positive values of social change which are associated with social transformation. It is an altruistic/prosocial change in the inspiration to steer clear of retaliation on an offender, thereby promoting the enhancement of quality of life leading to social transformation. My choice of this variable/concept is based on two philosophical assumptions.

One is that forgiveness is inspirational/motivational. Offended parties neither seek revenge nor do they want to see destruction come to the offender. Human beings experience social constructive transformations when forgiveness is an option and an intervention. The inspirational perception of forgiveness is simple but immensely powerful. It has a set of inspirational changes that lead to personal transformation.

The second is that forgiveness is intended to promote social acceptance (Prosocial). This means that forgiveness will impede or restrain destructive/unproductive responses and promote constructive/practical responses in difficult social situations. Revolutionizing change at every level in society amounts to social transformation, beginning with the personal, to social, to community, and upward. Here the author begins with social acceptance of large-scale structural change; when this change reaches all or most parts of the structure or society, therefore impacting most behavior of the whole structure or the community, then transformation is seen to have taken place.

Forgiveness can be identified with other positive behaviors that promote social acceptance and friendship in society. Forgiving has an element of contributing to the betterment of another person or a relationship (Williams 2015, 180). It is anticipated that it will invigorate mutual relational behaviors: for instance, to repair relationships with an offender and to discourage others from taking revenge.

12. Possible Risks of Forgiveness

Most social researchers and social transformers focusing on the topic of forgiveness tend to highlight the benefits of forgiveness for health and well-being. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that forgiveness might not always be certainly linked with health and well-being. In certain circumstances, people who are eager to forgive might be risking their health and well-being. Some research suggests that forgiveness might be an indicator for an interpersonal relationship distress (Katz, Street, and Arias 1997, 340). Katz, Street, and Arias posit that people who are enthusiastic to forgive are more likely to remain passively in a distressed situation. By carrying out research intended to unearth such circumstances, where forgiving could raise concerns for psychosocial distress, we may assist in bringing to the fore the differences between the benefits of forgiveness and the potential hazardous consequences.

13. A Final Reflection

It is time for people to make collective and intentional or deliberate efforts to examine faith and science: to consider what it is that can be done to deter youth from being recruited in order to cause havoc to fellow human beings. When dealing with issues of vulnerability, religions by nature are on the lookout for deep insights, consolation, and motivation.

Research has been carried out to examine if radical forgiveness, among other social teachings, can be considered as an option to this phenomenon of radicalization. The end result should be a response of what God requires of the people created in his image given the situation. This should ultimately lead to new scenarios, new pictures, new experiences, more exploration, further reflection, and back to action. Amidst suffering by all people—without a doubt many Christians, Muslims, and other faiths as well—we must use the wisdom of sound theology and look for directions to react to the challenges of suffering, stressing personal and collective transformation.

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Book Review: *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*

Dustin Burlet

Osborne, William R. and Russell L. Meek. 2020. *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*. Peabody: Hendrickson. Paperback. vi + 194 pp. CDN $26.95 (approx. R415). USD $19.95 (approx. R307). ISBN: 978-1-68307-086-3.

Typically, upon successful completion of their first year of Hebrew studies, many individuals (rightly) believe that they have a relatively firm grasp on the basics of the language, as a whole. At the same time, while many students will, undoubtedly, know a "significant portion of the Hebrew lexicon" (usually words that occur 100 times or more in frequency) they will, most likely, find themselves "awash in unfamiliar vocabulary" upon turning to the Prophets, many sections of Hebrew poetry, or even an unfamiliar narrative passage (2020, 1). William R. Osborne and Russell L. Meek, authors of *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary*, state:

> We created this volume to help students who have studied Hebrew for at least one year transition effectively toward reading the individual books of the Hebrew Bible by increasing their knowledge of the less frequently occurring words specific to each book. We do this by providing users with an alternative method of moving beyond the vocabulary they acquired in a first-year course.... The book-specific nature of the vocabulary lists found in this volume allow teachers and students—as well as those who are no longer engaged in formal study of the language—to focus their time and energy on whatever biblical book they currently wish to read, study, or teach. (p. 1)

Incontrovertibly, Osborne and Meek succeed in reaching their intended goal(s) for this text. The question remains, how, specifically, this book differs from the plethora of other volumes that also seek to provide guidance with respect to Hebrew vocabulary acquisition and retention.

To be clear, while *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary* does begin with a frequency-based list of the 418 words that occur more than 100 times in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (for easy review, these four hundred eighteen words are also divided into twenty-one sub-lists of twenty words each, except for the last list, which contains only eighteen words), each subsequent chapter is devoted to the vocabulary of a single biblical book. Exceptions to this include the twelve so-called Minor Prophets (i.e., the Book of the Twelve), which are grouped together into one chapter, and also Samuel, Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles, which are each also treated as being just one book. For each book, except a handful of the shorter ones, namely the five Megillot (see below), fifteen lists of twenty words each are included. Osborne and Meek clarify:

> To further facilitate ease in learning the vocabulary, we have used horizontal lines to subdivide each twenty-word list into three roughly equal sections. This allows readers to focus their attention on a smaller portion of a list at a given time, if they wish. Each chapter's fifteen book-specific lists present, in order of descending frequency, the 300 words that occur most frequently in the biblical book in question beyond the words that are included in our volume's initial chapter. (p. 2)

With respect to the *Megillot*, fewer than fifteen lists were necessary due to the smaller amount of vocabulary that appears in each of the books. Thus, "Lamentations and Ecclesiastes have fourteen lists, Song of Songs has twelve, Esther has nine, and Ruth has five" (p. 2). A few more clarifying comments are in order with respect to frequencies. Osborne and Meek maintain:

> For the longest biblical books, the lowest-frequency words presented in this volume occur three times in the books in question. For shorter books, the lowest frequency words presented in this volume occur either two times or one time in the biblical book in question. For books of this kind, however, we have only included in our lists words that *also* occur between three and 100 times in the Hebrew Bible as a whole. In other words, no words that occur either two times or one time in the Bible *as a whole are* found in this volume. We have excluded such words from our lists for two reasons: First, the meanings of rare words (such as *hapax legomena*) are sometimes unsure or even unknown. Second, for words that occur only once or twice in the Bible, as a whole, we believe that it is most efficient not to memorize them in the context of a vocabulary list but rather to learn them by encountering them in the passages in which they occur. (p. 2, italics original)

The glosses that are provided within *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary* depend highly on the words' contextual uses (book-by-book). For verbs, the authors state:

> We have listed glosses for *all* the stems in which a given root appears in the biblical book under study, including distinct glosses for the Qal Passive, if relevant. (In the volume's initial list of words…we have only listed glosses for stems in which a given root appears *ten times or more*.) We have treated the Qal Passive as its own category for the reader's convenience, since, while the meaning a root has in the Qal Passive can often be easily intuited from the root's active meaning in the Qal, this is not always the case. (p. 2, italics original)

There is much to commend in this slim volume. Linguistically speaking, Osborne and Meeks ably distinguish between each of the different Hebrew stems with respect to their sense and meaning (Qal, Niphal, Piel, Pual, Hiphil, Hophal, Hithpael, etc.). In this way, their analysis is free from many of the all-too-common exegetical and "word-study" fallacies (such as the "root fallacy" or "basic meaning fallacy") that often plague various language studies.

The authors also judiciously note that by providing "book-specific glosses" they not only help readers develop the ability to read a given biblical book "more quickly and proficiently, they will also help students learn more about the semantic ranges of words for which they may have memorized only a basic gloss in their first year of study" (p. 2).

Alongside this, the authors utilize and leverage many of the standard lexicons, including BDB, HALOT, and Cline's *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield, 1993–2016). While some may quibble at the absence of some other works, such as TWOT, NIDOTTE, TLOT, TDOT, or Cline's *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew Revised* (Sheffield, 2018–), it is most likely that their inclusion would have made only the most marginal of differences.

Typographically speaking, A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew is exceptionally well done. There is a good use of white space and ample margins. The numerous "breaks" in the lists themselves make for easy tracking. A small detail that also helps with these things is the fact that all glosses for non-verbs are provided in italics (NB: the Hebrew font for all

non-verbs is pointed). The effective use of shading and bold face type is also much appreciated. Lasty, the Hebrew font itself is well sized (all accents and vowels are clear) and quite pleasing to the eye.

That said, it is an overstatement to say that "this tool is markedly superior to competing vocabulary textbooks" (back cover, endorsement by Duane Garrett). Landes's *Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary: Learning Words by Frequency and Cognate*, 2nd ed (SBL 2001) has proven its worth over time and is the only resource I am familiar with that includes a helpful morphological mini-grammar. Mitchel's *A Student's Vocabulary for Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*, 2nd ed. (Zondervan, 2017) has the added bonus of including Aramaic (and a pronunciation guide!) while only Pleins and Homrighausen's *Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary by Conceptual Categories* (Zondervan, 2017) organizes the nouns of biblical Hebrew into logical categories of related words, thus allowing more mental space for making clearer connections between words. The extreme thoroughness that is provided with Van Pelt and Pratico's *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic*, 2nd ed. (Zondervan, 2019) is also easy to appreciate and, lastly, only Van Pelt and Pratico's *Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary in Context: Building Competency with Words Occurring 50 Times or More* (Zondervan 2019) allows readers to improve their sight-reading of biblical Hebrew without a BHS/BHQ at hand.

In brief, we suffer from an embarrassment of riches and each of the above texts has its own unique, niche strengths and shortcomings. It is, therefore, more reasonable to say:

> Portions of the Old Testament contain highly specialized and concentrated vocabulary at times unique to a particular book, including technical terms that may be genre-specific.... Osborne and Meek have provided a helpful way to immerse oneself in the literature of the Hebrew Bible, without getting sidetracked or distracted by such technical vocabulary. (back cover, endorsement by Bill T. Arnold)

To conclude, *A Book-by-Book Guide to Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary* is a most welcome new addition to the ever-growing library of Hebrew language study vocabulary books. Its unique format makes it especially amicable to self-study, while many educators will also appreciate the volume's unique book-by-book approach for teaching exegesis courses.
To this end, Osborne and Meek state:

> If a professor decides to teach an exegesis course on Genesis [for example], this book immediately provides all of the vocabulary lists that his or her students would need for their semester-long exploration of that biblical book. The fifteen twenty-word lists can be easily accommodated into a semester of study, and professors can rest assured that their students will not simply be learning words that occur frequently in the Hebrew Bible as a whole but rather those they will encounter most frequently in the book being studied. It is therefore our hope that this volume will serve both students and professors, as well as others who wish to develop their Hebrew skills, as an easy and effective way to increase their knowledge of Hebrew vocabulary. (p. 3)

Its primary users are likely beginner/intermediate Hebrew students in Bible colleges, seminaries, Christian university colleges, and, one hopes, the studious pastor. Highly recommended!

Dustin Burlet[1]

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Book Review (Extended): *A Guide to Bible Translation: People, Languages, and Topics*

Christopher J. Lovelace

Noss, Philip A., and Charles S. Houser, eds. 2020. *A Guide to Bible Translation: People, Languages, and Topics*. 2nd ed. History of Bible Translation. Swindon: United Bible Societies. L + 1–1110 pp. ISBN: 978-1545658116. Amazon: $71.99 (Hardback); $61.49 (Paperback).[1]

1. Introduction

A Guide to Bible Translation: People, Languages, and Topics is a general reference resource produced mainly through the joint efforts of the United Bible Societies (UBS) and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), with the participation of many people associated with the Nida Institute.

The general editors of the *Guide*, Philip A. Noss and Charles S. Houser, are no strangers to Bible translation. Noss, who holds a Ph.D. in African Languages and Literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, served as a Bible translator and literature coordinator for 11 years in Cameroon. During his twenty-year tenure with UBS, Noss served as a Bible Translation Consultant, a regional translation coordinator (Africa), and as global translation coordinator. Houser, his co-editor, served for 36 years (1978–2014) as Editorial and Publications Manager with the American Bible Society.

This review will refer to *A Guide to Bible Translation* (2020) simply as the "*Guide*" to facilitate clarity. This will allow us to restrict references to Noss and Houser in this review to specific signed articles that they contribute within the *Guide* itself. References to page numbers indicate the location of material in the *Guide*, unless otherwise specified.

2. A Clarification of the Title of "A Guide to Bible Translation"

The *Guide* defines itself as a "*reference* guide" (pp. xxxi–xxxii, my emphasis) which is a helpful distinction since "Guide" in the title may suggest to some readers that it is a textbook on how to translate the Bible. Rather, *A Guide to Bible Translation* is a single-volume encyclopedia on selected topics related to Bible translation. That is, it is a guide *about* Bible translation, not a primer on how to translate the Bible.[2]

3. The Guide's Intended Audience

Although the *Guide* is not formatted as an introductory textbook to Bible translation, the preface (p. xxxi) does list readers among its intended audience who would also be the likely consumers of an introduction to Bible translation: students and other parties interested in Bible translation, general translation studies, and topics related to the translation of non-

1 Available for import to South Africa from the US. Electronic edition currently available in *Translator's Workplace,* Logos Bible Software (Bellingham, Washington: Faithlife).

2 For readers in search of such a textbook, SIL has produced many procedural materials to aid Bible translators. Barnwell (2020), for example, provides an accessible introductory text for those who are new to Bible translation.

https://doi.org/10.54725/conspectus.2022.1.9

Judeo-Christian texts that their respective communities view as sacred in linguistics. Those who are new to Bible translation will surely benefit from the synopses that the book offers to other publications in the field. Likewise, university students (and perhaps secondary school students) will find the *Guide* useful, since it contains many articles that summarize important works and concepts that they will undoubtedly encounter in their classrooms. Specialists in the field of Bible translation, in the meantime, will surely appreciate that the *Guide* condenses so much information in one place; and even specialists will almost certainly discover much in this volume that is new to them.

4. Variation in Style

The scope and style of contributions to the *Guide* vary from article to article. Entries range from a few sentences to three or four pages in length. Many articles are written as a general introduction, just as readers would expect in an encyclopedia such as this. Other entries read like articles for peer-reviewed journals, or as short introductions that could serve as *prologomena* to specialized academic treatises.

Among the more technical offerings, Naudé consistently submits entries that stand out in terms of how thoroughly they interact with scholarly sources.[3] Nord adopts a similar approach. For example, her two-paragraph article on "Scenes and frames in Bible translation" (pp. 724–725) interacts with seven scholarly publications, as we might find in a technical paper. Werner offers a survey of the "Science of Bible translation and translation studies" (pp. 725–732) that would be at home in any doctoral dissertation, as would the discussion of semiotics by Cosculluela ("Semiotics," pp. 747–751) that devotes much of its length to a comparison of Pierce and Saussure. Cosculluela extends this article in "Sign" (pp. 760–764) with a similar approach.[4]

Most of the articles in the *Guide*, in contrast to these examples, adopt a less formal tone, in that most contributors employ general exposition and make fewer references to outside sources. Researchers might find these less formal articles useful to get a basic overview of the respective topics those entries cover. Scholarly surveys that summarize the literature thoroughly on a given subject are certainly present, but they represent the exception in the *Guide*.

5. How the Guide is Organized

As its subtitle indicates, the *Guide* is divided into three main sections: "People, Languages, and Topics." The editors introduce each of these sections with three to six pages of general discussion, after which the entries are arranged alphabetically by subject.

5.1 The "People" section

The section on "People" relates the activity of selected individuals to the Scriptures, to Bible translation and distribution, or to the discipline of translation. Although the *Guide* does not organize the "People" entries into subdivisions, the following categories suggest themselves in this section:

3 For examples of articles where Naudé extensively cites and interacts with the pertinent literature, see "Equivalence," pp. 415–422; "Globalization and Localization," pp. 477–481; "Translation Studies," pp. 838–845; and, co-authored with Miller-Naudé, "Agency and Bible Translation," pp. 285–289.

4 The article on "Semiotics" appears to be current up to about 2005, while "Signs" is current to 2006, based on the dates of the literature Cosculluela cites. Her excellent articles may benefit from some light updates to include scholarship from more recent years.

1. Translators and people who have been involved directly in Bible translation.
   a) Translators responsible for ancient versions (e.g., Jerome, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion).
   b) Translators who published early versions in modern vernaculars (e.g., John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, Cipriano de Valera, João Ferreira de Almeida).
   c) Notable translators during the missionary movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (e.g., William Carey, Hudson Taylor).
   d) Those involved in contemporary translation work: twentieth century to current times (e.g., John C. Callow)
2. Linguists who have written about Bible translation (e.g., Eugene Nida, John C. Callow, John Beekman, Friedrich Schleiermacher).
3. Linguists whose work in general translation theory has informed Bible translation (e.g., Jacques Derrida, Cicero).
4. Textual scholars and grammarians whose work has shaped the Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic texts that translators use in their work, and how those translators view these texts (e.g., Brook Foss Westcott, Robert Estienne). I have categorized grammarians and text-critical scholars together because those involved in text criticism often contribute to grammar studies, and vice versa (e.g., Luis Alonso Schökel, who is discussed under "Spanish" [pp. 243] and also under "Hebrew dictionaries and lexicons" [pp. 401–402].)
5. Notable enemies of the Bible (e.g., the Roman emperor Diocletian, who has an entry in the "People" section for his ignominious Bible-related activity of decreeing that Christian Scriptures be burned[!]).

Every entry in the *Guide* relates to the task of Scripture translation or Scripture engagement in some way, though these connections are occasionally implied rather than explicit. For example, the entry on Derrida in the "People" section (pp. 21–22) recognizes that his work on Deconstructionism informs translation theory by postulating that perfect translation from one language to another is impossible. The concise article on Derrida (four short paragraphs) does not explicitly relate his work to Bible translation, but it is not difficult to find the implied connection between his general translation theory and Bible translation.

Similarly, the article on Cicero (pp. 16–17) notes that the famed Roman orator "urges translators not to attempt word-for-word translations, but rather to achieve translations that balance the closest grammatical correspondence with the closest sense-equivalent rendering" (p. 17). This approach would not be out of place in any modern classroom where translation principles are taught. Likewise, the *Guide* points out that the Roman poet Horace (p. 30) advocated translating a text in a way that was faithful to the meaning of the original without slavishly feeling the need for word-for-word equivalence. The attention that Cicero and Horace paid to beauty and naturalness in translation, as opposed to formal equivalence, prefigures some of the modern attitudes toward translation.

5.2. The "Languages" section

Just as I identified potential subcategories in the "People" section of the *Guide*, it seems to me that the section on "Languages" can be similarly subdivided. The following categories suggest themselves:

1. Modern languages in which Bible translation has been done (e.g., Spanish, Italian, Mixtec).
2. Ancient versions and early translations (e.g., Latin, Slavonic, Gothic).
3. The languages in which the biblical texts were composed (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic).
4. Ancient languages that inform biblical studies (e.g., Ugaritic, Hittite, Hurrian).

The theme of this section is Bible translation in the languages listed. For instance, the article on "Dakota" (or "Lakota," pp. 107–108) offers only a little demographic information about the language. Most of this entry is about Bible translation into Lakota. The ancient languages that inform biblical studies (see point 4 in the preceding paragraph) are an exception to this general trend, but they represent only about 10 entries out of almost 200 in this section.

A few articles seem out of place in the languages section because they address general topics. For instance, the article on "Indigenous languages" (pp. 151–154) is a general discussion of minority languages, and it mentions translation efforts only in passing. This type of article seems more like the entries in the more generalized "Topics" section. The "Basic language" entry (pp. 87–88) is another such example, though it does discuss the *Parole de Vie* and *La Bible pour enfants* versions in the final paragraph. Other entries that may fit best in the general "Topics" section include "Language endangerment" (pp. 179–180), "Languages of arts and media" (pp. 180–183), and "Speaking in tongues" (p. 262).[5]

5 In an email dated July 20, 2021, the editors noted that they did consider placing these articles in the "Topics" section, but ultimately decided to place them under the "Languages" heading to ensure that they were not "lost among the grand array of translation topics."

5.3. The "topics" section

The "Topics" section is by far the largest part of the *Guide*, covering just under seventy percent of the text devoted to People, Languages, and Topics. This section includes topics on translation theory, grammar, and linguistics, among other subjects. The breadth of these entries defies easy categorization. Therefore, this review will not attempt to catalog the different types of topics as it listed the entries in the "People" and "Languages" sections. Instead, the review will highlight articles from the "Topics" portion by considering similar entries together, as discussion warrants. Hopefully, this provides a natural, organic presentation of the *Guide's* content.

6. The Biggest Strength of the Guide: Its Contributors

Although the *Guide* does a good job of highlighting "People," "Languages," and "Topics" in Bible translation, these categories do not represent its greatest strength, namely, the expertise and experience of its contributing authors. Among the contributions, the *Guide* presents articles by people who have been directly involved in this field as translators, translation project coordinators, regional translation directors, heads of Bible societies, and Bible translation consultants. Several authors in the *Guide*, if not most of them, speak from the experience of having ministered in multiple capacities (e.g., as Bible translators who have also served as project coordinators and regional directors). In the *Guide*, we hear from former heads of Bible societies and translation agencies with extensive knowledge of regional Bible translation efforts. The editors have also done well to include prominent scholars outside the Global West. Hopefully, their inclusion here will introduce readers to voices from Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe that they may not otherwise know.

Biographical information on the contributors to the *Guide* is limited to brief sketches for the editors (p. 901); a tribute in memory of Ellingworth (p. vii), who authored many articles in the *Guide*; a statement recognizing the contributions of Ellingworth and Sim (p. xxiv); listings of agency affiliations, if applicable, for those who contribute articles (pp. xxiii–xxvi); and occasional comments that the authors make in their entries regarding their own work in Bible translation. Theoretically, it would be possible to piece together the careers of some contributors from their works mentioned in the *Guide* and listed in the general bibliography (pp. 905–956). For most of the contributors, the *Guide* provides little information regarding the work they have done in Bible translation and academia.

The editors have accomplished a monumental achievement not just in what information they have assembled, but also in *whom* they have engaged to compose it. Potential readers should be told this, I believe, so that they can more fully appreciate the *Guide*. Therefore, this review will seek to highlight a few of the articles that illustrate these bonus features, while also providing a sense of the general content of the *Guide*.

The length of the *Guide* prohibits an exhaustive discussion of its contents. Therefore, I have chosen to highlight articles and authors that I believe show what the *Guide* has to offer overall.

7. Articles by Prominent Scholars in the Topics Section

As mentioned above, *A Guide to Bible Translation* includes articles from some of the most prominent scholars in the field of Bible translation today. For example, in her article on "Genre and Bible translation," Lynell Zogbo readily demonstrates her years of experience teaching on this topic to classrooms not only in her home in Côte d'Ivoire, but also around the world. Zogbo also provides a useful introduction in her article, "Poetry in Bible translation," that should prompt all serious Bible students to seek out the more extensive treatment she offers in her book on the subject, co-authored with Wendland (Zogbo and Wendland 2020).

Ernst Wendland, who is well known for his work on Frames of Reference (FoR) and Literary Functional Equivalence (LiFE), contributes sketches of three to four pages each for both of these models in the "Topics" section (on pp. 454–458 and pp. 567–568, respectively). Although Wendland does not say this in the *Guide*, these articles essentially summarize three of his books (Wendland 2004; 2008; 2011). Undoubtedly, his students at the South African Theological Seminary and Stellenbosch University will find these discussions invaluable, as will any readers looking for an overview on Frames of Reference or Literary Functional Equivalence.

Wendland also contributes articles in the "People" and "Languages" sections of the *Guide*. His article on Martin Luther (pp. 37–40) deals mainly with Luther's translation principles and the Bible he produced. Under the article for "Chewa" (also called "Chichewa," pp. 95–96), a language with which he has worked extensively in Zambia, he updates the overview he provides in his *Introduction to the New Chichewa Bible Translation* (Wendland 1998).

Other authors take a similar approach and surreptitiously distill portions of their published work into brief summaries that are embedded in their articles. For example, though Harriett Hill does not point it out in her article on "Culture and translation" (pp. 392–394), this entry effectively summarizes chapters 4–5 of her book *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads: From Translation to Communication* (2006).

Likewise, it would be difficult to summarize the extensive work of Christiane Nord, the well-known champion of *Skopos* theory. Fortunately, she offers a section on *Skopostheorie* that quietly summarizes this paradigm

in her article on "Functionalism and Bible translation" (pp. 459–462). These are just a few examples of how the *Guide* provides useful synopses of important theories in Bible translation.

8. Experts on Bible Translation in their Respective Countries of Origin

Among the summaries of Bible translation efforts in the "Languages" section of the *Guide*, some of the most detailed treatments are those by authors who write about versions in their respective countries of origin. In this section, I will mention just a few of the articles that I think bring a unique perspective to the history of Bible translation.

To begin, let us consider the overview on Russian Bible translation (pp. 221–225). The editors could hardly have found anyone more qualified to write this summary than Mikhail Seleznev, who currently teaches in the Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies at the Russian State University for the Humanities. Seleznev published new translations of Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, and Deuteronomy while he was serving as chief editor with the Russian Bible Society (1991–2010) and leading the Russian Bible Society project that produced a multi-volume translation of Old Testament books. He judiciously omits his own participation in the translation, even as he rightly gives prominence to the other members of the team. Similarly, he (humbly) neglects to mention his numerous publications (over 60 articles and books, at the time of this writing).[6] In this instance, even the translator of Seleznev's article, Larissa Shmailo, is a respected poet and author in her own right. Her credentials include work with the American Bible Society.

Even though Seleznev has published works in English, much of his work has been published in Russian, with the result that he is perhaps not as well known in the Anglophone world as he is in Russia. The *Guide* has, therefore, done a great service to the reader by providing his article in translation to acquaint more people with his work. Other translated entries in the *Guide* make articles available in English that might not otherwise garner the attention they deserve.

While Seleznev's four-and-a-half-page article is among the longer entries in this section of the Guide, the article by Peeter Roosimaa (pp. 118–119) on Estonian Bible translation proves that brevity does not preclude quality. In seven short paragraphs, Roosimaa manages not only to summarize 300 years of Estonian Bible translation, but even to pause for a moment to characterize specific numbered reprints (2, 3, 9, and 11) of the limited-edition *Piibel* version, published in the North Estonian dialect. I suspect that this article reflects the research that Roosimaa did for his 2004 doctoral dissertation on the exegetical methods behind the Bible translations published in his native Estonia (Roosimaa 2004). Since this dissertation appears to be available only in Estonian, the *Guide's* readers remain indebted to the translators who have made this article available to a broader readership: Christoph Unger and his wife Külvi, who served for many years with SIL, beginning in the early 1990s. Of course,Christoph Unger is also well-known in his own right as the author of numerous publications on various topics in cognitive linguistics and related areas.

Junko Nakai Suzuki, the author of a forthcoming monograph that focuses on nineteenth-century Bible translation in his native Japan (Suzuki 2022), writes the article on Japanese Bible translation (pp. 165–169). Like Roosimaa, Suzuki also has an eye for detail. For instance, Suzuki relates how the earliest seven (!) Roman Catholic translation projects have no surviving manuscripts, but then describes an exceptional case, where some verses from the Psalms were inscribed in 1585 by the Japanese ambassador to

6 See the listing of publications by Dr. Seleznev at https://www.hse.ru/staff/mgseleznev#sci, accessed June 21, 2021.

the Vatican. This manuscript was subsequently lost and rediscovered twice, finally resurfacing in 2001 (p. 164). This anecdote spans two sentences in Suzuki's four-and-a-half-page article. Certainly, the entry would still be excellent without this comment regarding a four-hundred-year-old Scripture portion. However, such details as these are the pearls of research that decorate some of the more thoughtful articles in the *Guide*.

Bayarjargal Garamtseren, who is now leading the translation team for the Mongolian Standard Version (currently scheduled for publication in 2026) and who has written extensively on Bible versions in Mongolian, lends his expertise to the *Guide* in a meticulous article on that topic (pp. 199–201). Ji-Youn Cho, who has served as a translation consultant with the Korean Bible Society, writes a similarly detailed article on Bible translation in her native Korea (pp. 175–179), as well as a short article on the Korean Bible Society itself (pp. 543–544). Since Cho wrote her Ph.D. dissertation on honorifics (published as Cho 2009), it is also fitting that she contributes the article on honorifics to the *Guide* (pp. 498–500). G. A. Mikre-Sellassie, who has published multiple articles on the Ge'ez Bible in the early history of the Ethiopic church, also enriches the *Guide* by summarizing some of his findings in the article on Ge'ez (pp. 129–131).

In a similar vein, the former directors of translation agencies and Bible societies are ideally placed to write about regional activities. For instance, Borislav Arapović founded and led for many years the Institute for Bible Translation (IBT), which is responsible for bringing Scripture to many languages in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Not only does Arapović write the *Guide's* article on IBT itself (pp. 519–520), but he also writes the entries for Azerbaijani (p. 87), Tajik (pp. 252–253), Tatar (pp. 255–256), Uzbek (pp. 266–267), Serbian (pp. 228–230), and his native Croatian (pp. 105–107). To cite another example, the D. Jonadob Nathaniel, the senior director of translations at the Bible Society of India, writes the *Guide's* articles for 16 of the languages in that region.

Iver Larsen, whose advocacy for Wycliffe Bible Translators in his native Denmark led to the eventual opening of a Wycliffe branch there in the late 1970s, is ideally suited to author the article on Danish Bible translations (pp. 108–109). Similarly, Stein Mydske is an excellent choice to author the article on the Norwegian Bible Society he formerly headed (pp. 627–628), as well as the entry he provides on Norwegian Bible translation (pp. 203–205). Walter Klaiber, former president of the Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft (1999–2009), renders the same service as Mydske, *mutatis mutandis*, in his articles on Bible societies in Germany (pp. 473–474) and German Bible translations (pp. 132–135). As noted above, these examples are merely representative of the *Guide's* authors and the experience with which they imbue their submissions to the encyclopedia.

9. Articles by People Directly Involved in Bible Translation

Many of the contributors to the *Guide* have been directly involved in Bible translation as translators, advisors, regional coordinators, or in any number of related roles. In effect, these entries preserve first-hand accounts about the process and (often extensive) lists of those involved in the projects where they served. Among these articles written by participants in the translations are "Lingala" (John Ellington, p. 186), "Gwich'in," "Micmac" (L. Watson Williams, pp. 197–198), "Mixtec" (Barbara Hollenbach, p. 198), "Nahuatl" (David Tuggy, p. 201), and Yucatec "Mayan" (written by a member of the advisory board, Rev. Edesio Sánchez-Cetina, pp. 195–197).

The Gwich'in language entry is a good example of one of these hidden gems. In just a few sentences, the author summarizes Bible translation work among this Arctic people group, including the New Testament translation

begun in 1959 by Richard and Susan Mueller of SIL and completed in 2011. According to the entry, this is the "only NT in an Alaskan Athabaskan language to date" (p. 140). Richard Mueller, who was mentioned in the article, then appears as a coauthor in the byline. That is, this brief entry on Gwich'in quietly offers the firsthand testimony of the missionaries who worked on this Bible translation. Many other such gems of firsthand experience remain to be mined from the pages of this book.

John W. Harris contributes an article (pp. 270–271) describing his father Len Harris's work in producing the Wubuy New Testament. This account is especially touching, as it culminates with the Christian community in this language taking the reins and eventually publishing the New Testament and then drafting all of the Old Testament on its own.

The entry on Dutch Bible translations (p. 110) comes from a Dutch Bible translator. Marijke H. de Lang served from 1993–2004 as a translator and exegete on the New Bible Translation (2004) under the Netherlands Bible Society. De Lang also contributes an article on Erasmus (p. 25), the Dutch humanist whose name will forever be linked with the *Textus Receptus* family of Greek manuscripts. Given the connection between Erasmus and the *Textus Receptus*, it is fitting that de Lang is also the author of the entry on the *Textus Receptus* as well (p. 802).

Philip Noss, who contributes 49 articles plus other introductory materials to the *Guide*, is at his best when he writes (pp. 127–129) about the Gbaya language translation project he served in Cameroon. As expected, he names many participants and provides details about the work in Gbaya that an insider would know. This is similar to the discussion that Seleznev offers on the Russian Bible translation he led, as mentioned above. Of course, no Bible translation occurs in a vacuum. Just as everyone who produces a new version must be aware of what translation work has been done before, so also the attention that Noss and Seleznev pay in their respective articles to the details of the Gbaya and Russian translations show that they are eminently qualified to comment on those endeavors.

10. Practical Articles Regarding Publication

Any translation team that has ever struggled with how best to provide paratextual aids to their intended readers will want to study the articles regarding various aspects of publication. Here, Charles Houser shares the insights he gained from his 36 years of publishing experience with the American Bible Society. Among these, I note especially "Formatting and Bible translation" (pp. 449–453) and "Maps in Bibles" (pp. 570–572), which give practical advice on how to approach these issues. The brief addendum the editors attach to "Maps in Bibles" (pp. 572–574) even gives a schematic of where translation teams might wish to place maps throughout their Bibles for maximum effectiveness. In the "Publisher's role in Bible translation" (pp. 677–680), Houser shares not only his insider's perspective on getting a Bible printed and distributed, but also several suggestions for translation teams to make their publication process smooth and effective for reaching their intended audience.

Houser is not the only author with expertise in this subject. Noss brings up some important caveats that translators should consider before they decide to issue "Red letter editions" (p. 692). For a general discussion of various types of paratextual aids, Sim devotes an article to "Supplementary materials" (pp. 778–783). Collaborative articles regarding Bible formatting can be found in "Section headings" (pp. 738–739, by Sim, Houser, and Noss); a discussion of "Illustrations and captions" (pp. 504–507, by Sim and Houser); and a guide to designing "Study Bibles" (pp. 775–778, by Sim, Houser, and Noss). Taken as a whole, these topics effectively cover the introductory issues that Bible translation teams face in publishing and formatting their texts.

11. Thematic Guide to Topics

Since the *Guide* is simply organized by subject in each of its three main sections, the "Thematic guide to topics" in the *Guide's* back matter is a welcome tool to help the reader locate articles by general topic. For instance, under the sub-heading entitled "Translation quality" in this section (p. 963), we find page numbers listed for 10 entries, including topics that will be of interest to translation consultants: "Acceptability," "Clarity," "Equivalence," "Faithfulness," "Naturalness," and "Translation quality appraisal." This format makes it much easier to find inter-related articles than a general index of topics, though the *Guide* also contains a general index.

12. Articles that Require Revision

In any encyclopedia that engages multiple authors to compose a work exceeding one thousand pages in length, it seems inevitable that some errors would creep into the text. *A Guide to Bible Translation* is no exception. The following suggestions are offered in the hope that they will improve the text.

12.1 Aldred

In the brief entry dedicated to Aldred (p. 7), Ellingworth credits him with penning "the first surviving English translation of part of the Bible" circa 950 AD (p. 7). However, the oldest known surviving English translation of part of the Bible is, at present, an interlinear gloss in the Vespasian Psalter, which predates Aldred by at least one hundred years. In fact, in his article on English Bible translations, Ellingworth even notes (p. 114) that the Vespasian Psalter preserves "The earliest surviving biblical text in OE [i.e., Old English]." I suggest changing the entry on Aldred (p. 7) to credit him with "*one of the earliest* surviving English translations of part of the Bible."

12.2 Catalan

In the article on Catalan, Ellingworth outlines Bible translation activity up to 1832, then states, "In more recent times translation work has been largely interconfessional, owing much to Rius Camps [sic] and his colleagues at the Monastery of Montserrat" (p. 94) and indicates that this work led to the 1993 publication of a study Bible (undoubtedly, the *Bíblia Catalana Interconfessional* [BCI]). Two corrections seem to be in order. First, this statement appears to indicate a case of mistaken identity. The shared surname "Camps" has apparently led Ellingworth to confuse Father Josep Rius-Camps with Father Guiu Camps. It is Guiu Camps, the late professor of exegesis at Montserrat, who deserves credit as a major contributor to the 1993 ecumenical BCI translation. Josep Rius-Camps, on the other hand, served as a translator on the *Nou Testament* (1978), which is oriented toward Roman Catholic readership. The name confusion is perhaps understandable, given that both Guiu Camps and Josep Rius-Camps worked on Bible translations, albeit very distinct ones, in the second half of the twentieth century.

Second, the expression "more recent times" seems to indicate "ever since 1832 and up to the present day," since 1832 is the last date in the immediately preceding sentence. If Ellingworth intends to include the entire twentieth century in what he considers to be "more recent times," then it seems strange to describe this phase of Catalan Bible translation as "largely interconfessional" in light of the many Bible translations that were published between 1915 and 1987 for Roman Catholics. During this period, Roman Catholic exegetes produced two New Testaments: (*El Nou Testament*, 1928–1929; and the 1980 *Nou Testament* by Jaume Sidera I Plana). Roman Catholics also published two multi-volume Bibles: *La Sagrada Biblia* (15 vols., 1928–1948) and *La Bíblia: versió dels textos originals i notes pels Monjos de Montserrat* (28 vols., 1926–1987). A one-volume Roman

Catholic Bible appeared in 1968 as *La Sagrada Bíblia, 2nd Edition*. Although it shares the same name as the 15-volume *Sagrada Biblia*, the single-volume *Sagrada Biblia* is a new translation. Though his Bible translation work was not extensive, Frederic Clascar also published Catalan translations for Catholics in the early part of the century: Genesis (1915), Song of Songs (1918), and Exodus (1925). Rather than describing post-1832 Catalan Bible translation as "largely interconfessional," it would be more accurate to note that these activities have been largely Roman Catholic, albeit punctuated by the important publication of some Protestant versions.

Regarding those Protestant Bibles, the author does mention the publication of *La Biblia del 2000* (a Protestant translation also known as the *Bíblia Evangèlica Catalana* [BEC]), and a 2004 critical edition of Exodus and Leviticus. However, he does not mention the 2009 Protestant translation *La Santa Bíblia o les Santes Escriptures* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society). Also absent is the Catalan edition of the New World Translation by the Jehovah's Witnesses (*Traducció del Nou Món de les Escriptures Gregues Cristianes*), published in 2016.

Given the brevity of this article, it is understandable that the author might choose not to mention every Bible translation in Catalan. Nevertheless, it is odd that he does not mention any Roman Catholic Bible translations published in the twentieth century, or the translation by the Jehovah's Witnesses. One hopes that the next edition of the *Guide* will update this article with the correct attribution of the BCI to Guiu Camps and include the information about the additional translations I have mentioned.

12.3 Slavonic

In the article on the Church Slavonic Bible translation, Ellingworth asserts, "What is generally considered the standard version of the Slavonic Bible first appeared in St. Petersburg in 1751 under the auspices of Peter the Great" (p. 237). This statement should be revised to indicate that the Slavonic Bible of 1751 was published under the auspices of Empress Elizabeth, the daughter of Peter the Great, rather than Peter the Great himself.

Although Peter did issue an edict in 1712 to publish a revision of the Slavonic Bible, he died in 1725 before it could be completed. On February 14, 1744, his daughter Elizabeth decreed that the revision be resumed.[7] The new Slavonic version that was published as a result, in 1751, was so connected to Elizabeth's patronage that even modern editions of the Church Slavonic text are still known today as the "Elizabeth Bible." The 1756 revision of the Elizabeth Bible is the basis of the text authorized for use by the Russian Orthodox church today.

I recommend amending this statement in the *Guide* to read: "The text of what eventually became the standard version of the Slavonic Bible first appeared in St. Petersburg in 1751 under the auspices of the Empress Elizabeth. She envisioned it as the fulfillment of the edict her father, Peter the Great, issued in 1712 to revise the Moscow Bible of 1663. The text received by Russian Orthodox Church today, based on the 1756 revision of the 1751 edition, is still called the 'Elizabeth Bible' in honor of her patronage." This represents a slight expansion for the sake of clarity, which seems warranted because the editors mention that readers of the first edition of the *Guide* requested that more information on Slavonic should appear in the revision (p. xxxiii).

Another small discrepancy appears in the discussion of the Church Slavonic Bible in the introduction to the "People" section (p. 4), where the text reads:

7 For the full text of Elizabeth's 1744 decree and an extensive analysis of the revision it launched, see chapter three in Astafiev (1889).

> Early in the 18c., Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia, ordered the preparation of what would become the standard Church Slavonic Bible, but he died before it was published. Elizabeth, Empress of Russia from 1741 to 1761, ordered its publication in 1751, and it is accordingly known as the "Bible of Elizabeth." (Nida 1972, 197)

The *Guide* cites page 197 in Nida (1972). However, the information in question is found on page 397 of the source in question. It is worth noting that this citation from Nida supports the emendation I have suggested for page 237 in the *Guide*.

12.4 Ukrainian

The entry for "Ukrainian" identifies the language as "Ukrainian (formerly known as Ruthenian)." As Himka (1996) demonstrates, the term "Ruthenian" in its various spellings has referred to various groups, but never simply to all Ukrainians. I suggest that the editors simply remove the reference to "Ruthenian" in this entry.

12.5 Vuk Stefanović Karadžić

The *Guide* (p. 34) states that the Serbian linguist Vuk Stefanović Karadžić learned to read and write at the monastery at Tronoša. This matches the claim by the Encyclopedia Britannica (n.d.), which causes us to wonder whether this might be the source that Ellingworth consulted for this article. However, Milićević (1971, 120) qualifies this information slightly: While Karadžić did study at the Tronoša monastery, he was initially taught to read and write by his cousin, Jevta Savić Čotrić, who would later become a Serbian national leader. I suggest that the *Guide* mention the initial contribution of Čotrić to his younger cousin's education.

13. Articles that Require Updates

In his Foreword to the *Guide*, Robert Hodgson, Jr. mentions that this encyclopedia was "a decade long in the making" (p. xxvii). If they were composed at the beginning of this decade-long process, this would explain some articles in the languages section that do not record Bibles produced after about 2009 (e.g., Czech, Italian, Spanish). Other entries cover subjects with more recent developments (e.g., Afrikaans). In addition to the article on Catalan that this review discussed above, I believe that the following articles require an update.

13.1 Kurt Aland

The entry on Kurt Aland (p. 6) is current up to the publication of the fourth revised edition of the UBS Greek New Testament. I recommend that this article be updated to include the publication of the fifth revised edition.

13.2 Afrikaans

The article on Afrikaans mentions a "source-language orientated translation, which is expected to be published during the bicentenary of the establishment of a Bible Society in South Africa in 2020" (p. 71). This almost certainly refers to *Die Bybel 2020-vertaling*, which the Bible Society of South Africa launched on November 29, 2020, following initial sales of the new Bible version in October. I recommend that the editors of the *Guide* update this article to reflect the 2020 publication of *Die Bybel 2020-vertaling*.

13.3 Czech

The discussion of Bible translations into Czech (p. 107) is current up to 2004. Since then, several study Bibles and other revisions have been published,

though it is not immediately clear from their various respective websites which of these projects (other than the revised *New World Translation*, 2019) represent new versions of the Bible in Czech. In any case, these new Czech Bible editions merit mention in this article.

13.4 Polish

The entry on Polish mentions that publication of the last two volumes of a multi-volume Bible is "planned for 2016" (p. 215). I suggest that this statement be updated to reflect the current status of this new Polish translation.

13.5 Russian

The article on Russian notes that Adventist Pastor Mikhail P. Kulakov founded the Institute for Bible Translation in Zaoksky, where he published his translation of the New Testament, and began publishing portions of the Old Testament. "At the time of this writing," the article says, the Institute "is planning publication of the entire Bible" (p. 224). I recommend that the editors update this article to reflect that the entire (Protestant canon) Bible was, in fact, finished under the direction of Kulakov's son, Mikhail M. Kulakov, and published in 2015.

13.6 Italian

The article on Italian (pp. 161–163) is current up to 1997. This coincides with the publication date of a summary of Italian Bible translation by Buzzetti (1997), which seems to be the original source of the article.[8] I recommend that future revisions of the Guide update this entry to include discussion of Italian translations after 1997. Among these, the following versions should be noted: *La Sacra Bibbia*, second edition (2008); *La Bibbia di Gerusalemme* (2009); and two translations by the Jehovah's Witnesses (the *Traduzione del Nuovo Mondo delle Sacre Scritture* [2017] and the *Traduzione del Nuovo Mondo delle Sacre Scritture: Edizione per lo studio* [2018]).

13.7 Spanish

The article on Spanish Bible translations ("Spanish," pp. 241–244) is a good example of one of the *Guide's* more extensive treatments. Nevertheless, the last modern version mentioned is a 2010 publication (*La Palabra: El mensaje de Dios para mí*). Since 2010, Spanish has seen at least 12 new versions or significant revisions of older versions. At least a few of these translations merit discussion in the *Guide*. The Reina-Valera, which the article in the *Guide* discusses, has enjoyed acceptance in the Spanish-speaking world similar to the way that the English-speaking world has received the King James Bible. Like the King James, the Reina-Valera has undergone many redactions over its four-hundred-year history. In 2011, a revision was published (the *Reina-Valera Contemporánea*, henceforth RVC) that updates the style in many passages to modern Spanish usage. The RVC also footnotes variants in the New Testament between its *Textus Receptus* Vorlage and the Nestle-Aland Greek Text (27th edition). This marks a noteworthy shift to bring the *Reina-Valera* tradition into closer dialogue with modern text criticism.

The year 2011 also saw the publication of a Messianic New Testament (*El Nuevo Testamento Judío*). The *Biblia Textual, Fourth Edition* (2014) merits mention as a fresh translation, produced by the Sociedad Bíblica Iberoamericana. Notable Roman Catholic editions continue to appear, such as the *Biblia de la Iglesia en América* (of which the New Testament was published in 2015) and the *Biblia Didajé* (2016, with commentary based

8 The Guide indicates that Ellingworth translated a Buzzetti article to produce the entry on Italian, but it does not state explicitly which Buzzetti article he translated. However, of the four works by Buzzetti that the Guide cites in its General References, only the 1997 article appears to be a summary history of Italian Bible translation.

on the English *Didache* Bible). The Watchtower Society of the Jehovah's Witnesses recently published the Spanish edition of the *New World Translation* in 2019.

14. Spelling Corrections

I suggest the following spelling corrections in non-English book titles and personal names:

1) *La traducción bíblica: lingüística y estilística*. In the article on Luis Alonso Schökel, the work cited as *La traducción biblica: lingüistic y stilistica* (p. 7) should be spelled *La traducción b**í**blica: lingü**í**stic**a** y **e**stil**í**stica*.
2) *La Défense et illustration de la langue française*. In the article on Joachim de Bellay (p. 12), the work cited as *Défense et illustration de la langue françoise* should be spelled *La Défense et illustration de la langue française*.
3) *Hebräische Grammatik*. Under the entry for Wilhelm Gesenius (p. 28), the title of his *Hebraische Grammatik* should be spelled "*Hebräische Grammatik*," with umlauts over the "a" in "*Hebräische*."
4) *Paolo de Santa Fé*. The entry for Yajirō (p. 64) lists his Portuguese name as "Paola de Santa Fé." The name "Paula" should be spelled "Paulo."
5) *Atahualpa*. The *Guide* spells the name of the Inca emperor as "Atahuallpa" (pp. 4, 9, 218), probably following the older convention of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. I recommend the current convention, following Spanish, that spells the name as "Atahualpa" (with one "l").

15. Minor Discrepancies

In this section, I respectfully list a few places where I believe the *Guide* could improve consistency and clarity.

15.1 Atahualpa

Regarding the ignominious fate of Atahualpa, the *Guide* reads, "The act of tossing the Bible to the ground was deemed to be blasphemy by the Spanish invaders for which the penalty was death" (p. 4). The structure and the subtle use of "which" make this sentence unclear at first glance: The expression "the Spanish invaders for which the penalty was death" suggests that the Spanish invaders suffered the death penalty. Perhaps this sentence could be clarified by the insertion of a full stop: "The act of tossing the Bible to the ground was deemed to be blasphemy by the Spanish invaders. The penalty was death."

The use of "which" instead of "whom" does disambiguate the recipient of the death penalty. However, this requires the reader to pause and disentangle the syntax. It seems smoother to divide the sentence to improve clarity, as I have suggested here.

15.2 Academic titles

Under the main category of "Advisors" in the front matter are three categories: Editorial Committee, Editorial Board, and Advisory Committee. Only the members of the Advisory Committee (pp. xxi–xxii) are listed with their academic titles (e.g., "Prof.," "Dr."). The names in the other categories are listed without titles, even though many of these people hold doctorates and professorships as well. For the sake of consistency, I recommend that the *Guide* either remove the titles of the Advisory Committee or include the titles of everyone listed.

15.3 Unclear labels: "Chinese and Chinese Dialects" and "Gypsy Languages"

A few entries appear under labels that are unclear, such as the entry entitled "Chinese and Chinese dialects." Since China hosts several hundred languages within its boarders, it does not seem proper to speak of "Chinese" as a language. Furthermore, the languages within China so often transcend national boundaries that linguists must resort to labels that reflect this reality (e.g., "Sino-Tibetan"). Therefore, a label such as "Mandarin and other Sinitic languages" or the slightly more durable "Mandarin and other languages in China" would be more consistent with current nomenclature. Such a change would also be consistent with the entry for "Vietnamese and languages of Vietnam" (pp. 268–269).

The entry for "Gypsy languages" stands out because of the often-pejorative use of the word "Gypsy." This unfortunate coloring of the term has led many people to prefer the term "Roma" over "Gypsy." The *Guide* does seem to be aware of this preference, since the entry at "Gypsy languages" redirects the reader to the entry "Romani." Given modern sensitivities to the word "Gypsy," perhaps future editions of the *Guide* could forego putting an entry for "Gypsy Languages." I suggest that the editors simply put an entry in the *Guide* for "Roma" or "Romani" and note in the text of the article that the Roma languages have historically been known under the name "Gypsy," which is becoming progressively obsolete.

Similarly, the general term "Eskimo" is falling into disuse as some groups find it offensive. As John Harris observes in the "Notes on terminology" at the end of his article on "Indigenous languages" in the *Guide* (pp. 151–154), "Inuit" is now preferred over "Eskimo" (p. 154). I suggest that the *Guide* follow Harris's advice by removing the entry for "Eskimo" (p. 118). In my opinion, readers will scarcely miss the entry for "Eskimo," since it merely directs them to "see Inuit, Yupik." The Aleut people should also be included, along with Inuit and Yupik, among the indigenous circumpolar ethnicities previously labeled as "Eskimo."

In defense of the *Guide*, I must concede that the preferred nomenclature of peoples and their languages is often both highly political and constantly shifting. It would be nearly impossible for any reference work of this scope to select names that satisfy all linguists. Nevertheless, the consensus on "Mandarin," "Roma," and the circumpolar people groups seems to be sufficiently well established that these changes seem warranted.

15.4 Kenneth Pike (unclear page references)

The article on Kenneth Pike (pp. 50–52) cites multiple works, but the citations are difficult to follow when the author refers to page numbers only. I suggest that this article list the abbreviated title with the page numbers for each citation it gives.

15.5 English

In the article on English Bible translations (pp. 113–118), Ellingworth calls the Deuterocanonical books "those OT books that have *no surviving basis in the Hebrew Bible* but were part of the LXX and therefore had always been part of the Vulgate" (p. 116, my emphasis). In light of the discovery in the Judean Desert of Hebrew versions of Sirach, portions of Tobit, and part of Baruch, I recommend that the editors of the *Guide* amend this statement as follows, "It [the Douay-Rheims version] was published in 1582 and was followed in 1610 by a complete Bible which included the Deuterocanon, those OT books that *were not included in the canon of the* Hebrew Bible but were part of the LXX and therefore had always been part of the Vulgate."

Ellingworth describes the King James Version (KJV) of 1611 as the "the most widely used of Middle English Bibles" (p. 116), even though he

correctly assigns the KJV to his first subsection on "Early Modern English." To avoid the possible confusion between whether the 1611 King James Bible represents Middle English or Early Modern English, it would be better to rephrase this statement as follows: "…the KJV became in time the most widely used of English Bibles *produced during this period*."

15.6 Logos Bible Software

The introduction to the "Topics" section notes that Logos Bible software is produced by Libronix (p. 277). I suggest updating this sentence with the phrase, "Logos Bible Software, formerly produced by Libronix…" or "Logos Bible Software, currently produced by Faithlife…"

15.7 "Slavic" versus "Slavonic"

The *Guide* occasionally uses the term "Slavonic" when current American usage prefers "Slavic." The term "Slavonic" used to denote both "Church Slavonic" (i.e., the liturgical language) and "Slavic" (i.e., the peoples, languages, and cultures that descend from the eponymous branch of Indo-European). However, modern American use of the term "Slavonic" now denotes the liturgical language (or sometimes Old Bulgarian, also called "Old Macedonian"). British English apparently uses "Slavonic" to include what American English would call "Slavic." Since the *Guide* has consistently used American English conventions elsewhere, I recommend that it use the term "Slavic" instead of "Slavonic" when the liturgical language is not in view.

The "Slavonic Bible Fund" should be named the "Slavic Bible Fund" on page 224. Similarly, the term "Slavonic" should be changed to "Slavic" on page 338. There we read, "For all textual issues, Orthodox churches in Slavonic countries regard the Church Slavonic Bible text as canonical." This sentence illustrates the difference between "Slavic" and "Slavonic," since it requires both expressions. I suggest, "For all textual issues, Orthodox churches in Slavic countries regard the Church Slavonic Bible text as canonical." It is not impossible that the author here does intend the sense of "Slavonic," that is, "Orthodox churches in Slavonic countries" could mean, "Orthodox churches in countries that adhere to the Church Slavonic rite." In this case, "Slavonic" would be the correct word choice. However, it seems more likely that "Slavic" is the intended term. The meaning would then approximately be, "Orthodox churches in ethnically and culturally Slavic countries regard the Church Slavonic Bible text as canonical." Please note that the expression "Church Slavonic" should remain as it stands.

On page 635, we find this statement: "The Church Slavonic translation of the Bible now used in the Russian and other Slav Orthodox Churches goes directly back to the first translation produced by the saintly brothers and their successors." While the expression "Slav Orthodox Churches" is certainly clearer than "Slavonic Orthodox Churches," current usage suggests that "Slavic Orthodox Churches" might be a better choice.

Where the entry for "Belarusan" identifies it as an "Eastern Slavonic language" (p. 88), it should be called an "eastern Slavic language." I suggest that the definite article be added to the following sentence in this entry: "A number of biblical fragments in Old Belarusan appeared in several manuscripts: Vitsebsk Psalter (1492), Chetsi-Minei (1489), and the Vilno Codex…" (p.88). The revision should read, "…the Vitebsk Psalter…"

15.8 Citation of Stephen Batalden in "Confessional and Interconfessional Translations"

On page 381, Omanson cites "Bataldan [sic] 2004, 169–268." The name of this author should be corrected to "Batalden." The article by Batalden does not seem to be listed in the *Guide's* "General References" section, though

the following does appear: Dean, John. 2004. "London Bible House in the 1950s." In Stephen Bataldan [sic], Kathleen Cann, and John Dean, eds., *Sowing the Word: The Cultural Impact of the British and Foreign Bible Society 1804–2004*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 81–96. It is unclear whether this work cited in the bibliography contains the reference cited on page 381 of the *Guide*.

16. Inactive Hyperlinks

The following hyperlinks in the *Guide* are inactive. I respectfully recommend that they be revised or removed.

1) "John Wycliffe." The article on John Wycliffe gives a hyperlink to an edition of the Bible published by his followers (http://wesley.nnu.edu/biblical_studies/wycliffe, p. 64). This internet link is inactive as of June 23, 2021.
2) "Sign languages." As of June 28, 2021, the hyperlink https://video.deafbiblesociety.com/ismilmo is inactive in the article on "Bible Translation in Sign Languages" (p. 231).
3) "Syriac." The hyperlink http://www.ancientscripts.com/syriac.html (as of June 28, 2021) in the article on "Syriac" (p. 248) is inactive.
4) "Christianity and sacred text." The hyperlink www.americanbible.org/about in the article on "Christianity and sacred text" (p. 342) directs the reader to an active page, but that page does not contain the text that the article cites (as of June 30, 2021).

17. Biographical Sketches for All Contributing Authors

This review has focused much of its attention on the authors who contribute articles to the *Guide* because I believe that their experience and scholarship adds value to this encyclopedia. I suggest that biographical sketches be included in the *Guide* for every author.

18. Relying on the Experts

This review has attempted to point out that the *Guide* is at its best when it enlists the experts. As the editors consider revising the *Guide* for future editions, I recommend that they play to this strength by continuing to seek the assistance of specialists in two ways: first, specialists should assess the changes that this review has suggested to the content of the *Guide*.

Second, if this review is correct when it asserts that the *Guide* is at its best when the experts speak, then it follows that the best practices moving forward should take greater advantage of the scholarship of specialists. Please allow me to illustrate this by pointing out an example of where the *Guide* seems to rely too much on the contributions of a single author.

The late Paul Ellingworth single-handedly authors 85 entries in the *Guide*, not counting the articles he submits in translation or as coauthor with someone else. These articles span all three of its major sections ("People," "Languages," and "Topics"), and they cover a staggering array of subjects. Considering the career that Ellingworth enjoyed in Bible translation and academia (particularly as a scholar on the book of Hebrews), it surprises no one that he was respected for the breadth of his knowledge in many areas.

The sheer scope of these 85 articles almost guarantees that Ellingworth could not equally be an expert in all of them. Take, for example, the corrections this review has suggested in the articles he writes on "Slavonic" and "Vuk Stefanović Karadžić." If Ellingworth was relying on English resources to research these two articles, he can scarcely be faulted if he missed important details. Perhaps if the *Guide* had enlisted specialists in these subjects to pen the articles, some of the discrepancies might have been avoided.

Although no other author contributes as many articles to the *Guide* as the esteemed Ellingworth, he is not the only author who has submitted a large number of entries. For instance, two other authors submit over 50 articles each to this encyclopedia on a range of subjects no less extensive than the entries by Ellingworth. Rather than relying on so few people for so much of its content, I suggest that the *Guide* exploit its strongest attribute and enjoin more scholars to share the load.

Considering the many scholars that do contribute to this encyclopedia, the *Guide* shows every evidence that the editors have invited as many experts as possible to submit articles. Therefore, this recommendation to engage more specialists to write the *Guide's* entries does not imply that the editors have not solicited those contributions. Rather, this review merely recognizes the excellence of those submissions, and encourages the editors to increase this practice of seeking out top scholars in Bible translation to contribute more articles in subsequent editions. Therefore, this review is as much a supplication to ask more scholars to contribute future articles to the *Guide* as it is a call to the editors to accept them.

19. Conclusion

This review of *A Guide to Bible Translation* has selectively attempted to highlight some of the contributing authors and articles that stood out to me as someone who is involved in Bible translation. It has been a pleasure to discover well-written entries by well-respected people in Bible translation and related disciplines. Hopefully, this review has invited its readers to discover the *Guide's* understated excellence on their own.

This review has pointed out a few areas where I believe the *Guide* requires revision or correction. Most of these amendments are not extensive. If the editors accept these suggestions, the changes should be easy to implement, at least in the electronic edition. Assuming that many Bible translation personnel will be accessing the digital text of the *Guide* in *Translator's Workplace* through Logos Bible software, any revisions should appear during the course of regular software updates.

In closing, I enthusiastically invite anyone interested in the field to read *A Guide to Bible Translation: People, Languages, and Topics*. It is my hope that the readers derive as much enjoyment as I did from the wealth of expertise and experience this encyclopedia offers.[9]

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9 A pre-publication draft of this review was shared with the *Guide's* editors, who graciously offered many useful comments toward its improvement. The opinions expressed in this review, however, are my own.

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