**Christadelphian EJournal of Biblical Interpretation**

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**Editorial Policies**: The **Christadelphian EJournal of Biblical Interpretation** seeks to fulfil the following objectives: 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; and subject the published articles to retrospective peer review and amendment.

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**Editorial**

“It is just a phase” is a common expression, and life does go through phases. In terms of writing, if you review the last fifty years of your local ecclesial magazines, you should notice that writers have phases. They appear for a number of years and then there is nothing. It is not because they have died, but rather they have passed through a phase. If they were good writers for you, then you miss their ongoing contributions. Of course, several people write for a long time, perhaps for a lifetime, and contribute regularly. This may be a good or a bad thing; they may not be good writers for you. I say “for you” to keep things subjective, but I believe there is an objectively “good” and “bad” for writing about Scripture.

Editors have to write; writing is their hobby, and so this is just as well. If an editor is not a good writer for you, then this is a problem. If a magazine has several editors, there is a greater possibility that they will write something of value for readers, but this is not guaranteed. It is said that speakers can love the sound of their own voice and speak well beyond the time they have been allocated. The same is true of writers; they can love their own writing and give preference to that writing when filling the pages of a magazine. For an editor, this is a danger—s/he can exclude other writers’ submissions because they love to see their own words in print.

Fortunately (we do not believe in the god of Fortune), the editors of the EJournal do not experience the temptation to prefer their own writing to that of those sending in material; the editors do not get very much material (obviously). It might be thought that the kind of material that we print and circulate is not being written in the community. This is partly true; however, there are Christadelphian websites where the EJournal’s kind of material does appear—and this is a valuable alternative medium.

Is this editorial a lament? I don’t think so; it does not matter where deeper study materials appear in the community (print and/or online); all that matters is that it does appear. It would be bad for the community if the only writing it produced was comprised of “devotion”, “introduction” and “sentiment”, even if these are valuable forms of writing.

**The Babylonian Reading of Isaiah 40-48**

**Andrew Perry**

**Introduction**

The Babylonian reading of Isaiah 40-48 dominates scholarship. To a considerably lesser extent you find a Babylonian reading of Isaiah 49-55, and there are still some who read Isaiah 56-66 through a Babylonian lens. Go back a hundred years and there was little doubt about the Babylonian provenance of Isaiah 49-55 and a few more willing to read Isaiah 56-66 in a Babylonian context. Christadelphian commentary has tended to follow the scholars and the Babylonian line with one or two exceptions.

One exception, H. A. Whittaker, has commented, “I am satisfied, to the point of dogmatism such as I normally decry, that Hezekiah and Isaiah (all 66 chapters) lean on each other considerably”.[[1]](#footnote-1) However, G. and R. Walker state, “But when we continue to read into chapter 40, we find no obvious historical markers to Hezekiah’s day, such as those which made the background of chapters 1-39 so clear. Instead, all the references are to a time of redemption after a scattering and captivity – a captivity which did not take place in the days of Hezekiah, for Jerusalem was saved through the faith in the remnant therein. And the name of Cyrus appears in the text as the one who does God’s will in causing the captives to return”.[[2]](#footnote-2) Walker and Walker follow the scholar’s Babylonian reading,[[3]](#footnote-3) whereas Whittaker offers an eighth century reading.

Eighth century readings of Isaiah 40-66 are rare; exilic and post-exilic readings dominate. Whittaker is able to reference a monograph by J. W. Thirtle[[4]](#footnote-4) and a commentary by W. A. Wordsworth.[[5]](#footnote-5) In the journal literature, there is a three-part article by J. B. Payne.[[6]](#footnote-6) Apart from these writings, you have to go back to the 18th century to dig out commentaries that read the entire book of Isaiah against the background of the life of Isaiah of Jerusalem, which, you would think, was the obvious thing to do. What happened to change this situation in English scholarship was the rise of higher-critical scholarship in Germany in the 19c.

Are church commentaries right? Is the consensus right? Should Christadelphian commentary follow the church position? Over the years the Isaianic material assigned to a Babylonian provenance has narrowed so that today most would only agree upon Isaiah 40-48. Should we further restrict the Babylonian material?

These may appear arcane questions, and it is the biblical text that counts. The main argument for a Babylonian provenance of Isaiah 40-48 is the mention of Cyrus, but if we place to one side Isa 44:24-28 and 45:1-7, do we need a Babylonian reading for the rest of Isaiah 40-48. In this article, placing the Cyrus oracles to one side, we will argue two points: i) the implied geography of Isaiah 40-48 is Palestinian; and ii) the implied history of Isaiah 40-48 cannot be the times of the Exile.

**Palestinian Provenance**

A Babylonian exilic reading of Isaiah 40-48 can be given in a general way, but the devil is in the detail and the following details[[7]](#footnote-7) do not fit a Babylonian reading:

1) Who is at war with Jacob/Israel (Isa 41:12)? Why is there so much fear (Isa 40:9; 41:5, 10, 13, 14; 43:1, 5; 44:2)? How would the people become a new sharp threshing instrument (Isa 41:15)? How were they to fan and scatter their enemies (Isa 41:16)? Obviously, there are no nations in and around Babylonia to satisfy these conditions. Rather, there is a state of war in the land, for which we have no corroborating evidence if this is the end of the Exile. This fits better the circumstances of Isaiah’s times. Thus, there is corresponding fear on the part of the people and the reassurance that they will thresh their enemies—details that fit with the aftermath of 701.

2) Who are the Mesopotamian nations that are being called to a meeting (Isa 41:1, 21)? How had they been hostile to God’s people in the Exile? There is nothing in the records of Kings and Chronicles to contextualize such a meeting. Yahweh summons the nations and islands/coastlands (see also Isa 41:5; 43:9) to a meeting place; it is more probable that this is *in* Judah rather than Babylon, because the word for islands/coastlands refers to cities towards the coast.[[8]](#footnote-8) This indicates a location for the prophet proximate to the Mediterranean.

Diplomacy fits the chaotic conditions in the land after 701, with local nations and city states vying for power in the situation left by the decimation of the Assyrian army. Hence, there is a call to a meeting between Judah and the nations.

3) The anti-idol polemics are directed towards the nations (Isa 41:5-7, 21-29) in addition to the Babylonians (Isa 44:25; 46:1; 47:9-13). Cyrus was the ostensibly emergent power at the end of the Exile, so why is the prophet concerned with other nations and their idols? Where are they in the politics of the Exile? Babylonian idolatry was prevalent in the land in Hezekiah’s day as a result of Sargon II’s deportations to Northern Israel, and the idolatry of other local nations was prominent in their diplomatic interaction with Judah.

4) The state of the people is one that is “robbed”, “spoiled” and “in prison” (Isa 42:7, 22); this does not fit the Exile. At the end of the Exile, the people were a settled community in Babylon and Judah. This is the sort of remark that would fit the aftermath of an invasion (701) rather than the state of a people after seventy years living off the land under Babylonian governorship. The people “snared in holes” are hiding from hostile bands (v. 22); the people in prison are captives waiting to be sold on as slaves.

5) The treatment of those in foreign lands does not fit the circumstances of the exiles. Those that ruled over them “made them howl” and they “blasphemed the name of Yahweh” (Isa 52:5). They were being shown no mercy and made to do hard labour (Isa 47:6). These details better fit the treatment of the larger numbers of Judahites involved in the eighth century Assyrian deportation of 701. Blaspheming the name of Yahweh suggests the hostility of local nations such as Moab, Ammon and Edom rather than Babylonians.

6) Parts of the south of Judah were still occupied by destroyers who had made cities waste (Isa 44:26; 49:17); they would “go forth”. This is the language of the aftermath of invasion; there were no destroyers to go forth from the Jewish community in Judah or Babylon. Faithful Jews would have wanted to enlarge “their tent” by driving out occupying armies and liberating cities (Isa 54:2-3). This kind of language does not fit the aspirations of the exiles whose goal was to return to a land.

7) The address is to Zion/Jerusalem (Isa 40:2, 9; 41:27; 44:26, 28; 51:17; 52:1-2, 9), the physical city and its condition rather than to any group of exiles. The message delivered by the prophet has urgency and immediacy; Jerusalem is to be a herald to the cities of Judah (Isa 40:9). The force behind the prophetic injunction requires the prophet to be present in Jerusalem or Judah as a visible source of authority to the people of Jerusalem. This comes out clearly in the visual metaphor, “Behold, your God” (Isa 40:9) which requires the gesture of the prophet directing the cities of Judah to look and see their God coming with a strong hand.

8) Yahweh pleads with Judah to be unafraid of the nations (Isa 40:15-17), but the example nation is Lebanon. This does not suggest a Mesopotamian perspective on “the nations”, but rather the Syro-Judean land-bridge. The nations are commanded to sing the praises of Yahweh (Isa 42:10) and the examples given are Kedar and Sela (Isa 42:11, RSV), which are neighbours immediately to the east of Judah. This is not the end of the Exile; it is the chaotic conditions in 700 and afterwards.

9) The geomorphology of the oracles’ metaphors is that of rivers, valleys, and mountains (Isa 40:3-5; 41:18), which suggests the topography of Judah rather than Lower Mesopotamia which is a flat plain. The “mountains” are to be threshed by Judah (Isa 41:15), which implies the presence of a prophet urging this policy upon the people in Judah; again 700 and afterwards, not 538.

10) The flora and fauna of Isaiah 40-55 is Judean. The cedar tree used for idols (Isa 44:14) is native to Judea rather than Babylonia; other trees mentioned are more naturally occurring in Judea than Babylonia (Isa 41:19; 55:13). The main tree found in Mesopotamia, the Palm, is not mentioned.

11) Yahweh states that he has “sent” to Babylon to achieve his purpose (Isa 43:14), and this implies that those he is addressing are not “in” Babylon but at some distance from Babylon. Isaiah is talking to his contemporaries about their concerns. Babylon featured in the politics of 700 as well as 538, and this remark fits 700 and after, not 538.

12) Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sabeans will make supplication to Jerusalem and affirm that God dwells in Zion (Isa 43:3; 45:15). This implies a “sphere of influence” for Judah and a perspective where the prophet is in Jerusalem and is looking south. In 700, Egypt and Ethiopia had just been defeated by Sennacherib; Hezekiah had used Arab mercenaries to reinforce Jerusalem according to Sennacherib’s records. These nations are actively involved in the politics in the region in 700, but absent in 538.

13) The address to Babylon, “Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans” (Isa 48:20, KJV), is spoken *from a distance*; the prophet does not say “flee from here” or “let us go from here”; the prophet is not among the exiles as one who expects to participate in an exodus from Babylon. This statement is consistent with a location of the prophet in Judah, and it is supported by the choice of the prophet to paint a picture of *returning to Zion* rather than *going from Babylon* (Isa 49:21; 51:11).[[9]](#footnote-9) We may suppose that captives returned from Babylon in 700 and afterwards as well as 538, but this command fits the times around 700. The injunction to “flee” (xrb) does not fit with an orderly departure from Babylon under royal patronage (Cyrus); it suggests urgency in the need to take flight (cf. Isa 15:5; 22:3).[[10]](#footnote-10)

14) The prophet records the words of Yahweh, “what have I here” (hp yl hm, Isa 52:5)[[11]](#footnote-11) and the demonstrative “here” is contextually defined as Jerusalem (v. 1), so that Yahweh is asking about the situation in Jerusalem (and the land). Similarly, Yahweh declares “Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence” (v. 11), which has the same contextual definition and is an injunction for the people to go out from Jerusalem and engage in a holy war with the “armour of the Lord” (ylk).[[12]](#footnote-12)

15) The character of Yahweh’s pleading with Zion and Jacob/Israel is dialogical; this suggests the presence of both Yahweh and the dialogue partner—Zion or Jacob/Israel. Thus, in Isa 40:27, Israel/Jacob says to Yahweh that his way is hidden to them, and in Isa 49:14, Zion addresses Yahweh complaining that Yahweh has abandoned them. This kind of material suggests that the prophet is present with the people in Jerusalem and engaged in dialogue with them on behalf of Yahweh. Again, Isaiah is not writing for an unborn generation 150 years in the future.

16) The prophet addresses a scattered people rather than one exiled group (Isa 41:9; 42:10-11; 43:5-6; 49:12; 54:7). The people are to be gathered from all points of the compass to the land of Judah and not just Babylon. The larger numbers involved in Sennacherib’s deportation better fits this detail.

Yahweh is not “in” the north, south, east, or west; rather he is centred in Jerusalem and speaks to these places (Isa 43:5-6). The language of “gathering” is a gathering to a point from which the gatherer stands, and this is Jerusalem: the captives are “brought” to Jerusalem (Isa 42:16).

17) The First Temple exists. It is described as “our holy and beautiful house” (Isa 64:11), a description incompatible with the lament over the temple of the returnees (Hag 2:3). However, it is in a burnt state and in need of repair (Isa 64:11), and this prompts Yahweh’s enquiry about the rebuilding of the house (Isa 66:1).[[13]](#footnote-13)

The temple and its sacrificial system is presupposed in Isa 43:23-24, “You have not bought me sweet cane with money, or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins; you have wearied me with your iniquities”. This complaint would not have been made in Babylonia.

The sanctuary (Land, Jerusalem, or Temple?) was profaned because the “first father” sinned (Isa 43:27-28). Furthermore, Yahweh defers his anger (Isa 48:9) over some matter. How does this fit the end of the Exile, when the anger is meant to be over and the sanctuary is to be restored?

In addition to (1)-(17) we might ask: what should Isaiah have mentioned if he was talking in advance to the Babylonian exiles? The prophet does not address the living conditions of a group in exile; he does not show a detailed knowledge of Babylonian customs. In view of these indications, we cannot contextualise the application of Isaiah 40-48 to the end of the Exile except for the Cyrus oracles. The challenge for a conservative commentator is to construct a catalyst for the mention of Cyrus in 700; something that has not yet been done.

**Conclusion**

Of Whittaker or Walker and Walker, who is right? It would seem that Whittaker is right and Walker and Walker are wrong, but this may be too simplistic. There is the possibility of **secondary fulfilment** through typology; parts of Isaiah 40-48 could **in part** have a **typological application** to the end of the Exile and the return of the exiles.[[14]](#footnote-14) And if there is this possibility there is also the possibility of tertiary fulfillment in the days of Christ. The mistake fostered upon the community of Christadelphian bible students by the German higher critics with their *exclusive* Babylonian reading of Isaiah 40-48 was a failure to distinguish the typological application of such oracles from their first and immediate fulfillment in Hezekiah’s day.

New Book from Willow:

Andrew Perry, **Isaiah 40-48**, (357 pages, ISBN 978-0-9563841-1-9). Available from [www.lulu.com/willowpublications](http://www.lulu.com/willowpublications) at £12.00 plus p&p.

**The Rich Young Man**

**P. Wyns**

**Introduction**

The gospel story of the Rich Young Man (Matt 19:16-26) has been chosen, in order to demonstrate the importance of an approach that utilizes “inner-biblical exegesis”. The approach is not a purely academic exercise, but of relevance to anyone that studies or exhorts from the gospels (or for that matter the Bible in general). The charge is sometimes heard that *too much* can be *read into* (eisegesis) a text, but the truth is that ancient readers and listeners were often far more astute and ‘tuned in’ than their modern counterparts. Biblical texts often carry specific ‘clues’ (markings) – these are a few, butsignificant,words that form the dominant pattern of an allusion. R. L. Schultz observes:

Yet **the comparative material suggests that minimal marking generally is the practice in literature** contemporary to the Old Testament and even later Jewish literature...One is forced to draw one of two conclusions: either the readers or listeners are not expected to identify the verbal parallel or they are considered competent to recognize it **despite only minimal marking**.[[15]](#footnote-15)

B. D. Sommer notes that the key component is reader familiarity with the ‘older text’:

Markers (usually borrowed vocabulary) point the reader to the older text, though only if the reader is familiar with them...In this formal category, the new text reuses vocabulary or imagery from the source...Probably the largest number of cases of what scholars have generally called ‘inner-biblical exegesis’ belongs to this category.[[16]](#footnote-16)

If these markings are missed then the theme that underlies the narrative is missed and the narrative is therefore subjected to a faulty interpretation. The markers will be ‘special’ vocabulary, but they may not be in the same ‘pattern’ as the original, although the words and phrases might not be organically related to the original they point to an underlying theme or topos. However, as Schultz (1999:228, 273) observes, a ‘topos’ is far more difficult to establish:

These passages illustrate the problem of trying to distinguish between quotation and topos. In quotation one is looking for the repetition of significant words and syntactical structures; with topos one simply seeks the repetition of various terms conceptually related to a theme or topic.

Biblical authors allude to older texts (allusion differs from echo by the absence of the need for reference) in order to argue a specific point. Sommer (1998:15) states:

In other words, allusion consists not only in the echoing of an earlier text but in the utilization of the marked material for some rhetorical or strategic end.

**The Rich Young Man and the Rich Old Man**

A casual reader of Matthew 19 will encounter a number of seemingly unrelated narratives. The chapter begins with a question about divorce (vv. 1-12), followed by the blessing of little children (vv. 13-15) and the encounter with the rich young man (vv. 16-30). However, once the ‘markers’ are identified the chapter’s cohesiveness will become apparent.

The emphasis in vv. 16-30 is on the **wealth** of the young man – “he had great possessions” (kth,mata polla) and this prevented him following Jesus, who comments to his disciples; “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a **rich** (plou,sioj) man to enter the kingdom of heaven” (v. 23). This astounded the disciples for if a man of such apparent moral integrity and wealth (a sign of God’s blessings?) struggled to enter the kingdom, what hope for them?

It is at this juncture that the ‘marker’ points us in the right direction. The word **rich** is used **for the first time** in scripture to describe Abraham’s circumstances; “And Abram *was* very **rich** (plou,sioj) in cattle, and silver, and gold” (Gen 13:2).[[17]](#footnote-17) Further investigation discovers other lexical connections with the Abrahamic narrative.

And , behold, one came and said unto him, Good **Master** (dida,skale) , what good thing shall I do , that I may have eternal life ? Matt 19:16 (KJV)

And he said, **Master** (de,spota) *and* Lord, how shall I know that I shall inherit it? Gen 15:8 (LXE[[18]](#footnote-18))

Even though the KJV and LXE translate the word in question as “master” different Greek words are employed, the passages are syntactically similar and both pose questions about gaining/possessing/inheriting something. When investigating shared concepts and themes, A. Perry notes:

The spread of words and/or phrases from the source text involve the reader/hearer in taking the whole of the source context as the background for the quoting narrative.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Once the source text is identified (in this case the Abrahamic narrative) the markers become more readily identifiable:

But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, “With men this is **impossible**, (avdu,nato,n) but with God all things are possible” Matt 19:26 (NKJV).

Shall anything be **impossible** (avdunatei/) with the Lord? At this time I will return to thee seasonably, and Sarrha shall have a son. Gen 18:14 (LXE).

Sometimes the texts employ different words but convey the same sense:

Jesus said to him, “If you want to **be perfect**, (te,leioj) go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” Matt 19:21 (NKJV)

And Abram was ninety-nine years old, and the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, I am thy God, be well-pleasing before me, and **be** **blameless** (a;memptoj). Gen 17:1 (LXE)

First century auditors would have recognised the connection with Abraham, and modern readers have also, as together with Matt 19:21, the Modern Greek Bible translates complete/perfect/whole from the Hebrew *tamim* (~ymiT') of Gen 17:1 as *teleios* (te,leioj) instead of *amemptos* (a;memptoj) used in the Greek Septuagint (LXX).Moreover, the injunction to “follow me” echoes the divine calling out of Abraham (Gen 12:1) and the **“treasure in heaven”** corresponds with God declaring “I *am* your shield, your **exceedingly great reward**”(Gen 15:1).

Jesus’ advice to the rich young man draws on Yahweh’s assessment of Abraham’s faithfulness:

But if you want to enter into life, **keep the commandments** (th,rhson ta.j evntola,j) Matt 19:17 (NKJV)

Because Abraam thy father hearkened to my voice, and **kept** (evfu,laxen) my injunctions, and **my commandments** (ta.j evntola,j), and my ordinances, and my statutes. Gen 26:5 (LXE).

Although there are only a few verbal correspondences, the theme for Matt 19:27, 29 also shares the topos of Abraham’s calling:

Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?”Matt 19:27 (NKJV)

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a **hundredfold**,[[20]](#footnote-20) and inherit eternal life. Matt 19:29 (NKJV)

Now the Lord had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you”. Gen 12:1 (NKJV).

Based on what has already been observed the last verse is probably a reference to the right of primogeniture, with the **first** being Ishmael (Abraham’s seed after the flesh) and the **last** being Isaac (Abraham’s seed after the spirit):

But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first. Matt 19:30 (NKJV)

As well as correspondences, we should also be aware of deliberate contrasts, such as the **sorrow** of the rich young man (Matt 19:22) contrasted with the **laughter** (and rejoicing; cf. John 8:56) of Sarah/Abraham (Gen 21:6), and the **everlasting possession** promised to Abraham in Gen 17:8 and **eternal life** of Matt 19:16, contrasted with the **great possessions** of the rich young man.

**Interpretation and Application**

Inner-biblical exegesis has identified connections with the Abrahamic narrative and the story of the rich young man is obviously deliberately referenced against Abraham. This should influence the way the narrative is interpreted.

Although riches form a key element in the narrative, the story is not *per se* a warning against the evils of materialism, for Abraham was extremely wealthy. The incident highlights the danger of a worldview prevalent in Judaism that understands entry into the kingdom as an act of human effort (works). Keeping the commandments (law) was of course critical but (here is the rub) **Abraham kept the law before it was even given.** The demands of Christian life seemed impossible to the disciples but (here is the rub) nothing is impossible with God because he is able to make the **barren bear fruit.** In fact he has given the means of redemption through the son promised to Abraham and therefore made the impossible, possible.

This does not mean that works are unnecessary, for Abraham was willing to give up his prize possession (his son) because he believed that God would provide. However, Abraham’s work was an act of faith, not one of self assertion. He is justified by faith and he is “counted righteous” because **he believed that God is righteous.** Although he did not know how, his life experiences had taught him that God would keep covenant and therefore he believed that the promise through Isaac would (somehow) be honoured. Instead of Abraham giving up his prize possession, God sacrifices his beloved son. The purpose of the law was to emphasise the righteousness of God, not the (non-existent) righteousness of man.

In contrast with the rich old man, the rich young man was unwilling to give up his prize possessions and law keeping became therefore irrelevant. The rich young man failed to recognize that faith in the Messiah (who is the embodiment of the righteousness of God) was the only way to be justified. The conclusion of the story is to respond to the call of God/Jesus in faith (with rejoicing instead of sorrow), like Abraham, knowing that the reward held in store is disproportionate to the response – that it does not rely on human effort but on divine faithfulness which makes the impossible, possible.

**The Cohesiveness of the Chapter**

Do the connections with Abraham extend beyond the story of the rich young man? This becomes more difficult to establish as lexical and syntactic markers virtually disappear. Thematic connections remain, but they become a question of reader perception which can be subjective.

For example, the blessing of the “little children” (Abraham’s seed) by Christ is probably meant to parallel the blessing of Abraham by Melchizedek. It also highlights that God keeps covenant and does the impossible – the evidence is simply that the descendants of barren Abraham/Sarah are being blessed by the Christ – who is the descendant of Abraham. The “little children”[[21]](#footnote-21) become then a metaphor for all disciples who approach Jesus with the faith of Abraham.

At first glance the question on divorce seems completely unrelated to the Abrahamic narrative, but rather the settling of a disputed question between different rabbinical schools of thought. The question was posed by the Pharisees as a “test” (v. 3) and raises suspicions that theological concerns were not the primary motivation. If we turn to the Abrahamic narrative we find that he “divorced” his maidservant Hagar at the behest of Sarah. This was done because Hagar encouraged her son to mock the legitimacy of the heir with the charge that he had been conceived in the tent of Abimelech (Gen 20:18-21:1). Obviously parallel questions existed around the legitimacy of Christ and rumours abounded about his unusual conception.

Relating the Abrahamic narrative to the question of divorce might seem far- fetched but not if the underlying question is one of adultery/legitimacy. This theory is lent support by John 8 which also commences with a question about adultery (John 8:3-11) and Jewish emphasis on Abrahamic status (John 8:33, 37) and the reply of Jesus which is based on the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael (John 8:35). The true seed of Abraham has his legitimacy questioned and this is the subtext of divorce/adultery questions in the gospels that are directed at Christ.

**Conclusion**

Scripture interprets itself and ancient readers/hearers of the word deserve more credit than their modern counterparts for recognising complex patterns, allusions and echoes that lie below the surface of the narratives. Good biblical exhortation can only be achieved if inner-biblical exegesis is practised. If exhortation is based on a superficial surface reading then it usually misses the point completely.

**Evangelicals and the Doctrine of the Trinity**

**Thomas Gaston**

**Introduction**

In 2003, the *Evangelical Quarterly* published an article entitled “The Christadelphians and the Doctrine of the Trinity”.[[22]](#footnote-22) The article was written by J. Clementson, a former Christadelphian turned evangelical, with the expressed aim of finding “constructive alternatives” in language to aid Christadelphians in understanding and accepting the Trinity. In this present article I intend to explore the issues raised by Clementson.

**Evangelicalism**

Clementson begins his article with a fair description of the origins of the Christadelphian movement, followed by summary of Christadelphian beliefs about Christ and the Holy Spirit.[[23]](#footnote-23)A comparable analysis of the evangelical movement is not possible here, but a few general comments will be useful.

Evangelicalism may be defined as a theological system that puts emphasis of personal faith and conversion (being “born again”) and the authority of the Bible. Nevertheless, the term carries a certain degree of ambiguity and can refer to a spectrum of beliefs. Belief in the tri-unity of God is one of the core tenets of the evangelical movements; it appears top of most evangelical statements of faith.[[24]](#footnote-24) This emphasis on the doctrine of the Trinity may in part be explained as a reaction to apathy shown to the Trinity by the Protestant churches during the 18th and 19th centuries. It may also be a result of the significance placed on the doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement.

The evangelical emphasis on the authority of the Bible is something that they have in common with Christadelphians, in contrast to the authority given to tradition in the Catholic and High Anglican churches. It is ironic, then, that the evangelicals, including Clementson himself, often refer to the creeds and councils of Catholic Church to define and defend the doctrine of the Trinity.[[25]](#footnote-25)

**Sonship**

Clementson writes, “The Christadelphian understanding of Jesus as the Son of God places much more emphasis on his virginal conception than does the New Testament” (p. 166). Whether or not this assessment is fair, it is nonetheless irrelevant since the issue of sonship is about ontology rather than an emphasis. The divine affirmations of Jesus’ sonship at his baptism (Mark 1:9-11) and resurrection (Acts 13:33) do not explain how Jesus came to be the Son of God. It is the virginal conception of Jesus that explains both how he came to be and how he came to be the Son. The burden is upon evangelicals to find an understanding of sonship that coheres with their belief in the eternity and equality of the Father and the Son.

Clementson puts much emphasis of the Johannine presentation of a pre-existent relationship between the Father and the Son (pp. 166, 169), arguing that Christadelphians did not give full significance to the Son. Yet he undermines his own argument in his attempt to argue that “Jesus does not speak on behalf of the Father” (p. 169). This is exactly what Jesus claimed to do: “I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me gave me a command, what I should say and what I should speak” (John 12:49). Though we can agree that the Son should be distinguished from the angels and prophets who previously spoke on God’s behalf, it is no denial of the Son to give preeminence to the Father.

The next argument is patristic, not Biblical: “the early church fathers concluded in the process of opposing Arius, if Jesus came to reveal the Fatherhood of God, then that Fatherhood must be intrinsic to God himself. And if God has always been Father, then he has always had a Son” (p. 170). This argument rests on the assumption that the content of temporal revelation is to be equated with ontological necessity; i.e. if God is a father, then to be God is to be father, therefore God was eternally father. The fallacy of the argument is demonstrated if we replace the concept of fatherhood with that of creation. If God is a creator, then (by this argument) to be God is to be creator, therefore God was eternally creating. Yet it is the teaching of the Bible, and generally accepted by Christians, that the world was created in time. Whilst God always had the power to create, there was not always a creation. Whilst God always had the power to “father” a child, there was not always a Son.

**Pre-existence**

Clementson notes the Christadelphian interpretation of Phil 2:6-8, that it refers to decisions made by a human Jesus not a pre-existent Son. He acknowledges that this opinion is shared by J. D. G. Dunn,[[26]](#footnote-26) but gives preference to N. T. Wright, who argues that here is a non-human choosing to become human.[[27]](#footnote-27) Thus, Clementson concludes, “the Christadelphian interpretation fails adequately to explain the reference to becoming human” (p. 167). However, it should be acknowledged that Paul does not say that Jesus took on the “form of a man” but the “form of a servant” – this was his choice. The “becoming in the likeness of men” is unlikely to refer to a change in nature since Paul refers only to “likeness” (*homoiomati*), not to form or nature. This being the case, it is likely that here Paul talking about the outward appearance (clothes, mannerisms, etc.). No pre-existence need be implied.

Regarding Col 1:15-20, Clementson chastises Christadelphians for missing the allusion to Wisdom 7:25-26 due to “an unwillingness to consult any non-canonical sources” (p. 166). In fairness, most Christadelphians are probably ignorant of the views of modern biblical scholarship regarding the influence of Wisdom literature in early Christology. Even if we concede that possibly Paul, and certainly John, identified Jesus with a personified attribute of God,[[28]](#footnote-28) it is not clear how this furthers the doctrine of Trinity. A personified attribute cannot make conscious choices to become human (see above).

Three Christadelphian objections to the concept of the pre-existent Son are noted, though the commonest is not mentioned – that Christadelphians do not find the pre-existent Son in the Bible. The first objection is “that God cannot be two (or three) persons because he is one” – more on this later. The second is “that a truly human person cannot pre-exist”, to which Clementson responds that this is based upon a misunderstanding of Trinitarian doctrine: the human being called Jesus did not pre-exist, only the divine Son pre-existed. Clementson blames “popular Trinitarian language” for leaving itself open to such misunderstanding (p. 170). This clarification does not help much, because it does not explain how a divine person can become truly human. This is the third objection. Clementson acknowledges the problem of maintaining a personal continuity between the pre-existent Son and the human Jesus: “If, by personal continuity, we mean continuity of individual conscious existence and memory, then this must surely be rejected as interference in his ordinary humanity and, in modern terms, physiologically impossible” (p. 171). Clementson thus proposes an alternative understanding of the incarnation, “not the continuity of an individual being, but the embodiment in a new human individual of the parent-child relationship eternally present in the Godhead” (p. 171). Before evaluating this understanding of the incarnation it is important describe Clementson’s view of personhood.

**Personhood**

The Trinity is traditionally defined as three persons (Gk: *hypostasis*) in one substance (Gk: *ousia*). It is Clementson’s proposition that this language is of little value for discussion with Christadelphians because the term ‘person’ is open to misunderstanding (p. 174). ‘Person’ in modern usage carries the connotation of a distinct individual being; Clementson acknowledges “on these terms, God is clearly one person, not three” (p. 175). He proposes, therefore, that what the church fathers expressed in *hypostasis* could be expressed to modern ears as “distinguishable centres of personhood” (p. 175) and as “relational qualities” (p. 171).

It is not entirely clear what is being expressed in these terms. Are these “centres of personhood” conceived of separate and distinct minds, or as aspects of the same mind? Are they self-conscious identities, or clusters of qualities? Clementson has already rejected the idea that the Son had an individual consciousness continuous from his divine state to his incarnation, proposing instead that Jesus was a new individual that embodied pre-existing relational qualities. This tends towards the concept that Father, Son and Spirit are not self-conscious minds but clusters of qualities. Such a doctrine would seem to tend towards a form of modalism, which is generally regarded as heresy.

Moreover, it seems to create numerous inconsistencies with common Trinitarian belief and practice. For instance, contrary to common evangelical dogma, Jesus apparently did not have a conscious pre-existence prior to his birth, at least not in any conventional sense, but his consciousness was created at his birth to include a cluster of qualities. Does this consciousness continue to exist? Clementson is unclear on this point. He insists that the human Jesus did not cease to exist and he ascended to the Godhead with his humanity “intact” (p. 172). Does this mean that there are now two consciousnesses within the Godhead, or has the Jesus-consciousness been subsumed into the consciousness of God? Furthermore, if the Trinity is not three consciousnesses but three clusters of qualities then in what sense is it meaningful to worship or pray to the Father, the Son and the Spirit? How can one have a personal relationship with a cluster of qualities? Surely, if God is a single conscious being then one can only have a relationship with God as unity. Such a tendency would seem to make the concept of the Trinity meaningless.

Despite the noble intention of the author of attempting to identify the right language for discussion with Christadelphians, it seems to me, at least, that he has failed. Neither *hypostasis* nor “distinguishable centres of personhood” are Biblical expressions for talking about the Father, the Son or the Spirit, and so are unlikely to appeal to Christadelphians.

**Divine Identity**

With regards to positive reasons for identifying Jesus as God (or the incarnation of a cluster of divine qualities, if you prefer), Clementson presents three. The first is R. Bauckham’s concept of divine identity as presented in *God Crucified* (p. 167)*.*[[29]](#footnote-29) Bauckham asserts that Second Temple Judaism was “characterized by a ‘strict’ monotheism that made it impossible to attribute real divinity to any figure other than the one God”,[[30]](#footnote-30) thus any ascription of divine qualities to Jesus by the New Testament writers should be interpreted as including Jesus in “the unique divine identity as Jewish monotheism understood it”.[[31]](#footnote-31) Instances of Jesus sharing God’s throne, having sovereignty over all things, being given the divine name, and being worshipped (see below) should, according to Bauckham, be taken as including Jesus in the divine identity.

The flaw in Bauckham’s argument is the assertion of a strict monotheism in Second Temple Judaism. In reality the strict monotheism of Rabbinic Judaism that precludes “semi-divine” beings arose as a response to Christianity, and was not characteristic of Second Temple Judaism, which was heterogeneous. I have argued elsewhere,

Jews of Jesus’ day did not operate under a two-category system … but a multi-categorical system with God at its head. Nothing preached by Jesus or the early apostles implied that Jesus belonged in the God-category.[[32]](#footnote-32)

In any case, in the NT believers are promised to sit on the divine throne (Rev 3:21), to have sovereignty over the nations (Rev 2:26), to bear the divine name (Rev 3:12), and to be worshipped (*proskuneo;* Rev 3:9). This argument fails to do justice to explicit statements in the NT that distinguish Jesus from the unique divine identity, that is from the one God (1 Cor 8:6; 1 Tim 2: 5; John 17:3; Jude 1:4; Eph 4:5-6).

**Worship of Jesus**

Clementson gives special emphasis to the worship of Jesus. He recognizes two ways in which Jesus may be worshipped, either because God specifically commands it or of one who is within the Godhead. The former alternative, which he identifies as the Christadelphian position, Clementson describes as coming “dangerously close to the polytheism that Christadelphians claim to reject” (p. 171). It is only the latter alternative that can be properly exercised within monotheism and thus is the only alternative that can explain the worship of Jesus by early Christians (p. 172).

The assumption that underpins this argument is that all worship is of the same sort and thus any form of worship carries with it an implicit recognition of divinity. This is simply not the case. The word used in the NT to describe the worship of Jesus is *proskuneo,* which can be used both of the worship of God and the reverence of worthy men (cf. Matt 18:26; Rev 3:9). An act of *proskuneo* implies only respect and honour, not the worship of a deity. The word used for the exclusive worship of God is *sebomai* and its cognates (cf. Rom 1:25). This is not applied to Jesus in the NT.[[33]](#footnote-33)

**Jesus and the Spirit**

The third reason Clementson gives for identifying Jesus with God is his privilege of outpouring the Holy Spirit. Acts 2 records that Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on the disciples. “But”, Clementson reasons, “in Old Testament terms, the Spirit is not an independent power, but part of God’s own identity; there is no place for the Spirit being owned or controlled by anyone other than God”. Thus the outpouring of the Spirit by Jesus signifies that he is God. This, he says, is “perhaps the strongest argument of all for placing the exalted Jesus within the Godhead” (p. 169).

Clementson anticipates the Christadelphian response, that God granted Jesus control of this power. However, in fairness, it is not a Christadelphian argument at all but *ad verbim* quotation from the text:

Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he poured out this which you now see and hear (Acts 2:33 [NKJV])

One can hardly argue that Jesus was not given the Holy Spirit when the text itself states that he received it. Also, since there are ample references to the Holy Spirit being given and received by believers in the NT (John 7:39; Acts 8:15-9, 10:47, 19:6), it seems impossible to argue that one should need to be God to do either. Clementson baldy asserts that the Holy Spirit in the OT is part of God’s identity without citing any biblical text or any scholarly authority.[[34]](#footnote-34) Yet elsewhere in his article he acknowledges that the Holy Spirit in the OT “can be understood simply as God’s power” (p. 172).

**Holy Spirit**

Clementson’s comments regarding the Holy Spirit are somewhat reserved. He acknowledges that the Spirit can be understood as the power of God and that personification of the Spirit in the NT is not sufficient evidence of real personhood (p. 172). He even goes so far as state that if the Son is not regarded as being in the Godhead then “it is sufficient to discuss the relationship between the Father and the Spirit in terms of a person and his power” (p. 174). His argument for the “distinct identity” or “personhood” of the Spirit is taken from those NT passages that speak of the Spirit of Jesus (citing Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6; Phil 1:19): “we are forced to consider that the Spirit must in some sense be distinguishable from both Father and Son in order to be sent by either” (p. 173).

This argument fails to establish the personhood of the Spirit. If I project my voice from one room to another I can claim a certain independence for my voice (it can be in one room while I am in another); this does not mean my voice has personhood distinct from my own. That God can send his Spirit signifies some level of independence but not personhood. Further that the Spirit is often sent, but never sends itself, would seem to deny personhood. Those passages which speak of the spirit of Jesus deserve further evaluation since it is far from clear that the spirit of Jesus is the Holy Spirit.

**Threefold Experience of God**

Clementson avers, “The ultimate test of orthodoxy is not adherence to the ancient creeds but a faith that naturally expresses itself in the same way as the New Testament” (p. 175). Clementson believes that this natural expression is the threefold experience of God, which he claims the first believers knew. For all this, he can only provide two NT expressions of the threefold experience of God, each of which betrays his purpose: i) 2 Cor 13:14 speaks not of three divine persons but one “God”, one “Lord Jesus” and the Holy Spirit. This does not appear to be a threefold experience of God, but a singular experience of God, accompanied by his Son and his power. Comparison with the close of Paul’s other letters demonstrates that he did not experience God in Trinity; his usual benediction is “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you” (Rom 16:24; 1 Cor 16:23; Phil 4:23; 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18; cf. Gal 6:18); and ii) the baptismal formula of Matt 28:19 also does not speak of three divine persons, but is rather an early form of baptismal confession centred on a shared name.[[35]](#footnote-35) This threefold formula must be contrasted with the early Christian practice of baptizing “in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, and 19:5).

**Conclusion**

In conclusion we can say that while Clementson has tried to be sympathetic to Christadelphians, his logic and arguments break down. The Christadelphian understanding and experience of God is based upon the Bible. There they encounter one God, the Son of God and the power of God.

**El Shadday**

**P. Wyns**

**Introduction**

This article originated as an exegesis of Ex 6:3, a verse that employs the epithet *El Shadday* (translated as “God Almighty”) and the *Yahweh* name. It was realised that in order to do the subject justice the epithet required separate treatment. The problem is that no academic consensus[[36]](#footnote-36) has been reached on the meaning of the title therefore philological and etymological approaches alone are not sufficient to reach a decisive conclusion. Indeed J. Barr has been critical of the traditional emphasis on comparative and etymological study because of its unfortunate semantic effects and admits (using rare Hebrew words as case examples) that “literary questions are relevant and one cannot proceed purely linguistically”.[[37]](#footnote-37) The case put forward here is therefore largely associative and contextually based, although some supporting philological and etymological evidence will be provided from recent studies.

**Survey of OT usage**

*Shadday* occurs 48 times in the Hebrew Bible the distribution is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Book** |  | **Form** | **Description** |
| **Gen-Num** | Genesis 28.3;  43.14; 48.3 | 3 | ydv la  ´ël šaDDay | Compound form (God Almighty) |
| Genesis 17.1; 35.11 | 2 | ydv la  ´ël šaDDay | Compound form: self-introductory formula - ´ánî-´ël šaDDay (I *am* God Almighty) |
| Genesis 49.25 | 1 | Ydv  šaDDay | Note paronomasia:  šaDDay... šädaºyim (Almighty… breast) |
| Exodus 6.3 | 1 | ydv la  ´ël šaDDay | Compound form (God Almighty) |
| Numbers 24.4,16 | 2 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form |
| **Writings** | Ruth 1.20,21 | 2 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form |
| Job 5.17; 6.4,14; 8.3,5;  11.7; 13.3; 15.25; 21.15,20; 22.3, 17,23,25,26; 23.16; 24.1; 27.2,10,11,13; 29.5; 31.2,35; 32.8; 33.4; 34.10,12; 35.13; 37.23; 40:2 | 31 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form |
| Psalms 68.14; 91.1 | 2 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Book** |  | **Form** | **Description** |
| **Prophets** | Ezekiel 1.24 | 1 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form |
| Ezekiel 10.5 | 1 | ydv la  ´ël šaDDay | Compound form (God Almighty) |
| Isaiah 13.6 | 1 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form  Note paronomasia:  šöd miššaDDay  destruction from the Almighty |
| Joel 1.15 | 1 | ydv  šaDDay | Simple form  Note paronomasia:  šöd miššaDDay  destruction from the Almighty |

In addition to the above table,[[38]](#footnote-38) there are theophoric names to note: **Zurishaddai**[[39]](#footnote-39) (my rock is *Shadday -* Num 1:6; 2:12; 7:36, 41; 10:19), **Ammishaddai** (the people of *Shadday*, or *Shadday* is my kinsman - Num 1:12; 2:25; 7:66, 71; 10:25). One name is pre-fixed with *Shadday*, which is **Shedeur** (*Shadday* shines, or light of *Shadday -* Num 1:5; 2:10; 7:30, 35; 10:18).

**Shadday in Genesis**

The first use of the epithet is also the self-introductory formula, “I *am* God Almighty” found in Genesis 17:1,

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him: “I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be thou wholehearted. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly. Gen 17:1-2 (JPS[[40]](#footnote-40))

The title is linked with the promise to multiply Abram exceedingly indeed he will become Abraham the father of a nation. The combination “fruitful and multiply” is found *a further three times* in Genesis (28:3; 35:11; 48:4) in the context of the blessings of *El Shadday*. This is similar to the pre-patriarchal blessing formula “God blessed...be fruitful and multiply” found in Gen 1:22, 28; 9:1. The patriarchal *El Shadday* is therefore a further development of the creation and antediluvian blessing formula but with added emphasis on feminine aspects as becomes apparent from the paronomasia in Gen 49:25,

By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty (šaDDay) who will bless you *With* blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts (šädaºyim) and of the womb. Gen 49:25[[41]](#footnote-41)

*Shadday* seems to be related to the Hebrew *shad* (breast). Biale (1982:248) states that, “given the persistent fertility traditions in which El Shaddai appears in Genesis, the association is contextually and phonetically reasonable, if not scientifically persuasive”—to be understood as “El with breasts” or the “breasted El” by the author (s) of the various fertility blessings. However, Baile himself admits that it is “a poetic association...not a scientific etymology” and he (1982:253) attempts to link the epithet to the wider ANE fertility cults.

However rather than the noun *shad* coming from a triconsonantal root *sh-d-y*, K. and K. Massey argue[[42]](#footnote-42) for a derivation from the closely related Arabic word for breast (*th-d-y*) which in the singular form (*th-d*) also means “udder”. This explains the presence of the final yod (*y*) in *Shadday* and is confirmed by its appearing in the dual/plural form *shadayim*. According to the Masseys the unpointed *sh-d-y* has the same spelling as the Hebrew for “udder” (2000:94). They conclude; “Blessings of the udder meant an ample food supply to an ancient pastoral people. Blessings of the udder meant assurance that the flocks and herds would grow. Thus “God of the Udder” would best be understood as a “prosperity” God rather than as a fertility God” (2000:95).

All the occurrences of *Shadday* in Genesis are associated with blessing or covenant formulas indicating prosperity and fecundity with the exception of Gen 43:14 where it is deliberately contrasted by Jacob with “bereavement of children”.

**Shadday in Exodus**

Along with many other scholars, Biale (2000:247) dismisses the singular occurrence of *El* *Shadday* in Exod 6:3, “The Exodus text may be dismissed from the discussion because it is most probably a late editorial note explaining the change in God’s name from El Shaddai to Yahweh”. Although Biale is keen to stress “the biblical context in which expressions are used” (1982:242), he has neglected to apply this to Exod 6:3 because there is no immediate reference point. However, this is only true if the wider context of Genesis/Exodus is ignored. The first chapter of Exodus employs many of the same markers as the blessing formulas found in Genesis:

But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them. Exod 1:7 (KJV)

The markers are repeated in Exod 1:10, 12 and 20—the irony of the situation is that the divine *El Shadday* blessing of Genesis is so abundant that it causes problems for the descendants of Abraham. The epithet of Exod 6.3 must therefore be understood within the wider context.

**Shadday in Numbers**

Both occurrences of *Shadday* in Numbers 24:4, 16 are in the context of the “blessing” of the people by Balaam/God which stresses the fecundity and supremacy of Jacob (Num 23:10; 24:6, 7). The theophoric names are of interest, particularly Zurishaddai (my rock is *Shadday*) which suggests “bringing water for them out of the rock” (Num 20:8)—a rock that provides nourishment in a fashion similar to a breast/udder (cf. the poetic - “He made him draw honey from the rock, And oil from the flinty rock”) but the nation that suckled on the rock grew fat and kicked (Deut 32:13-15).[[43]](#footnote-43)

**Shadday in Ruth**

The use of the epithet in Ruth is by way of contrast as Naomi “went out full and returned empty” thus implying that the *Shadday* epithet had not lived up to the promised blessing of fecundity and prosperity as she was returning without children and therefore without a means to redeem her deceased husband’s name and estate. This is the first use of *Shadday* in a negative context. It is possible to posit that we are dealing with an inversion of the meaning as from this point onwards *Shadday* is predominantly used in a context of destruction rather than blessing. However, rather than inversion or broadening of the semantic range of the epithet the new development can be explained by changing literary conventions with *Shadday* used in an antonymic manner—deliberately contrasting the epithet with the context for literary effect.

**Shadday in the Psalms**

When the Almighty scattered kings in it, It was *white* as snow in Zalmon. Ps 68:14 (KJV)

The first occurrence in the Psalms is enigmatic and the context in the early part of the psalm (vv. 1-18) is probably a reminiscence of Israel’s wilderness journey. If this is the case then Zalmon is the Zalmonah of Num. 33:41, and the “kings” is a reference to Num 21:1-3 or to Num 21:33-35 where Bashan is also mentioned (cf. Ps 68:15). The Septuagint (LXX) translators struggled with this verse and instead of the usual “Almighty” - *pantokrator* (pantokra,twr)they opted for “heavenly (evpoura,nion) [One]”.[[44]](#footnote-44) This suggests the possibility that the LXX translators either read the Hebrew *shadday* as *shamayim* (heavens) or that they were working from a Hebrew original that varied from the MT. In any case it is difficult to reach any conclusion from the context.

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Ps 91:1 (NKJV)

Similar to Psalm 90 this is probably also a “Psalm of Moses” reflecting the wilderness experience. References to the “secret place” and the “shadow of the Almighty” imply protection in the inner sanctum under the overspreading wings of the cherubim (cf. Ps 61:4). Psalm 27:5 likens this to being “set high upon a rock” and is reminiscent of Moses being hidden in the cleft of the rock when the Yahweh name was declared (Ex 33:22).

The love poem, Song 2:14, is based on the same experience; “O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, In the secret places of the cliff, Let me see your face, Let me hear your voice; For your voice is sweet, And your face is lovely”. The suggestion here is that the “cleft of the rock” is euphemistic for the “bosom” and this is picked up by the Evangelist: “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him” (John 1:18, NKJV). *Shadday* in Psalm 91:1 is therefore linked with protection and intimacy, a fitting prospect for the younger generation that survived the wilderness and were about to enter the land.

**Shadday in Job**

*Shadday* occurs 31x in Job,[[45]](#footnote-45) *El* some 50x, a dozen in parallel with *Shadday*. Equally interesting, **Yahweh is hardly ever used in the dialogues of Job**, only in the prologue and epilogue apart from the introduction to the Speeches of Yahweh (Job 38:1; 40:1), and one isolated reference in the poetic dialogue (Job 12:9) which is disputed.[[46]](#footnote-46) The presence of the title in Job is thought “to serve archaizing purposes” as the book of Job is consider to be postexilic. H. Niehr and G. Steins,[[47]](#footnote-47) for example, believe that *Shadday* is a late epithet and assert that “advocates of an early dating must deal with the observation that although this divine name was already familiar in Israel during a very early period, its use then completely receded for about five hundred years (!), the name then re-emerging during the Exile and becoming common again especially during the postexilic period”. They consider that this “unexplainable lacuna....disappears” with the view that “the divine name was not picked up before the Exile and that more recent scholarship accords a late date to the disputed passages even though he acknowledges “explicit historical-theological association with the patriarchal period (Ex 6:3)”.

This conclusion only stands if one accords a late (postexilic) date to Job and the prophetic books Isaiah/Joel. However, the consensus on the late dating of these books is not certain and A. Perry has presented compelling inter-textual evidence for an eighth century dating of Isaiah/Joel, moreover he presents a parabolic reading of Job as coming from the same period – a dramatization of Hezekiah’s situation.[[48]](#footnote-48) If Perry’s approach is correct (and I believe it is) then Job reflects a situation where the reforming king Hezekiah is about to die without an heir to the throne. The Abrahamic and Davidic covenants would therefore be disannulled. This dire situation is worsened by the Assyrian invasion of Sennacherib with his burnt earth policy. The blessings of *Shadday* which include prosperity and children are therefore reversed:

Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face! Job 1:10-11 (NKJV)

Hezekiah faces the loss of possessions and “children” (the 200,000 captives taken by Sennacherib) and the end of the Davidic dynasty. This explains why the central portion of Job exclusively employs *Shadday* instead of Yahweh. If the nation is destitute and depopulated then the promise implicit in the Yahweh name cannot be fulfilled. Our argument is that *Shadday* is employed ironically for literary effect. The *Shadday* blessing had implicitly promised not only prosperity and fecundity but kingship - the Davidic monarchy is anticipated in two of the patriarchal *El Shadday* sayings to Abraham and Jacob; “kings shall come from your body” (Gen 36:11; cf. Gen 17:6 with 17:1).[[49]](#footnote-49) For Job/Hezekiah the failure of the *Shadday* blessing was unfathomable and undeserved after his efforts to court the northern tribes and reform the Yahweh cult. Fittingly, Job/Hezekiah is restored and his blessing is doubled but this time not by *Shadday* **but by Yahweh** (Job 42:12).

The usage of *Shadday* in Job is significant - particularly considering that Yahweh is absent in the dialogues. If Job is a parabolic dramatization of the suffering of Hezekiah set in the patriarchal period, then the use of *Shadday* (fecundity/blessing/kings/children etc) promised to the patriarchs is in direct contrast with Job’s situation. This is not just an “archaizing” feature (which it is) but also a deliberate reminder that the patriarchal blessing has been reversed.

**Shadday in Isaiah/Joel**

Isaiah and Joel are to extant contemporaries and both employ the title (Isa 13:6; Joel 1:15) as a paronomasia:“Wail, for the day of the Lord *is* at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty” (šöd, miššaDDay are the Hebrew for “destruction” and “from the Almighty”). The context is similar to that of Job and the suggestion is that the title is used ironically—the God who showers his people with blessings of fecundity and prosperity now rains down destruction. The background of Joel is the destruction of the agricultural infrastructure and the threat to Ahaz of the removal of the Davidic dynasty[[50]](#footnote-50) - the opposite of what *Shadday* implies.

**Shadday in Ezekiel**

Ezekiel associates the simple and compound forms with the “wings of the cherubim” (Ezek 1:24; 10:5) and the “living creatures”. The glory residing among the “living creatures” is symbolic of divine creative work in both a natural and spiritual sense. The withdrawal of the *Shekinah* from between the cherubim wings on the Ark of the Covenant symbolised the reversal of the *Shadday* blessing of prosperity and fecundity for the nation. Only the poorest people would be left and the neglected land would degenerate into a wilderness.

**Conclusion**

The Septuagint (LXX) translators struggled to translate *Shadday* into Greek and settled for *pantokrator* (pantokra,twr)which sentiment the Latin Vulgate translators followed with their choice of *omnipotens* rendered by the King James translators as Almighty. None of these translations is correct and philological and etymological approaches alone have proved inconclusive. However, when philological and etymological methodologies are combined with literary and contextual exegesis, new understandings can be reached. Recent studies have highlighted fertility as a common factor, and to the Higher Critics’ “History of Religions” school of thought, this has suggested a syncretism with Canaanite fertility cults. While recognising that the epithet has definite feminine overtones this article rejects the view that its origins should be sought in native fertility cults[[51]](#footnote-51) and hesitates to translate the epithet as “God of the breasts (or udder)” as some suggest. However, the ideas of prosperity/nourishment/fertility are all present – and these related ideas are difficult to sum up in one phrase, therefore a tentative translation for *El Shadday* would be the “God who blesses{with offspring}and nourishes.”

Should ‘was’ be ‘became’ in Genesis 1:2a?

“And the earth was without form and void”

*wh´rc hyTh Thw wBhw*[[52]](#footnote-52)

**John W. Adey**

PART 1

**Introduction**

My aim in this article is to show that the usual translation of the Hebrew htyh/*hyTh* as ‘was’ in Gen 1:2a (as above) is correct and that ‘became’ is not justified either for certain Gap theorists or for any other reason. A ‘Gap Theory’[[53]](#footnote-53) that requires ‘became’ assumes a gap of countless millennia between vv. 1 and 2, in which there was a pre-Adamic habitation of the earth.[[54]](#footnote-54) This era is said to have ended in a catastrophe which produced the state of the earth as *Thw wBhw* (vocalised: *töhû wäböhû*), interpreted as ‘chaos’.

My interest, here, is solely linguistic. Hence, although I report some of the history and reaction to the Gap Theory, I do not debate whether the earth is young or old. The gap view idea and ‘became’ surfaces from time to time. For example, M. Rooker (2003)[[55]](#footnote-55) approvingly draws on B. K. Waltke’s (1974) grammatical treatment of Gen 1:2 against the restitution or gap theory.[[56]](#footnote-56)

I identify usage within the Hebrew Bible (HB) that differentiates htyh/*hyTh* as ‘was’ from ‘became’, and draw on parallel language and quotational evidence in the GNT. This inter-textual arena is sufficient in itself, but mostly Greek translations in antiquity support ‘was’ in Gen 1:2a, and other linguistic aspects treated. Only Symmachus has the Greek term evge,neto/egéneto which tends to have a progressive ‘became’ sense, but I have not been able to discover the reasons for his deviation from ‘was’ of the Septuagint (LXX), Aquila, and Theodotion.[[57]](#footnote-57)

**In the beginning**

The beginning of the linguistic life of the Hebrew term htyh/*hyTh* (KJV’s ‘was’) is in Gen 1:2. It is set in a context that presents, in a non-sensational matter-of-fact narrative style, a ‘*this is how it was’* account of creation. This following comment, from a paper attempting to interpret Genesis 1:1 in the light of near eastern archaeology adds:

The literary genre of Genesis 1:1-2:4a is that of a report. In this unit we find no tension and no resolution of a crisis; what we encounter is doctrine which is not set out philosophically but under the guise of history.[[58]](#footnote-58)

In Gen 1:1, God is both before and behind ‘in the beginning’. This is the context for a first encounter with transcendence; comprehending the Creator starts here. Causally, creation, “the heavens and all their host” (Gen 2:4; Ps 33:6) “became” (yhiY<+w:/*wyhy* Ps 33:9) “by the word of Yahweh”, “[made] by the spirit of his mouth” (Ps 33:6; Heb 11:3).[[59]](#footnote-59) In the beginning, therefore, was the word, and the word was with/towards God (John 1:1-2).

‘(In) the beginning’ (e.g., Matt 19:4; Mark 10:6; Heb 1:10; 2 Pet 3:4) terminates the time ‘*before* the earth was’ (Prov 8:23).[[60]](#footnote-60) Genealogically (Gen 2:4; Ps 90:2)[[61]](#footnote-61), the earth’s primal condition is whbw wht/*Thw wBhw* (KJV’s) ‘without form and void’, read not as chaos but as a preparatory consequence of God’s creative initiative recounted in Gen 1:1,[[62]](#footnote-62) which included, we learn later, God’s having “laid the foundations of the earth” (cf. Job 38:4-7; Ps 104:5; Prov 8:29; Isa 40:21; 51:13, 16).

In Gen 1:1 the earth is introduced created with the heavens and then the story of the earth is taken up in v. 2, as the Hebrew syntax positions the opening with (‘*wäw*’ = ‘and’): “‘and’ the earth” (*wh´rc*). In fact, narratively, the ***w****[h´rc]* ‘and’ could carry the sense of ‘now [the earth]’.[[63]](#footnote-63) Gesenius states that “the noun-clause connected by a *wäw* copulative to a verbal-clause, or its equivalent, always describes a state contemporaneous with the principle action. . . .”[[64]](#footnote-64) So, neither the principle action of Gen 1:1, nor 1:2’s opening noun-clause, offers any scope for a ‘gap’ of time. It is in this grammatical and syntactical area that M. Rooker believes that “Waltke’s critique of the gap theory is devastating.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

W. W. Fields, whom I cite more below, puts it like this:

The grammar of verse two forces us to say that the earth was *created* unformed and unfilled, while the Gap Theory alleges that it should say the earth *became* unformed and unfilled *after* (perhaps centuries after) it was created! It is grammatically impossible.[[66]](#footnote-66)

D. Kidner (1967) observes:

If verse 2 were intended to tell of a catastrophe (‘And the earth *became* . . .’), as some have suggested, it would use the Hebrew narrative construction, not the circumstantial construction as here.[[67]](#footnote-67)

Likewise, E. A. Speiser (1964) has these two different constructions in mind and how v. 2 figures in relation to v. 1:

The parenthetic character of this verse [Gen 1:2] is confirmed by the syntax of Hebrew. A normal consecutive statement would have begun with *waTTühî hä´ärec*, not *wühä´ärec* *häy•tâ*.[[68]](#footnote-68)

It is the case, however, that even if *waTTühî hä´ärec* had opened v. 2, without specific information favourable to ‘became’, that sense could not be sustained unambiguously; ‘was’ would still have been an acceptable sense.[[69]](#footnote-69)

‘Was’ for htyh/*hyTh* in Gen 1:2a is featured relating the earth to its first description: hbw wht/*Thw wBhw* (KJV’s ‘without form and void’). Therefore,htyh/*hyTh* has a copula (connecting) and temporal (past time deictic) function.[[70]](#footnote-70) I retain these two identifying features of the functional identity of this ‘(it/there/she) was’ as a way of defining its job description.

**In sum:** whbw wht/*Thw wBhw* interpreted as chaos[[71]](#footnote-71) is said to be evidence of a pre-Adamic habitation of the planet that ended in cataclysm in a supposed ‘gap’ between Gen 1:1 and 1:2. This changes Genesis 1’s causal account of *how it was*. As A. Gibson (1983) cogently countered:

Verse 2 does *not* mention that it includes the creation of the *planet* Earth. Verse 2 seems to rely on verse 1 for the record of the creation of the Earth. Thus verse 1 is about the creation of the planet; verse 2 tells us about God’s creative activity on the planet . . . this interconnects the two verses quite closely. No time-gap is cited in either verse. Hence it is an assumption, not a present piece of information, which supports an appeal to the time-gap.[[72]](#footnote-72)

**The ‘Gap Theory’ context for ‘became’**

Gen 1:1-2 and texts like Exod 20:11; 31:17 and Neh 9:6 feature God’s creation of the heavens (always plural in the HB) and the earth, providing for life on earth, within a symbolically-adapted chronological framework of six days, rather than, say, as an instantaneous[[73]](#footnote-73) event. Modern science has projected different timescales for the start of the universe or the age of earth, and this has led to views, like the Gap Theory, that seek to accommodate Scripture to science.[[74]](#footnote-74)

The origin of the Gap Theory is usually identified with Dr. Thomas Chalmers of Edinburgh University in 1814. Chalmers, who lived concurrently with Lyell and Darwin, deemed it necessary to harmonize the Scriptures and science in order to save Christianity from the onslaught of atheism.[[75]](#footnote-75) W. W. Fields (1976) puts Chalmers’ concern thus:

[Chalmers felt the need to] make room for the vast expanse of time which the geologists of his day were demanding and at the same time maintain a literal interpretation of the creation account.[[76]](#footnote-76)

Fields mentions that ‘Gap’, or ‘Ruin and Restoration’ theorists want the Hebrew term htyh/*hyTh* of Gen 1:2a, usually translated ‘was’ here in English versions, to be a progressive ‘became’(or, even ‘had become’).[[77]](#footnote-77)

So, this view, centre-staging ‘became’, did not arise in a neutral interpretative context or through agenda-free exegesis. The following has been put to me by some who resort to ‘became’ and believe that God speaks to us both through Scripture and the fossil record:

The way forward is for the Christian to accept that the planet on which God created Adam and Eve is an extremely old creation. Next, that God produced many, many creations on this ancient planet, of which the fossils bear record. Next, that all life on this planet was extinguished, exterminated, and remained so up until God spoke at the start of Day One.

In 1970, A. C. Custance (1910-1985) published *Without Form and Void*, which according to Fields is the lengthiest defense of the Gap Theory any man has attempted in print.[[78]](#footnote-78) Custance feels that the translation of *hyTh* is the pivotal point in the controversy and he argues for (the pluperfect) ‘had become’ (translating Gen. 1:2a: “But the earth had become a desolation”), whereas previous gap theorists, along with the *New Scofield Reference Bible* (OUP, 1967), supposed that “the word rendered ‘was’ may also be translated ‘became’”.[[79]](#footnote-79)

For Fields, as no gap is suggested between Gen 1:1 and 2, “the *only* sense in which the pluperfect could be understood, is as a description of the state of the earth as it had been created”. That is, ‘was’ explained as implying: “Now the earth *had come into being* (been created) void and without form”.[[80]](#footnote-80) I quote Fields because in my view he contends clearly and fairly against a gap view. He argues against ‘became’ and rightly claims that the “pluperfect [‘had become’] translation of Genesis 1:2 is better rejected.”[[81]](#footnote-81)

It is true that forms of the Hebrew verb *hyh*―‘to be’―like *hyTh* and cognates, which give ‘was’ and ‘were’, occur in (structuring) certain ‘became’ expressions. However, comparing usage soon shows when htyh/*hyTh* is ‘was’ and how some of its 116 instances are configured to provide (the need for) the sense: ‘became’.

There is Tense (and other grammatical or functional characteristics) in Hebrew verbs.[[82]](#footnote-82) As noted already, a prominent feature of the behaviour of Hebrew ‘be’ verbs is as *temporal* indicators! Differently, ‘became’ (cf. ‘*be*came’/‘*be*come’) has a temporal contour that implies some duration, or marks ‘happening’, and it can also be suggestive of a result (as in ‘come to *be’*).[[83]](#footnote-83)

Finally, J. Barr (1961), in his ground-breaking and now classic work *Semantics of Biblical Language*, and in a chapter exposing some scholars’ theological or theory-laden approaches to the Hebrew verb, makes reference to the *be*-verb hyh/*hyh (hayah).* In this context he mentions its third person feminine singular form htyh/ *hyTh* in Gen. 1:2 (Field also cites Barr here).[[84]](#footnote-84) Barr states:

[A] statement like ‘the earth is waste’ will have the nominal sentence and no verb; but if we put it in the past and say ‘the earth was waste (and is no longer)’, then the verb *hayah* is used, as in Gen. 1:2. It would be quite perverse to insist on the meaning ‘became’ here.[[85]](#footnote-85)

**Reviews**

## **W. Dever, Who Were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From? (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003)**

Dever argues that the Israelites were not external conquerors, but ethnic Canaanites who at some point separated themselves from the larger Canaanite population to distinguish themselves as a separate ethnic, social, and religious group.

To commence, Dever provides a detailed examination of the history of Biblical archaeology, from its earliest apparent ‘successes’ to its later unfortunate ‘failures’ and confrontations with contradictory evidence. The succeeding years are then described, during which various alternative readings of the Biblical text were proposed with no one model able to demonstrate sufficient support to establish a new scholarly consensus. By the end of this section it is apparent that no traditional readings of the Exodus-Conquest narrative can survive a confrontation with the evidence, and most of the post-traditional readings are also without any meaningful support.

Historic theories of Israelite origin are then discussed briefly, and their weaknesses exposed. Dever next moves to the core of his own model, which is that the Israelites were indigenous to Canaan. Taking issue with the interpretation of I. Finkelstein,[[86]](#footnote-86) he provides a useful critique of Finkelstein’s views (which have become popular with Minimalists).

Dever’s primary argument against the Conquest narrative is that there is no substantial discontinuity of material culture within Canaan at the time of the Israelite invasion. However, Dever must also provide sufficient evidence to substantiate a significant discontinuity of material culture illustrating eventual Israelite emergence as a distinct group.

Providing an abundance of archaeological evidence for a discontinuity of Israelite culture from Canaanite culture, Dever acknowledges that this break in continuity took place during the very era that the Biblical record indicates Israel was conquering Canaan. In fact, Dever provides substantially more than that they were an indigenous Canaanite group.

Most striking of the evidence for discontinuity is that which is clearly religious in nature:

* Absence of pig bones from settlement sites: evidence for a radical departure from existing Canaanite food practices, and the emergence of a new ethnic group.
* Massive abandonment (and in some cases physical destruction) of Canaanite temples, cult sites and idols: evidence that these areas had now been taken by a new ethnic group which eschewed the religious beliefs and practices of the Canaanites.

Finally, Dever attempts to harmonize the evidence within a scheme which interprets the early Israelites as an indigenous Canaanite group. It is telling that this last section is the shortest of all and that Dever himself acknowledges ‘my theory is speculative’ and has ‘little archaeological evidence to support it’.

Dever’s work is an extremely useful survey of archaeological data and commentary concerning the early conquest, and the interpretation of Joshua and Judges. However, readers are advised of alternative readings of the evidence which are more sympathetic to the Biblical account:

* I. Provan, V. Philips Long and T. Longman *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville: WJK Press, 2003).
* J. K. Hoffmeier *Ancient Israel in Sinai* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
* K. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

**J. Burke**

**J. D. G. Dunn, Did the first Christians worship Jesus? (London, SPCK, 2010)**

This book is worth having on the shelf because it brings together in one convenient volume the “worship” texts that an orthodox Christian is likely to use when arguing for the deity of Christ. Dunn himself says in the conclusion to the “Introduction”,

What I hope will become apparent is that the first Christians did not see worship of Jesus as an alternative to worship of God. Rather, it was a way of worshipping God. That is to say, worship of Jesus is only possible or acceptable within what is now understood to be a Trinitarian framework. Worship of Jesus that is not worship of God through Jesus, or, more completely, worship of God through Jesus and in the Spirit, is not Christian worship.[[87]](#footnote-87)

This conclusion is astonishing for its dogmatism, especially since Dunn is a careful NT scholar. It condemns all Christadelphian worship of Jesus as non-Christian, but more significantly, it arbitrarily drops in the Trinitarian framework as the only acceptable framework for such worship. Even if the book were to prove that the first Christians worshipped Jesus as God, this would not be enough to establish a Trinitarian metaphysics. Dunn is unable to think outside his western Christian background and ask the question: is Christianity astray in its thinking about Christ. Scholars take for granted what they have received in their church traditions and “build” on this basis.

The problem that Dunn faces is illustrated in the conclusions for his first chapter, which is an examination of “worship” vocabulary in the NT. He says,

‘Worship’ as such is a term rarely used in reference to Christ…Cultic worship or service (*latreuein*, *latreia*) as such is never offered to Christ, and other worship terms are used only in relation to God. In the case of the most common words for praise and thanksgiving (*eucharistein*), they too are never offered to Christ.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Dunn is not misrepresenting his discussion but he is creating a black hole of credibility in his argument because he has said in his “Introduction” that Christians “must” worship Jesus in a Trinitarian framework. The simple question is: given the paucity of evidence, why is there this “must”? To establish a “must” like this, you really need something systematic and structural in doctrine and practise in the NT letters. And of course this is what you do not have in the historical data.

Dunn goes on,

All the same, the fact that such worship language is used in reference to Jesus, even if only occasionally, is very striking. This would have been entirely unusual and without precedent in the Judaism of the time.

Again the problem for Dunn is the “very occasionally” as this is not enough to generate the “must” of Trinitarian worship that he is seeking in order to validate his own faith. Still, there is a point here: devotion to Jesus and the “lordship” of Jesus are distinctive in the Judaism of the day. Christadelphians explain this in terms of the exaltation of Jesus by God the Father. Such exaltation is incompatible with the notion of Jesus as the incarnation of God the Son.

The reader is suitable warned by Dunn’s careful hedging, “only occasionally”; s/he is warned to look carefully at the examples of worship language applied to Jesus; some or all may not be what Dunn claims. For example, Dunn regards Stephen’s calling upon the name of Jesus as an example of the language of calling upon a deity (Acts 7:59, NASB). He admits that such language could be an illustration of calling upon a heavenly being, but prefers to link the language to the practise of calling upon the God of Israel in order to secure a comparison of deity for Jesus.[[89]](#footnote-89) What is lacking in Dunn’s analysis is the careful intertextual work that *explains* the visionary context for Stephen’s address.

The argument, “Jesus was worshipped and only God should be worshipped, therefore Jesus is God”, is popular. Dunn’s book brings the texts together that are used in this argument. His cautiousness undermines his Trinitarian goal; nevertheless, his book has value as a source book of texts for constructing a correct understanding of such worship.

**Correspondence**

Dear Editor,

There were two main census carried out for the express purpose of consecrating God’s army. The first occurred after two years in the wilderness and the second, after the Baal-Peor incident, where it was necessary to consecrate the army, as all those of the first census, apart from Caleb and Joshua, had perished in the wilderness.

Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first [day] of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers’ houses, according to the number of names, every male individually, from twenty years old and above—all who [are able to] go to war in Israel. **You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father’s house**. Num 1:1-4 (NKJV)

The highlighted text clearly defines those involved in conducting the census. The NASB margin notes that the word ‘number’ is literally ‘muster’ and the half shekel is described as an ‘heave’ offering. The second census, as we have observed above, was made to consecrate the army before they crossed Jordan. There, as God’s army, they were to inflict God’s judgments on Canaan as the cup of their iniquity was now full.

David had led the army of Israel into battle many times. He might possibly have had concerns that the army was not consecrated and the census was a belated attempt to rectify this. If this was the case, then like the occasion of Uzziah, David had not consulted God’s law before embarking on this census. For a legitimate census to be conducted, David and the High Priest together with twelve elders representing the twelve tribes were required. As each eligible man passed over to the ‘mustered’ group he would offer his half shekel for the atonement of his soul. None of these requirements were complied with and thus David was at fault.

The plague on Israel was one of the three explicit judgments that God warned he would use for unfaithfulness (Lev 26:25-27; Jer 24:10, 29:17-18). These judgments are only used against Israel. David saw the sword in the hand of the angel; pestilence was ravaging Israel and although famine is not mentioned here it can reasonably be concluded that these judgments were as a result of **Israel’s** unfaithfulness. [Trevor Evans]

**Marginal Notes**

**1 Cor 11:3—J. Burke**

The meaning of the Greek word *kephalē* (most commonly translated ‘head’), in 1 Cor 11:3 has been debated extensively among evangelical commentators for years. However, among professional lexicographers there is no debate. Standard professional lexicons do not include the meaning ‘source, origin’ for *kephalē* here as understood by some egalitarians, nor do recognized authoritative lexicographers debate whether the word carries a fundamental meaning of ‘source, origin’ or ‘chief, ruler’.

Despite the years of egalitarian arguments and claims of new evidence, none of the standard lexicons has accepted the egalitarian definition of the word *kephalē*,[[90]](#footnote-90) although a number of the standard professional lexicons have been updated recently with additional lexicographical information derived from additional lexical studies or the discovery of new sources.[[91]](#footnote-91) Furthermore, standard lexicons and dictionaries specifically identify *kephalē* as having meanings such as ‘first, superior rank, pre-eminent status, leader, master, head’ in the very passage under discussion, 1 Cor 11:3.

**Postscript**

**Christadelphian Writing**

**Andrew Perry**

It is well known that Christadelphian books cannot be bought in Christian bookshops or in mainstream bookshops. In the 1980s, a Christadelphian imprint, Aletheia Books, tried to break into this market in the UK, but success was limited to only one or two volumes. Compared to Christian publishing houses, of which there are many, Christadelphians have only one or two organizations that run as a business.

In the world, a tiny number of popular authors make a living from religious book writing. The writing of books on biblical topics offers less opportunity for money-making to an author. Generally, the authors of these books are making their living in academia or the church; their writing offers some royalties as a bonus to their salary. We might ask whether royalties or commission fees should be paid to Christadelphian writers who have their work accepted in the main magazines or who have works published by CMPA. The principle is that a labourer is worthy of his hire.

The Christadelphian community is a more or less completely lay community; it has no professional clergy. It supports missionary work through private and charitable donations; it supports many other good works through such means, for example Meal-a-Day and various care homes. The same endeavours can be seen in the churches. That area of human endeavour which we call writing receives virtually no support financially in the Christadelphian community unless it is writing directed towards preaching.

A “giving of your time freely to the Lord” is the model that dominates Christadelphian writing. The same is true of Christadelphian preaching, except here there may be living expenses for foreign missionaries, for travel, or sundry expenses incurred in campaigns, *and so on*. The difference between the lack of financial support for writing compared to preaching is plain to see, but does it matter? Are there costs involved in writing which should be borne by the community; has the community suffered from its lack of support for writing? What are the problem conditions that arise from the lack of support for writing in the community? We could list several:

1) **Quality**: there are different qualities in different types of writing. In Biblical Studies, the best quality writing is based on careful research and thinking. The benchmark in method would be the doctoral writing that comes off the conveyor belt of the church seminaries and universities. This kind of writing is wholly lacking in the community. Other types of writing are also rare or scarce; writing that is overtly theological or philosophical in relation to biblical matters.

2) **False Doctrine**: When ecclesial magazines and those who publish books in the community neglect advanced writing, whether in biblical studies or in doctrine, there is a danger of false doctrine and error. Unless there is a counter-balance to the advanced writing that takes place in the churches, people will only have the one source to consult for such writing. The truths and the mistakes in advanced biblical studies are subtle, and readers imbibe each in equal measure. There is therefore a need for such writing in the community to counter the subtle falsehoods that exist in church writing.

3) **Problem Solving**: Hoary old chestnuts bedevil the community; they have a life of their own and they live on in each new generation. However, there is a need for advanced writing on such problems. One way to measure the lack of such writing is to ask: to which Christadelphian writers do I look for a solution to this or that problem? Is s/he a person who wrote over a hundred years ago, over fifty years ago, or in the last twenty years in the pages of an ecclesial magazine? Another question to ask is this: do the solutions being offered to biblical and doctrinal problems seem stuck in a time warp? This is another way in which the lack of advanced writing is felt. Again, people can go to the advanced writing in the churches for solutions to hoary old chestnuts and be misled.

4) **Doctrinal Development**: the Bible is a deep book and the believer can plumb to ever increasing depths. Doctrine can be developed to deeper levels. This is a form of advanced writing that is neglected in the community. It is a kind of writing that is required if Christadelphians are to combat the sophisticated false doctrines that are abroad in Christendom. Two pieces of evidence that show that we have neglected advanced writing on doctrine are: i) the extent to which pioneer writings are used; and ii) the temerity with which doctrine is handled; safe formulations are used from the past stock of writing (e.g. in the area of the Atonement).

We could, perhaps, add to (1)-(4), but this is a short opinion piece. The types of writing that predominate in the community are “devotional”, “preaching”, “proverbial back page sentiment” and “introduction”. With these types of writing, there can be no complaint about quality; each has their own rationale and value. We can say, however, that the neglect of more advanced types of writing is a **strategic mistake** within the community. This applies not only to what we might call scholarly writing but also to deeper analysis of the biblical text without scholarly engagement. The evidence that this mistake has been made is simply what has been published by the mainstream ecclesial magazines since the late 1980s. The problem that is created is that there is virtually nothing to read from the community once the offered forms of writing have been read.

Time is a problem. If a person only has time to read one advanced book on a topic, by a Pentecostal or a Baptist, say, they will inevitably be in danger of a one sided view. If that view is then transcribed to an article in a Christadelphian magazine, then it is duplicated a hundredfold. What’s required is: more time for personal research and/or a stock of Christadelphian writings that have written up such research, thereby offering a guide through topics.

The neglect of advanced writing in ecclesial magazines is a strategic mistake. For the last twenty years, magazines and those who publish books have not been building the stock of such writing for people to draw upon. This is not to say that false doctrine has crept into the magazines and books, although there are some obvious examples of scholarly mistakes that have migrated from scholarship into magazine and book materials. Rather, the conflict between true and false teaching has another battleground: the Internet. As opinions, viewpoints, and questions are posted on forums, Facebook, and mailing lists, it is here that the lack of advanced written material is felt, and the scholarly writing of the churches is quoted instead.

There are several ways to tackle this problem. Existing magazines could broaden their editorial policy to include advanced writing. Christadelphian publishing organizations could include the concept of an “academic series” in their portfolios, so that advanced biblical writing could be published. Christadelphian charitable foundations could broaden their articles of association to include research grants for the purpose of advanced writing and advertise this on their websites. These ideas are not new, but they would be a challenge. Perhaps the new generation of writers and editors (when they come) can undo the mistake of their forbears in this matter.

**Supporting Biblical and Historical Research**

**Andrew Perry**

The Christadelphian community does not support biblical and historical research that would be supportive to its ethos. Individuals may embark on post-graduate research and obtain secular funds for fees and maintenance and they may research topics of value to the community. Others may do such research part-time while holding down jobs and raising families. There is a great deal of research that can be done but none is currently supported by ecclesias.

For example, there are many inaccessible manuscripts from the renaissance and reformation eras supporting anti-Trinitarian points of view. Google Books and [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) has some material, but there are other authors whose work is valuable, such as Samuel Clarke, Paul Best, or Johann Crell. Such works need transcribing and editing for storage and access online. Or again, another example of research that would be of value to the community would be to investigate the writings of the Restoration/Restitution Movement of the 1830s out of which came J. Thomas.

Biblical research topics that would be of value to the community are legion. However, one area of support that could be offered by ecclesias would be in the area of formal Greek and Hebrew Studies. There is a need for more expertise spread throughout the ecclesias in the original bible languages, and a good way to support young Christadelphians spend a gap year studying them would be through the a “Stewardship Account” registered with [www.stewardship.org.uk](http://www.stewardship.org.uk). These are UK based accounts that attract gift aid status for repayment of tax for UK taxpayers. They function as an account that students draw upon while studying at a Bible College. A one year diploma would be one way in which Christadelphians could learn Greek and Hebrew as well as take modules in various areas of Biblical Studies. This would then be a platform for further Biblical research.

**New Websites and Blogs**

Anti-Trinitarian Studies Website

[www.antitrinitarian-studies.sussex.ac.uk](http://www.antitrinitarian-studies.sussex.ac.uk)

A new site (in development) which includes Milton’s *De doctrina Christiana* and a few other transcriptions.

Richard Bauckham

[www.richardbaucckham.co.uk](http://www.richardbaucckham.co.uk)

This is a new website. He is a retired professor and an evangelical Trinitarian but a conservative biblical scholar that has interesting things to say about the Gospels. Some of his lectures are on the site and he is the sort of Trinitarian thinker whose work needs to be criticized when defending the Jewish monotheism of the NT writers.

Emanuel Tov

[www.emanueltov.info](http://www.emanueltov.info)

This old site is worth bookmarking for its series of studies on the LXX.

**END**

1. H. A. Whittaker, *Isaiah* (Cannock: Biblia, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. G. and R. Walker *The Second Exodus* (Norwich: Bible Student Press, 2001), 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See also R. Roberts and C. C. Walker, *The Ministry of the Prophets, Isaiah* (2nd ed.; Birmingham: CMPA, 1923); or more recently in M. Vincent, “What Happens in Isaiah?” *Christadelphian Magazine* 137 (2000): 18-22; 59-62; 99-102; 138-142; 179-182; 218-222; 258-262; 299-302; 338-342; 378-382; 418-422; 459-462. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. J. W. Thirtle, *Old Testament Problems* (repr. Hyderabad: Printland Publishers, 2004; London: Henry Frowde, 1907). Thirtle’s work is noted by W. H. Cobb, “Where Was Isaiah 40-66 Written?” *JBL* 27 (1908): 48-64 (49). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. W. A. Wordsworth, *En-Roeh: The Prophecies of Isaiah the Seer* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1939). Wordsworth’s work is noted by R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, (London: Tyndale Press, 1970), 794-795. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. J. B. Payne, “Eighth Century Israelitish Background of Isaiah 40-66” *WTJ* 29 (1966-1967): 179-190; *WTJ* 30 (1968): 50-58; 185-203. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The “evidence” we list has been compiled and adjusted from J. D. Smart, *History and Theology in Second Isaiah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), 20-23; C. C. Torrey, *The Second Isaiah* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928), 20-37; C. R. Seitz, *Zion’s Final Destiny the Development of the Book of Isaiah: a Reassessment of Isaiah 36-39*  (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 205-207; R. J. Coggins, “Do we still need Deutero-Isaiah?” *JSOT* 80 (1998): 77-92, (85); H. M. Barstad, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah: ‘Exilic’ Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40-55* (Oslo: Novus Forlag, 1997), 23-33; P. R. Davies, “God of Cyrus, God of Israel: Some Religio-Historical Reflections on Isaiah 40-55” in ***Words Remembered, Texts Renewed* (eds., Jon Davies, Graham Harvey and W. G. E. Watson; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1995): 207-225**, (213-215); J. A. Maynard, “The Home of Deutero-Isaiah” *JBL* 36 (1917): 213-224; M. Buttenwieser, “Where did Deutero-Isaiah live?” *JBL* 38 (1919): 94-112; W. H. Cobb, “Where Was Isaiah 40-66 Written?” *JBL* 27 (1908): 48-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The RSV and NASB have “coastlands” and the KJV has “islands” for the Hebrew ya. The LXX often renders ya with nh/soj which means “island” (e.g. Isa 41:1; 42:10, 42:12, 15; 49:1; 51:5; 60:9; 66:19; cf. Acts 13:6; 27:26; 28:1, 7, 9, 11). A clear example of ya meaning a literal island is Ezek 26:18 (RSV), and Job 22:30 is a clear figurative example of ya meaning “city”. We propose that the term refers to the city states along the coast. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. R. Albertz, “Darius in Place of Cyrus: The First Edition of Deutero-Isaiah (Isaiah 40:1-52:12) in 521 BCE” *JSOT* 27 (2003): 371-383, (372); Barstad, *Babylonian Captivity*, 65; Coggins, “Deutero-Isaiah”, 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Torrey, *The Second Isaiah*, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Here we follow the marginal reading of the MT. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Following Barstad, *Babylonian Captivity*, 67-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Once the existence of the First Temple is admitted, a series of verses relating to the role of the house of the Lord come into view: Isa 56:5-7; 60:7; 66:6. These texts do not fit with the image of the exiles’ temple, to which Yahweh did not return. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. This is the mistake in the treatment of Walker and Walker in their *The Second Exodus*—of Isaiah’s oracles, they say “their first, immediate fulfilment” is the Return from Exile (1, 10). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. R. L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (JSOTSup 180; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 331. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. B. D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. With the NT it is easier to use the Greek of the LXX as a, albeit imperfect, guide to correspondences rather than the Hebrew MT. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The LXE is Brenton’s translation of an LXX text. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. A. Perry, “Quotes, Allusions and Echoes” in *The Christadelphian eJournal of Biblical Interpretation Annual 2007* (Sunderland: Willow publications, 2007), 69-74, (72). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. There is probably a reference here to Isaac:“Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a **hundredfold**; and the Lord **blessed him**”(Gen 26:12, NKJV). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 18:3, NKJV). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. J. Clementson, “The Christadelphians and the Doctrine of the Trinity” *Evangelical Quarterly* 75.2 (2003): 157-176. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Clementson, “The Christadelphians”, 157-163. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See the statements on the websites [www.eauk.org](http://www.eauk.org), [www.ifesworld.org](http://www.ifesworld.org) and [www.theevangelicalchurch.org](http://www.theevangelicalchurch.org/index.php?s=au&nid=30545) [cited 15/01/10]. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Clementson, “The Christadelphians”, 168, 170-1, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. J. D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (2nd ed.; London SCM Press, 1989), 113-121. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. N. T. Wright, ‘Adam in Pauline Christology’, *SBL Seminar Papers* 22 (1983): 373-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. T. E. Gaston, ‘Wisdom and the Goddess’, *Christadelphian Ejournal of Biblical Interpretation,* 2:1 (2008): 53-60. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. R. Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in New Testament* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1998). [Ed. AP: Bauckham is aware of Christadelphian views, via personal conversations with me when he was at Manchester University and through his reading of A. Eyre, *The Protestors* (Birmingham: CMPA, 1976).] [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Bauckham, *God Crucified,* 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Bauckham, *God Crucified,* 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. T. E. Gaston, Proto-Trinity: The Development of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the First and Second Christian Centuries (MPhil diss., University of Birmingham, 2008), 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. T. E. Gaston, “Worship of Jesus” *Christadelphian Ejournal of Biblical Interpretation* 3:2 (2009): 69-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. [Ed. AP: This is also the principal argument of M. M. B. Turner (London School of Theology Professor), “Towards Trinitarian Pneumatology – Perspectives from Pentecost” in his *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996), 166-176.] [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Cf. U. Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2003) 632. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. A brief survey of scholarship demonstrates a lack of consensus on the meaning and origin of this title.W. F. Albright offers the suggestion that *Shaddai* comes from the Babylonian *“Sadda’u*,” the gentilic of *Sadu*, noting that *Saddu* is the regular word for mountain; see *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (The Johns Hopkins press, 1940), 180 ff. G. F. Oehler avers that it is from the root *sadad* “to be strong” or “powerful” in his *Theology of the Old Testament*, (Zondervan Publishing House, 1962). , C. I. Scofield said that it was from *sad* which has primary reference to the female breast signifying nourishment, *Scofield Reference Bible*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917), 26. Recent studies also emphasise the feminine aspect: see D. Biale, “The God with Breasts: *El Shaddai* in the Bible”, *History of Religions* XXI.3 (Feb/1982): 240-256 and H. Lutzky, *Shadday as a Goddess Epithet* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. J. Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament*, (Eisenbrauns, 2001), 423; see also his *Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. For English readers, we include the full pointed transliteration of the MT, and for Hebraists we follow the convention of presenting just the consonantal text. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Sarasadai (Judith 8.1 (RSV)) may be a variant of Zurishaddai. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. I have chosen the Jewish Publication Society OT (1917) version because this translation renders the Hebrew syntax correctly as, “I am God Almighty” instead of “I am Almighty God” (the NKJV and most other translations). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. We should note that in Gen 49:25 *El* and *Shadday* are separated but the association of the two terms elsewhere and a copulative sense for ‘and’ (i.e. ‘even’) allows us to apply the paronomasia to *El Shadday*. We could render Gen 49:25 as, “~~By~~  From the God (’ēl) of your father who will help you, ~~And by~~ even the Almighty (šaDDay) who will bless you *With* blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts (šädaºyim) and of the womb”. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. K. and K. Massey, “God of the Udder: Another Look at El Shaddai” (Mysteries of History!! Solved! Massey Electronic Publishing, 2000). Online at [home.att.net/~phaistosdisk/mystery.pdf](http://home.att.net/~phaistosdisk/mystery.pdf) [Cited 12 Feb 2009]. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Compare the context of *Shadday* in Job 29:3-6 “the rock poured out rivers of oil for me” (Zurishaddai) and “by His light I walked” and note that Job is reminiscing of the time when his “children” were still with him. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. LXT Psalm 67:15 evn tw/| diaste,llein to.n evpoura,nion basilei/j evpV auvth/j cionwqh,sontai evn Selmwn Even the English translation struggles to make sense of the Greek: LXE Psalm 68:14 When the heavenly One scatters kings upon it, they shall be made snow-white in Selmon. There is an obvious poetic play between the white snow and the dark/shady Selmon (Zalmonah) – an alternative suggestion could be; “When the heavenly king commands the dark one becomes white as snow”. J. Adey has suggested to me that the translator simply introduced a current inter-testamental period formula for God - see 2 Macc 3:39; 3 Macc 6:28; 7:6; Ps 67:15; Odes 14:11-12 and Tobit 5:16-17 where *pantokrator* (Almighty) is juxtaposed with ‘heavenly one’. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. The speakers employ *Shadday* with the following frequency: Eliphaz (7x), Bildad (2x), Zophar (1x), Job (14x), Elihu (6x), Yahweh (1x)(as self-reference). [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. E. Dhorme draws attention to Eloah in a few Hebrew MSS, and claims that the original text was changed to YHWH due to the reminiscence of Isa.41:20. He notes that, “the entire book excludes the name Yahweh, accepts only very rarely and as if reluctantly that of Elohim, uses in the main only three names, El, Eloah, Shaddai, and subjects its use of these names to certain laws, the most obvious of which is the parallelism of Shaddai with one or other of the two other names”. See E. Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job*, (trans. by Harold Knight; London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1967), lxx, 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. H. Niehr and G. Steins, “Šadday” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 14:418-446,(445). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. A. Perry, Job,(Sunderland: Willow Publications, 2009); A. Perry, Joel (Sunderland: Willow Publications, 2009).

    [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. The mention of “kings” so early in Genesis anticipates the Davidic monarchy (not the kings of Israel): “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah...” (Gen 49:10). This was most definitely in the mind of Hezekiah/Job.....“Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you; for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.”(Isa 51:2). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. “If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established” (Isa 7:9) and the promise of “Immanuel” (7:14). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. H. A. Whittaker suggests that Ps 106:37 is a deliberate play on *Shadday* in opposition to the Canaanite fertility cults “……. in an allusion to Israel’s apostasy in the time of the Judges: “They sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils (*shedim*, gods of destruction) (Ps.106:37). Their God-given fertility was laid waste to false gods”. H. A. Whittaker, *Bible Studies: An Anthology* (Cannock: Biblia, 1987), 362-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Hebrew Whbow" Whto ht'y>h' #r<a'h'w> vocalised: *wühä´ärec* *häy•tâ töhû wäböhû*. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. See R. L. Numbers, *The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 446, and the index for many references to “gap theory”. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. J. Thomas, *Elpis Israel* (Birmingham: The Christadelphian, 1966), 10-12, held the view that there was a pre-Adamic habitation of the planet, citing 2 Pet 2:4’s “the angels that sinned” as “pre-Adamic inhabitants of the earth”, and affirming that “in the period between the wreck of the globe as the habitation of the rebel angels and the epoch of the first day, the earth was as described in Gen 1:2”. He therefore believed that “Fragments . . . of the wreck of this pre-Adamic world have been brought to light by geological research” and that “the scriptures reveal no length of time during which the terrene angels dwelt upon our globe”. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. M. F. Rooker, *Studies in Hebrew Language, Intertextuality, and Theology.* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 138-140. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. B. K. Waltke, *Creation and Chaos* (Portland, Oregon: Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1974). [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Symmachus has h` de. gh/ evge,neto avrgo.n kai. avdia,kriton. “And the earth became inactive [idle] and undifferentiated [mixed].” But it is not clear what lies behind this choice. However, LXX, Aquila, and Theodotion all have h=n/‘was’. 4QGenb, frg. 1i, and 4QGeng, frg. 1, are both missing different parts of Gen 1:2 including the word *hyth* (Cf. E. Ulrich, ed., *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants* ([*VTS*](http://www.brill.nl/default.aspx?partid=210&pid=7583) 134; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2010), 1, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. A. J. Frendo, “Genesis 1:1, an Archaeological Approach” in *Michael: Historical, Epigraphical and Biblical Studies In Honor of Prof. Michael Heltzer* (eds. Y. Avishur and R. Deutsch; Tel Aviv-Jaffa: Archaeological Center Publications, 1999), 162. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. (i) Divine speech-act creation is the relevant sense of *creatio* *ex deo* ‘creation out of God’. It compares with: evx ou- ta. pa,nta “out of whom are all things” (1 Cor 8:6). Cf. A. Gibson, “The Word-Creation Scheme” *The Testimony,* Vol. 48, No. 573, (Sept 1978): 312-313.

    (ii) See D. Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction: A Reappraisal of the Chaoskampf Theory in the Old Testament (*Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 74-76, re ‘Exegetical Problems of *rûaH ´élöhîm*’, and his corrective of T. C. Vriezen’s “view that *rûaH ´élöhîm* (1:2) had no creative function, and ‘this function is taken over completely by the word of God’.” [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Cf. P. T. Geach, *God and the Soul* (London: RKP, 1969), 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. This can imply that each successive bringing into being over six days required the creative outcome that preceded it, as with human descent or genealogy. According to Gen 2:4, God’s creation is presented as tAdôl.At *tôldôt* ‘generations’ (cf. ‘brought forth’ in Ps 90:2; Isaiah 66:8). This *tôldôt* ‘begetting’ pattern next features in Gen 5:1ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. The initial state of the earth as *töhû* is not in conflict with “he [Yahweh] created it not *töhû*” in Isa 45:18 (KJV: “he created it not **in vain**”). How it was in Gen 1:2, was not how God intended it to remain. The Isaiah perspective contrasting with the initial geophysical *töhû* reveals God’s intention as a necessary presupposition of Gen 1:2. Eventually all would not be *töhû* but ‘good’. See Rooker, *Studies in Hebrew Language, Intertextuality, and Theology*, 138-149. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Cf. Jonah 3:3, ‘Now Nineveh was [htyh/*hyTh*] a great city to God’ (my rendering and LXX are as the Hebrew). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. W. Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar* (28th Edition;. Edited by E. Kautzsch; Translated by A. E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910/1970), 453, sect. 141e. Cf. the Hebrew structure of Hos 2:21, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Rooker, *Studies in Hebrew Language, Intertextuality, and Theology*, 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. W. W. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory* (Collinsville Il: Burgener Enterprises, 1976), 81-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. D. Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* ( London: The Tyndale Press, 1967), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. E. A. Speiser. *Genesis–Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (The Anchor Yale Bible; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. This construction is purely hypothetical, as it is not used to open Gen 1:2. However, ‘and *became*’ would not be certain for *waTTühî* , anyway. In some similar cases it would be inappropriate. One such case is Gen 11:30, which, like Gen 1:2, is parenthetical to the introductory preceding verse: “And [tonally: ‘but’ or ‘now’] Sarai **was** barren . . .” (hr"\_q'[] yr:Þf' yhiîT.w:/*waTTühî Säray `áqärâ.* She did not ‘become’ barren this is how she ***was***. (LXX concurs with: kai. **h=n** Sara stei/ra). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. It is important not to be misled by conventional or elementary grammars’ talk of ‘Perfect’ (a category applied to htyh/*hyTh*) and it’s opposite ‘Imperfect’. Both terms are applied to Aspectual (complete or incomplete) actions of verbs, as if this adequately described all uses, or had priority over Tense (time). The verb ‘to be’ may initiate action (e.g., in ‘Let there be...’) but it is not an action verb; rather its main function is temporal, time marking. htyh/*hyTh* as ‘was’ is about past time. In any case, broadly speaking, Perfect forms tend to be about “complete events or facts that often can be translated with the past tense.” In practice, though, and this can easily be overlooked, the terms ‘Perfect’ and ‘Imperfect’ are about identifying the inflexional (prefix v suffix conjugation) “*forms* of the verb, not their *functions*.” Cf. C. H. J. van der Merwe, et al, eds. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 142-143. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 7-8. The Gap View’s ‘chaos’ concept rates as a piece of modern mythology, particularly where some Gap theorists believe Satan’s rebellion produced chaos. B. Thompson opposes this satanic view in *The Bible and the Age of the* Earth (Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc, 1999), 61-64. ‘Chaos’, as the state of the earth in Gen 1:2, has long been read for *töhû wäböhû* assuming an ancient near eastern mythic cosmogony background. However, in relation to possible ancient perspectives with Genesis, D. T. Tsumura (approvingly reviewed by H. G. M. Williamson in *VT* 42 [1992]: 423-424) argues against a view of primordial ‘chaos’; see D. T. Tsumura, *The Earth and Waters in Genesis 1 and 2. A Linguistic Investigation* (JSOT Sup 83; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989). Importantly, also, in his *Creation and Destruction: A Reappraisal of the Chaoskampf Theory in the Old Testament*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 75, Tsumura shows that the phrase *tohu wabohu* has nothing to do with a chaos concept at all. It simply refers to the “desolate and empty” state of the earth. It describes the initial state of the earth as “not yet” normal, as we know it; see his “Conclusions” p. 196. On p. 148, n. 33, he talks of the need to exercise interpretative control, especially across cognate languages where there is talk of ‘the sameness’ of two items, and he pertinently draws on A. Gibson, *Biblical Semantic Logic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), 24 and 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. A. Gibson, ‘Creation versus Evolution’ *The Testimony,* Vol. 53, No. 631 (July 1983): 226. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Compare the Greek of 1 Cor 15:52 for its expression of (infinitesimal, ‘atomic’) instantaneity (evn avto,mw|( evn r`iph/| ovfqalmou). KJV has “in a moment [evn avto,mw], in the twinkling of an eye.” I assume no limitation on God’s power (Jer 32:17), as He is ‘power’ (th/j duna,mewj Matt 26:64;Rom 1:20). *’Ēl*, basically ‘power’/‘might’, is the singular term for ‘God’. In Ps 90:2, *’ël* is presented in the same way that *´ĕlöhîm* is in Gen 1:1, there before creation. Isa 42:5 combines *hä´ël*―‘the God’―with Yahweh as the creator of the heavens. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. See A. Gibson, ‘Creation versus Evolution’. *The Testimony,* Vol. 53, No. 631 (July 1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, ix. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*,88. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Regarding the Hebrew Verbal System (HVS), the interwovenness of ‘time’ (Tense) and ‘kind of action’ (Aspect: as in ‘Perfect’ = complete, ‘Imperfect’ = not complete) is a distinct verb feature of many languages (cf. van der Merwe et al, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 143); Hebrew is no exception. See T. O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1973), 100, and J. F. A. Sawyer, *A Modern Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (London:Oriel Press, 1976), 78-82, who implements a neutralising ‘prefix/suffix conjugational’ approach, but has examples of tense, aspect and mood. Theoretical tensions can give the impression that the HVS is an enigma yet to be unravelled. Cf. L. McFall, *The Enigma of the Hebrew Verbal System: Solutions from Ewald to the Present Day* (Sheffield:The Almond Press, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Cf. van der Merwe, et al, eds. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar,* §44.5, d., 331-333. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled-A Critique of the Gap Theory*, 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. J. Barr, *Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 59, and n.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. I. Finkelstein and N. A. Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology’s New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of its Sacred Texts* (New York: Touchstone, 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. J. D. G. Dunn, *Did the first Christians worship Jesus* (London: SPCK, 2010), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Dunn, *Did the first Christians worship Jesus*, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Dunn, *Did the first Christians worship Jesus*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. An entry in LSJ9 has been cited by egalitarians as evidence for their understanding of *kephalē*, but the editor of the lexicon has explained that this was not the intended meaning of the entry (which has been misinterpreted), that the entry was badly worded, and that the meaning ‘source’ for *kephalē* as asserted by egalitarians does not exist. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. BDAG, 541; L&N, 1:738; Balz & Schneider, 1:285; Friberg & Miller, 4:229; Kittel, Bromiley & Friedrich, 3:679. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)