

Liberty University

**Pauline Style and a Biblical Theology**

A Thesis submitted to the faculty of  
The Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Biblical Languages

by

Andrew Whitney Perkins

Lynchburg, Virginia

October 2025

## Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Tables</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Semantic Synergy .....	8
Gender .....	10
Lexical Consistency .....	18
Context and Genre .....	20
Predication .....	22
Word Position .....	26
Thesis .....	30
<b>I. Presumptive Repetition</b> .....	<b>32</b>
Syntactically Identical .....	32
Syntactically Non-Identical .....	35
Primary Application: Ephesians 1:4 .....	37
Immediate Context .....	40
Anthropochronism .....	41
Summary .....	44
Excursus: The Adoption .....	45
<b>II. Interrogative Parallelism</b> .....	<b>51</b>
The Construction .....	51
The Examples .....	51

Symmetric Structure .....	51
Asymmetric Structure .....	54
Summary .....	57
Primary Application: Romans 9:21 .....	57
Ishmael Was a Believer .....	62
Jacob Have I Loved .....	65
No Contest .....	67
Postscript .....	70
No Question .....	70
No Missing Apodosis .....	71
<b>III. Consistent Context of Phrase Usage .....</b>	<b>75</b>
The Phrase “Grace Given” .....	75
Occurrences .....	76
Paul’s Apostolic Office .....	76
General Ministerial Office .....	78
Believers’ Service in the Body .....	79
Primary Application: 2 Timothy 1:9 .....	80
Immediate Context .....	80
Syntax .....	81
<b>Conclusions .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Appendix A: Every Occurrence of Εἶναι in Paul’s Letters .....</b>	<b>97</b>
Simple Infinitive .....	97
With Lexemes of Volition .....	99

With Verbs of Perception or Declaration .....	101
With Verbs of Communication .....	104
With Forms of δοκέω .....	106
With Other Verbs .....	109
As the Subject or Object of δεῖ .....	111
In Apposition Expressing Content .....	113
Infinitive of Purpose/Result (εἰς τὸ εἶναι) .....	113
Articular Uses .....	117
Summary .....	119
<b>Appendix B: The Three Stylistic Constructions and Pauline Authorship .....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>126</b>

## Abstract

Advances in biblical linguistics, especially in the Greek of the New Testament, have provided a means for a better understanding of the text of Scripture. Advances in Greek lexicography, syntax, verbal aspect, discourse analysis, exegetical and hermeneutical methods, and the historical background behind the gospels and letters of the New Testament have greatly increased interpreters' ability to determine what the text meant from both the writers and to the recipients of those documents. However, Christian theology, especially Systematic Theology, has remained mostly static, unaffected by these advances, and by a more accurate understanding of the biblical text. This thesis affirms that Christian theology must proceed from the text of Scripture by the linguistic analysis of that text, and that theology must be based upon the linguistic evidence. First, several failures to consider various linguistic characteristics are noted, e.g., failure to understand: (1) semantic synergy (Eph. 5:18); (2) grammatical gender (John 6:37); (3) lexical consistency (Rom. 10:17); (4) context and genre (Acts 13:48); (5) predication (Rom. 8:29); and (6) word position (1 Pet. 1:1-2). Studies pertaining to Paul's and Peter's usage of the  $\pi\rho\omicron\gamma\nu\omega$  lexeme bring the study to the matter of authorial style, also called "idiolect." A demonstration of three distinct characteristics of Paul's usage—resumptive repetition, interrogative parallelism, and consistent context of phrase usage—are first explained, then examined across the body of his letters, and then applied to specific verses. First, resumptive repetition will allow the proper interpretation of Eph. 1:4 to show that it speaks only of believers and of their future glorification. Second, interrogative parallelism will demonstrate that the pragmatic statement in Rom. 9:21 comes from Paul's diatribal opponent and not from Paul himself. Third, Paul consistently uses the phrase "grace given" in the context of the gifting of all believers for their function in the Body of Christ. Paul uses it for his own apostolic office, for

ministers of the word in general, and for all believers in general. Applied to 2 Tim. 1:9, Paul speaks of his and Timothy's vocational call to ministry and their gifting for their ministries as Apostle and as pastor, respectively. Taken together, these analyses demonstrate that the various verses and passages examined do not support the deterministic theological conclusions for which they are most often used.

## Abbreviations

ASV	<i>American Standard Version</i>
ATJ	<i>Ashland Theological Journal</i>
BAGL	<i>Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Bauer, Walter. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Translated by W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich. Revised and edited by Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> . Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
BDF	Blass, Freidrich, and Albert Debruner. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . trans. and ed. by Robert W. Funk. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1961.
BECNT	<i>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i> . Robert W. Yarbrough and Robert H. Stein, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1994.
BHS	Ellinger, Karl, and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds. <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990.
BKCNT	Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, eds. <i>The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament</i> . Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983.
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CSB	<i>Christian Standard Bible</i> . Nashville, TN: Holman, 2017.
DBSJ	<i>Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal</i>
EEC	<i>Evangelical Exegetical Commentary</i> . H. Wayne House, W. Hall Harris, and Andrew W. Pitts, eds. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2011.
ESV	<i>English Standard Version</i> . Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001.
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>

<i>ExSyn</i>	Wallace, Daniel B. <i>Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.
GKC	Kautzch, Emil, ed., revised by Arthur E. Cowley. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1910.
GNT	Greek New Testament
<i>GTJ</i>	<i>Grace Theological Journal</i>
HCSB	<i>Holman Christian Standard Bible</i> . Nashville, TN: Holman, 2017.
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
ICC	<i>International Critical Commentary</i> . J. A. Emerton and C. E. B. Cranfield, eds. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1895.
<i>JAIST</i>	<i>Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JOT</i>	<i>Journal of Translation</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KBH	William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. <i>Introduction to Biblical Interpretation</i> , Revised and Updated Ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004.
KJV	King James Version
L&N	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains</i> . 2nd ed. 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement</i> . Revised by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie. Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1996.
LXX	Alfred Rahlfs, ed., <i>Septuaginta</i> . 2 vols. in 1. Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979.
<i>MajT</i>	Hodges, Zane C., and Arthur L. Farstad. <i>The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text</i> . 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985.



MSG	<i>The Message</i> . Eugene H. Peterson, 1993.
NAC	<i>New American Commentary</i> . 2 vols. E. Ray Clendenen, gen. ed. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1991.
NASB	<i>New American Standard Bible</i>
NICNT	<i>The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i> . Ned B. Stonehouse, F. F. Bruce, and Gordon D. Fee, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1946.
NIDNTT	Brown, Colin, gen. ed. <i>The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> . 4 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986.
NIDOTTE	VanGemeren, Willem A., gen. ed. <i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997.
NIGTC	<i>New International Greek Testament Commentary</i> . Todd D. Still and Mark Goodacre, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978.
NIV	<i>New International Version</i> . Palmer Lake, CO: Biblica, Inc., 2011.
NKJV	<i>New King James Version</i> . Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1982.
NLT	<i>New Living Translation</i> . Carol Stream, IL: Tyndall House, 2015.
NRSV	<i>New Revised Standard Version</i> . National Council of Churches, 1989.
NTC	<i>New Testament Commentary</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1953.
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OT	<i>Open Theology</i>
PhC	<i>Philosophia Christi</i>
PNTC	<i>Pillar New Testament Commentary</i> . D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.
PPR	<i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i>
PTR	<i>Princeton Theological Review</i>
R&C	<i>Religion and Culture</i>
RevExp	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
RSV	<i>Revised Standard Version</i> . National Council of Churches, 1946.

<i>SBET</i>	<i>Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
<i>TCJBTC</i>	<i>TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism</i>
TDNT	Kittel, Gerhard, ed. <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 Vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
TDOT	Botterweck, Johannes G., and Helmer Ringren, eds. <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Rev. ed. 15 Vols. Translated by John T. Willis. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974.
TNTC	<i>Tyndale New Testament Commentaries</i> . Darrell L. Bock, ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019.
TWOT	R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. <i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i> . 2 vols. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980.
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
UBS <sup>5</sup>	Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martin, and Bruce Metzger, eds. <i>The Greek New Testament with Dictionary</i> , 5th Rev. ed. Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014.
WBC	<i>Word Biblical Commentary</i> . Bruce M. Metzger, gen. ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999.
<i>WCF</i>	<i>Westminster Confession of Faith</i>
<i>WPNT</i>	Robertson, A. T. <i>Word Pictures of the New Testament</i> . 6 Vols. New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1933.
ZECNT	<i>Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>

## Tables

1	Turner's groups .....	120
2	King's groups .....	121
3	Savoy's groups .....	122
4	Libby's groups .....	123

## Introduction

Though the study of the history of biblical interpretation—patristic, allegorical, historical-critical, theological, etc.<sup>1</sup>—is well documented, the Bible claims to be God’s revelation to mankind in the form of human language.<sup>2</sup> It must be interpreted *linguistically*. In New Testament (NT) studies, with the advances in biblical linguistics such as in verbal aspect, lexicography, syntax, discourse analysis, historical background, and exegetical method,<sup>3</sup> such advances must influence or be allowed to influence the interpretive process, especially its conclusions. The better one can understand the text of Scripture and the historical context in which it was first written, the better one can put theological ideas to the test. Interpreters and

---

<sup>1</sup> Gerald Bray, *How the Church Fathers Read the Bible: A Short Introduction* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2022); for the allegorical method, especially the Alexandrian School, see William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Rev. and updated ed. (KBH) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004), 25-26, 37-40; Ian Christopher Levy, *Introducing Medieval Biblical Interpretation: The Senses of Scripture in Premodern Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018); Daniel J. Trier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008); Stephen E. Fowl, *Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> The Scriptures themselves claim to be divinely inspired, i.e., the very Word of God (1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16), or “God-breathed.” The statement “all scripture is given by inspiration” (2 Tim. 3:16), translates θεόπνευστος (*theopneustos*), woodenly rendered as “God-breathed” but often glossed as “inspired by God” in Greek lexicons; see Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BDAG), 3rd ed., trans. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 450; Franco Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, Madaleine Goh and Chad Schroeder, eds. of English ed. (Boston, MA: Brill, 2015), 934; and Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement* (LSJ), rev. Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1996), 791. “The claim to hear God speaking directly through Scripture is quite proper . . .” (James D. G. Dunn, “Introduction,” in *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*, Scot McKnight, ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989], 15).

<sup>3</sup> Constantine R. Campbell, *Advances in the Study of Greek: New Insights for Reading the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2015); Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 1989); Douglas Mangum and Josh Westbury, *Linguistics & Biblical Exegesis* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017); Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1989); James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1961); Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (L&N), 2nd ed. 2 vols. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989); Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, rev. and expanded ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994); Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (ExSyn) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996); Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010). As noted previously, Walter Bauer’s lexicon is in its third edition in English. D. A. Carson’s *Exegetical Fallacies* has become a standard reference for what *not* to do in biblical exegesis (2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996).

theologians should not fear the scrutiny of their theological tenets via the biblical text.<sup>4</sup> The Scriptures themselves command us to do so.<sup>5</sup> If, at the end of the interpretive process, the conclusions do not reflect the text and wording of Scripture, i.e. what it says, then something is amiss.

The reason, again, is that the Scriptures are *linguistic* documents. Any pictures they paint are pictures of words. Language provides its own controls, i.e., words *mean* something, and that meaning cannot stray far from the syntax and lexicography of the text.<sup>6</sup> The semantic meaning of words *in their contexts* both specifies and *excludes* meaning. Such a focus does not discount uses common to all languages: figures of speech, idioms, metaphor, symbolism, etc. The charge against the “literal” interpretation of Scripture often wrongly accuses it of having no sensitivity

---

<sup>4</sup> “The truths of research and how we reach them must be available for public scrutiny. We base research claims on evidence available to everyone and on principles of reasoning that, we hope, our readers accept as sound. And then those readers test all of that in all the ways that they and others can imagine .... When we make a claim, we must expect, even encourage, others to question not just our claim but how we reached it—to ask, *Why do you believe that?*” (Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed., rev. by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, William T. Fitzgerald, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2018), 134; author’s italics.

<sup>5</sup> See 1 Thess. 5:21, 1 John 4:1; and Acts 17:11: “These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.” In its context, Paul had departed from Thessalonica (17:9) and preached the gospel in the synagogue in Berea (11:10). It was the very gospel itself that the Berean Jews were commended for putting to the test via the Old Testament Scriptures. The gospel passed the test: “therefore many of them believed” (Acts 17:12). Any doctrine, belief, or theological system which must be protected from scrutiny casts doubt on its Scriptural veracity and provenance.

<sup>6</sup> “Syntax deals with the relationships of words to one another. ... Syntactical grammars categorize and describe relationships that have been observed as consistent” (Scot McKnight, “New Testament Greek Grammatical Analysis,” in *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*, Scot McKnight, ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989], 77). The principle of the univocal nature of language states that there must be some agreement between two communicating parties regarding what words—linguistic signs—signify. For example, the word “cat”—a four-legged feline—must mean the same thing to both. “The significance of words cannot arbitrarily be changed by the individual if his signals are to be correctly perceived by others” (Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 18). On a larger scale, they add that “the signs change in their meaning as society insists collectively that they should change” (*ibid.*). “It is amazing that with the millions of idea possibilities, and our limited vocabulary, ambiguity is not the constant result. Yet a remarkable degree of precision is achieved through a wide range of meanings and uses attached to words in different contexts” (Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991], 81).

to such nuances and phenomena.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, such a detailed linguistic focus does not deny the interrelationship between the semantics and pragmatics of language.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, proper interpretation requires a knowledge of the historic context in which it was written, i.e., the occasional circumstance, the recipients, their local (people group/city) and remote (Roman Empire/Hellenistic world/Ancient Near East) culture, and what the words and phrases used by the biblical writer meant *to him* and *to them* at *that time*.<sup>9</sup> Progress in the study of archaeology (with or without biblical focus), history, cultural anthropology, etc., have served to inform and contextualize the biblical writings. The Scriptures should never be disjoined from their linguistic, historical, or cultural contexts. If the Scriptures teach something today, they have always taught it; if they do not teach something today, they have never taught it.

---

<sup>7</sup> Like this statement from a Systematic Theology professor in class: “Those who hold to a literal interpretation of Scripture would probably think that Jesus was made of wood because He said, ‘I am the door.’”

<sup>8</sup> “In traditional biblical exegesis it has been customary to focus attention almost exclusively on semantics, and within semantics there has been concentration on the meaning of words, lexical semantics” (Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 13). Semantics pertains to the more literal meaning of words out of context. “Pragmatics concentrates on the interpretation and explanation of utterances” (19). To illustrate, the question “are you deaf?” must have context. In the context of an argument where one party is frustrated by the other’s inability to understand, the pragmatic meaning of the question “are you deaf?” is the statement “I think you’re stupid!” However, at a school for the disabled, the same question gets closer to its more literal, semantic meaning, i.e., an enquiry regarding another’s ability to hear. When Jesus said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan!” (Matt. 16:23), the semantics of the statement lead many to interpret it as indicating that Satan had possessed Peter. However, in context, Jesus had just announced that “He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day” (16:21), for which Peter rebuked the Lord (16:22). In this context, Jesus calls Peter “Satan,” because that is the person most identified with opposition to the Lord’s purposes (σατάν is “literally ‘adversary’”; BDAG, 916). This is a species of metonymy which “features the substitution of a word or idea for one closely associated with it” (KBH, 313). We use similar figures of speech in statements such as “slow down, Jeff Gordon” (to a driver who is going too fast in one’s opinion), or “nice shot, Michael Jordan” (to a player who made a skillful basket in basketball) or, ironically, “good answer, Einstein” (to one who gave a wrong answer in class). Paul often uses rhetorical questions, as will be seen in the analysis of Romans 9, to make statements (pragmatics); the fact that these are questions does not connote uncertainty (semantics). So, understanding the pragmatics of Jesus’ rebuke toward Peter shows that He was not indicating any demonic possession in Peter’s case. One can see the same figure of speech where the LORD addresses Jerusalem as “Sodom” (Ezek. 16:46-59) to picture the severity of their sin by using the name of the city most identified with grievous sin.

<sup>9</sup> “The most deliberately and directly didactic of all the NT genres, Epistles are also the most ‘occasional.’ In other words, the authors wrote the Epistles for specific occasions to address individual audiences who were facing unique problems” (KBH, 427). “Hermeneutical principle number one is this: what the text could not have possibly meant to the original inspired biblical author, it cannot possibly mean today” (Ben Witherington III, *The Problem with Evangelical Theology: Testing the Exegetical Foundations of Calvinism, Dispensationalism, Wesleyanism, and Pentecostalism*, Rev. and expanded ed. [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015], x).

This linguistic, lexical, syntactical, and contextual interpretation of the Scriptures, with proper placement in a document's historical context, may be called the "grammatical-historical" method of interpretation. However, not all followers of this method come to the same conclusions. In the practice of the interpretive method, some interpreters follow particular "hermeneutics," such as Catholic Hermeneutics, Pentecostal Hermeneutics, Mormon Hermeneutics, or Calvinistic Hermeneutics.<sup>10</sup> These specified hermeneutics suggest that some sort of conclusions are built into the respective methods. In such cases, the assumptions or presuppositions—or denominational or confessional requirements—which one brings into the interpretive process control the conclusions.<sup>11</sup> Such "exegesis" becomes perfunctory, an empty exercise designed to end up where one started. If one's conclusions are set from the beginning, no legitimate or honest investigation of the biblical text is taking place.<sup>12</sup> The practice ends in

---

<sup>10</sup> For example, Peter S. Williamson, "Catholic Principles for Interpreting Scripture," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65 (CBQ), no. 3 (July 2003): 327-349; Benedict Thomas Viviano, *Catholic Hermeneutics Today: Critical Essays* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014); Lee Roy Martin, *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013); Harlyn Graydon Purdy, *A Distinct Twenty-First Century Pentecostal Hermeneutic* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015); Jeffrey S. Krohn, *Mormon Hermeneutics: Five Approaches to the Bible by the LDS Church* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2022); Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*, 3rd. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999); and Moisés Silva, "The Case for Calvinistic Hermeneutics," in Walter C. Kaiser and Moisés Silva, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994): 251-269. KBH mentions "Liberation Hermeneutics" (87), and "Feminist Hermeneutics" (96).

<sup>11</sup> "Individual presuppositions can easily bracket out what one doesn't want to hear. Or a meaning can be heard in a text which is quite divorced from its original or scriptural sense" (Dunn, "Introduction," 16). Darrell L. Bock warns against a practice "wherein one cites only the evidence that favors the interpretation one wants to defend. Certainly, unintentional errors in judgment do occur sometimes. However the intentional avoidance of certain facts will always result in inaccurate and biased conclusions" ("New Testament Word Analysis," in *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*, Scot McKnight, ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989], 112). Thomas R. Schreiner adds that "doing theological synthesis in Paul ... has its dangers. We may fail to hear what a particular text is saying because that text has already been swallowed up into our system. The problem there is not with systematizing, but with a system ... that does not take into account all the facts. Thus we may fail to let particular texts change our views of Pauline theology. We all come to the text with certain assumptions and desired about the meaning of the biblical text. So it is extraordinarily easy to read our own meaning into the text" (*Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011], 141-42).

<sup>12</sup> R. Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain note that "recent years have seen scholars dismiss traditional readings of certain passages, claiming that their frequent employment in theological literature owes solely to ecclesiastical tradition and not at all to exegetical rigor" ("In Defense of Proof-Texting," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54 [JETS], no. 3 [September 2011]: 593). However, in attempting to defend against this perceived disjunction between traditional or theological uses of certain texts and exegetical practice—with Aquinas and Calvin used as examples—they conclude by saying "biblical scholars will do well to familiarize themselves

*eisegesis*, reading meaning *into* the text. The linguistic evidence drawn from the text itself must be the primary criterion in determining the meaning of the text and, then, the theology contained therein.<sup>13</sup> The final result must be a biblical theology, regardless of the title.<sup>14</sup>

Though interpreters come to the biblical text with a pre-understanding, the interpreter must be willing to submit any pre-understanding to the text of Scripture. This is a process, rather than an event, as the interpreter continues to explore and revisit the biblical linguistic data in its various passages, contexts, and genres. Grant Osborne call this process the “hermeneutical spiral.”<sup>15</sup> The interpreter must be sensitive to genres of literature, whether poetry, narrative, didactic, prophecy, or apocalyptic. One should not use Ps. 5:5, “You [O Lord] hate all workers of iniquity,” a statement from OT poetry—a genre heavy in symbolism and hyperbole—to discount Rom. 5:8: “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still

---

with the history of biblical interpretation. They will begin to see how dogmatics and exegesis can function in harmony, each enriching the other with the diverse gifts. By reading the commentaries of Calvin alongside his *Institutes* or by dipping into the expository homilies of Augustine on 1 John or Genesis, they will see how the church has always insisted on teasing out doctrinal implications from interpretive insights” (606). It appears that they validate and exhibit the criticisms they noted, narrow proper exegesis to that of Calvin and Augustine, and appeal to church tradition. This provides no defense.

<sup>13</sup> “Exegesis means to ‘draw out of’ a text what it means, in contrast to eisegesis, to ‘read into’ a text what one wants it to mean” (Osborne, *Spiral*, 41). Regarding syntax, he adds that “in its narrow sense it refers to the relationship between the words of a sentence and is virtually equivalent to grammar. ... In its broad sense syntax refers to all the interrelationships within the sentence as a means of determining the meaning of the unit as a whole” (93). “One test of our preunderstandings is whether they correspond to the biblical data. ... Thoughtful Christians insist that accepting the Bible’s truthfulness is not merely a prejudiced dogmatism, an undefended presuppositionalism that simply assumes its stance. ... We believe that to accept the Bible’s veracity best accords with the evidence” (KBH, 163). “In the world of research, both academic and professional, good evidence and sound reasoning trump belief every time, or at least it should” (Turabian, *Manual*, 134).

<sup>14</sup> A “biblical” theology is one which is consistent with the teaching of Scripture. According to D. A. Carson, this writer would be among those who argue “that ‘biblical theology’ should be used to refer to any theology that seeks to be true to the Bible and to relate the parts fairly and honestly with one another.” (D. A. Carson, “Unity and Diversity in the New Testament,” in *Scripture and Truth*, Carson, D. A., and John D. Woodbridge, eds. [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992], 69). This is consistent with Gabler’s statement that “there is truly a biblical theology, of historical origin, conveying what the holy writers felt about divine matters” (John Sandys-Wunsch and Laurence Eldredge, “J. P. Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary, and Discussion of His Originality,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 33 (SJT) [1980]: 137).

<sup>15</sup> “The text itself sets the agenda and continually reforms the questions that the observer asks of it. The means by which this is accomplished it twofold: grammatical-syntactical exegesis and historical-cultural background. These interact to reshape the interpreter’s preunderstanding and help to fuse the two horizons” (Osborne, *Spiral*, 324). See also KBH, 154-68.



sinners, Christ died for us,” a didactic statement found in a NT letter. Exposure to the latter verse should put the former in its proper context and correct one’s misapplication of it.

Yet, the Scriptures *can* be understood; the Bible is not a book of mysteries. To portray it as such attempts to remove the accessibility of divine truth and place it in the hands of certain elites, usually the same ones who speak of such mysteries. The doctrine of “the perspicuity of Scripture” affirms that “the Bible is *understandable*; it is an accessible book. It presents a clear message to anyone willing to read it, and that is why people throughout history have understood its teachings.”<sup>16</sup> This perspicuity does not affirm that biblical interpretation is easy or obvious in all contexts or passages. Peter mentions that in Paul’s Letters, “are some things hard to understand” (2 Pet. 3:16). God has given believers the ability to understand the Scriptures (John 16:13; Eph. 1:17-18; 1 John 2:27), yet He also gifted certain men for the ministry of the Word to act as “pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints” (Eph. 4:11-12).<sup>17</sup>

This perspicuity does not deny all limitations. For the most part, at the time God revealed His truth, the biblical languages were the vernacular of the people to whom God gave it. Today, no person is a native speaker of the biblical languages and must learn them in order to interact with that revelation directly. For others, translations are the only access they have to the Word of God, and they are dependent upon the accuracy and trustworthiness of those translations.<sup>18</sup>

One cannot deny, however, that the failure to interpret the Scriptures linguistically, contextually, and historically has led to several interpretive errors which the proper *application*

---

<sup>16</sup> KBH, 149, author’s emphasis.

<sup>17</sup> The work of the Apostles was primarily “the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4), which was not without Old Testament precedent. For “the people to understand the Law of Moses,” Ezra and others “read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading” (Ezra 8:8).

<sup>18</sup> “Naturally, the person who does not know the original languages will have a perceptibly greater difficulty in dealing with grammar and syntax .... The problem is that they must then depend upon secondary sources, mainly translations and commentaries” (Osborne, *Spiral*, 41-42).

of the grammatical-historical method will reveal. Often these errors are codified, enshrined, and “sanctified” through prejudicial translation. Addressing this will be part of the methodology.

Regarding methodology, the primary sources will be the Greek New Testament (GNT),<sup>19</sup> the Hebrew Bible,<sup>20</sup> and the Septuagint (LXX),<sup>21</sup> with associated grammars and lexicons as primary references. Matters of textual criticism will be dealt with as they occur in the examination of the biblical passages. The top-selling English translations,<sup>22</sup> most of which having been produced within the last century and a half, will be consulted for comparison to see modern trends which modify or maintain the KJV tradition. The King James Version (KJV) will be the translational baseline because of its having been the standard, “authorized” translation for the English-speaking world for over two and a half centuries and, for some, remains the standard over four hundred years after its production. It is also a Reformation-era translation which shows Reformed theological bias in several places.

---

<sup>19</sup> Primary: Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martin, and Bruce Metzger, eds., *The Greek New Testament with Dictionary*, 5th rev. ed. (UBS<sup>5</sup>) (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014). Secondary: F. H. A. Scrivener, *H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΕΚΗ, NOVUM TESTAMENTUM* [Greek New Testament] (London, England: Whittaker and Assoc., 1887); Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text (MajT)*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985); *H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, The New Testament: The Greek Text Underlying the English Authorized Version of 1611* (London, England: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1991).

<sup>20</sup> K. Ellinger and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990).

<sup>21</sup> Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta* (LXX), 2 vols. in 1 (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

<sup>22</sup> The Top Ten Best Selling Bible Translations, according to the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA), as of May 2025 are: (1) *New International Version (Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV* [Palmer Lake, CO: Biblica, Inc., 2011]); (2) *English Standard Version (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version [ESV]* [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001]); (3) King James Version (KJV); (4) New Living Translation (*Holy Bible, New Living Translation [NLT]* [Carol Stream, IL: Tyndall House, 2015]); (5) *New King James Version* (NKJV) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1982); (6) *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB) (Nashville, TN: Holman, 2017); (7) *Reina Valera* (Brentwood, TN: B & H Español, 1995); (8) *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) (National Council of Churches, 1989); (9) *New International Reader's Version* (NIRV) (Palmer Lake, CO: Biblica, Inc., 2011); (10) New American Standard Bible (NASB) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1960). For the sake of this study, non-English translations (Reina Valera) and redundant translations (NIRV) will be omitted. The American Standard Version (ASV), Revised Standard Version (RSV; National Council of Churches, 1946), *The Message* (MSG) (Eugene H. Peterson, 1993), and the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) (Nashville, TN: Holman, 2017) will be added to the translation comparison pool. Comparisons will be limited to this pool as a representative sampling of historical, modern, or popular English translations of the text of Scripture.

Because of the widespread dependence upon the KJV translation, and with knowledge of the biblical languages being held by a minority of ecclesiastical elites, the mistranslation of certain passages would go unnoticed by most of the Christian population, and ministers could defend Reformed teaching by claiming that it was what “the Bible taught.” This study will move toward examples to demonstrate a few errors in areas of syntax, lexicography, and context; as well as their outworking in translation. The first matter concerns how words *work together* for meaning.

### Semantic Synergy

Like celestial bodies—stars, planets and asteroids—words exercise a certain semantic gravitational effect upon each other. Prepositions may affect the semantic nuance of the verbs with which they occur. An example from English is the difference between the two requests, “throw the ball *to* me” and “throw the ball *at* me.” In the former, the preposition “to” moves the semantic nuance toward “toss” within the semantic range of “throw.” In the latter, “at” moves the semantic nuance toward “hurl” within throw’s range and connotes a goal of hitting the recipient with the ball.

The most common translation of πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι in Eph. 5:18 is “be filled *with* the Spirit.”<sup>23</sup> This is usually because of a translational affinity for the phrase “filled with the Holy Spirit” from Luke’s writings.<sup>24</sup> In those cases, the phrase always includes “*Holy* Spirit,” instead of the unqualified πνεύματι as in Eph. 5:18. Luke’s construction is always the Genitive

---

<sup>23</sup> In the comparative translation pool, the ASV, ESV, KJV, NASB, NIV, NKJV, NLT, NRSV, and RSV all have “filled with the Spirit,” while the CSB and HCSB have “filled by the Spirit.” The MSG has “drink the Spirit of God.”

<sup>24</sup> One finds the phrase in: Luke 1:15 πνεύματος ἁγίου πλησθήσεται; 1:41 ἐπλήσθη πνεύματος ἁγίου; 1:67 ἐπλήσθη πνεύματος ἁγίου; 4:1 πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου; Acts 2:4 ἐπλήσθησαν ... πνεύματος ἁγίου; 4:8 πλησθεὶς πνεύματος ἁγίου; 4:31 ἐπλήσθησαν ... τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος; 6:3 πλήρεις πνεύματος (the traditional text adds ἁγίου); 7:55 πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου; 9:17 πλησθῆς πνεύματος ἁγίου; 11:24 πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου; 13:9 πλησθεὶς πνεύματος ἁγίου; and 13:52 ἐπληροῦντο ... πνεύματος ἁγίου.

of Content (GoC) which “specifies the contents of the word to which it is related ... *full of* or *containing*.”<sup>25</sup> One might speak of a glass full *of water* to illustrate. Paul’s own use of the GoC is consistent with Luke’s, though his use is much less frequent.<sup>26</sup>

However, when cognates of the πληρ lexeme are modified by the preposition ἐν, this excludes notions of “filling,” and moves the semantic focus toward fulfillment or completion.<sup>27</sup> Paul shows this to be true in Rom. 8:4, πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν (“might be fulfilled in us”); Gal. 5:14, ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται (“fulfilled in one word”); and Col. 2:10, ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι (“you are complete in Him”). The latter verse is significant because ἐν + divine person is close to Eph. 5:18. Also, Paul uses the phrase ἐν πνεύματι (“in the Spirit”) as nomenclature for being a believer, e.g., Rom. 8:9: “you are not in the flesh but *in the Spirit* (οὐκ ... ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλὰ ἐν πνεύματι), if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you” (see also Rom. 14:7; Gal. 5:16; Eph. 2:22; Col. 1:8).

Applied to Eph. 5:18, the last clause should read “be completed” or “be fulfilled,” and this “in the Spirit,” i.e., as a believer. This fits the contrast between the temporary “freedom” alcoholic intoxication provides (“do not be drunk with wine”), which leads to “debauchery” (ἀσωτία; cf. Prov. 23:20-21, 30-35). Rather than in that which is fleeting and potentially sinful, believers—those “in the Spirit”—should find their fulfillment, or continue their completion, in their status as believers in Jesus Christ. The point of the verse is not a focus on a continual task to perform, but for believers to recognize *who they are* as well as *who they are becoming*.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 92; author’s italics.

<sup>26</sup> For example, Rom. 15:13-14 πληρώσαι ὑμᾶς πάσης χαρᾶς ... πεπληρωμένοι πάσης τῆς γνώσεως (“fill you with all joy ... filled with all knowledge”), and 2 Tim. 1:4 χαρᾶς πληρωθῶ (“filled with joy”).

<sup>27</sup> One may see this usage in Luke’s writings: Luke 4:21 πεπλήρωται ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ἐν τοῖς ὧσιν ὑμῶν; 9:31 πληροῦν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ (“to accomplish at Jerusalem”); 22:16 πληρωθῇ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ.

<sup>28</sup> Regarding the present imperative, “the force generally is *to command the action as an ongoing process*” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 485). The passive nature speaks of the fact that God is the one transforming believers into Jesus’ image (2 Cor. 3:18).

They are to be or become complete in the Spirit, just as they are complete in Christ (Col. 2:10). The contrast between the old manner of life and the new is a prominent theme in Ephesians (2:1–10, 4:17–5:17ff) and, therefore, fits the context. The popular translation as “filled with the Spirit,” confusion about the genitive of content, and a lack of understanding the  $\pi\lambda\eta\rho + \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  semantic interplay leads interpreters away from the verse’s teaching and leaves them with the struggle to explain *how* believers are to accomplish such a “filling.”<sup>29</sup>

The next section deals with how a proper understanding of Greek grammatical gender masculine, feminine, and neuter—is necessary to properly interpret biblical passages. The different genders are used for a purpose in different contexts and blurring such distinctions leads to misunderstanding the text.

### Gender

The common interpretation of John 6:37 is that the first clause—“All that<sup>30</sup> the Father giveth me shall come to me” (KJV)—speaks of all the elect *persons* coming to Jesus.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> After a thorough and erudite examination of the interpretive history and contexts of the phrase “filled with the Spirit” in the New Testament, William W. Combs concludes that “the scriptural data suggests that the filling in Ephesians 5:18 is to be interpreted in line with what is often referred to as ordinary filling, which is found in several examples in Luke/Acts. . . . Paul wants believers to keep on being filled with the Spirit, which, of course, is the normal and expected activity of the obedient believer” (“Spirit-filling in Ephesians 5:18,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal 19 [DBSJ]* [2014]: 51). He also denies what might be called a “charismatic” interpretation of the verse: “there is no scriptural basis for believers to seek a special experience called the filling of the Holy Spirit as part of their progressive sanctification.” While all of this is true, he conflates Luke’s use of the GoC with Eph. 5:18, misses the  $\pi\lambda\eta\rho + \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  construction, and misses the linguistic and theological parallels found elsewhere in Paul’s writings.

<sup>30</sup> The ASV (“all that which”), NASB, and NRSV (“everything”) translations are clearer in translating the neuter, while the ESV, NKJV, and RSV follow the KJV. The CSB and HCSB (“everyone”), MSG (“every person”), and NIV (“all those”) push past any restraint and translate the neuter as personal and masculine.

<sup>31</sup> For example, George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd ed., in *Word Biblical Commentary* (WBC), ed. Bruce M. Metzger (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 92; Gerald L. Borchert, *John*, in *The New American Commentary* (NAC), 2 vols., E. Ray Clendenen, gen. ed. (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 1:265; D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, in *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (PNTC), D. A. Carson, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 290; Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 484; Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 325, 857, 859; Norman L. Geisler, *Systematic Theology in One Volume* (Arlington, TX: Bastion, 2021), 597, 899; Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan

However, this interpretation relies on equating the neuter  $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu \tilde{\omicron}$  (“all that”) with the masculine gender, with the latter tending to speak of persons in Greek.<sup>32</sup> The argument downplays any distinction in the uses of Greek genders, and uses certain passages as proof of this lack of distinction.<sup>33</sup> However, expanding the scope of examination in John 3, John 17, and 1 John 5 reveals patterns which show that John uses the neuter gender intentionally and it does not stand in for nor equate to the masculine gender.

In John 3:3-7, Jesus directs the conversation with Nicodemus by making two parallel statements in vv. 3 and 5 using the masculine gender ( $\tau\iota\varsigma$ ):

(MA1) unless one is born again ( $\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\eta\theta\eta\tilde{\iota} \tilde{\alpha}\nu\omega\theta\epsilon\nu$ ), [M=masculine]  
he cannot see the kingdom of God. (v. 3)

(MA2) unless one is born of ... the Spirit, ( $\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\eta\theta\eta\tilde{\iota} \tilde{\epsilon}\xi \dots \pi\nu\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ )  
he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (v. 5)

---

Academic, 2020), 737, 864; and William Hendriksen, *John*, in *New Testament Commentary* (NTC) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1953), 234; Edward W. Klink, *John*, in *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (ZECNT), Clinton E. Arnold, gen. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 232-33; Colin G. Kruse, *John. Revised ed.*, in *Tyndale New Testament Commentary* (TNTC) (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 191; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1943), 463; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John, Revised*, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (NICNT), Gordon Fee, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 325; Gerard Sloyan, *John*, in *Interpretation*, James L. Mays, ed. (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1973), 70; R. C. Sproul, *What is Reformed Theology?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997), 176; August Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology*, reprint of 1907 ed. (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1996), 781. Grant Osborne may be the proverbial “voice in the wilderness,” stating that “scholars are constantly reading the whole of a doctrine into isolated statements. This is especially true of theologically loaded passages like John 6:37-40, where many scholars see the full-fledged doctrine of predestination ...” (*Spiral*, 86).

<sup>32</sup> Though Colin G. Kruse takes the common position that the neuter in this verse speaks of persons, he notes that “the word translated *All* ( $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu$ ) is neuter singular, not masculine plural as might be expected” (*John*, 191). “The neuter usually refers to impersonal things (including animals) ...” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 399).

<sup>33</sup> “The neuter gender may refer to a person (e.g.  $\tau\tilde{\omicron} \gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu$  Jn 3<sup>6</sup> 1 Jn 5<sup>4</sup>, cp. masc. 5<sup>1</sup>) ...;  $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu$  is often added to make this clear (1 Jn 5<sup>4</sup>, Jn 17<sup>2</sup>  $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu \tilde{\omicron}$  ...) [Jn] 6<sup>37</sup>  $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu \tilde{\omicron}$  resolves itself into  $\tau\tilde{\omicron}\nu \epsilon\rho\chi\acute{\omicron}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$  ...)” (Nigel Turner, *Syntax*, vol. 3 of *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* by James Hope Moulton, 4 vols. [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1976], 3:21). A. T. Robertson lists John 6:39, 17:2, 24; and 1 John 5:4 (*Word Pictures of the New Testament* [WPNT], 6 Vols. [New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1933], 5:107, 6:204). Robertson says that the neuter is used “in a collective personal sense in John 6:37, 39” (*ibid.*, 6:204; also 5:275); he adds, “thus  $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\nu \tilde{\omicron}$  in Jo. 6:37 refers to believers,” then notes John 17:2 and 1 John 5:4 for corroboration (*A Grammar of Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* [Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1934], 409). Maximilian Zerwick’s justification for the personal neuter, in the context of John 3:6, is “if the emphasis is the quality ... the use of the neuter lays down an absolute and universal principle ... of the natural and supernatural orders” (*Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples* [Rome, Italy: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1963], 47). However, such a universal application moves away from attempting to narrow the scope to persons.

The neuter in v. 6 comprises a general statement, i.e., (NG1; N=neuter; G=general) “that which is born (τὸ γεγεννημένον) of the flesh is flesh; and (NG2) that which is born (τὸ γεγεννημένον) of the Spirit is spirit.” Humans, animals, fish, and birds are all “born of flesh” (see Gen. 7:21; 1 Cor. 15:39). Moreover, angelic beings and heavenly creatures (Rev. 4:6-9), as created spiritual beings, may be seen as “born of the spirit.” Jesus gives a general principle consistent with His previous specific statements.<sup>34</sup> Verse 7 provides a summary which alludes back to v. 3: (A) “Ye must be born again” (δεῖ ὑμᾶς γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν). This shows a pattern of: A1-A2-G-A3 → 1, with the A1-2 forming parallel statements regarding persons, followed by a general statement (G), then a postscript (A3) which points back to A1. The plural ὑμᾶς (3:7) points back to the plural “we know” (οἶδαμεν) in Nicodemus’s opening statement in 3:2.

One may notice a similar pattern in 1 John 5:1-5 where John makes several statements using the masculine gender (vv. 1-3), with the first showing πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς (v. 1). In v. 4, John follows with a neuter general statement—“whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world”—then concludes with an allusion back to v. 1 in the masculine gender in 5:5b: “he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God” (ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ). Notice the correspondence between the two statements in vv. 1 and 5. Also, John lists three things which overcome the world: (1) πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον (neuter, v. 4a); (2) , ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν (feminine, v. 4b); and (3) ὁ νικῶν (masculine, v. 5a). The variety of genders make the neuter fit as a general statement of truth.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> “The point is quite simple: ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ are different spheres of reality, each producing offspring like itself” (Klink, *John*, 199).

<sup>35</sup> Robertson rightly notes the use of “the neuter singular ... rather than the masculine singular (verse 1) to express sharply the universality of the principle as in John 3:6” (*WPNT*, 6:238). One might illustrate the pattern in this manner:

AM Whoever believes is begotten (5:1a) [M=masculine; F=feminine; N=neuter; G=general]  
 BM Everyone who loves is begotten (5:1b)  
 B2M The begotten love God and His children (5:2a-b)

In John 17, one should not isolate v. 2 from the rest of the context. In the passage, the Father has given the Son authority (v. 2; feminine), the work to complete (v. 4; neuter), the Apostles (vv. 6, 9, 11; masculine), and the words (v. 8; neuter, τὰ ῥήματα). The KJV's translation of 17:2b, "that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," is misleading. The relative clause πᾶν ὃ δέδωκας, "all which you have given" is not the subject of δώσει nor its object, for ζῶν αἰώνιον fulfills the latter. The neuter πᾶν ὃ is the object of δέδωκας. The relative clause should best be seen as an Accusative of Reference.<sup>36</sup> This makes the better translation "that, with reference to all things [the Father] has given to Him, He might give to them eternal life."<sup>37</sup> Considering all the things Jesus lists as having been given to Him in the subsequent verses, the neuter fits, and does not stand in for the masculine. The neuter points to a larger category of all the things which the Father gave the Son. Jesus' giving eternal life to His disciples is a subcategory of the "all things" as well as of "all flesh."<sup>38</sup> Jesus' similar

---

CM The love of God keeps commandments (5:2c)

C2 The love of God keeps commandments (5:3a)

C3 Commandments are not burdensome (5:3b)

NOG Whatever is born of God overcomes (5:4a) [O=overcomes]

FO2 Our Faith ... overcomes (5:4b)

MO3 Who overcomes? (5:5a)

A2 He who believes (5:5b)

<sup>36</sup> Though Wallace notes this as a rare category, it fits the context and syntax (*ExSyn*, 203-04). Though some may identify this construction as a pendent nominative (or *nominativus pendens*, as does Robertson, *WPNT*, 5:108), as noted above, πᾶν ὃ is the object of a verb and, therefore, accusative. Lenski states that the phrase "hangs in the air. We might call it an accusative absolute .... This construction is intentionally employed by John, for it lifts into special prominence the universality of, 'everything' which thou didst give him, the neuter singular indicating the entire mass as one great unit; compare the identical expression in 6:37 and 39." Yet, Lenski still identifies the mass as "believers" (*John*, 1119).

<sup>37</sup> The KJV translation of αὐτοῖς as "as many as" (as if it were ὅσοις) obfuscates the underlying syntax.

<sup>38</sup> Hendriksen states that "the phrase *all flesh* is a Hebraism, indicating *all people*" (*John*, 234). However, an examination of the phrase in the OT shows that "all flesh" most often refers to every living land creature including mankind (Gen. 6:13, 17, 17:21; Lev. 17:14; Num. 18:15-17; Dan. 4:12). In certain contexts, the reference of the phrase is restricted to animals (Gen. 6:19; 7:15-16). References speaking of humans only are usually found in the prophetic literature (Isa. 40:5-6; 49:26; 66:16, 23-24; Jer. 25:31, 32:27; Ezek. 20:48, 21:4-5; Zech. 2:13).



statements using the neuter in vv. 7 and 10 fit this understanding.<sup>39</sup> John's record of Jesus' use of the neuter and masculine show that they are not interchangeable; each is used with purpose.

Regarding the neuter in 1 John 1:1-3, understanding the basic syntax of the long sentence shows that the neuter does not refer to the Person of Jesus, but to all of those things which *pertain to or concern* (περὶ) Jesus, “the word of life,” i.e., His earthly ministry. The neuter pertains to all that the Apostles heard, saw, and touched during their time with Jesus.<sup>40</sup> The phrase “from the beginning” (Ὁ ἦν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς) should be understood as from the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry, for it was from that time that they could have heard, seen, and touched all that He did and said (see John 2:11, 8:25, 15:27, 16:4).<sup>41</sup> The neuter accusative relative clauses (ὃ) are the direct objects of the verb ἀπαγγέλλομεν (“we declare”). Of note, John’s repetition of ὃ ἐώρακάμεν καὶ ἀκηκόαμεν in 1:3, after the insertion of v. 2 (“the life was manifested”) is an example of “resumptive repetition,” which will be examined in Paul’s writings below.<sup>42</sup>

Having established that John 3:6, 17:2, and 1 John 5:4 do not validate the idea that the neuter and masculine genders are interchangeable and stand for each other in John’s writings, John 6:37 does not teach that all of the elect *persons* whom God gave to Jesus will approach Him. What *does* the verse teach in its context? In addition to the differences between the neuter (πάν ὃ) and masculine (τὸν ἐρχόμενον) genders in the verse, the translation of two different

---

<sup>39</sup> The “them” in 17:10 (ἐν αὐτοῖς) is neuter. Though it has the same form as the masculine, its antecedent is the things (τὰ, neuter) mentioned previously in the verse. One might ask what among all the things which God has created or done will not ultimately glorify the Son.

<sup>40</sup> The third person plurals in ἀκηκόαμεν ... ἐώρακάμεν ... ἐθεασάμεθα ... ἐψηλάφησαν are probably not a literary device, but point to the fact of the multitude of those who had the same empirical experience with Jesus, especially the Apostles.

<sup>41</sup> Placing the sentence of 1 John 1:1-3 into simple English—which follows the Greek syntax as well—shows the neuter accusative in its proper frame: “We declare to you (ἀπαγγέλλομεν καὶ ὑμῖν) what we have heard, seen, touched, and handled from the beginning (Ὁ ἦν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, ὃ ἀκηκόαμεν, ὃ ἐώρακάμεν ... ὃ ἐθεασάμεθα ... ἐψηλάφησαν) concerning the word of life (περὶ τοῦ λόγου τῆς ζωῆς), the Father’s (τοῦ πατρὸς) Son, Jesus Christ (τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

<sup>42</sup> Robertson calls it “resumption after the parenthesis of verse 2” (*WPNT*, 6:206).

verbal lexemes as “come” (ἦκω and ἔρχομαι) obscures the differences in the two statements in the verse.

Of the twenty-seven occurrences of ἦκω in the NT, over half (15/27, 56%) are clearly eschatological, referring to future apocalyptic events. If the one *possibly* eschatological (Rev. 3:9) and John 6:37 are added, then a larger majority of (17/27, 63%) of the uses are eschatological. The next largest category comprises narrative uses, describing the arrival of persons (four times). The rest of the occurrences appear in contexts of the Incarnation (once; John 8:42), Jesus’ Crucifixion (twice; John 2:4, 13:1), Christology (twice; Heb. 10:7, 9), and describing a present reality (once; 1 John 5:20). In each case, the lexeme conveys a culminative or final nuance, arrival rather than progress, this latter usually conveyed by ἔρχομαι.<sup>43</sup> This difference may be seen in John 8:42: “I proceeded forth (ἐξῆλθον) and came (ἦκω) from God; neither came (ἐλήλυθα) I of myself, but he sent me” (this is the Incarnation context). Moreover, in all cases in BDAG,<sup>44</sup> the verses placed in either categories #1 or #2 clearly describe the actions of persons or impersonal actors, respectively. The only exception is the inclusion of John 6:37 in the personal category (#1). This is interpretive, rather than lexical or contextual; BDAG in this case is acting as a theological dictionary, rather than a lexicon.<sup>45</sup>

Moreover, the use of πρὸς ἐμὲ with ἦξει may carry the nuance of association, “with,” rather than spatial, “toward.”<sup>46</sup> BDAG lists the stative gloss “be present” for ἦκω, which fits this

---

<sup>43</sup> L&N give ἦκω the glosses of “arrive,” “be here,” and “happen” (1:114), and place it into the semantic domains of “be, become, exist, happen” (13:112; 2:161) and “existence in space” (85:10), offering the definition “to be in a place, as the result of having arrived” (2:175). Regarding any movement, they note the emphasis on arrival: “to move toward and to arrive at a point—‘to come to, to reach, to arrive’” (2:193).

<sup>44</sup> BDAG, 435.

<sup>45</sup> A tendency also noted by Osborne: “it is important to remember that BAGD [the 2nd ed. of Bauer’s lexicon] is descriptive and interpretive. When it places a passage behind a certain meaning it is an opinion and not an established fact” (*Spiral*, 82).

<sup>46</sup> Wallace points out that the associative use of πρὸς (translated as “with”) occurs “with stative verbs” (*ExSyn*, 380). In addition to forms of εἰμί, the preposition connotes association in occurrences with the μέν verbal

context, so that the verb and prepositional phrase together should be translated “shall be present *with* me.”<sup>47</sup> The entire first clause, translating the neuter gender (πάν ὃ), ἵξει, and πρὸς ἐμὲ with lexical and syntactical clarity, is then, “All things which the Father is giving to Me shall be present with Me.” Jesus’ habit was to speak ambiguously or cryptically to those who did not believe in Him.<sup>48</sup> This statement is a veiled Messianic claim.<sup>49</sup> It is an allusion to Ps. 2:8, where the Father says to His Son, “ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.”

In John 6:37, the neuter and masculine each serve a specific purpose. The neuter gender of πάν ὃ fits the Messianic allusion to Ps. 2:8, while the masculine τὸν ἐρχόμενον fits persons coming to Jesus in faith: “blessed are all those who put their trust in Him” (Ps. 2:12). The first clause is complementary to the second, though they are not parallel. One may see similar

---

lexeme—διαμένω, ἐπιμένω, παραμένω—all of which speak of some sort of remaining in a state, and forms of ποιέω, et al. (BDAG, 875).

<sup>47</sup> The combination of ἵκω + πρὸς occurs only in John 6:37 in the New Testament. However, in the 29 places where one finds ἵκω + πρὸς in the LXX (including 4 in the Apocrypha), the combination translates לָךְ + אֵינִי (Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* [BDB] [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997], 41 and 97; all but once being translated as “to,” Dan. 11:7 providing the exception: “who shall come *with* an army”; ἵξει πρὸς τὴν δύναμιν; לֵבְיָהוּ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ). Compare with 1 Sam. 29:9 (and v.10, οἱ ἵκοντες μετὰ σοῦ): “he shall not go up *with* us”; οὐχ ἵξει μεθ’ ἡμῶν; וְלֹא יֵצֵא עִמָּנוּ. Yet, going with this majority biblical translation in John 6:37—“all things which the Father is giving to me will come to me”—neither commends the deterministic interpretation, nor harms the Messianic reference of the verse.

<sup>48</sup> See John 6:60, 66; 10:24-25. Compare with the faith of the Twelve in John 6:68-69. The religious leaders demanded that Jesus clearly identify Himself (Matt 26:62-64; Luke 22:66-71), but His answer retained some ambiguity. This also pertains to the matter of consideration of audience in interpretation. Compare with Jesus’ disclosure to His disciples in John 16:25-29.

<sup>49</sup> One may see a similarly veiled Messianic claim in Luke 17:20-21 as well, in which Jesus would not be telling a crowd of unbelieving Pharisees that the “kingdom of God is *within* you” (KJV). Rather, the adverb ἐντός, following the usage of ἐν in this context, takes the sense of “among” or “in the midst of” with its plural object. In contrast to the idea that the kingdom of God is “out there” somewhere—“See here!” or “See there!”—rather, Jesus stated that it was “in your midst” (ἐντός ὑμῶν). This is a veiled Messianic claim, the clear statement of which would be “the King is standing in your very presence at this moment.” The religious leaders demanded that He clearly identify Himself (Matt. 26:63; Luke 22:67; John 10:24), but He refused. In another example, after Jesus’ cryptic statements in John 6:26-65, “from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him” (v. 66). Compare this with John 16:29-30: “His disciples said to Him, ‘See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.’”

contrast and interplay between the neuter and masculine in John 1:11: “He came to His own (τὰ ἴδια, neuter), and His own (οἱ ἴδιοι, masculine) did not receive Him.” Most interpreters rightly note that the neuter refers to the whole of Jesus’ Creation, and the masculine refers to His own people, the Jews.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, in 6:37, the first clause shows that Jesus is the Messiah (Ps. 2:8). The second, connected by καὶ, states that, as Messiah, Jesus will not at all cast out any persons who come to Him in faith (see Ps. 2:12).

The verse also served to begin a section of discourse following the Feeding of the Five Thousand (6:4-14) and the initial “Bread from Heaven” speech (6:26-36), during which one begins to see the unbelief of the attendant Jews (vv. 30, 36). The neuter first clause fits Jesus’ use of the neuter in 6:38-39, before a change to the masculine foreshadows vv. 40-58. The neuter “raise it up at the last day” (v. 39; ἀναστήσω αὐτὸ ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ), in keeping with the neuter Messianic claim in 6:37a, speaks of Messiah’s restoration of the Creation at His return to establish His earthly Millennial kingdom (e.g., Isa. 11:6-9; 35:1-2, 6-7, 9; 51:3; Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:20-22). Jesus’ claims or allusions came in the context of His miracles (John 2:1-12, 4:46-54, 5:1-15, 6:1-14), the purpose of which was to validate His identity as Messiah (John 10:36-38). Equations of the neuter and masculine genders in order to create a deterministic soteriological proof text do not stand syntactically, lexically, nor contextually in the various texts in which John uses them.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> J. Ramsey Michaels narrows the reference of τὰ ἴδια to geography, i.e., “his own country ... Israel” (*John*, in *New International Biblical Commentary*, W. Ward Gasque, NT ed. [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989], 23; Borchert takes the same position [*John*, 1:114], as does Lenski [*John*, 55]). This is doubtful considering that γῆ (Matt. 2:20; Acts 7:3), πατρίς (John 4:44; Matt. 13:57), and χώρα (Matt. 2:12; John 11:54) are all feminine, though γένει is neuter, e.g., “a Cypriot by birth” or “race” (Acts 4:36). In the opinion of this writer, this is a very “small” interpretation. The picture of the Creator of the entire universe (1:3) entering His Creation is a much more profound picture than little Jesus coming to a small region, Israel. Klink rightly identifies the reference to Jesus’ “creation” (*John*, 102).

<sup>51</sup> One might point to other verses in the section such as John 6:44, but dealing with the entire chapter is beyond the scope of this introductory survey. That verse states that “no one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws (ἐλκύσῃ) him; and I will raise him up at the last day.” Indeed, “there is none who seeks after God” (Rom. 3:11), so God, as the Initiator, is the One who must draw men to the Son. Yet Jesus said, “the Son of Man

## Lexical Consistency

Regarding word definitions, the noun ἀκοή in Romans 10:16-17 serves as an example of a failure to practice lexical consistency in translation and interpretation. First, in v. 16, the word ἀκοή occurs in Paul's quotation from Isaiah 53:1 (κύριε τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν), taken from the LXX *verbatim*.<sup>52</sup> It speaks of the message of the prophet, rather than the act of hearing: "Lord, who hath believed our *report*?"<sup>53</sup> This is borne out in both NT and LXX lexicography.<sup>54</sup> The Hebrew text underlying the LXX features נְבוֹאָה, from the noun נִבְיָא, "news, report ... revelation."<sup>55</sup> For comparison, Matt 13:14 quotes Isa. 6:9 (LXX: ἀκοῇ ἀκούσετε), but the

---

has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). John 6:44 *does not* say that the Father draws some human beings and not others. Nevertheless, all who come to Jesus will be raised at the last day. Some argue that the note of compulsion and dragging of ἔλκω precludes a general drawing of all mankind, but one must explain away the universality of Jesus' statement in John 12:32, "if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (πάντας ἔλκύσω πρὸς ἑμαυτόν)." If one maintains that God's will is irresistible, one should remember that this was the argument of Paul's opponent in Rom. 9:19, i.e., "who has resisted His will?" (see below of Rom. 9:20). One should also consider Paul's statement in Acts 17:30, spoken to an unbelieving audience: "truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent." The verb is different (παραγγέλλει), but the connotations of order, command, and direction are present (παραγγέλλω: "order, instruct, direct"; παραγγελία: "command, order, instruction." Frederick W. Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2009], 266). Men are compelled to "repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15; μετανοεῖτε καὶ πιστεύετε; present imperatives). This is why faith in the NT is described as obedience (Acts 5:32; Rom. 6:17; Heb. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:22), and why persistence in unbelief is called "not obeying" or "disobedience" (John 3:36; Acts 14:2; Rom. 2:8, 10:16, 15:31; Gal. 3:1, 5:7; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 2:8, 4:17).

<sup>52</sup> LXX, 2:638.

<sup>53</sup> James D. G. Dunn (*Romans 9-16*, in WBC, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker [Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988], 623), and John Murray (*The Epistle to the Romans*, in NICNT, ed. F. F. Bruce, 2 vols. in one [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1959], 2:60) attempt to defend ἀκοή as the act of hearing in 10:17, while John A. Witmer follows by assuming that meaning in that context ("Romans," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament* [BKCNT], ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck [Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983], 481).

<sup>54</sup> BDAG, #4 (21) gives "that which is heard—a. *fame, report, rumor* ... b. *account, report, message*," and lists "[J]ohn 12:38, Rom. 10:16f. ... Gal 3:2, 5," with Heb 4:2 and 1 Thess 2:13 (36). T. Muraoka lists "*that which is heard*: 'message' ..." for all instances in the LXX with a single exception, "*ear*: sense organ" found in 2 Macc. 15:39 (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* [Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2009], 21). L&N follow BDAG, for the most part. However, they list only Rom. 10:16 under 24.57, "that which is heard by someone—"that which is heard, message"" (*Domains*, 2:283). They do not list Rom. 10:17 in any location for ἀκοή.

<sup>55</sup> William L. Holladay, ed., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 375. Also BDB, "report ... specif. of prophetic message" (1035). *TWOT* adds "news, rumor, report, message"; "exclusively to this form of the root, and theologically significant, is the meaning '(prophetic) message,' i.e., the message which the prophet himself hears from God and which he then transmits to the people. This use emphasizes the divine origin of the message" (R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* [TWOT], 2 vols. [Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980],

Hebrew construction is שמעו ושמעו, where ἀκοή translates the verb שמע, “hear, listen.”<sup>56</sup> In Acts 28:26, Paul also quotes Isa. 6:9 with the same sense.

There is no outstanding reason why ἀκοή should be translated differently between Rom. 10:16 and 10:17, as does the KJV: “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing (ἐξ ἀκοῆς<sup>57</sup>), and hearing (ἡ ... ἀκοῇ) by the word of God.”<sup>58</sup> After declaring that “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” in Rom. 10:13, Paul asks a series of four questions (“how?”; πῶς) pertaining the human instrumentality in the spread of the gospel in 10:14-15a: “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom

---

2:939), also confirmed by David J. A. Clines, *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 467.

<sup>56</sup> Clines, *Concise*, 376. The construction is the Hebrew infinitive absolute which “may intensify a finite verb,” and in this case making an “affirmation” (Bruce K. Waltke, and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990], 581, 586, 35.3.1.f.9).

<sup>57</sup> Following the KJV, the ASV, ESV, NASB, NKJV, and NLT translate ἀκοή as “hearing.” The CSB, HCSB, NRSV, and RSV have “what is heard,” reflecting the objective sense of ἀκοή. The only verse listed in BDAG (36) under #2 (“the act of hearing”), other than these two which quote Isa. 6:9, is 2 Pet. 2:8: βλέμματα γὰρ καὶ ἀκοῇ ὁ δίκαιος ἐγκατοικῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἡμέραν (“For that righteous man ..., **in seeing and hearing**, vexed his righteous soul ...,” KJV). This is questionable both in lexicography and translation. The primary definition in BDAG of the NT *hapax legomenon* βλέμμα—with no occurrence in the LXX—is “the aspect one projects through facial gesture, *look, mien, expression of countenance*” (178). Even so, BDAG creates a category #2 for “the act of seeing” into which it places this verse. However, someone flamboyantly dressed may be present “quite a sight”—consistent with the primary definition—but the act of seeing is not denoted; it is the appearance being presented. Together with what has been presented regarding ἀκοή, βλέμματα ... καὶ ἀκοῇ are better understood as datives of cause, which fits well as “just Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (v. 7, NKJV), because of *their* appearance and speech, ....” With the two quotes of Isa. 6:9, ἀκοή in 1 Cor. 12:17 speaking of “the faculty of hearing,” and the five contexts signifying the organ of hearing (“ear”; BDAG, 36); the act or ability to hear are minority nuances for ἀκοή, each found in contexts with little ambiguity.

<sup>58</sup> UBS<sup>5</sup>: Χριστοῦ, rather than θεοῦ of the traditional text. Regarding the external evidence, if one accepts that the fact of an earlier provenance is decisive, Bruce M. Metzger states that Χριστοῦ “is strongly supported by early and diverse witnesses”; however, he notes that “the expression ῥῆμα Χριστοῦ occurs only here in the New Testament, whereas ῥῆμα θεοῦ is a more familiar expression (Lk 3:2; Jn 3:34; Eph 6:17; He 6:5; 11:3)” (*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. [New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1998], 463-64). Regarding internal evidence, ῥῆμα is found twice in the immediate context in Rom. 10:8: “But what does it say? ‘The word (τὸ ῥῆμα) is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith which we preach)” (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν); which follows three mentions of Christ (10:4, 6-7). The rarity of the phrase’s use, as noted by Metzger, argues against its originality, though it may have been amended with the understanding that Christ is the content of the message (1 Cor. 1:23, 15:12; 2 Cor. 1:19, 4:5; Phil. 1:15-18). The phrase “word of Christ” is most often λόγος rather than ῥῆμα (Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 3:16), with “testimony of Jesus Christ” occurring twice, connoting both what Jesus spoke (Rev. 1:2), and John’s witness regarding Jesus (Rev. 1:9).

they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?” The progression presented is: sending (by God) → preaching → hearing → believing → calling on the Lord. Properly translated, ἀκοή in 10:17 fits this progression, i.e., “faith from the message” (message believed) → the message through the Word of God (message preached). The point of Rom. 10:14-16 is human instrumentality in the spread of the gospel, though that gospel may be rejected (10:21). Translating ἀκοή to imply a divinely-assisted act of hearing commends the use of Rom. 10:17 as a proof text for a supposed “effectual call” to salvation,<sup>59</sup> but neither the context nor lexicography validate such an understanding.

### Context and Genre

In Acts 13:48, found in the genre of historical narrative, the last clause reads ἐπίστευσαν ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, “as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” The imperfect (impf.) of εἰμί (ἦσαν) and the perfect tense-form of the participle (τεταγμένοι) create the pluperfect periphrastic construction.<sup>60</sup> Moule describes this periphrastic as “denoting completed action, referring to the past act as well as the existing result.”<sup>61</sup> Woodenly, this would be “as many as (ὅσοι) were (ἦσαν) having been ordained (τεταγμένοι) ....”<sup>62</sup> Most interpreters

<sup>59</sup> As does, e.g., Kruse, in speaking of the “production of faith” and “faith ... generated” (*Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, in PNTC, D. A. Carson, ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020], 418). See also Grudem, *Systematic*, 1096; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, in NICNT, ed. Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996) 666; and Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, rev. Vernon D. Doerksen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 273-74.

<sup>60</sup> See Wallace, *ExSyn*, 648.

<sup>61</sup> C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 19. Dana and Mantey define the pluperfect periphrastic much the same as Moule but add, “it represents action as complete and the results of the action in existence at some point in past time, *the point of time being indicated by the context*” (H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* [New York, NY: MacMillan, 1927], 205, writer’s emphasis). The emphasized last point is critical in this case.

<sup>62</sup> Note that the center of the controversy has been around the middle/passive tense-form of τεταγμένοι with non-Calvinists arguing for the middle, as well as the lexical nuance of, e.g., “inclined,” et al. and Calvinists arguing for the passive. In this writer’s view, the evidence is stronger for the passive, but this choice is not decisive for the interpretation of the verse. Daniel S. Hanshew traced the diachronic shift from the middle in earlier usage toward

answer the question regarding when they had been ordained with some sort of notion akin to “before the foundation of the world” or the oxymoronic “eternity past.” However, this ignores the immediate context in which the verse occurs and proceeds instantly to a remote context. There is an answer in the immediate context, i.e., the previous Sabbath. After Paul’s sermon in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch the previous Sabbath (Acts 13:16-41), “many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas” (13:43), a positive response to the message. To these, they “persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.” Though no form of the πιστ-lexeme is found in this verse (compare with Acts 17:34), being “in the grace of God” (τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ) connotes salvation: “our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand” (Rom. 5:1-2; see also 2 Cor. 8:1; Col. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:12).

Acts 13:44 describes this continuing positive response, during which Paul both rebukes the opposing Jews (13:45-46) and reiterates that salvation had come to the Gentiles (v. 47): “now when the Gentiles heard *this* (present participle), they were glad (imperfect) and glorified (impf.) the word of the Lord” (ἀκούοντα δὲ τὰ ἔθνη ἔχαιρον καὶ ἐδόξαζον τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου). All of the verbal forms—present and imperfect—denote an imperfective aspect; the ones hearing were rejoicing and were glorifying. Of these, as many as were having been ordained to eternal life—the previous Sabbath—believed. Rather than the inception of faith (e.g., Rom. 13:11), this is the continuation of faith, which one can see in 1 John 5:13: “these things I have written to you who believe ... that you may *continue* to believe ....” Luke, writing history, the genre of narrative, is not writing with the theological precision of a didactic treatise. The faith of those already in the grace of God, without excluding others new on the scene, continued.<sup>63</sup> The study now moves to

---

the predominance of the passive in the NT period (“Ordained to Eternal Life? Exegesis of Acts 13:48,” ThM thesis, The Capital Bible Seminary, 2006: 40-53).

<sup>63</sup> Both Kistemaker and Lenski recognize that to remain in the grace of God (13:43) demonstrates saving faith (Simon J. Kistemaker, *Acts*, in NTC [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker], 1990, 492; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation*



matters regarding predication, which pertains to statements of being, e.g., *X is Y*. Such predication may be unstated and must be understood from context.

### Predication

Romans 8:29 reads “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Regarding foreknowledge, Paul uses the προγνώ lexeme with a relational focus. For example, Paul writes pertaining to the Israelite nation that “God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew” (Rom. 11:2; ὃν προέγνω). In the larger context of Rom. 9-11, this aspect of antecedent time here (πρό) is prior to Christ’s first advent and the establishment of the church (Acts 2, 11:15). It speaks of the prior relationship and covenant between אברהם and the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Though Christ’s Incarnation, sacrifice, and Ascension had passed; and the church had been established, God had not cast away His people (τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ), the Israelites (Ἰσραηλίτης ... ἐκ σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ; 11:1). That relationship (προέγνω) remains.<sup>64</sup>

One may see Paul’s usage of “[fore]knowledge” in its larger relational significance in 2 Tim. 2:19: “the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are

---

*of the Acts of the Apostles* [Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1934], 547). However, both, as well as others, make no reference to this verse and hold to the deterministic interpretation of Acts 13:48 (Kistemaker, 496; Lenski, 553; Darrel L. Bock, *Acts*, in *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (BECNT), ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Robert H. Stein [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007], 464-65; F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts*, in NICNT, ed F. F. Bruce [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983], 283; Grudem, *Systematic*, 459; Stanley D. Toussiant, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament* [BKCNT]. ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck [Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983], 390-91), some resorting to the importation of wrongly interpreted external passages to promote the supposed “doctrine of divine election ... Rom. 8:29-30” (Kistemaker, *ibid*). For, Rom. 8:29, see “Predication” and “Word Position” below. Robertson remains noncommittal: “Why these Gentiles have ranged themselves on God’s side ... Luke does not tell us. This verse does not solve the vexed problem of divine sovereignty and human free agency” (*WPNT*, 3:200).

<sup>64</sup> In Romans 9-11, “Paul is not simply using Israel to illustrate a theological point, ... such as predestination .... He is talking about Israel herself, as he wrestles with the implication of the gospel of God’s ‘chosen people’ of the OT” (Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 548).

His.”<sup>65</sup> This is consistent with the Old Testament use of the Hebrew verb יָדַע (*yada'*), “know,”<sup>66</sup> which has strong relational significance, as one may see in Gen. 4:1: “Now Adam *knew* Eve his wife, and she conceived ...” (וַיֵּדַע אָדָם אֶת־חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתַּהַר), where the verb signifies “sexual intercourse on the part of both men and women.”<sup>67</sup> The verb is used in a sense similar as in Rom. 11:2 in Amos 3:2: “[O children of Israel ...], ‘You only have I known (יָדַעְתִּי) of all the families of the earth ...’” (see also Nahum 1:7). One may see such knowing before in the case of Jeremiah: “before (בְּטַרְחִי) I formed you in the womb I knew you (יָדַעְתִּיךָ) ...” (Jer. 1:5).<sup>68</sup> This statement includes sanctification, or setting apart (הַקְדְּשָׁתִי), and a “giving” (נָתַתִּיךָ) Jeremiah to be a prophet. God’s foreknowing Israel in Rom. 11:2 is relational and that prior relationship (foreknew) remains at the time Paul wrote that Epistle.

Returning to Rom. 8:29, those whom God foreknew are those in a relationship with Him (γυν) prior to this verse (προ). With this temporal reference otherwise unqualified,<sup>69</sup> there is no reason to look further than the immediate context. The relationship prior to v. 29 is in v. 28, where God works all things together for good in the lives of believers *in this life*. Ben Witherington III concurs, writing, “Romans 8:29 must be read in light of v. 28; the *ous* [οὗς] at

<sup>65</sup> One may see reciprocation of this relational knowledge of believers toward God in John’s First Letter, e.g., “everyone who loves is born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7; see also 1 John 2:3-4, 13-14, 3:6, 4:6-8).

<sup>66</sup> BDB, 393. Acknowledged by C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols., in *The International Critical Commentary* (ICC), ed. J. A. Emerton and C. E. B. Cranfield, (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 1:431; Erickson, *Theology*, 858; and Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 2nd ed., in BECNT, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018], 444.

<sup>67</sup> TWOT, 1:336. “The meanings of *yd'* ... range from sensory perception to intellectual process to practical skill to careful attention to close relationship to physical intimacy” (Willem A. VanGemeren, gen. ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (NIDOTTE), 5 vols. [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997], 2:410).

<sup>68</sup> The LXX has ἐπίσταμαί, “know, be acquainted with” (BDAG, 380) rather than γινώσκω, though this does not change the significance, nor deny the relational aspect.

<sup>69</sup> There is no qualification such as πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου (Eph. 1:4) or πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων (2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2).

the beginning of v. 29 must refer back to ‘those who love God’—Christians. The discussion that follows is about the future of believers. Paul is not discussing some mass of unredeemed humanity out of which God chose some to be among ‘the elect.’”<sup>70</sup> Rom. 8:28 speaks of the process of progressive sanctification which occurs *prior* to believers’ glorification, which can be seen in the next verse. This brings the discussion to matters of predication.

The sentence flow is that God, the understood subject of προώρισεν (τὸν θεὸν from v. 28), predestined (verb) the foreknown ones (subject of the elliptical equative infinitive “to be”) *to be* conformed (predicate adjective), etc. The “to be” is italicized in those English translations which follow the practice in cases of ellipsis (e.g., ASV, KJV, NKJV), yet most English translations do not italicize the ellipsis.<sup>71</sup> As a result, some interpreters combine the ellipsis with the predicate adjective συμμόρφους to create a passive verbal idea, “to be conformed,” as if the text showed συμμορφοῦσθαι (present, passive, infinitive). Such is not the case. The ellipsis is of εἶναι, the infinitive of εἰμί, so that the elliptical infinitive phrase “whom he foreknew *to be* conformed to the image of His Son” is the entire direct object of προώρισεν. The adjective συμμόρφους speaks of a product, not a process. If one turns the infinitive phrase into a first-person sentence, no believer presently alive can say “*I am* conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.” Unless one holds to Perfectionism, such a statement will only be true when the believer has passed on from this life and stands glorified in the very presence of God in heaven. Progressive sanctification (8:28) precedes (προώρισεν) glorification (8:29). Paul follows this pattern in Eph. 5:26-27, where Christ will “sanctify and cleanse [the church] with the washing ... by the word” (5:26; progressive sanctification), and then “present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle ... but ... holy and without blemish” (5:26; glorification).

---

<sup>70</sup> So concurs Witherington III, *Problem*, 67.

<sup>71</sup> For example, the CSB, ESV, HCSB, NIV, NRSV, and RSV.

The goal is seen later in Rom. 8:29: “that He [Christ] might be the firstborn among many brethren.” When believers pass from this life, having completed the process of sanctification (8:28), Jesus will stand in heaven “among” (ἐν + plural) glorified believers who, having completed the process of adoption by receiving redeemed bodies (Rom. 8:23), are His “brothers.” Being conformed to His image, they will bear the family resemblance. This does not fit the popular interpretation of Rom. 8:29 as a proof text for “election to salvation (justification) according to foreknowledge,” which requires progressive sanctification to be read into the verse (i.e., the idea of συμμορφοῦσθαι), and that the object of predestination refer to a hypothetical group chosen from pre-creation unsaved human beings, “the elect.”<sup>72</sup> NASB doubles down on the manipulation of the ellipsis showing “*to become*” in italics. Some might see such an insertion as possible, but this is doubtful.<sup>73</sup>

Regarding predication in general, often the double accusative construction is just the objective infinitive phrase with εἶναι in ellipsis, rather than expressed. Compare Eph. 1:4 with Jas. 2:5:

Eph. 1:4: “He chose ἐξελέξατο...	us ἡμᾶς...	to be εἶναι	holy and blameless ἀγίους καὶ ἀμώμους	in His presence” κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ
Jas. 2:5: “God has chosen οὐχ ὁ θεὸς ἐξελέξατο	the poor τοὺς πτωχοὺς	<i>to be</i> [εἶναι]...	rich πλουσίους	in faith” ἐν πίστει

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Dallas, TX: Gideon House, 2017), 85; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:432; Grudem, *Systematic*, 302, 459, 818; Murray, *Romans*, 1:318-19. Witherington III counters that “this, of course, is how Augustine and his offspring read this text, but it is not how various of the crucial Greek fathers that came before Augustine read it, including most importantly Chrysostom. Paul is speaking about ... Christians to be fully conformed to the image of Christ” (*Problem*, 68; see full discussion of Rom. 8:29, 67-69).

<sup>73</sup> In the case of “to become,” one might expect the understood equative infinitive to be γίνεσθαι, the present infinitive of γίνομαι. It is used ten times in the NT, seven in Luke/Acts (Luke 21:7, 28, 36; Acts 4:30, 14:3, 26:22, 27:33), twice in Paul’s writings (1 Cor. 7:36, 10:20), and once in James (3:10). In Luke the infinitive carries the nuance “to happen,” in Acts, “to be done” or as a complementary to μέλλω, i.e., “about to come/happen,” and Paul and James use it in the sense of “to be” (in 1 Cor. 7:36 as a complementary to ὀφείλει: “so it must be”). However, the aorist infinitive (γενέσθαι; used 37 times in the NT) *does* carry the nuance of “to become.” In Paul’s five uses one finds that “to become” is the legitimate sense; yet, in these instances, the “becoming” is an event, not a process, i.e., “to become the father” (Rom. 4:18); “to become married” (Rom 7:4); “to become free” (1 Cor. 7:21);

Both verses have an infinitive phrase as the direct object of the verb ἐξελέξατο, each having a subject of the infinitive (ἡμᾶς; τοὺς πτωχοὺς) and predicate adjectives (ἀγίους καὶ ἀμώμους; πλουσίους),<sup>74</sup> all in the accusative plural. The difference is the presence (Eph. 1:4) or the ellipsis (Jas. 2:5) of the equative infinitive εἶναι. The former is an infinitive phrase, and most grammarians might identify the latter as a double accusative.<sup>75</sup> The next example pertains to Greek word order. Though syntax and sentence function are determined by case, the flexibility of Greek word order provides its own limits. Greek words cannot be cut-and-pasted in any order.

### Word Position

The most easily seen manipulation of the text of Scripture is in 1 Pet. 1:1-2. First, one may look at the Greek text itself to see the location of “elect” (ἐκλεκτοῖς) in these verses:

Πέτρος ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς Πόντου, Γαλατίας, Καππαδοκίας, Ἀσίας, καὶ Βιθυνίας, 2 κατὰ πρόγνωσιν θεοῦ πατρός, ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος, εἰς ὑπακοὴν καὶ ῥαντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη.

The word is the fifth in the text of the Letter with its syntactic function already apparent; it adjectivally modifies παρεπιδήμοις<sup>76</sup> in the phrase “to the elect pilgrims of the Diaspora.” All

---

to become evident” (Phil. 1:13); and “to become examples” (1 Thess. 1:7). The simple ellipsis “to be” (εἶναι) is sufficient for the sense of Rom. 8:29; a process is not in view. Similar to NASB, the NLT has “he chose them to become like his Son.” The MSG appears to go far beyond “translation,” showing “to shape the lives of ...,” if this represents that part of the underlying text for συμμόρφους.

<sup>74</sup> As Wallace notes, *ExSyn*, 185, n.33. A. T. Robertson would identify this as a “predicate accusative,” though he states that the “second accusative may be *either substantive, adjective, or participle*” (*A Grammar of Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* [Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1934], 480; author’s italics).

<sup>75</sup> See Wallace, *ExSyn*, 181-89. See also Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 33; and F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BDF), trans. and ed. by Robert W. Funk (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1961), 85-86.

<sup>76</sup> The dative masculine plural noun παρεπιδήμοις is qualified by the genitive διασπορᾶς as being the ones dispersed or scattered in the five regions mentioned (Πόντου, Γαλατίας, Καππαδοκίας, Ἀσίας, καὶ Βιθυνίας).

three terms have Jewish connotations with the Jews as God's chosen people, sojourners<sup>77</sup> in the Land, and having been dispersed among the nations according to the stipulations of their covenant with יהוה (Exod. 19:5).<sup>78</sup>

In spite of its rightful place in the Greek text, “elect” was moved in translation to either to the end of v. 1, or the beginning of v.2, as one can see, for example, in the KJV: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 **E**lect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father ....” The earliest evidence of this transplant which this writer is able to find is in Tyndale's English translation (New Testament [NT], 1526).<sup>79</sup> This transplant continued through the Miles Coverdale Bible (1535), the Geneva Bible (NT, 1557), the Bishop's Bible (1568),<sup>80</sup> and the King James Version (1611). The first English translation after Tyndale to resist the transplant was the Revised Version (RV) of 1885. Neither the Peshitta,<sup>81</sup> Latin Vulgate, nor Wycliffe's English translation (1382) show any transplant. The HCSB, NRSV, NKJV, NASB and RSV continue the transplant tradition, while the CSB, ESV, NIV, and NLT do not.

---

<sup>77</sup> See Deut. 4:37; 7:6-8; 10:15-16; 14:2; 1 Kings 3:8; 1 Chron. 16:13; Ps. 105:6, 42-43; 106:4-5; 135:4; Isa. 41:8; 43:20; 45:4; 65:22; Ezek. 20:5; and Acts 13:17. The Jews being God's chosen people speaks of a special relationship between them, e.g., Exod 19:5; Deut 7:6-8; 14:2; Ps 147:19-20. The significance of “sojourners” is that every Israelite knew that God has promised that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would possess and dwell in the Land of Israel, e.g., Gen 12:7; 13:15; 17:19; 21:12; 26:2-5; 28:4, 13-15. Until their troubles had ceased, and they could dwell in the land in permanent peace, they considered themselves to be strangers, sojourners, and pilgrims in the Land, e.g., Exod. 6:4; 1 Chron. 29:15; Ps. 39:12, 105:7-12; Heb. 11:13.

<sup>78</sup> See Lev. 26:27-33; Deut. 4:25-27; 28:64-68; Neh. 1:8; Ps. 44:11; Jer. 9:13-16; Ezek. 12:15-16; and Zech. 7:11-14. See the use of τὴν διασπορὰν in John 7:35. Moreover, though so many Israelites had been scattered, and were dwelling throughout the known world, they understood that יהוה had prophesied and promised to bring them back to the Land (Isa 5:26-27; 11:12-13; Jer 23:3; 31:7-14; Ezek 11:14-21; 20:33-35; 28:25-26; 34:11-16; 36:16-38; 37:21-23; Mic 2:12-13; Zeph 3:19-20; Zech 10:6-10; see also Matt. 24:30-31).

<sup>79</sup> William Tyndale, *The New Testament*, 1526 ed., trans. William Tyndale (London: The British Library, 2000), facsimile.

<sup>80</sup> Miles Coverdale, *The Coverdale Bible*, 1535 ed. (London: The British Library, 2008), facsimile; *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007); *The Bishops' Bible*, 1568 ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 2009), facsimile.

<sup>81</sup> The writer acknowledges the assistance of Bro. Kenneth M. Sheets of Scripture Research Associates regarding the matter's pertinence to the Peshitta.

Such a transplant of “elect” in translation assists the idea and provides a proof text for the idea of divine “election according to foreknowledge.”<sup>82</sup> Yet, if that is not what the text itself says, what does one do with the three prepositional phrases in v. 2? These are, “according to (κατά) the foreknowledge of God the Father, in (ἐν) sanctification of the Spirit, for (εἰς) obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” The solution is that they modify what follows, i.e., “grace to you and peace be multiplied” (χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη). That a prepositional phrase might modify “grace to you ...” may be seen in Peter’s Second Letter: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” (2 Pet. 1:2; ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν). The position of the three prepositional phrases *before* the greeting, rather than after (as in 2 Pet. 1:2), places them in “marked” position:

Typically, the body of a text is UNMARKED for prominence. Thus, the story line or foreground events of a narrative do not normally carry a marker. Some sentences, however, may be MARKED as conveying information of special importance; in other words, they are highlighted. Similarly, other sentences may be marked as background information—they convey information of secondary importance.<sup>83</sup>

When this is applied to Constituent Order, being applicable to Greek language word order, “in PRAGMATICALLY BASED (free or flexible word order) languages, the order of clause constituents is less often motivated by purely syntactic conditions, but is highly responsive to discourse-pragmatic factors.”<sup>84</sup> Porter explains further, saying, “the flexibility of Greek syntax because of its inflected endings and its various ways of forming clauses does not

---

<sup>82</sup> For example, see Norman L. Geisler, *Chosen But Free: A Balanced View of God’s Sovereignty and Free Will*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2010), 85, 138; and Thiessen, *Lectures*, 258.

<sup>83</sup> Robert A. Dooley and Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Analyzing Discourse: A Manual of Basic Concepts* (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2000), 43.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 39. See further explanation and examples, see Stephen H. Levinsohn, “The Relevance of Greek Discourse Studies to Exegesis,” *Journal of Translation* (JOT), Vol. 2, No. 2 (2006): 13-17. “Variations from the default or unmarked order of constituents in clauses or sentences are more frequent in oral than in written material. This is because spoken utterances are accompanied by intonation contours that unite constituents into larger units, and by pauses that help to signal boundaries between units” (Dooley and Levinsohn, *Analyzing*, 8).

mean that the order of various elements makes no difference.”<sup>85</sup> As this pertains to 1 Pet. 1:2, one may see 2 Pet. 1:2 as an example of the default, unmarked order with prepositional modification coming *after* the greeting. When 1 Pet 1:2 puts the three prepositional phrases *before* the greeting, it both leaves the reader waiting for the phrases to “attach” to that which they modify and provides natural emphasis. This is “marked” constituent order.<sup>86</sup>

Finally, the place of divine foreknowledge in this passage should not be interpreted in isolation. The first of Peter’s three uses of the προγνώ lexeme occurs in his sermon at Pentecost, where he speaks of “Jesus of Nazareth ... being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23; τῇ ὀρισμένῃ βουλῇ καὶ προγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ). Peter makes this point to a Jewish audience who had been expecting a conquering Messiah reigning over an earthly Kingdom, rather than a suffering Servant (Mark 15:43 [Luke 23:51]; Luke 19:22, 24:21; Acts 1:6). To these, it was necessary for Peter to make the point that Jesus’ suffering and Resurrection were the original plan of God, “foreknown,” rather than a contingent response or an afterthought. According to this paradigm, Peter always mentions divine foreknowledge in the context of Jesus’ sacrifice. The “foreknowledge of God” appears with “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” in 1 Pet. 1:2, which serves as Peter’s Pentecost sermon in microcosm, seeing also that the church was sanctified, or set apart, as a distinct body of believers by the Spirit via the signs expressed (Acts 2:2-4).<sup>87</sup> Also, immediately following Peter’s mention of believers being redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ,” he notes that Jesus “was foreknown before

---

<sup>85</sup> Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 289.

<sup>86</sup> Levinsohn, “Relevance,” 15. See also, Runge, *Discourse*, 192-94, 272.

<sup>87</sup> This notion should not exclude some connotation of the individual sanctification of believers, but that is not the primary focus.



the foundation of the world” (1:19-20).<sup>88</sup> Rather than speaking of a deterministic soteriology, Peter consistently speaks of divine foreknowledge in a “Christo-sacrificial” context, emphasizing that Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection were God’s “plan A.” It is through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God’s foreknown plan, and sanctified by the Spirit, that believers can receive multiplied grace and peace. For Jewish audiences—“Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem ...” (Acts 2:13); ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς (1 Pet. 1:1)—this was a vitally important point which needed frequent repetition (see also Acts 17:1-3).

### Thesis

The consistent but different uses of the προγνώ lexeme—Peter, Christo-sacrificial; Paul, relational—brings the discussion to the topic of authorial style.<sup>89</sup> Across the body of his Letters, Paul is highly consistent in his use of particular phrases or grammatical constructions to express certain ideas. First, the writer will show by examples Paul’s use of resumptive repetition—by which Paul repeats certain words or phrases to resume the thought after the insertion of intervening material—then apply it to Eph. 1:4. Second, the writer will demonstrate Paul’s use of interrogative parallelism—by which Paul strings questions together using the particle ἢ (“or”) forming a parallelism regarding from which point of view the linked questions are asked—and then apply it to Rom. 9:21. Third, the writer will enumerate examples of Paul’s consistent use of the phrase “grace given” in the context of believers’ gifting for service in the Body of Christ, whether generally or in specific ministerial office and then apply it to 2 Tim. 1:9.

---

<sup>88</sup> The translation of προεγνωσμένου in 1:20 as “foreordained” (KJV, NKJV) obscures this consistent association. There is sufficient terminology available, e.g., προορίζω, to bear the lexical burden of pre-determination (see Peter’s use in Acts 4:28). To their credit, ASV, CSB, ESV, and NASB translate it as “foreknown.” This may be the intent of the MSG which has “God always knew he was going to do this.” HCSB, NIV, and NLT give eisegetical interpretive translations as “chosen/chose,” while NRSV and RSV show “destined.”

<sup>89</sup> Also called a writer’s “idiolect” (literally, “one’s own [*idio*; ἴδιος] speech [*lego*; λέγω/λόγος]), “the unique speech habit of the individual” (Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 19). See also Campbell, *Advances*, 157.

Though all three of these verses have been used as proof texts for ideas consistent with Reformed Theology, this study will show: (1) that Eph. 1:4 does not teach a supposed “doctrine of election” of a limited, pre-historic, hypothetical group of “elect” human beings to justification. Rather it speaks of believers’—those *already* believers—future glorification; (2) that Rom. 9:21 presents the argument of Paul’s diatribal<sup>90</sup> *opponent* and not Paul himself; and (3) that 2 Tim. 1:9 speaks of the ministerial calling and gifting of Paul as an Apostle, and of Timothy as a pastor/elder. This “calling” is not an effectual call to justification/salvation.

The overarching question of this thesis regards the supposed biblical basis for determinism in Christian theology. This thesis will demonstrate the consistent manipulation of the text to force deterministic interpretations upon the Scriptures. Such deterministic misinterpretations and mistranslations require the isolation of their supposed proof texts from their biblical, historical, and linguistic contexts, and the importation of such ideas from outside the canon of Scripture (a method which might be called “isolate and eisegete”). This thesis will challenge the validity of using deterministic theological assumptions or presuppositions in the interpretation of Holy Scripture. The proper application of the grammatical-historical method to examine Paul’s style of usage in the contexts to Eph. 1:4, Rom. 9:21, and 2 Tim. 1:9 will show that their historical uses as deterministic proof texts are non-syntactic, non-contextual, non-linguistic, and inconsistent with Paul’s usage elsewhere across the body of his Letters. Also, it will bring together the various passages within Paul’s Letters to produce a biblically accurate and consistent Pauline theology, which will stand distinct apart from the prevailing Augustinian theology. Yet, Paul’s theology harmonizes with the theology of the New Testament and the rest of Scripture. It will not leave any logical or theological contradictions to explain away.

---

<sup>90</sup> The term “datribal” describes the opponent whom Paul addresses in his use of the rhetorical form of a “datribe: a conversational method of instruction in which the writer considers and answers hypothetical objections from opponents” (KBH, 430).

## I. Resumptive Repetition

Resumptive repetition<sup>91</sup> describes a linguistic construction which Paul uses to resume a first thought after the insertion of intervening material. Though not exclusive to Paul, as seen in John's usage (1 John 1:1-3), Paul uses it more frequently. The second redundant word or phrase is most often syntactically identical to the first instance, but not always so. Consider the following examples ("O1" stands for "Occurrence 1," i.e., the first occurrence):

### Syntactically Identical

**Eph. 1:13** KJV: [O1] In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation:  
[O2] in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

GNT: [O1] ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν,  
[O2] ἐν ᾧ καὶ πιστεύσαντες ἐσφραγίσθητε τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τοῦ ἁγίου,

The antecedent to the relative pronoun ᾧ refers to Christ at the end of the preceding verse (v. 12; ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ). Speaking of Christ (v. 12), the thought is that in Christ also (ἐν ᾧ καὶ), the ones who have believed (πιστεύσαντες) have been sealed with "the promised Holy Spirit" (e.g., ESV, HCSB, NIV, NRSV). Paul inserts that those who have believed have first heard the true word, the gospel, which is consistent with Paul's question in Rom. 10:14: "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" The second prepositional phrase ἐν ᾧ καὶ

---

<sup>91</sup> Though this writer attempted to coin the term "resumptive repetition," in subsequent study he found it was already in use by Berlin, et al. in Old Testament studies (Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994]). The OT use is at the narrative level, e.g., the story of Joseph ends in Gen. 27 and then, after the account of Judah and Tamar in Gen. 28, the Joseph narrative resumes in Gen 29 with some of the language repeated. The usage in Pauline studies is at the sentence level, where Paul will use the same word or phrase to resume the thought after the insertion of intervening material. One might be tempted to create another "original" label such as "pleonastic resumption," but the present nomenclature is both accurate and easily understood.

resumes the thought after this insertion. The two phrases are syntactically identical, adverbially modifying the finite verb ἐσφραγίσθητε (“sealed”).

**Col. 1:20** KJV: And, having made peace through the blood of his cross,  
[O1] by him to reconcile all things unto himself;  
[O2] by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

GNT: καὶ [O1] δι’ αὐτοῦ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ,  
[O2] [δι’ αὐτοῦ] εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

Following the word order of the Greek text, the translation would read: “and [O1] by him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross, [O2] by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” The thought is that it pleased the Father that: (1) all fulness should dwell in Christ (ἐν αὐτῷ; 1:19), and; (2) that through Christ (δι’ αὐτοῦ) He would reconcile all things to Himself. The second occurrence of δι’ αὐτοῦ, after the insertion of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ, amplifies that “the all things” (τὰ πάντα) the Father reconciled through Christ includes anything on earth or in heaven.<sup>92</sup> The two occurrences of δι’ αὐτοῦ are syntactically identical showing Christ to be the intermediate personal agent in the reconciliation.<sup>93</sup>

**Col. 2:13** KJV: And [O1] you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened  
[O2] [you]<sup>94</sup> together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

GNT: καὶ [O1] ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν, συνεζωοποίησεν  
[O2] ὑμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ, χαρισάμενος ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ παραπτώματα

<sup>92</sup> This use of the article (τὰ πάντα) is anaphoric, “denoting previous reference” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 217).

<sup>93</sup> See Wallace’s chart on the different times of agency in *ExSyn* (432) for the διά + genitive construction. For a full treatment, see 432-34.

<sup>94</sup> The second pronoun ὑμῶν is not found in traditional text, e.g., in *H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, The New Testament: The Greek Text Underlying the English Authorized Version of 1611* (London, England: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1991), 371.

This verse may be seen as a parallel passage to Eph. 2:1, 5 below. The Colossian believers, addressed as “you” (ὁμᾶς) are described as “being dead in sins,” etc. The thought of the sentence is that the Father [by context] has made believers [Paul’s audience] alive together with Christ. The antecedent of “Him” (σὸν αὐτῷ) is “Christ” in 2:11. Paul repeats ὁμᾶς after the insertion of νεκροὺς ὄντας τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν. The pronouns ὁμᾶς are syntactically identical as the direct object of συνεζωοποίησεν.<sup>95</sup> Of note, the pronouns and verb are in a chiastic structure, ὁμᾶς ... συνεζωοποίησεν ὁμᾶς, pronoun-verb-pronoun, which is a pattern in Paul’s use of this construction, as one will see subsequently.

Also, each of the two examples in Colossians (1:20 and 2:13) involves a textual variant.<sup>96</sup> The likely explanation for these is that, because of the very redundant nature of resumptive repetition, copyists of Colossians may have omitted the redundant words, not understanding Paul’s style and usage. None of the other occurrences of resumptive repetition in this chapter involve any significant textual variation.

---

<sup>95</sup> Diego dy Carlos Araújo notes the repetition and assigns the purpose as emphatic: “Paul repeats the direct object ὁμᾶς after the main verb συνεζωοποίησεν for the sake of emphasis” (“The Passive ἀποκατηλλάγητε in P46 and B03 Colossians 1:22a: An Original Grammatical Anomaly or Another Case of Scribal Assimilation?” *Tyndale Bulletin* 73 [*TynBul*] [2022], 30). Murray J. Harris states that “this second ὁμᾶς is resumptive, being repeated for clarity ... after the lengthy qualification of the first ὁμᾶς” (*Colossians and Philemon: Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2013], 106).

<sup>96</sup> For Col. 1:20, the manuscripts and other witnesses are fairly divided regarding the presence or omission of this prepositional phrase. Metzger writes that in “the view of a majority of the Committee, the phrase ... was omitted ... either accidentally (because of homoeoteleuton).or deliberately (because it is superfluous or obscure)” (Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 554). They see it as original. Harris adds haplography (occurs twice, written once) as a possible explanation (*Colossians*, 51). This instance is similar to the variant of the second occurrence of ὁμᾶς in Col. 2:13, which the traditional text omits.

## Syntactically Non-Identical

**Rom. 3:25-26** KJV: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,  
 [O1] to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past,  
 through the forbearance of God;  
 [O2] To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just,  
 and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

GNT: ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι  
 [O1] εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων  
 ἁμαρτημάτων ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ,  
 [O2] πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν  
 δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ.

Spatially, “εἰς tends to include the idea of entry, whereas πρὸς tends to stop short at going up to (without entering).”<sup>97</sup> The phrases are syntactically identical, though two different prepositions (εἰς and πρὸς) are used. Both εἰς and πρὸς with the accusative express purpose.<sup>98</sup>

**Gal. 2:6** KJV: But of [O1] these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man’s person:)  
 for [O2] they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

GNT: ἀπὸ δὲ [O1] τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι—ὅποιοί ποτε ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει  
 πρόσωπον ὁ θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει—  
 ἐμοὶ γὰρ [O2] οἱ δοκοῦντες οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο

Paul gives an account of “false brethren” (τοὺς ... ψευδαδέλφους) who had sneaked in (παρεισῆλθον) to spy out (κατασκοπεῖν) the brethren (implied by context) and bring them into bondage (καταδουλώσουσιν) in Gal. 2:4. To these, Paul refers as those “who seemed.” Deception relies on appearing to be something other than what one is. Both phrases—ἀπὸ...τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι and οἱ δοκοῦντες—have different syntactic relationships to the flow of thought. In the first phrase (ἀπὸ ... τι), Paul seems to be setting up a thought regarding what

<sup>97</sup> Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 67-68.

<sup>98</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 369, 379. “The exegete should not assume that a change of prep[osition], ... *always* marks a change of meaning. A writer may simply wish to avoid repetition or vary his style .... A writer must be permitted to alter his terminology either to vary his style but not change his meaning or to express a distinction in sense. One must assume that a writer chooses his preps. with care” (Colin Brown, gen. ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* [NIDNTT], 4 vols. [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986], 3:1176).

came from them. However, after the insertion of an explanatory note (ὅποιοί ... λαμβάνει), Paul changes from an objective syntax to a nominative, subjective direction of thought; the “ones who seemed” are now the subjects of προσανέθεντο. Turner notes the same circumstance: “[Paul’s] sentences become so involved that at a certain point he would close them and begin again. Good examples are Gal 2<sup>6</sup> and 1 Tim 1<sup>3ff</sup>.”<sup>99</sup> Between these two occurrences in Gal. 2:6, the referents are the same and the repetition is valid, though the syntax is not identical.

**Eph. 2:1, 5** KJV: (1) And you *hath he quickened*, who  
[O1] were dead in trespasses and sins; ... (5) even when we  
[O2] were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ

GNT: (1) Καὶ [O1] ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν  
(5) καὶ [O2] ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ

The change in pronouns from second person to first person (ὕμᾶς to ἡμᾶς) led to categorization as “non-identical,” though the participial phrases have the same syntax. Limited to ὄντας νεκροὺς alone, the syntax is identical. Paul begins the section in Eph. 2:1 by noting that his readers were dead in trespasses and sins, then expounds upon what that dead life was like in 2:2-3. He moves toward the resumption of the thought by noting the Father’s favorable disposition toward them in 2:4. The complete thought is that God (2:4; ὁ ... θεὸς) has made believers—you/us being<sup>100</sup> dead in trespasses [and sins]—alive together (συνεζωοποίησεν) with Christ.

<sup>99</sup> Nigel Turner, *Style*, vol. 4 of *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* by James Hope Moulton, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1976), 4:86.

<sup>100</sup> The present participle ὄντας is syntactically “controlled” by συνεζωοποίησεν in 2:5. The tenses of the participle “behave just as they do in the indicative. The only difference is that now the point of reference is the controlling verb, not the speaker” and, in that, “the present participle is used for contemporaneous time,” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 614) i.e., contemporaneous with συνεζωοποίησεν. Though one may not press the aorist tense-form alone to indicate past time, other contextual clues, such as ποτε (“formerly,” BDAG, 856), found in 2:2, 3, 11, 13, give a past time context regarding Paul’s description of where his believing audience had been, as well as in which those who have rejected the gospel remain (οἱ λοιποί, 2:3). Regarding the participle as well, “context has more influence on participles than on any other area of Greek grammar” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 613). All these considered, if the participle takes the same time reference as its controlling verb, but maintains its imperfective aspect, it is proper to translate it as “who *were* dead” as it appears in most, if not all, English translations.

The two occurrences of the participle are syntactically identical, functioning as adjectival modifiers of the pronouns: “and you/us, being dead in trespasses, God has made alive ....” The basic phrase structure is: subject (of the participle; ὑμᾶς/ ἡμᾶς)-equative “verb” (ὄντας)-predicate adjective (νεκρούς). The fact that the KJV adds an italicized, elliptical “*hath he quickened*” in 2:1 shows that the translators, in this instance, recognized this linguistic correspondence, though the phrases are separated by three verses of Paul’s inserted material.<sup>101</sup>

The accusative pronoun, the direct object of συνεζωοποίησεν and matched by the accusative plural participle ὄντας, changes from second person plural (“you”; ὑμᾶς) in the first occurrence to first person plural (“us”; ἡμᾶς) in the second occurrence. This difference does not negate the syntax of the construction. Also, the difference in word order is of little consequence. As in Col. 2:13 above, Paul has arranged the associated redundant pronouns and verbal forms of the repetition into a chiastic structure, e.g., ὑμᾶς ὄντας ... ὄντας ἡμᾶς, or “pronoun-participle-participle-pronoun.”

#### Primary Application: Ephesians 1:4

**Eph. 1:4** KJV: According as he hath chosen  
[O1] us in him before the foundation of the world, that  
[O2] we should be holy and without blame before him

GNT: καθὼς ἐξελέξατο [O1] ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου,  
εἶναι [O2] ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ

The King James translators made the first ἡμᾶς the sole direct object of ἐξελέξατο, and turned the infinitive phrase into a purpose clause, e.g., “that we should be.”<sup>102</sup> However, the two occurrences of ἡμᾶς are a case of resumptive repetition, with Paul inserting ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ

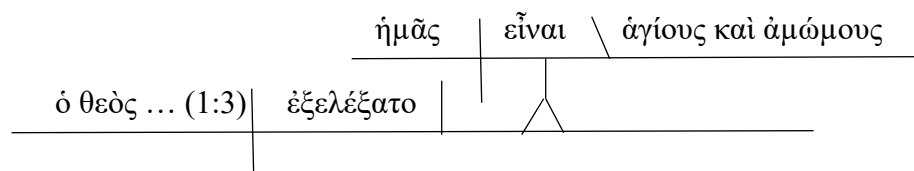
<sup>101</sup> Turner notes the insertion: “some characteristics of Paul’s style are harsh, particularly parenthesis, e.g. Eph 2<sup>5</sup>” (*Style*, 4:85).

<sup>102</sup> A view maintained by S. M. Baugh, *Ephesians*, in *The Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (EEC), ed. H. Wayne House, W. Hall Harris, and Andrew W. Pitts (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016), 80-82.



καταβολῆς κόσμου between them. This fits the pattern shown already. (This placement of the two prepositional phrases [ἐν ... πρὸ] and resumptive repetition argue strongly that they modify ἡμᾶς rather than ἐξελέξατο.<sup>103</sup>) First, the two pronouns are syntactically identical, both functioning together as the single subject of the infinitive εἶναι. Second, one may see the chiastic structure (ἡμᾶς ... εἶναι ἡμᾶς; pronoun-infinitive-pronoun) similar to what Paul employs in both Eph. 2:1, 5 and Col. 2:13. This pattern suggests that it was intentional. Third, Paul does not use the simple infinitive of εἰμί (εἶναι) to express purpose. His usual construction to express purpose with this infinitive is εἰς τὸ εἶναι (see Appendix A).

The entire infinitive phrase εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ, i.e. “us to be holy and blameless in His presence,” is the direct object of ἐξελέξατο, entailing much more than simply *whom* God chose, but *what* He chose. Borrowing somewhat from English grammar diagramming,<sup>104</sup> the basic structure of the sentence looks like this:



The context is limited to believers who are *in Jesus Christ*<sup>105</sup>—those *already* believers—to whom Paul is writing. They are called “saints” (1:1), who have been blessed with every

<sup>103</sup> The latter position tends to dominate deterministic interpretation and require a syntactic separation of the two pronouns (ἡμᾶς). See Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, in ZECNT, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2010), 80-81; Darrell L. Bock, *Ephesians*, in TNTC, ed. Darrell L. Bock (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019), 34; Constantine R. Campbell, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, in PNTC, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023), 46; Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 176-78; Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, in PNTC, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 99-100.

<sup>104</sup> The diagramming of the infinitive phrase is incorrect according to standard grammatical diagramming. This was done intentionally to show more clearly the relationships between the accusative subject of the infinitive (ἡμᾶς), the infinitive as a “verb,” and the predicate adjectives (ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους).

<sup>105</sup> The preposition ἐν being taken as “in Christ” or “in Him” (locative rather than agency, “by” or “through,” or cause, “because of”) is most appropriate linguistically and theologically. One may see the proper expression of agency using διὰ + genitive in Eph. 1:5, i.e., διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Though some may want the phrases ἐν Χριστῷ (1:3) and ἐν αὐτῷ (1:4) to signify something other than being positionally “in Christ” to avoid the

spiritual blessing “in Christ” (1:3). The “us” (ἡμεῖς) are those “in Him” (1:4), referring to Christ in the previous verse. God has chosen us in Him to be holy and blameless in His presence. This speaks of believers’ glorification, rather than their present lifestyle.<sup>106</sup> There is no supposed hypothetical, theoretical, or theological mass of prehistoric humanity in the passage at whom God looks into the future, and out of whom God chooses to save some and not to save others.<sup>107</sup>

---

theological implications, regarding “Ev + Dative for Personal Agency?,” Wallace states that “once a clear definition is given for personal agency, this will be seen as a rare or nonexistent category” (*ExSyn*, 373). “In Christ” stands. S. M. Baugh rightly notes that the phrase speaks of “union with Christ” (*Ephesians*, 80).

<sup>106</sup> Paul most often speaks of the believer’s being “holy and blameless” in a future context referring to the believer’s glorification. Paul uses the same terminology as Eph. 1:4 in Eph. 5:27 and Col. 1:22. The glorification context in the latter is shown in the “presentation” (παραστήσαι; see Eph. 5:27, ἵνα παραστήσῃ) as holy and blameless, as well as the use of κατενώπιον (see Eph. 1:4 and Jude 24). Paul’s noting this future is frequent, though the terminology may vary. 1 Thess. 3:13 speaks of the Lord establishing believers’ hearts “blameless in holiness before (ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἀγιοσύνῃ ἔμπροσθεν) our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.” The Lord’s coming is yet future. Consider also 1 Cor. 1:8: where the Lord “shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless (ἀνεγκλήτους) in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”; Col. 1:28: [We preach Christ] “that we may present every man perfect (παραστήσωμεν ... τέλειον) in Christ Jesus”; and 1 Thess. 5:23: “may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless (ἀμέμπτως) at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Some may affirm that these verses speak of living a sanctified walk in this life but, when Paul speaks of such a walk, he does so without ambiguity. Consider Phil. 1:10: “that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense (εὐλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι) till (εἰς) the day of Christ”; Phil. 2:15: “that you may become blameless and harmless (γένησθε ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι), children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world”; Col. 4:12: “Epaphras ... always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete (τέλειοι καὶ πεπληροφορημένοι) in all the will of God”; and 1 Tim. 6:14: “[I urge you in the sight of God ...] that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until (ἄσπιλον ἀνεπίληπτον μέχρι) our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing.” Though some of these latter examples might speak of this life or the next, one should not force verses which are clear semantically and contextually in speaking of believers’ glorification to stand for holy living in this life in order to preserve them as useful proof texts. Those affirming that Eph. 1:4 speaks of this present life on earth include Bock, *Ephesians*, 34; Francis Foulkes, *Ephesians*, in TNTC, Leon Morris, gen. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 55; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 179-80; and Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, in WBC, Bruce M. Metzger, gen. ed. (Dallas, TX: Word, 1990), 24. However, O’Brien rightly notes the eschatological focus of “holy and blameless in His presence” (*Ephesians*, 99-101).

<sup>107</sup> Regarding Eph. 1:4, Witherington III states that “the key phrase to understanding what he means by this concept is *in him* or *in Christ*. When Paul says believers were chosen before the foundation of the world ‘in him,’ he does not mean that believers preexisted or even merely that God’s salvation plan preexisted, though the latter is true” (*Problem*, 75; author’s italics). He is correct but limits the object of the verb to believers rather than the entire infinitive phrase. He adds that “Paul is not talking about a pretemporal electing or choosing of individual humans outside of Christ to be in Christ” (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, Clinton A. Arnold, in his section titled “Our Election before Creation,” states “this passage makes it clear that God sovereignly chose us before he made the heavens and the earth” (see Arnold, *Ephesians*, ZECNT, 95).

Only those *already* “in Christ” are the ones for whom future glorification has been chosen.<sup>108</sup> Of the most popular English translations, the NIV was the first (1978) to translate the infinitive phrase as objective rather than final (purpose), followed by the NRSV, NLT, CSB, and HCSB. However, the ASV, RSV, NASB, NKJV, and ESV translate the infinitive as final.

## Immediate Context

The context of future glorification occurs throughout Eph. 1:3-5. First, the spiritual blessings, rather than earthly blessings, are “in the heavenly places.” Believers alive at present are not yet in heaven, the abode of the Most High (see this sense also in 1:20 and 2:6).<sup>109</sup> This does not deny that believers enjoy spiritual blessings while still upon this earth, e.g., the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11), and the promise of the Lord’s presence (Matt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5). Eph. 1:5 continues the thought, noting that God has predestinated those in Christ to the Adoption (προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς υἰοθεσίαν) which is yet future.<sup>110</sup> It is proper, then, to say that God has predestined believers, those in Christ, to the adoption, which involves the redemption of their bodies (Rom. 8:23). Regarding predestination, Paul writes in Eph. 1:11, “in whom [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being

---

<sup>108</sup> This may make the debate regarding “corporate election” irrelevant (see, e.g., Brian J. Abasciano, “Clearing Up Misconceptions About Corporate Election,” *Ashland Theological Journal* 41 [ATJ] [2009]: 59-90; “Corporate Election in Romans 9: A Reply to Thomas Schreiner,” *JETS* 49, no. 2 [June 2006]: 351-71; William W. Klein, *The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election*, Rev. and Expanded ed. [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015]; and Thomas R. Schreiner, “Corporate and Individual Election in Romans 9: A Response to Brian Abasciano,” *JETS* 49, no. 2 [June 2006]: 373-86). As this writer has done in this thesis, he can see himself as an individual as having been “in Christ before the foundation of the world.” Yet any individual believer may see himself or herself similarly. The plural pronoun “us” (ἡμᾶς) may then speak of a “collection-of-individuals ... the position endorsed by Calvinism” (Campbell, *Ephesians*, 44). However, if one sees that God chose believers as a “nonindividual collective” ... endorsed by Arminianism” (*ibid.*, 45), there is little to debate if Eph. 1:4 speaks of God’s plan for the glorification of those in Christ. It is a “both-and” situation, more than an “either-or.” In the company of another believer, one can say “we” or “you also” with little theological difference.

<sup>109</sup> So also Baugh, *Ephesians*, 79; Ernest Best, *Ephesians*, in ICC, ed. J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield, and G. N. Stanton (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 114; Campbell, *Ephesians*, 43; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 20; O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 97.

<sup>110</sup> See the excursus on the Adoption below.

predestinated according to the purpose of him ....” Regarding this inheritance, Peter writes that God the Father has “begotten us [believers] again (ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς) ... to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:3-4). Again, heaven is a *future* destination for believers, at their glorification. Though the King James translators and other interpreters attempted to make Eph. 1:4-5 into a proof text for a deterministic soteriology, neither the context nor the syntax supports any such notion, especially recognizing Paul's resumptive repetition and his usage of the simple infinitive.

### Anthropochronism

The time-bound language of the phrase “before the foundation of the world” (πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου) must not be projected back upon the eternal God. If God is eternal, having created time itself, and is not bound by time, and is omni-temporal, existing in all periods of time in a single divine instant<sup>111</sup>; such time-bound language is for human benefit. When interpreters

---

<sup>111</sup> [First person for efficiency] Contrary to attributions to Greek philosophy (e.g., Plato), or theological works, I came to hold the view of a timeless eternity through the study of Scripture in the attempt to reconcile verses such as 2 Cor. 5:8 (“absent from the body ... present with the Lord”) with 1 Thess. 4:16-17, as well as comparisons between Eph. 1:4, Rev. 13:8 and other verses, and seeking to understand statements such as “before the foundation of the world.” Up until the last few years, all of the theological argumentation I had heard from pulpits or classroom podiums spoke of a time-bound God, e.g., how God in eternity past looked forward into the future at the mass of yet uncreated humanity and chose to save some and not others. I was surprised and encouraged to discover that others held a view of timeless eternity, e.g., Boethius, Erigena, and Aquinas (Richard R. La Croix, “Aquinas on God’s Omnipresence and Timelessness,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 42 (PPR), no. 3. [March 1982], 391). Though some theologians will acknowledge a timeless eternity, deterministic argumentation requires a time-bound God, or eternity as a timeline to infinity past and future, or some sort of sequence. Understanding the bind, some will argue for a *logical* sequence, though that does not solve the issue (e.g., Erickson, *Theology*, 323; Geisler denies “logical order” but his solution is to argue for an “operational order” to God’s decrees: *Theology*, 815-16). Systematic theologies continue to speak of the *ordo salutis* and chapters such as “the Antecedent to Salvation: Predestination” (Erickson, *Theology*, 841). Adopting a timeless eternity view never caused problems, contradictions, nor paradoxes in my biblical, theological understanding pertaining to God’s immutability, impeccability, sovereignty, triunity, ability to interact with His Creation, or that the Incarnation may have necessarily time-bound God (see Richard A. Holland, Jr., *God, Time, and the Incarnation* [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012]; William Lane Craig, “Timelessness and Omnitemporality,” *Philosophia Christi* 2, no. 1 [2000]: 29-33; and “God, Time, and Creation,” *Philosophia Christi* 23 (PhC), no. 2 [2021]: 359-65; and Gregory E. Ganssle, ed., *God and Time: Four Views* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001]). As such, I have stated my own views and have avoided dealing with such questions in this thesis. This may open me to accusations of shaving Schrödinger’s cat with Occam’s razor, i.e., providing too simplistic or naïve answers to difficult, complicated, or paradoxical questions—to scholars’ great dissatisfaction—or in treating as optional questions they consider mandatory. I choose not to wrestle with matters which never caused me any philosophical, biblical, or theological stress. In creating time itself, God had not

use such time-bound language to speak of God's intentions and acts in "eternity past"<sup>112</sup> (an oxymoron), or to picture divine Persons as looking forward into the future, they manifest a misunderstanding of the interplay between the eternal and the finite in Scripture.<sup>113</sup> For example, Jesus, God the Son, was crucified in the flesh at a particular time and place (Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:25; Luke 23:33; John 19:18), yet He is described in Rev. 13:8 as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."<sup>114</sup> The latter uses time-bound language ("before") to express the divine, timeless point of view regarding Jesus' sacrifice. Likewise, the fact that believers are described as "in [Christ] before the foundation of the world" speaks from the divine point of

---

created a proverbial rock which was too heavy for Him to lift, as if the Creator, in any aspect of His nature or works, was somehow changed, affected, limited, or subjugated by His own Creation. God's timeless eternity and my own finite time-boundedness are merely aspects of the Creator-creature distinction with no intrusion nor contradiction. Rather than creating paradox, contradiction, or difficulty; understanding the two points of view—the divine and the human—has made the Scriptures, and the theology contained therein, more harmonious, and easier to understand.

<sup>112</sup> For examples of the use of "eternity past," see Arnold, *Ephesians*, 80; Bock, *Ephesians*, TNTC, 33; Enns, *Handbook*, 203; Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, in TNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 51; J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, in WBC (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 7; and Schreiner, *Romans*, 443.

<sup>113</sup> As shown in the introduction regarding 1 Pet. 1:1-2, the notion that God's election is based upon His foreknowledge, i.e., that He looks into the future to know who will believe, manifests this misunderstanding, as well as misses the syntax and lexicography of that passage.

<sup>114</sup> Interpreters deny that ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου in Rev. 13:8 modifies τοῦ ἀρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου ("the Lamb slain") primarily based upon Rev. 17:8, where the phrase is omitted (see Grant R. Osborne's survey in *Revelation*, in BECNT, ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 503). For comparison:

Rev. 13:8: οὗ οὐ γέγραπται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τῆς ζωῆς **τοῦ ἀρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου**

Rev. 17:8: ὃν οὐ γέγραπται τὸ ὄνομα ἐπὶ τὸ βιβλίον τῆς ζωῆς [?] ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου

One may notice the contrast between the finite and the infinite in Rev. 13. The Beast "he was given authority to continue for forty-two months" (13:5). It is natural that the Beast, the Antichrist, as the prime mover during Daniel's Seventieth Week, would be contrasted with the True Christ, Whose Person and work ("slain") are eternal. Likewise in Rev. 17, the focus is on finite humanity, "the kings ... and the inhabitants of the earth." Of the kings associated with "the Mother of Harlots" (17:5), one "must continue a short time" (17:10). That "those who dwell on the earth" are "not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world" shows appropriate contrast between the finiteness of their time to wreak havoc upon earth and their eternal destiny (see Rev. 20:15). The mention or omission of the Lamb is appropriate to the respective contexts. The omission in 17:8 is anaphoric, pointing back to 13:8 when one might have expected another mention of the Lamb. Without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, one's name remains omitted from the book of life from the foundation of the world. The proximity of ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου to τοῦ ἀρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου argues that the phrase modifies the latter in 13:8. Finally, comparison with 1 Pet. 1:19-20 shows that Christ, the lamb slain (1:19) was "foreknown before the foundation of the world" (πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου; 1:20). The presence (Rev. 13:8) or absence (17:8) of the Lamb slain, and identical phrases modifying two different entities in each of the verses shows a purposeful emphasis, comparison, and contrast between both verses.

view.<sup>115</sup> This writer calls these time-bound expressions “anthropochronisms,”<sup>116</sup> similar to anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms. Consider that Jesus said, “for You loved Me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24; ὅτι ἠγάπησάς με πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου), and said “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30; ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἓν ἐσμεν). As God, also being One with the Father, Jesus is eternal. Yet during His time on earth in the flesh, having submitted Himself to *participation* in time, space, and matter; He uses time-bound anthropochronistic language.

Believers’ being in Christ “before the foundation of the world” presents an antecedent anthropochronism.” In Eph. 2:4-6, “God, ... made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” presents a “subsequent anthropochronism,”<sup>117</sup> picturing believers as presently existing in a place to which they have not yet gone. According to this understanding of biblical linguistic anthropochronisms, it would be correct to say that, *from the divine, eternal point of view*, a believer alive on this earth today—having been “in Christ before the foundation of the world” has *already* gone “to be present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8), stood before the βῆμα of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 4:2-5), been glorified (Rom. 8:23, 29; Eph. 1:4; Phil. 3:20-21; Rev. 5:6), returned with Christ and reigned with Him for one thousand years (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev 1:6; 19:14; 20:4, 6), and is presently existing with God in the Eternal State (Rev. 21-22). Interpreters err when they take the anthropochronistic language of Scripture

---

<sup>115</sup> Though this writer did not believe the gospel and become saved until 14 years of age, living 14 years “without Christ, ... having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12); from the eternal, divine point of view, he has always been “in Christ.”

<sup>116</sup> At the time this writer was coining the theological use of the term to illustrate the interrelationship between God’s eternity and the time-bound language of Scripture, online searches for any other uses of the word turned up R. Radhakrishnan, who used the term in his book *History, the Human, and the World Between* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), a work in phenomenology in the context of humanistic philosophy and history. The attempt to find his definition of the word proved fruitless, though he certainly is not using the word in the context of Christian theology.

<sup>117</sup> The two types of anthropochronistic language, describing eternal divine truths pertaining to believers’ “pasts” and “futures” may use terms such as antecedent and subsequent, as above, or the terms “historic” and “futuristic” anthropochronisms.

and read time-boundedness back upon the essence, character, and acts of God. Statements such as “before the foundation of the world” are for the benefit of us finite creatures; it should not leave one pondering what God was doing prior to creation.

### Summary

With resumptive repetition, Paul would repeat words or phrases in order to resume his flow of thought after the insertion of intervening material. Such insertions could be just a couple of phrases or clauses, up to a few verses in length. In four cases, the resumptions are syntactically identical to the first occurrence; in three cases, they are non-identical, though the resumption is easily identifiable. Most significant in this identification is its application to Eph. 1:4, which shows that there are not two clauses, but one, with the infinitive phrase “us to be holy and blameless in His presence” functioning as the entire direct object of “He chose.” Paul does not use the simple infinitive εἶναι to express purpose, as the two-clause view requires. When the syntax and context are understood, the verse speaks of the future glorification of those who were already believers at the time Paul wrote. There are no unbelievers in the context, nor any mass of unsaved humanity at which God looks into the future to make a deterministic choice to save some. It is only at their glorification, yet future, that believers will be “holy and blameless” in the very presence of God (cf. Eph. 5:27). That believers were “in Christ before the foundation of the world” shows the divine, timeless point of view, and shows God’s timeless eternity through the use of time-bound, anthropochronistic language (“before”). The futuristic-glorification view is consistent with the context in which the verse occurs, i.e., the spiritual blessings from God are “in the heavenlies,” a *future* destination for believers (Eph. 1:3); believers have been predestined to the adoption, the future redemption of their bodies (Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:20-2); and they have been predestined to obtain their inheritance, which is yet future (Eph. 1:11; 1 Pet. 1:4).

How they came to be believers is shown in Eph. 1:13 when, in time, they heard the gospel, believed the gospel, and were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, i.e., they were regenerated.

### Excursus: The Adoption

Though popular in modern sermons and theological reasoning, it is not proper to say that believers in Jesus Christ have been “adopted into the family of God,” associating it with the inception of salvation, rather than its completion.<sup>118</sup> However, some who affirm this still note the futuristic aspect of Rom. 8:23 (where “the redemption of our body” provides specific qualification for the adoption).<sup>119</sup> Most theological discourse on the subject tends to speak of the biblical topic of sonship or salvation in general without treating adoption as a separate aspect.<sup>120</sup> Having seen above that the adoption refers to the redemption of believers’ bodies (Rom. 8:23), it

---

<sup>118</sup> As does Robert C. Dorman, “A Study of Paul’s Use of *HYIOTHESIA*: Its Background, Development, and Importance Concerning Spiritual Adoption,” MA thesis, Covenant Theological Seminary, 1997: 47; also, Geisler, *Systematic*, 846-47; and Grudem, *Systematic*, 913. Erickson states that adoption “occurs simultaneously with conversion, regeneration, justification, and union with Christ” (*Theology*, 892), while John Murray writes that “by adoption the redeemed become sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; they are introduced into and given the privileges of God’s family” (*Redemption Accomplished and Applied* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955], 132). Thornton Whaling, of adoption, states: “spiritual or filial sonship is bestowed in regeneration ...” (“Adoption,” *The Princeton Theological Review* 21 (*PTR*), no. 2 [April 1923]: 228). However, not all miss the proper timing of adoption. After surveying Catholic, Reformed, and later tendencies to associate biblical adoption with justification (10-17), Michael Braeutigam correctly discerns that “Paul’s use of *huiiothesia* clearly points to an eschatological hope. The apostle shows that true sonship ... still lies in the future: ... (Rom 8:23). Hence, redemptive adoption in its completeness is clearly an eschatological redemptive event” (“Sons and Daughters of God: An Account of a Systematic Theology of Adoption.” ThM thesis, University of Glasgow, 2008: 72).

<sup>119</sup> Whaling states that “the *υιοθεσία* of the believer is the climax of the redemptive process in its objective aspect” (“Adoption,” 223). Francis Lyall provides a historical, legal survey of ancient adoption (Hebrew, Greek, and Roman law), and follows A. A. Hodge in affirming that adoption occurs “in a present and continuous sense, which, combining justification and sanctification,” which “is ideally illustrated by the Roman concept” (“Roman Law in the Writings of Paul: Adoption,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (*JBL*), no. 4 [Dec. 1969]: 459). Even so, Lyall mentions Rom. 8:23 once, writing that “the allusion in Rom 8 23 to waiting adoption refers to our final transformation at the second resurrection. Then indeed will we have passed from our former state into wholly new” (*ibid.*). Geisler notes that adoption is “fully manifested at the resurrection of the body” (*Theology*, 847). Grudem, with reference to Rom. 8:23: “Paul sees the receiving of new resurrection bodies as the fulfillment of our privileges of adoption” (*Theology*, 915).

<sup>120</sup> For example, Daniel J. Theron, “‘Adoption’ in the Pauline Corpus,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 28 (*EvQ*), no. 1 (1956): 6-14; also Grudem, *Theology*, 913-19. Tim J. R. Trumper counters: “We must break with the established custom of reading adoption arbitrarily into the filial language of the NT, irrespective of the author in view or the specificity of the language under consideration. Paul’s adoption model should be treated on its own terms ... the volumes of systematic theology dealing with adoption [reveal] that the focus is ... on its connections to regeneration, justification and sanctification” (“A Fresh Exposition of Adoption: I. An Outline,” *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 23 (*SBET*), no. 1 [Spring 2005]: 62). However, Trumper seems to follow the “established customs” in the rest of the article.



is for believers something yet future, yet the verse sometimes receives little attention in some discussions.<sup>121</sup> This suggests a general lack of clarity on the subject in theological circles.

The Scriptures consistently describe entry into God's family, becoming "sons of God" or children of God, via the metaphor of a birthing act (Exod. 4:22-23; Deut. 32:18; Isa. 66:8; John 1:13, 3:3, 6-7; 1 Pet. 1:3, 23). The birthing metaphor is also used to illustrate the familial relationship between the heavenly Father and God the Son (Ps. 2:7; see John 1:14, 18, 3:16, 18; Acts 13:33 and Heb. 1:5, 5:5). Paul also uses the birthing metaphor to describe believers who have come to faith through his ministry (1 Cor. 4:15; Phlm. 10).

The concept of adoption stands unique among the soteriological concepts in Scripture, being found only five times in Paul's Letters in Rom. 8:15, 23, 9:4; Gal. 4:5; and Eph. 1:5. Three concern the church, specifically (Rom. 8:15, 23; Eph. 1:5). The future aspect of Rom. 8:23 is consistent with Phil. 3:20-21: "for our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" ("conformed" is σύμμορφον; see Rom. 8:29).

Though the adoption event is yet future for believers, they presently possess "the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'" (Rom. 8:15). The anarthrous phrase "spirit of adoption" (πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας) may have a general sense, i.e., that believers look to God with a spirit of adoption, acknowledging Him as our Father, but also having a sense of anticipation and expectation regarding the future.<sup>122</sup> Since the adoption is specifically identified with the

---

<sup>121</sup> Whaling makes no reference to Rom. 8:23 ("Adoption"), and Erickson omits any reference to the verse in his section on "Adoption" (*Theology*, 891-93), though he does mention the verse in the contexts of the liberation of creation (136), glorification (926), and bodily resurrection (1098).

<sup>122</sup> If one might argue that υιοθεσία being anarthrous in Rom. 8:23 discounts its standing for an event, its appositional qualifier is articular, i.e., τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. Omitting the English definite article in translation would show "eagerly await adoption, the redemption of our body," and still suggests some event. The noun is articular in Rom. 9:4 (ὧν ἡ υιοθεσία) and Gal. 4:5 (ἵνα τὴν υιοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν), and follows a

believer's glorification, it qualifies Eph. 1:5 which speaks of the Father (1:3) "having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself." In context, Eph. 1:3-5 speaks only of believers, those already "in Christ," whom God has chosen to be holy and blameless in His very presence (1:4; see also Eph. 5:27 and Jude 24). Moreover, believers "in Him ... have obtained an inheritance, being predestined" (Eph. 1:11). Predestination in Paul always refers to those already believers, either relationally foreknown (Rom. 8:29) or in Christ (Eph. 1:3-4, 11). This predestination is to their redeemed bodies by the adoption (Eph. 1:5; see Rom. 8:23), to final conformity to God's Son in His presence (Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4), and to receiving an inheritance (Eph. 1:11; see 1 Pet. 1:4). One should not confuse Augustine's theology with Paul's own theology.

Believers are now, presently, children of God, just as John wrote that "*now* (νῦν) we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). Notice how John ties our present status as children of God to future conformity to Jesus, i.e., "we shall be like Him" (ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα). If believers are presently children, but still awaiting a future "adoption," it is as if all the legal documents have been signed, and we are now *legally* God's children, but we must still wait in the "orphanage" of this earth until the day our Father comes to take us home to be with Him. Does this metaphor have Scriptural precedent?

First, again, we are presently, legally God's children, just as John wrote "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right (ἐξουσίαν) to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12). We have the authority to become children of God; we are

---

preposition in Eph. 1:5 (εἰς υἰοθεσίαν). Regarding the latter, "there is no need for the article to be used to make the object of a preposition definite ... when a noun is the object of a preposition, it does not *require* the article to be definite: if it has the article, it *must* be definite; if it *lacks* the article, it *may* be definite" (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 247). In Rom. 8:15, being indefinite fits the context for υἰοθεσίας; in all other cases, its definiteness is explicit or the best sense from context.

God's children legally. Second, regarding the orphanage metaphor, consider Jesus' statement in John 14:2-3: "In My Father's house are many mansions ... I go to prepare a place for you ..., I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Jesus is presently preparing a place for believers in the Father's house, with the promise that He will come again and take us there. Note Jesus' statement later in the chapter: "I will not leave you orphans (ὀρφανούς); I will come to you" (14:18).<sup>123</sup> The metaphor of believers being presently legal children of God, yet still waiting here in this earthly orphanage for our Father to come pick us up to take us home—an event which will complete our adoption and is called by that name—is entirely warranted. That Jesus is the one to come receive us on behalf of the Father presents no contradiction.

What about Israel? In two places, Paul speaks of adoption in the context of Israel (Rom. 9:4 and Gal. 4:5). Israel's adoption may be seen in the same future sense as that of the church, whether as part of it, or as a subsequent national, ethnic redemption (Eph. 2:11-15, 3:6; Rom. 11:26-27). Consider Gal. 4:4-5: "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we<sup>124</sup> might receive the adoption as sons." The progression is from the incarnation ("born of a woman") to a purpose of redemption which *followed* the incarnation (Luke 1:68, 24:21), with a subsequent purpose of Israel ("those who are under the law") receiving the adoption. As seen previously, Israel's becoming God's son or children was pictured using a birthing act, while their

---

<sup>123</sup> "To you" translates ἡμῖν, which is better taken as a dative of interest-advantage, i.e., "I will come *for* you" (see Wallace, *ExSyn*, 142-44).

<sup>124</sup> The inclusive first person plural of ἀπολάβωμεν, "that *we* might receive," may refer to Paul's status as a Jew (Rom. 9:3-4) or, generally, as a believer, since the gospel first came to and through the Jews (Acts 2:14, 22; Rom. 1:16), with Gentiles later being added in by faith apart from any formal act of proselytization (Acts 10:36-39, 11:15-17, 14:27).

adoption is yet future.<sup>125</sup> Future adoption is associated with future redemption, just as the future adoption of the church is associated with its glorification. Paul mentions adoption in association with Israel in Rom. 9:4, writing of “Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption.” Though there is no specific eschatological context in this verse, Paul concludes his Israel parenthesis (Rom. 9-11) with “and so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins’” (Rom. 11:25-26). Part of Paul’s use of the adoption metaphor refers to the glorious restoration of Israel—the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—i.e., its redemption.

Just as believers in Jesus Christ—both Jews and Gentiles—are already children of God as they wait for the Adoption, so also Israel, having been “birthed” by the Lord, awaits its glorious future, its redemption, its adoption. Paul’s use of the adoption metaphor with Israel may also have reference to its disinheritance, e.g., “call his name Lo-Ammi, for you *are* not My people, and I will not be your God” (Hos. 1:9). Though a natural-born son, the Lord uses a disinheritance metaphor in the context of Israel’s breaking of the Covenant. Paul refers to Hosea in Rom. 9:25-26: “as He says also in Hosea: ‘I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved.’ ‘And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ There they shall be called sons of the living God.’” However, Paul applies these verses to *include* the Gentiles (“not my people”; see Rom. 9:24) in Israel’s adoption. God opened salvation to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, Israel’s Messiah (Acts 10:45, 11:18, 15:12-20) so that they, together with believing Jews (Gal. 3:28; Col 3:11),

---

<sup>125</sup> Though Paul follows by noting that “because you *are* (ἐστε) sons ...” (Gal. 4:6; see also Gal. 3:26), this acknowledgement of the Galatian believers’ present status as sons does not discount the future aspect of the adoption in 4:5. One may see a similar juxtaposition of present sonship and future adoption in Rom. 8, e.g., “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are (εἰσιν) sons of God” (8:14), with the association with the future redemption of believers’ bodies (8:23).

look forward to their future adoption. So also Israel—*as a nation*, presently persisting in unbelief—will be redeemed at their own future adoption. In Israel’s case, as a disinherited first-born son (“broken off”; Rom. 11:19-20), it may take a legal act of adoption to bring them back into good standing in the Father’s household.

## II. Interrogative Parallelism

### The Construction

Interrogative parallelism refers to Paul's habit of connecting two or more questions together via the disjunctive/comparative particle ἢ ("or"), creating a parallelism between them. The structure is "question-or-question" (QoQ, or Q—ἢ—Q). The parallelism is in the fact that the questions come from the same point of view, either from Paul, from his audience, or from his opponents. The significance of this pattern is that some interpreters have broken this parallelism in their interpretations and translations to make points contrary to Paul's normal usage. In order to identify and demonstrate this use, one must survey all of the occurrences of this usage in Paul's Letters. The King James Version will provide the English translation, especially to show the translation or non-translation of the particle, which provides critical interpretive insight.

### The Examples

#### Symmetric Structure

The term "symmetric" describes examples which are free of insertions, and which show ἢ between all questions. "[Q1]" and "[Q2]" stand for the first and second questions, etc.

Verse(s)	English text
Questioner	Greek text
Recipient	
<b>Rom. 2:3-4</b>	[Q1] And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? or [Q2]
Q: Paul	despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering;
R: The Judging Man	not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
	[Q1] λογίζῃ δὲ τοῦτο, ὃ ἄνθρωπε ὁ κρίνων τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας καὶ ποιῶν αὐτά, ὅτι σὺ ἐκφεύξῃ τὸ κρίμα τοῦ θεοῦ; ἢ [Q2] τοῦ πλούτου τῆς χρηστότητος αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀνοχῆς καὶ τῆς μακροθυμίας καταφρονεῖς, ἀγνοῶν ὅτι τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς μετάνοιάν σε ἄγει;

- Rom. 3:1** [Q1] What advantage then hath the Jew? or [Q2] what profit is there of  
 Q: Paul circumcision?  
 R: Readers [Q1] Τί οὖν τὸ περισσὸν τοῦ Ἰουδαίου, ἢ [Q2] τίς ἡ ὠφέλεια τῆς περιτομῆς;
- Rom. 6:2-3** [Q1] How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? [or; Q2] Know  
 Q: Paul ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into  
 R: Readers his death?  
 [Q1] οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, πῶς ἔτι ζήσομεν ἐν αὐτῇ;  
 ἢ [Q2] ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν εἰς τὸν θάνατον  
 αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν;

Note that, in Rom. 6:2-3, the “or” is omitted in translation. In this case, the omission does not affect the sense of the text for the reader. Also, the first question is first-person plural (“we”), while the second is second-person plural (“ye/you”). This change in person does not negate the parallelism. Paul asks both questions. Speaking to believers, Paul uses the first person because he, together with the believers at Rome, are “dead to sin.” In the second question, he excludes himself because he is teaching believers something they may not realize.

- Rom. 10:6-7** Say not in thine heart, [Q1] Who shall ascend into heaven? ... or, [Q2] Who  
 Q: Opponent shall descend into the deep? ...  
 R: Audience Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, [Q1] Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; ...  
 ἢ [Q2] Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; ....

- Rom. 11:34-35** [Q1] For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or [Q2] who hath been his  
 Q: Paul (quoting) counsellor? or [Q3] who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed  
 R: Readers unto him again?  
 [Q1] Τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου; ἢ [Q2] τίς σύμβουλος αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο;  
 ἢ [Q3] τίς προέδωκεν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἀνταποδοθήσεται αὐτῷ;

The first two questions in Rom. 11:34-35 quote Isa. 40:13 (LXX),<sup>126</sup> but Paul changes the καὶ το ἢ between the first two questions; the second ἢ comes from the text of Isa 40:14, and

<sup>126</sup> Isaiah 40:13-14 (KJV): “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?” Compare below with the Septuagint (LXX, 2:619-20):

[Q1] τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου καὶ [Q2] τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο ὃς συμβιβᾷ αὐτόν 14 ἢ [Q3] πρὸς τίνα συνεβουλεύσατο καὶ συνεβίβασεν αὐτόν ἢ [Q4] τίς ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ἢ [Q5] ὁδὸν συνέσεως τίς ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ.

Paul’s use of interrogative parallelism may have come from the influence of the LXX, as one can see from this passage.

follows a more likely textual variant.<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, the resulting structure is illustrated as

QoQoQ.

**Rom. 14:10** But [Q1] why dost thou judge thy brother? or [Q2] why dost thou set at nought thy brother?

R: The Unjust Judge [Q1] σὺ δὲ τί κρίνεις τὸν ἀδελφόν σου; ἢ [Q2] καὶ σὺ τί ἐξουθενεῖς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου;

**1 Cor. 7:16** [Q1] For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?

Q: Paul or [Q2] how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

R: Rhetorical spouses [Q1] τί γὰρ οἶδας, γύναι, εἰ τὸν ἄνδρα σώσεις; ἢ [Q2] τί οἶδας, ἄνερ, εἰ τὴν γυναῖκα σώσεις;

**1 Cor. 9:9-10** [Q1] Doth God take care for oxen? Or [Q2] saith he it altogether for our sakes?

Q: Paul [Q1] μὴ τῶν βοῶν μέλει τῷ θεῷ; ἢ [Q2] δι' ἡμᾶς πάντως λέγει;

R: Readers

**1 Cor. 11:22** [Q1] What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or [Q2] despise ye the

Q: Paul church of God, and shame them that have not?

R: Readers [Q1] μὴ γὰρ οἰκίας οὐκ ἔχετε εἰς τὸ ἐσθίειν καὶ πίνειν; ἢ [Q2] τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ καταφρονεῖτε, καὶ καταισχύνετε τοὺς μὴ ἔχοντας;

The two questions in 1 Cor. 11:22 which follow—τί εἶπω ὑμῖν; ἐπαινέσω ὑμᾶς; ἐν τούτῳ οὐκ ἐπαινῶ—are also parallel as far as point-of-view, but do not follow the pattern established by the first two questions (i.e., no Q—ἢ—Q). Having made the larger point with the first two questions, the second two concern Paul's question about his response to them regarding their failure in the matter of the Lord's supper.

**2 Cor. 3:1** [Q1] Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or [Q2] need we ... epistles of

Q: Paul commendation to you, or ... from you?

R: Readers [Q1] Ἀρχόμεθα πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνειν; ἢ [Q2] μὴ χρῆζομεν ... συστατικῶν ἐπιστολῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἢ ἐξ ὑμῶν;

**Gal. 1:10** [Q1] For do I now persuade men, or God? or [Q2] do I seek to please men?

Q: Paul [Q1] Ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν θεόν; ἢ [Q2] ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις

R: Readers ἀρέσκειν;

<sup>127</sup> "Few scholars have devoted any attention to the curious fact that Paul's quotation corresponds verbatim to a well-attested variant reading in Isa 40:14 LXX" (Katja Kujanpää, "Job or Isaiah? What Does Paul Quote in Rom 11:35?" *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 24 [TCJBTC] [2019]: 2).



Regarding Gal. 1:10, Douglas Estes states that “the conjunction ἥ in [Q2] is used to join two different thoughts, two different questions, in a disjunctive rather than conjunctive union.”<sup>128</sup> He recognizes the connection between the two questions and the function of ἥ, but the difference in the questions is verbal (πείθω; ἀρέσκειν). Both actions have men as their objects (ἀνθρώπους and ἀνθρώποις<sup>129</sup>), which creates some semantic parallelism.

### Asymmetric Structure

Asymmetric examples include those with insertions between questions or in which ἥ does not occur between each question.

**Rom. 11:1-2** [Q1] Hath God cast away his people? ... [or; Q2] Wot ye not what the scripture  
Q: Paul saith of Elias?  
R: Readers [Q1] μὴ ἀπόσωτο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ; μὴ γένοιτο ... ἢ [Q2] οὐκ οἴδατε ἐν  
Ἡλίᾳ τί λέγει ἡ γραφή;

One may dispute the parallelism because the questions are not juxtaposed in the text.<sup>130</sup> Such a structure might be illustrated as “question-explanation/answer-OR-question” (Q-E/A-o-Q). Though separated, one still finds ἥ between two questions, which are parallel, in that Paul asks both questions.

**1 Cor. 1:13** [Q1-2] Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or [Q3] were ye baptized in  
Q: Paul the name of Paul?  
R: Readers [Q1-2] μεμέρισται ὁ Χριστός; μὴ Παῦλος ἐσταυρώθη ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, ἢ [Q3] εἰς  
τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου ἐβαπτίσθητε;

The structure here would be QQoQ. The lack of ἥ between the first two questions does not discount the construction. It may show an intended disjunction between the first two questions, of which the first deals with Christ and the second two with Paul, possibly avoiding

<sup>128</sup> Douglas Estes, *Questions and Rhetoric in the Greek New Testament: An Essential Reference Resource for Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, Mich. Zondervan, 2017), 118.

<sup>129</sup> Here, ἀρέσκω takes a dative direct object, ἀνθρώποις (BDAG, 129; Wallace *ExSyn*, 171-73).

<sup>130</sup> The two questions are separated by nineteen words of Greek text: καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ Ἰσραηλῆτης εἰμί, ἐκ σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ, φυλῆς Βενιαμείν. οὐκ ἀπόσωτο ὁ θεὸς τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ὃν προέγνω.

Moses' error in failing to set the LORD apart ("sanctify") from himself (Num. 20:21) when said "must we fetch you water out of this rock?" (Num. 20:10). Yet, the parallelism remains.

**1 Cor. 6:7, 9** [Q1-2] Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer  
 Q: Paul yourselves to be defrauded? ... [or; Q3] Know ye not that the unrighteous shall  
 R: Readers not inherit the kingdom of God?  
 [Q1-2] διὰ τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἀδικεῖσθε; διὰ τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἀποστερεῖσθε; ...  
 ἢ [Q3] οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι ἄδικοι θεοῦ βασιλείαν οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν;

This example presents similarities to both Rom. 11:1-2 and 1 Cor. 1:13. Like the former, there is intervening material between the second and third question: ἀλλὰ ὑμεῖς ἀδικεῖτε καὶ ἀποστερεῖτε, καὶ τοῦτο ἀδελφούς (1 Cor. 6:8). Like the latter, it exhibits a QQoQ structure. This may cast doubt on the "sanctify" argument regarding the previous verse (1 Cor. 1:13), but the first two questions in 6:7 are nearly identical except for the verbs used (ἀδικεῖσθε and ἀποστερεῖσθε), which might make ἢ out of place between them.

**1 Cor. 6:15-16, 19** [Q1-2] Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I  
 Q: Paul then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an  
 R: Readers harlot? [Answer] God forbid. [or; Q3] Know ye not that he which is joined  
 to an harlot is one body? ... [or; Q4] Know ye not that your body is the  
 temple of the Holy Ghost ... and ye are not your own?  
 [Q1-2] οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν μέλη Χριστοῦ ἐστίν; ἄρα οὖν  
 τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιήσω πόρνῃς μέλη; μὴ γένοιτο. ἢ [Q3] οὐκ  
 οἶδατε ὅτι ὁ κολλώμενος τῇ πόρνῃ ἐν σῶμά ἐστιν; ... ἢ [Q4] οὐκ  
 οἶδατε ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐστίν, ...  
 καὶ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐαυτῶν;

According to the previous examples, the structure of this occurrence may be illustrated as QQAoQ-Insertion-oQ. It maintains Paul's use of interrogative parallelism. Note that "or" does not show up in translation for questions 3 and 4.

**1 Cor. 9:7-8** [Q1] Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? [Q2] Who planteth a  
 Q: Paul vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or [Q3] who feedeth a flock, and  
 R: Readers eateth not of the milk of the flock? [Q4] Say I these things as a man? or [Q5]  
 saith not the law the same also?  
 [Q1] τίς στρατεύεται ἰδίῳις ὀψωνίοις ποτέ; [Q2] τίς φυτεύει ἀμπελῶνα καὶ  
 τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐσθίει; ἢ [Q3] τίς ποιμαίνει ποίμνην καὶ ἐκ τοῦ  
 γάλακτος τῆς ποίμνης οὐκ ἐσθίει; [Q4] Μὴ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ταῦτα λαλῶ,  
 ἢ [Q5] καὶ ὁ νόμος ταῦτα οὐ λέγει;

The structure in 1 Cor. 9:7-8 is QQoQQoQ, all questions being parallel. The first three questions are axiomatic; the second two are more direct to Paul's audience and religion-specific.

**1 Cor. 10:18-19** [Q1] Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?  
 Q: Paul [Q2] What say I then? that the idol is anything[?] or [Q3] that which is  
 R: Readers offered in sacrifice to idols is anything?  
 [Q1] οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίοντες τὰς θυσίας κοινωνοὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου εἰσὶν;  
 [Q2] τί οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστίν; ἢ [Q3] ὅτι εἰδωλὸν τί ἐστίν;

The structure in this occurrence is QQoQ.

**2 Cor. 6:14-16** [Q1] For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and  
 Q: Paul [Q2] what communion hath light with darkness? and [Q3] what concord hath  
 R: Readers Christ with Belial? or [Q4] what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?  
 And [Q5] what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?  
 [Q1] τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀνομία, ἢ [Q2] τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ  
 πρὸς σκότος; [Q3] τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ [Q4] τίς  
 μερὶς πιστῷ μετὰ ἀπίστου; [Q5] τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ  
 εἰδώλων; [ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ];

The UBS<sup>5</sup> text places question marks at the end of questions Q2, Q4, and Q5,<sup>131</sup> and the *MajT* places English question marks (“?”) after all five questions.<sup>132</sup> The structure of all five questions follows the conjunctive pattern of “γὰρ-ἢ-δὲ-ἢ-δὲ,” but still shows parallelism in subject, questioner, and recipients. In the pattern, the particle ἢ groups concepts (righteousness, lawlessness ἢ light, darkness) and persons (Christ, Belial ἢ the believer, unbeliever) with the groups being bordered by δέ. The γὰρ in 6:16b likely presents an *inclusio*<sup>133</sup> with τίς γὰρ in 6:14 and closes the pattern.

**2 Cor. 13:5** [or, Q1] Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye  
 Q: Paul be reprobates?  
 R: Readers ἢ [Q1] οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἑαυτοὺς ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἐν ὑμῖν;

---

<sup>131</sup> UBS<sup>5</sup>, 601-02.

<sup>132</sup> *MajT*, 556.

<sup>133</sup> *Inclusio*: “framing ... by repeated words or phrases from its opening lines at its conclusion” (KBH, 303); “an *inclusio* is a pattern in which a paragraph or longer portion ends in much the same way in which it began” (Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation* [Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1991], 140).

In 2 Cor. 13:5, unless *ἐαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε* may be rendered as an interrogative, i.e., “are you putting yourselves to the test?” (QoQ)—which does no damage to the sense of the text—the structure in this case is “-oQ.”

### Summary

In every place where Paul uses the conjunction *ἢ* to join questions, they are parallel because all of the joined questions are asked from the same point of view, either by Paul or by his opponent (e.g., Rom. 10:6-7). The term “opponent” signifies one not holding Paul’s own point of view. The “or” may have been omitted in English translation (e.g., Rom. 6:2-3, 11:2; 1 Cor. 6:9, 16, 19), and the parallel questions may change person (e.g., from first to second in Rom. 6:2-3) without breaking the parallelism.

### Primary Application: Romans 9:21

The most significant application of Paul’s use of interrogative parallelism is in Romans 9:20-21:

<b>Rom. 9:20-21</b>	Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, [Q1] “Why have you made me
Q: Diatribal	like this?” [or; Q2] Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same
Opponent	lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?
R: Paul	<i>μὴ ἔρεῖ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι</i> , [Q1] <i>Τί με ἐποίησας οὕτως; ἢ [Q2] οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὁ κεραμεὺς τοῦ πηλοῦ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦφυράματος ποιῆσαι ὃ μὲν εἰς τιμὴν σκεῦος, ὃ δὲ εἰς ἀτιμίαν;</i>

According to the principle of interrogative parallelism already demonstrated, both questions come from Paul’s diatribal opponent’s point of view. The omission of the “or” in the KJV obscured this parallelism to English readers.<sup>134</sup> Though the two questions exhibit a change in person from second (*ἐποίησας*) to third (*ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὁ κεραμεὺς*), one may observe a similar change in Rom. 6:2-3, as already noted. Verse 21 may rightly be translated “or *shall one say*,

<sup>134</sup> The ESV, MSG, NIV, NKJV, NLT, NRSV, and RSV also omit “or” in translation. However, the ASV, CSB, HCSB, and NASB show “or” in Rom. 9:21.

‘Does not the potter have power ....’” The parallelism links questions together rather than shows opposing alternatives.<sup>135</sup>

To reiterate, Paul’s use of interrogative parallelism shows that the question in 9:21, just as in 9:20, comes from Paul’s diatribal opponent, not from Paul himself. After noting Israel’s blessed status (Rom. 9:1-5) and defending God’s choice of Israel through the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (9:6-13) and God’s freedom to exercise mercy or harden (9:14-18), Paul anticipates that some might read a soteriological determinism into his reasoning, especially since he has mentioned individuals, rather than nations, in vv. 6-18. Paul deals with three expected protests from these “opponents” who would twist his arguments to say: (1) God’s will is irresistible (9:19)<sup>136</sup>; (2) God made me this way (9:20); and (3) the Potter unilaterally makes a vessel either to honor or dishonor (9:21).<sup>137</sup> Though the three are rhetorical questions, Paul’s pragmatic use of such questions can show the views of his opponents as statements.

The opponents’ arguments in Rom. 9:20-21 show a gross misunderstanding of the Old Testament (OT) Divine Potter metaphor, and contradict how יהוה Himself used the potter to

---

<sup>135</sup> The conjunction (ἥ) is not showing contrast or a “necessary alternative” in this case, *contra* Morris, *Romans*, 365. Though categorized as a “disjunctive (alternative) conjunction” by Wallace (*ExSyn*, 672), Robertson lists, e.g., Matt. 5:17, “the law or the prophets” (τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας), and Mark 10:29 “house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands” (οἰκίαν ἢ ἀδελφοὺς ἢ ἀδελφάς) under “Connection in Sentences” (*Grammar*, 427). In this usage, ἥ connects different items. Contrast or disjunction is not being shown between the Law or the Prophets, or between brothers, sister, houses or lands, etc.; but unity between them. One might ask a child if the new baby in the family is his brother or sister, which denotes alternative or contrast. Yet, when James proposes if “a brother or sister is naked” (2:15; ἀδελφὸς ἢ ἀδελφὴ γυμνοὶ), the *difference* in gender is not in view, but that they *are united* in need *in spite of* gender. James is not excluding any person based upon their sex. “It is never strictly disjunctive, but is just as much copulative ... [and] comes close to the force of a copulative conjunction” (BDF, 231).

<sup>136</sup> Jerome Zanchius takes up this argument: “the determining will of God being omnipotent cannot be obstructed or made void, it follows that He never did ... will that every individual of mankind should be saved. If this was His will, not one single soul could ever be lost (for who has resisted his will?)” (*Absolute Predestination* [London, England: Silver Trumpet, 1989], 18).

<sup>137</sup> One error of interpretation in this section is to accept the three arguments of Paul’s opponent as true and Pauline, then to focus on parts of the diatribe such as “who art thou that repliest against God?” (9:20), and to identify the error as daring to question God at all, instead of just accepting one’s fate. Rather, the error is in attributing fatalism or determinism to God’s person or acts, especially regarding His relationship with the Patriarchs and Israel.

illustrate His dealings with both individuals and nations. Rom. 9:21 quotes no OT passage. A survey of the OT use of this metaphor is in order.

First, in Job 10:8-9 (“Your hands have ... fashioned me ... You have made me like clay”), Job uses the metaphor to acknowledge God as his Creator and Sovereign, able to do His will with Job, though *what* that specifies is left uncertain (see Job 33:6 where Elihu acknowledges Job’s statement). Second, in Isa. 29:16, the Lord asks, “shall the thing made say of him who made it, ‘He did not make me’? Or shall the thing formed say of him who formed it, ‘He has no understanding’?” Though the Potter is not mentioned, the Lord uses the metaphor to contend with those who deny His creative activity and His omniscience. In this way, the Lord affirms Himself as omniscient Creator without deterministic connotation. Third, in Isa. 45:9, the Lord pronounces woe, adding the question, “shall the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ Or shall your handiwork say, ‘He has no hands’?” The addressee is guilty of questioning *what* God is doing as well as denying His control via His anthropomorphic “hands.” This use of the metaphor makes no deterministic statement. Finally, in Isa. 64:8, Isaiah prays, “but now, O Lord, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand.” The prophet acknowledges God as Creator and Sovereign, but does not specify *what* the Lord does with the clay. The mere mention of the potter does not allow ideas to be imported.<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>138</sup> This may illustrate a practice the writer calls “one word theology” where the mere presence of a particular word (or idea), apart from syntax and context, is used as a port through which to import theological ideas. Frequent examples in the NT include “grace,” “elect,” “called,” etc. Unqualified occurrences must be interpreted in the light of qualified or explained occurrences. One example, to be shown in the next chapter, is that “grace” can refer specifically to the gifting of believers for their place of service in the Body of Christ, whether generally or in specific ministerial office. It is illegitimate to read an entire system of theology into any or every occurrence of the single, unqualified lexeme χάρις, “grace”—e.g., the “doctrines of grace”—based upon the mere presence of that single word in a particular verse. In his section on “false assumptions about technical meaning,” D. A. Carson states that “in this fallacy, an interpreter falsely assumes that a word always or nearly always has a certain technical meaning ...,” and adds that “one corollary to this fallacy is that some interpreters will go one stage further and reduce an entire doctrine to one word which they have understood to be a technical term. This is true, for instance, of many treatments of the verb *to foreknow*” (*Fallacies*, 45, 47). The mere *mention* of the Divine Potter does not promote nor prove any sort of biblical determinism.

The first part of Paul's question in Rom. 9:20 is taken *verbatim* from Isa. 29:16 in the LXX, but the second part only alludes to Isa. 45:9:

Rom. 9:20:	μὴ ἔρεϊ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι,	Τί με ἐποίησας οὕτως;
Isa. 29:16:	μὴ ἔρεϊ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι	[οὐ σύ με ἔπλασας]
Isa. 45:9:		τί ποιεῖς

The Hebrew text behind the question in Isa. 45:9 is *מַה עֹשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים*, “*what* are you making.”<sup>139</sup> Paul's opponent is asking a different question from the one in Isaiah. Both “*what*” and “*why*” are acceptable glosses for *τί*,<sup>140</sup> but Paul's opponent, instead of enquiring with uncertainty, is blaming God for the product based upon deterministic assumptions. Both attempts to invoke the divine potter metaphor by Paul's opponent are illegitimate.

Though Rom. 9:21, as noted, quotes no OT Scripture, a likely source is Wisdom of Solomon 15:7 (KJV): “For the potter, tempering soft earth, fashioneth every vessel with much labour for our service: yea, of the same clay he maketh both the vessels that serve for clean uses, and likewise also all such as serve to the contrary: but what is the use of either sort, the potter himself is the judge.”<sup>141</sup> Isolated from its context, readers likely applied the verse as if it spoke of God. However, in its context, the verse is speaking of a human potter making idols.<sup>142</sup> If this is the source behind Rom. 9:21, its isolation and misuse likely led some to believe that it had reference to the Divine Potter.

---

<sup>139</sup> From BHS, 746. The interrogative *מַה* is “*what?*” primarily, or “*how?*” It is prefixed to form *מַה־לָּךְ*, “*why*” (BDB, 552-54).

<sup>140</sup> BDAG, 1006-07.

<sup>141</sup> The writer first encountered this as a possible source for Rom. 9:21 in Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:491-92.

<sup>142</sup> Wisdom 15:4-6 (KJV): “For neither did the mischievous invention of men deceive us, nor an image spotted with divers colors, the painter's fruitless labor; the sight whereof enticeth fools to lust after it, and so they desire the form of a dead image, that hath no breath. Both they that make them, they that desire them, and they that worship them, are lovers of evil things, and are worthy to have such things to trust upon.”

These misuses of the potter metaphor contradict the Lord's own use of the metaphor which one may see in Jer. 18:8-10: "if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it." The Lord's message follows Jeremiah's observing a human potter stop the first vessel mid-process, in order to make an entirely different vessel out of the same clay (Jer. 18:4). This divine self-interpretation is significant for all applications of the potter metaphor. Moreover, misuse of the metaphor contradicts Paul's own view of the outworking of the metaphor of vessels honorable and dishonorable in the New Testament: "if anyone cleanses himself (ἐκκαθάρη ἑαυτὸν) from the latter,<sup>143</sup> he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21).

In both Rom. 9:20 and 9:21, Paul is likely dealing with statements or arguments he has heard previously. That such wrong ideas may occur and persist is similar to how some wrong ideas persist within Christianity. Many today think that "the Lord works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform,"<sup>144</sup> or "God helps those who help themselves" are somewhere in Scripture. The misquote of 1 Tim. 6:10 as "money is the root of all evil" is well-known. Such "ecclesiastical legends" take on a life of their own. There is nothing new under the sun.

---

<sup>143</sup> The NKJV and others translate "from the latter" from ἀπὸ τούτων. Other common translations include "these," "these *things*," or interpretive variations of that which is "dishonorable," e.g., ESV and HCSB. The genitive plural inflection (-ων) is common to masculine, feminine, and neuter genders, which makes identifying the pronoun's antecedent a challenge. The noun ἀτιμία ("dishonor") is feminine singular, which would be a more obvious antecedent for τούτων if it were also singular. The plural appears to look deeper into the previous context, possibly including "iniquity" (ἀπὸ ἀδικίας) in 2:19, and "profane, empty babblings" (τὰς δὲ βεβήλους κενοφωνίας) and "ungodliness" (ἀσεβείας) in 2:16. The plural likely summarizes all of the evil words and deeds mentioned in 2:16-20, from which believers are to depart, or shun, or purge themselves.

<sup>144</sup> An allusion to the hymn "God Moves in a Mysterious Way," by William Cowper written in 1773 ... [first] as a poem entitled "Light Shining out of Darkness": "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform" (from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God\\_Moves\\_in\\_a\\_Mysterious\\_Way](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_Moves_in_a_Mysterious_Way)).



Theologians have been affirming the argument of Paul's opponent as their own believing that it comes from Paul himself.<sup>145</sup> Though often used as a proof text for soteriological ideas passed off as "Christian" and "biblical," such misuse runs counter to Paul's argument, and affirms pagan ideas foreign to Scripture.<sup>146</sup> When the overall context of Romans 9 is properly interpreted, these verses are shown to be consistent with that context, i.e., God's sovereign choice of and covenant with Israel through whom He would fulfill His redemptive purposes. Paul also affirms their continuing relevance to God's plan, whether one feels Israel is more worthy of His choice than any other nation. To this end, a few interpretive notes are in order.

### **Ishmael Was a Believer**

Though not mentioned by name in Rom. 9, the idea that Ishmael was an unbeliever proceeds only from the theological necessity of some to interpret the passage as pertaining to

---

<sup>145</sup> See Albert N. Arnold and D. B. Ford, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1889), 233-34; C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans*, rev. ed., in *Black's New Testament Commentary*, ed. Henry Chadwick (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 175; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:491; Dunn, *Romans*, 557; Kruse, *Romans*, 384-85; Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans*, in *The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (NIGTC), Todd D. Still and Mark Goodacre, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 819; Moo, *Romans*, 602-03; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 365-66; Murray, *Romans*, 2:32-33; William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, in ICC, ed. S. R. Driver, A. Plummer, and C. A. Briggs (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1895), 260; Schreiner, *Romans*, 505-06. "Dialogue is a total loss unless you indicate who the speaker is" (William Strunk and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2000), 76.

<sup>146</sup> Kenneth M. Wilson provides a brief survey of religious and philosophical fatalism, the manifestation of which in Christian theology he calls DUPIED, or "Divine Unilateral Predetermination of Individuals' Eternal Destinies," in "Augustine's Conversion from Traditional Free Choice to 'Non-free Free Will,'" PhD Thesis, in *Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 111* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 11-12. He also documents ideas from Gnosticism, Stoicism, and other ancient sources, which made their way into Christian theology via Augustine. For example, Valentinus, a Gnostic, "taught the message of salvation was offered to all, but only the elect ... were empowered by God to accept the invitation and receive salvation" (13). Compare this with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter 11, XIV: "the grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls is the work of the Spirit of Christ." The Stoics taught that "moral responsibility stands compatible with strict determinism because human actions contribute to the fated causal chain" (16). Compare with Loraine Boettner: "a person's acts must be without compulsion and in accordance with his own desires and inclinations, or he cannot be held responsible for them," and "God's will for the course of events is the primary cause and man's will is the secondary cause; the two work together in perfect harmony" (*Reformed*, 193, 195). See also Wilson's summary of his thesis, *The Foundation of Augustinian-Calvinism* (Montgomery, TX: Regula Fidei, 2019).

individual soteriology, especially as it pertains to Isaac, who is mentioned (Rom. 9:6-9). In such an interpretation, Ishmael is identified as one of the “children of the flesh” and, therefore, not a believer. Paul's point in this case is a contrast between being solely a physical descendant (“flesh”; see Rom 1:3, 9:3, 5) and being a physical descendant about whom divine promises have been made, i.e., Isaac. The phrase “children of God” (τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ) is relational, not soteriological, in this context.<sup>147</sup> Here, Paul is not using “flesh” as a signifier of unbelief, as he does in Rom 7:5; 8:1, 5, 8-9.<sup>148</sup> The point of the chapter (together with chs. 10-11) is the blessed history, continuing relevance, and glorious restoration of the nation Israel (Rom. 11:26-27), not a supposed “spiritual Israel,” but the actual descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet, being a physical descendant does not guarantee individual salvation (Rom. 9:31-32); the gospel is “for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed ... ‘The just shall live by faith’” (Rom. 1:16-17; NKJV). The popular teaching of “election” of individuals to justification/salvation is absent from Rom. 9. Consider the following statements about Ishmael:

- he was promised to be multiplied (Gen. 16:10)
- he was named by the LORD (Gen. 16:11; acknowledged by Abram, v. 15)
- he was promised that “he shall dwell in the presence of all his brothers” (Gen. 16:12)
- he was blessed by Abraham (Gen. 17:18); acknowledged by God (Gen. 17:20)
- he was circumcised along with the rest of Abraham’s household (Gen. 17:23-27)
- he was still blessed, though exiled (Gen. 21:13, 18)
- he was heard by God (Gen. 21:17)
- he was blessed by God, Who was “with him” and he grew (Gen. 21:20; see Gen. 39:2; Josh. 1:17, 6:27; Judg. 1:19, 22; 1 Sam. 3:19, 18:14)
- he was not Isaac’s enemy (Gen. 25:9)
- he was “gathered to his people” (Gen. 25:17; see 25:8, 35:29, 49:33; Exod. 32:50)
- he died in the presence of all his brothers (Gen. 25:18)

---

<sup>147</sup> Consider Deut. 14:1-2: “You are the children of the Lord your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head for the dead. For you are a holy people to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.” Paul’s use of “children of God” to speak of the people of Israel, or those through whom God was make such a people, is legitimate. See also Exod. 4:22; Deut. 32:18-19.

<sup>148</sup> Dunn writes that σάρξ does not constitute “a disqualifying factor in itself, but [neither does it] constitute a qualifying factor in itself; divine sonship can neither be defined (nor disqualified) in these terms, that is, by natural or ethnic criteria” (*Romans*, 541).

Some make Ishmael a villain in the story of Abraham and Isaac, but the scriptural record argues otherwise. Ishmael was loved by Abraham and blessed by God, and all of the language used regarding him suggests that he believed in the LORD, just as his father Abraham did. Ishmael's scoffing at Isaac's weaning party is the single negative note against Ishmael (Gen. 21:9). Is sibling rivalry among children a mark of unbelief (or "reprobation")? Paul does use Isaac and Ishmael indirectly in an allegory to illustrate the superiority of the promise of salvation by faith over the law (Gal. 4:21-31). In this allegory, Hagar and Ishmael are used to *represent* the law, metaphorically "Mount Sinai." To use this as justification for the idea that Ishmael (or even Hagar) were unbelievers, in order to force a soteriological interpretation ignores both that this is an allegory, and that the Law was given centuries after Abraham, Isaac, and Ishmael had already been gathered to their people.

The descendants of Ishmael are identified as enemies of Israel in Psalm 83:6, but one should not confuse what is said about a nation of a man's descendants with what is true about the man himself. For example, though the Moabites were often the enemies of Israel (e.g. Judg. 3:12-30, 2 Kings 3:4), yet Ruth, a Moabite woman, believed in the LORD, and became an ancestor of David, and of Jesus Christ (Ruth 1:16-17, 4:17-21). After fleeing Egypt, Moses found haven among Midianites (Exod. 2:15-21), who had intermarried with Ishmaelites (Gen. 37:28).<sup>149</sup> The nation of Israel itself—physical descendants of Jacob—vacillated between faithfulness to the LORD, and gross sin and apostasy throughout its history. The conclusion from the biblical record is that God would fulfill His purposes through Isaac, and not Ishmael, though both were believers. Paul understood this in making his point.

---

<sup>149</sup> The Midianites descended from Midian who was one of Abraham's six sons by Keturah after Sarah's passing (Gen. 25:1-2).

## Jacob Have I Loved

First, in Romans 9:12-13, Paul quotes the first (Genesis) and last (Malachi) prophecies, both canonically and chronologically, in the Hebrew Bible regarding Jacob and Esau, forming a merism or *inclusio*.<sup>150</sup> This bookends his point, which was that God chose to fulfill His promises through the descendants of Jacob rather than those of Esau, the intent of the original prophecy. Later pronouncements of judgment upon (Obadiah) and rejection of (Malachi) the Edomites were based upon *that nation's* conduct centuries after the lives of the brothers. Prior to the Israelite monarchy, Edom had every right to reject Israel's reasonable request for passage during the Exodus (Num. 20:14-21); the LORD pronounced no judgment upon Edom for doing so.<sup>151</sup>

Second, the only time the “elder [nation] served the younger [nation]” was during the reign of David (2 Sam. 8:14; 1 Chron. 18:13; see 1 Kings 11:14-22), though Israelite dominance lasted for about a century after the end of David's reign (2 Chron. 21:8-10). Though the LORD said that Israel's desire for a king was a rejection of His theocracy (1 Sam. 8:7); nevertheless, God used the Davidic monarchy to present a type of His Son's future reign as Messiah (2 Sam. 7:12-14; Psalm 2), the ultimate Theocracy. David's temporary subjugation of Edom was not the fulfillment of the Genesis 25:23 prophecy, but only a picture of its fulfillment. Even during Jesus' earthly ministry, the vassal ruling power over the Israelite nation was the Herodian dynasty, who were Idumaeans, or Edomites. Jesus, a physical descendant of Jacob, was under the temporal, earthly authority of Esau during that time. The elder was not serving the younger. Because of a lack of lasting fulfillment, and that, with one exception—the reign of David—

---

<sup>150</sup> A merism is when “a writer mentions the extremes of some category ... to portray it in totality” (KBH, 302).

<sup>151</sup> After Edom's refusal, and just prior to entering the Land, the LORD reminded Israel, “You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he *is* your brother” (Deut. 23:7).

Edom, the elder, has not served the younger, all of this suggests that the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy of Gen. 25:23 is Jesus' future earthly reign as Messiah. Only then will the elder (Edom) finally serve the younger (Jesus) forever as the Edomite nation takes its place among all of the other nations who serve Israel's Messiah as King over all the Earth (see Amos 9:11-12).

Third, even after all of the machinations and manipulations within Isaac's immediate family (Gen. 25 and 27), by the time the estranged brothers reunited, both appear to have come to understand that the prophecy's significance had little to do with themselves as individuals (Gen. 33:3-16). Though Esau is called "profane" for selling his birthright (Heb. 12:16),<sup>152</sup> nothing states definitively that he was an unbeliever. He would have understood the covenantal significance of his own circumcision along with Jacob's. Remember that Peter called Lot "righteous," in spite of Lot's many weaknesses, faults, and errors (2 Pet. 2:7). The original Gen. 25 prophecy spoke of "nations" and "peoples," not the twin brothers as individuals.<sup>153</sup> There is nothing soteriological in Paul's reference to Jacob and Esau in making his point in Romans 9.<sup>154</sup> Likewise, Jacob's blessing the younger Ephraim ahead of the older Manasseh had no individual soteriological significance (Gen. 48:1-20), something that Jacob himself would have understood.

---

<sup>152</sup> "Profane" translates βέβηλος. BDAG's first definition regards what is "pert[inent] to being accessible to everyone and therefore void of real significance ... *worthless*" (173). Applied to Esau, selling his birthright showed a lack of "having an interest in transcendent matters" (def. #2). The writer of Hebrews is exhorting Jewish believers to persevere toward "better" things in the face of trial. This includes pursuing peace and holiness (12:14), and avoiding apostasy (12:15). The "root of bitterness" alludes to Deut. 20:18, and those "whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood." In Hebrews, abandoning Christ is compared with Israelite idolatry, both acts of apostasy. Esau illustrates that one who abandons Christ cannot return, i.e., having sold the birthright, Esau was later rejected from the blessing. See Heb. 6:4-6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, ... if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance." This falling away shows that one was never a believer, rather than teaching one can lose salvation. The writer's point is that there is no return from apostasy. He uses Esau as an illustration for that first-century historical context; he is not offering an anachronistic commentary on the state of Esau's soul.

<sup>153</sup> Noted by Morris, *Romans*, 356-57.

<sup>154</sup> As with the case of Isaac and Ishmael above, the argument against the spiritual state of individuals based upon the later actions of the nations which proceeded from them tends to be one-sided. Some will argue that Ishmael and Esau were unbelievers on this basis—e.g., Ishmaelites buying Joseph and taking him to Egypt, or later judgments pronounced upon the Edomites—but do not apply the same standard to Israel itself and its own

## No Contest

The LORD's purpose for the Exodus was not to instigate a contest for Pharaoh's soul to provide patristic interpreters with a paradigm or biblical proof texts for an individual deterministic soteriology. The status of Pharaoh's soul was never in question. According to the cultus of Egypt, Pharaoh received and accepted worship as deity. Moreover, his first words recorded in Scripture are "who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice ...? I do not know the Lord" (Exod. 5:2). Moses has been absent from the royal court for only forty years; it is likely that Pharaoh might have known him or, at least, heard of him, though sanitizing historical records or making certain names unmentionable are not unusual among the powerful. Pharaoh's daughter almost certainly so quickly identified the infant Moses as a Hebrew child because he was circumcised (Exod. 2:6). It is unlikely that Pharaoh's statement proceeded from ignorance.

In Exod. 4-14, in the two places where the LORD states, "I will harden" Pharaoh's heart, the purposes are so that he would not let the people go (4:21), and that the LORD would multiply His signs and wonders (Exod. 7:3).<sup>155</sup> In the two places where the LORD states the fact that "Pharaoh will not heed you" (Exod. 7:4; 11:9), His purposes are "so that I may lay My hand on Egypt," and "so that My wonders may be multiplied." In the cases of the first meeting (rod turned to a snake), and Plagues 1, 3, and 5, the text states simply that Pharaoh's heart "grew," "became," or "was" hard (Exod. 7:13-14, 22, 8:19, 9:7, 35).<sup>156</sup> After Plagues 2, 4, and 7,

---

wickedness and apostasy, such to the point where the LORD kept His covenantal promise to cast them out of the Land and disperse them among the nations (see footnote 78). One would not use, for example, the Babylonian captivity to argue that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, et al., were unbelievers. God is no respecter of persons.

<sup>155</sup> "I will harden" in Exod. 7:3 is *הִקְשִׁיחָהּ*, i.e., *הִקְשִׁיחַ* in the Hiphil stem (BDB: "be hard, severe, fierce"; 904).

<sup>156</sup> The Hebrew verbs in these verses consistently use the Qal stem which is "'simple,' in the sense that ... it is simple semantically in that notions of causation are absent," and is used in this context with a stative (rather than fientive) nuance (Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 362-64). These are statements of fact, semantically unadorned otherwise. They simply describe the state of Pharaoh's heart. The six examples alternate between *קָשָׁה* (four times) and *כָּבֵדָה* (twice).

Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Exod. 8:15, 32, 9:34).<sup>157</sup> After Plagues 6, 8-9, and prior to 10, the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart (Exod. 9:12, 10:20, 27, 11:10, 14:8).<sup>158</sup> The result of these latter divine hardenings is that Pharaoh did not heed Moses and let Israel go. The last record of the LORD hardening Pharaoh's heart was prior to his pursuit of Israel to destroy them in the desert (Exod. 14:8).

The hardness of Pharaoh's heart had little to do with Pharaoh himself, but was so that the LORD would: (1) glorify Himself (9:14, 16); (2) multiply His signs; (3) judge the nation of Egypt; (4) give the Israelites something to tell future generations about the glory and power of the LORD (Exod. 10:2); (5) show His power to the rest of the inhabited world (Exod. 9:16; see Josh. 2:9-11, 9:9); and (6) prevent Pharaoh from letting the people go until the LORD had finished His signs and plagues. Regarding the last point, human beings tend to yield and seek relief to avert or avoid adverse consequences (e.g., 2 Sam. 19:18-20; Rev. 6:16, 20:11). Pharaoh may have "caved" earlier during the plagues merely to avert further catastrophe prior the LORD's completion of His judgments (see Exod. 12:31).<sup>159</sup> The LORD did not harden Pharaoh's heart until the sixth plague, and Pharaoh hardened his own heart after the seventh.

---

<sup>157</sup> The stem in these examples is the Hiphil, which "is primarily ... [the] *causative of Qal*" (Kautzsch, ed., rev. A. E. Cowley, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* [GKC], [Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1910], 144). The verb in these instances is כָּבַד (or כִּבְּד), to "be heavy (BDB, 457). Pharaoh caused his own heart to be heavy.

<sup>158</sup> In all of these verses (and Exod. 4:21), the text shows the Piel of קָיַם, to "make rigid, hard, ... harden" (BDB, 304, II.5). Comparing the differences in lexical and verbal stems in the cases of either Pharaoh (Hiphil, כִּבְּד) or יהוה (Piel, קָיַם) hardening Pharaoh's heart, "the fundamental distinction between Piel and Hiphil is that the former signifies the bringing about of a state and the latter the causing of an event" (Waltke and O'Connor, *Syntax*, 437; they give Exod 8:11 as an example on 438, 12b). One might expect a difference in terminology used to describe human or divine activity; however, this difference should not be stretched to signify a deterministic interpretation. "Based on the way these various wordings for 'be/make stubborn' seem to occur in no particular pattern, are routinely used synonymously, and clearly refer to the same essential phenomenon (i.e., God's keeping Pharaoh from letting the Israelites leave Egypt until a time of God's choosing), it is not likely that any real semantic difference is intended by the three wordings" (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, in NAC, ed. E. Ray Clendenen [Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2006], 149).

<sup>159</sup> God's "purpose in preventing Pharaoh from giving in too easily and too early was, as [seen in] ... parts of the narrative, to allow himself fully to demonstrate his sovereignty over Pharaoh, the Egyptians, the land of Egypt itself, and the gods in which Pharaoh and the Egyptians trusted" (Stuart, *Exodus*, 146-47).

There is a lack of symmetry in the various hardenings during the progress of the plagues.

Pharaoh's heart—or salvation—was never the focus of the Plagues, nor the Exodus.

The LORD was the Initiator of the entire captivity, judgment, and Exodus as it pertains to the *nation* of the Egyptians. The LORD foretold the Egyptian Captivity several centuries before it occurred, telling Abram, “know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions” (Gen. 15:13-14). The LORD's “raising up” Pharaoh (Exod. 9:16) may be a case of synecdoche<sup>160</sup> where Pharaoh stands for the entire nation of Egypt. To “raise up” was common terminology for divine control of the rise and fall of leaders and nations,<sup>161</sup> regardless of their righteousness or lack thereof. Recall Habakkuk's protest to the LORD: “You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, and hold Your tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he?” (Hab. 1:13). The prophet questions how a holy God can use such an unholy nation, i.e., the Chaldeans (1:6) to execute judgment against His chosen people. The Lord may use whomever He pleases, however He pleases (e.g., Cyrus, Isa. 45:1; Ezra 1:1). This is Paul's point in quoting Exod. 9:16 in Rom. 9:17. Pharaoh was a mere pawn in the LORD's plan for the Exodus, and a small illustration of the greater point that “He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens,” without respect to the soul-status of the object of divine activity.<sup>162</sup> In the context of Rom. 9,

---

<sup>160</sup> “A synecdoche is the substituting of a part of something for the whole or the whole for a part” (Zuck, *Basic*, 151); it focuses “on something specific as a symbol of something larger” (KBH, 313).

<sup>161</sup> See Judg. 2:16, 3:9, 15; 1 Sam. 12:6; 1 Kings 11:14, 14:14; Jer. 50:41; Amos 6:14; Zech 11:16; in the NT, Acts 2:30, 13:22-23. After the LORD revealed the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel, he praised God, saying, “He removes kings and raises up kings” (Dan. 2:21); moreover, “the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes” (Prov. 21:1).

<sup>162</sup> In Scripture, the hardening or blinding of individuals, whether by God directly or through divine allowance, always occurs in the context of human unbelief, e.g., Acts 19:9; Rom. 1:21b, 28; 2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Thess. 2:10-12.



the LORD has shown mercy on Israel,<sup>163</sup> and He was and is just in doing so. The hardening of Pharaoh was a minor supporting point.

## Postscript

### No Question

A few syntactical notes are warranted in order to finish the rest of Romans 9 (22-33).

First, 9:22 asks no question, e.g., the translation “*what if*.” For such a question, see Rom. 3:3, τί γὰρ εἰ ἠπίστησάν τινες; (“For *what if* some did not believe?”). Second, Paul uses δέ to transition from the errors of his opponent back to his own affirmations.<sup>164</sup> Third, “but if” (εἰ δέ) provides an accurate translation, as Paul introduces a condition (first class with the indicatives ἤνεγκεν). Fourth, the participial phrase (θέλων) is concessive, i.e., “but if God, *though willing* to show his wrath and make his power known” (9:22).<sup>165</sup> This “if” (εἰ) clause forms the protasis of a

<sup>163</sup> Isa. 14:1: “For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. Jer. 30:18 (Context: restoration of Israel): “Thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob’s tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; The city shall be built upon its own mound, and the palace shall remain according to its own plan. Ezek. 39:25 (Context: restoration of Israel): “Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name.’” Ezra 3:11: “And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: ‘For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel.’ Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.” Ps. 98:1-3: “Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.” Luke 1:54: “He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy.”

<sup>164</sup> “The conjunction δέ does not mark the presence of semantic discontinuity as BDAG claims. The fact that semantic discontinuity or continuity may be present is indicated by their reference to ‘contrast or simple continuation,’ respectively. Either may be present, δέ does not mark its presence or absence. This is not to say that contrast is not present in many contexts where δέ occurs; ... the presence of the connective is not what brings it about. Contrast has everything to do with the semantics ... present in the context” (Runge, *Discourse*, 28). “Paul appears to use *de* with simple transitional force” (Moo, *Romans*, 604).

<sup>165</sup> The language of the concessive participial phrase in 9:22 is a likely allusion to 9:17: ἐνδείξομαι ἐν σοὶ τὴν δυνάμιν μου (“that I may show My power in you, “), with 9:22: ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὀργὴν καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῦ (“though willing to show His wrath and to make His power known”). As argued, even prior to the Exodus, Pharaoh was already a vessel of wrath prepared for destruction. The difference between 9:17 and 9:22 is that God, though willing to demonstrate His power (as He did in the case of Pharaoh), now endures the vessels of destruction so that He can make known “the riches of His glory” to both Jews and Gentiles (9:24). John provides

conditional sentence, which “has two parts: an ‘if’ part and a ‘then’ part. ‘IF’ = protasis; ‘THEN’ = apososis.”<sup>166</sup>

### No Missing Apodosis

In this part of Rom. 9, many interpreters affirm that this protasis does not have an apososis,<sup>167</sup> i.e., the “then” of the “if-then” interplay. However, removing some of the qualifying and dependent phraseology to shorten the sentence will make the sentence flow clearer, in order to reveal the apodosis. First, the protasis is “but if God endure the vessels of wrath.” The ἵνα+subjunctive (γνωρίση) clause begins an extended addition connected with an adjunctive/connective καὶ,<sup>168</sup> i.e., [if God endured]—also/and in order that He might make known ... upon the vessels of mercy.” The first clause is a statement of fact (ἦνεγκεν), and the second expresses purpose (ἵνα γνωρίση). Second, a series of dependent clauses extends the subjunctive purpose clause beginning with the neuter plural relative ᾧ (9:23). Its antecedent is σκεύη, “vessels (of mercy),” and is noted as comprising both Jews and Gentiles (οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν). Paul spends the next five verses (9:25-29) explaining his (and God’s) inclusion of the Gentiles among the vessels of mercy. Paul started with the relative ᾧ, then moved to οὗς,<sup>169</sup>

---

some explanation regarding “preparation for destruction”: “he who does not believe *is condemned already*, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). In historical context, Pharaoh had rejected יהוה, the God of Israel (Exod. 5:2), the pre-incarnate Jesus Who said: “most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58). Murray notes the allusion to 9:17 in 9:22 (*Romans*, 2:34). Chadwick A. Thornhill identifies the vessels of wrath as “unbelieving Israel” (“To the Jew First: A Socio-Historical and Biblical-Theological Analysis of the Pauline Teaching of ‘Election’ in Light of Second Temple Jewish Patterns of Thought,” PhD diss., Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013: 261-62).

<sup>166</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 682.

<sup>167</sup> See, e.g., Barrett, *Romans*, 176; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:492; Dunn, *Romans*, 558; Kruse, *Romans*, 386; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 260; Schreiner, *Romans*, 507; and Thornhill, “Second Temple,” 261.

<sup>168</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 671.

<sup>169</sup> The relative ᾧ (accusative plural) acquires its neuter gender from its antecedent σκεύη, which is a metaphor for human beings. After completing the metaphor, Paul changes to the masculine οὗς (accusative plural) because he is, in fact, writing of persons, not the earthen vessels of the metaphor. The string of relatives maintains the focus on the vessels of mercy: σκεύη ἐλέους → ᾧ → οὗς ... ἐκάλεσεν ... Ἰουδαίων ... καὶ ... ἐθνῶν.

with which he ties his validating quotes from Hosea and Isaiah together with the following chain of subordination and conjunction:

καὶ ἵνα γνωρίσῃ ... σκεύη ἐλέους, ἃ ... οὕς:	
ὥς καὶ	(9:25; “as also”; comparative/adjunctive; Hosea. 2:23)
καὶ ἔσται	(9:26; “and it shall be”; connective; Hosea 1:10)
Ἡσαΐας δὲ κράζει	(9:27; “but Isaiah cries out”; connective transition; Isaiah 10:22)
λόγον γὰρ	(9:28; “for the matter”; causal; Isaiah 28:22, LXX)
καὶ καθὼς	(9:29); “and just as”; adjunctive/comparison; Isaiah 1:9)

The entire string of relatives and conjunctions looks back to ἃ (9:23) and σκεύη within the parenthetical subjunctive clause (ἵνα γνωρίσῃ). With this understanding, the apodosis which follows the protasis is found in 9:30: “the Gentiles have attained to the righteousness ... of faith” (ἔθνη ... κατέλαβεν ... δικαιοσύνην ... ἐκ πίστεως). Put together with the qualifying clauses removed, the thought of 9:22-30, with protasis and apodosis intact, looks like this: “[protasis] but if God endured the vessels of wrath, and in order that he might make his glorious riches known to the vessels of mercy [‘whom’; parenthesis of OT Scriptures regarding Gentile inclusion], we shall say that<sup>170</sup> [apodosis] the Gentiles have attained to the righteousness of faith.”

One may see a similar structure in shortened form in Rom. 3:5: “[protasis] but if (εἰ δὲ) our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say?” (τί ἐροῦμεν;). The apodosis is in the form of a rhetorical question: “Is God unjust who inflicts wrath?”<sup>171</sup> Both present first-class conditions, but the difference between Rom. 3:5 and 9:22-30 is that the former

<sup>170</sup> After the extended protasis, Paul sets up the apodosis by asking a question in light of the facts he has just laid out in 9:23-29: “what shall we say then?” (τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν;). The following objective clause (ὅτι) requires something the object of which it can be, which ellipsis comes from the question, i.e., “we *shall say* [ellipsis] that (ὅτι) the Gentiles.” The objective clause, then, provides the apodosis. The question (Τί) sets up the apodosis by notifying the reader after such an extended protasis, and by looking for an answer.

<sup>171</sup> Paul follows the “what shall we say,” a response enquiry—most often in the form τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν—with a rhetorical question and then an emphatic denial (μὴ γένοιτο) structure of “response enquiry—rhetorical question—emphatic denial (RE-RQ-ED) three other times in Romans (6:1, 7:7, and 9:14). In two other cases, he follows the response enquiry with rhetorical questions and conditional sentences (Rom. 4:1-2 and 8:31).

presents an untrue condition, while the latter presents a true condition corresponding to reality.<sup>172</sup>

Wording the statements *as if* they were true shows more correspondence: “but if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *We shall say that* God is unjust to inflict wrath.” Here, the protasis and apodosis are together.<sup>173</sup> In Rom. 9:22-30, they are separated by the extended protasis. Though God was just to choose the Jewish people among the other nations via the Patriarchs to fulfill His purposes (9:1-21), yet the Gentiles are not excluded because righteousness is by faith (9:22-30; see Rom. 4:3-13), not genealogy. However, Jews, though so chosen, must also believe in the Lord (9:31-33).

Paul’s rejection of deterministic misinterpretations of his argumentation in Rom. 9:19-21 is consistent with the overall context and his flow of thought in that chapter. That context and flow may be summarized as follows: Paul desires the salvation of his fellow Israelites, and God was just to choose them through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to fulfill His redemptive purposes. He is just either in showing mercy or in hardening (though some might misinterpret Paul’s

---

<sup>172</sup> Rom. 3:5 does not meet the syntactic requirement for identification as a second class condition (contrary to fact), i.e., the lack of *ἄν* in the apodosis, though it is not true. The first class condition “indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 690). Paul’s opponent in Rom. 3:5 believes that his statement is true, though it is not. See Wallace’s full discussion (687-94). James L. Boyer concurs with this classification in both instances (“First Class Conditions: What Do They Mean?” *Grace Theological Journal* 2 (*GTJ*), no. 1 (Spring 1981): 93, 96).

<sup>173</sup> In Rom. 3:3-8, Paul addresses dialecticism, which may be seen as a conflict or contrast between a thesis and an antithesis. In some formulations, these two are in conflict and the result is a synthesis, which becomes the new thesis, and the process repeats itself, so that every thesis must have an antithesis. This may be seen in modern circumstances in the person always feeling it necessary to “play the devil’s advocate,” who cannot allow any assertion to pass without posing some opposite antithetical premise. According to his manifest dialectics, no assertion (thesis) may be judged as true until it has been verified by comparison with its antithesis (no matter how absurd it may be); an antithesis *must* be posed. In Rom. 3, Paul addresses one who argues that his unrighteousness (an antithesis) helps demonstrate God’s righteousness (the thesis). In that sense, he is “helping” God, and so protests, “why am I also still judged as a sinner?” (Rom. 3:7). The underlying thought is that the quality of anything is only determined by a necessary comparison with its antithesis, i.e., God is judged to be good or righteous only by comparison with that which is evil. The thought is that God *needs* evil to exist for Him to be judged as holy by comparison. This is why Paul’s dialectic opponent in Rom. 3:5-8 protests that: (1) God is unjust to inflict wrath (because of His need for evil); (2) God should not judge me as a sinner; and (3) some good comes out of my evil. However, evil is not necessary, nor does sin and evil “help” God. Dialectic thinking shuns absolutes, and good and evil are seen as interdependent. On the contrary, God’s holiness and justice are absolute, just as “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5) and Paul rightly rebuts: “certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?” Paul, regarding those who think such a way about God, concludes with, “their condemnation is just” (Rom. 3:8).

argumentation as asserting fatalistic ideas). Even so, God will show His glory and mercy upon Jews *or* Gentiles who believe (as shown in the prophets), but Israelites, though physical descendants of the promise, are excluded if they persist in unbelief.

### III. Consistent Context of Phrase Usage

#### The Phrase “Grace Given”

Regarding consistency of usage, Paul always uses the phrase “grace given,” with little variation in terminology, in the context of God’s gifting of believers for their function and service of the Body of Christ. In this matter also, Paul demonstrates the high degree of consistency he exhibits throughout the body of his Letters.<sup>174</sup> Paul uses the phrase to speak of His specific call from the Lord Jesus Christ to be the “Apostle to the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13).<sup>175</sup> He also uses it in a generic sense regarding others whom God has called to be ministers of the Word. Finally, he uses it regarding every believer’s gifting for their place and function in the Body of Christ. This phrase and its usage in such contexts have received little attention in biblical lexicography.<sup>176</sup>

Once this consistency is demonstrated, it will be applied to 1 Tim. 1:9 in order to properly interpret and apply that verse both in its immediate context and as it pertains to the larger

<sup>174</sup> “Sometimes the meaning of a word can change the meaning of the entire passage. Thus careful attention to the context and to Pauline usage elsewhere is crucial to accurate interpretation” (Schreiner, *Pauline Epistles*, 131).

<sup>175</sup> Other verses where Paul mentions this apostolic ministry without using the phrase include: (1) Acts 22:21: “then He [the Lord, v. 19] said to me, ‘Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles’”; (2) Acts 26:17: “I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you”; (3) Gal. 1:15-16: “but when it pleased God, ... to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles”; (4) Eph. 3:1: “I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles”; and (5) 1 Tim. 2:7: “I was appointed a preacher and an apostle ... a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.”

<sup>176</sup> No such category exists in BDAG (1079-81); Louw and Nida, *Domains*, 1:262; 2:299-300, 429, 569-70, 749-50; or Montanari, *Brill*, 2343-44; though H. Conzelmann does mention that “Paul’s special grace is his apostolic office .... He has received it (R[om.]. 1:5); it was given to him (R. 12:3; 15:15, cf. 1 C[or.]. 3:10” and footnotes (n. 192) “for this sense cf. 1 C. 15:10; G[a]l 2:9” (s.v., “*χάρις* κτλ.,” Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [TDNT], trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 10 Vols. [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964], 9:396). Any possible OT correspondence, e.g., Ps. 84:11, “the LORD will give grace and glory” (סֵן וְכְבוֹד יִתֵּן יְהוָה), and Prov. 3:34, “but gives grace to the humble” (וְלַעֲנָיִים יִלְעָנֵם יְהוָה) provides no match. The former context makes no specific application and stands alone in sense, while the latter speaks of a favorable disposition. Conzelmann summarizes that “*χάρις* is never a theological word in the LXX” (TDNT, 9:389), though this statement likely has a view toward NT usage. Hans-Helmut Esser largely follows this diachronic pre-NT analysis, but does provide a list pertaining to Paul’s “apostolic mission in particular (Rom. 1:5; 12:3; 15:5; 1 Cor. 3:10; Gal. 2:9; Phil. 1:7) as it is of the Christian life in general (Rom. 12:3, 6; 1 Cor. 1:4ff; 2 Cor. 4:15; 6:1; 8:1; 9:8, 14; Phil. 1:7),” though he mixes motifs, goes no further with the subject, and does not mention all occurrences (“Grace,” NIDNTT, 2:121).

theological context of Scripture. Since there are no traditional translational discrepancies, the English biblical quotations will revert to the New King James Version. There are no syntactical twists for this phrase; a simple biblical word search for “grace given” in English would reveal almost all of these occurrences.<sup>177</sup>

## Occurrences

### Paul’s Apostolic Office

#### Rom. 12:3

NKJV: “For I say, through the grace given to me (διὰ τῆς χάριτος τῆς δοθείσης μοι), to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”

Paul begins the section regarding the gifting of believers (Rom. 12:3-8) with an appeal to the grace given him. Though not as explicit in this case, through the grace given to him, he appeals to his apostolic authority<sup>178</sup> as one may see from subsequent occurrences. Paul knew the authority his office carried and used it to add gravity to his exhortations and teaching (see Rom. 11:13; 1 Cor. 9:1, 14:37). Though appealing to his authority, the exhortation toward humility presents no contradiction; elsewhere, Paul acknowledges his unworthiness for the office (1 Cor. 15:9). Paul is assertive in pointing to his apostolic credentials as a warning, but he does so

---

<sup>177</sup> George W. Knight III identifies the combination of “δίδωμι and χάρις” and lists most of the verses below but adds verses to his list which do not have this exact combination. For example, he lists: (1) 1 Cor. 15:57, “but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”; (2) 2 Cor. 8:16, “but thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus”; and (3) 2 Thess. 2:16, “may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, ... who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace.” In those instances which do manifest the “grace given” construction, he misses the ministerial context of the phrase (*The Pastoral Epistles*, in NIGTC, ed. Mark Goodacre and Todd D. Still [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992], 375). He takes “holy calling” as a call to a “holy life” (374).

<sup>178</sup> Sanday and Headlam recognize that the phrase speaks of Paul’s apostolic authority in Rom. 12:3, though they explore the phrase no further (*Romans*, 355). John Murray also ties it to Paul’s “apostolic commission,” noting, among others, Rom. 15:15-16; 1 Cor. 3:10; Gal. 2:9; and Eph. 3:7-8 as passages for comparison (*Romans*, 117). See also Longenecker, *Romans*, 928.

without pride. The last clause (“God has dealt ...”) deserves its own translational and theological analysis.<sup>179</sup>

### **Rom. 15:15-16**

NKJV: Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God (διὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ), that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

### **Gal. 2:7-9**

NKJV: But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me (γινόντες τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι), they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

### **Eph. 3:2-8 (3 occurrences)**

3:2, NKJV: If indeed you have heard of the dispensation<sup>180</sup> of the grace of God which was given to me (τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δοθείσης μοι) for you,

3:7-8, NKJV: of which [the gospel; τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, v.6] I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me (κατὰ τὴν δωρεάν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δοθείσης μοι) by the effective working of His power. 8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given (ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις αὐτῇ), that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.<sup>181</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> This phrase is often used as a proof text for the deterministic idea that faith is a gift, i.e., that God makes one believe (e.g., Murray, *Romans*, 2:316; Strong, *Systematic*, 782). However, such a view is not unanimous. After a detailed examination, Cranfield concluded that “μέτρον πίστεως in Rom. xii. 3 means ‘a standard (by which to measure himself), namely (his) Christian faith’. But, since the all-important thing in Christian faith is not the activity of the believer but the Object believed in, to say that the Christian is to measure himself and all things by his faith is really to say that he is to measure himself and all things by Jesus Christ. The μέτρον πίστεως is really Jesus Christ himself as the Standard and Norm” (“METPON ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans XII. 3,” *New Testament Studies* 8 [NTS], no. 4 [1962]: 351).

<sup>180</sup> “The dispensation” translates τὴν οἰκονομίαν which, in this verse, signifies “responsibility of management” which “Paul applies the idea of administration to the office of an apostle,” i.e., his own (BDAG, 697).

<sup>181</sup> H. J. Flowers recognizes the association between the grace given to Paul and his apostolic mission to the Gentiles in Eph. 3:1-13, but identifies grace in the passage with Paul’s unworthiness to be an Apostle, and makes no reference to any other occurrences of the phrase in Paul’s Letters (“The Grace Of God Given To Paul—A Study Of Ephesians III, 1-13,” *Review and Expositor* 25 [RevExp], no. 2 [1928]: 161-63).



## Generic Ministerial Office

### 1 Cor. 3:10

NKJV: According to the grace of God which was given to me (κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι), as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

In the context of various personality-based factions within the church at Corinth centered around one's preferred minister (1:10-12), Paul moves the argument toward the comparative irrelevance of such men, i.e. "who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed ...?" (1 Cor. 3:5); emphasizing that it is "God who gives the increase" (3:7). He moves from an agricultural metaphor (3:6-8) to the metaphor of an architect (3:10; ἀρχιτέκτων; "master builder") who participates in the construction of the church at Corinth, "you are ... God's building" (3:9). This is the context in which Paul identifies his function in the building of the Corinthian church as "according to the grace of God ... given to me," though he speaks of ministers generally: "I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it" (3:10). Though the context is ministerial, when Paul speaks of each one's work being tested by fire,<sup>182</sup> the passage is *applicable* to all believers.

### 1 Tim. 4:14

NKJV: Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you (χαρίσματος, ὃ ἐδόθη σοι) by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

---

<sup>182</sup> Though not named in this passage, this is the βῆμα, the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10) before which all believers will stand and be rewarded. The testing by fire mentioned in 1 Cor. 3 is consistent with the "seven spirits of God"—which symbolizes the church—being pictured as "seven lamps of fire ... burning before the throne" (Rev. 4:5) which had been "set" (ἔκειτο) in heaven (4:2). The church, as "the seven spirits of God" moves from its mission on earth (Rev. 3:1; note the parallelism with "seven stars" in 1:20), through the Rapture (4:1), immediately to their judgment of fire (4:5). After this, in Rev. 5:6, the Lamb presents the glorified church fit to reign with Him ("seven horns"), having attained full knowledge ("seven eyes"; 1 Cor. 13:12), and having completed the Great Commission ("sent out into all the earth"). So glorified, the church takes its place among the other redeemed peoples in heaven who await their return with Christ (Rev. 19:14). See Andrew W. Perkins, "The Seven Spirits of God in Revelation," term paper, Liberty University, 2023. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/127399333/Andrew\\_Whitney\\_Perkins\\_Seven\\_Spirits\\_of\\_God\\_in\\_Revelation](https://www.academia.edu/127399333/Andrew_Whitney_Perkins_Seven_Spirits_of_God_in_Revelation).

In 1 Tim. 4:14, Paul uses a different cognate, *χαρίσμα*<sup>183</sup> rather than *χάρις*, but the ministerial context is apparent, with possible reference to Timothy's "ordination" (see also 2 Tim. 1:6).<sup>184</sup>

## Believers' Service in the Body

### Rom. 12:6

NKJV: Having then gifts (*χαρίσματα*) differing according to the grace that is given to us (*κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν*), let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith.

Paul applies the very same phrase he applied to his own authority in 2:3 to believers pertaining to their place of service in the Body of Christ (e.g., 1 Cor. 12:12-30). *Every* believer has been so gifted (Rom. 12:3-8; see below); there are no idle spectators *within* the Body.<sup>185</sup>

---

<sup>183</sup> See below: Rom. 12:6, *χαρίσματα*, and 1 Cor 1:7, *χαρίσματι*. Regarding any supposed substantive difference between *χαρίσμα* and *χάρις*, there are no separate "gifts of the Spirit" which manifest themselves in Christian worship or service and a separate set of ministerial gifts. All such gifts, whether specifically labeled as from the Spirit or not, are ultimately from Christ (Eph. 4:7-11) and granted through the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11). Notice that "prophecy" and "teaching" are listed among service, exhortation, giving, leadership and mercy (Rom. 12:6-8). Likewise, the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Cor. 12:6-7—prophecy, ministry, teaching—are primarily ministerial, i.e., pertaining to offices of ministry, e.g., pastoral ministry. Though not all believers are called to specific ministerial office, some of the "uncalled" may be gifted as teachers or servants. The gifts match the calling, for the Overseer must be "able to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2; *διδασκτικόν*); however, the office has no monopoly on such gifts.

<sup>184</sup> Some of the issues regarding this determination are the differences between the hands of either the eldership (here) and Paul's hands (2 Tim. 1:6), whether this difference refers to two events or one, and whether such events are effective or merely symbolic. If two events, the place of the eldership in the proceedings suggests ordination, making the laying on of hands largely symbolic. See Knight III, *Pastoral*, 208-09, 370-71; William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, vol. 46, WBC, ed. Bruce M. Metzger (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 70-73, 261-63; Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, in NICNT, ed. Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 321-25, 457-70; and Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, in PNTC, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018), 250-53.

<sup>185</sup> The pastors and teachers in Eph. 4:11 are "for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (4:12): *πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. The difference in prepositions (*πρὸς* ... *εἰς* ... *εἰς*) suggests that the gifted men have a purpose to equip the saints, and that it is the saints who perform "the work of the ministry" with the goal of edifying the body. "Christ has given gifted leaders to the church not merely to do the ministry, but to invest their time heavily in developing and preparing fellow believers to engage in ministry to the body" (Arnold, *Ephesians*, 262). Agreeing are Best, *Ephesians*, 395-99; Campbell, *Ephesians*, 180-82; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 548-49; and O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 301-04; though this view is not unanimous, e.g., Baugh, *Ephesians*, 336-40.

### 1 Cor. 1:4-7

NKJV: I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you (ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ δοθείσῃ ὑμῖν) by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you come short in no gift (χαρίσματι), eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Eph. 4:7

NKJV: But to each one of us grace was given (ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις) according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Though the gifts Paul lists later in 4:11 are ministerial gifts, he is speaking to all the believers in Ephesus without specification (4:1-6). He moves from the general to the specific.

Primary Application: 2 Timothy 1:9

### 2 Tim. 1:9

GNT: τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ **χάριν, τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν** ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων

NKJV: Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

The first key to interpreting the verse is to recognize that the phrase “grace given” specifically shows a ministerial context, as one can see from the examples above according to Paul's style and usage. This provided the remote context for the verse. However, a more complete interpretation requires an examination of the immediate context of this Letter to Timothy, as well as the syntax of the other words and phrases within the verse.

### Immediate Context

In his Second Letter to Timothy, Paul is writing to deal with real problems (“tears,” 1:4) and, by implication, “fear” (1:7), a cause for shame (1:8), hardship (2:3, 12, 4:5), and opponents

bringing strife and false teaching (2:14-18). Paul's exhortation to Timothy to share with him in the sufferings of the gospel (1:8, also 2:9), and the statement that "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (3:12) suggest problems as well.

In order to encourage Timothy in a time of trial, Paul calls upon his own prayers for Timothy (1:3), Timothy's godly family heritage (1:5), his gifting by God (χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ) and ordination (1:6), and God's gifts of enablement, love, and peace of mind (1:7). After inviting Timothy to share with him in his own similar trials, made possible by the "power of God" (1:8; δύνανται θεοῦ),<sup>186</sup> Paul moves to the example and explanation of his and Timothy's calling to and gifting for the ministry (1:9).

## Syntax

"The One Who has saved us" refers to God (θεοῦ) in 1:8, with the articular substantival participles (τοῦ σώσαντος ... καλέσαντος), being adjectival modifiers in apposition. The combination of the article and two personal substantival participles connected by καὶ (TSKS) invokes the Granville Sharpe Rule, signifying both have the same referent, θεοῦ ("God"),<sup>187</sup> Who is both the Savior and Caller. The ministerial context of the verse (χάριν, τὴν δοθεῖσαν) makes the "holy calling" the call to the ministry, similar to, "Paul ... called *to be* an apostle" (Rom. 1:1, 1 Cor. 1:1; see also Gal. 1:15), rather than emphasizing the act of calling.<sup>188</sup> The dative κλήσει

<sup>186</sup> The English gloss "power" can be misleading. The core significance of the δύναμι lexeme is ability. Regarding δύνανται (verb), BDAG has "to possess capability ... for experiencing or doing someth[ing], *can, am able, be capable*" (261-62); δύναντις (noun) #2 bears this out as well: "*ability, capability*" (262).

<sup>187</sup> TSKS is the "The-Substantive-Kai-Substantive" construction. According to the Rule, both substantives "*always* refer to the same person" (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 270, author's emphasis). The most common misunderstanding of the rule is that the substantives equate to each other, i.e., Saving=Calling, which is not correct. The participles meet the requirements of the rule in that, "neither is *impersonal* ... neither is *plural* ... neither is a *proper* name" (272).

<sup>188</sup> This is similar to "circumstance involving an event, state, condition" (Danker, *Concise*, 202; s.v., κλήσις). Danker lists only 1 Cor. 7:20 for this nuance (as does BDAG, 549): "let each one remain in the same calling (ἐν τῇ κλήσει) in which he was called" (ἐν τῇ κλήσει ἣ ἐκλήθη ... μενέτω), though this is close to Eph. 4:1, "walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἣς ἐκλήθητε). Lenski

ἁγία is of reference, “*with reference to a holy calling.*”<sup>189</sup> The sense of being called *to* a holy calling (direction) would more likely be the accusative, probably with εἰς (see 2 Thess. 2:14, 1 Tim. 6:12).

Paul is setting up an analogy between salvation and the ministry, that neither their salvation, nor their calling as ministers, were meritorious, i.e., “not according to our works” (οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν). Having ministered with Paul (Acts 16:1-17:14; Rom. 16:21; 2 Cor. 1:1), Timothy was likely familiar with Paul’s doctrine regarding salvation apart from merit or works (Rom. 3:27-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9). This is the key point of Paul’s encouragement in this verse. Just as Timothy’s salvation was not meritorious, neither also was his call to ministry meritorious. Some Christians may think that, after a person is saved, there is a sort of “probation period,” and that those who score highest in “Christianity points”—those who love and study the Scriptures and become involved in the ministries of their church—God calls into the ministry of the Word. Such is not the case; Paul considered himself “not worthy to be called an apostle” (1 Cor. 15:9) and elsewhere declared that “God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty ... and the things which are despised ... and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence” (1 Cor. 1:27-29).

Paul reminds Timothy that his status in the ministry is not about his own choice, his own qualities, his own ability, his own desires, or his own strength. It was God—the same God Who had saved him—Who had called Timothy into the ministry without any reference to personal

---

understands the vocational context, as well as the distinction between salvation and calling in the verse, noting “who saved us and besides that called us to a holy calling or profession,” though he makes no formal categorization of the dative (*To Timothy*, 759).

<sup>189</sup> The phrase translated “with a holy calling” is a “pure” dative with no preposition. “To a holy calling” is a better translation, in this writer’s opinion. “Alternatively, the sense of the dative might be ... to describe the goal of calling as ‘to ....’” (Towner, *Letters*, 468). Towner called this construction a “dative of interest” (n. 54). Other identifications include instrumental (Knight III, *Pastoral*, 374).

merit or past accomplishment. In strong contrast, rather (ἀλλὰ) Paul tells Timothy that both of their ministries are according to God's divine purpose (κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν) and that God had gifted them for their respective ministries (καὶ χάριν, τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν), Paul as Apostle, and Timothy as a pastor.<sup>190</sup>

Paul uses the phrases “in Christ Jesus” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) and “before time began” (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων) in much the same way as ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου in Eph. 1:4. Using anthropochronistic language, Paul points out that God's plan for Timothy had always been the ministry of the gospel, lest Timothy begin to doubt in times of difficulty or persecution. It was for this ministry that he had been specifically gifted. One may see this eternal aspect in Paul's own view of his ministry: “when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace ...” (Gal. 1:15).<sup>191</sup> This understanding is not a Pauline invention, but may be seen in the call of Jeremiah: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations” (Jer. 1:4-5).<sup>192</sup>

The next verse (2 Tim. 1:10) states, “but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” “Has been revealed” translates φανερωθεῖσαν (aorist, passive, participle, acc. sing. fem.), which describes “grace” (χάριν). Though God's ministerial plan and gifting for Paul and Timothy are eternal, they were not revealed to them until now (νῦν), i.e., in this life, through the

---

<sup>190</sup> See also the ministerial context of χάρισμα in 1:6. For the most part, BDAG is not explicit regarding the unmeritorious nature of χάρις: 1. a winning quality or attractiveness ... 2. a beneficent disposition toward someone ... 3. practical application of goodwill ... 4. exceptional effect produced by generosity ... 5. response to generosity or beneficence” (1079-80), though Zodhiates gives “unearned and unmerited favor” among the list of glosses (*Dictionary*, 1469), and Paul Enns rightly states that “grace is the unmerited favor of God” (*Handbook*, 484).

<sup>191</sup> Compare “separated” in Gal. 1:15 (ἀφορίσας) with Rom. 1:1: “Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated (ἀφωρισμένος) to the gospel of God.”

<sup>192</sup> The LXX reads πρὸ τοῦ με πλάσαι σε ἐν κοιλίᾳ ἐπίσταμαί σε καὶ πρὸ τοῦ σε ἐξελεθεῖν ἐκ μήτρας ἡγίακά σε προφήτην εἰς ἔθνη τέθεικά σε. The affinity is conceptual rather than lexical.

gospel (διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου). Though Timothy had to learn about his calling, his call as minister did not begin at the point in time when he first understood it. Because Paul and Timothy were bound by time, it was necessary for Christ to appear, abolish death, and bring life and immortality to make a way for their ministry. Having accomplished these, “when He ascended on high, He ... gave gifts to men ... some apostles ... some pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:8, 11).

Paul continues with an example from his own ministry: the gospel (1:10) is that “to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles” (1:11), then he completes the thought, noting his own associated sufferings and his confidence in God rather than in himself (1:12). In this latter verse, notice especially the phrase “because He [God] is able” (ὅτι δυνατός ἐστιν). Paul continues his appeals to examples from his own and Timothy’s life experience. He reminds Timothy that his call to and gifting for the ministry are from God, and not based upon personal merit, nor contingent, nor a divine afterthought. Rather, they were the eternal plan of God for Timothy. It is as if Paul writes, “it is not about *you* Timothy; it is about God.<sup>193</sup> *You* did not call nor do you sustain yourself. Keep going and endure by faith in the enablement and power of God” (δυνάμεως ... δύναμιν θεοῦ ... δυνατός; 2 Tim. 1:7, 8, 12). The use of 2 Tim. 1:9 as a soteriological proof text for a supposed “effectual call”—or for the prehistoric election of only some humans to salvation<sup>194</sup>—fails on linguistic and immediate contextual grounds, and ignores Paul’s consistent use of the phrase “grace given” in contexts of ministry and service elsewhere in the New Testament.

---

<sup>193</sup> Yarbrough well states that “the energy and plumb line for Timothy’s duties lie entirely in God” (*Letters*, 360).

<sup>194</sup> See Erickson, *Theology*, 862; James Leo Garrett, *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical*, 2 Vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 2:314; Geisler, *Systematic*, 905; Grudem, *Systematic*, 819, 826; Knight III, *Pastoral*, 374; Lenski, *Timothy*, 761-62; Mounce, *Pastoral*, 481; Towner, *Letters*, 467-68; Zanchius, *Predestination*, 62.

## Conclusions

The advances in biblical linguistics must be applied to the text of Scripture and be allowed to affect the conclusions to which interpreters come with that application. Sensitivity to historical and literary contexts, syntax, lexicography, genre; and the recognition and understanding of figures of speech cannot be ignored. These linguistic principles are part of the so-called “grammatical-historical” method of biblical interpretation. In turn, these conclusions based upon the text of Scripture must be allowed to affect Christian theology, the content of the Christian faith. This theology must be “biblical” in the sense that it springs from the Scriptures, rather than being read into the Scriptures. No disjunction should exist between exegesis and systematic theology, or between what the Scriptures “say” and what our theology teaches. As God’s revelation, the Scriptures are meant to be understood and can be understood. The authority of Scripture is divine, rather than human. In interpreting them, one must not assume one’s conclusions.

In demonstration of such applications, first, when the preposition ἐν modifies the πληρ lexeme, it excludes nuances of filling and moves the semantic value toward fulfillment or completion. This construction should not be confused with Luke’s use of the lexeme and πνεῦμα in the Genitive of Content construction. Applied to Eph. 5:18, this shows that the translation “filled with the Spirit” lacks linguistic sensitivity and should be “be fulfilled (or complete) in the Spirit.” Also, Paul uses the prepositional phrase “in the Spirit” in his Letters to signify one’s status as a believer, just as he speaks of believers being “in Christ” (cf. Col. 2:10, “in Him”).

Second, the use of particular genders by biblical writers should not be glossed over. For example, many attempt to gain a deterministic interpretation from John 6:37 by equating the neuter gender (πᾶν ὃ) with the masculine, usually with appeal to John 3:6, 17:2, and 1 John 5:4.



When all of these passages are examined more closely, they reveal patterns of usage which show that John uses the neuter and masculine genders for specific purposes; he does not equate them, nor does he choose them at random. When the neuter gender in John 6:37 is not forced to stand in for the masculine, and the entirety of the sentence is understood in its linguistic context, Jesus' statements in the verse show a likely allusion to Psalm 2, a Messianic Psalm, verses 8 and 12b, specifically. Jesus is making a Messianic claim, though it is veiled before an unbelieving audience, according to His habit (see also Luke 17:21).

Third, biblical writers tend to practice lexical consistency, both in OT allusions and quotations, and among their own writings. The translation of ἀκοή as “report” in Rom. 10:16 and as “hearing” in Rom. 10:17 is unwarranted. That it stands for the message of the prophet (Isaiah) was demonstrated from Hebrew and LXX usage, and NT Greek lexicography confirmed that this meaning carries over into NT usage. The act of hearing is an unlikely significance for ἀκοή. Translating ἀκοή in Rom. 10:17 to stand as a supernaturally assisted act of hearing in order to create a proof text for a supposed “effectual call to salvation” fall short. The point of the passage is human instrumentality in the spread of the gospel.

Fourth, one must take the meaning of particular verses in their respective contexts in which they occur, with due consideration for their literary genre. In the example of Acts 13:48, one cannot properly interpret the verse by determining the voice significance of a single participle alone, i.e., the passive or middle voice of τεταγμένοι. Though the linguistic evidence favors the passive, the entire periphrastic construction (with ἦσαν) does not allow an appeal to any remote context to determine *when* some “were having been ordained,” while excluding an examination of the immediate context. There is no eternal appeal, e.g., “before the foundation of the world,” in the verse. However, one may look at the statement from the previous Sabbath—

that Paul and Barnabas persuaded some “to continue in the grace of God” (Acts 13:43)—to see that it speaks of saving faith (cf. Acts 17:34). As such, this being “in the grace of God” was when they “were having been ordained to eternal life” in v. 48. The fact that these “believed” (v. 48) shows the continuation of the faith that began in v. 43 (see 1 John 5:13). If this lacks the theological precision one might desire, one should remember that Acts is historical narrative by genre, rather than being a didactic treatise.

Fifth, the interpreter must properly handle matters of predication, i.e., statements of being or equation. In Rom. 8:29, “conformed” translates the adjective συμμόρφους, which is the predicate adjective in the sentence. The equative verb “to be” is elliptical, understood but not expressed. It describes those foreknown whom God predestined. Some interpreters attempt to amalgamate the “to be” and “conformed” into a passive verbal idea to say that the verse speaks of the progressive sanctification which believers experience *in this life*. However, Paul uses foreknowledge in this verse (as in Rom. 11:2) to speak of a prior *relationship*; he does not use it to speak of divine omniscience or mere prescience. Like Acts 13:48, no eternal appeal is present, nor should one ignore the immediate context. The prior relationship was while believers were experiencing progressive sanctification in Rom. 8:28, the previous verse, just as “all things work together for good to those who love God.” It is these ones, those already believers in prior relationship with God, whom He predestined to stand “conformed” to the Son’s image (8:29), so that the Son stands among (ἐν + plural) them. The verse speaks of believers’ glorification, for only at that time, after they leave this life, will they be so “conformed” to Christ’s image.

Sixth, word position or order works differently in Greek than in English. Nevertheless, this does not allow translators to move words around *contrary* to the syntax of the language. In 1 Pet. 1:1-2, the word “elect” occurs early in 1:1, where it modifies “pilgrims (of the Diaspora).”

The transplant of “elect” to make it appear that it is modified by the three prepositional phrases in 1:2 contradicts normal Greek word order, syntax, and context. The three prepositional phrases modify the greeting which follows, i.e., “grace to you and peace be multiplied.” Comparison with 2 Pet. 1:2 shows that the greeting may be modified by prepositional phrases. That the three phrases in 1 Pet. 1:2 come before the greeting places them in “marked” position, according to the principles of discourse analysis. This argues against any theological reference to 1 Pet. 1:1-2 to promote the idea of divine “election according to foreknowledge.”

Regarding divine foreknowledge, Peter’s first use of the concept was at Pentecost, where he argues that the Crucifixion of Jesus was “by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23). In his two uses in 1 Pet. 1, similar to Acts 2:23, it is always associated with Christ’s sacrifice. One finds “the foreknowledge of God” with the “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” in 1:2. Later in the chapter, after mentioning that believers were redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ,” Peter follows by saying that Christ was “was foreknown before the foundation of the world.” Peter always speaks of divine foreknowledge in a “Christo-sacrificial” context, i.e., that Christ’s coming as the “suffering Servant”—rather than the conquering King—was God’s plan A regarding His First Advent. This point was especially significant to a Jewish audience, whether those to whom Peter spoke at Pentecost or to whom Peter wrote in his First Letter.

Seen together and harmonized, neither Paul’s nor Peter’s writings on divine foreknowledge teach any “election (or predestination), according to foreknowledge” to justification/salvation. Such fatalistic/deterministic interpretations have been forced upon the Scriptures; they do not proceed from them. According to Scripture, those foreknown were in a prior relationship with God in Paul’s writings, either the Jews prior to Paul’s writing Romans (11:2), or believers

in Jesus Christ prior to their glorification (8:28-29). In Peter's speeches and writing, it is Christ and His sacrifice which were foreknown by God the Father. Jesus Christ came to earth as the suffering Servant (e.g., Isa. 52:13-53:12); His coming again as the conquering King remains yet future (see Rev. 19:11-16). This important distinction warranted repetition to Jewish audiences who were expecting the latter during Christ's First Advent. Their expectation was proper, though they misunderstood the timing of those events.

Such consistent linguistic usage among biblical writers brings matters of style to the forefront. Paul's consistency of expression and chosen terminology across the body of his Letters was demonstrated by three linguistic phenomena: resumptive repetition, interrogative parallelism, and context of usage of the phrase "grace given." Regarding the first, Paul showed a tendency to repeat certain key words or phrases in order to resume the flow of thought after the insertion of intervening material. Examples include three syntactically identical occurrences, Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:20 and 2:13; and three syntactically non-identical occurrences, Rom. 3:25-26 (difference in prepositions); Gal. 2:6 (difference in case); and Eph. 2:1, 5 (difference in person). The primary application pertained to Eph. 1:4, where the syntactically identical resumptive repetition of ἡμᾶς indicates that there is one clause, not two. The infinitive phrase εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ is the direct object of "chose" (ἐξελέξατο) rather than just the first occurrence of ἡμᾶς. Moreover, with rare possible exception, Paul does not use the simple infinitive εἶναι to express purpose; rather he uses εἰς τὸ εἶναι, as one may see in Eph. 1:12 (see Appendix A).

Moreover, these ones whom God chose to be holy and blameless in His presence were "in Christ before the foundation of the world." This form of expression uses time-bound terminology, e.g., "before," so that God's time-bound, finite creatures might understand His

timeless eternity. Though believers were not always “in Christ” in their temporal existence, from the divine, timeless point of view, they were “in Christ from the foundation of the world.” The writer calls such time-bound expressions of divine eternity “anthropochronisms.” It is important to distinguish between the divine and human points of view in the various passages of Scripture. It is an interpretive error to project such expressions back onto the eternal and to “time-bind” God or to attribute some form of finiteness to Him. Most deterministic interpretations depend on a time-bound God Who looks into the future, Whose acts require sequence, or Whose “foreknowledge” is merely prescient, rather than being biblically relational or Christo-sacrificial.

Taken together, these exegetical facts show that Eph. 1:4 speaks only of believers—only those *already* “in Christ”—and God’s determination of their glorification. There is no hypothetical, theoretical, or theological mass of unsaved humanity in the context out of whom God chooses to save the few. The entire context of Eph. 1:3-5 carries this futuristic glorification theme with 1:3 speaking of the believer’s spiritual (rather than earthly and tangible) blessing in the heavenly places, a place to which those alive on this earth are yet to go. That the text says that God has already blessed us in this manner is anthropochronistic, similar to how Eph. 2:6 speaks of believers “in Christ Jesus” already being seated together with Christ in the heavenly places, both occurrences being futuristic or subsequent anthropochronisms. Eph. 1:5 shows that God has predestined those in Christ to the Adoption, an event which is yet future for believers alive today, and involves the redemption of their bodies (Rom. 8:23; cf. 1 Cor. 15:42-44; Phil. 3:21). Moreover, Eph. 1:11 teaches that those in Christ have been predestined to an inheritance, the reception of which is yet future (cf. 1 Pet. 1:4).

The significance to Pauline (and systematic) theology is that Paul is consistent in how he speaks of predestination. It is not enough to ask if one believes in predestination, but one must add, the predestination “of whom” and “to what.” Taking Rom. 8:29, Eph. 1:4, and 1:11 together, Paul consistently speaks of the predestination of believers—those already “in Christ”—to their glorification, which involves final conformity to the image of God’s Son (Rom. 8:29), the adoption, or the redemption of their bodies (Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:23), and the reception of their inheritance (Eph. 1:11). Elsewhere in Paul’s Letters, this glorification—which is the end and purpose of believers’ progressive sanctification in this life—also involves being perfectly holy and blameless in God’s very presence (Eph. 1:4; cf. Eph. 5:27), and possessing a perfected relational knowledge of God (1 Cor. 13:12). Any claim to a biblical basis for Augustinian determinism finds little support in these contexts when modern exegetical methods are applied.

With the deterministic, soteriological misuse of these verses exegetically and contextually excluded, why is Paul’s teaching on the believer’s glorification so prominent in his Letters, especially its part in the plan of the eternal, timeless God? Approximately two millennia after the revelation of the New Testament, believers take for granted that they will go directly into the presence of God in heaven when they die (cf. 2 Cor. 5:8). However, this was something new at the time it was revealed. Prior to the death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ, the departed proceeded to the underworld, called *Sheol* (שְׁאוֹל) or Hades (ᾍδης).<sup>195</sup> Recall the departed Samuel’s protest to Saul after the medium had seen “a spirit ascending out of the earth,” when he said, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” (1 Sam. 28:13, 15), as well as Jonah’s poetic description of death (2:6). Prior to His own death, Resurrection, and Ascension; Jesus

---

<sup>195</sup> *Sheol* is “the abode of the dead ... [and] designates both the grave and the netherworld, particularly the latter ... a place, one beneath the earth’s surface to which people descend at death” (NIDOTTE, 4:6). *Hades* is “the nether world ... place of the dead” (BDAG, 19). One might consider Enoch and Elijah special cases, but these exceptions should not disallow the general principle from the majority of Scripture.

spoke of the rich man and Lazarus being “in Hades” (ἐν τῷ ᾗδῃ) and Abraham’s bosom, respectively. Even just prior to His death on the cross, Jesus said to the repentant thief, “today you will be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43), which refers to Abraham’s bosom in Hades. If one wishes to argue that “paradise” in this verse refers to heaven, what does one do with Jesus’ statement immediately after His Resurrection, “I have not yet ascended to My Father” (John 20:17)? Consider Eph. 4:9, where Paul mentions that Christ “first descended into the lower parts of the earth.”

In that same context, one may take the phrase “when He ascended on high, He led captivity captive” (Eph. 4:8) to speak of Jesus’ taking the pre-Resurrection saints from Abraham’s bosom up to heaven with Him to begin the era of immediate, direct access to the presence of God when believers pass from this earth. It is understood that there is some debate about these verses and this point of view, but such an understanding puts Paul’s frequent reference to believers’ glorification and its various aspects—something taken for granted today—into a historical context. Because it was new, Paul taught it often. Unfortunately, these glorification passages have been largely misinterpreted and misappropriated to speak of the justification of a hypothetical pre-historic group—the elect—contrary to established principles of interpretation.

Paul’s theology of adoption is futuristic. To speak of believers being “adopted into the family of God” is improper, seeing becoming one of God’s children is pictured using the metaphor of a birthing act in both Testaments. Though believers in Jesus Christ are presently children of God (1 John 3:2) and have the legal authority to be so (John 1:12), the Adoption is attached to the redemption of the bodies of believers in Jesus Christ in Rom. 8:23, which makes this an aspect of their future glorification. Applying Jesus’ teachings about preparing a place for

believers and returning for them to bring them to His Father's house in John 14:2-3 commends the "orphanage metaphor" to describe the interim period while they are still on this earth, especially Jesus' statement in John 14:18 regarding not leaving them as "orphans." According to this metaphor, the event called "the Adoption" speaks of the culmination and completion of the process. When Paul speaks of adoption as it pertains to Israel, Gal. 4:4-5 show that the purposes of God sending His Son was to redeem those under the law and that they might receive the adoption, which form a sequence. Israel's adoption follows their redemption, which follows the Incarnation. In this way, the Adoption pertains to Israel (Rom. 9:4) and likely refers to her glorious restoration (Rom. 11:26-27). It would take an act of adoption to restore (Hos. 1:10) a previously disinherited son (Hos. 1:8-9).

The documentation of the second phenomenon, interrogative parallelism, in both its twelve symmetric and eight asymmetric occurrences, demonstrated that the various parallel questions were all asked from the same point of view, either from Paul or his rhetorical opponent. When the consistency of this phenomenon was applied to Rom. 9:19-21, it showed that the question in Rom. 9:21 came from Paul's diatribal opponent, and not from Paul himself. It is the third question from the opponent, being made parallel to the second question via ἢ ("or"), left untranslated in the KJV, et al. The context makes clear that the questions come from the opponent, e.g., "you will say to me" (9:19) and "O man, who are you to reply against God?" (9:20). The three pragmatic statements made by Paul's opponent are the following: (1) God's will is irresistible; (2) God made me this way; and (3) the Divine Potter unilaterally makes a vessel for honor or dishonor. The opponent's third question likely finds its origin in a verse from the Apocrypha taken out of context (Wis. 15:7). These three arguments have been taken up by



deterministic theologians as if Paul were affirming them. In doing so, they have placed themselves in opposition to Paul and his theology.

The third linguistic phenomenon is Paul's use of the phrase "grace given." In every instance where Paul uses the phrase, it is in the context of: (1) Paul's office as Apostle, most often as Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom 12:3; 15:15-16; Gal. 2:7-9; Eph. 3:2, 7-8); (2) of ministers of the Word generally (1 Cor. 3:10; 1 Tim. 4:14); or (3) of believers, generally, regarding their gifting for service in the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:4-7; Eph. 4:7). With reference to 2 Tim. 1:9, Paul applies the phrase "grace given" to himself and Timothy regarding their respective ministerial offices, Paul as Apostle and Timothy as pastor. This understanding fits the context of Paul's reminding and encouragement to Timothy in a time of trial. In the verse, Paul reminds Timothy that God is not only the One Who saved them, but also the One Who called them with reference to their holy ministerial vocation. This calling was not meritorious ("not according to our works"), but it was the eternal God's purpose for both Paul and Timothy "in Christ Jesus before time began" (an antecedent anthropochronism). Timothy's circumstances were neither a divine afterthought, nor were they dependent in any way on Timothy. Paul encourages Timothy toward an "upward focus" pertaining to God's unmerited call and enablement, rather than an "inward focus" upon Timothy's own circumstances or inability, over which he has no control. This exegesis shows that deterministic uses of the verse, such as to promote a supposed "effectual call to salvation" or to use "grace" as a catch-all for deterministic theology do not proceed from the verse when "grace given" is properly understood and the context in which the verse stands is considered.

This thesis shows that Paul interprets Paul (and Peter interprets Peter, and John interprets John, etc.) with a marked consistency, and without the necessity to twist word meaning, to

isolate verses from their immediate and remote contexts, or to force ideas into his Letters which are foreign to Paul's own context and style of expression. One should not confuse Augustine's theology with Paul's own theology.

It is unlikely that systematic theologies will change in the face of biblical, exegetical, and contextual evidence to the contrary. The use of the verses examined as proof texts and the foundation for the tenets of their system is too valuable to abandon. The academic, intellectual, and scholarly reputations—and denominational pensions—of too many have been founded upon and maintained by an adherence to Augustinian theology, often for several decades. Any large-scale theological paradigm shift<sup>196</sup> is unlikely.

Modern systematic theologies provide answers to almost any theological or philosophical question one might ask or think to ask (to which their enormous page counts and number of volumes attest). In that, they are to be commended for their comprehensiveness. However, they

---

<sup>196</sup> The term “paradigm shift” comes from Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd. ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Regarding the revolutionary shifts which came from the work of Copernicus, Newton, Lavoisier, and Einstein, Kuhn writes that “each of them necessitated the community’s rejection of one time-honored scientific theory in favor of another incompatible with it. Each produced a consequent shift in the problems available for scientific scrutiny and in the standards by which the profession determined what should count as an admissible problem available or as a legitimate problem-solution. And each transformed the scientific imagination in ways that we shall ultimately need to describe as transformation of the world within which scientific work is done. Such changes, together with the controversies that almost always accompany them, are the defining character of scientific revolutions” (6). This writer was introduced to Kuhn’s work through Vern S. Poythress, “Science and Hermeneutics” in *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*, ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 430-531. Pertinent to this thesis, Poythress writes that “changes in hermeneutical method might result in revolutions in either systematic theology or exegesis or both ... exegesis and systematic theology belong together, in one large-scale project of understanding the Bible better. But in current scholarly practice, the two disciplines have their own distinctive subcultures, so that an analysis of patterns of development and revolution must to some extent treat the disciplines separately” (“Science,” 477). Turabian adds that “no more than five centuries ago, the search for better understanding based on evidence was often regarded as a threat. Among the powerful, many believed that all the important truths were already known and that the scholar’s job was to preserve and transmit them, certainly not to challenge them. If new facts cast doubt on an old belief, the belief usually trumped the facts. Many who dared to follow evidence to conclusions that challenged authority were banished, imprisoned, or killed. Even today, those who reason from evidence can elicit anger among those who hold cherished belief ... we believe not only that we may question settled belief but that we *must*, no matter how much authority cherishes them—so long as we support our answers with sound reasons based on reliable evidence” (*Manual*, 134; author’s emphasis). This might remind one of Felix Manz and Balthasar Hubmaier, who were executed by Reformed Protestants for the crime of following the Scriptures in relation to their Anabaptist faith in 1526 and 1528, respectively. Hubmaier’s wife was executed three days after her husband by drowning in the Danube.

provide answers to questions which the Scriptures themselves neither ask nor seek to answer. In this they err by going beyond the Scriptures. Then, when such answers are forced back upon and into the Scriptures, they commit a more dangerous second error.

The writer concludes by borrowing from the Apostle James: “But someone will say, ‘You have exegesis, and I have theology.’ Show me your theology without your exegesis, and I will show you my theology by my exegesis.”

וְיִקְרָא-לוֹ בַּיּוֹם-הַהוּא יִרְבֶּעַל לְאמֹר יְרֵב בּוֹ הַפַּעַל כִּי נִתְּן אֶת-מִזְבְּחוֹ

εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ

## Appendix A: Every Occurrence of εἶναι in Paul's Letters

The infinitive of εἶμι, εἶναι, occurs fifty-four times in Paul's Letters in three different constructions: forty-three times as the simple infinitive, eight times in the εἰς τὸ εἶναι construction, and three times in other articular constructions. Often called "being verbs," other terms include "stative verbs" or copula, though this study will follow Wallace's term "equative."<sup>197</sup>

### Simple Infinitive

The "simple" infinitive is anarthrous and free from prepositional attachment. Paul uses the simple infinitive εἶναι in phrases which function as subjects,<sup>198</sup> objects,<sup>199</sup> complements, etc., but not purpose.<sup>200</sup> Where the infinitive is elliptical, the equative verb is understood but not expressed. In double accusative constructions, Wallace acknowledges that "although such elements are lacking, one should normally translate the construction with 'as,' 'to be,' or 'namely' between two accusatives."<sup>201</sup> Being equative, εἶναι often takes subjects,<sup>202</sup>

---

<sup>197</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 39 (see also 40, B.1 for further definition and examples). Regarding "stative," Wallace states that "the equative verb does not imply action, but a state" (38), he also calls equative verbs "copulas" (412). The terms are interchangeable, depending on the author's era and preference. Boyer uses the term "predicative verb" but mentions "copula" in explaining it (James L. Boyer, "The Classification of Infinitives: A Statistical Study," *GTJ* 6, no. 1 [Spring 1985]: 4-5). Eugene Van Ness Goetchius also calls these "equative verbs" (*The Language of the New Testament* [New York, NY: Scribner's, 1965], 44).

<sup>198</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 192-97.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 602, 3.

<sup>200</sup> For a possible exception, see 2 Cor. 9:5 below.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 184. For ὥς, see 1 Thess. 2:7 below. Goetchius translates ὁ πατήρ ἀπέσταλκεν τὸν υἱὸν σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου (1 John 4:14) by adding the elliptical "to be": "The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (*Language*, 142).

<sup>202</sup> Older grammars called what functioned as the subject of the infinitive the "infinitive of reference" or "of general reference," stating "the accusative used with the infinitive is not properly the 'subject' of the infinitive, but is ... used to describe the person connected with the action" (Dana and Mantey, *Manual*, 93). This was probably based upon linguistic rules—e.g., only a finite verb can have a subject—rather than on observable usage (see Robertson, *Grammar*, 1082-85). Whatever entity is performing the action of the infinitive is its subject, regardless. Boyer called this "the *logical* subject, the doer of the action or the possessor of the condition expressed by the

predicate adjectives, and predicate nominatives.<sup>203</sup> With the double accusative of object complement, Wallace states that “frequently the complement is an adjective. When this is the case, it is always a predicate adjective”<sup>204</sup> and “a predicate nominative can occur only with an *equative* verb.”<sup>205</sup> The identification of infinitive phrases as “complements” does not preclude their having direct objects.<sup>206</sup> Though, according to Boyer’s understanding, a “large number (79) of infinitives have as their subjects an accusative direct object of the main verb,”<sup>207</sup> it is more coherent to regard the entire infinitive phrase—with its subject, object, or predicate—as the direct object. For example, in Rom. 16:19 below, “I want *you*” makes little sense in context, but “*you* to be wise concerning the good” makes sense regarding *what* Paul wants.

In five cases, one finds a prepositional phrase functioning as the predicate. Though not a substantive or an adjective, such phrases do not disrupt or negate their predicate function. Such phrases as “under sin” (Rom. 3:9), “under the law” (Gal. 4:21), “with Christ” (Phil. 1:23), “among you” (1 Cor. 11:19), and “in silence” (2 Tim. 2:12) make sense regardless of nomenclature. Because all of these five show physical or logical location, they may be called

---

infinitive” (19-20; writer’s emphasis). BDF cut through the semantic fog and simply refers to it as the “subject of the infinitive” (e.g., 211 §410). Wallace also calls it what it is, the “Accusative Subject of the Infinitive” (*ExSyn*, 192). This thesis will simply call it the “subject” (of the infinitive), especially since not all subjects or predicates of infinitives are in the accusative case.

<sup>203</sup> Robertson calls such predicates “predicate nominatives” and “predicate accusatives” according to their respective Greek cases (*Grammar*, 1082). This writer will follow English usage, in that a predicate nominative is nominal, i.e., that which pertains to a noun or substantive, while the predicate adjective pertains to an adjective or non-adjectival descriptor. This is to avoid confusion between syntactic functions and the Greek cases.

<sup>204</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 184.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>206</sup> “Many verbs take an infinitive as a complement to their meaning; in a sense, the infinitive functions as the direct object of the verb” (Boyer, “Classification,” 6). See also BDF, 201-05.

<sup>207</sup> Boyer, “Classification,” 20. “As a general rule, the subject is omitted when it is the same as the subject of the governing verb, or when it is the same as the object of the governing verb, or when by reason of its general, indefinite character or its easy inference from some other portion of the sentence, it is sufficiently clear” (Clyde W. Votaw, “The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek,” PhD Thesis, University of Chicago, 1896: 58).

“predicate locatives,” though Lane C. McGaughey called such constructions “predicate adverbs.”<sup>208</sup> Together, predicate nominatives provide identification, predicate adjectives description, and predicate locatives location.

### With Lexemes of Volition (εὔχομαι, θέλω, ἐπιθυμέω)

#### Rom. 9:3

ἠϋχόμεν γὰρ ἀνάθεμα εἶναι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ...

For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ ...

The use of the nominative case (αὐτὸς ἐγὼ) is rare, but shows Paul’s rhetorical intensity in emphasis where one might expect the accusative.<sup>209</sup> The nominatives are not the subject of ἠϋχόμεν (from εὔχομαι, “pray, wish, long for”). The infinitive phrase—“I myself to be accursed”—is the direct object of ἠϋχόμεν and is *what* Paul wishes, indicating the strong degree of feeling Paul had regarding his fellow Jews coming to faith in Christ (Rom. 9:32).

#### Rom. 16:19

θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς σοφοὺς εἶναι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.

But I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.

The infinitive phrase “you to be wise ... simple ...” (ὕμᾶς σοφοὺς εἶναι ... ἀκεραίους δὲ ...) is the direct object of θέλω (“I will”). “You” (ὕμᾶς) is the subject of the infinitive while “wise” and “simple” are the accusative plural predicate adjectives.

<sup>208</sup> Lane C. McGaughey, “Toward a Descriptive Analysis of Εἶναι as a Linking Verb in New Testament Greek,” PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1970: 2.

<sup>209</sup> This is probably what Wallace would call a “nominative in apposition to oblique cases.” Similar to “the Seer of Revelation,” Paul is using “this to emphasize the word in the nominative” (Wallace, *ExSyn*, 62). Though Votaw states that “when the subject of the infinitive is expressed it is always in the accusative case,” instances like this should move “always” toward “almost always” or “usually” (“Use,” 58; Boyer accepts Votaw’s statement as a proof, “Classification,” 23-24). However, the statement may be true for non-equative verbs, though this qualification was never given. “If the infinitive is accompanied by a nominal predicate or a modifying word or phrase agreeing with its subject, the latter is never and the former is not always the basis for altering the construction to the acc. with the infinitive. In other words, the modifiers must, and the predicate can, be in the nom. as in classical: R[om.] 9:3” (BDF, 209). See Gal. 2:9 and Phil. 4:11 below.

**1 Cor. 7:7**

θέλω δὲ πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἶναι ὡς καὶ ἐμαυτόν.  
For I wish that all men were even as I myself.

The infinitive phrase “all men to be as I myself” (πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἶναι ὡς καὶ ἐμαυτόν) is the direct object of θέλω (“I will”), with “all men” as the subject of εἶναι. Though a phrase of comparison, ὡς καὶ ἐμαυτόν still bears a descriptive predicate relationship to πάντας ἀνθρώπους.<sup>210</sup>

**1 Cor. 7:32**

θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀμερίμνους εἶναι.  
But I want you to be without care.

The infinitive phrase “you to be without care” is the direct object of θέλω (“I will”). “You” (ὑμᾶς, accusative plural) is the subject of the infinitive, while “without care” (ἀμερίμνους) is the accusative plural predicate adjective.

**Gal. 4:21**

Λέγετέ μοι, οἱ ὑπὸ νόμον θέλοντες εἶναι, τὸν νόμον οὐκ ἀκούετε;  
Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

Here the nominative case<sup>211</sup> of οἱ ... θέλοντες is unusual. The context puts it in apposition to the understood subject of the imperative verb Λέγετέ, i.e., “you [ὑμεῖς] tell me (μοι).” Though “under the law” (ὑπὸ νόμον) is placed emphatically between the article and participle (in first attributive position<sup>212</sup>), the basic syntax is “the ones willing” is the subject of the infinitive while “under the law” is the predicate locative.

---

<sup>210</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 184, c.

<sup>211</sup> The use of the nominative case is either a parenthetic nominative where it “*is the subject of an explanatory clause within another clause*,” (*ibid.*, 53, author’s italics) or a nominative for vocative which is “used ... in direct address to designate the addressee” (*ibid.*, 56). The context favors the latter because of the contentious nature of Paul’s arguments toward the Galatian believers regarding the place of the Law in their lives, e.g., “O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you” (Gal. 3:1). The note of address is stronger than mere parenthesis.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

**Phil. 1:23**

συνέχομαι δὲ ἐκ τῶν δύο, τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων εἰς τὸ ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι  
 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ.

The infinitive phrase “the desire ... to be with Christ” (τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ... σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι) is part of the direct object of the participle ἔχων (“having”). The nominal τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν (a cognate of ἐπιθυμέω), with the participle (“having the desire”), carries the same sense as “desiring” (ἐπιθυμῶν). According to this understanding, the infinitive phrases (ἀναλῦσαι ... εἶναι) are objective, showing what is desired. However, since “the desire” is a noun, the infinitive phrases are appositional, giving the content of the desire. The phrase σὺν Χριστῷ is the predicate locative.

**1 Tim 1:7**

θέλοντες εἶναι νομοδιδάσκαλοι  
 Desiring to be teachers of the law

The infinitive phrase εἶναι νομοδιδάσκαλοι (“to be teachers”) is the adjectival complement to the participle θέλοντες (“desiring”) showing *what* “some” (τινες, 1:6) desire. Its closer relation to the “verb” might make it adverbial, but it still retains an objective nuance giving the content of the action of the participle.<sup>213</sup> Though the infinitive is complementary, νομοδιδάσκαλοι retains its function as its predicate nominative of the infinitive.

**With Verbs of Perception or Declaration (ἡγέομαι, λογίζομαι, νομίζω, πείθω, προαιτιάομαι)**

**Rom. 2:19**

πέποιθάς τε σεαυτὸν ὁδηγὸν εἶναι τυφλῶν  
 And are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind.

---

<sup>213</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 598-99.



In Rom. 2:19, the phrasing begins with πέποιθάς, the sixth verb in a series in 2:17-18—ἐπονομάζη ... ἐπαναπαύη ... καυχᾶσαι ... γινώσκεις ... δοκιμάζεις—which describe Paul’s rhetorical addressee, a Jew (Ἰουδαῖος; v. 17). The perfective tense-form and verbal aspect of πέποιθάς emphasize how strongly this one is “convinced” or “persuaded.”<sup>214</sup> Their “minds are made up,” so to speak, and remain in such a state. The infinitive phrase “you yourself to be a guide of blind ones” is the direct object of the verb showing of what the Jew is convinced. The English translation of the objective “that” shows this as well. Accordingly, σεαυτὸν is the accusative singular subject of the infinitive, while ὁδηγὸν is the corresponding predicate nominative.

### Rom. 3:9

προητιασάμεθα γὰρ Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλληνας πάντας ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι  
For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

The infinitive phrase πάντας ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι is the direct object of προητιασάμεθα. The subject is πάντας and the predicate locative is ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν.

### Rom. 6:11

καὶ ὑμεῖς λογίζεσθε ἑαυτοὺς εἶναι νεκροὺς  
You also, reckon yourselves to be dead.

The infinitive phrase “yourselves to be dead” is the direct object of the verb “consider” (λογίζεσθε). The masculine plural “yourselves” (ἑαυτοὺς) is the subject of the infinitive, and “dead” (νεκροὺς) is the predicate adjective.<sup>215</sup>

---

<sup>214</sup> BDAG, s.v., πείθω, 791.

<sup>215</sup> Wallace considers ἑαυτοὺς ... νεκροὺς to be in an object-complement relationship (*ExSyn*, 186). The presence of εἶναι and the fact that “dead” describes “yourselves” argue against it. In most of Wallace’s other examples of the object-complement constructions, the object and complement tend to be more appositional, e.g., him/Lord, you/servants, Son/Savior, example/prophets. In cases where the complement is adjectival, his examples tend to have ὥς, whether expressed or supplied (185-89). However, see Wallace’s discussion of “the Accusative Subject of the Infinitive” (192-97) where he allows the “subject accusative-predicate accusative construction” (especially 195, ns. 70 and 71).

**Rom. 14:14**

τῷ λογιζομένῳ τι κοινὸν εἶναι

To him who considers anything to be unclean

Here, the infinitive phrase “anything (τι) to be (εἶναι) unclean (κοινὸν)” is the direct object of the participle τῷ λογιζομένῳ, showing *what* the one considers.

**2 Cor. 10:7**

εἴ τις πέποιθεν ἑαυτῷ Χριστοῦ εἶναι

If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ’s

The phrase Χριστοῦ εἶναι is complementary to πέποιθεν (“is convinced”) with the possessive genitive Χριστοῦ functioning as predicate adjective.

**Phil. 3:8**

ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι

Yet indeed I also count all things loss

The infinitive phrase “all things (πάντα) to be (εἶναι) loss (ζημίαν)” is the direct object of ἡγοῦμαι. The difference in the number of the accusatives—πάντα (plural), ζημίαν (singular)—presents no syntactical contradiction (especially since one may rightly translate the former with the singular “everything”). Whatever things Paul formerly valued (Phil. 3:5-6) are considered as a collective loss.

**1 Tim. 6:5**

νομιζόντων πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν

Who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

The infinitive phrase “godliness [to be] a means of gain” is the direct object of the participle νομιζόντων. Speaking of “men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth,” these are considering (νομιζόντων) godliness (τὴν εὐσέβειαν; subject of the infinitive) to be (εἶναι) a means of gain (πορισμὸν; predicate nominative).

**With Verbs of Communication (ἀποκαλύπτω, λαλέω, παραγγέλλω, συνίστημι, ὑπομινύσκω, φάσκω)**

**Rom. 1:22**

φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν  
Professing to be wise, they became fools

In Rom. 1:22, the infinitive phrase “to be wise” (εἶναι σοφοὶ) is the complement of the participle φάσκοντες (φάσκω, “to claim, assert”),<sup>216</sup> which is likely concessive, i.e., “though claiming.” The adjective σοφοὶ could be either predicate nominative (“wise ones”) or predicate adjective (“wise”) of the infinitive; the latter is more likely. The elliptical addition “themselves” (“professing *themselves* to be wise”; see ASV, CSB, and KJV) is a valid understanding from context and would be the subject of the infinitive if expressed.

**2 Cor. 7:11**

ἐν παντὶ συνεστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς ἄγνοὺς εἶναι τῷ πράγματι  
In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

The infinitive phrase “yourselves to be clear (in this matter)” is the direct object of συνεστήσατε with ἑαυτοὺς as the accusative plural subject of the infinitive and ἄγνοὺς the predicate adjective. Though not a verb of speaking, συνίστημι in this context may connote communication of truth via demonstration (see, e.g., Rom. 5:8).<sup>217</sup>

**Eph. 3:6**

[ὥς νῦν ἀπεκαλύφθη, 3:5] εἶναι τὰ ἔθνη συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα καὶ συμμετοχα  
3:5 as it has now been revealed ... 6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers ...

The infinitive phrase “the Gentiles to be fellow heirs” (εἶναι τὰ ἔθνη συγκληρονόμα), etc., is the direct object of ἀπεκαλύφθη in v. 5. The full phrase gives the content of the revelation, showing *what* was revealed.

---

<sup>216</sup> BDAG, 1050.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, s.v., συνίστημι: #2, “present, introduce, recommend.” This verse is listed under #3, “to provide evidence of a personal characteristic or claim through action, *demonstrate, show, bring out*” (972-73).

## 1 Tim. 6:18

ἀγαθοεργεῖν, πλουτεῖν ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς, εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, κοινωνικούς,  
*Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,*

In 1 Tim. 6:18, the infinitive ἀγαθοεργεῖν is complementary to παράγγελλε in 6:17, following μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν and ἡλπικέναι, and followed by πλουτεῖν. The phrase εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, then, is also complementary to the same verb, i.e., τοῖς πλουσίοις ... παράγγελλε ... εὐμεταδότους εἶναι: “Instruct the rich to be ready to give.”<sup>218</sup> The accusative plural predicate adjective is εὐμεταδότους.

## Titus 2:2, 4, 9

2 πρεσβύτας νηφαλίους εἶναι, σεμνούς, σώφρονας, ὑγιαίνοντας τῇ πίστει, τῇ ἀγάπῃ, τῇ ὑπομονῇ.  
*That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience.*

4 ἵνα σωφρονίζωσιν τὰς νέας φιλόανδρους εἶναι, φιλοτέκνους,

*That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.*

9 δούλους ἰδίοις δεσπόταις ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἐν πᾶσιν, εὐαρέστους εἶναι, μὴ ἀντιλέγοντας,  
*Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back.*

We will examine the three infinitives in Titus 2:1-9 together. The section begins with Paul exhorting Titus via the emphatic imperative Σὺ ... λάλει, i.e., “*YOU* speak!” The content which Titus is to speak are “the things which are proper for sound doctrine” (2:1; ὅ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ). The accusative plural dominates the verses, which is fitting as Paul enumerates those things which are “proper” by apposition to the accusative plural ὅ, “the

<sup>218</sup> Because the indirect object of the verb παράγγελλε is the same as the actor of the infinitive, Boyer calls them “co-functioning,” explaining that “in 1 Tim 6:18 the predicate complement of the infinitive is accusative even though the subject referred to is present in a co-functioning dative” (“Classification,” 21). However, this writer disagrees because though two parts of the sentence have the same referent, they are not syntactically identical within the sentence. This is similar to the misunderstanding of the Granville Sharpe rule regarding the article. Though the two substantives in the TSKS construction have the same *referent*, i.e., they refer to the same person, it does not equate the two lexically or syntactically (see Wallace, *ExSyn*, 270-90). One manifestation of this misunderstanding—as well as applying the rule to concepts rather than persons—is to equate the “the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God” (τῇ ὀρισμένη βουλῇ καὶ προγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ). Those making this error argue that, in other contexts where divine foreknowledge occurs, it may be equated with God’s foreordination. This may be theologically expedient, but it is grammatically misinformed. Boyer appears to be arguing that two words having the same referent equates to their having the same syntactic function in the sentence. In 1 Tim. 6:18, τοῖς πλουσίοις (v. 17) is not the dative subject of εἶναι in addition to being the indirect object of παράγγελλε.

things.” In 2:2, the sense is “you tell: older men to be sober” with *πρεσβύτεας νηφαλίους εἶναι*, together with the other accusative plural attributes in the verse, being the direct object of *λάλει*. This pattern continues in 2:4 with the older women (*πρεσβύτιδας*; 2:3) counseling (*σωφρονίζωσιν*) “younger women (*τὰς νέας*) to be (*εἶναι*) husband-lovers (*φιλάνδρους*),” etc. The entire infinitive phrase (“younger women to be ...”), with other following associated accusatives, being either predicate adjective and nominatives, is the direct object of *σωφρονίζωσιν*. In 2:9, “bondservants ... to be well-pleasing” (*δούλους ... εὐαρέστους εἶναι*) follows the same pattern, though in this instance the infinitive phrase is the direct object of *παρακάλει* (“exhort”) in 2:6.

### Titus 3:1–2

Ὑπομίμνησκε αὐτοὺς ἀρχαῖς ἐξουσίαις ὑποτάσσεσθαι, πειθαρχεῖν, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐτοίμους εἶναι, μηδένα βλασφημεῖν, ἀμάχους εἶναι, ἐπιεικεῖς, πᾶσαν ἐνδεικνυμένους πραῦτητα πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους

Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.

Though the sentence in these verses is somewhat expansive, the two infinitive phrases (*αὐτοὺς ... εἶναι ... εἶναι ...*) form the direct objects of the imperative *Ὑπομίμνησκε*. The basic flow of the sentence is “remind them (*αὐτοὺς*) ... to be (*εἶναι*) ready (*ἐτοίμους*) for every good work (*πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν*)” and, in verse 2, “to be (*εἶναι*) peaceable (*ἀμάχους*).” The accusative plural pronoun *αὐτοὺς* is the subject of both infinitives, while *ἐτοίμους* and *ἀμάχους* are their respective predicate adjectives.

### With Forms of *δοκέω*

#### 1 Cor. 3:18

εἴ τις δοκεῖ σοφὸς εἶναι ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ

If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age ...

In 1 Cor. 3:18, the infinitive phrase σοφὸς εἶναι, with its attendant prepositional phrases (ἐν), is complementary to δοκεῖ, with σοφὸς as the predicate adjective of εἶναι.

### 1 Cor. 11:16

Εἰ δέ τις δοκεῖ φιλόνηκος εἶναι  
But if anyone seems to be contentious ...

The phrase φιλόνηκος εἶναι is complementary, with φιλόνηκος as the predicate adjective.

### 1 Cor. 12:23

καὶ ᾧ δοκοῦμεν ἁτιμότερα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος  
And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable ...

The somewhat disjointed syntax of the infinitive phrase is “what things (ᾧ) [of the body, τοῦ σώματος] to be (εἶναι) less honorable (ἁτιμότερα) ...,” and it is the direct object of δοκοῦμεν. The accusative plural ᾧ is the subject of the infinitive (rather than the first person δοκοῦμεν, which would expect a nominative) and ἁτιμότερα is its predicate adjective. The difference in actors between the subjects of the verb and of the infinitive argues against its being complementary.

### 1 Cor. 14:37

Εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός  
If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, ...

The infinitive phrase, though complementary to δοκεῖ, gives the content of *what* the subject and verb τις δοκεῖ “thinks.” Most English translations supply an elliptical “himself” or “he,” which is readily understood from the context. This ellipsis would be the subject of the infinitive εἶναι, with προφήτης and πνευματικός the predicate nominative and adjective, respectively. Even if the passive verbal nuance of “seem” is accepted for δοκεῖ, and the need for

the ellipsis disappears—“if anyone seems to be a prophet ...”—the infinitive phrase still stands in an objective relation to the verb.

## 2 Cor. 11:16

μή τις με δόξη ἄφρονα εἶναι  
Let no one think me a fool.

The infinitive phrase “me to be a fool” (με ... ἄφρονα εἶναι) is the direct object of δόξη which takes τις as its own subject. The accusative singular pronoun με is the subject of the infinitive and ἄφρονα is its predicate nominative. The difference in actors (verbal subjects) between τις and με disallows a complementary identification, making the objective use easier to identify.

## Gal. 2:6

ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναί τι  
But from those who seemed to be something ...

The infinitive phrase “to be something” (εἶναί τι) is complementary to the participle τῶν δοκούντων. The neuter accusative indefinite pronoun τι is the predicate nominative.

## Gal. 2:9

καὶ ... Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς καὶ Ἰωάννης, οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι  
And ... James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars ...

The entire participial phrase, οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι, is adjectival and appositional to the three Apostles listed. The nominative masculine plural is the “nominative in simple apposition.”<sup>219</sup> The three Apostles named are the subjects of ἔδωκαν (“gave”), so that the nominative case of the infinitive phrase fits. The infinitive phrase is the complement to the participle οἱ δοκοῦντες, with στῦλοι as its predicate nominative.

---

<sup>219</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 48-49.

**Gal. 6:3**

εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι μηδὲν ὄν, φρεναπατᾷ ἑαυτόν·

For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Here, the infinitive phrase εἶναι τι is complementary to δοκεῖ τις, with τι as predicated nominative.

**With Other Verbs (δύναμαι, ἐκλέγομαι, ἐλεέω, ἐπιτρέπω, μανθάνω, φιλοτιμέομαι)****1 Cor. 7:25**

γνώμην δὲ δίδωμι ὡς ἡλεημένος ὑπὸ κυρίου πιστὸς εἶναι

“I am offering direction as one being granted mercy by the Lord to be faithful.” [Writer’s translation.]

The infinitive phrase is complementary to the participle ἡλεημένος with πιστὸς as predicate adjective. There may be some pragmatic—not semantic or syntactic—nuance of result. Because English has no verbal cognate for “mercy,” translational modification is necessary. A transitive translation keeps the objective sense: “as being *mercied* by the Lord to be faithful.”<sup>220</sup>

**2 Cor. 5:9**

διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι

Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

If the idea of φιλοτιμέομαι is to make something a goal,<sup>221</sup> then the infinitive phrase εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι is the direct object of the verb. Supplying “it” in English translation shows this understanding.

<sup>220</sup> In his Letters Paul uses ἐλεέω in the active voice with an accusative direct object in Rom. 9:15, 18 (ὄν), 11:32 (τοὺς πάντας ἐλέησεν), and Phil. 2:27 (ὁ θεὸς ἡλέησεν αὐτόν). He also uses the passive intransitively in Rom. 11:30 (ἡλεήθητε); 2 Cor. 4:1 (ἡλεήθημεν); and 1 Tim. 1:13, 16 (ἡλεήθην), as in this verse. Verbalizing the noun “mercy” into English—“mercied” or “being mercied”—helps clarify the syntax of the Greek verbal usage.

<sup>221</sup> Boyer, “Classification,” 6, 2.



**2 Cor. 9:5**

καὶ προκαταρτίσωσιν τὴν προεπηγγελμένην εὐλογίαν ὑμῶν, ταύτην ἐτοίμην εἶναι  
 And prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may  
 be ready ...

The phrase ταύτην ἐτοίμην εἶναι (“this to be prepared”) is more referential and explanatory than appositional, though the latter is the preferred identification. The near demonstrative ταύτην is the subject of the infinitive, the antecedent of which is τὴν προεπηγγελμένην εὐλογίαν, “the previously promised blessing.” The predicate adjective is ἐτοίμην. Though the translation (NKJV) shows purpose (“that”), this understanding is pragmatic, based upon reader expectation, rather than being semantic. Indeed, the goal of preparation is readiness, but the construction is formally appositional.

**Eph. 1:4**

καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους  
 κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ  
 Just as He chose us—in Him before the foundation of the world—us to be holy and  
 blameless in His presence. [Writer’s translation.]

The phrase “us to be holy and blameless in His presence” is the direct object of ἐξελέξατο, with ἡμᾶς as the subject of the infinitive and ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους as the predicate adjectives.

**Phil. 4:11**

οὐχ ὅτι καθ’ ὑστέρησιν λέγω, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμι αὐτάρκης εἶναι  
 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.

The phrase αὐτάρκης εἶναι (“to be content”) is complementary to “I have learned” (ἐγὼ ... ἔμαθον), and αὐτάρκης is the predicate adjective. The relative pronoun οἷς is proleptic giving a preview of the circumstances Paul will describe in the next verse (4:12).

**1 Thess. 2:6/7<sup>222</sup>**

δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι  
 When we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

The writer's own translation is "being able *in importance*<sup>223</sup> to be as Apostles of Christ."

The infinitive phrase εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι is complementary to the participle δυνάμενοι. Though showing the comparative conjunction ὡς, "Apostles of Christ" is the predicate nominative.

**1 Tim. 2:12**

διδάσκειν δὲ γυναῖκί οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω, οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἄνδρός, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ  
 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.

The sentence flow may read "I allow (ἐπιτρέπω) a woman (γυναῖκί) ... to be in silence (εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ)" with "a woman ... to be in silence" being the infinitive phrase. The verb ἐπιτρέπω tends to take dative direct objects, rather than accusative,<sup>224</sup> so that γυναῖκί is the subject of the infinitive εἶναι, just as it would be if it were in the "normal" accusative. The phrase ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ is the predicate locative. The location is conceptual, rather than physical or spatial. The infinitive phrase has a (direct) objective relationship to ἐπιτρέπω.

**As the Subject or Object of δεῖ**

Most English translations of this verb supply an "it" as the subject and, though Boyer identifies all infinitives with δεῖ to be subjects,<sup>225</sup> the presence of nominative and accusative

<sup>222</sup> This participial/infinitive phrase occurs at the end of 2:6 in the traditional text, and at the beginning of 2:7 in UBS<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>223</sup> Danker: ἐν βάρει "2. Idiom: *make a claim of importance* ... (cp. our 'throw one's weight around')"  
 (*Concise*, 68; so also BDAG, 167).

<sup>224</sup> BDAG, 384-85.

<sup>225</sup> Boyer, "Classification," 4.

infinitive phrases suggests that they may be either subjects or objects. Nominative or accusative phrases will be identified as either subjects or objects according to their case.

### 1 Cor. 11:19

δεῖ γὰρ καὶ αἰρέσεις ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι

For there must also be factions among you.

The alternative translation of “for indeed, *for* factions to be among you is necessary” brings out the nuance of subject rather than object for the infinitive phrase. The nominative αἰρέσεις is the subject of the infinitive and the prepositional phrase ἐν ὑμῖν is its predicate locative.

### 1 Tim. 3:2

δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι

A bishop then must be blameless ...

The various accusatives in 3:2-7 suggest relations to δεῖ as objects rather than subjects. In such a case, it might be better to supply an understood subject for the verb, i.e., “*it* is necessary *for* the bishop to be blameless ...,” with τὸν ἐπίσκοπον as the accusative subject of the infinitive εἶναι and ἀνεπίλημπτον, etc., as its predicate adjectives.

### 2 Tim. 2:24

δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου οὐ δεῖ μάχεσθαι, ἀλλὰ ἡπιον εἶναι πρὸς πάντας

And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all ...

The syntax of the accusative here is “*it* is necessary (δεῖ) *for* a servant (δοῦλον) of the Lord ... to be (εἶναι) gentle (ἡπιον) to all men,” i.e., the infinitive phrase “servant to be gentle,” is the direct object to δεῖ.

### Titus 1:7

δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνέγκλητον εἶναι

For a bishop must be blameless ...

Titus 1:7 is nearly identical to 1 Tim. 3:2 except for conjunctions (οὖν, γὰρ) and predicate adjectives (ἀνεπίλημπτον, ἀνέγκλητον). The infinitive phrase is the direct object of δεῖ.

## In Apposition Expressing Content

### Rom. 4:13

Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἢ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου, ἀλλὰ διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως·

For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

The NKJV correctly places the infinitive phrase τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου next to “the promise” (ἡ ἐπαγγελία), to which the phrase stands in apposition.<sup>226</sup> The phrase gives the content of the promise. In the phrase, αὐτὸν (“him”) is the subject of the infinitive, and τὸ κληρονόμον (“the heir”) is its predicate nominative.

### Infinitive of Purpose/Result (εἰς τὸ εἶναι)

### Rom. 1:20

τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου τοῖς ποιήμασιν νοούμενα καθορᾶται, ἢ τε αἰδῖος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θεϊότης, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀναπολογήτους·

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

The phrase εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀναπολογήτους is “so that they (αὐτοὺς; subj. of the infinitive) might be (εἰς τὸ εἶναι) without excuse (ἀναπολογήτους; pred. adj.).” In this example, connotations of result are much stronger than purpose.<sup>227</sup> The result of God’s creation

<sup>226</sup> Wallace would call this “simple apposition” (*ExSyn*, 198). Votaw also places this under the category of apposition (“Use,” 29). BDF call this use of the article (ἡ ἐπαγγελία) “anaphoric” and the phrase τὸ κληρονόμον ... “epexegetical to ἐπαγγ.; the art[icle] both times designates what is well known” (205-06).

<sup>227</sup> “The relation between purpose and result is a close one and often difficult, sometimes impossible, to distinguish. Intended result is purpose; accomplished or realized purpose is result, and it is not clear in every instance which is in the mind of the author.” (Boyer, “Classification,” 10). Votaw identifies this occurrence as denoting result (“Use,” 21). See also BDF, 207: “Εἰς τό is used to denote purpose or result ... the former predominates in Paul ...”

manifesting His attributes is that human beings are without excuse, i.e., are morally accountable to God. God's estimation of His own Creation prior to the Fall was that it was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). That His Creation would show His attributes for the mere *purpose* of rendering *fallen* mankind without excuse does not fit, depending upon one's theological stance.

### **Rom. 3:26**

ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ, πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ

to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

In the phrase "in order that He (αὐτὸν) might be just and the justifier (δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα)," Paul again shows his consistent use of εἰς τὸ with the infinitive to express purpose. God set forth Christ Jesus as a propitiation through faith to demonstrate His righteousness for the purpose (εἰς τὸ εἶναι) of validating His justice (by punishing sin in His Son, i.e., "His blood") and His imputation of righteousness to "the one who has faith in Jesus. "He" is the subject of the infinitive, and "just" and "justifier" are the respective predicate adjective and predicate nominative. This verse juxtaposes and explains the interrelation between God's justice and His lovingkindness shown toward sinful creatures created in His image.

### **Rom. 4:11**

καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς, ... εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων ...

And he received the sign of circumcision, ... that he might be the father of all those who believe, ...

"He" (αὐτὸν) is the subject, and "father" (πατέρα) is predicate nominative of the infinitive of purpose. Abraham's justification prior to his circumcision was for the purpose that he would be the "father," the historic example, of all subsequent believers (πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων), whether Jew or Gentile (Rom. 3:29-30). However, connotations of *result* are also possible.

**Rom. 4:16**

διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως, ἵνα κατὰ χάριν, εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, ...  
Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, ...

Regarding Rom. 4:16, having established that the promise to Abraham came prior to circumcision (4:9-12) and did not come through the Law (4:13-15), Paul concludes (διὰ τοῦτο, “because of this”) that righteousness is from faith (ἐκ πίστεως; see 4:13), according to grace, for the purpose that (εἰς τὸ εἶναι) the promise (τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν), the “subject” of the infinitive, might be “sure” or steadfast,<sup>228</sup> the predicate adjective of the infinitive for “all the seed.”<sup>229</sup>

**Rom. 8:29**

ὅτι οὓς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς·  
For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

The purpose of believers’ predestination to ultimate conformity to the image of Jesus Christ is in order that Christ (“He,” αὐτὸν; subj. of the infinitive) might be (εἰς τὸ εἶναι; infinitive of purpose) the Firstborn (πρωτότοκον; predicate nominative) “among many brethren.” This speaks of the believer’s future glorification.

**Rom. 15:16**

εἰς τὸ εἶναί με λειτουργὸν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, ἱεουργοῦντα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.  
That I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified [in] the Holy Spirit.

The phrase εἰς τὸ εἶναί gives the purpose regarding “the grace given to [Paul]” in v. 15. The translation of the accusative με (literally “me”) as the nominative “I” demonstrates the

<sup>228</sup> Regarding βεβαίαν, see BDAG, 172.

<sup>229</sup> The dative παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι is of interest or advantage, for the benefit of “all the seed.” See Wallace, *ExSyn*, 142-43.

proper understanding of the accusative “subject” of the infinitive, because “in order that me to be a minister” would be improper. Yet, it could have been translated “in order for me to be minister.” “Minister” (λειτουργὸν) is the predicate nominative of the infinitive of purpose and signifies that Paul is performing a religious service on behalf of the Gentiles, rather than being their servant in the sense of a slave (δοῦλος).

### 1 Cor. 10:6

ταῦτα δὲ τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγενήθησαν, εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἐπιθυμητὰς κακῶν, καθὼς κάκεῖνοι ἐπεθύμησαν.

Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

“These things” (ταῦτα) refer to the circumstances surrounding those “overthrown in the wilderness” (10:5), the purpose (εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι) of which is that “we” (ἡμᾶς; subject of the infinitive) should not be “ones who lust” (ἐπιθυμητὰς; predicate nominative) for evil things.

### Eph. 1:12

εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης αὐτοῦ τοὺς προηλπικότας ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ.

That we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

The infinitive phrase gives the purpose of ἐκληρώθημεν (“been granted inheritance”) in 1:11. The pronoun ἡμᾶς (“we/us”) is the subject of the infinitive. The accusative plural τοὺς προηλπικότας is either the predicate nominative of the infinitive (“in order for us to be the ones having hoped before”), or stands in simple apposition to ἡμᾶς (“in order that we, the ones with prior expectation, might exist ...”).<sup>230</sup>

<sup>230</sup> If τοὺς προηλπικότας is the predicate nominative, the syntax of this verse is not clear without reference to prior and subsequent context. Eph. 1:11 begins with “in Whom also we have been granted inheritance (ἐκληρώθημεν; passive main verb), with “having been predestined ...” (προορισθέντες) being explanatory alluding to 1:5. The infinitive phrase gives the purpose of the verb, i.e., “we have been granted inheritance ... in order that we (ἡμᾶς) might be (εἰς τὸ εἶναι) the ones with prior expectation (τοὺς προηλπικότας) who are in the Anointed One” (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ).” Eph. 1:13 continues the thought with the mention of their hearing and believing the gospel, then being sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, “Who is the guarantee of our inheritance” (1:14; ὃς ἐστὶν ἄρραβὼν τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν). Between those in Christ being predestined to receive their inheritance, having the Holy Spirit as the guarantee, and receiving it, i.e. “until the redemption of the purchase possession” (εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς

Paul teaches believers about future: (1) blessings in heaven (1:3); (2) glorification (1:4); (3) completion of the adoption (1:5; see Rom. 8:23); and (4) inheritance (1:11; see 1 Pet. 1:4), of which the ultimate purpose is believers' existence to praise God's glory (1:12). Paul's emphasis in this verse is akin to John's in Rev. 4:11 (KJV): "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." [Of note, other than the eight occurrences in Paul's writings, the only other NT occurrence of εἰς τὸ εἶναι is in James 1:18.]

### Articular Uses

#### 1 Cor. 7:26

Νομίζω οὖν ... ὅτι καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ οὕτως εἶναι.

I think, then, ... that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is.

The article (τὸ) likely marks the comparative conjunction of manner οὕτως as the subject, i.e. "I think this manner *to be* good for a man" (ὅτι untranslated), with καλὸν as the predicate adjective. The article also substantivizes<sup>231</sup> τὸ οὕτως εἶναι, with the English gerund helping the sense: "[the] *being* in this manner *is* good for a man." The pragmatics of the statement are understood though the analysis may prove a challenge. The infinitive phrase is the direct object of νομίζω.

#### Phil. 2:6

ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ

who, being in the form of God, did not consider it [an advantage] to be equal with God,

---

περιποιήσεως), believers are the ones who hoped before (τοὺς προηλπικότας). The prior hope (προ-) is from the point of view of completion looking back. It is the believers present expectation; in the future it will become a prior expectation, a hope they had before.

<sup>231</sup> See Wallace, *ExSyn*, 234-35.



In Phil. 2:6, the “wooden” sentence flow is “Who (ὅς) did not consider (οὐχ ... ἡγήσατο) the to be equal with God (τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ) an advantage to be exploited (ἀρπαγμὸν).”<sup>232</sup> The article with the infinitive acts as a substantiver, grouping the entire phrase into a single syntactic entity. Within the phrase, ἴσα (“equal”) is the predicate adjective of the infinitive. The result is that the equality with God and the advantage form a sort of double accusative construction, both direct objects of the verb,<sup>233</sup> while Wright identifies τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ as the “grammatical object” of οὐχ ... ἡγήσατο.<sup>234</sup>

### Rom. 7:3

ἐλευθέρα ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα γενομένην ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ.  
She is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

If a woman’s husband has passed on and she marries another, the result is that she is not an adulteress (τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα). The infinitive takes the neuter genitive article (τοῦ) and makes a semantically negative statement (μὴ). Even as an infinitive of result,<sup>235</sup> the accusative singular αὐτὴν (“her/she”) is the subject of the infinitive and μοιχαλίδα (“adulteress”) is its predicate nominative.<sup>236</sup>

---

<sup>232</sup> See Roy W. Hoover, “The Harpagmos Enigma: A Philological Solution,” *The Harvard Theological Review (HTR)* 64, no. 1 (Jan. 1971): 95-119. “Wooden” means that the “literal” English is awkward, but necessary to demonstrate the Greek syntax.

<sup>233</sup> Wallace makes this identification for this verse (*ExSyn*, 186). Votaw includes this verse in a category in which “the infinitive preceded by the article τὸ is used as the object of another verb to complete or make specific its meaning,” and adds that “this use of the articular infinitive is found mainly in the N. T., where it is for the most part Pauline, and infrequent” (“Use,” 22). Pertaining to the article, BDF lists this verse under “anaphoric” (206), referencing something previous, though the only note in the previous context regarding Jesus’ divinity is His being in the “form of God” (ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων), noted also by N. T. Wright (“ἀρπαγμός and the Meaning of Philippians 2:5-11,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 [*JTS*], no. 2 [Oct. 1986]: 344) Another remote possibility is that it is *kataphoric*, pointing to what follows in 2:9-11. Wright’s proposed translation of the phrase τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ as “this divine equality” fits linguistically and theologically (*ibid.*)

<sup>234</sup> Wright, “Meaning,” 329.

<sup>235</sup> Wallace, *ExSyn*, 592-93, 3.b. See also Boyer, “Classification,” 12.

<sup>236</sup> So concurs Votaw, “Use,” 25.

### Summary

Paul's uses of the infinitive of εἶμι (εἶναι) twenty-seven times in infinitive phrases which function as the direct object of a verbal form; twelve cases show a complementary relationship to the verb; four stand in phrases with an appositional function; and two in phrases as subject of the verb. Paul consistently uses the εἰς τὸ εἶναι construction to express purpose (seven times) or result (once). Once, Paul uses the neuter genitive articular infinitive to express result. A pragmatic nuance of purpose is possible in one of the cases of apposition (2 Cor. 9:5), but this is exceptional. Some may appeal to this exception to deny the overall pattern demonstrated, providing justification for other applications which are otherwise strained or forced. Even so, the translation of εἶναι in Eph. 1:4 as a purpose clause, i.e., "that we should be ...," is unjustifiable on syntactic, lexical, and contextual grounds.

## Appendix B: The Three Stylistic Constructions and Pauline Authorship

According to Turner, in the context of the question of Pauline authorship of the Letters attributed to him, “modern scholarly opinion requires that, as far as possible, we consider the various groups separately: group (1) 1 and 2 Thessalonian; group (2) Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans; group (3) Philippians, Colossians, Philemon; group (4) Ephesians. We have excluded the Pastoral Epistles, but have noted parallels there ....”<sup>237</sup> This brings up the question whether the three characteristics of Pauline style shown in this thesis cross these groupings, and whether that data may be used to argue for or against Pauline authorship of certain of his Letters.<sup>238</sup> None of the three occur in Group 1, so it is omitted.

**Table 1. Turner’s groups**

Group	Letter	Resumptive Repetition	Interrogative Parallelism	“Grace Given”
2	Rom.	X	X	X
	1 Cor.		X	X
	2 Cor.		X	
	Gal.	X	X	X
3	Phil.			
	Col.	X		
	Phmn.			
4	Eph.	X		X
Pastoral	1 Tim.			X
	2 Tim.			X
	Titus			

In the case of resumptive repetition, groups 2-4 overlap; interrogative parallelism is confined to group 2, though represented in all members; and “grace given” spans groups 2, 4, and the Pastoral Epistles. Taken together, these three usages span all of Turner’s groups, though none are present in Group 1.

<sup>237</sup> Turner, “Style,” 4:80.

<sup>238</sup> For this thesis, the writer assumes Pauline authorship of all of the New Testament Letters traditionally attributed to him. Questioning such authorship is beyond the scope of this thesis. James A. Libby provides a historical survey of past scholars using a synchronic approach, and the disparity and variety of the Letters attributed to or denied Pauline authorship, then concludes “the jumble of results could, of course, be used by diachrony-only

Other non-traditional approaches yield similar results. Derek King analyzed Pauline authorship according to personality typing techniques, starting with Brown's seven genuine Letters as a baseline: "1 Thessalonians, Philippians, Philemon, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians and Romans."<sup>239</sup> King noted two basic personality types, ESTJ and INFP, but four authorial "Pauls": Paul and Trito-Paul (ESTJ); and Deutero-Paul and Tetarto-Paul (INFP).<sup>240</sup> King accepted Brown's list as authentic, then argued that Col. and Eph. were authored by Deutero-Paul, 2 Thess. was authored by Trito-Paul, and the Pastorals were authored by Tetarto Paul.<sup>241</sup> The groups look thus:

**Table 2. King's groups**

Group	Type	Resumptive Repetition	Interrogative Parallelism	"Grace Given"
Paul	ESTJ	X	X	X
Deut-P	INFP	X		X
Trit-P	ESTJ			
Tetr-P	INFP			X

All of King's "Pauls" except Trito-Paul (2 Thess.) are represented. Both personality types exhibit one of the three stylistic phenomena examined above.

Moving into the present century, after noting past studies which used word length, sentence length, letter occurrence frequencies, short letter sequence distribution, and part-of-

---

scholars to dismiss the whole quantitative/synchronic enterprise" ("The Pauline Canon Sung in a Linguistic Key: Visualizing New Testament Text Proximity by Linguistic Structure, System, and Strata," *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics* 5 [BAGL], no. 2 [2016]: 125-26).

<sup>239</sup> Derek Edwin Noel King, "The Four Pauls and Their Letters: A Study in Personality-Critical Analysis," *Mental Health, Religion, and Culture* 15, (R&C), no. 9 (Nov. 2012): 863. King's reference is to Raymond E. Brown, *An introduction to the New Testament* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1999).

<sup>240</sup> King, *ibid.* ESTJ is Extraverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging; and INFP is Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, and Prospecting. For further information see, for example, Naomi L. Quenk, *Essentials of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2009). Paul, Deutero-Paul, Trito-Paul, and Tetarto-Paul are the first, second, third, and fourth of King's theoretical "Pauls."

<sup>241</sup> King, "Pauls," 870.

speech (POS) tags; as well as various calculation methodologies,<sup>242</sup> Jacques Savoy showed the following groups<sup>243</sup> clustered according to vocabulary usage models as follows:

**Table 3. Savoy's groups**

Group	Letter	Resumptive Repetition	Interrogative Parallelism	"Grace Given"
1	Eph.	X		X
	Col.	X		
2	1 Thess.			
	2 Thess.			
3	1 Tim.			X
	2 Tim.			X
4	Rom.	X	X	X
	1 Cor.		X	X
	2 Cor.		X	
	Gal.	X	X	X

In Savoy's analysis, neither Philippians, Philemon, nor Titus were assigned groups because, according to the analytical statistical method employed, their authorship was deemed statistically improbable according to the model. However, as with Turner's groups, the three stylistic constructions examined above cut across all of Savoy's groups, except for Group 2, the Thessalonian Letters.

Without attempting to explain his complex calculation methodology or rigorous controls, James A. Libby's investigative framework featured "eleven measures in three linguistic categories: structure (syntagmatics), system (paradigmatics), and strata (semantics)."<sup>244</sup>

<sup>242</sup> Jacques Savoy, "Authorship of Pauline Epistles Revisited," *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 70 (JAIST), no. 10 (2019): 1089-90.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 1091-92.

<sup>244</sup> Libby, "Visualizing," 135. Explained, the categories involve: syntagmatics (grammar): words, phrases, clauses, sequences of clauses/clause complexes, sentences; paradigmatics: undefined but examines the grammatical annotations from GramCord, *AGNT* (Barbara Friberg, Timothy Friberg, and Kurt Aland, eds., *The Analytical Greek New Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984]), and *Logos*; semantics: semantic domains and subdomains, e.g., those from L&N (135-39).

With his multiple analyses, plotting, and displays necessarily simplified; the groupings in his Figure 16 were<sup>245</sup>:

**Table 4. Libby's groups**

Group / Cluster	Letter	Resumptive Repetition	Interrogative Parallelism	"Grace Given"
Cluster	1 Tim. Titus			X
Cluster	Col. Eph.	X X		X
<b>The Grouping of Eight</b>	Cluster	1 Thess. 2 Thess.		
		1 Cor.	X	X
	Cluster	Phil.		
		Rom.	X	X
		2 Cor.	X	
		Gal.	X	X
	Alone	Phmn.	[but within The Grouping of Eight]	
Cluster	2 Tim. 2 Pet.			X

The three stylistic constructions were represented in each of Libby's five clusters/ groupings, even the unexpected clustering of 2 Tim. with 2 Pet.

Paul Robertson expanded further away from lexemes and syntax, analyzing the Pauline Corpus compared with two extra-biblical writers using a list of 19 figures and patterns of speech such as Universal Claims or Assertions, Metaphors and Analogies, Caustic Injunctions, First Person Reflection, etc.<sup>246</sup> The study did not produce groupings like those above<sup>247</sup> but did provide a different set of analytical criteria which proved beneficial in subsequent study.

<sup>245</sup> Libby, "Visualizing," 180.

<sup>246</sup> Paul Robertson, "Visualizing Data in the Quantitative Comparison of Ancient Texts: A Study of Paul, Epictetus, and Philodemus," in *Ancient Manuscripts in Digital Culture*, ed. David Hamidovic, Claire Clivaz and Sarah Bowen Savant (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2019), 160-61.

<sup>247</sup> Robertson did note some specifics, however: "Removing 2 Thessalonians (contested authenticity) and Philemon (extremely short length resulting in data outliers due to small sample size) results in an even clearer picture of the way that Paul's Letters cluster around each other"; also, "as a polythetic classification ..., we note some outlying data points in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians, which in this understanding are less typical of Paul's overall style" (*ibid.*, 166).

Pracht and McCauley's research regarding the Pauline authorship of just the Pastoral Letters draws upon past research, including that by Libby and Savoy,<sup>248</sup> and utilizes Robertson's 19 categories, plus several distribution models.<sup>249</sup> Along the way, they note that "the ways Paul relates to his audiences—whether declaring facts or making arguments, fashioning communal identity or disparaging outsiders, giving praise or issuing blame—can be quantified as features that exhibit certain statistical behaviors."<sup>250</sup> However, this should not ignore that these Letters were occasional documents written to individuals and groups for specific reasons. Paul censured the churches of Galatia (a group of groups), yet sought to encourage Timothy, an individual. The evidence more likely suggests occasional and audience variability rather than authorial plurality. Nevertheless, they conclude that

our literature review has shown that two major computational studies in recent years ... have concluded that stylistic differences between both corpora are not as significant as has previously been thought .... Based on our results, we agree with the findings of van Nes and Libby and argue that the differences in style between the Pauline and Pastoral Letters are not sufficient to discriminate between authors.<sup>251</sup>

Finally, regarding the absence of the three phenomena in the Thessalonian Epistles, one may observe constructions which resemble the Three. First, regarding repetition, one may see: (1) "[just as] you know" (καθὼς οἶδατε, etc.; 1 Thess. 1:5, 2:1, 2, 5, 11, 3:3-4, 4:2, 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:6, 3:7); (2) "to have need" (χρεῖαν ἔχειν, etc.; 1 Thess. 1:8, 4:9, 12, 5:1); and (3) "your faith" (τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν, etc.; 1 Thess. 3:6-7, 10; 2 Thess. 1:3-4). However, none of these repetitions are resumptive. Second, one sees two questions separated by "or" (ἢ; QoQ

---

<sup>248</sup> Erich Benjamin Pracht and Thomas McCauley, "Paul's Style and the Problem of the Pastoral Letters: Assessing Statistical Models of Description and Inference," *Open Theology* 11 (OT), no. 1. (Jan. 2025): 3-6.

<sup>249</sup> For example, binomial, Poisson, and negative binomial.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>251</sup> Pracht and McCauley, "Pastoral," 25. For a critique of criteria used either to question or validate Pauline authorship of the Pastorals, see Stanley E. Porter, "Pauline Authorship and the Pastoral Epistles: Implications for Canon," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (BBR) (1995): 105-23.

construction) in 1 Thess. 2:19: “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you (ἡ οὐχὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς) in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?” Yet, the two questions are not parallel in the same way as shown previously—the second question answers the first—though they are parallel in that Paul asks both. Third, regarding “grace given,” though one finds both words present in 2 Thess 2:16—“now may our Lord Jesus Christ ... who has loved us and given (δούς) us everlasting consolation ... by grace (ἐν χάριτι)” —the syntactical relationship between the two differs, and there is no context of service or ministry.

Though some have disputed the Pauline authorship of the Letters traditionally attributed to him, more modern techniques have tended to question such disputes and their conclusions. The three phenomena—resumptive repetition, interrogative parallelism, “grace given”—have found distribution among all of the various groupings, though the Thessalonian Letters find a place in such groups only in Libby’s study. One may use the three phenomena to argue in favor of Pauline authorship for all but the Thessalonian Letters, though this writer does not dispute Paul as the writer of these latter two.



## Bibliography

- Abasciano, Brian J. "Clearing Up Misconceptions About Corporate Election." *Ashland Theological Journal* 41 (2009): 59-90.
- . "Corporate Election in Romans 9: A Reply to Thomas Schreiner." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49, no. 2 (June 2006): 351-71.
- . "Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9:1-9: An Intertextual and Theological Exegesis." PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 2004.
- Achtemeier, Paul J. *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter*. In *Hermeneia*. Eldon J. Epp, ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996.
- Aland, Barbara, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martin, and Bruce Metzger, eds. *The Greek New Testament with Dictionary*, 5th rev. ed. Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014.
- Aland, Kurt, and Barbara Aland. *The Text of the New Testament, Revised and Enlarged*. Trans. Erroll F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Alexander, T. Desmond, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000.
- Allen, R. Michael, and Scott R. Swain. "In Defense of Proof-Texting." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54, no. 3 (September 2011): 589-606.
- Ambrosiaster. *Commentaries on Galatians-Philemon*. In *Ancient Christian Texts*. Gerald L. Bray, trans. Thomas C. Oden and Gerald L. Bray, Sen. eds. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009.
- . *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*. In *Ancient Christian Texts*. Gerald L. Bray, trans. Thomas C. Oden and Gerald L. Bray, Sen. eds. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009.
- Apocrypha, The*, New Revised Standard Version. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Arnold, Albert N., and D. B. Ford. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1889.
- Arnold, Clinton E. *Ephesians*. In *The Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Clinton E. Arnold, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2010.
- Barclay, John M. G. "Pure grace?" *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology* 68, no.1 (2014): 4-20.

- Barr, James. *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1961.
- Barrett, C. K. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Rev. ed. In *Black's New Testament Commentary*. Henry Chadwick, gen. ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- Barth, Markus, and Helmut Blanke. *Colossians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. In *The Anchor Bible*. David N. Freedman, ed. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1995.
- Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Trans. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich. Rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Baugh, S. M. *Ephesians*. In *The Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*. H. Wayne House, W. Hall Harris, and Andrew W. Pitts, eds. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016.
- Beale, C. K. *Colossians and Philemon*. In *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019.
- Beasley-Murray, George R. *John*. 2nd ed. In *Word Biblical Commentary*. Bruce M. Metzger, gen. ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999.
- Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994.
- Best, Ernest. *Ephesians*. In *The International Critical Commentary*. J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield, and G. N. Stanton, gen. eds. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1998.
- Blass, F., and A. Debrunner. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Trans. and ed. by Robert W. Funk. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1961.
- Blomberg, Craig L., with Jennifer Foutz Markley. *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Acts*. In *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Robert W. Yarbrough and Robert H. Steing, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007.
- . *Ephesians*. In *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Darrell L. Bock, ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019.
- . “New Testament Word Analysis.” In *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*. Scot McKnight, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989: 97-114.
- Boettner, Loraine. *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Dallas, TX: Gideon House, 2017.

- Bonner, Ali. *The Myth of Pelagianism*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Borchert, Gerald L. *John*. In *The New American Commentary*. E. Ray Clendenen, gen. ed. 2 vols. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996.
- Botterweck, Johannes G., and Helmer Ringren, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. 15 Vols. Rev. ed. Trans. John T. Willis. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974.
- Boyer, James L. "First Class Conditions: What Do They Mean?" *Grace Theological Journal* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 75-114.
- . "The Classification of Infinitives: A Statistical Study," *Grace Theological Journal* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 3-27.
- Braeutigam, Michael. "Sons and Daughters of God: An Account of a Systematic Theology of Adoption." ThM thesis, University of Glasgow, 2008.
- Bray, Gerald L. *How the Church Fathers Read the Bible: A Short Introduction*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2022.
- Brown, Colin, gen. ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986.
- Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
- Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1999.
- Bruce, F. F. *Commentary on the Book of Acts*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. F. F. Bruce, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983.
- . *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. F. F. Bruce, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984.
- . *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977.
- Burke, Trevor J. "Adoption and the Spirit in Romans 8." *Evangelical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (1998): 311-324.
- Burton, Ernest De Witt. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1900.
- Campbell, Constantine R. *Advances in the Study of Greek: New Insights for Reading the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2015.

- . *Basics of Verbal Aspect in Biblical Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2008.
- . *The Letter to the Ephesians*. In *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023.
- Campbell, Jr., Ronnie P. “The Eternality of the Immutable God in the Thought of Paul Helm: A Critical Analysis,” Master’s Thesis, Liberty University School of Religion, 2008.
- dy Carlos Araújo, Diego. “The Passive ἀποκατηλλάγητε in P46 and B03 Colossians 1:22a: An Original Grammatical Anomaly or Another Case of Scribal Assimilation?” *Tyndale Bulletin* 73 (2022): 23-44.
- Carraway, George Warrington. “Christ is God Over All: Romans 9:5 in the Context of Romans 9-11.” PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012.
- Carson, D.A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996.
- . *The Gospel according to John*. In *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990.
- . *The Gospel and the Modern World: A Theological Vision for the Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2023.
- . “Unity and Diversity in the New Testament.” In D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, eds. *Scripture and Truth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992.
- Carson, D. A., and John D. Woodbridge, eds. *Scripture and Truth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992.
- Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*. 8 vols. in 4. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1993.
- Clarke, Adam. *Clarke’s Systematic Theology*. Reprint ed. Salem, OH: H. E. Schmul, 1967.
- Clines, David J. A. *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
- Combs, William W. “Spirit-filling in Ephesians 5:18.” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 19 (2014): 23-52.
- Cosgrove, Charles H. “Rhetorical Suspense in Romans 9-11: A Study in Polyvalence and Hermeneutical Election.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 115, no. 2 (1996): 271-287.
- Cotterell, Peter, and Max Turner. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 1989.

- Craig, William Lane. "On Systematic Philosophical Theology." *Philosophia Christi* 23, no. 1 (2021): 11-25.
- . "God, Time, and Creation." *Philosophia Christi* 23, no. 2 (2021): 359-65.
- . "Timelessness and Omnitemporality." *Philosophia Christi* 2, no. 1 (2000): 29-33.
- Cranfield, C. E. B. *The Epistle to the Romans*. 2 Vols. In *The International Critical Commentary*. J. A. Emerton and C. E. B. Cranfield, eds. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1979.
- . "METPON ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans XII. 3" *New Testament Studies* 8, no. 4 (1962): 345-51.
- Cunningham, Philip A. "The Gifts and the Calling of God Are Irrevocable (Rom 11:29)." *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 12, no. 1 (2017): 1-39.
- Dana, H. E., and Julius R. Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. New York, NY: MacMillan, 1927.
- Danker, Frederick W. *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2009.
- Davids, Peter H. *The First Epistle of Peter*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Gordon D. Fee, ed. 18 Vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Davis, Stephan K. "The Antithesis of the Ages: Torah and Christ in Paul." PhD diss., Marquette University, 1999.
- Day, Adam Warner. "Paul, Hosea, and the Exile: A New Solution to Paul's Quotation of Hosea in Romans 9:25-26." MDiv thesis, Talbot School of Theology, 2010.
- Dinter, Paul E. "The Remnant of Israel and the Stone of Stumbling in Zion According to Paul (Romans 9 - 11)." PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1979.
- Dixon, Thomas P. "Israel, an Anatomy of the World: Microcosmic Contours Between Romans 9–11 and 1–8." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 74, no. 2 (October 2023): 567-606.
- . "Judgement for Israel: The Marriage of Wrath and Mercy in Romans 9-11." *New Testament Studies* 66 (2020): 565-81.
- Doole, Andrew J. "Liquid Mercy, Liquid Wrath? God's Empty Pots in Romans." *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 138, no. 3 (2016): 331-47.
- Dooley, Robert A., and Stephen H. Levinsohn. *Analyzing Discourse: A Manual of Basic Concepts*. Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2000.

- Dorman, Robert C. "A Study of Paul's Use of *HYIOTHESIA*: Its Background, Development, and Importance Concerning Spiritual Adoption." MA thesis, Covenant Theological Seminary, 1997.
- Downing, F. Gerald. "Incongruous Conciliation: A Constructive Critique of John Barclay's Paul and the Gift." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 41, no. 3 (2019): 384-402.
- Dunn, James D. G. *The Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon*. In *The New International Greek Text Commentary*. Todd D. Still and Mark Goodacre, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.
- . "Introduction." In *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*. Scot McKnight, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989: 15-19.
- . *Romans 9-16*. In *Word Biblical Commentary*. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, gen. eds. Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988.
- . *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1998.
- Earle, Ralph. "1, 2 Timothy." In vol. 11 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Frank E. Gaebelin, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978.
- , ed. *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Holy Bible, Abridged*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1967.
- Ellinger, K., and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990.
- Elwell, Walter A. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Enns, Paul. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1989.
- Enos, Ralph Gregory. "To Die Is Gain: The Christian's Intermediate State in Pauline Theology." ThD diss. Dallas Theological Seminary, 1989.
- Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.
- Esser, Hans-Helmut. "Grace." In *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. ed. Colin Brown. Vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986.
- Estes, Douglas. *Questions and Rhetoric in the Greek New Testament: An Essential Reference Resource for Exegesis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017.
- . "Regular and Irregular Variable Questions in New Testament Greek." *The Bible Translator* 72, no. 3 (2021): 351-63.

- Fanning, Buist M. *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Gordon D. Fee, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Feinberg, John S., ed. *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments (Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.)*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1988.
- Flowers, H. J. "Election in Jesus Christ—A Study of Ephesians 1:3-4." *Review and Expositor* 26, no. 1 (1929): 55-67.
- . "The Grace Of God Given To Paul—A Study Of Ephesians III, 1-13." *Review and Expositor* 25, no. 2 (1928): 155-72.
- Flowers, Leighton. *The Potter's Promise: A Biblical Defense of Traditional Soteriology*. San Antonio, TX: Trinity Academic Press, 2017.
- Foster, Robert B. "Renaming Abraham's Children: Election, Ethnicity, and the Interpretation of Scripture in Romans 9." PhD diss., Marquette University, 2011.
- Foulkes, Francis. *Ephesians*. In *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Leon Morris, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Fowl, Stephen E. *Theological Interpretation of Scripture*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009.
- Friberg, Barbara, Timothy Friberg, and Kurt Aland, eds. *The Analytical Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984.
- Ganssle, Gregory E., ed. *God and Time: Four Views*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001.
- Garner, David B. "Adoption in Christ." PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2002.
- Garrett, James Leo. *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical*. 2 Vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Geisler, Norman L. *Chosen But Free: A Balanced View of God's Sovereignty and Free Will*. 3rd ed. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2010.
- . *Systematic Theology in One Volume*. Arlington, TX: Bastion, 2021.
- Gempf, Conrad. "Paul, the Gift, and Jesus; or What Happened to the Jesus Tradition?" *Evangelical Quarterly* 89 vol. 4 (2018): 311-17.

“God Moves in a Mysterious Way.” Wikimedia Foundation, last updated August 6, 2024.  
Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God\\_Moves\\_in\\_a\\_Mysterious\\_Way](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_Moves_in_a_Mysterious_Way).

Goetchius, Eugene Van Ness. *The Language of the New Testament*. New York, NY: Scribner’s, 1965.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002.

Griffiths, David J. “First John’s Use of the Gospel of John: An Intertextual Study,” MA thesis, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011.

Grudem, Wayne. *1 Peter*. In *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.

———. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Guralnik, David B., ed., *Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language*, 2nd College ed. New York, NY: Prentice Hall, 1984.

Hanshew, Daniel S. “Ordained to Eternal Life? Exegesis of Acts 13:48.” ThM thesis, The Capital Bible Seminary, 2006.

Harris, Murray J. *Colossians and Philemon: Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2013.

Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. 2 Vols. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1980.

Hatch, Edwin, and Henry A. Redpath. *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1906.

Hawthorne, Gerald F. *Philippians*. In *Word Biblical Commentary*. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, gen. eds. Waco, TX: Word, 1983.

Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.

*H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, The New Testament: The Greek Text Underlying the English Authorized Version of 1611*. London, England: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1991.

Hendriksen, William. *Galatians and Ephesians*. In *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1968.

———. *John*. In *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1953.



- . *Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus*. In *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1957.
- . *Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*. In *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1964.
- Hermann, J. Berenike, Karina van Dalen-Oskam, and Christof Schöch. “Revisiting Style, a Key Concept in Literary Studies.” *Journal of Literary Theology* 9 no. 1 (2015): 25-52.
- Hill, Wesley A. “The Church as Israel and Israel as the Church: An Examination of Karl Barth’s Exegesis of Romans 9:1-5 in the Epistle to the Romans and Church Dogmatics.” *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 6, no. 1 (2012): 139-58.
- Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology*. 3 Vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Hodges, Zane C., and Arthur L. Farstad. *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*. 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985.
- Hoehner, Harold W. *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Holladay, William L., ed. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971.
- Holland, Jr., Richard A. *God, Time, and the Incarnation*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012.
- . *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*. Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1982.
- Hoover, Roy W. “The Harpagmos Enigma: A Philological Solution.” *The Harvard Theological Review* 64, no. 1 (Jan. 1971): 95-119.
- Hunt, Dave. *What Love is This? Calvinism’s Misrepresentation of God*. Sisters, OR: Loyal, 2002.
- Jackson, Jason. “Causes and Consequences of Spiritual Death: A Textual Analysis and Application of Ephesians 2:1–10.” Thesis, Freed-Hardeman University, 2022.
- Johnson, Robert. “Paul’s Theology of Israel: An Exegesis of Romans 9-11.” MA thesis, Regent University, 2008.
- Kautzsch, E., ed. Revised by A. E. Cowley. *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*. Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1910.
- Kaiser, Walter C. *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001.

- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr., and Moisés Silva. *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Keble, John, trans. *Five Books of S. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Against Heresies, With the Fragments That Remain of His Other Works*. Oxford, England: James Parker & Co., 1872.
- Kent, Homer A., Jr. *The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*. Rev. ed. Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1986.
- Kim, Kangil. “Participation ‘In the Heavens’ in Christ: Deification in Ephesians.” *Religions* 14 (2023): 1-13.
- King, Derek Edwin Noel. “The Four Pauls and Their Letters: A Study in Personality-Critical Analysis.” *Mental Health, Religion, and Culture* 15, no. 9 (Nov. 2012).
- Kistemaker, Simon J. *Acts*. In *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990.
- . *Peter and Jude*. In *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987.
- Kittel, Gerhard, ed. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 Vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
- Klein, William W. *The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election*, Rev. and Expanded ed. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015.
- Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Rev. and Updated ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004.
- Klink, Edward W. *John*. In *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Clinton E. Arnold, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016.
- Knapper, Daniel Reagan. “The Tongue of Angels: Pauline Style and Renaissance English Literature.” PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2019.
- Knight, George W., III. *The Pastoral Epistles*. In *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Mark Goodacre and Todd D. Still, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Kohlenberger, John R., III, Edward W. Goodrick, and James A. Swanson. *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.
- Köstenberger, Andreas J. *Commentary on 1–2 Timothy and Titus*. In *Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary*. T. Desmond Alexander, Thomas R. Schreiner, and Andreas J. Köstenberger, eds. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021.

- Krohn, Jeffrey S. *Mormon Hermeneutics: Five Approaches to the Bible by the LDS Church*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2022.
- Kruse, Colin G. *John*. Rev. ed. In *Tyndale New Testament Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017.
- . *The Letters of John*. In *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020.
- . *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. In *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 3rd. ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Kujanpää, Katja. "Job or Isaiah? What Does Paul Quote in Rom 11:35?" *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 24 (2019): 1-13.
- La Croix, Richard R. "Aquinas on God's Omnipresence and Timelessness." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 42, no. 3 (March 1982): 391-399.
- Lemmer, H. R. "Reciprocity Between Eschatology and Pneuma in Ephesians 1:3-14." *Neotestamentica* 21 (1987): 159-82.
- Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1934.
- . *The Interpretation of Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1937.
- . *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1943.
- Levinsohn, Stephen H. "The Relevance of Greek Discourse Studies to Exegesis." *Journal of Translation* 2, no. 2 (2006): 13-17.
- Levy, Ian Christopher. *Introducing Medieval Biblical Interpretation: The Senses of Scripture in Premodern Exegesis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Libby, James A. "The Pauline Canon Sung in a Linguistic Key: Visualizing New Testament Text Proximity by Linguistic Structure, System, and Strata." *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics* 5, no. 2 (2016): 122-201.
- Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon with a Revised Supplement*. Revised by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie. Oxford, England: Clarendon, 1996.

- Lightfoot, J. B. *J. B. Lightfoot's Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul*. 4 Vols. Reprint ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999.
- Lincoln, Andrew T. *Ephesians*. In *Word Biblical Commentary*. Bruce M. Metzger, gen. ed. Dallas, TX: Word, 1990.
- Linebaugh, Jonathan A. "Incongruous and Creative Grace: Reading Paul and the Gift with Martin Luther." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 22, no. 1 (January 2020): 47-59.
- Longenecker, Richard N. *The Epistle to the Romans*. In *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Todd D. Still and Mark Goodacre, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016.
- Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.
- Lyall, Francis. "Roman Law in the Writings of Paul: Adoption." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88, no. 4 (Dec. 1969): 458-466.
- MacArthur, John. *Revelation*. In *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*. 2 Vols. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1999.
- Mangum, Douglas, and Josh Westbury. *Linguistics & Biblical Exegesis*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *The Epistles of John*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Gordon Fee, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978.
- Marshall, John W. "The Person of Paul: A Study in the Apostle's Ethical Appeal." MA thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 1992.
- Martin, Lee Roy. *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2013.
- McGaughy, Lane C. "Toward a Descriptive Analysis of  $\epsilon\lambda\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota$  as a Linking Verb in New Testament Greek." PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1970.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Theology: The Basic Readings*. 3rd ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2018.
- . *Theology: The Basics*. 4th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2018.
- McKnight, Scot, ed. *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989.
- . "New Testament Greek Grammatical Analysis." In *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*. Scot McKnight, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989: 75-96.

- . *The Letter to the Colossians*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Joel B. Green, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018.
- Meeker, Kyle. “Pharaoh and the Justice of God: The Contribution of Exodus 9:16 to Paul’s Argument in Romans 9:14-18.” ThM thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2000.
- Melick Jr., Richard R. *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*. In *The New American Commentary*. David S. Dockery, gen. ed. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1991.
- Mesner, David Earl. “The Rhetoric of Citations: Paul’s Use of Scripture in Romans 9: Volume 1.” PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1991.
- Metzger, Bruce M. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. 3rd enlarged ed. New York, NY: Oxford, 1992.
- . *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1998.
- Meyer, Ben F. “Election-Historical Thinking in Romans 9-11, and Ourselves.” *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 7, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 171-81.
- Michaels, J. Ramsey. *John*. In *New International Biblical Commentary*. W. Ward Gasque, NT ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989.
- . *1 Peter*. In *Word Biblical Commentary*. Edited by Bruce M. Metzger. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999.
- Miley, John. *Systematic Theology*. Reprint ed. 2 Vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989.
- Montanari, Franco. *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Madaleine Goh and Chad Schroeder, eds. of English ed. Boston, MA: Brill, 2015.
- Moo, Douglas J. *The Epistle to the Romans*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Gordon D. Fee, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.
- . *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*. In *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Morris, Leon. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.
- . *The Gospel According to John, Revised*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Gordon Fee, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- . *The Revelation of St. John: An Introduction and Commentary*. In *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. R. V. G. Tasker, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980.

- Moule, C. F. D. *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*. Cambridge, England.: Cambridge University Press, 1959).
- Mounce, William D. *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009.
- . *Pastoral Epistles*. Vol. 46. *Word Biblical Commentary*. Edited by Bruce M. Metzger. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000.
- Muraoka, T. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2009.
- Murray, John. *The Epistle to the Romans*. In *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. 2 vols. in one. F. F. Bruce, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1959.
- . *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955.
- Newman, Carey C. “Election and Predestination in Ephesians 1:4-6a: An Exegetical-Theological Study of the Historical, Christological Realization of God’s Purpose.” *Review and Expositor* 93 (1996): 237-47.
- Nicoll, W. Robertson, ed. *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*. 5 Vols. Reprint ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Norman, David J. “Resurrection of the Body: Continuity in Christ Through Death in Christ.” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 86, no. 3 (2021): 273–88.
- Nuxoll, H. John. “Who’s on First? The Relationship Between 1 Peter and the Pauline Corpus Through Their Common Expression *EN CHRISTO*.” ThM thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2011.
- O’Brien, Peter T. *Colossians, Philemon*. In *Word Biblical Commentary*. David A. Hubbard, gen. ed. Waco, TX: Word, 1982.
- . *The Epistle to the Philippians*. In *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*. I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991.
- . *The Letter to the Ephesians*. In *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Ongkowidjojo, Hendry. “For When They Were Not Yet Born (Romans 9:6-18 in the History of Interpretation).” ThM thesis, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2008.
- Ortlund, Dane C. “The Insanity of Faith: Paul’s Theological Use of Isaiah in Romans 9:33.” *Trinity Journal* 30NS (Spring 2009): 269-88.

- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991.
- . *Revelation*. In *The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Moisés Silva, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Painter, John. *1, 2, and 3 John*. In *Sacra Pagina*. Daniel J. Harrington, ed. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008.
- Pao, David W. *Colossians and Philemon*. In *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Clinton E. Arnold, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2012.
- Park, Jang Hoon. “Is Romans 9:15 a Hindrance to Missional Motivation?” *The Journal of Korean Evangelical Missiological Society* 57 (2022): 241-74.
- Pattee, Stephen B. “Stumbling Stone or Cornerstone? The Structure and Meaning of Paul’s Argument in Rom 9:30-10:13.” PhD diss., Marquette University Graduate School, 1991.
- Pfeiffer, Charles F., and Everett F. Harrison, eds. *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1962.
- Pfeiffer, Charles F., Howard F. Vos, and John Rea, eds. *The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*. 2 Vols. (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975).
- Piatt, Richard C., II. “Predestination Duplex in Romans 9:9-23.” ThM thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1981.
- Pinnock, Clark, ed. *Grace Unlimited*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999.
- Pinnock, Clark, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger. *The Openness of God*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1994.
- Pinto, Carlos Osvaldo Cardoso. “The Contribution of the Isaiah Quotations to Paul’s Argument in Romans 9-11.” PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2003.
- Plecnik, Steven John. “Re-Evaluating Augustinian Fatalism through the Eastern and Western Distinction between God’s Essence and Energies.” PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 2009.
- Porter Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1994.
- . “Pauline Authorship and the Pastoral Epistles: Implications for Canon.” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (1995): 105–123.

- . *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1989.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Christopher D. Stanley, eds. *As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.
- Powell, Mark. "Called and Sent by God: The Divine Initiative in Ministry and Mission." *The Reformed Theological Review* 79, no. 3 (Dec. 2020): 215-39.
- Poythress, Vern S. "Science and Hermeneutics." In *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*. Moisés Silva, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996: 430-531.
- Pracht, Erich Benjamin, and Thomas McCauley. "Paul's Style and the Problem of the Pastoral Letters: Assessing Statistical Models of Description and Inference." *Open Theology* 11, no. 1 (Jan. 2025): 1-33.
- Purdy, Harlyn Graydon. *A Distinct Twenty-First Century Pentecostal Hermeneutic*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015.
- Quenk, Naomi L. *Essentials of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment*. 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2009.
- Radhakrishnan, R. *History, the Human, and the World Between*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Rahlfs, Alfred, ed. *Septuaginta*. Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*. 3rd. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999.
- Ratliff, Joshua. "Ephesians 1:3-4: An Explanation of the Corporate and Christocentric Nature of Election." Senior thesis, Liberty University, 2009.
- Reid, J. K. S. "The Office Of Christ In Predestination." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 1, no. 2 (1948), 166-83.
- Robertson, A. T. *A Grammar of Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1934.
- . *Word Pictures of the New Testament*. 6 Vols. New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1933.
- Robertson, Paul. "Visualizing Data in the Quantitative Comparison of Ancient Texts: A Study of Paul, Epictetus, and Philodemus." In *Ancient Manuscripts in Digital Culture*. David Hamidovic, Claire Clivaz, and Sarah Bowen Savant, eds. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2019.



- Runge, Steven E. *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010.
- Ryrie, Charles C. *Basic Theology*. Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor, 1986.
- Sanday, William, and Arthur C. Headlam. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. In *The International Critical Commentary*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1895.
- Sandys-Wunsch, John, and Laurence Eldredge. "J. P. Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary, and Discussion of His Originality." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 33 (1980): 133-44.
- Savoy, Jacques. "Authorship of Pauline Epistles Revisited." *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 70,no. 10 (2019): 1089-97.
- Schreiner, Thomas R. "Corporate and Individual Election in Romans 9: A Response to Brian Abasciano." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49, no. 2 (June 2006): 373-86.
- . "Does Romans 9 Teach Individual Election unto Salvation? Some Exegetical and Theological Reflections." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36, no. 1 (March 1993): 25-40.
- . *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
- . *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology*. 2nd ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2025.
- . *Romans*. 2nd ed. In *The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Scrivener, F. H. A. *Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, NOVUM TESTAMENTUM* [Greek New Testament]. London, England: Whittaker and Assoc., 1887.
- Scott, James M. *Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of ΥΙΟΘΕΣΙΑ in the Pauline Corpus*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992.
- Sears, Philip Chase, "Mysterion and the Salvation of 'All Israel' in Romans 9-11." PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019.
- Shellrude, Glen. "The Freedom of God in Mercy and Judgment: A Libertarian Reading of Romans 9:6-29." *Evangelical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (2009): 306-18.
- Sherwood, Aaron. "Paul's Use of the Old Testament in Romans 9:6-29: God's Judgment Upon Israel's Idolatry." MCS thesis, Regent College, 2007.

- Silva, Moisés. *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*. Rev. and Expanded ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.
- . “The Case for Calvinistic Hermeneutics.” In *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Sloyan, Gerard. *John*. In *Interpretation*. James L. Mays, ed. Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1973.
- Smith, Bradley L. “The Predestination Debate: A Harmony of Corporate Election and Individual Election.” Senior thesis, Liberty University, 2015.
- Sproul, R. C. *What is Reformed Theology?* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997.
- Steyn, Gert J. “Observations on the Text Form of the Minor Prophets Quotations in Romans 9–11.” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 38, no. 1 (2015): 49-67.
- Stibbs, A. M., and A. F. Walls. *1 Peter*. In *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. R. V. G. Tasker, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1959.
- Strong, August Hopkins. *Systematic Theology*. Reprint of 1907 ed. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1996.
- Strunk, William, and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2000.
- Stuart, Douglas K. *Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*. In *The New American Commentary*. E. Ray Clendenen, gen. ed. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2006.
- Swinburne, Richard. “God and Time,” in *Reasoned Faith*, Eleonore Stump, ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).
- Taylor, Bernard A., John A. L. Lee, Peter R. Burton, and Richard E. Whitaker, eds. *Biblical Greek Language and Lexicography: Essays in Honor of Frederick W. Danker*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Theron, Daniel J. “‘Adoption’ in the Pauline Corpus.” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (1956): 6-14.
- Thielman, Frank. *Ephesians*. In *The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.
- . *Romans*. In *The Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Clinton E. Arnold, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2018.

- Thiessen, Henry Clarence. *Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Revised by Vernon D. Doerksen. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.
- Thomas, Robert L. *Revelation: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2 Vols. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1992.
- Thornhill, A. Chadwick. “To the Jew First: A Socio-Historical and Biblical-Theological Analysis of the Pauline Teaching of ‘Election’ in Light of Second Temple Jewish Patterns of Thought.” PhD diss., Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013.
- Toussiant, Stanley D. “Acts.” In John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983: 349-432.
- Towner, Philip H. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*. In *New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Gordon D. Fee, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Trier, Daniel J. *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Trumper, Tim J. R. “A Fresh Exposition of Adoption: I. An Outline.” *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 23, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 60-80.
- . “A Fresh Exposition of Adoption: II. Some Implications.” *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 23, no. 2 (Autumn 2005): 194–215.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 9th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, William T. Fitzgerald, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2018.
- Turner, Charles C. “The Metaphors of St. Paul Classified and Discussed.” PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1956.
- Turner, Nigel. *Style*. Vol. 4 in *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, by James H. Moulton, 4 Vols. Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1976.
- . *Syntax*. Vol. 3 in *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* by James H. Moulton, 4 Vols. Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1963.
- Van Aarde, Timothy. “The Use of οἰκονομία for the Missional Plan and Purpose of God in Ephesians 1:3-14.” *Missionalia* 43, no. 1 (2015): 45–62.
- VanGemenen, Willem A., gen. ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997.

- Van Hoozer, Kevin J. "May We Go Beyond What Is Written after All? The Pattern of Theological Authority and the Problem of Doctrinal Development." In *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016: 747-792.
- Vaughan, Curtis. "Colossians." In vol. 11 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. 12 Vols. Frank E. Gaebelin, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978.
- Verster, Pieter. "Evangelism and Election: Is There an Answer to the Challenges?" *Pharos Journal of Theology* 104, no. 1 (2023): 1-14.
- Viviano, Benedict Thomas. *Catholic Hermeneutics Today: Critical Essays*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014.
- Votaw, Clyde W. "The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek." PhD Thesis, University of Chicago, 1896.
- Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.
- Walsh, Corinne C. "'What Was From the Beginning' (1 John 1:1): The Priority of the Johannine Epistles and the Johannine Community." MA thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1997.
- Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
- Walvoord, John F. *Revelation*. Revised and edited by Philip E. Rawley and Mark Hitchcock. Chicago, IL: Moody, 2011.
- Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983.
- Warfield, Ted A. "Causal Determinism and Human Freedom Are Incompatible: A New Argument for Incompatibilism." *Philosophical Perspectives* 14, *Action and Freedom* (2000): 167-80.
- Watson, Edward W. "Reading the Pauline Metaphor of Adoption in Roman as Authorial Audience." PhD diss., Baylor University, 2005.
- Westcott, Brooke Foss. *The Epistles of St. John*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001.
- Whaling, Thornton. "Adoption." *The Princeton Theological Review* 21, no. 2 (April 1923): 223-235.

- Williamson, Peter S. "Catholic Principles for Interpreting Scripture." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (July 2003): 327-349.
- Wilson, Kenneth M. "Augustine's Conversion from Traditional Free Choice to 'Non-free Free Will.'" PhD Thesis. In *Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 111*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018.
- . *The Foundation of Augustinian-Calvinism*. Montgomery, TX: Regula Fidei, 2019.
- Witherington III, Ben. *The Problem with Evangelical Theology: Testing the Exegetical Foundations of Calvinism, Dispensationalism, Wesleyanism, and Pentecostalism*, Rev. and Expanded ed. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015.
- Witmer, John A. "Romans." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament*. Ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1983: 435-503.
- Wong, Simon Sek-Muk. "A Semantic Analysis of Ephesians 1:3-14." ThM thesis, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1987.
- Wood, A. Skevington. "Ephesians." In vol. 11 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Frank E. Gaebelin, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978.
- Wooten, Cecil W. "Questions in Greek Rhetorical Theory and Demosthenes' Philippians." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 31, no. 4 (Autumn 2013): 349-371.
- Wright, N. T. "ἀρπαγμός and the Meaning of Philippians 2:5-11." *Journal of Theological Studies* 37, no. 2 (Oct. 1986): 321-52.
- Wynn Jr., J. Michael. "The Scope of Personal Pronouns in Ephesians 1 & 2." ThM thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2003.
- Yarbrough, Robert W. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*. In *Pillar New Testament Commentary*. D. A. Carson, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018.
- Zanchius, Jerome. *Absolute Predestination*. London, England: Silver Trumpet, 1989.
- Zerwick, Maximillian. *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples*. Rome, Italy: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1963.
- Zuck, Roy B. *Basic Bible Interpretation*. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1991.