**Christadelphian EJournal of Biblical Interpretation**

**Editors: Andrew.Perry@christadelphian-ejbi.org**

**Paul.wyns@christadelphian-ejbi.org**

**T.Gaston@christadelphian-ejbi.org (Church history)**

**J.Adey@christadelphian-ejbi.org (Text and Language)**

**Contents**

* **Editorial**



* **John 1:3-4**
* **Misogynist Alterations of Scripture**
* **Being Jesus**
* **Wickedness in Shinar**
* **Numbered with the Transgressors**
* **Survey Results**
* **Babylonian Echoes in Isaiah 40-48**
* **The Nassouhi Prism**
* **SOTS Report**
* **Marginal Notes: Gen 2:23; John 10:35; 1 Cor 6:9**
* **A Tally of Two ‘Theres’**
* **Postscript: Writing and Printing in a Digital Age**

**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.

**Submission of Articles**: Authors should submit articles to the editors. Presentation should follow *Society of Biblical Literature* guidelines (www.sbl.org).

**Publication**: E-mailed quarterly on the last Thursday of January, April, July, and October. Published as a collected annual paper-back obtainable from: www.lulu.com/willowpublications.

**Subscriptions**: This is a “free” EJournal to communities and individuals whose statement of faith is broadly consistent with the Christadelphian common statement.

**Editorial**

“Dumbing Down” is an expression you hear in the media. It refers to TV programmes or magazine and newspaper articles that present their content in a simple rather than a complex way, cutting out detail, the use of complex ideas, and instead using graphics, illustrations, pictures, photographs, video and sound-bites. Such media presentation looses the deeper analysis in favour of the surface treatment.

The apostle Peter observed that in Paul’s letters there were things hard to understand (2 Pet 3:16) which implies that Paul did not “dumb down”. If an inspired apostle wrote difficult things, it is certain that the OT scriptures also contain difficult material, pre-eminently the Prophets. What is more, the presence of such difficult material tells us something about what we should do in our reading and writing. We should not expect things to be simple, and neither should we always write what is simple. We should endeavour to write about the difficult and move forward our understanding of scripture and doctrine.

There is a reason why scripture contains difficult material. God appears to have included such material for his children down the ages, and we might ask and object by saying: *Why do this*, we don’t *want* difficult holy writings? On the other hand, we might just ignore those parts of the Word that are difficult or just read over them in a superficial way. We may not “put the time in” to engage what is difficult preferring the quicker fix that is the surface. We are deceiving ourselves in such behaviour, saying, in effect, that we do not want what is difficult if it means too much effort. We might choose to fill our spiritual time with the easier things of speaking (and its correlate – listening) and singing, but this may well miss the lesson that the Word presents us, namely, that we need to spend our time in spiritual *thinking*. It is perhaps ironic that among the four *ings* of speaking, listening, singing and thinking that we neglect the thinking.

If we are to put the time into spiritual thinking, then one course of action in this endeavour is to seek out and collect Christadelphian writing from the older magazines which tended to go deeper in its treatment of topics.

**John 1:3-4**

**Paul Wyns**

**Introduction**

This paper answers a question raised by John 1:3-4: What was made by the Word? The KJV renders the relevant text as follows:

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. John 1:3-4 (KJV)

The New American Bible (NAB) renders this as follows:

All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race. John 1:3-4 (NAB)

We can revise this to bring out the difference with the KJV as follows:

All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. That which was made in him was life, and this life was the light of the human race. John 1:3-4 (NAB revised)

The two versions differ in that whereas the KJV has the Word creating “everything”, the NAB avers that “what came to be **through him** was life”. The difference is clearly one of punctuation but the issue affects doctrine. The KJV will allow someone to believe the Word created all things, the universe, but the NAB will not allow this belief to get started.

**Punctuation**

There is a punctuation issue here: Should the relative clause (o] ge,gonen, “that which was made”) go with v. 3 or v. 4? The earliest manuscripts have no punctuation (P66,75\* א\* A B Δ *et* *al*).[[1]](#footnote-1) Many of the later manuscripts which do have punctuation place the clause before the predicate “was life” thus putting it with v. 4 (Ì75c C D L Ws 050\* *pc*). Nestle-Aland25 placed the relative clause in v. 3 but Nestle-Aland26 moved the words to the beginning of v. 4. In a detailed article, K. Aland defended the change.[[2]](#footnote-2) He sought to prove that the placement of o] ge,gonen (“that which was made”) in v. 3 began in the 4th century C.E. in the eastern Greek church (see the Appendix). This development was engendered by the Arian Controversy and was intended as a safeguard for doctrine; the change was unknown in the West. Aland is probably correct in affirming that the clause was originally attached to v. 4; only when the Arians began to use the clause was it attached by the Eastern Church to v. 3. But this history does not rule out the possibility that, by moving the words from v. 4 to v. 3, one is restoring the original reading. Understanding the words as part of v. 3 is natural and adds to the emphasis which is built up there, while it also leaves a terse, forceful statement in v. 4. Accordingly, it can be argued that taking the phrase o] ge,gonen with v. 4 gives a complicated sentence. C. K. Barrett says that the two obvious ways of understanding v. 4 with o] ge,gonen included “are almost impossibly clumsy”:[[3]](#footnote-3)

That which came into being – in it the Word was life.

That which came into being – in the Word was its life.

o] ge,gonen evn auvtw/| zwh. h=n…

Barrett’s rendering of this “clumsy” punctuation is not unequivocal or impartial. We might render his form of v. 4 more neutrally (but still following him) as,

That which came into being – in it/him (the Word) was life.

Barrett makes a number of points in support of taking o] ge,gonen with v. 3:

(1) John frequently starts sentences with evn (*en*) and so such an opening word in v. 4 is normal for him.

(2) John repeats himself frequently and so “nothing was created that has been created” is in keeping with his style.

(3) The statements of John 5:26 and 6:53 both give a sense similar to v. 4 if it is understood without o] ge,gonen.

(4) It makes far better Johannine sense to say that in the Word was life than to say that the created universe (that which was made, o] ge,gonen) was life in him.

So it is that Barrett takes the phrase with v. 3.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. John 1:3-4 (KJV)

And we might support this choice by referring to John 5:16,

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself… John 5:16 (KJV)

**New Life in Christ**

Barrett’s view is wrong and he is misled by his reading of the clumsy alternatives as ones involving the notion of a created universe. It is rather the case, as the NAB has correctly discerned, that “new life” in Christ is the topic of v. 4 and this proposal is supported by John 6:3,

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. John 6:3 (KJV)

The NAB renders the Greek as “what came to be **through him** was life”. The assumption is made that the “coming into being” is referring to the physical universe, but John 6:3 demonstrates that it is the believer who “comes into being” through Christ and therefore can be said to have life in him.

Although fourth century Arianism understood Jesus as divine, their doctrine taught that Jesus was a created being – therefore at some point in time he did not exist. As Aland shows, orthodox writers preferred to take o] ge,gonen with the preceding sentence, thus removing the possibility of heretical use of the passage to the effect that life was made in Christ at some point in time. The different emphasis on punctuation by orthodox writers was therefore influenced by their anti-Arianism. The KJV punctuation expresses the Nicene view that “In him was life”, as Jesus is thought to be co-eternal with God; Jesus himself could not therefore be a created being (but rather an incarnation of God); he had the life-principle “in himself” (eternally).

**Staircase Parallelism**

The balance in assessing the grammatical issue between both versions (KJV/NAB) is very fine, but the staircase parallelism in the text favours the NAB translation. Translations that are aligned with the NAB can employ “staircase parallelism” to justify their rendering of this passage. Staircase parallelism takes the rhythmic balance of John’s Prologue into account, where the end of one line matches the beginning of the next, resulting in a “staircase of parallelisms”—see diagrams below:

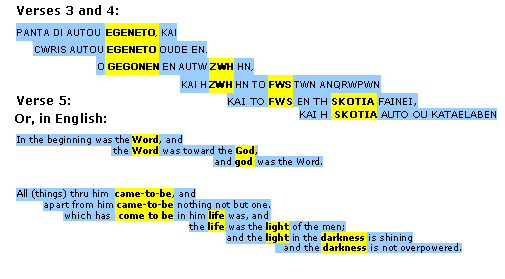
(1)



**Diagram 1**

In John 1:1 we have transliterated the Greek in a straightforward way so that we can see how the major term (coloured yellow) of the former clause is picked up in the next clause. Commentators have dubbed this a “staircase” which we have shown in Diagram 1. The same point can be made with regard to John 1:3-5, and we show this in Diagram 2 below.

(2)



**Diagram 2**

In this diagram, we can see that the “staircase” can only be preserved if o] ge,gonen (O GEGONEN) is placed on the third line above and therefore as part of v.4. On this basis, we can argue that the correct punctuation of John 1:3-4 is that which is given in the NAB.

**Conclusion**

Translations are often biased; sometimes it is only a matter of emphasis or punctuation. The aim of this article is not to introduce an alternative translation, but to show why translations that follow the NAB are correct.

**Appendix**

Patristic usage (gathered from the Nestle Aland 27th edition) demonstrates a shift in translational emphasis for John 1:3-4 after Nicaea; see table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of men. NAB** | **...and without Him nothing was made that was made. NKJV** |
| Naassenes II/III |  |
| Theodotus (ac. to Cl) II |  |
| Valentinians(ac.to Ir) 160 |  |
| Diatessaron II |  |
| Ptolemy II |  |
| HeracleonII |  |
| Theophilus 180 |  |
| Perateni III |  |
| Irenaeus 200 |  |
| Clement 215 |  |
| Tertullian 220 |  |
| Hippolutus 235 |  |
| Origen 254 | Adamantius 300 |
| Eusebius 339 | Alexander 373 |
| Ambrosiaster IV | Ephraem 373 |
| Hilary 367 | Didymus 398 |
| Athanasius 373 | Epiphanus 403 |
| Cyril (Jerusalem) 386 | Chrysostom 420 |
| Epiphanus 403 | Jerome 420 |
|  | Nonnus 431 |

### **Misogynist Alterations of Scripture**

**J Burke**

**Introduction**

Egalitarian scholars identify anti-feminist bias in the later Greek manuscripts of the NT, and on this basis they speculate about such bias in earlier manuscripts; this paper examines one such presentation.

**Misogyny in the ‘Western’ Greek New Testament**

An argument found among egalitarian scholars is that the New Testament text was altered by later generations of Christians in order to validate developing misogynist attitudes. This argument is articulated in particular detail by egalitarian B. Witherington III:

In view of the above evidence, it appears that there was a concerted effort by some part of the Church, perhaps as early as the late first century or beginning of the second, to tone down texts in Luke's second volume that indicated that women played an important and prominent part in the early days of the Christian community.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Witherington says, “**it appears that** there was a concerted effort by **some** part of the Church, **perhaps** as early as the late first century or beginning of the second”,[[5]](#footnote-5) but when it comes to presenting the actual evidence which can be observed, Witherington does not cite any textual evidence earlier than the 4th century,[[6]](#footnote-6) some 200 years after the 2nd century.

Witherington refers to “D and others” as his range of manuscripts.[[7]](#footnote-7) D is a Greek/Latin diglot, also known as Codex Bezae Cantabrigensis, or Dea (where the superscript ‘ea’ refers to the content of the text: the gospels (known as ’Evangelium’) and Acts (known as ‘Apostolos’). D is a 5th century text but the Greek text type it instantiates, (called ‘Western’), cannot be dated any earlier than **250 AD**, even if quotations from early Christian writers are used (there are no Western type Greek manuscripts or papyri earlier than the 4th century). The texts that Witherington discusses are given in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Text cited by Witherington | | | | |
| Passage | Text Name | Text Type | Date | What happens? |
| Matt 5:32 | D, ita, b, d, k | Western | 4th century, 5th century | Protection of male privilege |
| Acts 1:14 | D | Western | 5th century | Additional mention of children |
| Acts 17:4 | D | Western | 5th century | Reference to wives rather than women |
| Acts 17:12 | D | Western | 5th century | Men included as prominent |
| Acts 17:34 | D | Western | 5th century | Omission of Damaris |
| Acts 18:2, 3, 7, 18, 21, 26 | ith gig | Western | 5th century | Priscilla’s prominence reduced |
| Col 4:15 | D, Gpm | Western | 5th century, 9th century | House church allocated to Nymphas not Nympha |

In addition to D, the table above identifies an African Old Latin copy of an earlier Greek text (‘it’—the ‘it’ stands for ‘Itala’, meaning Latin, and the other superscript letters stand for various specific copies of this Latin manuscript). The reading in D of Matt 5:32 is supported by ‘it’ and it is also found in other Greek and Latin manuscripts according to the 4th-5th century Christian writer, Augustine. The table also refers to another Latin manuscript (itgig), which is a 13th century Old Latin manuscript, and to a text referred to as ‘Gpm’ (the ‘pm’ stands for the Latin *permulti*, meaning ‘very many’, and indicates that many manuscripts of this tradition have this reading), which is a 9th century Greek/Latin interlinear diglot also known as Codex Boernerianus.[[8]](#footnote-8)

From this survey of Witherington’s evidence it may be seen that he does not present any actual textual evidence earlier than the 4th century, and most of his textual witnesses date to the 5th century. It is significant that these variants are all found in the Western text type, since this text type is most well known, not for its anti-feminist bias, but for its general tendency to paraphrase and edit the text in a particularly arbitrary manner.[[9]](#footnote-9) It is also significant that almost all of these variants are found in only **one** manuscript tradition of the Western text (D), with only three variants appearing in any other Western manuscript tradition (Gpm, ita, b, d, k, h), and this demonstrates that these are not even systematic changes to one particular manuscript tradition, let alone the entire Western text type. This is one of the reasons why modern textual scholars generally view few (if any), of these alterations as genuinely motivated by a desire to minimize the role of women in the early church. They are so few and far between, so inconsistently found, and some of them are so much more readily attributable to accidental scribal error or the desire to render the text more grammatical, that they contradict the idea that the New Testament was revised studiously by groups of anti-feminist scribes as a result of changing attitudes to women in early Christian history.

It should also be pointed out that Witherington is an egalitarian scholar, whose interpretation of these textual alterations is demonstrably influenced by his own sensitivity to the subject. A comparison of Witherington’s statements on the texts with the statements of the United Bible Societies’ Committee shows that in a number of cases there is a more likely explanation for the text’s alteration than any anti-feminist attitude by a particular scribe. The comments from the UBS Committee in the following tables (our emphasis is added) were written by B. M. Metzger, and are considerably more moderate on the subject than his own previous comments in his book, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*,[[10]](#footnote-10) written two years earlier; comments are given after the text from Witherington and the UBS Committee. Each table presents the relevant data relating to Witherington’s examples of anti-feminist bias.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Acts 17:4 | |
| Witherington | UBS Committee |
| **While there is some ambiguity in the text of 17:4** as we have it in p74, K, A, B, E, P (so that gunaikw/n te tw/n prw,twn might be translated “the wives of leading men” instead of rendering “women of the first magnitude”), D and others give us the unambiguous kai. gunai/ke,j tw/n prw,twn.[[11]](#footnote-11) | **It is possible to translate** gunaikw/n te tw/n prw,twn “and wives of the leading men,” an interpretation that the Western text **enforced by reading** kai. gunai/ke,j tw/n prw,twn. A majority of the Committee preferred the reading supported by P74 א A B E P Ψ 33 81 614 1739 *al*, not only because of superior external attestation, but also because it was thought much more likely that copyists would replace the less usual connective by the more common kai. (or δέ, as in l1021).[[12]](#footnote-12) |

**Comment**: Both Witherington and Metzger agree that the text here is actually ambiguous in the first place, and could be read either way. This is therefore not clearly a matter of a deliberately anti-feminist reading being introduced, but a scribal decision as to which particular interpretation of the text made more sense to them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Acts 17:12 | |
| Witherington | UBS Committee |
| We find the same phenomenon at 17:12. **D\* alters the text so that both the men and women are prominent** (kai. tw/n euvschmo,nwn a;ndrej kai. gunai/kej) and thus the women's prominence is lessened somewhat.[[13]](#footnote-13) | After beginning the verse with a rather banal observation, ti,nej me.n ou=n auvtw/n evpi,steusan, ti,nej de. hvpi,sthsa,n (“Some of them, therefore, believed, but some did not believe,” cf. 28.24), **codex Bezae smooths the grammar of the generally received text** and reads kai. tw/n ~Ellhniwn kai. tw/n euvschmo,nwn a;ndrej kai. gunai/kej i`kanoi, evpi,steusan (“and many of the Greeks and men and women of high standing believed”)…**Besides being better Greek** the readjusted order has the effect of lessening any importance given to women (cf. comments on ver. 34 and on 18.26).[[14]](#footnote-14) |
| Acts 1:14 | |
| Of a similar nature is the addition of kai. te,knoij at 1:14 by Codex Bezae **so that women are no longer an independent group** but are simply the wives of the apostles.[[15]](#footnote-15) | **Instead of the colorless** su.n gunaixi.n codex Bezae reads su.n tai/j gunaixi,n kai. te,knoij (“with their wives and children”); **compare 21.5**, where the Tyrian Christians accompany Paul to his ship su.n gunaixi,n kai. te,knoij…[[16]](#footnote-16) |

|  |
| --- |
| Acts 18 |
| Witherington |
| **In the Western text of chap. 18**, there is a definite effort to reduce the prominence of Priscilla, **probably because she appears to the editors to be assuming her husband's first place** and also because she was **a well-known teacher of a male Christian leader, Apollos**.[[17]](#footnote-17) |
| **UBS Committee** |
| Apparently the Western reviser (D itgig syr copsa arm *al*) desired to reduce the prominence of Priscilla, for he either mentions Aquila first (as here) or inserts the name of Aquila without including Priscilla (as in verses 3, 18, and 21). The unusual order, the wife before the husband, must be accepted as original, **for there was always a tendency among scribes to change the unusual to the usual**. In the case of Priscilla and Aquila, however, it was customary in the early church to refer to her before her husband (cf. Ro 16.3; 2 Tm 4.19).10 On an anti-feminist tendency, see the comment on 17.12 above.[[18]](#footnote-18) |

**Comment:** Metzger notes that the original text was ‘colorless’. It is characteristic of the Western text type to alter the text to make it more stylistically ‘interesting’, and in this case Metzger also points out that the scribe altered the text to conform to the grammatical pattern already existing in Acts 21:5, an alteration which the scribe considered to be more likely to be in conformity with the original. Such ‘harmonization’ is also characteristic of the Western text type, so there is no necessity to attribute this alteration to an anti-feminist motivation. In any case, does associating the women with the apostles as their wives really diminish them in any meaningful way? This sounds like the imposition of a 21st century cultural view onto the 1st century text. Metzger points out that the reason for Codex Bezae (D), altering the text was to smooth the grammar and render it into better Greek. Such alterations are a common feature of the Western text type, especially Codex Bezae, so this textual alteration is simply what the scribes of the Western text type typically did in any case. There is therefore no need to attribute to this alteration an anti-feminist motivation.

**Comment:** Although it is possible to read the tendency in some of the Western witnesses to place Aquila first or insert Aquila’s name without including Priscilla as a desire to reduce the prominence of Priscilla, there is also the fact (as Metzger observes), that the general tendency of the Western text type scribes was to ‘change the unusual to the usual’. Since in their day (centuries later), it seemed to them unusual that Priscilla would be mentioned first, they altered the text to conform to what they considered to be more likely to be original. The fact that they did this with many other passages indicates that there is no necessity to attribute to this alteration an anti-feminist motivation, even though in this case it is entirely likely.

|  |
| --- |
| **Acts 17:34** |
| **Witherington** |
| …the omission in Codex Bezae of kai. gunh. ovno,mati Da,marij at 17:34 **is in all likelihood more evidence of an anti-feminist tendency in this textual tradition**.[[19]](#footnote-19) |
| **UBS Committee** |
| The omission in codex Bezae of the words kai. gunh. ovno,mati Da,marij **has been taken by some**…**to be another indication of the anti-feminist attitude of the scribe**…**It is, however, more likely**…that a line in an ancestor of codex Bezae **had been accidentally omitted**, so that what remains in D is evn oi-j kai. Dionu,sioj o` VAreopagi,thj euvschmo,nwn kai. e[teroi su.n auvtoi/j (“among whom also was a certain Dionysius, an Areopagite of high standing, and others with them”). In either case, however, the concluding phrase su.n auvtoi/j suggests that Luke originally specified more than one person (Dionysius) as among Paul’s converts.[[20]](#footnote-20) |

**Comment:** There is a case to be made here that the alteration is a deliberate attempt to diminish the importance of the women in the text. However, as Metzger says, it is more likely to have been due to an accidental omission, so there is no necessity to attribute to this alteration an anti-feminist motivation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Matt 5:32 | |
| Witherington | UBS Committee |
| Consider the Western text of Matt 5:32b. D, ita, b, d, k, and other manuscripts omit kai. through moica/tai in 5:32b. Bruce Metzger suggests that some scribes felt that if the divorced woman is made an adulteress by illegal divorce, then anyone marrying such a woman also commits adultery.  **Alternatively, this omission may reflect the tendency of the Western text to highlight and protect male privilege**, while also relegating women to a place in the background. In this case, the omission here is of material that reflects badly on men.[[21]](#footnote-21) | The reading of B (ὁ … γαμήσας) seems to have been substituted for the reading of the other uncials (o]j eva.n … gamh,sh|) **in order to make the construction parallel to the preceding participial clause** (o` avpolu,wn). The omission of the words kai … moica/tai (D ita, b, d, k Greek and Latin mss. acc. to Augustine) **may be due to pedantic scribes who regarded them as superfluous**, reasoning that if “everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress [when she remarries],” then it would go without saying that “whoever marries a divorced woman [also] commits adultery”.[[22]](#footnote-22) |

**Comment:** Once again, Metzger makes the point that the scribal tendency to smooth the text (in this case to create a neat parallel), and to remove material perceived as redundant, is an adequate cause for the alteration, so there is no necessity to attribute to this alteration an anti-feminist motivation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Col 4:15 | |
| Witherington | UBS Committee |
| This anti-feminist tendency appears also to be in evidence at Col 4:15. While B, 6, 424c, 1739, 1881, *et al*. have auvth/j indicating a church in the house of Nympha, D, G pm, *et al*. have auvtou/ indicating a church in the house of Nymphas.’[[23]](#footnote-23) | Νυμφαν can be accented Nu,mfan, from the feminine nominative Nu,mfa (“Nympha”), or Numfa/n, from the masculine nominative Numfa/j (“Nymphas”). **The uncertainty of the gender of the name led to variation** in the following possessive pronoun between auvth/j and auvtou. On the basis chiefly of the weight of B 6 424c 1739 1877 1881 syrh, pal ms copsa Origen, the Committee preferred Numfa/n … auvth/j. The reading with auvtw/n arose when copyists included avdelfou.j in the reference.[[24]](#footnote-24) |

**Comment:** Metzger notes that the gender of the name was uncertain to start with, giving rise to variations in the text. The difference between the female name Nympha and the male name Nymphas was a matter of accenting the Greek letters one way or another, but the earliest manuscripts did not use any accents at all, meaning that later scribes had to make interpretative decisions at times. There is therefore no need to attribute to this alteration an anti-feminist motivation, even given the fact that the ambiguity was settled in favour of the male name Nymphas.

**Conclusion**

When all the facts are presented, the argument for significant alterations of the Greek text by anti-feminist scribes becomes significantly diminished. Instead of alterations being observed from the second century onwards, we find instead alterations only from the 4th century onwards, some 200 years later. Instead of evidence of systematic scribal bias in collaboration with emerging anti-feminist attitudes, we find a tiny handful of alterations in a mere handful of manuscripts, none of which contains all of the alterations, and most of which contain only one or two. Instead of clear evidence of anti-feminist motivation in the case of each alteration, we find clear evidence that normal Western scribal influences (a tendency to paraphrase, eliminating perceived irregularities in the text, smoothing the grammar, creating parallels, and harmonizing with other passages), were in most cases a more likely cause.

Witherington’s own words are pertinent here:

That the so-called Western text **has certain definite theological tendencies** not found in various other manuscript traditions is so **well-known that it hardly needs rehearsing**.[[25]](#footnote-25)

The evidence for deliberate theological revision of the text within the Western text type is indeed well recognized by the scholarly consensus. The evidence is so apparent and so abundant, that the case is undisputed. This is completely different to the suggestion that the Western text type also contains evidence of deliberate anti-feminist revision of the text, as the evidence for the latter is not in any way equivalent to the evidence for the former.[[26]](#footnote-26)

**Being Jesus**

**Paul Wyns**

Moses *saw* the goodness of God “pass before him”, but that goodness was expressed in the proclamation of the divine name. What Moses *heard* were the divine attributes, grace and mercy, articulated with the imperfect-future **I will be gracious** and **I will show mercy** (Exod 33:18-20), thereby establishing the hope of future God manifestation (cited by Paul in Rom.9:15 also using the future tense). The echo and allusion is with Exod 3:14 and **I will be who I will be**.

The phrase **I will be who I will be** begs the question: **Who will God be?** The covenant promise vouched safe to David answers the question:

**He shall be** to me a Son 2 Sam.7:14 (KJV)

This is an obvious allusion to the texts of Exod 3:14 and Exod 33:18-20 – the son would manifest the qualities and character of the Father (“to him”). This passage is quoted in the future tense in Hebrews, “I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son” (Heb 1:5), within the context of a discussion of **inheriting** **a more** **excellent name** (Heb 1:4).

Perhaps this theology of God manifestation is best expressed in a formulation used by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor.15:8-10 which has multiple echoes with Exodus 3:

And last of all he was seen (cf. ‘appeared’—the same word is used in Acts 7:30 in the description of the burning bush incident) of me…For I am the least of the apostles….but by the grace of God **I am what I am**…yet not I but the grace of God which was with me. 1 Cor 15:8-10 (KJV)

The context of the passage (1 Cor 15:4) is redemption, salvation (cf*.* Exod 3:7-10, 17) and resurrection. Paul was an **apostle** (=“sent one” cf*.* “send” in Exod 3:10, 12, 13, 14, 15), and God promised to be **with** him as with Moses (Exod 3:12).

Paul affirms **I am what I am**, echoing **I will be who I will be** in Exod 3:14. He uses the present tense **I am**, because he fulfils the terms of I will be **who** I will be—God was manifested through the Spirit in him. Jesus had said that he was a “chosen vessel **to bear my name**” (Acts 9:15).

In a similar fashion the blind man, whose sight was restored (like Saul’s), could say: **I am** (John 9:9). The blind man uses exactly the same syntactic expression for which Christ was almost stoned in John 8:58—yet he was not claiming to be God. Jesus explained that the blind man had his condition so that “the works of God might be made **manifest** in him” (John 9:3). Hence, the blind man was inspired to say **I am** in order to show how he fulfilled the terms of the promise in I will be **who** I will be.

The name of Jesus is an abbreviated form of *Yahweh* prefixed to the Hebrew verb for “to save”—*Yahshua*. This name becomes *Iesous* in the Greek and is coupled with the third person future form “he shall save” in Matt 1:21-23,

…and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for **he shall save** his people from their sins…and they shall call his name Immanuel….God with us. Matt 1:21-23 (KJV)

Matthew’s narrative at this point is a paronomasia that explains ‘Jesus’ in terms of redemption (“save”) and fellowship (“with”). Isaiah called the Messiah “Immanuel” or “God with us” which picked up on the Exodus motif, “Certainly, **I will** **be with thee**” (Exod 3:12). Hence, Jesus was to claim that “I am come in my **Father’s name**” (John 5:43) and that “I have **manifested thy name**” (John 17:6). He did this insofar as he too was a fulfillment of I will be **who** I will be.

**Wickedness in Shinar**

**Paul Wyns**

**Introduction**

In the previous issue of the *eJournal*, T. Gaston[[27]](#footnote-27) examined the tensions that led to the separation of Christianity as a distinct religion from Judaism based on the standard work, “The Partings of the Ways” by J. D. G. Dunn.[[28]](#footnote-28) The catalyst in this development was the destruction of the Second Temple which necessitated the reformation and rebirth of Judaism as Rabbinical Judaism (the heir of Pharisaic Judaism). The article focused attention on the Jamnia community, which after AD 70 was authorized by the Romans to operate with a degree of autonomy unavailable to any other Jewish community and which therefore became the architect of a new Jewish orthodoxy: Rabbinic Judaism. However, the importance (sometimes even the existence) of the Jamnia Council is challenged:

The concept of the Council of Jamnia is an hypothesis to explain the canonization of the Writings (the third division of the Hebrew Bible) resulting in the closing of the Hebrew canon. ... These ongoing debates suggest the paucity of evidence on which the hypothesis of the Council of Jamnia rests and raise the question whether it has not served its usefulness and should be relegated to the limbo of unestablished hypotheses. It should not be allowed to be considered a consensus established by mere repetition of assertion.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Whatever the contribution of the Council of Jamnia in the land of Israel may have been, it is certain that Roman support was squandered with the Bar Kokhba revolt led by Simon Bar Kokhba (AD 132–136). The revolt was supported by Rabbi Akiba.**[[30]](#footnote-30)** The revolt was viciously crushed by the Romans, and the consequences for Judaism were even more devastating for the population than those of AD 70 as the majority of the Jewish population of Judea was killed, exiled, or sold into slavery after the Bar-Kokhba revolt, and Jewish religious and political authority was suppressed far more brutally, with the Jews even banned from entering Jerusalem.. After the revolt the Jewish religious center shifted away from the land of Israel to the Jewish scholars of **Babylon** under Parthian control, away from the influence of Rome.

Rabbinic Judaism gained dominance within the Jewish Diaspora between the second to the sixth centuries AD, with the codification of the oral law and the development of the **Babylonian Talmud** to control the interpretation of Jewish scripture and to encourage the practice of Judaism in the absence of Temple sacrifice and other practices no longer possible. Babylon became the main centre of Jewish religious, cultural, and political life; Judea would not become prominent again until the modern era. The destruction of the Second Temple and the emergence of Rabbinic Judaism in Babylon are predicted by the prophet Zechariah and confirmed by Christ.[[31]](#footnote-31)

**Vision of the Flying Scroll**

The vision in Zechariah 5 is about the destruction of a “house” in the land[[32]](#footnote-32) and the establishment of a new “house” in the land of Shinar[[33]](#footnote-33). Zechariah is said to have prophesied in the second year of Darius the Persian (520 BC) but his ministry extended to the forth year (518 BC). Like Haggai, therefore, he is addressing and seeking to encourage the postexilic community.

At first glance Zechariah 5 is incongruous with the previous visions concerning restoration, but closer examination demonstrates that this is not so, for the restored community was being reassured that God had removed the iniquity, allowing the remnant a fresh beginning; thus Zechariah 5 complements earlier visions. However, the vision also carries an implicit warning; for what God had performed in the past – removing iniquity and exiling the nation, would happen again if the nation remained unrepentant. From Zechariah’s standpoint (building the new temple) the vision is retrospective and reassuring, but it is at the same time prophetic of future events, for the iniquity that had been removed to Shinar in order to allow the community to flourish, could also at some future point return from Shinar and contaminate the nation again.

The flying scroll with the curse was of huge proportions – it flew so that it could be viewed throughout the land – it was written on both sides so that it could be read from above (by the angels, who act as witnesses?) and from beneath (by the people) – in other words ignorance of the divine will was not an excuse. The Hebrew word translated “curse” (Zech 5:3) alludes to the covenant sanctions that attend the violation of God’s covenant with Israel (cf. Deut 29:12, 14, 20-21). Stealing and swearing falsely (mentioned later in this verse) are sins against mankind and God respectively and are thus violations of the two major parts of the Ten Commandments. These two stipulations (commandments 8 and 3) represent the whole law. The second part of the vision describes three women – two of them with wings bearing a basket containing a third woman called iniquity or “lawlessness.” These “women” come out of the house that has just been destroyed:

Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out (i.e. of the house) two women, and the wind *was* in their wings. Zech 5:9 (KJV)

We are clearly dealing with a parody of the Ark of the Covenant – instead of two “ox-faced” cherubim with the spirit in their eagle wings we have two women (representing Israel and Judah) with the “wind”[[34]](#footnote-34) in their unclean stork wings. Instead of the gold covered mercy seat—a lead weight, instead of the glory of God dwelling between the cherubim—a wicked woman called “lawlessness” in the “midst”. Moreover, the description vouchsafed to Zechariah is similar to Ezekiel, “He said moreover, this is their resemblance (Heb., ‘eye’) through all the earth.” (Zech 5:6; cf. Ezek 10:12; “and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about”). The two women are based on the matriarchs Rachel and Leah, “which two did build the house of Israel” (Ruth 4:11), except now a different kind of house was being prepared.[[35]](#footnote-35)

**Establishing a House in Shinar**

Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Wither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, to build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established (*kuwn*), and set there upon her own base (*mekunah*). Zech 5:10-11 (KJV)

The scroll that bore the curse had the same dimensions (20x10 cubits) as Solomon’s porch (1 Kgs 6:3). This is not accidental, for the porch was supported by two pillars that symbolised the covenant made with David (1 Kgs 7:21):

But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established (*kuwn*) for evermore. 1 Chron 17:14 (KJV); cf. 2 Sam 7:12

God had promised (Exod 23:20), “to bring the people into the place which I have prepared” (*kuwn*). The first pillar was Jachin “He (*Jah*) will establish (*kuwn*)”; the other pillar, Bo’az, probably means, “He will strengthen”.[[36]](#footnote-36) Zechariah draws our attention to this by using poetic parallelism between the words “established” and “base”.

The Hebrew *mekunah* (“base”, related to the verb *kuwn* “to establish”) is used eight times in 1 Kings 7 for the description of the brass base of the lavers and the base of the pillars that Solomon made for the temple. King Ahaz removed the brazen “sea” from its base (*mekunah*) of twelve oxen (2 Kgs 16:17); one can only presume that he used the base as support for a (portable?) throne or maybe an altar. He certainly copied and installed an Assyrian altar in the temple. Ahaz’ action seems to be a response to Isaiah’s message,[[37]](#footnote-37)

If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. Isa 7:9 (KJV)

We might well add the words of the Deuteronomy,

Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? *Is* not he thy father *that* hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established (*kuwn*) thee? Deut.32:6 (KJV)

The divine response to the nation’s corruption was to exile the people and the bases to Babylon:

And the pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the Lord, and the **bases** (*mekunah*), and the brazen sea that *was* in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to **Babylon**. 2 Kgs 25:13 (KJV)

And when it is established (*kuwn*), she shall be set there upon her own base (*mekunah*) Zech.5:11 (KJV revised)

**The Unclean House Destroyed**

‘I will send out *the curse*’*,* says the Lord of hosts; ‘It shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house and consume it, with its timber and stones’. Zech 5:4 (NKJV revised)

Leviticus 14 proscribes the procedure that the priest must follow in order to cleanse a leprous house.  If the house could not be cleansed, the following took place:

And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house: and he shall carry *them* forth out of the city into an unclean place. Lev 14:45 (KJV)

Before condemning an unclean house, the priest would inspect the house three times before pronouncing his final verdict—similarly, Jesus inspected the Temple three times during his ministry, culminating in the last inspection during his final week (Matt 21:12, 13; Luke 19:43-48). The verdict pronounced by Christ is based on Zechariah’s vision:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Matthew 23 & 24** | **Zechariah 5** |
| A den of thieves (21:13).  Stealing (23:23-25).  Corban (Mark 7:11). | The house of the thief (v. 4). |
| Swearing (23:16-22). | Swearing (v. 3). |
| Your house left desolate (23:28).    Not one stone upon another (24:1-3). | Timber and stones of the house consumed (v. 4). |

Consequently “their house” (“your house”) was destroyed by the Romans, for it was an unclean house, no longer fit to be his Father’s dwelling place. The subsequent history of Israel demonstrates that the remainder of Zechariah’s vision was fulfilled in Babylon, for the Jews, deprived of cultic ritual, established their interpretation of the Law as a substitute.

**Conclusion**

The vision in Zechariah 5 is about apostate Judaism not apostate Christianity. The temple was destroyed (again) as predicted by Zechariah (and Christ) and false religion was established in Babylon in the development of Rabbinic Judaism. Spiritually the Jews had regressed to the place of their exile.

**Numbered with the Transgressors**

**Paul Wyns and Andrew Perry**

**Introduction**

The themes of “numbering” (census-taking) and plague as a consequence of failure to pay the **atonement price** are found in the parallel accounts of David’s numbering of the people in 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21. Whenever a census was taken atonement money was paid as an offering to the Lord “for an atonement of your souls” otherwise a plague would afflict the people (Exod 30:12-16). Such a plague afflicted the people after David’s census, and we can infer that it was *because the atonement price was not paid*. In this paper, we will examine this incident and conclude with suggestive parallels that are to be observed with the “suffering servant” of Isaiah 53 who was “numbered with the transgressors”.

**David Numbers the People**

Again the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, “Go, number (hnm[[38]](#footnote-38)) Israel and Judah”. 2 Sam 24:1

The action of “numbering the people” is usually regarded as an act of folly or pride by David and/or a capricious/arbitrary act by God.[[39]](#footnote-39) Despite David’s willingness to accept all the blame for what had been done, we are left in no doubt that Yahweh (a ‘satan’ in 1 Chron 21:1) was the prime mover behind David’s action to take a census. Hence, in the summary of his reign David, is only held accountable for his sin in the matter of Uriah the Hittite and the census-taking receives no mention (1 Kgs 15:5). These details invite a closer look at the whole episode:

1) The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel rather than David. The preposition “against” (b) is repeated in the description of the action of David, so that we know that the action “against them” was the numbering.

2) Yahweh “moves” (tws) David (1 Sam 24:1), which is rendered “provoked” in 1 Chron 21:1 (KJV). The verb is broad in meaning and the sense here is conveyed in any neutral verb of persuasion, with “provocation” a translator’s interpretation.

3) The numbering takes more than nine months (2 Sam 24:8) and this detail illustrates peaceful conditions in the land allowing the commander of the army and a detachment to travel the length and breadth of the land collecting the census data.

4) A military catalyst for the census is therefore unlikely. Were David under attack in ongoing campaigns, it is implausible to infer that the commander of the army would collect census data with a view to a general conscription. This might be done ahead of a pre-emptive campaign the next year on the part of David, but not as a defensive response to an attack.

5) Thus, while the anger of the Lord is often kindled against his people, and this takes the form of attacks by the surrounding nations, this is not the case here because what is “against” the people is the numbering.

On the basis of (1)-(5), we should conclude that domestic politics are behind this incident rather than military threat. The persuasion of David by the Lord would naturally have taken the form of a word of prophecy.

What happens during the census-taking is indicative of the domestic situation. Levi and Benjamin were excluded from the census by Joab (1 Chron 21:6). This suggests that the census was taken *against* Israel and Judah as a means of asserting the authority of the Davidic king and that dissension was present at the highest of levels (Joab). It will be remembered that David was not accepted by the northern tribes for the first seven years of his reign at Hebron and we may surmise that Joab had support among the tribes.

If Yahweh saw that some of the people were hostile to David, his anointed, then this would explain his anger “against them” and how the action of numbering them would be “against them”. By such an action they would be brought under the authority of the king. We can go further in specifying what the domestic situation might have been because Levi was one of the tribes not counted. Levi was not a northern tribe, but the priestly tribe spread among the people. They were the priestly ruling class among the people and were presumably on the side of Joab throughout the census-taking. Similarly, the mention of Benjamin hints at the politics of the situation. Saul was of Benjamin, and supporters of Saul’s house (Benjamites) were hostile to Davidic claims upon the throne. Benjamin had a history of trouble with David. They had violated the covenant made with the Gibeonites who served at the tabernacle in the days of Saul (2 Sam 21:1-6; cf. Josh 9:19-23). David had granted the Gibeonite request to have seven of Saul’s sons executed because of the covenant violation.

In this connection it is important to recall that **census-taking was allowed by the Law** upon payment of an atonement price. Thus, a census is not in itself an act that is “against” the people unless there is the sort of background that we have sketched. God had imposed three years of famine for Benjamin’s refusal to repent over their slaughter of the Gibeonites. This was action “against” the people and the census-taking was likewise “against” the people and in support of David.

Finally, we might note that the plague that was visited upon the people after the census particularly fell upon Benjamin. Interestingly, the parallel account in Chronicles[[40]](#footnote-40) adds the following detail (not present in Samuel),

For the tabernacle of the Lord and the altar of the burnt offering, which Moses had made in the wilderness, were at that time at the high place in Gibeon. But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the Lord. 1 Chron 21:29-30

Gibeon was in the territory of Benjamin, and David was afraid to go there because the plague was presumably vigorous in that area.

David numbered the people and after receiving the census data he confessed that he had done foolishly.

And David’s heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. 2 Sam 24:10

This is not a confession that the *census itself* was foolish, but rather that **the census had been carried out without regard to the atonement price being paid**. This is shown by David’s choice of punishment: he chose the pestilence or plague that would be visited upon the people if they did not pay an atonement price. He had carried out the census without proper regard to the Law:

When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when *thou* numberest them. Exod 30:12

There is a further dimension to this foolishness and the underlying politics. The atonement price was meant for the tabernacle and sanctuary (Exod 30:16) but the tabernacle was at the time of the census in Gibeon and in Benjamin. The Levites and Benjamin were the two tribes that would have been the beneficiaries of the monies taken through the census. Their non-participation in the census is all the more telling when we see that David had not collected the atonement price.

And David said unto God, *Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but *as for* these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued. 1 Chron 21:17

It is possible to mis-read David’s confession: he did command the people to be numbered, but this is not the sin. It is true that his confession of sin does not identify his failing to collect the atonement price, but this is implied for those with knowledge of the Law.

H. A. Whittaker proposes that the motivation for the census-taking (disguised as a military census) was the desire by David to raise funds for the building of the Temple and he suggests that the census-taking occurred early in his reign.[[41]](#footnote-41) This proposal has not received the attention that it deserves, but the narrative has no mention of atonement monies being raised or not raised. We could surmise that David *was* raising such monies for a sanctuary, but not the sanctuary-tabernacle that was at Gibeon in Benjamin. We could hypothesize that he was collecting monies for a future temple in Jerusalem. Such a proposal would explain the opposition by Benjamin and the Levites if they were vested in the existing arrangements.

The problem with Whittaker’s proposal is that it does not account for the confession of sin on the part of David since the taking of a census was lawful. If David *was* exacting the atonement price, his sin would become his keeping the monies for a new temple. We don’t know if the Levites would oppose such an aspiration given that it does not diminish their role in Israel. Further, while Benjamin may have opposed such an action when the tabernacle-sanctuary was in their territory, we should remember that the tabernacle moved its location around Israel. Accordingly, we would say that Whittaker’s historical reconstruction is a step too far. The justice in God afflicting a pestilence upon Israel requires a legal basis and the failure to collect an atonement price seems the simpler explanation.

We might query whether David was at fault in this episode. Did *he* determine not to collect the atonement price, or was this a failure on the part of Joab and his poll-tax collectors? Or was it disobedience on the part of the people as each city, town and village was visited by Joab? We need to look at David’s confession of sin. This happens in two stages:

(1)

And David’s heart condemned (hkn *nakah*) him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the Lord, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O Lord, take away the iniquity (!w[ ‛*avon*) of your servant (db[ ‛*ebed*), for I have done very foolishly. 2 Sam 24:10 (NKJV)

This is the initial confession and it is followed by the affliction of the people with a plague and 70,000 die throughout all the land. With Levi and Benjamin singled out, it is possible that these two tribes were more fully in transgression. This settles the question of culpability – the whole people were involved.

David’s heart condemned him, and this is an acknowledgement of guilt rather than any self-sacrificial taking of blame.

(2)

And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders *of Israel, who were* clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David said unto God, *Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but *as for* these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father’s house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued. 1 Chron 21:16-17 (KJV)

The second confession is different; it is an **intervention** on behalf of the people. In this intervention, David **takes** responsibility upon himself and his house and **excludes the sheep** from blame.

David shoulders all the responsibility and requests that divine retribution be visited against his “father’s house” instead of the people. In other words, David was asking to be “numbered with the transgressors” – to be treated as the one who had not paid the atonement money at the census-taking. In this request, David was offering to pay the price. This is why he insists that he **purchase** the temple site from his own resources. An atonement tax has not been collected but the site for the temple had still to be bought; David pays with his own resources and this is the atonement price for the census.

**The Suffering Servant**

There are echoes of David’s “transgression” in the Servant Song of Isaiah 52:13-53:12:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **number** the people (hnm *manah*) | **numbered** with the transgressors (hnm *manah*) |
| David’s heart was **smitten** (hkn *nakah*) | we esteemed him stricken, **smitten** (hkn *nakah*) |
| take away the **iniquity** (!w[ ‛*avon*) | he shall bear their **iniquities** (!w[ ‛*avon*) |
| your **servant** (db[ ‛*ebed*) | my **servant** (db[ ‛*ebed*) |
| these **sheep**, what have they done (!ac *tso’n*) | we like **sheep** have gone astray (!ac *tso’n*) |

These echoes might be judged as purely coincidence; this is a reading judgment. On the other hand, they may be part of a designed contrast between the Suffering Servant who is innocent and David who was culpable. David calls himself a “foolish” servant; in contrast the servant of Isaiah is a “prudent/knowledgeable” servant. David confesses personal “iniquity” and sin and empathises with the “smitten” people by being “smitten” in the heart. The Suffering Servant is esteemed by the elders of the people to be “smitten”.

These parallels with the Suffering Servant are striking. Scholars, such as M. Barker, have clearly recognised that the **atonement ritual** forms the background to Isaiah 53.[[42]](#footnote-42) It is beyond the scope of this paper to explore this theme, but we can note the two most obvious connections:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| He shall **sprinkle** many nations (Isa 52:15) | He shall **sprinkle** the blood (Lev 16:19) |
| He **bare** the sin of many (Isa 53:12) | The goat shall **bear** upon him all their iniquities (Lev 16:22) |

This suggests that the Servant was modelled on the one who performed the atonement rites in the first temple. We should not be surprised to find echoes of the **atonement price** paid by David as well as the **Day of Atonement** in the description of the Suffering Servant.

**Conclusion**

There are problems of interpretation in the episode of David’s numbering of Israel. The main problem is the puzzle as to what is wrong. Census-taking was lawful and there is nothing intrinsically “against” anyone in the taking of a census. In order to solve this puzzle we are driven to reconstruct the history behind the episode. We have inferred that the sin of David was a failure to collect the atonement price. Someone might ask: why do we have to infer anything in the first place; the text does not actually specify any sin. Such an attitude is an understandable complaint on the part of the historian but it fails to appreciate the conditions under which the historical records of the Israelites were recorded.

An Aside: Dating undated prophetic books is a judgment that can only be made through a careful comparison of the language of the book with what is known about the history of Israel and Judah in Kings and Chronicles (and any non-biblical sources). **Joel** is a case in point: it requires a comprehensive knowledge of the times of Ahaz and Hezekiah to know that this is the correct placement of the book.

**Survey Results**

In the table below we have laid out the results of the questionnaire that we circulated to the Subscriber List in October 2009; thanks to those who replied. The feedback leads us to the following conclusions and proposals.

(1) The EJournal project should continue to run and pretty much everyone files each issue away on disk. People have different requirements and would naturally have different preferences for types of article. The only two clear messages are: first, there is no need to engage *more* scholarship, and this is consistent with our intention to reduce the scholarly element during 2010; secondly, contemporary ecclesial issues should be given more space.

(2) Articles will sometimes be too complicated and too narrow; this is inevitable but we try and balance a dry and narrow piece, or a technical piece, with something with broader appeal and without technicalities. The lack of space given to technical and complicated material in the mainstream magazines of the community is one reason why the EJournal will continue to include such material.

(3) The EJournal is a vehicle for use by writers who want to write types of material and in a style that would not be acceptable to the mainstream magazines. Consequently, while we would like to cover all the areas that people would want, the editors are themselves working on a narrower range of topics at any one time, and coverage of a broader range of issues depends on others who may write and send in a piece.

(4) The size of the EJournal and its articles are about right. The Annual should continue to include the quarterly issues but in 2010 (GW) it should include new material (not circulated in the quarterly issues). In order to facilitate this, we propose to exclude the editorials, the contents pages and newsy items from the Annual and re-organize it logically rather than chronologically by quarter.

(5) With online publication and print-on-demand facilities it is possible to retrospectively change published material and this flexibility has been used and will continue to be used.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |  |
| **Is the EJournal providing a resource?** | 93% | 7% |  |
| **Are the articles bad in any way...** | **Yes** | **No** | **Some** |
| a) Too complicated? | 7% | 29% | 64% |
| b) Too easy? |  | 100% |  |
| c) Too narrow? |  | 64% | 36% |
| **Do you file the issue away on disk or discard after review?** | **File** | **Discard** |  |
|  | 97% | 3% |  |
| **Are there areas that need covering?** | **Yes** | **No** |  |
| a) More on defending the faith? | 75% | 25% |  |
| b) More on ecclesial issues like the role of men and women in the church? | 82% | 18% |  |
| c) More on Bible background? | 71% | 29% |  |
| d) More on exegesis? | 64% | 36% |  |
| e) More on engaging scholars? | 34% | 66% |  |
| f) More on church history? | 41% | 59% |  |
| g) More on theology? | 62% | 38% |  |
| **Should the EJournal continue to run or be folded?** | **Run** | **Fold** |  |
|  | 100% |  |  |
| **Should articles be shorter - longer? Issues bigger - smaller?** | **Bigger** | **Smaller** | **Same** |
|  | 90% | 10% | 64% |
| **Should articles be shorter - longer? Issues bigger - smaller?** | **Bigger** | **Smaller** | **Same** |
|  | 60% | 40% | 64% |
| **Should the Annual include just wholly new material?** | **Yes** | **No** |  |
|  | 32% | 68% |  |
| **Do you look at the website now and again?** | **Yes** | **No** |  |
|  | 68% | 32% |  |

**Babylonian Echoes in Isaiah 40-48**

**Andrew Perry**

Scholars have identified traces of Babylonian cultural expression in Isaiah 40-48 and concluded that this locates the author in a Babylonian milieu. S. L. Peterson has reviewed the older scholarship on this question (up to 1975), and discussed the texts that have been adduced and their characteristics of self-predication and self-praise.[[43]](#footnote-43) His conclusion is that “Deutero-Isaiah[[44]](#footnote-44) [Isaiah 40-55] intentionally adopted some details of Mesopotamian style and terminology”.[[45]](#footnote-45) Nevertheless, he notes that while there may be specifically Babylonian elements in Isaiah 40-55, it is more often the case that those characteristics that scholars highlight are not just Babylonian, but broadly Near Eastern in provenance, and just as comparable with the Assyrian period and the older periods of Mesopotamian history.[[46]](#footnote-46)

This judgment has been supported by H. M. Barstad[[47]](#footnote-47) and the lines of questioning that he puts forward include: i) Are the similarities nothing more than common forms of expression around the Near East and an older cultural milieu; and ii) does the influence show that Second Isaiah was domiciled in Babylon? To these doubts we can add our proposal that if there are Babylonian echoes and allusions, it is due to Isaiah of Jerusalem’s engagement with the world-view of the Babylonian envoys (Isaiah 39) and his countering of the influence of the Babylonians that had settled in Northern Israel under Sargon II.

Scholars[[48]](#footnote-48) have documented certain phrases and words common to Isaiah 40-55 and Babylonian texts, and while some of these are common to a broad range of Mesopotamian cuneiform texts, it is worth noting a sample of texts in order to judge the extent to which Isaiah of Jerusalem (or Second Isaiah if you are a critical scholar) uses Babylonian forms of expression. There are two types of text: i) those that describe Yahweh’s claims about himself; and ii) those that describe the relationship between Yahweh, the Servant and Cyrus.

### **Yahweh and the King**

Examples of texts in this category include:

1) Calling an individual by name and, moreover, doing so with favour and in grace, is a feature of royal texts.[[49]](#footnote-49) The Servant states that Yahweh “made mention of my name” (Isa 49:1), and Yahweh states, “I have called thee in righteousness” (Isa 42:6). This compares with Marduk pronouncing the name of Cyrus as recorded in the *Cyrus Cylinder*,[[50]](#footnote-50) and other comparable phrases such as “they favourably designated his name” used of Nabonidus and “they favourably called my name” used of Esarhaddon.[[51]](#footnote-51) The rhetoric here is that Yahweh has called the Servant and he also calls Cyrus (Isa 45:4) **rather than Merodach-Baladan**; any so-called calling by other gods is an empty claim.

2) The “holding of the hand” is a common ritual motif in dealings between the king and Marduk:

I shall lead him by his hand… *Verse Account of Nabonidus*[[52]](#footnote-52)

…lead him [Marduk]… *Cyrus Cylinder*[[53]](#footnote-53)

May thy heart turn towards him who takes thy hand… *New Year Festival Prayer*[[54]](#footnote-54)

This bears comparison with,

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut… Isa 45:1 (KJV); cf. 41:13; 42:6

F. Stummer has identified a number of texts (hymns) addressed to Marduk that use the phrase “to take by the right hand”.[[55]](#footnote-55) The point of the rhetoric in Isa 45:1 is directed against Marduk and Merodach-Baladan: Yahweh was the one who would hold the hand of Cyrus, **not of Merodach-Baladan**.[[56]](#footnote-56)

3) In the royal texts, common phrases such as “the beloved of the god”, “the favourite of the god” and the “chosen/selected of the god” correspond to phrases in Isaiah like “loved one/friend” (Isa 41:8; 43:4) “my chosen one whom I desire” (Isa 42:1).[[57]](#footnote-57) Following the call by a god, the king would be given tasks to fulfil, and this is the structure of the first Servant Song (Isa 42:1-9); the title of “Servant” is common for Mesopotamian kings.[[58]](#footnote-58) In nominating Cyrus, the rhetoric is directed against both Hezekiah and Merodach-Baladan.

4) The motif of being called while yet in the womb is a common feature of the divine right of kings.[[59]](#footnote-59) S. M. Paul cites texts from seven Assyrian and Babylonian kings. For example, Ashurbanipal (669-632) affirms,

I, Ashurbanipal, am the creation of Ashur and Belit…whom Ashur and Sin, the lord of the crown, already in the distant past had called by name for ruling, and who created him in his mother’s womb for the shepherding of Assyria.[[60]](#footnote-60)

This bears comparison with Isa 49:1,

Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. Isa 49:1 (KJV)

This common form of expression contributes to the identification of the Servant as a king. This point in turn casts doubt on the Babylonian exilic reading, since the Jews had no king in exile. It lends support to our reading that the Servant is Hezekiah.

### **Yahweh and the gods**

Examples of texts in this category include:

1) The Babylonian New Year Festival was a weeklong ritual and various activities were assigned to each day. In respect of the making of images, it is stated,

When it is three hours after sunrise he shall summon a craftsman; then shall he give him precious stones and gold from the treasury of Marduk for the making of two images for the sixth day. He shall summon a carpenter, and shall give him cedarwood and tamarisk wood. He shall summon a jeweller, and shall give him gold.[[61]](#footnote-61)

This kind of language is echoed in Isaiah in texts such as,

The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. Isa 40:19 (KJV)

They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, *and* hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. Isa 46:6 (KJV)

While the rhetoric addresses the manufacture of idols, it also ridicules the Babylonian New Year Festival and is one of several allusions to the festival in Isaiah.

2) The prayers to Marduk offered during the Babylonian New Year Festival have points of contact with the defence of Yahweh in Isaiah:

Who does pass through the heavens, dost heap up the earth; Who dost measure the waters of the sea, who dost cause (the fields) to be tilled; Dwelling in E-ud-ul, Marduk the exalted...[[62]](#footnote-62)

This bears comparison with,

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Isa 40:12 (KJV)

Peterson suggests that there is a contrast going on in Isaiah: while Marduk passed through the heavens, Yahweh set their limits; while Marduk measured the waters of the sea, Yahweh did so with just the span of his hand; while Marduk heaped up the earth, Yahweh weighed the dust, mountains and hills.[[63]](#footnote-63)

3) *Enuma Elish* is the Babylonian creation myth that was read during the New Year Festival. Part of the myth describes the formation of the gods,

Then it was that the gods were formed within them (i.e. the waters of Apsu and Tiamat)...Anshar and Kishar were formed, surpassing the others.

This mythology is addressed in Isa 43:10,

Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. Isa 43:10 (KJV)

Peterson comments, “...we have here a type of intellectual dependence upon a Babylonian tradition, which dependence is demonstrated by the prophet’s conscious rejection of, and polemic against, the tradition”.[[64]](#footnote-64)

4) Self-predication is a form of speech in which a god asserts something of himself/herself. The form of speech is widely used in Mesopotamian texts. For example, in the following Sumerian hymn to Enlil (c. 1000-1300), we read,

I am the Lord, the lion of the holy An, the hero of Sumer, I make the fishes of the sea glad, and see that the birds do not fall down, the wise countryman, who ploughs the field, Enlil, I am he.[[65]](#footnote-65)

The sequence of “I am the Lord” with intervening claims ending with a juxtaposition of the god’s name with the expression “I am he” bears comparison with many Isaiah texts:

Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I *am* he. Isa 41:4 (KJV); cf. 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12; 52:6

The use of this form of speech is set against the competing claims of the gods. It is a form uniquely common[[66]](#footnote-66) in Isaiah 40-48 and used in Yahweh’s polemical speeches.[[67]](#footnote-67) There is an additional contrast to note: Peterson observes that the form is used to affirm the solitary power of Yahweh serving and saving his people; in Mesopotamian texts the self-predication is about self-honour.[[68]](#footnote-68)

5) Shamash the sun-god is given praise in an old hymn found in the library of Ashurbanipal but thought to be older (c. 1000). Its theology has an obvious point of contact with Isaiah:

O illuminator of the darkness...you suspend (?) from heaven the circle of the earth...[[69]](#footnote-69)

*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in… Isa 40:22 (KJV)

Again, the rhetoric is brought into sharp relief: the Isaiah text affirms that it is Yahweh who controls the circle of the earth.[[70]](#footnote-70)

6) The incomparability of the god is an important claim, and this was attributed to several Babylonian deities as well as other Near Eastern gods. In one text from Ashurbanipal’s library, celebrating the moon-god we read,

O lord, who decides destinies in heaven and on earth, whose saying no one can alter, who holds water and fire in his hands, who guides living creatures – who among the gods is as you are?[[71]](#footnote-71)

The emphasis on “Who is like Nanna?” bears comparison with,

And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. Isa 44:7 (KJV)

The moon was critical in deciding the destinies of nations and the science of divination explained how the moon in its various positions and configurations conveyed to the king what was going to happen on earth.

Or again, a Hymn to Sin (the Moon god) begins,

O Lord, hero of the gods, who in heaven and earth is exalted in his uniqueness...In heaven who is exalted? Thou! Thou alone art exalted.[[72]](#footnote-72)

Or again in a Hymn to Inanna,

My father gave me the heavens, and gave me the earth. I am the lady of heaven. Does anyone, any god, measure himself with me?[[73]](#footnote-73)

which compares with Isa 44:24,

I *am* the Lord that maketh all *things*; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself… Isa 44:24 (KJV)

The greater frequency of this type of language in Isaiah 40-48 and its popularity in Babylonian hymns of self-praise, suggests that the language is directed towards these ideas.

### **Conclusion**

The above examples establish that Isaiah’s rhetoric is engaged with Babylonian and/or Mesopotamian ideas and particularly those of the relationship between god and king.[[74]](#footnote-74) It is possible to extend the connections between Isaiah 40-48 and the thought-world of Mesopotamia with more examples. For instance, the idea of divine control over history and the interest of the god in his people are obvious shared ideas reflected in Isaiah and Mesopotamian texts. In such a context, the argument in Isaiah is that Yahweh has such control and the Mesopotamian deities are without power and foreknowledge.[[75]](#footnote-75)

The texts are used to support the idea of a Babylonian Second Isaiah. Our counter claim is that the echoes illustrate how Isaiah’s rhetoric is directed against **the Babylonian envoys and Merodach-Baladan**. Isaiah’s argument is that Yahweh is the one true God and the one who has chosen his Servant (Hezekiah). Since “the Servant” of “the deity” is a common motif for the Near Eastern king, Isaiah’s argument requires a pre-exilic context of interpretation.

**The Nassouhi Prism**

**Andrew Perry**

**Introduction**

The Nassouhi Prism is not a new discovery but it presents a problem of interpretation and historical reconstruction to Persian scholars. In an earlier article the prism was cited as evidence of the use of the name “Cyrus” in connection with the royal house of Anshan as early as 646.[[76]](#footnote-76) The point of this article is to add an historical reconstruction for the prism.

**The Nassouhi Prism**

The name “Cyrus” is typically Elamite/Persian (*Kūrush*) and it *may* be a **given name** or a **throne name** for rulers in Anshan/Parsumash at least as early as 646. A text, from the thirtieth year (646) of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, has Kūrush paying tribute through his first-born son, Arukku.

The Nassouhi Prism is an Akkadian clay prism, originating from Babylon and reads:

(When) Kurash, king of Parsumash, heard of the mighty victory, which I had inflicted on Elam with the help of Ashur, Bel, Nabu and the great gods, my lords, (and that) I had overwhelmed the whole of Elam like a flood, he sent Arukku, his eldest son, together with his tribute, as hostage to Nineveh, my lordly city, and implored my lordship.[[77]](#footnote-77)

The identification of this Kūrush is disputed, with some scholars willing to equate him with Cyrus I, while others regard 646 as too early for Cyrus I to be the ruler of Anshan/Parsumash, who is given dates like 620-590 or 640-600.[[78]](#footnote-78)

If 646 is indeed too early for Cyrus I, our suggestion would be that “Kūrush” is a given name for Teispes[[79]](#footnote-79) (675-640), the father of Cyrus I, and Arukku a given name for Cyrus I or an older son that did not succeed in the dynasty. Persian scholars have not made this proposal, partly because they have adopted consensus views about Second Isaiah and his prophetic mention of Cyrus II.[[80]](#footnote-80) If we instead take Isa 44:28/45:1 to be from Isaiah of Jerusalem, this changes the possibilities for the history in question.

In order to avoid an equation between the Kūrush of the Nassouhi Prism and Cyrus I, scholars hypothesize about the existence of another otherwise unknown region with a similar name of “Parsumash” (further north).[[81]](#footnote-81) Their reconstruction is that the Nassouhi Prism is about the ruler of this region rather than the well documented Anshan/Parsumash in the south. However, if we factor in the evidence of Isaiah (see below), then we have two texts that give witness to a “Cyrus” of Anshan/Parsumash, one from 700 and one from 646.

The chronology of the early Achaemenids is uncertain and texts are scarce before Cyrus II,[[82]](#footnote-82) and so an equation between Teispes and the Kūrush of the Nassouhi Prism cannot be proven or disproven, especially if the texts from Isaiah are discounted. If we factor in Isaiah’s evidence—that he had a *historical reason* to nominate a Cyrus—then an equation between Teispes and Kūrush becomes a distinct possibility. If Teispes began his reign in 675 at age 40, then he might be a young prince in 700, age 15. We know that the party of Babylonian envoys included princes and it is possible Teispes was a member of the party learning the diplomatic trade. If we change the dates of Teispes’ reign, the age we hypothesize for him in 700 can also change.

The practise of taking throne names upon accession was widespread in the Ancient Near East. Although it might be thought that “Cyrus I” and “Cyrus II” indicates that “Cyrus” is a throne name, this cannot be proved. If we equate Teispes and the Kūrush of the Nassouhi Prism, Kūrush would be one of his **given** names. A. Kuhrt notes that “Kūrush” is now thought to be an Elamite name,[[83]](#footnote-83) meaning “He who bestows care” or “He gives fortune”. The Nassouhi Prism is anti-Elamite insofar as it celebrates victory over the Elamites; the selection of “Kūrush” as Teispes’ given name in the prism could be part of this **anti-Elamite propaganda**. This is our proposal for the historical reconstruction of the prism.

We have noted that scholars are unwilling to equate Cyrus I with the Kūrush of the Nassouhi Prism. If instead, we make the equation with Teispes, the name of his eldest son, “Arukku”, would be the given name of Cyrus I, and this would then be evidence for “Cyrus” being a throne name, so adopted in deference to his father Teispes (and Isaiah’s prophecy given in Teispes’ presence?). The throne name was then continued in the grandson, Cyrus II.

**Conclusion**

Our conclusion remains the same as in our earlier article: In 700, the Achaemenid dynasty was just beginning with Achaemenes, and the region of Anshan would have been perceived as an active part of the Elamite Empire, traditional enemies of Assyria and traditional allies to Babylon. The house would have been perceived in terms of the minor nobility of Elam, the junior governing partner in the Elamite alliance.[[84]](#footnote-84) It is not implausible to suppose that Isaiah would have nominated a future liberator from Assyrian dominance nominating a prince of this region especially if the royal prince was a member of the party of envoys. In this case, Isa 44:28/45:1 is primary evidence for “Cyrus” being a given name of Teispes (or even Achaemenes if we want to canvass all possibilities).

An Elamite-focused prophecy nominating a Persian prince is an inspired, historically plausible, prognostication by Isaiah in 700. It works because the prince is **representative** of the Achaemenid dynasty and the eventual succession of kings named “Cyrus”.

**News: SOTS Report 2010**

About 150 people gathered at Fitzwilliam College in Cambridge for the annual Society of Old Testament Winter meeting 2010. The society is a few years away from its hundredth anniversary and its membership is comprised of current, retired, aspiring or wannabe academics that have been through or are in the academic system.[[85]](#footnote-85) Membership is open to anyone with Hebrew, but with meetings held only in the UK, it is largely British. Talks vary in quality and relevance to the Bible Student, but there are discounted bookstalls, and opportunities to pick up useful information from the current scribal class.

Evening talks at the conference are meant to be lighter affairs and the first evening was regaled by J. Cheryl Exum talking about “Art and the Exegete”—how renaissance painters represented biblical scenes . She chose scenes such as “David and Bathsheba” and “Abraham sending away Isaac”. Nothing revelatory was said, except to note the obvious point that painters choose to represent and misrepresent the biblical narrative. For example, she discussed how the biblical text represents the morality of the sending away of Isaac through its use of distancing and how painters have represented the emotions of the episode in the faces and postures of the characters involved. Yahweh talks of “the bond woman” and the “son of the bond woman” (Gen 21:12-13) rather than “Hagar” and “Ishmael”. Renaissance painters had the opportunity to pass comment on the incident in how they portrayed the emotions of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac—did they paint Hagar and Ishmael as “bond woman” and “son of bond woman”, badly treated, or did they paint Abraham and Sarah in a good or better light?

The most interesting talk of the 2 day conference was by Ellen van de Wolde on “to create” (arb, *bara*) in Genesis. Her thesis was that it carries the meaning of “to separate, distinguish, divide” in the narrative. She drew a contrast with the Hebrew for “to make” (hf[) and observed that while this verb is common in Genesis 1 and 2 (vv. 7, 11, 12, 16, 25, 26, 31; 2:2, 3, 4), the verb (as she sees it) “to separate, distinguish, divide” is rare (vv. 1, 21, 27; 2:3, 4). The puzzle then is to explain its incidence: why does God only *bara* the whales (1:21)? What does it mean to *bara* man (1:27)? Her argument for “to separate, distinguish, divide” is based on Gen 1:1 and what God actually did with the heavens and the earth: they came about through separation of the waters. It would be fair to say that the audience was not sympathetic to the thesis. The verb occurs in 45 texts in the Hebrew bible and it would take a monograph to demonstrate the thesis for the semantic domain.

Other talks at the conference included a presentation by S. Gillingham on “Psalms 1 and 2 as an Introduction to the Psalter”. This examined the history of interpretation of the two psalms to see whether commentators had taken them to be one or two in number for the purposes of introducing the book of Psalms. While the KJV of Acts 13:33 has “second psalm” for Psalm 2, there is manuscript evidence for “first psalm” (mainly Codex Bezae) as well as “the psalms”. The most interesting part of the talk however was the common vocabulary between the two psalms.

Another talk that had some useful data was that by M. Nissinen on the distribution of male, female and transgender prophets in Mesopotamia and West Semitic texts. His conclusion for Assyrian prophets was that intuitive prophesying was carried out by both male and female with corresponding bias towards male and female deities. However, technical divination and its prophets were male. His explanation was that divine agency meant that human gender was not critical in being a prophet as such; however, if technical skills were required, the profession was followed by males.

Talks are a mixed bag; some may be of no value, especially if they are from a historico-critical perspective, which generally dominates at SOTS. The value in attending lies mainly in the networking opportunities—to talk to academics who have written commentaries and monographs in the field in which you have an interest. Lunch, dinner and coffee, and their respective queues were the opportunities for talking.

**Marginal Notes**

**Genesis 2:23—Naming Eve and Feminism—PW/AP**

Naming can be and is an act of dominion on occasion. For example, if the name-giver is God, a patriarch, or a king, the name given is part of the intention to shape the destiny of the one named. We see this in the naming of Abraham or Jacob/Israel. Or again, in the naming that goes on in families upon the birth of a child, we see the authority of the parent expressed and the expectation for the child encapsulated in the name. For example, we might think of the naming of Jesus in this regard.

In attempting to subvert the order of creation, feminist interpretation of Genesis 2 asserts that Adam had no dominion or rule over his wife until after the Fall. The proposal is made therefore that in the New Creation, we should return to the ideal of Eden in which the man and the woman are equal as to role. Such an argument neglects to see or deliberately puts aside the teaching implicit in Adam’s naming of Eve and the cultural significance that such naming carried in patriarchal times. The naming shows that Adam had authority over Eve. The harmonization of Genesis 1 and 2 in this regard would see Eve’s authority in creation as derived from her husband.

**John 10:35—Scripture Cannot Be Broken—AP**

What does it mean to say “Scripture cannot be broken”. The verb is a common one (lu,w) and the semantic field is broad: to loose, to untie, to break, to free, to abolish, to break up, to tear down, to repeal, to annul, *and so on*. Some would say that it is a statement about **textual integrity** because Jesus’ argument is about particular words in a psalm. This would be a significant inference for the history of the Second Temple period. Today, we will commonly say that the original autographs were inspired and fully accurate while accepting that our copies may have errors. In short, we do not insist on textual integrity for our copies of the text.

However, we know that in Jesus’ day there were different text types with regard to the scriptures; this is clear from the DSS. Was Jesus of the opinion that, say, there were copies of Isaiah in his day that were textually without error—perhaps scrolls held in the Temple? Or is there here another concept of scripture at work in this conversation? Is Jesus adverting to a **canonical status** by saying “scripture cannot be broken”? Had the canon of the Jewish scriptures recently been fixed? Is his point one of authority?

**1 Cor 6:9—Sodomites—TG**

It is frequently repeated in certain quarters that avrsenokoi/tai (“sodomites” [NKJV]; “homosexual offenders” [NIV]) refers only to certain pagan practices, and therefore does not include all forms of homosexual activity. This assertion is based upon the claim that avrsenokoi/tai has a narrower semantic field than is generally accepted.

The difficulty in resolving on a translation of this word is not because its etymology is unclear. It is derived from the compound of two words a;rrhn (“male”) and koi,th (“bed”, euphemistically “sexual intercourse”), and thus could be literally render “males who lie with males”. The difficulty concerns the fact that avrsenokoi/tai is not widely attested, and is not known at all before the first century AD. Since some later writers appear to use the word, or its cognates, in the context of male prostitution or pedastry, it has been proposed that one or other of these might be its meaning in 1 Cor 6:9. Without considering these usages in detail, it is apparent that unless all these references can be shown to refer solely to male prostitution or pedastry then the argument for restricting the semantic field fails.[[86]](#footnote-86) The fact that avrsenokoi/tai is used to refer male prostitution, and pedastry, and other homosexual activity (as indeed it is) demonstrates that these term as wide semantic field and can be (and is) used generically to refer to all forms of homosexual activity.

Perhaps more significant for the understanding of 1 Cor 6:9 are the linguistic parallels in Leviticus [LXX], where the command against homosexual activity is given:

kai. meta. a;rsenoj ouv koimhqh,sh| koi,thn gunaiko,j bde,lugma ga,r evstin (Lev 18:22)

kai. o]j a'n koimhqh/| meta. a;rsenoj koi,thn gunaiko,j (Lev 20:13)

The parallels between these verses and avrsenokoi/tai are unmistakably as in both cases the root words a;rrhn and koi,th occur. The suggestion that has met with scholarly support is that avrsenokoi/tai came into usage by Jewish writers, influenced by the Septuagint, looking for a word to condemn the homosexual activity of the Greek world.[[87]](#footnote-87) There are a variety of Greek words available for various forms of homosexual activity. The only reason to coin a new term like avrsenokoi/tai would be to refer more generally about homosexual activity, reflecting the prohibitions made in Leviticus.

Returning then to 1 Cor 6:9, the meaning of avrsenokoi/tai seems determined by several considerations: 1) Paul, steeped in the Old Testament, is likely to have categorized sins based upon the framework of the Mosaic Law, even if he did not accept that all its prohibits were applicable to the Christian believer; 2) there are better alternatives that Paul could have used had intended to refer to either male prostitution or pedastry; 3) Latin, Syriac and Coptic translations of the Pauline writings all attest to a general translation of this term.[[88]](#footnote-88)

In sum, we can have confidence that 1 Cor 6:9 refers generically to all homosexual activity. The remaining issue is whether the English word “homosexual” (NASB; HCSB) is a suitable translation. Since in common usage “homosexual” often refers to sexual orientation rather than sexual activity, a more literal translation such as “men who practice homosexuality” (ESV) or “men who lie with men” (NWT) is preferable.

**A Tally of Two ‘Theres’ \***

**J W. Adey**

Positive

\* Negative

My diagram identifies an overall scene-setting in Gen 11 of a negative ‘there’ to a positive ‘there’2; between what happens in Shinar at Babel versus Abram’s arrival in Haran. Reading the Bible holistically shows the (designed) creation of counterpoint in this context.

\* ‘Negative to Positive’ was added at the suggestion of R. P. Gordon (Cambridge Regius Professor of Hebrew) when discussing this diagram.

**Text and context:** As Gen 2:7 and 2:18, 20-23 complementarily unveil the making of man and woman briefly overviewed in 1:26-27, so the Babel incident of 11:1-9 peers into the past, providing an etiology of how the dispersal of the nations of chapter 10 came about, when (11:1): “the whole earth was of one language (‘lip’)”.1 Language was the Babel builders’ social mortar.In 10:10, Babel heads a list of cities and is said to be the ‘beginning’ of Nimrod’s kingdom. The new concept of ‘kingdom’ emerges and by implication Nimrod becomes the first king. His attitude is not godly; enthronement in Babel, this divinely judged ‘there’, is proof.

KJV obscures the ‘there’ connections with 'from thence' in 11:8-9.

Abram dwells **there**

(11:31)

Haran

Builders dwell

**there**

(11:2)

Land of Shinar

UNITY

Result

DISUNITY

Man

God

Scatters abroad

+ **there**

(11:9)

Descending from heaven

(11:5)

Disperses the people

(11:8)

See **city** and tower

(11:5)

Ascending to heaven

(11:4)

Build **city** and tower

(11:4)

**Yahweh** acts

+ **there**

(Judgment)(11:8)

**Let us:**

Real unity

(True) (11:7)

**Let us:**

Unity aim

(False) (11:4)

**Yahweh** confuses

+ **there**

**Names** ‘Babel’ (11:9)

**Yahweh**

+ **there**

(11:7)

Make us

a **name**

(11:4)

Terms within this ‘there’ framework set up a significant contrast, or opposition, between Babel (Babylon) and the ‘City of God’.

With Hebraic punning they occur in language about “the place God has chosen to put His **name** **there**” (Deut 12:5ff; 1 Kgs 14:21). The man-built heavenward Babel-‘there’ is a counterfeit, or inversion, of the heavenly, set-on-a-mountain-top, city, to be called ‘Yahweh is **there**’ (Ezek 48:35). This is Zion and Jerusalem. In this **there**, Divine **unity** will be manifested (Cf. “Song of **Ascents**” Pss 132:5, 13-17, and 133). In that day, in “a pure language”, God’s “**name** will be call[ed] upon, to serve Him with **one** consent” (Zeph 3:9).

Abram in the Haran-*there* introduces one who was ‘looking for a city whose builder and maker is God’ (Heb 11:10); a city to come (Heb 13:14); made without hands; not ‘here and now’. With clean hands and a pure heart Abraham and his seed, which is Christ, will be able to enter Zion, the city of God, and ascend into the hill of Yahweh (Ps 24:3-4).

So, Babylon and Jerusalem are set in contrast and contestation. See the cultic ‘high hills’ in Israel (Babylonish ‘theres’) versus God’s chosen place in Ezek 20:28, 40. But, ‘Babylon the Great’ is judged with ultimate finality (Rev 17). The holy city New Jerusalem, the Lamb’s wife, those with the Father’s **name** in their foreheads, descends and **unites** with him on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1; 21:2).

**Notes**

1. D. I. Block in “The Role of Language in Ancient Israelite Perceptions of National Identity”, *JBL* (1984): 335 cites an ancient Babel-like parallel in a Sumerian text, mentioning one (“harmony-tongued”) universal language before Enki, leader of the gods: “changed the speech . . . of man that had been one” (lines 154-156).

2. R. P. Gordon *Holy Land, Holy City: Sacred Geography and the Interpretation of the Bible.* Carlisle and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, (2004): 40, re Psa 48: (v. 7[6]) notices that “The use of the adverb ‘there’ may imply something more definite than mere cultic re-enactment.” He notes Psa 76:3-4 (2-3)’s juxtaposition of *Zion* and *there*.

**Postscript**

**Editing and Writing in a Digital Age**

**Andrew Perry**

The Internet with its websites, instant messaging, forums and e-mail, along with print-on-demand online publishing, has changed the possibilities in how written material is produced and circulated within the community. There is now no need (and this has been the case since the 90s) to incur costs for the following types of written material: ecclesial news, announcements, editorials, and articles. The annual subscription costs for magazines (which are not small, especially for those on a low wage or the unemployed and retired) can be avoided through the simple expedient of publishing online.

Ecclesial news could be posted online in a central place and copied to the news pages of forums (with suitable registration and password access). Archives can be kept online for reference. The same point goes for announcements and adverts of all kinds. In the same way that the ecclesial magazine was a structure of ecclesial life, changing times require a new structure in which the “ecclesial magazine” for whatever fellowship or part of the world is transferred to the Internet and made available on a free basis. For those who are without access to the Internet, local printing on desktop laser printers and circulation of material amongst ecclesial members can meet this need. And, for those who like to retain a traditional format for the magazine, this is also still possible.

The above proposal is a Western perspective and the traditional print magazine is needed in countries where the Internet is not widely available. It is a question of meeting need in the most appropriate way. For those who can and wish to access printed magazines through the Internet, there is no reason why the material should not be freely available online to individuals.

The distribution of traditional magazine content through wireless devices and mobile broadband devices such as e-book readers like the Kindle is the way forward in the next few years (should such years come along). In the same way that a person might have gone to a library or a newsstand, s/he will download the required content to an e-reader. This development is a further reason why the mode of circulation for ecclesial magazines needs to migrate from the printing press to include the Internet.

It is a fact that some, maybe many, like to hold a traditional magazine in their hands (e.g. me; I am blessed to be able to borrow and save the cost). The problem for our point of view is that only an economy of scale makes magazine printing viable; if ecclesial magazines migrate all their content to the Internet, the economic basis for a print equivalent produced and circulated on a monthly basis will be undermined. The way to meet this problem is to reduce the quality of the paper used, the print process, and the type of cover. Another way to meet the problem is to support magazines through the ecclesial donation bag. Another way is to consider the Internet as a revenue stream.

The Internet Portal could be subscription-based. There might be free areas and subscriptions areas. Ecclesias could hold a subscription pass to all areas; individuals could have access to free areas or use their ecclesial subscription pass. Some material could carry a charge, for example, PDFs, presentations, Sunday School material. Classified adverts could carry a fee, *and so on*.

The decline of one media in favour of another is unavoidable. The management of the decline does not lie in a refusal to embrace the new media. All ecclesial news, announcements and adverts should have a central location on the Internet. This Portal should also contain the content of the other print magazines produced around the world. The decline of print as a medium for magazines should be managed and several management strategies are possible.

First, there may be sufficient demand for a print magazine to justify the exercise of printing. In widening the availability of all magazine content by placing it online, there is no necessary rule which states that print magazines become unviable; it depends on the laws of demand. Secondly, magazine issues can be aggregated and printed to reduce costs. It is a simple fact that aggregating monthly issues into quarterly, half-yearly or annual print copies is cheap using print-on-demand publishing.

This strategy requires a new model in our thinking about the circulation of writing. Ephemeral content like editorials, news, announcements, and adverts do not warrant preservation in print if they are archived online. Collating the more valuable spiritual material into a quarterly, half-yearly or annual book, with proper indexing and a logical structure, satisfies the need for printed reading matter in the community in this area.

The change envisioned is not small; instead of the “ecclesial magazine” people would think of the “ecclesial internet presence”. As a matter of course, most would reference the site for news, announcements, adverts, editorials and articles. From the site it would be possible to link to all ecclesial magazines that are published worldwide and participate in forums; reference individual ecclesial websites, preaching sites, *and so on*. The site would have archived magazines and e-commerce facilities to facilitate the purchase of print copies of collated collections of issues of magazines.

The mindset and role of an editor change in this scenario. S/he is no longer a writer and editor with an eye on the next book for printing or the next issue for printing. Rather, s/he is an editor of a web presence where only a small part of the job description involves handling the work of supplying copy for printing. The management of a web presence involves work with e-mail, forum management, web design, document preparation and upload, news updates, instant messaging and video conferencing—and, of course, there is the research and writing to be done.

Moving to a free model for the distribution of all magazine content has the obvious benefit of reaching greater numbers and arrests the decline in the circulation of print magazines because it circumvents this problem; it also reaches a new demographic which does not purchase a print magazine but which is active online.

Moving to an online model of distribution also requires a different attitude towards what is written. It is no longer the case that a book is written and it remains unchanged until the print run has been exhausted. Rather, with print-on-demand, a book is a work in progress. It has to be written to a certain standard for initial publication, but once in print, there is no need to regard the text as sacrosanct. It can be changed easily and uploaded as a “new impression” or, if the changes are substantial, a new edition. The quick and easy exchange of peer review of written material that the internet affords allows such change to be made in a timely manner. The same principle applies to articles published online.

There is nothing sacred about the word “monthly”. News, the need for announcements, the urgent requests for prayer, the requirement to advertise—these things happen in real time and not in monthly intervals. The opportunity and the urge to share writing happen in real time and not on the first of the month before the month of publication. Moving to an online basis of publication allows sharing to happen in real time or perhaps weekly. As it is, there is news, adverts and announcements made monthly to some; to others such things happen more immediately through forums such as Facebook, e-mail, blogs and Twitter. Certainly, there is enough foreign news in the Middle East to justify a regular news comment in the appropriate area of the Portal.

Traditional Christadelphian magazine publishing needs to develop in the direction of the internet so that there is holistic approach to the circulation of written material, one where forums, blogs, websites and print-on-demand media are handled together as part of the same editorial enterprise.

The Internet is a medium of equality. Anyone can set up a web presence in the name “Christadelphian”. Anything can be said when there is an arbiter of one. Discussion forums allow the exchange of any opinion around the world. The consequences of speaking out online are usually hidden. As matters stand today, there is no authority in any of the Christadelphian websites. As a result there is (as ever) the presence of false teaching. The way in which the presence of Christadelphians on the web has grown—unstructured, uncontrolled—exacerbates problems of doctrine.

The piecemeal upload of some magazine content to a website that has a domain name matching the name of a magazine does not address the needs of the situation. The ethos that has driven the magazines of the community needs to shift wholesale from the concept of “the next issue of the magazine” to the “day-to-day management of the website content”. The magazine needs to be seen as an adjunct to the Internet presence from the website to the downloaded e-magazine on an e-reader.

Such a shift can only come from the editors and the committees that control the ecclesial magazines. It requires editors to assume an active online presence; it requires agreement by the main magazines to move all their content to the web and make this accessible through a central Portal; it requires good and changing web design; it requires co-operative editing and administration of the various web presences – editors/administrators both young and old.

There are some points to make by way of conclusion. In this new world the concept of what a magazine is and what an editor is changes. One way in which a magazine changes is that limits on content can be lifted. Thus the policy of including only generalist and introductory material with pictures and illustrations can be lifted so that the internet Portal includes material of a more advanced type. The concept of the “single editor” changes since web site management allows and requires cooperative editors for the various types of content. These are major changes, albeit evolutionary if they are strategically managed.

What might be the vision in such a development? The goal is a unity expressed in Eph 4:13-16,

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

As things currently exist the Internet is not being used in a way that fulfils the goals of this passage. Discussion forums toss people around by every wind of doctrine instantly and worldwide; websites can be set up under the name “Christadelphian” and promote contrary views, often derived from church writings, with the aim to promote a “movement” or a cause. Of course, the interplay between the Man, the Woman and the Serpent is not going to go away. But the Man has a responsibility here for teaching, and one way to facilitate and foster the unity required by Eph 4:13-16 in the context of the Internet is to bring the mainstream Christadelphian magazines and discussion forums under one Portal and to migrate all content to that Portal, supported with a shift in the mindset of the editors towards web site management and co-operative editing. This kind of strategy has a unifying effect and it acts as a counterweight to the disunity engendered by the current state of affairs.[[89]](#footnote-89)

Apologies to readers who may have noticed that that the website has been down for more than a month. This has been due to domain name registration renewal delays.

**END**

1. B. M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (2nd Edition), Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. K. Aland, “Eine Untersuchung zu Johannes 1, 3-4. Über die Bedeutung eines Punktes” *ZNW* 59 (1968): 174-209. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: SPCK, 1958), 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. B. Witherington II, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, *JBL* 103/1 (March 1984): 82-84 (83). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. He only cites one text as early as the 4th century. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 82; he does not specify which other texts he means. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Witherington goes on and says ‘D, G pm, **et al.** [and others]’, but does not say to which other manuscripts he is referring— Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. B. M. Metzger states, “The chief characteristic of Western readings is fondness for paraphrase. Words, clauses, and even whole sentences are freely changed, omitted, or inserted. Sometimes the motive appears to have been harmonization, while at other times it was the enrichment of the narrative by the inclusion of traditional or apocryphal material. Some readings involve quite trivial alterations for which no special reason can be assigned”—*A Textual Commentary On the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; New York: UBS, 1994), xx. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. B. M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 401. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 402. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 246. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 407. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 407. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Witherington, “The Anti-Feminist Tendencies of the ‘Western’ Text in Acts”, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Together with brother Mark Olsen, the author has co-written a 40 page paper addressing commonly asked questions concerning New Testament textual criticism (especially with regard to the issue of identifying the most reliable manuscripts), which the interested reader may request by email (dixit-dominus@thechristadelphians.org). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. T. Gaston, “The Parting of the Ways”, *CeJBI* 3/4 (Oct 2009): 1-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. J. D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways* (London: SCM Press, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. J. Lewis “Jamnia” *ABD*, 3:634-7 (634). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. # “Bar Kokhba” means “son of a star” (Num 24:17: “There shall come a star out of Jacob”.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. [ED. AP.] Palestinian centres of learning (such as Usha) were also influential, especially during the second century. Babylonian prominence develops towards the end of the second century especially with the Amoriam. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The curse encompasses the whole “land” or “earth” (*eretz*, Zech.5:3); here in particular it concerns the land of Judah. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. “Shinar” is the “country of two rivers”, the ancient name for the territory later known as Babylonia or Chaldea (Gen 11:2). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. The meaning of the Hebrew word *ruach* is to be deduced from the context. The main idea running through all the passages is that of invisible force. It is variously translated as either wind or spirit. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The “two sisters” (based on Rachel and Leah) form the archetype for Ezekiel (Ezek 23:1-3). Contrast the removal of iniquity in Zechariah with the removal of the glory in Ezekiel: “Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims”(Ezek 10:18). Rachel and Leah “built the house of Israel” (Ruth 4:11). [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. The meaning of “Boaz” is uncertain but most probably means “strength”—the word “strength” is twice used in Prov 31:17 (where the virtuous woman is modelled on Ruth) playing on the name of Boaz. The pillars formed an outward symbol of the promise made to David: “Yahweh would establish the seed of Boaz”. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ahaz set the Assyrian altar in the temple area after the crisis of Isaiah 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The same word is used in 1 Chron 21:1, 17 and Isa 53:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. R. Alter affirms that “The reason for God’s wrath is entirely unspecified, and attempts to link the events in the preceding narrative are quite unconvincing…perhaps, indeed, there is no discernible reason for God’s fury against Israel…He is decidedly an interventionist God, pulling the human actors by strings, and He may well be a capricious God, here ‘inciting’ David to carry out a census that will only bring grief to the people”. *The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel* (New York: Norton & Company, 1999), 353, fn.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Chronicles is of later provenance than Samuel. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. H. A. Whittaker notes that; “there is general agreement that 2 Samuel 21-24 consists of an appendix to the history, made up of items divorced from their chronological setting”. *Samuel, Saul & David* (Cannock: Biblia, 1993), 220-226 (220). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. M. Barker, “Atonement: The Rite of Healing” *SJT* 49/1 (1996): 1-20. [Online: cited May 2009] [www.marquette.edu/maqom/Atonement.pdf](http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/Atonement.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. S. L. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence in Deutero-Isaiah: A Bibliographic and Critical Study* (Unpublished PhD Diss., Vanderbilt University, 1975), 2. This is the standard review up to 1975 and is often cited. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Scholars typically regard Isaiah 40-55 as the work of a Babylonian prophet called Deutero-Isaiah or Second-Isaiah. We do not, but that is a different matter; our interest here is in Babylonian echoes in the text of Isaiah 40-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 4; see also p. 45—“Deutero-Isaiah cast his message in unmistakeable contrast to the dominant Babylonian world view”. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. See H. M. Barstad, “On the So-Called Babylonian Literary Influence in Second Isaiah” *SJOT* 2 (1987): 90-110. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. J. W. Behr, *The Writings of Deutero-Isaiah and the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions: A Comparison of Language and Style* (Pretoria: Pretoria University Press, 1937); W. Hallo, *Early Mesopotamian Royal Titles: A Philological and Historical Analysis* (AOS 43; New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1957). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Behr, *The Writings of Deutero-Isaiah and the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions*, 20-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. The Cyrus Cylinder is an inscription on a clay barrel commemorating the capture of Babylon in 539—translation in ANET, 315-316. For an overview see A. Kuhrt, “The Cyrus Cylinder and the Achaemenid Policy” *JSOT* 25 (1983): 83-97. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. S. M. Paul, “Deutero-Isaiah and Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions” *JAOS* 88 (1968): 180-186 (182). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. The *Verse Account of Nabonidus* ANET, 313-315. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. ANET, 315. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. S. H. Hooke, *Babylonian and Assyrian Religion* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. F. Stummer, „Einige keilschriftliche Parallelen zu Jes. 40-66“ *JBL* 45 (1926): 171-189 (177-178). [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. This rhetoric requires “Cyrus” to be “on the scene” and we have shown in an earlier article how “Cyrus” was a throne-name for the Persian royal house and noted the inscriptional evidence that Teispes (675-640) bore the name—A. Perry, “Naming Cyrus” *CeJBI Annual* (2008): 68-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Paul, “Deutero-Isaiah and Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions”, 181; see also Behr, *The Writings of Deutero-Isaiah and the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions*, 21-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Behr, *The Writings of Deutero-Isaiah and the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions*, 25-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Behr, *The Writings of Deutero-Isaiah and the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions*, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Paul, “Deutero-Isaiah and Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions”, 185; see also Behr, *The Writings of Deutero-Isaiah and the Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions*, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Hooke, *Babylonian and Assyrian Religion*, 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Hooke, *Babylonian and Assyrian Religion*, 105; Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 83-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. W. Beyerlin, ed., *Near Eastern Religious Texts relating to the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1978), 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. That is, Isaiah 40-48 characteristically expands upon the self-predication with relative clauses and participial phrases— Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 113 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Beyerlin, *Near Eastern Religious Texts relating to the Old Testament*, 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Or again, given the prominence of the light of the sun and the moon in Babylonian divination, Isaiah counters with the promotion of Yahweh as the light of the people or of the Servant as the light to the Gentiles (Isa 42:6; 60:19-20). [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Beyerlin, *Near Eastern Religious Texts relating to the Old Testament*, 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. ANET, 385. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Westermann, 156; Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 110-111. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. This is the thrust of Paul’s paper and observed by Peterson, *Babylonian Literary Influence*, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. For example, compare the *Esarhaddon Oracles* in ANET 449-450 for points of contact with Isaiah 40-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. A. Perry, “Naming Cyrus” *CeJBI Annual* 2008, 68-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. A. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period* (London: Routledge, 2007), 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. On this see M. Brosius, *The Persians* (London: Routledge, 2006), 7; E. M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990), 71; Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. It is significant that Cyrus II lists the dynasty from Teispes in the *Cyrus Cylinder* which has a number of echoes with Isa 45:1—ANET, 316. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. See Kuhrt’s treatment in *The Persian Empire*, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 47-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 48. Compare the older view in Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Brosius, *The Persians*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. The only Christadelphian to have been a president of the society is Bro. W. G. Lambert (1984). [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. These uses are considered in detail in D. F. Wright, “Homosexuals or Prostitutes? The meaning of avrsenokoi/tai (1 Cor 6:9, 1 Tim 1:10)”*Vigiliae Christianae* 38:2 (1984): 133-141. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Wright, “Homosexuals or Prostitutes?”, 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Wright, “Homosexual or Prostitute?”, 144-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. [Ironical Footnote: It may appear as if this opinion piece is trying to do the EJournal “out of business”.] [↑](#footnote-ref-89)