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* Offer analytical and expositional articles on biblical texts.
* Engage with academic biblical studies that originate in other Christian confessions.
* Defend the biblical principles summarised in the common Christadelphian statement of faith.
* Subject the published articles to retrospective peer review and amendment.

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Editorial

In this issue there are two new sections -“Reviews” and “Marginal Notes”. It is often the case that exegetical information for a text may only comprise a paragraph; the concept of a marginal note allows such information to be included in the magazine instead of being postponed for inclusion in a longer article. As for book reviews, the intention here is to include reviews of non-Christadelphian books that have value for exegesis.

**The Spirit Yesterday and Tomorrow (2)**

**The Manifestation of the Spirit at Pentecost**

**Andrew Perry**

There are three broad positions on the meaning of the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost. Pentecostal scholars like Robert Menzies define the gift solely in terms of an added gift enabling and supporting the missionary work of the church.[[1]](#footnote-1) Non-Pentecostal scholars of a broader charismatic persuasion such as Max Turner extend the range of functions flowing from the gift to include building up the church;[[2]](#footnote-2) J.D.G. Dunn argues that the gift of the Spirit pertains also to conversion-initiation and salvation.[[3]](#footnote-3) These three positions define the current state of scholarship on this question.

The premise for Pentecostal scholars who present an empowerment view is that the gift of the Spirit is promised to those who are *already* Christians. This prior status is shown by Luke’s loose coupling of the reception of the Spirit and water baptism. Luke has examples of baptised believers without the Spirit (Acts 8, 19). The gift of the Spirit is therefore secondary and additional to the Christian life; its purpose is mission. Scholars who take this approach may further delimit the Spirit as essentially prophetic in the style of the Old Testament prophets *preaching* to the nation. Menzies offers the most detailed defence of this position.

Our contrary view of the Spirit is not one that is exclusively either missiological (Menzies) or soteriological (Turner and Dunn). If Pentecost is read in the context of “last days” of a Jewish age and in the light of the need to deliver the people from a coming judgment, it follows that Menzies’ missiological emphasis is correct. However, there is an implied *restriction* in this model that prevents the generalization that the gift of the Spirit is *an added gift* available for the Christian church and a Christian dispensation.

In his use of Joel, Luke places a *temporal restriction* on the gift as one pertaining to the “last days” (Acts 2:17). This restriction has major consequences for any assessment of the soteriological significance of the gift. Menzies, Dunn, and Turner implicitly assume that the gift of the Spirit is a permanent feature in the structure of both Christian life and the church. However, the argument that we will develop against this view is that Luke presents his account of Pentecost within the eschatological expectations of Luke 17 and 21. These do not allow for an enduring Christian dispensation, and therefore we cannot assume that the gift of the Spirit pertains to such an enduring institution as “the church”. The purpose of the bestowal of the Spirit relates to the requirements of the “last days”, which is to secure an escape from the wrath to come. The implication is that when this purpose has run its course, *that* gift of the Spirit comes to an end.

This view is a “cessationist” position. As a result of the influence of Pentecostalism upon the church since the beginning of the 20c., older catholic and reformed views of the cessation of the Spirit have fallen by the wayside. Generally speaking, if a scholar accepts that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have ceased, he still nevertheless holds the view that the “graces” of the Spirit are present in the church today. The older reformed emphasis upon the Word of God in the life of the believer has lost its role to the presence of the Spirit in the life of the believer. This is a broadly charismatic view which can be considered a consensus. Pentecostalism, having pushed the Spirit onto the main agenda in the thinking of the church a century ago, is now no longer the driver in this area of church doctrine: its insistence on a narrower view of the Spirit as an added gift for mission has lost credibility to the broader charismatic view that says the Spirit is also involved in the conversion of a Christian and the maintenance of a Christian in his church life.

The strength of the cessationist view lies in an understanding of the OT. The declared purpose of God through the prophets, particularly Joel and Isaiah, shows that the Spirit is bestowed at a particular time in the scheme of things: this time is the “last days” before a crisis in the history of his people. In Isaiah (e.g. Isa 32:15), the Spirit is bestowed around the time of the Assyrian Crisis in 701; this is also the subject of Joel 2:28-32. The Spirit was not bestowed as a permanent endowment in 701 as shown by the subsequent history of Judah going into exile.

These texts about the Spirit in Joel and Isaiah are the basis for Luke’s explanation of Pentecost. Luke uses both Isa 32:15 and Joel 2:28-32. The bestowal of the Spirit is another fulfillment of the terms of original prophecies. However, just as those prophecies did not issue in the establishment of the kingdom, and the Jews were scattered throughout the nations, so too the Spirit was withdrawn once its purpose was completed – a purpose that had to do with the need to witness to the Jews.

**Contextualizing Prophetic Oracles (2)**

**Isaiah 24-27**

**Andrew Perry**

Isaiah 24-27 is usually regarded by scholars as “apocalyptic”, and as later than the time of Isaiah of Jerusalem. However, we view their content as entirely applicable to the Assyrian crisis.[[4]](#footnote-4) The “Zion triumphant” perspective of these chapters fits the history of the Assyrian crisis in that Jerusalem is delivered. The rivalry between Judah and Assyria in the parochial eyes of Isaiah leads him to proclaim the survival of Jerusalem.

The main critical “evidence” that leads to the non-Isaianic dating for these oracles is the description of “the city” or “cities”. What is the identity of the city, and has the city been devastated and the population gone into captivity? If the city is Jerusalem,[[5]](#footnote-5) the details may apply equally to the Babylonian or Assyrian crisis. The following points suggest an Assyrian application if the city is Jerusalem:

1) The population is still present in the city and in a state of siege: every house is “shut up” and “no man” is allowed in (Isa 24:10). The city is in a state of “confusion” suggesting siege conditions and irrational despair (Isa 24:10). The city is said to be “broken” (rbv, Isa 24:10), but this verb is a broad term; it could signal the capture and sacking of a city, or it could indicate a rupture or breach in the city. An example of the latter usage is Isa 30:13, where a city wall is said to be ruptured. The other details suggest a city under siege and city walls that have received a breach.

2) The gate is said to be “battered” (ttk, Isa 24:12, RSV). This might suggest that the gate has been broken down and the siege army has broken through and ransacked the city. However, this is unlikely; it is more likely that the gate has been battered and shorn up, and the invader has not yet broken through. The people are still safe in the city, but in dire straits. The verb is one of attack rather than one for breaking through: thus it has been translated as “smite” and “beat” in the KJV. The verb is used in Isa 30:14 as part of the figure “vessel that is broken in pieces” (KJV). This text refers to the sudden breaking of the peace treaty between Assyria and Judah. This led to the siege of Jerusalem and as a consequence the “joy” that was in the city vanished (Isa 24:11).

3) The city is said to be “desolate” in that desolation is “left in the city” (Isa 27:10). The verb for “remaining” (rav, Isa 24:6) is used and this implies some sort of exodus from the city, with appropriate looting, so that the city only has desolation left or remaining. This picture is not one describing what is left after the ransacking of the city, but rather it is one describing what is left once those who *can* escape have abandoned the city. The idea of there being a surviving remnant in the land is prominent in Isaiah (e.g. Isa 28:5, 37:31). The city is intact but in a dire state “in the midst of the land” (Isa 24:13).

4) Whereas “the city of confusion” is Jerusalem, not every reference to a city in Isaiah 24-27 is a reference to Jerusalem. Cities were turned into heaps in the land, and this is the claim of Isa 25:2, “you have made a city a heap”; the LXX interprets with a plural, “you have made cities a heap”.

The sacking of the Judean “fortified cities” (rcb, Isa 25:2) is the hallmark of the Isaianic account of the Assyrian campaign (rcb, Isa 36:1, 37:26), rather than any sixth century prophets’ account of the Babylonian invasion. In a similar vein, the Assyrian invader sacked “citadels of foreigners” (Isa 25:2). These fortresses were set up by those foreigners taking advantage of the chaos in the land. The claiming of territory by foreigners in the wake of the Assyrian threat is suggested by such texts as Isa 1:7.

Another reference to the cities of the land is found in Isa 27:10-11, “the fortified city is solitary” (RSV). These cities, after they had been sacked by the Assyrian army, were left abandoned, and since many of them would have been “fenced” and of wooden construction, their fate was to be used for firewood (Isa 27:11).

5) Jerusalem is described as “the lofty (bgf) city” with “inhabitants of the height” (Isa 26:5, RSV). This city is laid low, but it is cast down in order for the poor and the needy to trample it under foot (Isa 26:6). In this kind of language, Isaiah is not describing the effects of a hostile enemy, but the replacement of corrupt rulers who had sought appeasement with Assyria and who had persecuted the poor and the needy. This interpretation is suggested by the intertextual links with Isa 2:11, 17 which state that “the haughtiness (bgf)” of men shall be humbled “in that day”. The description “lofty city” means a “haughty city”, a city ruled by haughty men. In the day that the Lord delivers Jerusalem, these men will be humbled in the dust—their policy of appeasement shown to be a false policy.

In contrast to these men, Isaiah uses the terms “the poor” and “the needy” as ciphers for those whom the Lord views with favour (Isa 3:14-15, 10:2, 14:32, 32:7)

6) Oracles about the survival of the city are included in Isaiah 24-27. Thus Yahweh will reign from Mount Zion (Isa 24:23); and a feast will be celebrated on the mountain of the Lord (Isa 25:6-8). Oracles are also included that suggest that the people in the city wait for salvation in that place (Isa 25:9, 26:1-4). The juxtaposition of these oracles of hope alongside oracles of doom suggests an imminent expectation of deliverance of the city.

For these reasons, we take Isaiah 24-27 as descriptive of the Assyrian Crisis.

**Understanding Demons (2)**

**Hellenistic and Jewish Demonology**

**Andrew Perry**

There is no consensus in ancient literature about the nature of demons or evil spirits. The early Jesus traditions pre-suppose or assume an understanding of demons; the Gospel authors assume their readers[[6]](#footnote-6) will readily understand the mention of demons.

Sources for understanding demons include Greco-Roman and Jewish literature before and after the time of Jesus, the Greek Magical Papyri (PGM), curse tablets, and amulets.[[7]](#footnote-7) Curse tablets and magical amulets have been discovered from all over the Mediterranean world, dating both before and after our period. The magical papyri are dated later (3c. CE and onwards), but they reflect the earlier traditions embodied in the curse tablets and magical amulets. Further, we cannot ignore the wider Near East and its possible influence on thinking about demons in first century Palestine.[[8]](#footnote-8) These various sources are often highly syncretistic; there was a significant cross-fertilisation of ideas about demons and gods in the Ancient World.

The differences in source material can be characterised in the following way: in philosophical and literary works, the references to demons are more likely to be discursive and theoretical, whereas in the magical texts, curse tablets and amulets, references to demons are essential to the practical use of these texts in everyday life. It is these latter types of text that are more relevant to the traditions about Jesus’ exorcisms simply because they are set in everyday social contexts.

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Plutarch (c. 46 - c.120 C.E.) is the principal philosophical source for 1c. views on demons. His main writing on the subject, *Oracles in Decline*,[[9]](#footnote-9) is a dialogue set in Delphi, discussing the question of why Oracles were less used than in previous generations. Plutarch’s characters represent two views on demons – they are either intermediary to the gods and/or they are the souls of the departed dead.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Plutarch’s characters adduce information about demons from the religious rituals and mysteries of the day. Demons are required because the gods cannot directly participate in men’s affairs. They are souls because they manifest the same behavioural characteristics as humans who are essentially “souls”. Generally, they are the souls of the dead, however, some are souls that have never been united with human bodies and are therefore independent spirits—intermediate beings between the gods and men. Demons may be good or evil.[[11]](#footnote-11) Plutarch represents views about demons derived from Plato,[[12]](#footnote-12) who may be considered to have moulded the consensus view for the educated Hellenized classes.

These two views represent alternative understandings that Jesus and/or his disciples may have entertained.[[13]](#footnote-13) However, there is no Gospel-based evidence that Jesus or the disciples subscribed to Hellenistic views. It is more likely that they derived their conceptions from the surrounding Jewish culture, including Jewish literature and Jewish Scripture. We should also bear in mind that Jesus may have entertained a different point of view to that of the disciples on this question.

The main evidence for Jesus’ view on demons is the passage known as the “Beelzebub Controversy”. In this controversy Jesus is accused of being possessed by Beelzebub. This accusation is well attested in early tradition (Luke/Q 11:14-18a, 19-20, 23,[[14]](#footnote-14) Mark 3:19b-30), and the central charge may well have been made on more than one occasion (cf. Matt 9:32-34, 10:25, John 7:20, 8:48-52, 10:20-21). Likewise, Jesus’ answers to the charge have multiple attestations (e.g. GThom 35 as well as Q and Mark). This variety of independent evidence leads scholars to regard the Beelzebub Controversy as genuine.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Mark’s narrative comment on this controversy is that Jesus’ opponents had accused him of having an unclean spirit (Mark 3:30) – and this suggests that Beelzebub was an unclean spirit – a demon. In a Jewish context, “Beelzebub”,[[16]](#footnote-16) the prince of demons (Mark 3:22), is another title for the leading demon in the Story of the Watchers (cf. Dan 4:17) – “Mastema” or “Satan” in *Jubilees* or Semyaz or Azaz’el[[17]](#footnote-17) in *1 Enoch*. These texts develop a Midrash on Genesis 6 and offer an account of the origin of demons.[[18]](#footnote-18)

In *1 Enoch*, the sons of God (fallen angels) marry the daughters of men and give birth to giants (*1 Enoch* 6:1-2, 7:1-2). These angels (led by Semyaz or Azaz’el) are imprisoned in the earth but the spirits of these giants are allowed to roam the earth:

But now the giants who are born from the (union of) the spirits and the flesh shall be called evil spirits[[19]](#footnote-19) upon the earth, because their dwelling shall be upon the earth and inside the earth. Evil spirits have come out of their bodies. Because from the day they were created from the holy ones they became Watchers; their first origin is the spiritual foundation. They shall become evil upon the earth and shall be called evil spirits. The dwelling of the spiritual beings of heaven is heaven; but the dwelling of the spirits of the earth, which are born upon the earth, is the earth. The spirits of the giants oppress each other; they will corrupt, fall, be excited, and fall upon the earth, and cause sorrow. They eat no food, nor become thirsty, nor find obstacles. And these spirits shall rise up against the children of the people and against the women, because they have proceeded from them. *1 Enoch* 15:8-12

They have defiled the people and will lead them into error so that they will offer sacrifices to the demons as unto gods, until the great Day of Judgment... *1 Enoch* 19:1

These spirits “which come from the flesh” will do their work until the consummation of the age.

This is only a brief and simple survey of the story of the Watchers. There are complex issues of interpretation raised by the text, which we have ignored. These do not affect our objective in considering *1 Enoch*, because we are just concerned with how the work accounts for the origin of demons.[[20]](#footnote-20) *1 Enoch* provides a precise explanation of a) why there are evil spirits; b) why these beings are “spirit”; and c) why they dwell on earth.

*Jubilees* is the other major surviving source from the inter-testamental period that describes the fall of angels from heaven. O. S. Wintermute comments,

If Jubilees is dated between 161-149 BC, it becomes an important primary source for studying the evolution of the various religious parties which became prominent in Judea just before the birth of Christ.[[21]](#footnote-21)

*Jubilees* gives a slightly different caste to the story of the Watchers. The leading evil spirit, Mastema or Satan, is one of the giants and left free to supervise other evil spirits; in *1 Enoch*, Azaz’el or Semyaz is a fallen angel and imprisoned in the earth.

In response to the prayer of Noah for protection against the spirits of the giants, God instructs his angels to “bind them” in the earth. In response to this command Mastema addresses God:

And the Lord God bade us to bind all. And the chief of the spirits, Mastema, came and said:

‘Lord, Creator, let some of them remain before me and let them hearken to my voice, and do all that I shall say unto them; for if some of them are not left to me, I shall not be able to execute the power of my will on the children of men because they are intended to corrupt and lead astray before my judgement because the evil of the sons of men is great.’

And he said:

‘Let the tenth part of them remain before him, and let nine parts descend into the place of condemnation.’

And one of us he commanded that we should teach Noah all their medicines; for he knew that they would not walk in uprightness, nor strive in righteousness. And we did according to all his words: all the malignant evil ones we bound in the place of condemnation, and a tenth part of them we left that they might be subject before Satan on the earth. And we explained to Noah all the medicines of their diseases, together with their seductions, how he might heal them with herbs of the earth. And Noah wrote down all things in a book as we instructed him concerning every kind of medicine. Thus the evil spirits were precluded from hurting the sons of Noah. *Jubilees* 10:1-14[[22]](#footnote-22)

The dimension that Jewish literature adds to Hellenistic ideas about demons is the nomination of a leading demon: the Devil and Satan. In Greek religion, demons might be the intermediaries of the gods, but no one particular “god” is signalled out as a leader of demons.[[23]](#footnote-23) In *Jubilees*, Mastema or Satan is given a recurring adversarial role in Israelite history.[[24]](#footnote-24)

The scholarly consensus is that Jewish demonologies developed after the Exile as a result of contact with Persian thinking:

The idea that demons were responsible for all moral and physical evil had penetrated deeply into Jewish religious thought in the period following the Babylonian exile, no doubt as a result of Iranian influence on Judaism in the fifth and the fourth centuries BC when Palestine as well as Jews from the eastern Diaspora were subject to Persian rule.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Of the two traditions, *Jubilees* is closer than *1 Enoch* to Jesus’ controversy with his opponents. Mastema was a “prince”, and being a “prince” is a characteristic of Beelzebub. Jesus shows understanding of Jewish thinking in this area: he accepts that Beelzebub is a “prince”—for he talks of a kingdom and he accepts the casting out of demons “by” a figure of power. Jesus also substitutes “Satan” for the title “Beelzebub”, which is also a title for Mastema.

In terms of Jesus and his disciples’ thinking on demons, it is likely that some rendition of the Watchers Story informed their dealings with the people. Its popularity is evidenced in the number of surviving 1c. texts that mention the story, for example, in the Essene documents—the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen 2:1), and the *Damascus Document* (CD 2:14-20);[[26]](#footnote-26) and in various inter-testamental works.[[27]](#footnote-27)

**John the Baptist**

**Paul Wyns**

The impact that John the Baptist made on the national psyche cannot be underestimated; he is mentioned by the historian Josephus[[28]](#footnote-28) and had a lasting effect on the early church as well as influencing the preaching of Jesus himself.

John commenced his preaching in the Jordan valley near Jericho. Because it was so much lower and warmer than Jerusalem, Jericho had been extended by Herod the Great to form a winter-capital for the court. ‘The climate is so mild’, says Josephus, ‘that the inhabitants wear linen when snow is falling throughout the rest of Judaea’.[[29]](#footnote-29) This may have been a consideration in choosing a location but there are other, more compelling reasons for choosing this location.

John deliberately chose Jericho because it was the location where Israel first entered the land. He alludes to the significance of this location when he says,

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, ‘We have Abraham to our father’: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham (Luke 3: 8)

The people were commanded to erect a monument of twelve stones as a memorial, both in the middle of the Jordan and at their first campsite.

Moreover, it was the same spot where Elijah had been snatched away 900 years previously. Although John denied he was Elijah (John 1:21),[[30]](#footnote-30) he did claim to be “like” Elijah in the way he dressed, his ascetic lifestyle, his choice of location and also by his uncompromising preaching.

Just as there was overlap between the ministries of Elijah-Elisha, so also there was between John and Jesus.

A comparison between the preaching style of John and that of Jesus highlights the similarities:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **John** | **Jesus** |
| O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?   Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (Luke 3: 7,8)  | Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matt.12: 33,34) |
| He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.(Luke 3:11) | And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. (Matt.5: 40) |
| And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. | Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. (Luke 13: 7-9) |
| Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.(Luke 3:17, *cf.* Mal 2:2,3) | Jesus cleanses the temple (John 2)[The temple was built on a threshing floor]  |

Jesus (not himself but his disciples) conducted a baptizing mission in Judea similar to that of John (John 3:26) – like John, Jesus associated with soldiers and publicans (Luke 3: 18). The two missions seemed so similar (at first) that after John’s execution the people confused Christ with John the Baptist (Matt. 16:14). Luke informs us that some thought that Jesus was the resurrected John (Luke 9: 7) even Herod thought that Jesus was the risen Baptist (Matt 14: 1).

Notwithstanding the initial similarities between the mission of John and Jesus, their enemies exploited their differences in order to cause friction between the disciples:

Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. (John 5:25)

And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?……And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? (Mark 2:16-22)

John replied that he was but the ‘friend of the bridegroom’; ‘he that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom rejoiceth’ – Jesus added the observation that ‘the children of the bridegroom cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them.’ Jesus had come to call the bride, and to change the waters of baptism into something more substantial – **the wine of the new covenant.**

After John was imprisoned, he sent two of his disciples to bluntly ask Jesus whether he was the Messiah or not –“Art thou he that cometh or look we for another?” (Luke 7:20) Commentators express the opinion that John in his distress doubted.

The evidence suggests that John asked the question for the benefit of his disciples and not because he doubted the Messianic credentials of Jesus. After all, John had proclaimed Jesus, “The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world”. Furthermore, John would have known from his mother that the Messiah was a relation. He was given a sign –establishing Jesus’ Messianic calling (the Holy Spirit, descending like a dove) - a sign that he himself had predicted. Later in his ministry John testified to Jesus a second time (John 3:21-36), a testimony acknowledged by Jesus (John 5:33), who declared: “What went ye out to see? A reed shaken with the wind?” (Luke 7: 24). Unlike the general populace, John did not bend or shake to every whim of public opinion – John knew that Christ was the Messiah and testified to it.

Why then did John send his disciples with this question? The Lucan account records that Jesus’ witness about John is preceded by the account of the raising of the widow’s son (Luke 7: 11-17). I. Howard Marshall comments: “Jesus raises from the dead the son of a widow, thereby manifesting the kind of powers to those of Elijah and Elisha (1 Ki.17: 17-24; 2 Ki.4: 18-37) which led the people to conclude that he was a prophet and that through his activity God was visiting his people; at the same time the stress on the helplessness of the widow, deprived of the support of both of her husband and her son, draws attention to the gracious compassion of Jesus in caring for those in distress.” [[31]](#footnote-31)

This event caused problems for John’s followers – wasn’t John supposed to be Elijah? But John was imprisoned. Would he be liberated from prison? Was the Lord’s miracle a reflection that John’s mother Elisabeth was still alive as a widow and that she was about to lose her only son? Would he be restored? Who were they supposed to follow now? If Jesus were the “Coming One” would he act in judgment against John’s persecutors? For these reasons John sent his disciples to Jesus, who did a remarkable thing – he did not speak to them but performed a catalogue of healing miracles, after which he sent them back to John with these words:

Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. (Luke 7: 22)

Jesus’ words are a paraphrase of certain Isaiah passages (Isa 35:5-6; 42:7; 61: 1) texts that John was familiar with,

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. (Isa 35:5-6)

To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. (Isa 42:7)

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. (Isa 61:1)

The blind and the lame in Isaiah 35 represented the nation of Israel, whose progenitor Isaac was temporarily blinded to the covenant promises by his love for Esau and whose other son Jacob was made lame (Gen 32: 31,32) through his wrestling to obtain the covenant blessings by his own efforts. Jesus had come to proclaim the Gospel of grace, the “acceptable year” of the Lord (Isa.61: 2) – a Jubilee year of blessing and healing – but he deliberately omitted – “the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” The message to John was unambiguous – he would not be released from prison; the message to John’s followers was “Yes, I am the ‘Coming One’ but the role that John envisaged for me (the day of vengeance: Isa.61: 2) is not yet.”

Jesus himself testified that John was a burning light illuminating the darkness,

Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. (John 5:33-35)

however, the prologue to the Fourth Gospel makes it clear that John was not “that Light”, (the Messiah) but that he was sent to bear witness of “that Light”(John 1:8). The Johannine idiom is based on the Old Testament vision of the two lamp-stands encountered in Zechariah (Zech 4: 2). It is very probable that the annunciation of John’s birth occurred while his father Zacharias (Luke 1: 5-25) was serving as priest during the Feast of Lights (Hanukkah).[[32]](#footnote-32) Hanukkah was historically connected with sanctifying and cleansing the temple a theme close to the Baptist heart.

Although John the Baptist was an Aaronic priest by inheritance he was raised as a Nazarite (Numbers 6) in imitation of the High Priest, thus intimating that there was a “better priesthood”; a fact he readily acknowledged – “He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.” (John 1:15) John recognized the primacy of Jesus’ priesthood in terms expressed by the kinsman redeemer in the story of Ruth – “If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it” (Ruth 4:4). John confessed that he was not worthy to unloose the Messiah’s shoe (John 1: 27) – the customary symbolism that occurred during the transaction of the kinsman redeemer – “Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor: and this was a testimony in Israel” (Ruth 4: 7). On the testimony of Jesus, John was the greatest of the prophets, but the prophets and the law alone could not inaugurate the kingdom. After Moses and Elijah disappeared, Jesus is depicted as a solitary figure, standing alone on the transfiguration Mount, with the divine instruction that we should listen to him. The prophets and the law could only prepare the ground, however great John was; the least in the kingdom of heaven would be greater than him.

The eschatological role of the Law and the Prophets was preparatory and limited pointing forward to the fuller revelation of the Messiah. Within this function they acted as witnesses; but the people failed to heed the warnings:

And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. and when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? (Luke 12: 54, 55)

The people had no trouble predicting the weather, but they could not predict the time of their visitation. When they saw a cloud in the west they knew that a shower was coming, when the southerly wind blew they knew that a scorching heat would follow. Yet God had given them a sign in the person of John the Baptist – he was the new Elijah- the sign that the drought had broken – as in the time of the great prophet, when a little cloud arose from the west, out of the sea, the size of a man’s hand, and Elijah had girded himself up and run before his king to bring the people of Israel good tidings (1 Kgs 18: 43, 44). But now John had been murdered – he had not succeeded in turning the hearts of the children to the fathers –in the words of Malachi- “lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (Mal 4:6); “for the day cometh and it burneth like a furnace” (Mal 4:1). They chose scorching heat instead of showers of blessing.

*Conclusion*

The paradox presented to us in the New Testament is that John was at the same time Elijah and not Elijah. The rejection of John was anticipatory of the rejection of the Messiah. John did indeed come in the Spirit and power of Elijah, (Luke 1: 17) but his mission was only partly successful. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum has pointed out, in light of Mark 9:9-13, that “if Elijah had come before the first coming of Christ and restored all things, then the prophecies of the sufferings of the first coming would remain unfulfilled."[[33]](#footnote-33) The work of another “Elijah” therefore lays in the future – a prophetic witnessing ministry immediately prior to the Second Advent. Jesus’ designation of John as being “Elijah” precludes a literal appearance (resurrection) of Elijah at the end, for, like John, the two witnesses will appear in the same Spirit and power as Elijah – a reincarnation of the Elijah principle.

**First Century Jewish Views of the holy Spirit**

Paul Wyns

*Introduction*

The concept of “the” holy Spirit” (*Ruah ha-Kodesh*) is not uncommon in the Talmud, Targums, Midrash, the DSS[[34]](#footnote-34) and other first century Jewish writings;[[35]](#footnote-35) the OT only has two examples of the concept (Pss 51:11, Isa 63:10) and an article is not used (*Ruah Kodesh*). The LXX, however, does carry the article in these instances, where we have “the Spirit the holy”. While it is conventional to express the concept substantively as “the holy Spirit”, the Hebrew and Greek could also be read attributively as the “Spirit of Holiness”. In terms of the OT, Pss 51:11 is naturally read in an attributive way, while Isa 63:10 is naturally read substantively. The substantive and attribute use of *Ruah ha-Kodesh* is found in Jewish writings. In this article we will examine what is implied in a “substantive” view of the Spirit.

*The Nature of the Spirit*

Unlike Wisdom, scholars generally do not ascribe to the Jews of the first century a hypostatic view of the Spirit. James D. G. Dunn comments; “The cosmic speculation which gave such prominence to Wisdom and Logos hardly touched the Spirit. In talk of the divine-human relationship Wisdom is the wholly dominant figure, with ‘spirit’ as we have seen not much more than a way of defining Wisdom (Wisd 1.6f; 7.22-5;9.17), and even prophecy is attributed to Wisdom rather than to the Spirit (Wisd 7.27; Sir 24.33). Philo still thinks of the Spirit as the Spirit of prophecy (‘the prophetic Spirit’ —e.g. *Fug*. 186, *Mos*. I.277), but while in his treatment of creation the divine Spirit has a place, the dominant category is still the divine Logos.” [[36]](#footnote-36)Dunn concludes that, “of the Spirit as an entity in any sense independent of God, of Spirit as a divine hypostasis, there is nothing”.

In studies of Jewish cosmology, the category of a hypostasis is important, but the conceptual category is vexed.[[37]](#footnote-37) The foundational study on the topic is that of W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter*.[[38]](#footnote-38) His views were attacked by G. F. Moore,[[39]](#footnote-39) and Helmer Ringgren[[40]](#footnote-40) has also contributed to the debate. More recently, Larry Hurtado has argued that proposals in this area are “neither very clear nor compelling”.[[41]](#footnote-41) Max Turner argues that, “however close Judaism may have drawn to hypostatizing an angelic being or a divine attribute, at no point does a hypostatization of God’s *Spirit* come into question”.[[42]](#footnote-42) Such a factor tells against the doctrine of the Trinity.

An attributive hypostatization is one where the attributes of the deity are regarded as having independent existence.[[43]](#footnote-43) A linguistic hypostatization is “the figural translation of any non-corporeal quantity into a physical, corporeal one”.[[44]](#footnote-44) Dunn offers a definition of literary hypostatization as, “a habit of language which by use and wont develops what is only an apparent distinction between Yahweh and one of these words and phrases…a literary or verbal device to speak of God’s action without becoming involved in a more complicated description of how the transcendent God can intervene on earth”.[[45]](#footnote-45) Thus, for example, the rabbinical literature employs a formula—“the Holy Spirit cries”,[[46]](#footnote-46) but this is just a *literary* hypostatization. The problem with this approach is that it does not fit the data in the NT; here it is better to talk of a *personification* of the Spirit.

*The Holy Spirit and Wisdom*

Although it seems that the holy Spirit (in contrast with Wisdom/Logos theology) plays a comparatively limited role in the Old Testament, this is largely due to a failure to recognize the interchangeability and overlap between these terms. Whereas in Genesis the creative power is the Spirit (Gen 1:2), in Proverbs 8 it becomes Wisdom. In the Apocrypha the creative Spirit-breath of God becomes the creative Wisdom-breath of Elyon:

Wisdom sings her own praises, before her own people she proclaims her glory; In the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth, in the presence of his hosts she declares her worth: I came forth from the mouth of the Most High and covered the earth like a mist. I dwelt in high places and my throne was in a pillar of cloud. Alone I made the circuit of the vault of heaven and have walked in the depth of the abyss. (Sir 24.1-6)

Wisdom and the Holy Spirit are equated in Wisd 9.17:

And who shall know thy thought, except thou give wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit from above. (Wisd 9:17, cf. Prov. 8.15 -16)

Wisdom is once again linked with the Spirit of God and the creation motif at the construction of the tabernacle (the new heavens and earth):

See I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah (Exod 31: 2)…and filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in all manner of knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship… (Exod 35: 30-36:2)

Not only is the wisdom/spirit terminology largely interchangeable but personification did not transgress the strict sense of Jewish monotheism.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Luke employs the same spirit/wisdom categories when he describes the ministry of the seven in Acts 6,

It is not fit that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables, wherefore brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and Wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. (Acts 6:2b, 3)

Stephen is specifically said to have Wisdom and Spirit, for when he was arrested and put on trial by the Sanhedrin (seventy), they were not able to resist “the Wisdom and Spirit by which he spake”.

It is obvious that Luke is drawing on Proverbs 8 and 9 and combining this with the outpouring of the Spirit in Numbers 11:

Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. (Prov 9.1, 2)

In Numbers 11, the seventy were jealous of the two who prophesied away from tabernacle, and who, apparently, had also received the Spirit. It is clear then that primitive Christianity associated the covenant meal/vision and the outpouring of the Spirit on the seventy with “Wisdom furnishing her table”: thus, for Luke the holy Spirit in action at that time was the same as Wisdom at work creating a new creation in Christ.

Jesus “stood and cried” concerning the dispensing of the Spirit to believers,

In the last day, that great [day] of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) John 7.37-39

Jesus, (who had the Spirit without measure) speaks with the authority of the Spirit and becomes in this sense a *personification* of the Holy Spirit (in the same way as the wilderness Angel). This may seem unusual until we realise that elsewhere in the NT, Jesus is presented as the personification of the “Wisdom of God.”

Therefore also said the *wisdom of God*, I will send unto them prophets and apostles; and some of them they shall kill and persecute; that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation Luke 11:49 (ASV)

Therefore, behold, *I send* unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall ye kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city Matt 23:34 (ASV)

Hence, Paul also equates Jesus with Wisdom, “Christ the power of God, and the *wisdom of God*.” (1 Cor. 1:24 ASV)

*Conclusion*

New Testament usage of the “holy Spirit” is consistent with the Old Testament. Although it is sometimes personified, and often linked with these same terms, it was in no means regarded as a *hypostatization* by first century Jews and Christians.

**Romans 11 and the Redemption of Israel**

Paul Wyns and Andrew Perry

It is often asserted that the divine purpose with Israel as a nation and with the Jewish people as a distinct ethnicity is a thing of the past – the nation has been replaced by the church.

In dealing with Romans 11, P. Robertson asserts that, “nothing in this chapter says anything about the restoration of an earthly Davidic kingdom, or of a return to the land of the Bible, or of a restoration of a national state of Israel.”[[48]](#footnote-48) Robertson reinforces his argument by referring to the book of Revelation, “nowhere in this book are the Jewish people described as having a distinctive part in this kingdom”.[[49]](#footnote-49) In following this line of reasoning he is merely articulating the view of many of the churches, who fail to see that the book of Revelation has any significance to the Jewish people. Thus S. L. Chafer states, “All that is related to her covenants and promises are in abeyance…No Jewish Covenants are now being fulfilled”. [[50]](#footnote-50) J. Dwight does not believe in a continuing remnant of Israel, but rather in complete blindness: “There is no continuing remnant of Israel with whom God is particularly dealing today…Because that nation is now blinded, God can not have a remnant within the nation”.[[51]](#footnote-51) This view has been dubbed *amillennial supercessionism*.

The opposite view has been dubbed *progressive dispensationalism*, and this states that Israel continues to be the chosen medium for displaying God’s purpose. Moses understood that the complete destruction and extermination of the Jews as a race and a nation was an abrogation of the promises and a failure of the divine will (Deut 9:27-29, Jer.31-36, Mal.3:6, Rom.11:27). This view states that Yahweh continues to be revealed in Israel, both within and apart from the body of believers; God is still revealed through the existence of the people of Israel, just as in times past. Accordingly, God will restore the kingdom to Israel in a future millennial dispensation. Meanwhile, “*blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in”* (Rom 11:25).

In contrast to these two views, a third position can be elaborated. If Israel does not remain centre-stage in the purpose of God, this makes a mockery of the witness of the Old Testament prophets. However, this fact does not mean that God’s purpose with Israel has been *progressive* over the last two thousand years. On the contrary, while Israel’s experience in their dispersion among the nations has been accurately described in the OT, this has not been a progressive experience; the particularities of this history were not prophesied by the OT prophets, and there has not been any prophet since NT times.

The situation for the last 2000 years has been analogous to the inter-testamental period. During this time, the prophets did not prophesy events relating to the nation. The pattern of prophecy in the OT therefore is threefold: detailed events leading up destruction and exile, silence over the detail of the exile with the exile described in general terms, and detailed events surrounding the return of the people and their restoration under a Davidic Messiah followed by silence. Thus, the last two thousand years have been a period of prophetic silence.

In keeping with the tendency of systematic theologians to find titles for their “systems” of doctrine, this third position can be dubbed *punctuated dispensationalism*. This view states that God has given detailed information about the “last days” and the return of Israel to the land and how their restoration will be realized by their Messiah, but he has not supplied information about Israel’s long period of dispersion.

Scholars who argue a supercessionist case assume that the church began at Pentecost and has continued in an unbroken sense since that time; they further assume that blindness to Israel happened at that time and has continued in an unbroken sense since that time. But this “continuity” can’t be found in the NT - the NT writings presume a “last days” period of time and such a period has not been ongoing for 2000 years. Accordingly, the remnant that was brought out at *that time* and the blindness that happened at *that time* remain just that: the groupings of *that time*. It’s exactly parallel to the remnant that clustered around Isaiah and Hezekiah versus the grouping of leaders and “the wicked” in the land that was judged by the Assyrian invader in 701 B.C.E; both these groupings came and went. The church today is not the remnant of Israel, it has no dual identity; it is the body of Christ meeting on the basis of the faith “left behind” by the apostles.

Elijah is a prototype of any “eschatological witnesses” who “turn the hearts of the children to the [Covenants of] the fathers” (Mal 4:4-6). In the first century, Paul was part of the witness of this “Spirit of Elijah” in the apostles. The mission of the “eschatological prophets” to Israel (Rev 10:11) is the counterpart to Paul’s election as the apostle to the gentiles (Rom 11: 13; Acts 9:15).[[52]](#footnote-52) Any such eschatological witness produces a “remnant” at the time of witness from among Israel. With the future eschatological witnessing of “Elijah” there will once again be a remnant of Israel, and like the Jews in the first century, the body of Christ will be expected to align itself with “Elijah” in the last days. At this time, Elijah’s role will be to call out a remnant of the Jewish people, and these will bear a dual identity as both a remnant within Israel the people and as a particular community within the body of Christ”. [[53]](#footnote-53)

In the first century, *part* of Israel was not blinded; it was with this remnant that Jesus established the New Covenant through his own ministry and in the ministry of the apostles. But this is not to say that everything relating to the New Covenant was completely fulfilled; the purpose of God was not completed at that time because Israel did not fully repent (Acts 3:19-25). Hence, there is yet to be a final acceptance of this covenant “from the least of them unto the greatest of them” (Jer 31:34), a completion to be expected in the last days yet to come.

In Pauline terms, the idea of a “remnant” implies a corresponding “hardening” on the part of Israel. This presents a problem to Paul, which he resolves with the idea of a “future forgiveness” and in-grafting of the Jews (Rom 11: 23). Along with the grafting in of the gentiles, Paul refers to this complex of happenings as a “mystery” in the purpose of God. Hence, the letter to the Ephesians records,

Having made know unto us the mystery…that in the dispensation of the *fullness of times* he might gather together in one *all things* (*cf*. all Israel) in Christ. (Eph 1:9, 10, cf. 3:1-5).

In the first century, this interrelated set of happenings—hardening of Israel—the coming out of a remnant—the grafting in of the gentiles—the forgiveness of wider Israel—was not “finished”. The “finish” is set for the sounding of the last trumpet.

In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished… (Rev 10: 7).[[54]](#footnote-54)

One way to establish that the reality of a *future* restoration of Israel under the Davidic Messiah is to compare Romans 11 and Revelation 11 and set the teaching of Romans 11 in an apocalyptic context. That the apostolic message in Romans 11 *should* be interpreted in the context of an apocalyptic worldview is indicated in Paul’s allusion to the example of Elijah. Elijah had learnt that God’s justice was always tempered with mercy – the divine will was expressed not only in judgment (wind, earthquake, fire) but also in grace (the still small voice proclaiming the divine attributes). Paul alludes to this reality in the words,

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God. (Rom.11: 22, cf. Exod33:19, Rom.9:15)[[55]](#footnote-55)

The “goodness” here is both the gentile mission and the calling out of a remnant from Israel; the “severity” is the hardening of Israel. Revelation 11 is clearly working with the same template of prophetic organisation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2.  God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elijah? | 6. These [Moses and Elijah] have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy |
| 3   Lord, they have **killed thy prophets** | 7. Shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, **and kill them**. |
| 4.  I have reserved to myself **seven thousand men.**  | 13. And **the remnant were** affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. |
| 5. Even so then at this present time also there **is a remnant** according to the election of grace. |
| 25. Until the fullness of the **Gentiles** be come in. | 2. For it [=court of the gentiles] is given unto the **Gentiles...**  |

The difference between Revelation 11 and Romans 11 is that Revelation gives the fuller picture of how this “calling out—hardening—and grafting” is finished with the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom. We can expect that the nation, like Paul himself, will be *partially blinded again*, there will be a witness to the nation and a remnant, but that events will be “finished” with the final reconciliation of Israel to God.

**Quotes, Allusions and Echoes**

Andrew Perry

The question arises as to what a NT author or the first audience knew of scripture; what did an author require of his real audience and what did he imply in his use of scripture? This topic is vexed by the subjectivity of reading today; one scholar may attribute to an author or audience specific knowledge of the context of a source quotation, whereas another scholar may find no evidence of such knowledge and restrict an author’s knowledge only to the quotation. This area of discussion proceeds outside the doctrinal framework of inspiration; a presumption of omniscient authorship changes the intertextual task completely.

It is useful to ask whether there are any criteria to apply in deciding whether an author requires a reader to know more of a source context for the quotation, allusion, or echo that is being included. In a programmatic exercise, the following loosely stated criteria are offered:

1) A quotation may stop in mid-sentence. For example, Luke’s quotation of Isa 61:1-2 stops with “to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:19), which is half the sentence that is completed with “and the day of vengeance of our God” (Isa 61:2).[[56]](#footnote-56)

The situation here is akin to someone announcing, “Friends, Romans, Countrymen…” which is an incomplete catchphrase and likely to be completed by the audience. Similarly, in the case of Luke’s quotation of Isaiah 61, an auditor[[57]](#footnote-57) is likely to complete the quotation and ask why Luke has stopped mid-sentence.

The point here is that the absence[[58]](#footnote-58) of material motivates an auditor to supply the missing material. What is to be made of the material left out is another question. Luke may or may not think that there is an imminent day of vengeance.

2) Conversely, an author may quote mid-sentence. For example, Luke quotes from Isa 58:6 in Luke 4:18, “to let the oppressed go free”, and this is a mid-sentence clause. Once a reader/hearer is sent to Isa 58:6, he is bound to ask how this clause fits with the immediate clauses.

3) A slight variation on the previous point, which sees a composite quotation of Isaiah 58 and 61 being used by Luke, is a composite quotation of fragments from a single text. For example, the author to the Hebrews, quotes Pss 102:25-27 in Hebs 1:10-12, but prefaces the quotation with the fragment, “And thou Lord…” from Psa 102:12. This kind of usage requires the reader/hearer to take, in this case, the whole Psalm, as a context for understanding the quotation.

4) Dropping into the middle of a sentence, or stopping mid-sentence, are obvious directions to a reader to fill in the gaps. A composite quotation from two oracles, as in the case of Isaiah 58/61 also directs a reader/hearer to associate the two oracles. Luke’s usage of two fragments from the two oracles brings the two oracles as a whole together and directs a reader to think beyond the quoted material to the question of how the oracles may be a background to Luke’s story.

5) Another indication to a reader/hearer that he is to draw in the wider context of a source text is the presence of corresponding lexical material in both quoting context and quoted context. It is this kind of correspondence that forms typological patterns. Correspondences may be established through the LXX or the MT; with the NT it is easier to use the LXX as a guide to correspondences with the MT.

For example, Pentecost can be compared to Isaiah’s Call.[[59]](#footnote-59) Isaiah saw “the lord sitting (ka,qhmai/bvy) upon a throne” and “the house” (oi=koj/lkyh) “full (plh,rhj/alm) of his glory” (Isa 6:1, LXX[[60]](#footnote-60)). In the accompanying theophany smoke fills (pi,mplhmi/alm, cf. Ezek 10:4) the temple, and there is a voice or sound (fwnh,/lwq) of praise (Isa 6:3-4), which shakes (evpai,rw/[wn) the doorposts of the temple. Isaiah has his “lips” (Isa 6:9) purged as a symbol of his appropriateness as a mouthpiece of the Deity.

Luke’s Pentecost account has corresponding detail: Luke has the disciples in “the house” (oi=koj),[[61]](#footnote-61) when the house is filled (plhro,w) with a rushing mighty wind (Acts 2:2); the disciples are then filled (pi,mplhmi, Acts 2:4) with the holy Spirit, and their voice (fwnh,, Acts 2:6) is a voice of praise, and they are empowered to speak on behalf of God; finally, this event takes place after Jesus has ascended and been exalted to a position as “the lord” sitting upon a throne (ka,qhmai, Acts 2:33, 34).

In addition to these correspondences, there is a broad thematic “fit” with Acts insofar as Isaiah’s call narrative is about calling and commission. The crux in the text is about who will be “sent” and who will tell the people (Isa 6:8-9, xlv/avposte,llw). This corresponds to the commission of the disciples to be “apostles” (avpo,stoloj, Luke 6:13, Acts 1:8). Isaiah’s commission was ultimately to be unsuccessful insofar as the people would hear “but not understand”, and see “but not perceive” (Isa 6:9). This is the quotation upon which Luke concludes his view of the Jews (Acts 28:25-26), which thereby shows his Isaianic view of the preaching of the disciples throughout Acts.

In this example, there is no citation, but there is an allusion conveyed by multiple lexical items. When this occurs, the spread of the words and/or phrases from the source text involve a reader/hearer in taking in the whole of the source context as the background for the quoting narrative.

6) More broadly, if there are no corresponding lexical items between the quoting and quoted contexts, there may be shared concepts between the two texts that indicate why an author has chosen a text, and the shared themes may be the result of the author reflecting on the scriptural material. For example, Luke alludes to Mal 3:1 in the prediction that there was a “Coming One” (Luke 3:16). This person would baptise with “spirit and fire”. Mal 3:2 refers to the “refining fire” of the coming one, which is shared motif with Luke 3:16. This connection suggests that Luke expects a reader to compare more fully the oracle of Malachi 3 with the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus.

7) Conversely, it may seem as if there is nothing in common between two contexts; it may appear as if a quote has been “lifted out of context”. The problem with this supposition is that deeper analysis may yield contextual linkage. However, if we suppose for the sake of argument that there are no contextual links, then this would indicate that the author does not expect a reader/hearer to read around the originating context of the quotation. It may be that the quotation is frozen and complete in the point it conveys. Obvious examples of this kind of quotation would be sayings and aphorisms.

8) A variation on (7) would be the situation when there is dissonance between two texts. Here a quotation seems partly appropriate, but there are elements in the quotation itself, which do not serve the author’s purpose. For example, Luke’s quotation of Joel 2:28-32 has an element of the sun being turned into darkness and the moon into blood. It is not clear that the sense such elements have in Joel is the sense that Luke requires in Acts. This kind of dissonance shows a reader/hearer engaging both texts, an engagement triggered by the author. In this exercise, the reader/hearer is driven to the wider context seeking resolution of the dissonance.

9) Finally, an author may offer a gloss on the quoted material that directs a reader/hearer to take the material in a certain way. For example, Paul says, “For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. (Rom 15:3). This citation from Pss 69:9 is prefaced by the point that Paul wants to make; Paul is directing the reader to take from the source context the information he highlights. An auditor *may* read all of Psalm 69, but there is no impetus to do so on account of Paul’s citation.

In conclusion, these criteria have been loosely stated. However, they could be stated more precisely. For example, rule (8) could be stated thus: “if and only there is dissonance between quoted text and quoting context, then a reader/hearer is directed to the wider context of the source text to resolve the dissonance”. The major theoretical work on echoes in scripture has been undertaken in recent years by Richard Hays;[[62]](#footnote-62) his criteria for evaluating echoes will be discussed in a future article.

**Personification**

Andrew Perry

Personification is a well recognised figure of speech. Wisdom is personified in Proverbs 8, and there are many examples of personification phrases. In this article, we will lay out a theoretical framework for handling the topic of personification. With this framework we will then be in a position to discuss personification as it pertains to doctrine. Christadelphians have held that the Spirit is personified, and they have argued that the devil is a personification of sin-in-the-flesh. Both of these proposals are sophisticated narrative suggestions, and as an introduction to this topic as it affects Christian doctrine, we will consider what it means to say that the Spirit is personified.

While any theoretical model of personification could be used, and the merits and demerits of various models discussed, we will use here some basic distinctions derived from the work of J. L. Paxson.[[63]](#footnote-63) Paxson distinguishes between personification[[64]](#footnote-64) in phrases[[65]](#footnote-65) and personification that is extended into an actual story. For Paxson, personification is one type of “metaphoric translation” where one kind of entity is put for another kind of entity. He offers the following table of entities in a story:[[66]](#footnote-66)

|  |
| --- |
| Story Element |
| Human |
| Non-human life form |
| Inanimate object |
| Place |
| Abstract Idea |
| Deity |

Any one of these elements can be referred to in terms of another kind of element: thus an object like the rock in the wilderness, and the striking of that rock, and the flow of water from that rock, could be “translated” into Christ. Paxson offers the following table of types of metaphoric translation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Types of Metaphoric Translation | Translation  |
| Substantialization | A non-corporeal quantity is referred to in corporeal terms. |
| Materialization |
| Hypostatization |
| Anthropomorphism | A non-human quantity is translated into a character with human form. |
| Personification | A non-human quantity is given voice and intelligence. |
| Animification | A human or inanimate entity is given animal form. |
| Reification | A human is given inanimate form. |
| Ideation | A human or inanimate entity is turned into an abstract idea. |
| Topification | An abstraction is made into a geographical place. |

This table is useful in disclosing the complexity that can exist in figurative language, and it also clearly demarcates the use of the term “personification”. Essentially, the kind of detail[[67]](#footnote-67) in a narrative will disclose the kind of metaphoric translation: personification involves “voice and face” or “intelligence and speech”.

Clearly, there is a distinction between *what is personified* that the *personifier*.[[68]](#footnote-68) The personification offers a “voice and face” in its presentation of the true entity or essence. Human beings, God himself, the angels, as well as various mythical beings, are persons. Accordingly, a question that always needs to be posed is this: what *kind* of person is the personifier? Is the personification angelic or human (male, female), or again, is it a mythical character. If the Devil and Satan is a personification of sin-in-flesh, then the personifying figure in the NT is that of a mythical character that appears in Jewish writings of the Second Temple. If the Spirit is personified (as it is in Acts), then our corresponding proposal is that the personifying figure is that of the Angel of the Lord that led Israel out of Egypt.

It is important to recognise that a personified figure such as the Devil or the Spirit exists in the narrative world of the text. The figure has a role and acts with a voice and a face. In standard literary theory, the term “story” is neutral;[[69]](#footnote-69) it does not imply that the narrative has no basis in fact. Within a story, a character will have a structural role, and as such it is often termed an “actant” in the story. There are various classification schemes for these roles in narrative. For our purposes, the role of a “helper” or “guide”, or “director” is important to understand the role of the Spirit.[[70]](#footnote-70)

A personified figure that extends over a narrative story, and which appears in several scenes is significantly different from a localized personification, such as “Poverty walked in, and Love flew out of the window”. If this turn of phrase is extended and Love becomes a character in an allegory, then we have the case of a personified figure. Clearly, the Spirit figures as an agent in the story of Acts, even though this is not an allegory.

*Ananias and Sapphira*

As a worked example we will look at the episode of Ananias and Sapphira. Luke’s usage of “Spirit of the Lord” is distinctive (Luke 4:18, Acts 5:9, 8:39).[[71]](#footnote-71) Whereas his use of the title in the Nazareth episode (Luke 4) might be attributed to his use of Isaiah 61, his choice of the title in the voice of the reliable character of Peter (Acts 5:9), and in the mouth of the narrator (Acts 8:39), suggests an evocation of “Spirit of the Lord” OT texts. The Ananias and Sapphira episode is the first “personalization” of the Spirit in Acts, and it is likely that the agent quality of “Spirit of the Lord” traditions underpins Luke’s presentation. One way to configure the data in accordance with this suggestion is as follows:

1) The injured party in the Ananias and Sapphira episode is respectively the holy Spirit, God, and the Spirit of the Lord (Acts 5:3, 4, 9). The injury is lying (Acts 5:3, 4) and temptation (Acts 5:9). The man-woman parallelism[[72]](#footnote-72) in Luke’s account implies that “the holy Spirit” (to. pneu/ma to. a[gion, v. 3) and “the Spirit of the Lord” (to. pneu/ma kuri,ou, v. 9) are co-referential.

2) Ananias’ lying to both the Spirit and to God in the *same* act suggests that Luke equates the Spirit with God, but this does not explain why he changes the terms of reference.[[73]](#footnote-73) The equation need not be one of reference, it could be one of representation—trivially speaking, a person may lie to a representative of a king and the *same act* is a lie to the king. Furthermore, while a common gloss would be to say that Ananias lied to the Spirit “in” Peter,[[74]](#footnote-74) this does not explain why Peter does not initially accuse Ananias of lying to *him* rather than the Spirit.[[75]](#footnote-75)

3) There are two levels of description[[76]](#footnote-76) of Ananias and Sapphira’s single act[[77]](#footnote-77) (lying, tempting), and the exegetical challenge is to explain the personalization of the Spirit. The personifying face implicit in the act is not one belonging to Peter or to God because while there is some parallelism[[78]](#footnote-78) between God and the holy Spirit in the act of lying, God and Peter are distinguished from the Spirit of the Lord.

4) Peter accuses Sapphira of “tempting” the Spirit of the Lord, and this resonates with the traditions of the people tempting the Lord in the wilderness (Exod 17:2, 7, Num 14:22, Pss 78:18, 41, 56, 94:9, 106:14), and disobeying the Lord in the land (Josh 7:1).[[79]](#footnote-79) Thus the element of covetousness, the keeping back of the money, collusion, divine discernment, judicial death, and subsequent fear, are elements of the story of Achan. The central position of “the lie” and the use of the titles “the holy Spirit” (to. pneu/ma to. a[gion, v. 3) and “the Spirit of the Lord” (to. pneu/ma kuri,ou, v. 9) evoke the episode of Israel turning back from the land and believing the lie of the ten spies (Num 13:32, Pss 78:41, Isa 63:9-14 (MT). In this episode, the Lord was turned against the people as their enemy (Num 14:45, Isa 63:10), and this resonates with the role of the Angel of the Lord as a destroying angel (e.g. (Josh 5, Exod 12, 1 Chron 21),[[80]](#footnote-80) and forms a precedent for the judicial death of Ananias and Sapphira.

5) With Luke’s conjunction of “the holy Spirit” (to. pneu/ma to. a[gion, v. 3) and “the Spirit of the Lord” (to. pneu/ma kuri,ou, v. 9) only occurring in Isa 63:9-14 (MT), his *personification* of the Spirit in this episode is most likely “angelomorphic” and derived from this particular Isaianic presentation of the role of the Angel of the Lord. This reading receives support from Luke’s other use of “the Spirit of the Lord” (Acts 8:39), which seems to be contextually linked to the occurrence of “the Spirit” (Acts 8:29), which in turn picks up the earlier reference of “the angel of the Lord” (Acts 8:26).

Luke does not use “the Spirit of the Lord” outside these two episodes, and it could be that he has here a limited reason to evoke “Spirit of the Lord” traditions in these two texts. However, a consideration of Luke’s wider story suggests that these two episodes are just clearer examples of a broader pattern in Acts.

*Conclusion*

Luke deploys a personification of the Spirit; this is shown by his conjunction of personal language in respect of the Spirit with language that describes the Spirit as something that is possessed, received and poured. Luke presents an *angelomorphic personification* of the Spirit in Acts 5. This may imply an angelic agency underlies the personification, but such an implication is not required (nor is it excluded) by our findings. The poetics of personification are such that the *prosopopoeia* makes no such implication; as Paxson notes, the rhetorical practise of personification “requires a separation between the literary pretence of a personality, and the actual state of affairs”.[[81]](#footnote-81) However, the linkage with Isaiah 63 and the Angel of the Lord in the Exodus prevents any use of Luke’s language as an initial step on the way to a doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Trinity.

**Contextualizing Prophetic Oracles (3)**

**Babylon and Assyria**

**Andrew Perry**

It has been argued by H. A. Whittaker that the terms “Assyria” and “Babylon” are confused in prophetic oracles.[[82]](#footnote-82) The purpose of this article is to review the evidence presented by Whittaker for such confusion. We have noted elsewhere[[83]](#footnote-83) in a discussion of the “Burden of Babylon” (Isaiah 13-14) that the king of Assyria was at times the king of Babylon; however, this does not make “Assyria” and “Babylon” interchangeable terms. In the days of the British Empire, Queen Victoria was “Empress of India”, but “India” and “Great Britain” were not interchangeable terms of reference.

The various oracles in the Hebrew Scriptures do not confuse “Assyria” and “Babylon” as the “same region”, “Nineveh” is not confused with “Babylon”, and the oracles that deal with the Assyrian Empire do not use the term “Babylon” for that empire. The uses of “Babylon” and “Assyria” highlighted by Whittaker have clear unconfused readings:

1) Ezra 6:22 refers to Persian kings (Ezra 6:14) as the “king of Assyria”, a usage indicative of the extent of their empire; Ezra is not confusing Persia with Assyria.

2) Lam 5:6 refers to the Egyptians and Assyrians as past overlords of the people; Jeremiah is not confusing Assyria with Babylon or Egypt, even though the Babylonian Empire was the current superpower of the region. Jeremiah is referring to historical *archetypal* oppressors.

3) In the later oracles of Zechariah, the lands of Egypt and Assyria are associated again as regions from which Yahweh will bring his people (Zech 10:10-11). This again reflects a motif in which “Assyria” is the archetypical place of captivity along with Egypt; Babylon is not mentioned. On the other hand, Pss 87:4 couples Egypt and Babylon, and offers an alternative archetypal pairing.

4) The motifs in prophetic oracles were re-applied by later prophets, but this does not necessarily result in any confusion in geography. The language of an oracle about Babylon could be used in an oracle about Nineveh, but this does not imply any confusion between the two cities, nor does it mean that oracles that use “Babylon” refer to Nineveh.

For example, the following two texts are clearly related, but they do not show that “Babylon” was a term for Nineveh.

And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, *and* dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; *their* voice shall sing in the windows; desolation *shall be* in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work. Zeph 2:13-14 (KJV)

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in *their* pleasant palaces: and her time *is* near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged. Isa 13:19-22 (KJV)

Another example is Nahum 3 which is about Nineveh (v. 7) and yet has the same motifs as Isaiah 47 which is about Babylon (Nah 3:4, 5, 16, Isa 47:2, 3, 9, 15).[[84]](#footnote-84)

5) Prophetic oracles appear to be precise in their use of geographical terminology. For example, Micah describes Assyria as an invader (Mic 5:5) but also prognosticates that Jerusalem will go to Babylon (Mic 4:10). While this may be taken as a long range prophecy of the Babylonian captivity, it is more likely that it was intended as a prediction that Assyria would relocate Judeans in the region of Babylon, which was known Assyrian practice (cf. 2 Chron 33:11). Micah is not confusing Assyria and Babylon as terms for the same region.

*Conclusion*

The above illustrations do not mean that geographical terms *cannot* be used indistinctly and in error. A later writer or editor may use a modern term for an historical region, or he may make a mistake. On the other hand, the writer may intentionally alter source materials for theological reasons. An example of this latter possibility is Luke’s quotation of Amos 5:7, “Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus”, which he cites as, “I will carry you away beyond Babylon” (Acts 7:43). Luke is not confusing Assyria (the region beyond Damascus) with Babylon in this alteration. Rather, he is deliberately changing the scope of the Amos text to refer to the archetypical region of captivity, while taking over from Amos the point about divine providence.

Whittaker’s motivation for equating “Babylon” and “Assyria” in prophetic oracles is to facilitate the contextualization of oracles in Isaiah 40-66 to the reign of Hezekiah. Standard scholarship locates these oracles to a “Second Isaiah” and even further unnamed individuals after the exile. Whittaker’s thesis is nearly unique among scholarship; however, its defense does not require the explanation of a confusion of terms to re-orientate Babylonian prophecies to an Assyrian superpower, it is entirely plausible to apply these Isaianic prophecies to the Babylon of Hezekiah’s day. What has not been appreciated in such contextualization is the significance of the visit of the Babylonian envoys.

**Reviews**

*Christology in the Making*[[85]](#footnote-85)

 *Reviewed by Paul Wyns*

Professor James D.G. Dunn is a New Testament theologian who employs the exegetical methods of “historical context of meaning” and “conceptuality in transition,” to illuminate the first-century meaning of key New Testament texts that bear directly on the development of the Christian understanding of Jesus. He describes his method in these terms: “But genuinely to locate oneself within the process, and genuinely to take seriously the fact of conceptuality in transition, is to limit oneself to the possibilities available at the time of writing, to take a stand within the inevitably limited horizon of writer and readers, who did not and could not know how the words written were going to be taken and understood in subsequent years and decades.” (Dunn 1989, xvi)

His book, *Christology in the Making* is a New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation. He has been criticised on Trinitarian apologetic websites for his “Christadelphian-like logos theology”,[[86]](#footnote-86) particularly for his rejection of a full-blown notion of pre-existence; that Christ somehow had a personal history with God prior to his birth. According to Dunn pre-existence is notably absent from the three Synoptic Gospels, the chief resource for the human history of Jesus. Dunn observes, “There is no real indication that Matthew had attained a concept of incarnation, had come to think of Christ as a pre-existent being who became incarnate in Mary’s womb or in Christ’s ministry (as incarnate Wisdom).” (Dunn 1989, 257) [[87]](#footnote-87) Similarly, he observes that the letters of Paul, if they contain the notion at all, feature it simply in the attenuated, figurative sense of Christ's pre-temporal presence in the mind and purpose of God, without any implication of personal pre-existence; “Did he (Paul) then think of Christ as a man, a created being, chosen by God for this purpose, perhaps even appointed to this cosmic role as from his resurrection? Or alternatively, as a heavenly being who had pre-existed with God from the beginning? Texts in Paul could be readily interpreted either way. The more plausible interpretation however is that such alternatives had not yet occurred to him: his overwhelming conviction was that God had himself acted in and through Christ, that what had happened in the whole Christ-event was God himself opening the way for man for righteousness and redemption, and that this had been the same power and purpose through which and for which God had created the world. In expressing this conviction in Wisdom language, as when he used the Adam language of the Philippians’ hymn, he introduced into Christology phrases and terminology which when read apart from the original context of Wisdom and Adam Christology would be understood as ascribing to Christ himself pre-existence and a role in creation” (Dunn 1989, 255).

It is of course an oversimplification to ascribe anti-Trinitarian views to Dunn, as his main concern is to trace the development of Christology from pre-Christian Judaism and Hellenistic Judaism, particularly from the Wisdom/Logos categories. Although he finds no pre-existence/incarnational theology in the Synoptic Gospels or in the Pauline corpus, he concludes, “that only in the Fourth Gospel can we speak of a doctrine of the incarnation.” [[88]](#footnote-88)

In his foreword, Dunn comments; “Does it matter whether Paul, and other NT writers, mark an earlier stage in the development towards the full-blown Christian doctrine, or even stages in diverse developments and trajectories? Others might argue in the negative: it does not matter. For myself it does. It matters what Jesus thought about himself. For if we can uncover something at least of that self-understanding, and if it differs markedly from subsequent Christian doctrine of Christ, then we have discovered a serious self-contradiction at the heart of the Christian doctrine of incarnation itself. For we then have to admit that the doctrine of God submitting himself to the full rigours of historical existence is not after all accessible to historical inquiry. This has been a fundamental issue at the heart of Christology in fact from the beginning but most pressingly over the past two hundred years. It will not go away. It matters too whether Paul had a doctrine of incarnation. For the Pauline letters are the only NT writings which belong indubitably to the first generation of Christianity. And the later we have to presuppose the emergence of the Christian doctrine of incarnation the more real becomes the possibility that the doctrine is the product not of organic growth (‘development’ as from seed to plant), but grafting a different growth on to the earlier (non-incarnation) stock, or of transmutation into a different species (by ‘hellenization’, philosophization, or whatever).” (Dunn 1989, xiv )

While we agree with his conclusions concerning the Synoptic tradition and Pauline epistemology, we disagree with his conclusions on the Johannine christology,[[89]](#footnote-89) but his overall balanced approach coupled with his breadth of scholarship and refreshing insights, ensure that this classic should be a fixture on the bookshelf of every Christadelphian.

**Marginal Notes**

**Matt 3:15 (AP)**

The problem with this text is: Why should Jesus be baptised? Commentators observe that John baptised with a baptism of *repentance for the remission of sins* but Jesus was sinless. Christadelphian solutions answer the problem by saying that Jesus had a sinful nature and was baptised for that reason; orthodox commentators are more likely to affirm that Jesus was demonstrating that baptism was essential for anyone who would follow him. The problem with these responses is that they do not arise from Jesus’ answer to John that such a baptism “becometh us to fulfil all righteousness”.

So...

1. Instead of thinking that John baptised Jesus with a baptism of *repentance*, a baptism that John objected to performing, let us read "becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" as Jesus’ explanation to John that his baptism was *not* a baptism of repentance but a different kind of baptism, one that was a *prophetic fulfillment* of “all righteousness”.

2. How does this work?

i) John says to Jesus that he had a need to be baptized by Jesus, but this does not refer to any need of John for a baptism of repentance performed by Jesus; rather, it refers to John’s need for a baptism of spirit and fire which he has just said the Coming One will perform (Luke 3:16).

ii) Jesus’ answer quotes 1 Sam 12:7. The LXX expression (two words) is the same in both Matthew and 1 Samuel for “all righteousness” (pa/san dikaiosu,nhn only occurs in these two places) and the Hebrew is “all righteousnesses” and is unique to 1 Samuel. The KJV interprets as “all righteous acts”, and 1 Sam 12:6 indicates that the Exodus is the example of “righteousness” in focus.

iii) So, Samuel says to Israel that he is going to reason with them about “all righteousness” and these are the acts of the Lord particularly in relation to Moses and Aaron bringing Israel up from Egypt.

iv) The Exodus from Egypt involved crossing the Red Sea and a journey through the wilderness. Elsewhere this is described as God bringing his son out of Egypt (Hos 11:1). In Matthew, Jesus is baptised in the Jordan and then he goes into the wilderness.

v) So, Jesus’ baptism is not a baptism of *repentance* but a baptism in *type* corresponding to Israel's baptism in the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:2). He is saying to John that they must fulfil *in type* “all the righteous acts of God”, and in terms of the types in the Law, the crossing of the Red Sea by God’s Son (Israel) required his only begotten son to be baptised. In this scenario, John is “Moses” and Jesus is “Aaron”.

3. The term “fulfil” secures the case: this is the standard term for fulfilling prophecy and fulfilling scripture:

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Luke 24:44 (KJV)

Jesus could equally have said to John, “suffer it to be so, for it becometh us to fulfil all scripture”, but he doesn’t: by quoting 1 Sam 12:7, Jesus points to the scripture in the Law about the crossing of the Red Sea, when Israel, God's son, was brought out of Egypt across the Red Sea.

**Habakkuk 1:6 (PW)**

Although there is great uncertainty over the dating of the book of Habakkuk the consensus among scholarship is that the circumstances found in Judah ca. 605-600 B.C.E are the most likely historical fit for the oracle.**[[90]](#footnote-90)**

The *crux interpretum* is Hab 1:5-11, particularly v. 6 which mentions the Chaldeans and therefore most scholars date the prophecy either slightly before the reign of the reforming Josiah, or just after when Nebuchadnezzar marched into and captured the Palestinian land bridge.

“For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, *that* bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not theirs.” Hab 1:6 (KJV)

In the Habakkuk Midrash (1QpHab II, 10-15) Chaldeans (*kasdim*) are called *kittim*, a code name for Rome. This illustrates the principle that the Jews were prepared to re-interpret their ancient prophecies to fit current circumstances and allows the hypothesis to be explored that the expression “the Chaldeans” in Hab 1:6 is a scribal alteration for a prophecy that originally encompassed Assyria.

It is entirely possible that Hab 1:6 was itself adapted by scribes to reflect the “Chaldean” invasion in the time of Jeremiah. This would require a dating of Habakkuk during the Assyrian hegemony. Some points in favour of an Assyrian application include:

(1) Whereas the Assyrians were known for rapacious cruelty, sadism, treachery and greed (Isa 10:5-11, 13), the Chaldeans were the diplomats of Mesopotamia and used violence as a last resort. For example, the conquest of Nineveh by the Chaldeans brought relief rather than oppression to the whole of Western Asia.

(2) The description in v. 6, the *“bitter and hasty nation”* is more appropriate to Assyria and is reminiscent of Isa.8:3 – ***Maher-shalal-hash-baz***, the name of Isaiah’s son, *“swift to the spoil, hasty to the prey”* to denote the character of Assyria (cf*.* Isa.10:6 – *“to take the spoil and to take the prey”*).

END

1. Robert P. Menzies, The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology: with special reference to Luke-Acts (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. M. M. B. Turner, Power from on High: the Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. J. D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (London: SCM Press, 1969); *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM Press, 1975). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See E. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah* (Dublin: Browne & Nolion, 1941), 267, 303, and J. E. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, (Waco: Word, 1989), 313-351. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For a discussion of the identity of the city see A. van der Kooij, “The Cities of Isaiah 24-27 according to the Vulgate, Targum and Septuagint” in, *Studies in Isaiah 24-27*, (eds. H. J. Bosman & H. van Grol; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 183-188. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For an overview of issues relating to identifying the readers of the Gospels, see Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The magical texts have been published in, K. Preisendanz and A. Henrichs, eds., *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (2 vols; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973-4). The curse tablets have been published in J. G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992). The magical amulets have been published in E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols of the Greco-Roman Period* (13 vols; New York, Pantheon Press, 1953-64). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For example, see the entry under “Demons and Monsters” in J. Black and A. Green, eds., *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia* (London: The British Museum Press, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See *Oracles in Decline,* 414-417, 431 in *Plutarch: Selected Essays and Dialogues*, (ed., D. Russell; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For a study on the extensive evidence showing the popularity of the “ghosts view” of demons, see P. G. Bolt, “Jesus, The Daimons and the Dead” in *The Unseen World* (ed., A. N. S. Lane; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Philo voices the same view, “But as men in general speak of good and evil demons, and in like manner of good and evil souls, so also do they speak of angels…”, *On The Giants,* 16, in *The Works of Philo* (ed., C. D. Yonge; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See *Symposium* 202d-203, *Timaeus* 40d, *Cratylus* 397d-398b, *Republic*, 427b, 469a, 540c, and *Laws* 909b in *Plato: Complete Works* (ed., J. M. Cooper; New York: Hackett 1997). All subsequent quotations of Plato are from this edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. That the disciples may have believed in ghosts – see Matt 14:26, Luke 24:37 cf. Acts 23:8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. For a popular introduction to the theory behind Q, which includes a reconstructed text of Q, see Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (Shaftsbury: Element, 1993). For a presentation of Q with critical apparatus and parallels with other gospels, see John S. Kloppenborg, *Q Parallels* (Sonoma: Polebridge, 1988). We follow Kloppenborg in his assessment of the content of Q. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. For a discussion see Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (London: SCM Press, 1998), 298-299. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The meaning of this title is disputed but we favour the view that it connotes “Baal, the Prince”. This is suggested by archaeological discoveries at Ras Shamra (Ugarit), which have uncovered uses of the title *zbl. bcl* for Baal. See A. S. Kapelrud, *The Ras Shamra Discoveries and the Old Testament* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 33, 37; U. Oldenberg, *The Conflict Between El and Baal in Canaanite Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), 82, n. 1; T. Jemielty, *Satire and the Hebrew Prophets* (Louisville: WJK Press, 1992), 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. For a discussion of the names of the leading angel see, M. E. Mills, *Human Agents of Cosmic Power* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), ch. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Quotations from *1 Enoch* are from the translation in J. H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols; New York: Doubleday, 1983-85). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. This concept of “evil spirit” is different to the one found in the Old Testament, which is associated with angels (Jud 9:23, 1 Sam 16:14, Ps 78:49) – here in *1 Enoch* they are the spirits of dead giants. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. For a discussion of the Story of the Watchers in *1 Enoch* see N. Forsyth, *The Old Enemy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), chs. 7-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. O. S. Wintermute, “Introduction” to *Jubilees* in Charlesworth, ed., *Pseudepigrapha*, 1:46. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. This translation is from H. C. Kee, ed., *The Origins of Christianity: Sources and Documents* (London: SPCK, 1973). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 179-181, 329-332. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See *Jubilees* 11:15, 17:15-18:13, 23:29, 46:1-2, 48:2, 12, and 50:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London: SCM Press, 1993), 61. See also, Forsyth, *The Old Enemy*, 147 and H. C. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986), 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Another Dead Sea fragment, 4Q180, also mentions Azaz’el and the fallen angels. Unless otherwise noted all references to the Dead Sea Scrolls are to the edition, Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The theme is also mentioned in the largely 2c. B.C.E. work, *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* – *T. Reuben* 5:6-7*, T. Naphtali* 3:2, 5. The giants are mentioned in the *Wisdom of Solomon* 14:6, (1c. B.C.E.), *Sirach* 16:7, (2c. B.C.E.), *Baruch* 3:26, (1c.-3c. B.C.E.), *3 Maccabees* 2:4, (1c. B.C.E.). This spread of witness to the story shows that it was a popular belief. All of these works can be found in Charlesworth, ed., *Pseudepigrapha*. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. *Ant*. 18.5.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. *War*. 4.473 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. J. A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (London: SCM Press, 1985), 182-183, comments, “It is indeed particularly remarkable that the Johannine tradition should retain the memory that John denied he was Elijah when Jesus was to say that was just what he was (Mtt.11.14; 17.12; Mark 9.13) and also that John denied being Elijah while still claiming to be the forerunner of the Messiah (3.28) when the Christian church subsequently equated the two roles by identifying ‘the Lord’, for whom Elijah prepared, with Christ. In both I believe the memory is historically correct.” [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995), 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The ‘Feast of Dedication’ or the ‘Feast of Lights’ (Hanukkah) was a post-Mosaic feast instituted by Judas Maccabaeus in 164 B.C., when after the recovery of Jewish independence from the Syro-Grecian domination, the Temple of Jerusalem was solemnly purified (the old polluted altar removed) its stones put on a separate place on the Temple mount, and the worship of the Lord restored.  [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Footsteps of the Messiah* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Press, 1982), 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. In his article, “The Spirit of Holiness as Eschatological Principle of Obedience in Second-Temple Judaism” in *Christian Beginnings and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds., Craig Evans and John Collins; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2006), 75-99, Barry Smith examines the “Spirit of holiness” in the DSS and concludes that, “in the passages examined, ‘spirit of holiness’ is a functional term denoting an eschatological principle of obedience. It refers to the new, divinely-granted capacity of repentance, which in turn results in atonement.” Barry believes that the closest parallel with DSS usage of the “spirit of holiness” as eschatological principle of obedience is found in Ezekiel: the prophet proclaims that God will give His people a new spirit (Ezek 11:19; 36:26) and that He will give them His spirit (Ezek 36:27, cf. 37:14; 39:29). Barry adds that, “the term “spirit of holiness” occurs infrequently in the Hebrew Bible (Isa 63:11 [see Isa 63:14]; Ps 51:11), and never with the meaning of eschatological principle of obedience”. J. H. Charlesworth believes that “Jesus may have inherited from the Essenes their concept of ‘the Holy Spirit’ ” – but this seems highly unlikely, *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Doubleday, 1992),20-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The term “Spirit of Holiness” occurs infrequently in the Jewish writings (e.g. *Jub*. 1.21-22; *T. Levi* 18.9). [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. James D.G. Dunn*, Christology in the Making* (London: SCM Press, 1989), 132-136. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The vexed nature of the debate is the result of confusion between linguistic hypostatization and attributive hypostatization. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. W. D. Bousset and H. Gressman, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1966). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. G. F. Moore, “Intermediaries in Jewish Theology” *HTR* 15 (1927): 41-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom: Studies in the Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East* (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons, 1947). Ringgren fails to distinguish attributive and linguistic hypostatization when he says that hypostatization is a “quasi-personification of certain attributes proper to God, occupying an intermediate position between personalities and abstract beings”, *Word and Wisdom*, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord* (Sheffield: Continuum, 1998), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996), 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Scholars have noted that in Egyptian and Babylonian religion the qualities of the “high god” became self-existent beings. For example *Maat* (truth) originally a function of the high god in Egypt became a female goddess, the daughter of the high god, and a similar transition happened with *Mēŝaru* (righteousness) in the Babylonian pantheon. Both *Maat* and *Mēŝaru* had their own cultic images, places of worship and priests. In the OT Wisdom is not offered worship. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. J. L. Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Christology*, 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Certain passages are often considered as direct utterances of the Holy Spirit (*Sifre*, Num. 86; *Tosef., Soṭah*, ix. 2; *Sifre*, Deut. 355, p. 148a, six times; Gen. R. lxxviii. 8, lxxxiv. 12; Lev. R. iv. 1 [the expression “and the Holy Spirit cries” occurs five times], xiv. 2, xxvii. 2; Num. R. xv. 21; xvii. 2, end; Deut. R. xi., end). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. On Wisdom language Dunn comments: “When set within the context of faith in Yahweh there is no clear indication that the Wisdom language has gone beyond vivid personification [*Christology*, 170]….within Judaism, including Hellenistic Judaism however, there is no evidence that such talk of God’s (pre-existent) wisdom ever transgressed Jewish monotheism [*Christology*, 210]….The earliest Christology to embrace the idea of pre-existence in the NT is Wisdom Christology [*Christology*, 209]….So far as we can tell there was in the first instance no concept of ‘the pre-existence of Christ’ apart from this application of Wisdom categories to Jesus” [*Christology*, 210]. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. P.O. Robertson, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Philipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2000), 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. *The Israel of God,* 165. So also L.J., Bray, *Israel in Prophecy* (Lakeland: J.L. Bray Ministry,1983,1995), 29-30, “Surely no one will say that there is a single solitary verse anywhere in the entire NT which teaches a future restoration of the Jews to Palestine, nor of their conversion to Christ after his second coming.” [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. S. L. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (8 vols; Dallas: Seminary Press, 1983), 6:83. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. J. Dwight, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 293-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Paul a persecutor from Benjamin (Rom.11:1; Gen.49: 27), blind (Acts 9: 8 *cf.* Rom.11:25 see Gen.27:1 contrast Gen.48:10), and elected (1 Sam.20:42; Rom.9:11). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. The question arises as to whether Elijah will emerge within the body of Christ or outside this body from the ranks of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Two of the chapters that Paul quotes from (Rom.11:8 = Deut.29:4 & Isa.29:10) make a reference to the vision being like a sealed book (Isa.29:11 cf. Rev.5:1) and to the secret things belonging to God unless he chooses to reveal them (Deut.29: 29 cf.Rev.10:8). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Compare the *“Song of Witness”* in Deut.31:21 and 32; 39-43; “I kill, and I make alive; I wound and I heal….and *will be merciful* unto his land and his people.” Compare the rainbow *covenant of mercy* (Rev.10:1) and the correspondence between Deut.32:40 with Rev.10:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. In Hebrew this point is strengthened because of the parallel structure of the poetry; it is more marked that one half of a bi-colon is absent. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. This term is used to refer to readers and hearers as a collective group. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. An analogy exists here between phrasal metalepsis and the absence of linked material from a source text in a quoting text. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. An allusion to this call narrative is noted (but not developed) by F. S. Spencer, *Journeying through Acts: A Literary Cultural Reading* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2004), 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. This LXX interpretation of the Hebrew is confirmed in Johannine tradition and applied to Jesus (John 12:41). [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Spencer, following other scholars, does not recognize Luke’s typological use of “house” for the temple, preferring an “upper room” location, *Journeying*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. J. L. Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Paxson defines personification as “the material translation of one quantity (often ideational or abstract) into another (usually a person)”, *Poetics*, 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Examples of this kind of personification are given in standard treatments such as G. B. Caird, *Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980), 136-137, and J. Hawthorn, *Studying the Novel* (London: Arnold Publishing, 2001), 91-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. *Poetics*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. The detail is hierarchical in that substance precedes form, which in turn precedes viability and sentience. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Accordingly, a human person (say an adult) could be personified as a child in a narrative story, or an actual angel could be personified as the Angel of the Lord in the episode of Ananias and Sapphira. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Paxson defines the “story” as the “narrated level of phenomenal events”, *Poetics*, 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. J. Hur, A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 186-187. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Elsewhere, N.T. usage is confined to 2 Cor 3:17-18, an exodus context. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 214. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Witherington, *Acts*, 216, states that Luke equates the Spirit with God, but he does not offer an explanation of what such an equation means for Luke. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. For example, E. Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), 237. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. As C. K. Barrett observes in, *The Acts of the Apostles* (2 vols; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2004), 1:263, that the episode does not say that Ananias or Sapphira lied to Peter, and so we cannot explain the personifying language in terms of Peter’s possession of the Spirit. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention* (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 2000), 11-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. B. R. Gaventa, *Acts*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Angelomorphic traditions present the Angel of the Lord as distinct from the Deity, but they do not conventionally indicate a switch in subject between the Angel of the Lord and the Lord, so that what is ascribed to the Angel of the Lord is also ascribed to the Deity (e.g. Exod 3 (Burning Bush), Gen 16 (Hagar)); here, the holy Spirit is presented in the same way. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Barrett notes the link to the Waters of Meribah, *Acts*, 1:270; Haenchen notes links with the story of Achan, *Acts*, 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. This is noted by William Neil, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1973), 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. *Poetics*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. H. A. Whittaker, *Isaiah*, (Cannock: Biblia, 1988), 415-417. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. “Babylon in Isaiah 13-14” *CeJBI* (1) 2007: 7-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. If Nahum and Zephaniah use Isaiah 47 this is evidence that Isaiah 47 and Isaiah 40-55 do not originate with a “Second-Isaiah” at the end of the Babylonian captivity. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM Press, 1989) [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Steve Rudd, “Dunn, James D. G.: Christology in the Making, 2nd edition, 1989.” Online: <http://www.bible.ca/trinity/trinity-Dunn.htm> [cited 11 March 2007]. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Note that Dunn balances his observations by adding a qualifying statement – “Nor is there any indication of course that he ignored or rejected such an understanding of Christ”, nevertheless, it is clear that the Synoptic Gospels are distinctly lacking any kind of pre-existence or incarnation theology. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. “The doctrine of the incarnation began to emerge when the exalted Christ was spoken of in terms drawn from the Wisdom imagery of pre-Christian Judaism.” (Dunn 1989, 259) [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. “On almost any reckoning, John 1.14 ranks as a classic formulation of the Christian belief in Jesus as incarnate God. Assuming then, as most do, that John’s Gospel is one of the latest documents in the NT, the question was whether John 1.14 is best understood simply as a variation on an already well formed conception of incarnation or as itself a decisive step forward in the organic growth or evolution of Christian doctrine.” (Dunn 1989*,* xiii) [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. For an introduction, see A. Leslie, “Habakkuk” in *Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), 3:503-505. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)