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Contents

Editorial: Martin Luther

Pentateuchal Studies Today

Gordon Wenham

Understanding Pauline Studies: An Assessment of Recent Research [Part One]

Stanley E. Porter

Evolution and Eschatology

David N. Livingstone

The Role of Methodism in the Chartist Movement

Nigel Scotland

Book Reviews

Stephen N. Williams, "Editorial: Martin Luther," *Themelios: Volume 22, No. 1, October 1996* (1996): 1–2.

Editorial: Martin Luther

'A man is what he is on his knees before God—nothing more', said the nineteenth-century Scots minister, Robert Murray McCheyne. Who taught him, who exemplified for him, the truth of a salvation believed in, received, worked out in the secret place? We have had, as he had, many such teachers, for all of whom we are grateful. But few attain the stature of Martin Luther (1483–1546), the 450th anniversary of whose death we commemorate in this editorial.

Those inducted into theological study, whether in a Lutheran or non-Lutheran context, will likelier than not soon learn all about Luther's shortcomings. He divided the spheres of religious and political life; he stirred people up to violence, on particular occasions, against peasants and Jews; he erred on the Eucharist; he reduced the Pauline and biblical gospel to a narrowly-focused concern with the deliverance of a trembling and guilty sinner from the law of a wrathful deity. There is certainly a place for critical or constructive assessment on all these points. But not the place we often give it—the place given by people who show little sign of having learned from Luther before criticizing him: the place given by people who do not even pause to ask what Paul meant when he warned against judging another man's servant (Rom. 14:4).

Luther's break with Rome was not the result of a fundamentally negative impetus towards the Roman Church, but of a positive grasp of the gospel which led him to enthrone Christ, the salvation of Christ and the Word of God in a heart that burned with the discovery of God's way of justification. He is commonly credited with this emphasis on justification by faith alone and, indeed, his attempt to clarify Paul's 'justification by faith' by the addition of 'alone' in his German translation of the Bible, testifies to that emphasis. Yet, with all his attention to the faith of the believer, it was the superlative object of that faith which captured Luther. Listen to his comment on Galatians 3:13, to give one of many possible examples:

Hereby it appeareth that the doctrine of the Gospel (which of all other is most sweet and full of singular consolation) speaketh nothing of our works or of the works of the law, but of the unspeakable and inestimable mercy and love of God towards us unworthy and lost men: to wit, that our most merciful Father, seeing us to be oppressed and overwhelmed with the curse of the law, and so to be holden under the same that we could never be delivered from it by our own power, sent his only Son into the world and laid upon him the sins of all men, saying: Be thou Peter that denier; Paul that persecutor, blasphemers and cruel oppressor; David that adulterer; that sinner which did eat the apple in Paradise; that thief which hanged upon the cross; and briefly, be thou the person which hath

committed the sins of all men; see thou therefore that thou pay and satisfy for them.¹

It is one thing to wonder whether this is the most felicitous theological exegesis of the Pauline text in its relation to the wider doctrine of the atonement; it is another to deny that we witness here something of Luther's profound grasp of the truth that Christ bore our sins in his body on the cross.

Nor was Luther guilty of sheer inwardness. His life was crammed extraordinarily full of an activity which testified to his robust conviction that God calls us to a complete dedication to him in any and every sphere of service. We owe much to Luther in his way of dignifying Christian life in the world: justification by faith sets us free for joyous service and obedience. Nor is this formulated just in terms of God and the world. Everyone should read the short classic published in 1520, before the final breach with Rome: *The Freedom of the Christian Man*. (It is available in English translation not only in the multi-volume *Works* of Luther, but also, e.g., in the *Three Treatises*.²) First Luther establishes the principle of justification by faith, not as a cold doctrine, but as a life-transforming power as we are led into living union with Christ. But the seed of faith bears the fruit of love towards our neighbour. As Luther strikingly puts it: I must indwell my neighbour by love as I indwell Christ by faith. One needs to ponder this formulation. It is nothing less than a doctrine of total immersion-total immersion in my neighbour now that I live by faith in God, through Jesus Christ.

With statements such as these, Luther was able to present us with both the simplicity and the profundity of Christian essentials. And so we learn how compromised we so often are. Faith and love are often regarded as being in tension and, increasingly with and after the Enlightenment in the West, faith could look like a principle of ill-grounded and dogmatic inflexibility, while love looks like a principle for tolerant social co-existence. Luther full knew how faith, firm as flint, and love, stretchable as elastic, could make for a paradoxical alliance and difficult partnership. Yet that is the product of sin and immaturity. In Jesus Christ we see the perfect and deep harmony of repose in the Father, unflinching witness to truth and sacrificial love of impenetrable measure.³

Luther's life was no unblemished exemplification of his teaching, or, to put it another way, he was human and, to that extent, not unlike his detractors past and present! But he strove—strove to live the life that knows no governance save the lordship of God, and to relate to others according to the law of Christ. As for that protest and reformation which altered the course of world history, Luther would have been dismayed to find such things spoken of here or in any other article under the title: 'Luther'. 'I simply taught, preached,

¹ Martin Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (Cambridge: Clarke, 1953), p. 272.

² M. Luther, *Three Treatises* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1960).

³ I am eliding here the various distinctions in the meanings of 'faith' in relation both to Jesus and to ourselves.

wrote God's Word: otherwise I did nothing ... The Word did it all.'⁴ And had he known that some would long for another Luther to guide the Church in our day, he would have despaired: why *Luther*, when the power lies in the *Word*? It is because he reminds us of this, that we remember him in 1996.⁵

⁴ Quoted in Gordon Rupp, *Luther's Progress to the Diet of Worms* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 99. It is still worth reading.

⁵ We touch here on the ecumenical appropriation of Luther and the question of the relationship of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. By referring to Luther for today, I do not have this question in mind, however relevant and important it may be.

Gordon Wenham

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On the face of it, the study of the Pentateuch is in ferment. New interpretations of narrative and law are constantly being proposed in journal articles, and large tomes keep appearing which challenge or reaffirm conventional hypotheses about the composition of the Pentateuch. But this only underlines the fact that no new paradigm or scholarly consensus has emerged to displace the old theories. Though this article will focus on modern studies of the Pentateuch, this must not be taken to imply that the old views have been discarded. I suspect that if a poll of contemporary OT scholars were conducted, only a minority would endorse one of the modern models.

The oldest paradigm of Pentateuchal study presupposes the Mosaic authorship of nearly the entire corpus from Genesis to Deuteronomy. Moses is not only the chief actor in most of these books, he is the recipient of all the laws in Exodus to Numbers, and the preacher of Deuteronomy. Indeed Deuteronomy 31:24 states that Moses wrote 'the words of this law in a book, to the very end'. So generations of readers from pre-Christian times to the nineteenth century concluded that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch.

However, with the rise of historical criticism in the nineteenth century, a new paradigm of the Pentateuch established itself. Far from the books being written by one author in a short period (c. 1400 BC), they were written by many hands over a long period. It was held that the earliest sources were written several centuries after Moses: J about 900 BC, E about 800 BC, Deuteronomy about 600 BC, the Priestly source about 500 BC, and the final edition later still. This is known as the documentary hypothesis and its chief advocate in Germany was J. Wellhausen.

This hypothesis is expounded in every introduction to the OT, so we shall not spend time reviewing it here. Conservative Bible readers were perturbed by its implications for the historical truthfulness of the Pentateuch. If it was written so long after the events it describes, how can we be sure that they actually happened, let alone that they are reported accurately? But there was another very important change in the direction of pentateuchal study marked by the rise of the documentary hypothesis. Hitherto the main purpose of study had been to understand the text as it stood and to apply its teaching. Now the main purpose of study was to understand how the text came into existence and the historical circumstances of its composition. Critical commentaries were filled with discussions of which source is being cited, when a passage was written, how it relates to non-biblical texts, and so on. The origins of the biblical material, not its final form, became the focus of study. The assumption was that the scholar's duty is to recover the earliest form of a narrative, law or other tradition; the canonical text, since it was produced quite late, is of little interest.

In the first half of the twentieth century, subtle modifications to the documentary hypothesis by scholars like Alt, Noth and von Rad in Germany and the Albright school in America suggested that, despite the late date of the Pentateuch, we can nevertheless recover a credible picture of the period of Moses and even of the patriarchal age.² Hence opposition to the documentary hypothesis gradually waned, and by the mid-twentieth century it was almost universally accepted.

But in the 1970s this cosy consensus began to be disturbed. The dating of the sources was questioned, the historicity of the narratives was disputed, even the principles underlying source division were challenged. This debate has been in full swing now for twenty years and shows no signs of subsiding. Much of the argument is convoluted and depends on assumptions that are not universally

shared. So, for the sake of clarity, we must simplify the debate drastically and just draw out its main strands and directions. I shall therefore describe four main models for understanding the growth of the Pentateuch: the radical sceptical, the Jewish critical, the New Critical, and the theological models.

Radical scepticism

First to challenge the scholarly consensus were the radical sceptics, led initially by North American scholars like Van Seters and Thompson, then joined by Germans such as Rendtorff, Blum and Levin, and supported by the doyen British OT scholar, Whybray. These three groups have in common a rejection of the traditional criteria for distinguishing between sources, a dating of J to the sixth century BC or later, and a scepticism about the historicity of the material. But they disagree about how the Pentateuch was composed. Whereas Van Seters and Levin advocate a modified documentary hypothesis, Rendtorff and Blum favour a supplementary model, and Whybray a fragmentary model. For this reason, we shall describe each approach separately.

J. Van Seters, in *Abraham in History and Tradition* (1975), offered a fresh approach to the composition of the Pentateuch, which he has developed in numerous articles and in two further books, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (1992) and *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers* (1994). I shall look at these books in order of publication, spending most time on the first, for it is the one that has had most impact.

Abraham in History and Tradition divides into two parts. The first part attacks the position of Albright, Speiser and Gordon and others who had argued that parallels between Genesis and second-millennium Mesopotamia demonstrated the historicity of the Genesis accounts. On the contrary, Van Seters argues that the nomadic lifestyle of the patriarchs fits better into the late neo-Assyrian or even the neo-Babylonian period, i.e. the seventh and sixth centuries BC.³ He argues that the alleged parallels between the social and legal customs associated with marriage, adoption, sale and covenant-making in Genesis and the ancient Near East fit in better with first millennium oriental practice than with the second millennium. Finally, he looks at the places that Genesis says the patriarchs visited and asserts that the archaeological evidence does not show that they were inhabited in the early second millennium in the days of the patriarchs.⁴

Van Seters' arguments against the historicity of Genesis were supported by L. Thompson in his misleadingly titled *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives* (1974). Thompson's work is a more judicious book than Van Seters'. He draws attention to some of the fallacies that have characterized the archaeological defence of Genesis, but he is not so dogmatic as Van Seters in propounding an alternative very late setting for the traditions in Genesis.

These two books prompted a scholarly reassessment of the arguments for the antiquity and authenticity of the Genesis accounts, for example A.R. Millard and D.J. Wiseman, *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*. This concludes that the arguments for authenticity are not so cogent as Speiser and others alleged, but the balance of probability still lies with the antiquity of the tradition. Furthermore, the names of the patriarchs, such as Jacob, Ishmael and Isaac, are definitely early second-millennium in form and it would be very surprising for them to have been successfully archaized in the late first millennium.⁵

In the second half of *Abraham in History and Tradition* Van Seters developed a fresh approach to the source criticism of Genesis. He sits light to many of the criteria employed by traditional source critics. Only duplication of episodes is a clear marker of different sources, e.g. 12:10-20 and chapter 20, or chapters 15 and 17. Repetition within a story may not indicate different sources but may be merely stylistic. Nor does variation in vocabulary or divine names suffice to

separate sources, though material analysed into sources on other grounds may be identified through distinctive vocabulary.⁴

Throughout his literary discussion Van Seters tends to argue for the substantial unity of material usually ascribed to J and suggest that it comes later in biblical history than traditionally supposed. Discussing Genesis 15, for example, he notes its kinship with deuteronomic ideas and Deutero-Isaiah and suggests the boundaries of the land: 15:18-21 suit the exilic era better than any other period.⁷ He regards the P material essentially as a supplement to J and dates it to the post-exilic period. He holds that chapter 14 is later still, and that Genesis reached its present form about 300 BC.⁸

In his later works Van Seters tries to show that his critical conclusions hold for other parts of the Pentateuch. In *Prologue to History* he deals with the primeval history in Genesis 1-11, which he compares with both Near Eastern and Greek mythology. He thinks it has an affinity with Greek antiquarian writers active in the late first millennium as well as with Mesopotamian sources. He suggests that this is explained if the Yahwist lived in the Babylonian exile, where he could have encountered these ideas.

In *The Life of Moses* (1994) Van Seters completes his case for a complete reordering of the documentary hypothesis. As in his earlier works, he tends to view the JE material as a unity emanating from the Yahwist, and argues for its late date. Basically, the Yahwist was writing an introduction to the Deuteronomistic history (Deuteronomy to Kings), and borrowed freely and creatively from these earlier works in writing his own. Thus, Joshua's encounter with the captain of the host of Israel becomes the model for the burning bush. Moses' reluctance to be a prophet is modelled on the calls of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the idea of an exodus from a land of oppression derives from Second Isaiah.⁹

Van Seters's approach is a *tour de force*. If he is right, it has even more serious consequences for the historicity of the Pentateuch than the traditional documentary hypothesis. Though some may see his approach as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the documentary hypothesis, his view that the JE material is no earlier than the exile has found a good number of adherents, most notably Blum and Levin.¹⁰ Criticism of Van Seters has generally concentrated on his treatment of the patriarchal narratives,¹¹ but his treatment of Genesis 1-11 is also problematic. The closest non-biblical parallels to this material come from the period 2000-1500 BC in Mesopotamia and it is most unlikely that these traditions could have been transmitted to Israel after the second millennium.¹²

If Van Seters is the leading North American dissident in the field of pentateuchal criticism, in Germany this title must go to Rolf Rendtorff, whose *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (1977) represents an outright challenge to the documentary hypothesis. According to Rendtorff, the methods of source criticism as exemplified in Wellhausen's work and the methods of form criticism of Gunkel are fundamentally incompatible. Yet Gunkel and his successors, including Noth and von Rad, tried to combine the two methods. They used form criticism to explain the development of pentateuchal traditions in the oral stage of transmission. Then they affirmed that these oral traditions somehow coagulated into the literary sources J, E, P and so on.

Rendtorff holds that the patriarchal narratives were originally shorter and independent of each other. The Abraham stories do not form a tightly knit cycle: each episode seems rather independent and this suggests what they were like in the earliest stage of oral tradition. They were subsequently linked up by adding the divine promises of descendants, land and blessing. The different formulations of the promises (e.g. sometimes 'land', sometimes 'descendants') give a clue to the different stages in the process of amalgamation. These divine promises glued together the Abraham stories. Meanwhile, other stories about other themes were developing, e.g. the primeval history, the Joseph story, the exodus, Sinai. But at

this stage there was no documentary source running from creation to conquest. The blocks of stories were not linked up into a lengthy narrative akin to the Pentateuch till a deuteronomist developed the land promise to connect the previously separate blocks together.

Rendtorff thus argues that it is quite misleading to talk about a Yahwist or Elohist, for there never was a stage in the growth of the Pentateuch when the J or E traditions existed as connected documents covering the earliest history of Israel. Nor is it valid to speak of a P source. His work contains many other sharp jibes at the methods of literary criticism¹³ and at the dating criteria that are often invoked.

It must be conceded that we really do not possess reliable criteria for dating of the pentateuchal literature. Each dating of the pentateuchal 'sources' relies on purely hypothetical assumptions which in the long run have their continued existence because of the consensus of scholars.¹⁴

Rendtorff's book is more of a programme than a fully worked out alternative model of pentateuchal criticism. This has been provided by his former student E. Blum. In *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (1984) Blum traces the multiple stages of growth through which the patriarchal stories have passed. The earliest elements are found in the stories of struggle between Jacob and Esau and between Jacob and Laban in Genesis 25, 27 and 31: 'Obviously this text cannot be dated before David's subjugation of Edom.'¹⁵ This was next expanded by the addition of other stories in Genesis 27-33. Next the story of Jacob and his sons that begins in chapter 25 and ends in chapter 50 was worked out. Since these stories are concerned both with the northern tribes (e.g. Joseph) and yet look to the leadership of Judah, this points to a period when Judah was asserting its supremacy over the North, i.e. the reign of Josiah.

Meanwhile, stories about Judah and its neighbours, Moab and Ammon circulated in the southern kingdom. These relationships are reflected in the narrative about Abraham and Lot (Gn: 13, 18-19). These were tacked on to the Jacob narrative to form the first patriarchal history (*Vätergeschichte 1*)¹⁶ During the exile, a second form of the patriarchal history (*Vätergeschichte 2*) was produced. This involved filling out the Abraham stories and connecting the material with the promise of descendants, the gift of the land, and blessing. In the post-exilic period, perhaps between 530 and 500,¹⁷ the patriarchal history was linked to the rest of the Pentateuch through the editorial work of D, the Deuteronomist. In Genesis, his hand is evident in chapters 15, 18, 22:16ff. chapter 24 and some other places.

Like the deuteronomistic layer, the priestly layer is the only other layer that is found throughout the Pentateuch. Blum's second volume, *Die Komposition des Pentateuch* (1990), deals first with the deuteronomistic redaction of the Pentateuch and then with the priestly texts. J and E are never mentioned, though in some respects his D-layer is like Van Seters's and others' late and expanded J. But in his definition and dating of P, Blum comes close to traditional pentateuchal criticism.

A British contribution to this new-look pentateuchal criticism has been provided by R.N. Whybray in *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (1987). He begins by observing that the documentary hypothesis, the fragmentary hypothesis, and the supplementary hypothesis are not mutually exclusive. But he holds that

the least plausible of them is the Documentary Hypothesis. For whereas the Fragment and Supplement Hypotheses envisage relatively simple, and, if it would seem, logical processes and at the same time appear to account for the unevennesses of the completed Pentateuch, the Documentary Hypothesis is not only much more complicated but also very specific in its assumptions about the historical development of Israel's understanding of its origins.¹⁸

Whybray has two fundamental objections to the documentary hypothesis. The first is that it is illogical and self-contradictory and fails to explain what it professes to explain. The Pentateuch is split up into sources, because the present text contains redundant repetition and contradiction. The original sources, it is held, were non-contradictory and not repetitious, and the documentary hypothesis labours to reconstruct them. But then, when the sources were linked together, a repetitious and contradictory account was produced. Why, asks Whybray, should we suppose that the methods of Hebrew writers changed so drastically? If early writers did not tolerate contradiction or repetition, why did later writers revel in it? But if later writers did not mind such features, why should we suppose that the earlier sources did not contain contradiction and repetition? But if they did, how can we separate out the sources? 'Thus the hypothesis can only be maintained on the assumption that, while consistency was the hallmark of the various documents, inconsistency was the hallmark of the redactors'.¹⁹

His second objection is that the phenomena of repetition and stylistic variation found in the Pentateuch, which the documentary hypothesis is alleged to explain, may be understood quite differently. For example, since other religious texts use a variety of names for God, why should the change of divine name in Genesis signal a change of source? There could be a theological reason why one name is preferred to another, or the writer may just want a change. Repetition is often done for stylistic reasons, or to emphasize something, e.g. for rhetorical effect and in poetic parallelism. Furthermore, Whybray holds that the attempts to describe the theology of J or of E rest on too narrow a base to be convincing. But if this applies to these relatively lengthy texts, how much less plausible are the attempts of Rendtorff and Blum to define editorial layers on the basis of alleged editorial passages.

Having argued that the documentary style of analysis is both too complicated and implausible, Whybray criticizes the tradition-critical approach even more trenchantly. He argues that the task of tradition critics is even more difficult than that of source critics. At least the latter are dealing with partially extant texts, but the former are dealing with hypothetical reconstructions for which we have no tangible evidence: 'Much of Noth's detailed reconstruction of the Pentateuchal traditions was obtained by *piling one speculation upon another*'.²⁰

Rendtorff and Blum profess to be tradition critics, but Whybray says that this is true only in the sense that they see the process of growth that characterized the oral phase as continuing in the literary phase, for their methods of analysis of the text are much closer to classic source criticism. But he finds their conclusions less than convincing: 'Rendtorff has merely replaced the comparatively simple Documentary Hypothesis which postulated only a small number of written sources and redactors with a bewildering multiplicity of sources and redactors'.²¹ As for Blum, Whybray thinks his approach is, if anything, more complex and more dogmatic, yet less demonstrable, than Rendtorff's.

So what does Whybray himself believe? His agnosticism about most of the complex reconstructions of the documentary and tradition critics is manifest. He considers most of their hypotheses at best unverifiable and at worst illogical speculation. Let us admit that we just do not know much about the growth of the Pentateuch. Modern literary criticism (cf. Alter and Clines) has shown that the Pentateuch is a well-constructed work, which shows that it is the work of an author, not the end-product of haphazard growth like the Midrash. So let us suppose it is the work of one writer from the late sixth century, as Van Seters argued. Greek historians claim to use written sources, but they evidently rewrite them in their own words. They do not mind repeating themselves or varying their style, so why should these features in Hebrew literature be ascribed to different sources or layers? Van Seters and Rendtorff have been going in the right direction in seeing the Pentateuch as an essentially single literary work, either by the late Yahwist or a Deuteronomist, but they have failed to reach their logical conclusion: There appears to be no reason why (allowing for the possibility of a few additions) the *first* edition of the Pentateuch

as a comprehensive work should not also have been the *final* edition, a work composed by a single historian.²³ But its late date means that most of the story should be regarded as fiction, including 'the whole presentation of Moses . . . its present form.'²⁴

Whybray's work on the Pentateuch could be viewed as the logical conclusion of the direction in which most pentateuchal criticism has been moving in the last three decades. More and more studies have been insisting on the sixth century as the time in which the whole work took shape, and there has been an even stronger trend to unitary readings and a reaction against minute dissection. On the other hand, he could be viewed as the embodiment of the English common-sense tradition as opposed to the continental love of complex theorizing. His book is a powerful and valid critique of the methods that have been taken for granted in pentateuchal criticism for nearly two centuries. However, though he thinks his model for the composition of the Pentateuch is essentially correct, that of one major author using a variety of sources,²¹ he has not demonstrated this by giving detailed attention to the texts, nor has he shown that it was composed so late and should be regarded as fiction.

Jewish criticism

A quite different model of the growth of the Pentateuch is preferred by most critical Jewish scholars (Orthodox Jews still of course uphold the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch). Following in the footsteps of Y. Kaufmann,²⁵ they tend to accept the basic source division of the documentary hypothesis, but to maintain that P is not the latest source but that it antedates Deuteronomy and reflects the worship of Solomon's temple. P may therefore come from much the same period as J. Some of the more important works from this school of thought have come from A. Hurvitz,²⁶ M. Haran,²⁷ J. Milgrom,²⁸ and M. Weinfield.²⁹

A new study³⁰ of the P material profoundly challenges many accepted views. According to the documentary hypothesis, there are several components in the priestly material. One of the earlier sections is the Holiness Code (H) (Lev. 17-26), which is often dated in the early exile, whereas the bulk of the priestly code (P) may be up to a century later. Furthermore, it is usually held that there are P insertions or editorial changes to H.

Knohl challenges all these points. Using methods used in the critical analysis of the Talmud, he argues that the Holiness School edited the P material not *vice versa*. By comparing the P version of the festivals in Numbers 28-29 with the P version in Leviticus 23, he shows that the latter is an H expansion of a P text. Using a mixture of linguistic, theological and content criteria, Knohl goes on to argue that wide stretches of P material have been edited by H. He argues that 'there are many indications of HS editing of PT material but . . . no evidence at all for influence in the opposite direction.'³¹ Not only did HS edit PT and not *vice versa* but 'HS is responsible for the great enterprise of editing the Torah, which included editing and rewriting the legal scrolls of the PT and blending them with the non-Priestly sources'.³²

Knohl then tries to locate HS and PT historically. He thinks that Leviticus 17 suggests that HS was written in a period when the cult was being centralized, because it forbids the offering of sacrifice anywhere but at the tabernacle. This could connect it with Hezekiah's reform in the eighth century. This was also a time of social polarization, which HS tries to counter with the jubilee provisions of Leviticus 25. The eighth-century prophets like Amos and Isaiah savagely attacked priestly rituals and demanded moral purity. So HS counters this prophetic onslaught by insisting that holiness does involve morality, but that the cult also has its proper place: 'Thus we find a moral refinement of the purely cultic conception, stemming from Priestly circles themselves, under the

influence of the prophetic critique.³³ The prophetic preaching about social and moral issues led to the priests emerging from their introverted world preoccupied with cultic holiness, and interacting instead with popular concerns. Thus Knohl dates the emergence of HS somewhere in the late eighth century.

P(T), however, was written before HS. It probably originated in the period when Solomon's temple was being built in the mid-tenth century: 'We may safely assume that the establishment of the "King's Temple" of Jerusalem and the creation of a closed, elitist Priestly class dependent on the royal court are all part of the background leading to the development of PT.³⁴ The loftiness and abstraction of PT by no means require a late date. Probably 'PT and J came into existence about the same time . . . If we add the flourishing of poetry, psalmody and wisdom literature, we may generalise by saying that this was the peak period of all Israelite literature - in every genre.'³⁵

Knohl's analysis of the redaction of P texts by HS is convincing at many points. He has made a good case for holding that many P texts have been edited by HS. His methods and conclusions seem more sober and empirical than most attempts at source and redaction criticism. His exposition of the theological stance of HS is masterly. But his view of P and his dating arguments seem less well grounded. These depend too much on arguments from silence. Knohl too often argues thus: if PT does not mention something, it follows that it did not believe in it. P does not include moral commands; therefore, its concept of holiness is purely cultic. P does not mention prayer and singing in describing the sacrifices; therefore, worship was conducted in silence. However, we do not have the original PT, only the version edited by HS. We therefore cannot be sure what PT once contained, only what parts HS chose to retain.

Does, for example, the non-mention of prayer in worship mean sacrifice was conducted silently? We could argue that though we do not know what was said or sung during worship, we should assume that something was said, because this was standard practice throughout the ancient Near East and elsewhere in the OT. Knohl makes the opposite assumption: that the absence of reference to singing or prayer with the sacrifices means that nothing was said. But as archaeologists say: 'Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.' It would seem extraordinary that if PT were written to describe temple worship in Solomon's time, a time when, Knohl says, psalmists were also active, the text would envisage a sanctuary of silence.

Though Knohl may be right to date P and H much earlier than usual, his arguments are not much better than Wellhausen's or Van Seters's. The concerns of HS would be relevant at many points in Israel's history, not just in the eighth century.

Final form study and New Criticism

In much modern pentateuchal criticism there is a trend towards much simpler explanations of the growth of the Pentateuch: this is most noticeable in the work of Whybray and Knohl. There is a recognition that the more complex the reconstruction of the growth to the Pentateuch, the more difficult it is to demonstrate, and that if one is not careful, one will pile hypothesis upon hypothesis. This has led to ever increasing interest in the final form of the text. However, it is not merely the dawn of common sense that is to be thanked for this new insight but also a trend in literary theory known as New Criticism. This holds that the proper subject for literary study is the text itself, not the author or the circumstances of the text's composition. An example of this new style of criticism is D.J.A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (1978). In it, he laments the vast attention given to the unprovable speculations of source criticism and the neglect of the present shape of the Pentateuch.

It is ironic, is it not, that the soundest historical-critical scholar, who will find talk of themes and structures 'subjective' in the extreme, will have no hesitation in expounding the significance of a (sometimes conjectural) document from a

conjectural period for a hypothetical audience of which he has . . . only most meagre knowledge.³⁶

Clines argues that 'the theme of the Pentateuch is the partial fulfilment . . . the promise to or blessing of the patriarchs'.³⁷ The promises focus descendants, the divine-human relationship, and land. Most of the rest Clines's book is taken up with showing how these are developed in different parts of the Pentateuch, and that recognition of the theme allows us to see coherence of sections of the Pentateuch, such as the book of Numbers, often regarded as confused and illogical. In the penultimate chapter, he shows how this understanding of the Pentateuch's theme fits in with the needs of the exilic community, which could have read the story of Israel's wanderings outside the land as prefiguring its own life in exile. This shows, according to Clines, that attention to the major literary issues such as theme may clarify historical issues, so that synchronic and diachronic studies need not be in opposition to each other.

Other studies emphasizing the final form of the text have tended to look at shorter sections. G.A. Rendsburg³⁸ deals with the whole of Genesis, while J. Fokkelman and M. Fishbane³⁹ look at parts of Genesis including the Jacob cycle (chs 25-35). Many other studies of parts of Genesis have appeared in journals, and in such books as J. Licht, *Storytelling in the Bible*,⁴⁰ R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*⁴¹ and M. Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*.⁴² Studies on other parts of the Pentateuch have been fewer, but a final-form reading of Exodus 32-34 has been offered by R.W.L. Moberly,⁴³ Numbers by D.T. Olson and of Deuteronomy by R. Polzin.⁴⁵ This brief list gives only a hint of the range and of exciting work devoted to interpreting the final form of the text.

Theological Criticism

Though most final-form studies pay lip-service to the continuing place of diachronic study, few really have attempted to create a new synthesis bringing together the two ends of the discipline. And even fewer studies take the theology of the text seriously. An exception is R.W.L. Moberly, *The Old Testament of the Old Testament*. He begins by looking at two passages in Exodus 3 and 6, which tell of the revelation of the name of Yahweh to Moses. In the first, Moses stands before the burning bush and asks God what his name is. He is told, 'I am that I am', i.e. Yahweh. In the second passage, God simply introduces himself: 'I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them' (Ex 6:2-3). Standard documentary criticism sees these texts as justifying the analysis of pentateuchal narratives into the main sources, E in Exodus 3: 1-15 and P in Exodus 6:2-3, because they could be held to be repetition. They also enable a contrast to be made with the J source which uses the name Yahweh frequently in the patriarchal stories, whereas E and P say it was an innovation from the time of Moses.

Moberly, however, shows that Exodus 6 is not simply repeating Exodus 3: the plot of the narrative demands that something like chapter 6 follow chapter 3. Thus, if it is right to distinguish sources here, which Moberly doubts, both the old E source and late P source agree that there is a distinction to be made between the religious experience of Moses and that of the patriarchs. Why, then, is God so often referred to as 'the LORD' in Genesis? Moberly argues that this does not represent a different historical perspective from the J source, rather it is a way of insisting that the God who spoke to the patriarchs was the same God as spoke to Moses. The patriarchs may have known God as 'Elohim', 'Shaddai' or 'El' or 'Elohim,' but that does not mean he was a different deity from Moses' Yahweh. The use of the name 'Yahweh' in Genesis is a reminder of the continuity between patriarchal and Mosaic religion and of the fact that patriarchal history is told from the perspective of Mosaic Yahwism. Thus all the

putative sources in the Pentateuch see both continuity and differences between the Mosaic and patriarchal periods.

Moberly then goes on to explore some other points of similarity and difference between the patriarchal and Mosaic periods portrayed in the texts. While the patriarchs worship one God, there is not the exclusivism that characterizes Mosaic monotheism. The patriarchs generally live peaceably with the Canaanites without trying to exterminate them or to drive them out as the Mosaic law requires. God reveals himself directly to the patriarchs and they themselves build altars and offer sacrifices without the mediation of Moses or the priests. The patriarchs practise circumcision, but it is not clear that they observed the sabbath or food laws that figure so largely in later books of the Pentateuch. Finally, 'the notion of holiness, which from Exodus onward is a basic characteristic of God and a major requirement for Israel, is entirely lacking in the patriarchal traditions'.⁴⁶

Moberly argues that the relationship between the patriarchal stories and the rest of the Pentateuch is like that between the OT and the NT. The same God revealed himself in both testaments, but there was a radical new perspective on his nature revealed by the coming of Christ. Similarly, the revelation at Sinai represented a new theological dispensation in his dealings with Israel. That is not to invalidate the old revelation given to the patriarchs or to say that their experience of the life of faith is not most illuminating to later ages, but to insist that the revelation to Moses, like the coming of Christ, brought new insights into God's character and purposes unknown before.

Moberly suggests that the whole project of naming the sources J, E and P is flawed, because so much rests on postulating religious distinctions between the sources, which really represent differences between the patriarchal era and the Mosaic dispensation. He would prefer a different approach: 'It would be most helpful to adopt categories that are descriptive of the content of the text: patriarchal traditions (subdivided into Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph cycles . . .); similarly Mosaic traditions' (again subdivided).⁴⁷ Then one can proceed to find the linking vocabulary and theological themes that span these different sections of text and build up a new critical theory.

Finally, Moberly's approach to the distinctiveness of the patriarchal era makes the scepticism of Van Seters and others about the historicity of these traditions unwarranted. The pentateuchal writers cannot be projecting back into the patriarchal past contemporary popular religious practice with which they disagree. The writers believed in Mosaic Yahwism, yet they have described different beliefs and practices which they wanted to abolish without condemnation. Indeed, they have gone further:

They have given traditions depicting non-Yahwistic ethos and practices the considerable luster of inseparable association with the ancestor of Israel's faith, Abraham, and the eponymous ancestor of the whole nation, Jacob/Israel. They have refrained from all adverse comment. And they have gone to considerable lengths to relate such material to Mosaic Yahwism in the way we have shown above. One would have thought that straightforward suppression would not only have been easier but also more in keeping with the generally exclusive and polemical nature of Yahwism in Exodus-Deuteronomy.⁴⁸

Conclusion

Sometimes scholarship gets stuck in a rut. But that is certainly not the case with pentateuchal studies at the moment. The debate between different points of view is lively and sometimes heated. As yet, no new consensus has emerged about the composition of the Pentateuch. However, there is much creative interpretation being done by those concentrating on the final form of the text. And it is here that Christians have always located the authority of Scripture and its inspiration, and it

remains our duty not simply to read the text but apply it to ourselves in instruction in righteousness (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16). If we do this, we shall keep the critical debates in perspective.

- ¹ For my brief summary and assessment see 'The Pentateuch', in D.A. Carson *et al.*, *The New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition* (Leicester: IVP, 1994), pp. 43-53, and G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Waco: Word, 1987), pp. xxv - xlv.
- ² See *The New Bible Commentary* p. 49.
- ³ J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1975), pp. 13-38
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-22.
- ⁵ For further discussion see A.R. Millard and D.J. Wiseman (eds), *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (Leicester: IVP, 1980), and for a brief assessment of the debate, G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50* (Dallas: Word, 1994), pp. xx - xxviii.
- ⁶ Van Seters, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-157.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 263-278.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 304-308.
- ⁹ J. Van Seters, *The Life of Moses* (Kampen: Kok, 1994), pp. 35-63.
- ¹⁰ C. Levin, *Der Jahwist* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).
- ¹¹ See footnote 7 and also K. Berge, *Die Zeit des Jahwisten* (BZAW 186; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990).
- ¹² For further discussion see Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. xlv.
- ¹³ E.g., on linguistic criteria for source division, see R. Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch*, trans. by J. J. Scullion, (JSOTSS 89; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) pp. 113, 118.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-202.
- ¹⁵ E. Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), pp. 202-203.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 297.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 392.
- ¹⁸ R.N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (JSOTSS 53; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), p. 18.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 210.
- ²² *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 240.
- ²⁴ I argued the same independently of Whybray in my commentary on Genesis 1-15 which was also published in 1987. *Genesis 1-15* (Waco: Word, 1987).
- ²⁵ Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, trans. and abridged by M. Greenberg, (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1960).
- ²⁶ A Hurvitz, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship between the Priestly Source and the Book of Ezekiel* (Paris: Gabalda, 1982).
- ²⁷ M. Haran, *Temples and Priestly Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978).
- ²⁸ See his numerous books and articles but especially his commentaries: *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1990) and *Leviticus 1-16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1991).
- ²⁹ E.g. in *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972) and 'Social and cultic institutions in the priestly source against their ancient Near Eastern background', in *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies volume 5* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1983), pp. 95-129.

- ³⁰ I. Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 204. N.B. Because Knohl believes that H and P have not always been correctly distinguished, his definitions of H and P do not always coincide with the traditional ones. For this reason he speaks of HS = Holiness School and PT = Priestly Torah.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 6; cf. p. 101.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 216.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222 n. 78.
- ³⁶ D.J.A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (JSOTSS 10; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), p. 14.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- ³⁸ G.A. Rendsburg, *The Redaction of Genesis* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1986).
- ³⁹ J.P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (Amsterdam: van Gorcum, 1975); M. Fishbane, *Text and Texture* (New York: Schocken, 1979).
- ⁴⁰ (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1978).
- ⁴¹ (New York: Basic, 1981).
- ⁴² (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985).
- ⁴³ R.W.L. Moberly, *At the Mountain of God* (JSOTSS 22; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983).
- ⁴⁴ D.T. Olson, *The Death of the Old and the Birth of the New: The Framework of the Book of Numbers and the Pentateuch* (Brown Judaic Studies 71; Chico: Scholars Press, 1985).
- ⁴⁵ R. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).
- ⁴⁶ R.W.L. Moberly, *The Old Testament of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), p. 99.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 181.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

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Publications in Pauline studies continue at what appears to be an ever-increasing pace. Although the work is not uniformly of the same standard, it all bears testimony to the continued interest in 'the second founder of Christianity', as Wilhelm Wrede called Paul (not without some merit). This two-part study attempts to survey and assess a number of works on Paul and his writings from 1991 to the present. In this study, I wish to draw attention to several of the major areas of work, including work in commentaries. I do not pretend to have read everything in Pauline studies (nor would I even want to try), but I will try to offer an informed critique of some of the major works and what they might have to offer a serious student of the NT. Since I am the editor of one of the major monograph series in NT studies (*JSNT Supplement Series*), I will note where a contribution has been made by the series but (usually) refrain from commenting on these volumes.

In the discussion that follows, I divide the books on Paul into two broad and roughly even categories. The first is concerned with books on Paul and the issues that surround him and his letters. The second, to be published in the next issue, includes treatments of individual letters, including commentaries and monographs. I will take each of these categories in turn, and then conclude with some general observations on the state of Pauline studies.¹ Here, then, I shall concentrate on general Pauline studies. In this section, assessment is given of a number of studies, grouped under convenient headings. Not only are there a number of fundamental studies on Paul, but there are a few volumes each on such related topics as Paul and the law, the Pauline letter legacy, Pauline ethics, Paul and the OT, Paul and Jesus, Paul and ancient rhetoric, and monographs on Paul.

Fundamental studies

Probably the single most important work on Paul in the last five years, in so far as general applicability is concerned, is the *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*.² This dictionary of close on 1 million words is a compendium of over 200 articles representing the latest and best thinking by an international group of evangelical scholars (with 'evangelical' healthily broadly defined). The articles range in length from fairly short to lengthy and detailed treatments. Since I wrote a few of the articles, it is unfair for me to surreptitiously single them out for accolades. But there are plenty of other articles that merit close scrutiny. In fact, there are so many that it would be unfair to mention only a few. They are virtually all up to date (except possibly the one on Qumran and Paul, in the light of recent publication of Cave 4 documents). If there is a word of caution that needs to be expressed regarding this dictionary (and most others) is that the articles display several different kinds of approaches, which cannot always be equated. For example, some are essentially word studies and fall victim occasionally to the limitations of equating concepts with individual words; others are theologies, with one or two being more theologies of the Reformation than of Paul; and others are studies of particular passages. If used wisely, however, this may well be the single most reliable general guide to Paul's writings and thought, and a very useful tool for preparing for examinations and papers (and even lectures!). I might also mention in passing a collection of fourteen essays on Paul, including some on Paul the Apostle, Pauline interpretation of sacred tradition, Pauline theology and the Pauline letter-form and rhetoric. These were all published in *JSNT* between 1978 and 1993, and

offer a useful selection for those wishing to read serious scholarly essays on these topics.⁴

There are two studies on the life of Paul that are worth mentioning. The first is Martin Hengel's study of what he calls *The Pre-Christian Paul*.⁵ This book is a very useful continuation of his previous work on the Hellenistic nature of Judaism during Hellenistic times,⁶ with a recognition of the historical reliability of the biblical documents, including Acts. Hengel, for example, defends the Roman citizenship and Pharisaism of Paul, beliefs doubted by some critical scholarship today. He goes further and shows how Paul's being educated by Gamaliel in Jerusalem does not negate Paul's knowledge of Greek as his first language, along with his having learned Hebrew and Aramaic. Hengel illustrates how very Greek Jerusalem, as well as Palestine, was at this time, including in its educational system. This has direct implications for understanding Paul and his writings. Throughout, Hengel documents his study with reference to numerous primary and secondary sources. Although in the past (and still in some circles) there were lines drawn between Hellenism and Judaism, Hengel shows the clear connections between them, such that one can fully appreciate Paul as a Jew of the Hellenistic world, without this being a contradiction in terms. Hengel closes with an endorsement of the radicalness of Paul, well understood by Augustine and Luther, a position that puts Hengel at odds with much recent Pauline scholarship.⁸ Hengel's book is to be contrasted with Hyam Maccoby's *Paul and Hellenism*,⁷ which attempts to show that Paul, who was not rabbinically trained, was influenced by Gnosticism and the mystery religions. This laid the foundation for Christian anti-Semitism, especially with his teaching regarding the death of Jesus (Paul also made up the idea of the eucharist!). Although Maccoby does raise some interesting questions, his method and evidence cannot sustain his analysis of Paul. This book does not represent mainstream Pauline studies.

Quite a different book is C.K. Barrett's book, *Paul*.⁸ Whereas Hengel's is narrow in focus and detailed, Barrett's is an overview of the life and thought of Paul, clearly based on a lifetime of serious study of the apostle (Barrett's commentaries on Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians and the Pastoral Epistles are all highly commended). Barrett (rightly) approaches Paul as the first and probably the greatest Christian theologian. His discussion utilizes the Pauline epistles as virtually the only sources for understanding Paul (downgrading Acts and especially apocryphal sources). After briefly discussing Paul's life and his controversies, Barrett discusses the major points of theology in the major Pauline letters (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, along with Philemon). He devotes a very important section to disputing the view that Paul is opposing covenantal nomism (*i.e.* the new perspective on Paul), seeing Paul as arguing in Galatians and elsewhere against works righteousness. He also offers an exposition of Phil. 2:6-11 that begins with the pre-existent life of Christ, a topic of recent importance and dispute.⁹ Barrett then discusses the remaining Pauline letters in a chapter on the sequel to Pauline theology, and concludes with a brief application to today. While some will not think that Barrett has sufficiently established the non-Pauline authorship of 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles, there is much of value in his analysis of Paul's thought. Whereas there have been a number of Pauline theologies written in the past (*e.g.* Anderson Scott, Whiteley, Ridderbos), this is the only one of recent times, and it merits attention.

Paul and the law

Since the issue of the law has been raised above, it is perhaps appropriate here to mention three books that specifically address this topic. The first is a study of the use of the Greek word *nomos* (law) in Paul by Michael Winger.¹⁰ Most commentaries and treatments of the law in Paul do not have a linguistically sound approach to analysis of this lexical item. The result is that all too often there are attempts to force the evidence. What Winger attempts to do is to use principles of modern

linguistics to provide a study of the various possible uses of the word. By usefully differentiating between meaning and reference (sense and reference might have been better terms), by which he means the basic meaning of a word and how it might be used in a given context, he is able to describe various components of the meaning of the word. He then applies these to two Pauline passages (Gal. 2:15-21 and Rom. 7:14-25), showing how the word *nomos* is used in a variety of ways. Winger is clearly right to dispute how *nomos* has been interpreted by previous commentators, especially since so many of them want to equate it with the Torah. His differentiation of a number of semantic features of the word is also very useful. The difficulty is when one attempts to analyse given passages. Then one realizes that in more than a few instances there is still room for serious debate.

The second and third books on the law are similar in that they are theological discussions of Paul and the law. It is impossible here to recapitulate the significant discussion that this topic has engendered in the last approximately twenty years. The major names in the discussion of late, besides Sanders and Dunn, are H. Räisänen and S. Westerholm, among others¹¹, but these latter two books provide serviceable treatments of the issue. Both start with a discussion of the history of Christian thought regarding Paul and the law, bringing the reader up to date on the issue's complexities. Then the books diverge in approach and conclusions. Both are written by evangelicals who have previously published on the topic, and are in their own ways fine books. Frank Thielman,¹² who wrote the article on 'Law' in the *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, treads a middle line between the traditional Reformation and Lutheran view, and the new perspective on Paul. Whereas he does not think that Judaism was by nature legalistic (here he follows a covenantal approach), he does think that in Paul's time there were Jews who tried to combine God's grace with the doing of the law. With the coming of Christ, the Mosaic law, which had been established on the same gracious basis, was rendered obsolete. Paul, therefore, in passages that seem to argue for a legalistic Judaism, is dismissing the capacity of righteousness through works, something that Judaism had never endorsed. Thielman develops this consistent Pauline position on the basis of exegesis of the individual Pauline letters discussed in order, an approach that has much to commend it.

Thomas Schreiner,¹³ on the other hand, provides a more systematic account of the evidence, treating the NT by topic rather than by book. He also extends his discussion to address contemporary issues regarding the continuing use and function of the law, such as the theonomy movement (something probably of more relevance to a North American audience). Schreiner argues two points worth noting here. The first is that he believes that careful exegesis of the Pauline passages indicates that Paul was in fact arguing against a Judaism characterized by works righteousness, and he is not willing to accept that Paul, as a former Pharisee, was not correct in his understanding. The second point is that he subjects Sanders's assessment of whether Judaism was legalistic to direct scrutiny, contending that he can find even in Sanders's own evidence, indications of Judaism as legalistic. So which of these two volumes is better? Although I am more inclined to think that Schreiner is correct, it is not my job here to press the point. Contained within each volume is a lot of provocative exegesis, which rewards study. Three significant passages—Rom. 3:27-4:8; 9:30-10:8; Phil. 3:2-11—are worth comparison, since these are three passages that are at the heart of the dispute over whether Paul was opposing a legalistic form of Judaism. Most heartening, perhaps, is that evangelicalism is large enough to have two such serious efforts put on the table for consideration.

The Pauline letter and its legacy

In the light of the several different approaches to the Pauline letters witnessed in several of the books mentioned above, it is appropriate here to mention

several books that address the Pauline letters and their legacy in various ways. Calvin Roetzel, for example, has issued a third and expanded version of his introduction to Paul's letters first published in 1975.¹⁴ There is a little bit of almost everything here; an appreciation of Paul's Hellenistic background, including use of the Septuagint; something on the Pauline letter form; on the content and argument of each of the letters (he accepts the same seven as authentic as does Barrett, and treats the deutero-Pauline letters separately); and a brief synopsis of Paul's thought. He also includes useful bibliographies. Although one might disagree at any number of points with Roetzel, he provides a summary of current mainstream Pauline scholarship, while his brevity begs for the student to do more. And it has to be done. For example, Jeffrey Weima has recently published an entire monograph on the endings of the Pauline letters,¹⁵ a topic discussed by Roetzel in two pages. Similar to Roetzel's volume is a book by Anthony Tambasco¹⁶ which, after introducing basic facts about Paul's life and the world in which he lived, goes through each of Paul's seven letters. The study is very basic and might be more suitable for a church study group than serious study by undergraduates (although the drawings are very useful).

Whereas most studies of Paul proceed along fairly traditional and well laid out lines, I am thankful that there are always exceptions to this. A new and innovative theory regarding the collecting together of Paul's letters has been proposed by David Trobisch.¹⁷ This is certainly one of the most fascinating books in Pauline studies that I have read in a long time. On the basis of examining a number of ancient letter collections, as well as a huge variety of biblical manuscripts, Trobisch argues (in a theory very similar to one argued by E.J. Goodspeed in the 1930s) that there is a consistent arrangement in the manuscripts of Paul's letters. On the basis of the length of the letters, he contends that the first four letters, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Galatians, were selected and edited for publication by Paul himself. They were concerned with the theme of the Jerusalem collection, and were preceded by Romans 16 as a cover letter. Ephesians to 2 Thessalonians, and then the personal letters (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon), were two later appended collections, made after Paul's death. Although many will welcome the thought that Paul was involved in collecting his own letters, others will not be as happy with particular details, such as the Corinthian letters representing seven letters, the return to Baur's four major letters, and the arguments for the deutero-Pauline letters. In any event, the book is an engaging one for contemplation, and has a number of implications for describing the history of early Christianity, including the process of the forming of the canon.

Although the question of how Paul's letters apply today is a valid and useful one to ask, J.C. Beker's book on the Pauline legacy does not to my mind present the answer.¹⁸ He assumes the deutero-Pauline character of 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles, without confronting the problems that their pseudonymous character raises for the issue of canonical formation and continuing application. According to his description of Paul as a contingent thinker, there is little that would disqualify him from writing these letters, by Beker's own criteria. Beker's sections on Acts are better, since here we know that we have an interpreter of Paul. When it comes to application, one wonders whether the exercise is even necessary. Beker distinguishes between a catalytic and a literalistic hermeneutic—it is no surprise that the catalytic one, endorsing adaptation of the Pauline message, wins out.

Pauline ethics

On a related topic, ethics, Dieter Georgi's book on the history of Paul's collection for the Jerusalem church has appeared in English translation.¹⁹ Following his own chronology, he reconstructs the starts and re-starts of Paul's collection, as it encountered various difficulties in his churches, for example in Galatia and Corinth. Georgi shows how important the collection was to Paul's missionary

endeavour, and goes further in showing how the language associated with the collection has theological resonance, so much so, that the collection itself has direct bearing on Paul's view of justification. Georgi also attaches an appendix on the relevance of ancient attitudes towards wealth for today, reflecting the fact that the English revision of this book was being produced during the collapse of East Germany. This book is consistent with another by Georgi²⁰ arguing that ultimately Paul was martyred by the Romans for treason, since he was proclaiming a political gospel, that is, one that was not privatized and removed from social implications on the basis of an abstract or eschatological frame of reference. Paul, Georgi claims, proclaims Christ, the one crucified on a Roman cross, as now living and equal to the biblical God. This is a direct political and social threat to the Roman establishment, including the place of Caesar. Although there is a good chance that Georgi has overread the Pauline evidence in an effort to promote a politicized Paul, the political and social implications of Paul's proclamation of the good news merit further examination. There is much still to be learned regarding how Paul saw Christianity in the light of Roman political and social institutions. As Georgi emphasizes, some of Paul's articulation of this was indirect and subtle. On the basis of the seven Pauline letters, J. Paul Sampley offers a broader view of the range of Paul's ethical positions.²¹ Without reference to secondary literature, Sampley's volume is a basic recounting of Paul's view of life (Christians live in the in-between period) as part of a community of those 'in Christ'. He then discusses Paul's view of how to respond to a variety of circumstances. Although there is plenty here to stimulate thought, the book may not meet the rigours of what is required for degree-level study of the topic.

Paul and the Old Testament

The use of the OT and related traditions in the NT is a topic of perennial interest. There have been a number of books on this topic in Pauline studies in recent years,²² and James Aageson's joins the ranks. Although designed for students new to understanding Paul's use of the OT, Aageson puts forward a tentative interpretative model, which he calls a 'conversation model'. It is based upon what he calls the 'circle of plausibility', in which the interpreter carries on a dialogue with the text and its context. After outlining Paul's christologically-based theology in brief (and uncritically accepting the new perspective on Paul), Aageson offers interpretations of Galatians 3:16 and Abraham, Romans 9-11, and Romans 5:2-21, before finishing with a number of christological passages. Although the bibliography is slim and the method underdeveloped, Aageson's is a good book to begin with, because it presents a method and applies it to particular texts.

More detailed and much fuller than Aageson's volume is Christopher Stanley's *Paul and the Language of Scripture*.²³ As much a study in method as it is a study of individual passages, Stanley's volume is first concerned to define what constitutes a direct quotation and where each comes from. He then studies all the direct quotations in Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Galatians, and compares how citation of authoritative sources was handled in a variety of Greco-Roman and Jewish writers. Stanley concludes some important things regarding Paul's use of the OT. In some ways, Paul conforms to what one might expect from a Jewish writer of the time, including his view of Scripture as authoritative, and his following a recognizable text. But there are a number of things that Paul does in adapting his quotations, including changing certain words and word order, that distinguish him from Jewish writers and make him look more like Greco-Roman writers. Paul is also unique in some ways, including the way that he introduces his quotations with a form of the word 'write'. Stanley attempts to discern the possible causes of Paul's manipulation of his source texts, including adaptation to his particular linguistic context and alteration for rhetorical purposes. This study raises interesting questions, some

of which go unanswered. I am not as convinced as is Stanley, that Paul follows the Jewish technique. Since the study limits itself to explicit quotations, there is also plenty of room for dealing with other kinds of citation. From this study, one can move to a recent collection of essays, *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*,²⁴ containing a lengthy critique of Hays's *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, and then a number of very good studies of Paul's use of Scripture. This volume is definitely for the advanced student, and reflects the current state of play in NT studies.

Paul and Jesus

A further area of recent study is the question of how much Paul knew of Jesus and how he got this information. As a brief introduction, Victor Paul Furnish's small volume on *Jesus according to Paul* is excellent.²⁵ It covers the major issues in a short and compact form, devoting its lengthiest discussion to sayings of Jesus in Paul's letters (he finds three certain ones: Cor. 7:10; 9:14; 11:23-25) and the presence of Jesus in Paul's gospel. Furnish also includes a chapter on how Jesus fared in the letters of the Pauline corpus. There is a brief bibliography and study questions. For those desiring a more detailed discussion, David Wenham's book on Paul is to be highly recommended.²⁶ Wenham will be no stranger to readers of this journal, and several of the articles that he has written over the years have contributed to this sizable volume.²⁷ He does not follow the usual pattern, which focuses primarily on Paul. Instead, he selects a number of issues, some of them quite difficult, and describes Jesus' perspective on each, followed by Paul's perspective, and then a section connecting them. Topics he discusses include the kingdom of God, where he admits that Paul uses language of righteousness instead of Jesus' of kingdom; titles of Jesus; views of the death of Jesus; the church; ethics; eschatology; and Jesus' life and ministry. Wenham concludes that Paul was a follower of Jesus rather than the founder of Christianity, a conclusion that is hard to resist. Wenham is modest and judicious in the results he squeezes from the evidence, but he makes a very good case for Paul having direct and indirect access to a wealth of knowledge regarding Jesus.

Paul and ancient rhetoric

Rhetorical studies of Paul's letters have become a significant area of recent research.²⁸ A useful guide to much of this is to be found in a recent bibliography by Duane Watson and Alan Hauser.²⁹ The classical scholar George Kennedy, who has probably been the single most influential scholar in inspiring rhetorical criticism of the NT,³⁰ has been honoured with a recent *Festschrift*, which contains several rhetorical studies on dimensions of Paul's letters, as well as assessments of Kennedy's approach.³¹ The NT scholar Wilhelm Wuellner, who has tried to introduce a modern rhetorical approach to NT study, has also been given a *Festschrift*,³² this one containing not only a variety of rhetorical approaches but a number of methodological essays, subjecting various presuppositions of rhetorical criticism to necessary scrutiny (see especially those by J.T. Reed, C.J. Classen and S.E. Porter).

Two studies in particular are worth discussion, especially as they both examine 1 Corinthians. The first is by Margaret Mitchell.³³ Following an approach developed by Hans Dieter Betz in his commentary on Galatians,³⁴ Mitchell examines 1 Corinthians as a deliberative letter. That is, she examines it as if it were a piece of deliberative rhetoric, designed to persuade regarding future behaviour, although couched in an epistolary form. After establishing the deliberative nature of the letter, she examines the use of various political topics (or *topoi*) in the body of the letter, especially those concerned with factionalism. As a result, she claims to be able to show that the letter is a unified whole. This monograph is not for the beginner. The exegesis is detailed (relying heavily on the Greek text), and there are numerous important discussions carried on in the footnotes, with reference to a number of extra-biblical texts. Two fundamental problems seem evident, however, making it questionable whether Mitchell should be followed as an example of

rhetorical analysis. The first is the supposed proof of the existence of the deliberative letter type. Mitchell's argument is based upon the use of similar wording in the rhetorical and epistolary handbooks, an argument that has not been accepted by all. The fact that similar words are used in these handbooks does not prove that one should use the categories of ancient rhetoric to analyse letters. This leads to the second issue, and that is whether the arrangement of the various parts of an oration (including its thesis statement, statement of facts and proofs) can be imposed on what is clearly a genuine letter. There is the further difficulty, therefore, of whether her conclusion regarding the letter's unity can be drawn from this method.

The second rhetorical study is by Duane Litfin.³⁵ His volume is divided into two parts and in some ways stands as two separate discussions. The first major section is a treatment of the history and development of classical rhetoric, from its beginnings in Athens, through Plato, Aristotle and the orators, to the two best-known Roman rhetoricians, Cicero and Quintilian. Litfin summarizes the state of rhetoric in the first century in terms of its persuasive and adaptive power. In the second major section, he analyses 1 Corinthians 1-4, in terms of two major issues. The first is the use of rhetoric at Corinth and the place of this passage in the book, and the second is how Paul understands his preaching especially in terms of 1 Corinthians 1:10-2:5. Litfin wishes to contrast these two approaches. Whereas the goal of rhetoric is to persuade, according to Litfin, the engendering of faith is left to the Spirit. Paul is engaged in proclamation, not persuasion. Litfin's summary of the development of ancient rhetoric is a worthwhile overview of the field, especially for someone who is new to the subject. His analysis of 1 Corinthians 1:1-4, however, is not entirely convincing. It seems that he has drawn too clean a distinction between rhetoric and proclamation, perhaps over-theologizing Paul's method and approach.³⁶

Monographs on Paul

I will conclude this part of our study with a brief description of several volumes that are more technical and specialist in origin.³⁷ They are summarized briefly to give the interested student guidance as to what they contain, because they may well prove useful in exploring a particular topic or dimensions of particular Pauline letters. The first is *Pauline Theology*, a collection of essays on the theology of the Thessalonian letters, Philipppians, Galatians and Philemon.³⁸ These essays were originally delivered as papers at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meetings in 1986-88. There are five sections, all but one with at least two essays and then a response. The first section is concerned with method, and in particular addresses the question of the contingent nature of Paul's letters, a topic frequently addressed in Pauline studies in the light of the work of such scholars as J.C. Beker, who has an essay on this topic here. Other essays in the volume worth noting are R. Jewett on 2 Thessalonians as authentically Pauline (whereas many dispute this), J.D.G. Dunn on covenantal nomism in Galatians (reflecting his contribution to the new perspective on Paul), and several attempts to synthesize Paul's theology, by N.T. Wright (who makes some helpful distinctions regarding contradictions in Paul) and R.B. Hays, among others. There are also extensive bibliographies. Like any collection of essays, not all are of equal merit, but there are some here worth reading, although these are for the advanced student. The bibliographies are useful places to go for up-to-date references for research.

Many good things can also be said for N.T. Wright's *The Climax of the Covenant*.³⁹ This is a collection of essays, mostly previously published (some dating back to the 1970s). They are all meant to support his thesis that the covenantal purposes of God reached their climax in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The introduction is found in essence in Barsler's volume, noted above, on Pauline theology. Also noteworthy are Wright's discussion of

Philippians 2:5-11 and Colossians 1:15-20, where he argues for christological monotheism. Many of the essays are on particular verses (e.g. Rom. 8:3; Gal. 3:10-14, 15-20; Phlm. 6) or passages (Rom. 7, 8, 9-11; 1 Cor. 8; 2 Cor. 3), so their greatest value is probably if one has particular interest in these Pauline texts and their relation to the general thrust of Paul's theology. They are not easy going, (knowledge of Greek is recommended), and some of the conclusions are distinctively Wright's, but there is much here to think about.

In a study which presupposes knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, David Capes⁴⁰ argues that the term 'ĪLord' originated in a Palestinian rather than a Hellenistic context, and that Paul clearly applies quotations from the OT that refer to God (Yahweh), to Jesus. These include Romans 10:13; 14:11; 1 Corinthians 1:31; 2 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 10:26; and 2 Timothy 2:19. Not all have found these passages equally convincing, especially since Capes invokes ideas regarding a supposed Jewish corporate concept of God. There are also problems with his estimation of the Palestinian origins of the terminological usage, since the firm distinction between Palestinian and non-Palestinian Judaism cannot be made, as Hengel has demonstrated. Nevertheless, the christological implications are clear—Paul thought of Christ as in some way equal with or sharing in the same status as the God of the OT. This is one of several recent studies that argue in this direction, representing to my mind, a healthy movement in NT research.

In an equally demanding, but rewarding, monograph, James Scott argues that the Pauline terminology of adoption,⁴¹ especially as found in Galatians 4:5, 2 Corinthians 6:18, and Romans 8:15, 23, derives not from a Hellenistic but from a Jewish background, especially 2 Samuel 7:14. His study is based on a commendable survey of both the Jewish and Greek evidence. Although I am not convinced regarding the Jewish origins of Paul's adoption language, and there seems to be some lack of clarity regarding the word study, Scott's study is insightful and meticulous.

I have made my own contribution in studying Pauline vocabulary, analysing all of the known uses of the word often translated 'reconciliation' (*katallassō*) in ancient Greek literature, including the NT.⁴² This is a fairly common treaty word in Greek literature, in which antagonistic parties restore a peaceful relationship. After surveying this usage, I examine 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Romans 5:9-11, Colossians 1:20, 22 and Ephesians 2:16, and find that Paul clearly uses this word in line with extra-biblical Greek, although he is the first to use it in a form in which God as the offended party in a relationship takes active steps to restore peace. This is the clear sense in 2 Corinthians 5:18, 20.

In a massive tome running to over 950 pages, Gordon Fee examines references to the Holy Spirit in Paul's letters.⁴³ One must be thoroughly committed to knowing about virtually every passage in the Pauline corpus to appreciate the work that has gone into this volume. Fee is to be thanked for including some preliminary comments on Paul's use of spirit language, as well as a 100-page synthesis of his findings. Inevitably one will disagree with some of the interpretations. It is odd to have to observe that Fee has perhaps included a few passages that are not references to the Holy Spirit but to some other kind of spirit (e.g. Rom. 1:9), but such seems to be the case. Nevertheless, virtually all of the evidence is here, especially since Fee includes all thirteen of Paul's letters.

In a collection of essays mostly on Pauline passages, half of which have been published before, Bruce Winter, warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge, explores early Christianity's view of its social obligations as citizens and benefactors.⁴⁴ He discovers that, contrary to much social analysis of early Christianity, Christianity drew from a range of social strata and maintained both public and private lives within the *polis* or city. Pauline passages discussed include Romans 13:3-4, 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13, 1 Timothy 5:3-16, Philippians 1:27-2:18, 1 Corinthians 6:1-11, Galatians 6:11-18,

1 Corinthians 7:17-24, 8-11:1, and Romans 16:23. Although a knowledge of the ancient world is helpful for this volume, enough is explained to make it very useful for background studies to the Pauline letters. Recent work in Pauline studies has appreciated more fully the place of Greco-Roman social institutions, including the role of the benefactor, and Winter's volume adds to our knowledge from the NT.

One of several volumes from Ben Witherington III amounts to a Pauline theology.⁴⁵ He calls it an analysis of *Paul's Narrative Thought World*, and by this he means that there are four major 'stories' that encapsulate Paul's theology, all based in the OT. These are: the story of the world gone wrong, or the fall and sin; the story of Israel; the story of Christ; and the story of Christians, including Paul. Under these headings, and drawing heavily on his several other recent works on Paul and Jesus,⁴⁶ Witherington discusses most of the major topics found in more traditional theologies, but organized in a way that, he contends, grows out of the way Paul expresses himself in his letters. The emphasis is upon the coherence of Paul's thought and the conclusions are almost uniformly conservative. It is impossible to list the various topics discussed here, but they include the story of Adam and Eve and the fall, Abraham and the law (he does not engage in much debate with Dunn or Sanders over their interpretations), the pre-existent Christ especially as discussed in two pre-Pauline hymns (Phil. 2:6-11 and Col. 1:15-20), the second Adam, the cross and resurrection, eschatology,⁴⁷ and the life of Paul, including his so-called conversion. While there is much of merit in these discussions, including the attempt to utilize sociological insights in a commentary-like exposition, there are also limitations. At several points Witherington is probably too dependent upon the Wisdom tradition for his categories in Paul, especially when he is looking at pre-existence and the christological hymns. Although many of his other conclusions are sound enough, the way they are arrived at is not always convincing. At times Witherington engages in detailed exegesis, with heavy reference to secondary literature; at other times there are simple assertions where argument is required. There is also a whole wealth of important secondary literature, and its attendant debate, overlooked, which students should be aware of if they are using this material. Not infrequently a point is made on the basis of a grammatical point needing stronger support. (Some readers will be more than a little annoyed by Witherington's citing of his own poetry along with the work of Herbert, Donne and Hopkins.)

A related study is Ellen Christiansen's *The Covenant in Judaism and Paul*.⁴⁸ Reflecting the concerns of her doctoral supervisor, J.D.G. Dunn, Christiansen primarily engages in a study of Jewish rituals that identify the boundary of a faith community. She then applies this to Pauline Christianity, especially in terms of describing how Paul argues against circumcision but not to replace it with baptism. Baptism is a boundary marker established in its own right to symbolize the faith relationship of the community. One suspects that there is a Lutheran apologetic behind some of this exegesis.

Let me mention a last book under this heading, Neil Elliott's *Liberating Paul*.⁴⁹ This study of Paul's thought, although occasionally verging on the emotive—perhaps appropriately for the subject matter—offers a liberation theological view of Paul's writings. According to the author, this interpretation helps to clarify and liberate Paul from some misunderstandings. After citing a number of instances where Paul has been not only misinterpreted but misapplied, often with fateful consequences, Elliott tries to show what Paul was actually concerned to say, even in passages that have traditionally been problematic, such as Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Timothy 2:11-15. First, Elliott claims that many of the problematic passages occur in pseudonymous works, *i.e.* in other words, books not written by Paul at all. Then, in the light of what he sees as Paul's concern for the Jews and his apocalyptic framework, Elliott examines key authentic Pauline passages. I am far from convinced by the exegesis that Elliott

offers at several places, including his view that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 is an interpolation. But the book is provocative in a new area of research.

So much for general Pauline studies. We shall turn to particular epistles in the next part

- ¹ In Part Two, I take the Pauline epistles generally in their canonical sequence.
- ² G.F. Hawthorne and R.P. Martin, with D.G. Reid (eds), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Leicester: IVP, 1993).
- ³ S.E. Porter and C.A. Evans (eds), *The Pauline Writings: A Sheffield Reader* (Biblical Seminar 34; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).
- ⁴ M. Hengel with R. Deines, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1991). This is a translation of a work that first appeared as 'Der vorchristliche Paulus', in M. Hengel and U. Heckel (eds), *Paulus und das antike Judentum* (WUNT 58; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991), pp. 177-291.
- ⁵ See, for example, M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, trans. J. Bowden; (London: SCM Press, 1974).
- ⁶ Here I refer to the so-called 'new perspective' on Paul, illustrated in the work of E.P. Sanders and J.D.G. Dunn. Although many have hailed this as a 'paradigm shift' in Pauline studies, there are still significant scholars who have not accepted the new understanding. The key works are E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1977); *idem*, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); and J.D.G. Dunn, 'The New Perspective on Paul', *BJRL* 65 (1983): 95-122.
- ⁷ H. Maccoby, *Paul and Hellenism* (London: SCM Press, 1991).
- ⁸ C.K. Barrett, *Paul: An Introduction to His Thought* (London: Chapman, 1994).
- ⁹ Barrett is opposing the kind of view found in J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM Press, 1980), who posits an Adam Christology, that is, that Christ is being equated with Adam's position in Phil. 2:6-11.
- ¹⁰ M. Winger, *By What Law? The Meaning of Nomos in the Letters of Paul* (SBLDS 128; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992). See also H. Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and Torah: Collected Essays*, trans. D.E. Orton (JSNTS 43; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), with several essays on the question of law in Paul.
- ¹¹ H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983; repr. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); S. Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and his Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988).
- ¹² F. Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).
- ¹³ T.R. Schreiner, *The Law and its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993).
- ¹⁴ C.J. Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context* 3rd edn (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991).
- ¹⁵ J.A.D. Weima, *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings* (JSNTS 101; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994).
- ¹⁶ A.J. Tambasco, *In the Days of Paul: The Social World and Teaching of the Apostle* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991).
- ¹⁷ D. Trobisch, *Paul's Letter Collection: Tracing the Origins* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).
- ¹⁸ J.C. Beker, *Heirs of Paul: Paul's Legacy in the New Testament and in the Church Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).
- ¹⁹ D. Georgi, *Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul's Collection for Jerusalem* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992). The original German was published in 1965.
- ²⁰ D. Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology* trans. D. Green (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), the original German was published in 1987.

- ²¹ J.P. Sampley, *Walking between the Times: Paul's Moral Reasoning* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).
- ²² The most important may well be R.B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989).
- ²³ C.D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (SNTSMS 74; Cambridge: CUP, 1992).
- ²⁴ C.A. Evans and J.A. Sanders (eds), *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel* (JSNTS 83; SSEJC 1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).
- ²⁵ V.P. Furnish, *Jesus according to Paul* (Understanding Jesus Today; Cambridge: CUP, 1993).
- ²⁶ D. Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).
- ²⁷ See also D. Wenham, *The Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse* (Gospel Perspectives 4; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984).
- ²⁸ Cf. also I.H. Thomson, *Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters* (JSNTS, 111; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).
- ²⁹ D.F. Watson and A.J. Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism of the Bible: A Comprehensive Bibliography with Notes on History and Method* (BI 4; Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 178-202 on Paul.
- ³⁰ Among many works, see G.A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).
- ³¹ D.F. Watson (ed.), *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy* (JSNTS 50; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).
- ³² S.E. Porter and T.H. Olbricht (eds), *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (JSNTS 90; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).
- ³³ M.M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (HUT 28; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991).
- ³⁴ H.D. Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979).
- ³⁵ D. Litfin, *St Paul's Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 14 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric* (SNTSMS 79; Cambridge: CUP, 1994).
- ³⁶ See also D.A. Campbell, *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3.21-26* (JSNTS 65; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); L.G. Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians* (JSNTS 78; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).
- ³⁷ See also the following two collections of technical essays: B.H. McLean (ed.), *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity. Essays in Honour of John C. Hurd* (JSNTS 86; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); L.A. Jervis and P. Richardson (eds), *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker* (JSNTS 108; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994).
- ³⁸ J.M. Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology. 1. Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).
- ³⁹ N.T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991).
- ⁴⁰ D.B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* (WUNT 2.47; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992). Cf. N. Richardson, *Paul's Language about God* (JSNTS 99; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), which investigates God-language in Romans 9-11, 1 Cor. 1:18-3:23; 2 Cor. 2:14-4:6, and other places.
- ⁴¹ J.M. Scott, *Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of HUIOTHESIA in the Pauline Corpus* (WUNT 2.48; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992).
- ⁴² S.E. Porter, *Katalassô in Ancient Greek Literature, with Reference to the Pauline Writings* (Estudios de Filología Neotestamentaria 5; Córdoba, Spain: Ediciones El Almendro, 1994).

- ⁴³ G.D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994).
- ⁴⁴ B.W. Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens* (First-Century Christians in the Graeco-Roman World; Carlisle: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994). One of these appeared in *Themelios* 13.3 (1988) pp. 91-94.
- ⁴⁵ B. Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994). Cf. N. Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem: A Study in Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity* (JSNTS 66; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).
- ⁴⁶ See, for example, B. Witherington III, *Jesus, Paul and the End of the World: A Comparative Study in New Testament Eschatology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992); *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).
- ⁴⁷ On the use of apocalyptic categories to analyse Paul, and a treatment that debunks much of the secondary discussion, a very important recent work is R.B. Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul: Paul's Interpreters and the Rhetoric of Criticism* (JSNTS 127; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).
- ⁴⁸ E.J. Christiansen, *The Covenant in Judaism and Paul: A Study of Ritual Boundaries as Identity Markers* (AGJU 27; Leiden: Brill, 1995).
- ⁴⁹ N. Elliott, *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle* (Biblical Seminar 27; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), published in the United States by Orbis of New York in 1994.

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Introduction

The encounter between evolutionary theory and evangelical theology has now been the subject of numerous historical investigations.¹ These have provided a variety of case studies of individual responses to evolutionary biology and, on occasion, have sought to connect these stances with denominational allegiance, doctrinal system, biblical hermeneutics, or philosophical orientation. Insightful though many of these proposals undoubtedly are, I suggest that one major component of traditional Christian theology has been significantly overlooked in these scenarios—eschatology.² Thus my argument in this paper is that attitudes to evolutionary theory were very substantially conditioned by eschatological stances which, in turn, were closely bound up with how evangelicals conceived of the doctrine of providence and the sorts of social philosophy they espoused.³

Eschatology is 'traditionally defined as the doctrine of the "last things"—in relation either to the individual human being (in which case they comprise death, resurrection, judgment, and the afterlife) or to the world'.⁴ Eschatologies, moreover, implicate their holders in a whole range of stances towards history, politics, society, and so on. Postmillennialists, for example, in the nineteenth century generally had a fairly optimistic view of social change and a robust confidence in the cognitive and political power of Christian civilization. In Britain, and no doubt in America too, the purposes of Providence were seen as the engine power behind what Roderick Murchison in mid-Victorian Britain once called the 'public faith of empires'.⁵ Premillennialism, particularly in its dispensational mode, was, and is, of course rather different. As George Marsden puts it:

This doctrine . . . provided a general theory of history, proclaiming that the present "church age," the sixth dispensation in the world's history, was marked by apostasy in the churches and the moral collapse of so-called "Christian civilization." Thus dispensationalism predicted the rise of modernism and emphasized the necessity of fighting to preserve the true faith and personal purity. These emphases also led dispensationalism to an antimodernist way of interpreting the Bible. They insisted on the inerrancy of Scripture and argued that each word was the perfect word of God. Confident that they could rely on even the details of Scripture, dispensationalists became fascinated by specific predictions of the cataclysmic events ushering in the millennial age, based on literal interpretations of biblical prophecies.⁶

The implications of eschatological commitments, I should note in passing, can be fairly wide-ranging. In a recent study of 'Contemporary Christian Eschatologies and their Relation to Environmental Stewardship', for example, Janel Curry-Roper highlights the different ecological strategies that eschatological postures deliver. Thus she points out, for instance, that dispensationalist premillennialists canvass the environmental literature on pollution, the impact of nuclear weaponry and so on merely 'to show how prophecy is being fulfilled'. This 'fosters no active stewardly response—only idle waiting', she concludes. Chuck Smith, author of *End Times*, is thus reported as apparently seeing in the destruction of the ozone layer the fulfilment of Revelation 16 which tells of the fourth vial being poured out by the angel during the great tribulation. DDT accumulation in the oceans is similarly interrogated. By contrast, modern postmillennialists of theonomist stripe see the solution to ecological breakdown within the context of the re-establishment of the OT moral economy. Far from being other-worldly, this land ethic calls for the development

of earth resources within the context of a free-market capitalist economy. Amillennialists and historic premillennialists are different yet again. Perhaps the key to unlocking the ecological strain in these traditions is the tension that they both hold between this present evil age, and the new age already inaugurated at the incarnation. The idea of substantial ecological healing and the encouragement of acts of environmental restoration thus represent the kind of vocabulary to which they turn.⁷

I do not intend to pursue this topic further, however. I merely refer to the question of eschatology and ecology to indicate that eschatological convictions have broader social and political implications and perhaps to suggest that historical considerations of the relationship between theology and environment need to be approached with far greater hermeneutical sophistication. I now turn in a different direction.

The centrality of eschatology

I want to suggest that responses to evolution theory were substantially conditioned by the eschatological stance adopted by commentators. Now while my focus here is on conservative or evangelical eschatologies, it is worth pausing to note in passing that there is an initial plausibility to this association given the connections between liberal theologies of hope, ideologies of progress, process philosophy and (at least certain versions of) evolutionary thought. Nearly three decades ago Ernst Benz published a work entitled *Evolution and Christian Hope*, part of which was devoted to an assessment of the relationship between Darwinism and such future-orientated ideologies as Marxist and materialist histories of salvation, Nietzsche's futurist doctrine of the superman, speculations on evolution and the future of humanity in the writings of the Hindu Sri Aurobindo, and Teilhard de Chardin's evolutionized eschatology. In all of these, eschatological *motifs* certainly assert themselves. Moreover, the resonances between technological progress and Christian expectation of the end times at least since the period of the late Renaissance render the association between developmental convictions and theologies of Christian hope entirely conceivable. Indeed there have been some, like David Friedrich Strauss who 'transposed the Christian expectation of the end of time into an idea of technological progress'.⁸

Further details of Benz's general scenario are beyond my purposes here. What I do want to focus on is the formative role he accords to the eschatological thinking of such nineteenth-century evangelical scholars as James McCosh, Henry Drummond and George Frederick Wright.⁹ All were, to be sure, postmillennialists. Consider the case of James McCosh, Presbyterian clergyman, Scottish Common Sense philosopher, and president of Princeton University. Even before the *Origin of Species* had made its appearance, McCosh had displayed his belief in the working of God through natural law. To him, a unity of design was to be detected throughout the course of plant and animal development, for all elements in the world of nature 'conspire[d] to a given end'. Accordingly, as he himself was to put it in 1871:

The persistence of force may be one of the elements conspiring to this end; the Law of Natural Selection may be another, or it may only be a modification of the same . . .

All such laws are complex . . . [but] the law of the progression of all plants and of all animals is a still more complex one, implying adjustment upon adjustment of all the elements and all the powers of nature towards the accomplishment of an evidently contemplated end, in which are displayed the highest wisdom and the most considerate goodness.¹⁰

Further elucidation of McCosh's scientific leanings or exegesis of the precise version of his evolutionary commitments are not necessary here. Elsewhere I have tried to locate McCosh's evolution in the tradition of American Neo-Lamarckism.¹¹

Rather, what I want to argue is that his evolutionary inclinations were undergirded by a robust postmillennialism. Referring to the 'coming time', McCosh observed:

In all the geological ages we find in any age the anticipation of the following. This may also be the case with the age in which we now live, the Age of Man. We see everywhere preparations made for further progress, seeds sown which have not yet sprung up; embryos not yet developed; life which has not yet grown to maturity. In particular we find that in this Age of Man, man has not yet completed his work.¹²

For McCosh, then, the events of the *Heilsgeschichte* in the Christian era were to be located in the wider context of the progressive development of the great chain of life. The advent of the human species, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, are to be understood as inaugurating new stages of human existence. As he put it:

In all past ages there have been new powers added. Life seized the mineral mass, and formed the plant; sensation imparted to the plant made the animal; instinct has preserved the life and elevated it; intelligence has turned the animal into man; morality has raised the intelligence to love and law. The work of the Spirit is not an anomaly. It is one of a series; he last and the highest. It is the grandest of all powers.¹³

In the light of these intimations it is hardly surprising that Benz senses reverberations between McCosh's evolutionary eschatology and Teilhard's Omega point. Indeed, McCosh's enthusiasm for the Duke of Argyll's *The Reign of Law* reveals just how far he was prepared to go in locating divine design within the intrinsic operations of natural law.¹⁴

All this suggests that there were significant resonances between attitudes to eschatology and attitudes to evolution theory. Thus postmillennialists, with their exuberant confidence in social progress, were sympathetic to the idea of a gradual transformation of society, and so it is not surprising that they would find the transformism of evolution theory congenial. Perhaps no better candidate illustrates this than B.B. Warfield, famous for his architectonic defence of biblical inerrancy and professor of didactic and polemic theology in the Princeton Seminary. That Warfield endorsed the broad outlines of evolution theory is now beyond doubt and does not require demonstration here. Rather I want to illustrate something of how Warfield conceived of God's workings in the world from his reflections on aspects of evolutionary theory.

First, Warfield was not unfavourably disposed to mechanistic accounts within science. In his otherwise favourable review of Vernon Kellogg's *Darwinism Today* published in 1908, he complained that

Some lack of philosophical acumen must be suspected when it is not fully understood that teleology is in no way inconsistent with—is rather necessarily involved in—a complete system of natural causation. Every teleological system implies a complete 'causo-mechanical' explanation as its instrument.

Then again, consider Warfield strenuous efforts to make Calvin himself into an evolutionist in the following terms. If the six creatorial days had been lengthened out into 'six ages of the growth of the world', he reported,

Calvin would have been a precursor of the modern evolutionary theorists . . . for he teaches, as they teach, the modification of the original world-stuff into the varied forms which constitute the ordered world, by the instrumentality of second causes,—or as a modern would put it, of its intrinsic forces.¹⁵

In both of these cases it is clear that Warfield was operating with a conception of God's activity in the world in immanentist rather than interventionist terms. To be sure, this does not imply that Warfield ruled out intervention. But in his theology of creation he basically kept it to a minimum. Now this, of course, sits nicely with the transformational gradualism of a postmillennialist eschatology. Besides, Warfield believed that the creation narratives in Genesis were so ordered 'as to throw into a very clear light the teleology of the whole world-history'. The modes of creation held within them the very structures of what he termed 'cosmical predestination'—world eschatology.¹⁰

The very gradualism that postmillennialists found congenial to their evolutionary requirements, however, was precisely what critics found objectionable. Louis Berkhof, for example, focused on this very point in his critique of postmillennialism.

The modern idea that natural evolution and the efforts of man in the field of education, of social reform and of legislation, will gradually bring in the perfect reign of the Christian spirit, conflicts with everything that the Word of God teaches on this point. . . . Civilization without regeneration, without a supernatural change of the heart, will never bring in a millennium, an effective and glorious rule of Jesus Christ. It would seem that the experiences of the last quarter of a century should have forced this truth upon the modern man. The highly vaunted development of man has not yet brought us in sight of the millennium.

Besides this, Berkhof so associated postmillennialism and evolutionism in his evaluations that he felt constrained to suggest as a question for further study, 'Are the Postmillennialists necessarily evolutionists?'¹⁷ Indeed, for Berkhof and others, certain forms of postmillennialism—like that of Walter Rauschenbusch or Shirley Jackson Case—could simply be defined as 'humanistic and evolutionary in principle'.¹⁸

Berkhof's question certainly did have considerable plausibility. Allow me to illustrate this by brief reference to the eschatological theologies of two eminent nineteenth-century American theologians, Augustus Hopkins Strong and William Newton Clarke.¹⁹ Here I do not propose trying to identify the precise theological niches into which these figures may be fitted. Suffice to say that such labels as moderate fundamentalism, liberal evangelicalism and progressive orthodoxy have all been used in categorising their theological stances. What they did have in common, though, was an emphasis on the theological, scientific, and eschatological significance of the principle of continuity. In both, divine immanence assumed a new significance; not that intervention was entirely ruled out—at least in the case of Strong—but the emphasis moved towards an assertion of the pervading universal character of the work of the spirit in the world. And what made this shift from discontinuity and transcendence towards continuity and immanence all the more plausible, of course, was the idea of evolution. As Strong himself argued, 'Evolution is simply the ordinary method of Christ's working [although] it leaves room for absolute creation, for incarnation, miracle, resurrection'.²⁰ Because Strong conceived of history as the progressive revelation of God to humanity, eschatology merged with natural evolution and Christocentric immanentism to the degree that he could assert that 'the attraction of gravitation and the principle of evolution are but other names for Christ'.²¹ What made this quite remarkable assertion coherent for Strong was his insistence on a conception of the world that was dynamic, monistic, and idealist:

If we were deists, believing in a distant God and a mechanical universe, evolution and Christianity would be irreconcilable. But since we believe in a dynamical universe, of which the personal and living God is the inner source of energy, evolution is but the basis, foundation and background of Christianity, the silent and regular working of him who, in the fullness of time, utters his voice in Christ and the cross.²²

Of course, Strong did retain the central theological significance of the individual—'Humanity is saved, individual by individual, not by philosophy or philanthropy or self-development or self-reform' he asserted—and yet in good postmillennial fashion he welcomed the application of Christian principles to 'all human relations, to labor and capital, to commercial and social evils, to legislation for the equalization of human conditions'. And so understandably he could insist that Christ's second coming is 'pre-millennial spiritually, but post-millennial physically and visibly'.²³

Certainly not all evangelical postmillennialists found Strong's particular visions appealing. Warfield, in typically Princetonian mode, for example, was hesitant about his idealist tendencies, but yet did observe that the new monistic views he had espoused 'have not as yet eaten very deeply into the substance of Dr. Strong's work'.²⁴ Moreover, the self-same optimistic reading of social and scientific history undergirded the evolutionary eschatology of William Newton Clarke, who urged that natural theology needed to be refashioned on a Darwinian template. Eschatology, on this rendering, became the mundane unfolding of the kingdom of God. Indeed, to Clarke, eschatology was not properly millennial at all, but, rather, evolutionary and progressivist.

The wider millennial science

Thus far I have been arguing that there were conceptual resonances between pro-evolution sentiments and postmillennial eschatology of various stripes. Of course I am not suggesting this as an invariant general law. But what does make the association compelling, I suggest, is its converse: the connection between dispensational premillennialism and anti-evolutionism. This eschatological stance, of course, introduced a much narrower literalism into biblical hermeneutic and a more sombre note of social pessimism into evangelical rhetoric; the outcome was a theology with a far more robust emphasis on intervention than on providential superintendence of the world order. Dispensationalism, according to George Marsden, was suited for 'people who saw themselves as becoming cultural outsiders. . . . It proclaimed that true believers were a holy remnant, that they should maintain personal purity while waiting for the Lord to return, and that they should concentrate on rescuing the perishing. These emphases could dampen efforts to reform civilization either through politics or education.'²⁵

Accordingly, premillennialists—like George McCready Price, Seventh-Day Adventist father of the modern creationist movement—found the idea of evolutionary transformism repugnant on almost every front: social, scriptural, and scientific. Thus his pamphlet on *Poisoning Democracy: A Study of Present-Day Socialism* was described by one partisan as showing 'that the conditions prevailing today are due largely to the acceptance of various socialistic and evolutionary theories termed "New Theology"'.²⁶ And if here we find displayed Price's twin political and scientific phobias, it is not surprising that they were all-of-a-piece with his eschatological emphases:

The most timely truth for our day is a reform which will point this generation of evolutionists back to Creation, and to the worship of Him who made the heaven and the earth. Other reforms in other days have been based upon various parts of the Bible here and there. The reform most needed in our day is one based on the first part of the Bible—and upon the last part also. For he who is looking for the return of his Lord, and for the imminent ushering in of the new heaven and the new earth, must necessarily believe in the record of the first part of the Bible which tells of the Creation of the earth. Surely it is useless to expect people to believe in the predictions given in the last chapters of the Bible, if they do not believe in the record of the events described in its first chapters.²⁷

In similar—though certainly not identical—vein, the International Bible Students Association, in its illustrated *Photodrama of Creation*, portrayed the Battle of Armageddon in terms of a conflict between labour and capital. Socialism, apparently prefigured in the story of Samson, and higher criticism, taught in the seminaries, were together conspiring to loose anarchy upon the world. The only course for the believer was to hold steadfastly to the prophetic principles embedded in the very structure of the Genesis narrative.²⁸

None of this, of course, is intended to suggest that dispensationalism or premillennialism was the sole begetter of creation science. To the contrary: creationism had plural origins. For in contrast to Price, William Jennings Bryan's anti-evolution sentiments were wedded to the politics of democracy and to an abhorrence of what he took to be the *moral* implications of Darwinian naturalism.²⁹ And yet the association between dispensationalism and anti-evolution was, I judge, especially tight. This is surely further confirmed in the following words published by the dispensationalist theologian John F. Walvoord in 1975, who in the course of his discussion describes eschatology as 'a developing science':

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Darwinian evolution began to penetrate the ranks of postmillenarians. Liberals hailed the theory of evolution, with its easygoing optimism, as the true divine method for bringing in the predicted golden age. Recognizing this as a departure from the faith, more conservative postmillenarians and amillenarians attempted to refute the new evolutionary concept. One of the means used was the calling of great prophetic conferences which were held in the last part of the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth.

As amillennialism and postmillennialism have little to offer by way of refutation of the concept of evolutionary progress, these prophecy conferences soon became dominated by premillennial interpreters. Many of the doctrines which later became an essential part of premillennial theology were introduced into the discussion . . .³⁰

What lends further support to these suggestions, moreover, is what might be called the scientific dispensationalism that is built into the very fabric of creation science. For in these scenarios there is a major structural disjunction between the original created order and the post-fall, or perhaps better, post-flood world as we find it. The original structures of nature have, supposedly, been entirely dislocated by fall and flood. Thus it seems that the natural world itself has its own series of 'dispensations' to pass through.³¹

Thus far I have said little about two related subjects: the relationship between amillennialism and evolutionary theory, and the recent wedding of theonomist postmillennialism and creationism. So far as amillennialism is concerned, I suggest that its advocates could opt for different evolutionary positions depending on the precise version of amillennialism adopted. Thus, for example, Floyd E. Hamilton, a staunch opponent of evolution in the 1930s, turned from premillennialism to amillennialism. Yet he noted that 'the premillennial theory is . . . right in what it asserts of the condition of the world up to the time of the Rapture'.³² By contrast, the Christian Reformed Church, widely adherent to the amillennial view but rather more optimistic in its enthusiasm for cultural transformation, could accept evolutionary change even while rebutting Darwinian naturalism.³³

Either way, the connections between evolution and eschatology remained firm. Consider, in this regard, the case of the Dutch theologian Herman Bavinck—an advocate of amillennialism—who, in evaluating evolutionary theory, felt constrained to locate his analysis within the broader framework of the 'origin, essence, and end of all things'—namely in the context of the world's entire eschaton. For Bavinck, the heart of evolutionism was to be found in its espousal of the idea that 'substance is eternal' and that Providence had been transmuted into natural law. But his critique of the naturalism that he identified as the essence of the modern 'development

theory' was intimately connected with his efforts to address such questions as: What is the end of the world? What is the issue of the world's history? For, to Bavinck, it was precisely because 'the theory of development . . . has no mention of a plan and of any destiny of things' that its unsatisfactory character was especially evident. Scientific defenders of evolutionary theories abandoned 'themselves to greater illusions than the Chiliasts among Christians, who look for a kingdom of Christ in this present dispensation'.³⁴ Not surprisingly, signs of amillennial social pessimism clearly surface in this analysis. The high culture of modern civilization was anything but secure and nothing could ensure that it would 'not become trodden down underneath threatening revolutions'. Anarchism, now actually loosed upon the world, 'refuse[d] to practice patience any longer' and threatened to satisfy its passions 'by violence, with the aid of petroleum and dynamite, of revolution and slaughter'.³⁵ With such convictions Bavinck's assessment of the culture of modernity and his rejection of the theory of evolution as unremitting naturalism held together in a non-millennialist eschatology:

If we had no knowledge except that of an immanent self-development, we would have no ground for th[e Christian] hope. The kingdom of heaven has not once come along the lines of gradual ascent, neither will it come along these lines in the future.³⁶

The recent reassertion of anti-evolutionism among the postmillennial theologians or Christian Reconstructionists also merits scrutiny.³⁷ On the surface this might seem to militate against the associations I have been detecting between pro-evolutionary sentiment and postmillennialism. But there are, I think, very significant differences between this contemporary postmillennialism and its nineteenth-century counterpart. For one thing—as I read it—contemporary reconstructionist postmillennialism politicizes eschatology in a way that is totalitarian and theocratic; its strategies seem more manipulative than gradualist, revolutionary rather than evolutionary. Earlier postmillennialism seemed to rely more on God's providential supervision of the world order and its history.

Be that as it may, my argument is simply—again—that eschatological commitments substantially condition evolutionary stances. In a striking article that appeared in a recent issue of the *Chalcedon Report*, R.E. McMaster, lamenting the lack of eschatological commitment in modern churchdom, attacks the theory of evolution because it counterfeits truly biblical eschatology. To put it another way, he sees evolutionary theory as Satanic pseudo-postmillennialism. Appropriately enough adorned with a New Age hieroglyphic in the form of an astrological icon, McMaster's piece identifies the competitors of genuine postmillennialism as either evolutionary humanism or New Age optimism:

What's the essence of evolution? That things are getting better and better over time. Which Christian perspective is evolution most closely attempting to counterfeit? Post-mil, the concept that Christians will make the world better and better over time until Christ returns. *Satan's counterfeit, evolution, is attempting to substitute itself for the post-mil reality.* The New Agers are close to being on track, but they have bought the truth with a deathly Satanic warp.³⁸

And just how does McMaster consider that Christians make the world better and better? By the unfettered reign of the free-market economy:

God understands the principle of incentive, eternally. In fact, He invented it. Men work for benefits and out of love. This is why the Christian free market works, and the economics of Communism is such a dismal failure. There is no incentive to work under Communism . . . Christianity works, in time, on earth. Men who have put it to the test and proved all things affirm that Christianity works. This is what made America great.³⁹

McMaster's analysis is not to be taken as untypical of Reconstructionist theology. The very first issue of the *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, for example, was devoted to a series of critical readings of evolution theory and included a programmatic statement of creationist-Reconstructionist economics that denounced all forms of state interventionism.⁴⁰ Moreover, in a recent investigation of postmillennial creationism, Tom McIver reveals just how central eschatology is to the Reconstructionist philosophy of science. Indeed, he reveals the profound disjunction between their brand of creationism and that of 'creation science'. The Reconstructionists are not interested in undermining contemporary evolution theory with the gadgetry and paraphernalia of modern-day scientific technique. They frankly admit that creationism is a *religious* commitment, because, well versed as they are in the presuppositional apologetics of Cornelius Van Til, they reject the evidentialism of traditional positivism and argue for the legitimacy and coherence of allowing their theology to *reconstruct* science itself. Rousas J. Rushdoony's tellingly entitled volume on *The Mythology of Science* captures the spirit of this project.⁴¹ It is erected foursquare on the presuppositional apologetics of Dutch neo-Calvinism and on six-day creationist foundations. What is at stake for Rushdoony is the question of *epistemic authority*—the competing authorities of science and Scripture. Accordingly, science needs to be remade along consistently creationist lines and that means 'renouncing the idea of brute factuality, that is, the idea that facts exist apart from God and apart from any interpretation'. For the Reconstructionists, 'creationism is a *necessary* fact'.⁴²

Postmillennial dominion theology, however, does not merely require a reconstruction of the scientific enterprise. Because what is ultimately at stake is the question of authority, the entire social order needs remaking through legislative reconstitution. For some, this means a return to OT law and so they are openly contemptuous of democracy and advocate the reinvigoration of theocratic authority.⁴³ The scary images of Margaret Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale* come eerily to mind. The reconstructionist agenda, at least for some, according to McIver, includes the reinstatement of slavery, the death penalty for various moral sins, the disparagement of religious liberty, and racial polygenism. Herein their divergence from the Common Sense postmillennialism of the nineteenth-century Princetonians is dramatically revealed.

Conclusion

Attitudes about the end times may have had a greater impact on thinking about origins than beliefs about election or divine sovereignty or any of the doctrinal particulars generally associated with Calvinism or Arminianism. The reason is, I suspect, that eschatologies, no less than creation stories, are comprehensive cosmologies.⁴⁴ They situate their adherents in conceptual frameworks that make sense of their particular historical setting and in an entire system of beliefs and behaviours appropriate for the regulation of the social order. The debates about evolution theory are to be understood, at least in part, within this context. The nature of the scientific task, the role that science should play in human knowing, the authority it should have in society are all involved in the evolution debates no less than in assessments about social change in the light of eschatological convictions.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to Ron Numbers for several valuable observations on an earlier draft of this piece.

- 1 So, for example, James R. Moore, *The Post-Darwinian Controversies: A study of the Protestant struggle to come to terms with Darwin in the United States and Great Britain, 1870-1900* (Cambridge: CUP, 1979); David N. Livingstone, *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders: the encounter between evangelical theology and evolutionary thought* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1987); Frederick Gregory, 'The impact of Darwinian evolution on Protestant theology in the nineteenth century', in David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (eds), *God and Nature: historical essays on the encounter between Christianity and science* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 369-390; Jon Roberts, *Darwinism and the Divine in America: Protestant intellectuals and organic evolution, 1859-1900* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); Ronald L. Numbers, *The Creationists* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1992).
- 2 Numbers, however, does draw attention to links between eschatology and creationism: see *op.cit.*
- 3 I have hinted at some of these connections in an earlier, preliminary investigation in 'Evolution, eschatology and the privatization of Providence', *Science and Christian Belief* 2 (1990): 117-130.
- 4 Frederick Fyvie Bruce, 'Eschatology', in Everett F. Harrison *et al* (eds), *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975), pp. 187-193.
- 5 Roderick I. Murchison, 'Address to the Royal Geographical Society', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 14 (1844): lxi.
- 6 George Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism. Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 5.
- 7 Janel M. Curry-Roper, 'Contemporary Christian eschatologies and the relation to environmental stewardship', *Professional Geographer* 42 (1990): 157-169. The citations from this article both appear on p. 161.
- 8 Ernst Benz, *Evolution and Christian Hope. Man's Concept of the Future from the Early Fathers to Teilhard de Chardin*, translated from the German by Heinz G. Frank (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 134. Liberal theologians who fused postmillennial optimism and organic evolution were Albrecht Ritschl, Washington Gladden, and Walter Rauschenbusch. See Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*; Richard D. Knudsen, *The Systematic Thought of Washington Gladden* (New York: Humanities Press, 1968), pp. 111-117; Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1922), pp. 131-166.
- 9 See Benz, *Ibid.* The relationship between eschatological vocabulary and quantum cosmologies is discussed in Willem B. Drees, 'Beyond the Big Bang: Quantum Cosmologies and God' (Doctoral Dissertation, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1989). I am grateful to Dr Howard Van Til for drawing this latter work to my attention.
- 10 James McCosh, *Christianity and Postivism. A Series of Lectures to the Times on Natural Theology and Christian Apologetics* (London: Macmillan, 1871), pp. 90, 92.
- 11 *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders*, pp. 106-112.
- 12 James McCosh, *The Religious Aspect of Evolution* (New York, 1890), p. 101.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- 14 McCosh had written to Argyll in 1867 and received a reply in which Argyll noted that it was a 'great pleasure to find that on the whole our agreement is so great on the questions raised respecting "Law in the Realm of Mind". I think we are substantially at one.' Letter, Duke of Argyll to Dr McCosh, 21 September 1867, General Mss (misc) C0140, Firestone Library, Princeton University. That Benz locates Henry Drummond's evolutionary theology and what might be called the Darwinian Calvinism of George Frederick Wright in the self-same conceptual frame is also entirely predictable. See the discussion of Drummond's views in James R. Moore, 'Evangelicals and

- evolution: Henry Drummond, Herbert Spencer, and the naturalization of the spiritual world,' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 38 (1985): 383-417. Wright is discussed in Ronald L. Numbers, 'George Frederick Wright: from Christian Darwinist to fundamentalist', *Isis* 79 (1988): 624-645.
- ¹⁵ B.B. Warfield, 'Calvin's doctrine of the Creation', *Princeton Theological Review* 13 (1915): 196.
- ¹⁶ B.B. Warfield, 'Predestination', in *Biblical and Theological Studies*, p. 277.
- ¹⁷ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (London: Banner of Truth, 1958, first pub. 1939), pp. 718, 719.
- ¹⁸ Ernest Frederick Kevan, 'Millennium', in Everett F. Harrison *et al* (eds), *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 351-55 on p. 353. Rauschenbusch, for example, in his *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (p. 225), wrote that the Christian ideal of society would come about only by a 'shift from catastrophe to development'. Case, in *The Millennial Hope* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916, p. 238), urged that the 'course of history exhibits one long process of evolving struggle'.
- ¹⁹ I rely here on Irwin Reist, 'Augustus Hopkins Strong and William Newton Clarke: a study in nineteenth century evolutionary and eschatological thought', *Foundations* 13 (1970): 26-43. See also Grant Wacker, *Augustus H. Strong and the Dilemma of Historical Consciousness* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1985).
- ²⁰ Augustus Hopkins Strong, *What Shall I Believe? A Primer of Christian Theology* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1922), p. 49.
- ²¹ Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology: A Compendium* (1907; rpt. London: Pickering & Inglis, 1956), p. 75.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ²³ The extracts cited in these two sentences are quoted in Reist, *op. cit.*
- ²⁴ B.B. Warfield, review of Strong's *Christ in Creation and Ethical Montism*, in *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 12 (1901): 325-326.
- ²⁵ Marsden, *op.cit.*, pp. 5-6.
- ²⁶ Cited in advertisement appended to William Jennings Bryan, *In His Image* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1922).
- ²⁷ George McCready Price, *Science and Religion in a Nutshell* (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1923), p. 13.
- ²⁸ See *The Scenario of the Photo-Drama of Creation* (Brooklyn, NY: International Bible Students Association, 1914).
- ²⁹ Numbers, *The Creationists*, p. 43.
- ³⁰ John F. Walvoord, 'Posttribulationism today', *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1975): 16-24.
- ³¹ I am indebted to Dr Arie Leegwater for this suggestion.
- ³² Floyd E. Hamilton, *The Basis of Millennial Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1942), p. 34. Hamilton was also the author of *The Basis of Evolutionary Faith* (London: James Clark, c. 1931).
- ³³ See Glenn A. Remelts, 'The Christian Reformed Church and science, 1900-1930: an evangelical alternative to the fundamentalist and modernist responses to science', *Fides et Historia* 21 (1989): 61-80.
- ³⁴ Bavinck seems to have postmillennialism in mind at this point.
- ³⁵ H. Bavinck, 'Creation or development', *Methodist Review* (November 1901): 849-874, on 852, 868, 872, 873.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 874.
- ³⁷ Critiques of theonomy are available in William S. Barker and W. Robert Godfrey (eds), *Theonomy: A Reformed Critique* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academic Books, 1990); Richard John Neuhaus, 'Why Wait for the Kingdom? The Theonomist Temptation', *First Things* (May 1990): 13-21.
- ³⁸ R.E. McMaster Jr., 'Evolution and New Age globalism: counterfeiting biblical eschatology', *Chalcedon Report* (1989): 7-9. Critics have claimed that postmillennial Reconstruction or Dominion Theology, as it is sometimes called,

- has embraced either New Age occultism or materialism. See D. Hunt and T.A. McMahon, *The Seduction of Christianity: Spiritual Discernment in the Last Days* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1985).
- ³⁹ McMaster, *op.cit.*
- ⁴⁰ See *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 1, 1 (1974).
- ⁴¹ Numbers points out that Rushdoony found a publisher for John C. Whitcomb's *The Genesis Flood*: see Numbers, *op.cit.*, p. 199.
- ⁴² Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Mythology of Science* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1967), pp. 57-58. See also his rejection of scientific authority in *The Myth of Overpopulation* (Birmingham, AL: Cornerstone Publishers, 1974).
- ⁴³ See Tom McIver, 'Christian Reconstructionism, Post-millennialism, and Creationism', *Creation/Evolution Newsletter* 8, 1 (1988): 10-17.
- ⁴⁴ See Jim Moore, '(Re)reading Genesis: towards a radical interpretation of the New Creationism', *Science for People* 55 (1983): 10-15.

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Introduction to Chartism

It should not surprise us that Chartism has attracted so much interest from social and political historians for there is no other period, with the possible exception of the years surrounding the General Strike of 1926, when there was so much working-class action and excitement. Chartism had its origins in a 'WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION' which was formed in 1836. William Lovett, who became its first secretary, published in the following year a pamphlet entitled *The Rotten House of Commons*. In it he showed that out of 6,023,752 adult males, only 839,519 had the vote. Helped by Daniel O'Connell and a few radical MPs, Lovett's Association drew up *The People's Charter*. This was intended to be the basis of a Bill which would be put to Parliament. It contained six proposals: universal suffrage, payment for Members of Parliament, secret ballot, the abolition of property qualifications for MPs, annual parliaments and equal electoral districts.

Chartism, as it became known, gathered rapid momentum and climaxed in a National Convention which was held in Palace Yard, Westminster, in the Spring of 1839. A 'monster' petition containing hundreds of thousands of signatures in support of the Charter was handed in to Parliament. The Charter campaign was kept up during the so-called 'hungry forties'. A third petition was made in 1848, the year of the revolutions, but failed to persuade those in authority to take any action. After this point Chartism began to lose momentum and the leaders who had formed the movement became discouraged and began to run out of energy. Feargus O'Connor, for instance, died in a lunatic asylum in 1855. Lovett became the proprietor of the National Hall in Holborn and died in 1877. A number of others emigrated to America and Australia and several of the clerical leaders reverted from Chartist preaching back to more orthodox Christian homilies. Joseph Rayner Stephens pastored an Independent Chapel in Ashton under Lyne and Arthur O'Neil left the Chartist Church in Birmingham and took on the leadership of a Baptist congregation in the same city. The last Chartist convention was held in 1848 and from that time the movement was a spent force.

Inevitably, there has been substantial literature on Chartism. One of the classic primary texts for the movement, and the only significant nineteenth-century account, is that written by Robert George Gammage (1829-80). Entitled *History of the Chartist Movement 1837-1854*, it was published in 1854. Gammage developed radical leanings at a very young age and joined the Chartists at an early point. He did not achieve prominence at National level until the very last phase of the movement from 1848 to 1854, although he was a Chartist lecturer in Newcastle on Tyne for two years from 1842. In May 1853, however, he was elected on to the Executive Committee of the National Association. Gammage in actual fact proved to be quite critical of the movement. He laid bare the various leadership conflicts and pronounced the Chartist Land Plan as 'the next great folly which was to contribute to the disgrace of the Chartist Movement'.

In the present century there was a cluster of studies around the time of the First World War. These included full histories by Hovell, Rosenblatt, Slosson and West. Harold Faulkner also produced his monograph *Chartism and the Churches* (1916) at this point.¹ The focus of Chartist studies then moved to detailed local analyses and biographical studies. This approach was begun by G.D. Cole in his *Chartist Portraits* (1945) and was followed by David Williams's

John Frost: *A Study in Chartism* and by John Saville's *Ernest Jones' Chartism* published in 1952. Subsequently there followed the publication of Asa Briggs's *Chartist Studies* and Dorothy Thompson's *The Chartists* (1984). The importance of these two latter volumes was that they provided a more serious attempt at analysis rather than contextual and descriptive history. Their writing also points up the diverse nature of Chartism, particularly the variations in motivation, leadership and policy from one area of the country to another.²

Historians of the Chartists have highlighted the significance of various causal factors of the movement. Edouard Doleans (1913), for example, identified the root as being 'a reaction of the working class against the Industrial Revolution'.³ Mather (1965) supported his contention noting that Chartism was strongest in areas of decaying cottage industry.⁴ J.R. Dinwiddie underscored the 'impact of economic depression'.⁵ Others such as O. Ashton and J.F.C. Harrison stressed the role of Owenism and Poor Law issues.⁶

One factor which seems to have been largely overlooked is the role of religion in the Chartist movement. Professor H. Faulkner produced *Chartism and the Churches* (1916) and Robert Wearmouth offered some largely descriptive accounts of Methodist involvement in Chartism in 1938.⁷ More recently, Eileen Yeo (1981) attempted a detailed explanation of the role of religion in the movement.⁸ She saw religion functioning as 'contested territory' which both the Chartists and their opponents fought into. This was each side's way of demonstrating the righteousness of their cause and gaining the support of public opinion.⁹

Whilst acknowledging Yeo's point that there is clear evidence that both sides operated in this way, this article will argue that Christianity also had both a causal and sustaining impact on the Chartist movement. This role is most readily observable in Methodism.

Methodist conversion

The starting point for all branches of Methodism was conversion. Evangelical conversion after the pattern and style of John Wesley's own experience at Aldersgate Chapel was the *sine qua non* of all branches of Methodism throughout the nineteenth century. It had particular implications for a radical working-class movement such as Chartism. For the recipient, there was an immediate sense of being loved and accepted by Christ. This often gave a new feeling of dignity and self-worth which enabled working people to shake off an attitude of ingrained fatalism towards their low pay and conditions of work. Methodist conversion further conveyed a 'felt assurance'. The love of God had been shed abroad in the heart and this engendered in many lower-middle-class Methodists a compassion for the down-trodden and a desire to fight on their behalf. Of great significance, Methodists taught their new converts to maintain their experience by establishing a disciplined 'Methodical' lifestyle. This in turn generated tenacity and a gritty determination which led many to strive for a rudimentary education and other forms of self-improvement. It is not surprising, therefore, that many Chartist leaders were prompted into action by a 'new birth experience' in a Wesleyan or Primitive Methodist Chapel. In his study of Methodism, David Hempton observed the fact that many in working-class leadership had early Methodist conversion experiences between fourteen and seventeen years of age. This early commitment, he suggested, 'often moved to a more radical and politicised Christianity'.¹⁰ It produced, he noted, Chartist leaders such as John Skevington, a Primitive Methodist local preacher at the age of fourteen, and Joseph Barker.¹¹ J.F.C. Harrison observed that, in Leicester Chartism, the local leaders were self-educated working-class men. The majority had a strong non-conformist (usually Methodist) allegiance.¹² Maldwyn Edwards also instanced the case of another Chartist leader, Thomas Cooper. He attended a Primitive Methodist Chapel, 'but at the age of fifteen became a

Wesleyan and was greatly influenced by the "intelligent and deeply spiritual preaching" of Lawrence Kershaw'.¹³

Methodist training

Another important contribution which Methodism brought to the Chartist movement was in helping to produce more articulate men and women. In their local chapel environment they learned the skills of organising their fellow workers, recording minutes of meetings and keeping simple financial accounts. Above all, many learned how to stand up in public and put their point across in a simple and effective manner.

Prior to the Forster Education Act of 1870, very few labourers' children attended a day school with sufficient regularity to gain even a rudimentary education. It was here that the Methodist Sunday Schools were of major importance. W.R. Ward and others have pointed out that a good many Wesleyan Sunday Schools in the northern manufacturing areas were decidedly radical in tone and readily defied the Conference ruling which prohibited Sabbath writing.¹⁴ The Primitive Methodists in contrast had no such rule about Sunday writing in their schools and were able to offer a more fully rounded rudimentary education.

Methodism and social justice

From Methodism the Chartists also learned to make a stand for social justice. Wesley himself had fought hard against slavery and challenged the ill-treatment of women. Additionally, he also strongly opposed enclosures and the harsh conditions in mines and factories. All this fed into a strongly emerging tradition in Methodism which demanded more equitable treatment for the poor and those who found themselves at the bottom of the social pile. E.J. Hobsbawm observed that Methodist preaching fostered an element of protest which 'made all who took to it like the ancient prophets a stiff-necked people unwilling to bow down to the House of Rimmon'.¹⁵

Such protest is clearly apparent in the writing and public speeches of Chartist leaders. For them, the Bible, far from teaching submission, became a radical text which they used to put down the unjust designs of the clergy and those 'who were set in authority over them'. When William Lovett, on being taken into prison, was asked what was the nature of his religion, he replied that he was 'of the religion which Christ taught and which very few in authority practice'.¹⁶

In 1839, by way of raising their public profile, local Chartist groups paraded through the streets and attended the worship of their parish churches. Eileen Yeo observed that these public demonstrations took place in at least 31 different localities.¹⁷ In most cases they supplied the incumbent with a biblical text in advance and asked that he preach to the assembled company on that theme. The texts conveyed the content of Christianity which the Chartists wished to hear. Stockport Chartists, for example, offered their clergyman a choice of several texts: 'Six days shalt thou labour', 'He that will not work, neither shall he eat', 'Thou shalt not worship any graven image', 'As Jesus said to the young man who professed to be perfect, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give it to the poor"'. The most requested text, however, was James 5:1-6 which began: 'Go now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you'.¹⁸ Very few clergy were prepared to have any truck with the Chartists. Most preferred to take a text of their own on which to hang the message they wished to put across. A similar situation occurred in Sheffield where the Chartists visited the parish church requesting the vicar to preach on the first five verses of the fifth chapter of the epistle of St James. Instead, one of the assistant ministers preached a sermon from Proverbs 24: 'My son, fear thou the Lord and King, and meddle not with them that are given to change'.¹⁹

Despite these and numerous other clerical 'put downs', the Chartists continued to cling to their keenly held view that the Bible was an essentially radical book. For example, at the large Chartist gathering held at Cronkeyshaw near Rochdale, on the morning of 14 August, the eve of the General Strike of 1842, James Mills of Whitworth asserted that 'every chapter of the Bible breathed nothing but freedom and liberty'. One of the women read out a passage from Luke 14:13: 'But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee'.²⁰

It is, of course, possible to take Yeo's position, that the use of the Bible by the Chartists was simply part of the process of buying respect for their movement. However, the fact that most of these leaders were office holding Methodists active in the circuits before Chartism emerged, suggests another view. Here were people who had already been proclaiming social justice based on OT texts. It was inevitable that they should use the same biblical material in support of the Charter.²¹

Methodist leaders

In the light of the educative and practical opportunities provided by their chapels, it is small surprise that Methodism was a major contributor to Chartism insofar as leadership was concerned. In one sense, it might be argued that in areas where Methodism was dominant, it was not surprising that they gave the movement many leaders, particularly at the local level. Nevertheless, the case can be made that in certain Midlands counties there were strong pockets of other non-conformist groups. The fact of the matter is that some, such as the Particular Baptists and Congregationalists, were rather more quietist and apolitical by temperament and policy. Furthermore, Baptists and Congregationalists afforded little opportunity by comparison with the Methodists for lay men and women to exercise speaking or administrative roles.

Among the most prominent Methodist leaders of the Chartist movement were William Lovett and the Reverend Joseph Rayner Stephens of Ashton under Lyme. William Lovett (1800-1877), who helped to draw up the first Charter and was the London leader, was for a time a Bible Christian Methodist local preacher. Maldwyn Edwards suggested that his Methodism 'helped to shape his thinking and behaviour'. Like others it would seem possible to argue that his Methodist upbringing influenced him in favour of ordered protest. He once stated that 'whatever is gained by force in England, by force must be sustained; but whatever springs from knowledge and justice will sustain itself'.²² Joseph Rayner Stephens (1805-1879), who was widely influential in Lancashire Chartism was notorious. He was a gifted preacher, whose radical ideas inevitably clashed with the Buntingite faction in London and elsewhere. He was particularly incensed by the injustices of the 1834 Poor Law Act, and his passion to help its victims led him to espouse the cause of violence. In 1836 he declared: 'I will help to plead for the poor, and when talking and pleading and praying are at an end and found to be of no effect, I will fight for the poor. The poor shall have their own again'.²³ Stephens's revivalist preaching attracted many to the Chartist ranks in the early stages, although he later disowned all commitment to the Charter.²⁴ Interestingly enough, other Methodist ministers in the north of England were happy to espouse physical force for Chartism. The Reverend Mr Jackson, a Methodist minister residing in the Stockport area, was reported to have talked of 'bullets and lead and guns and pistols and pikes'.²⁵ James Schofield, a Bible Christian Minister, was nominated as Chartist Chairman for Manchester on 19 March 1841. Two years later, a Chartist Conference of Factory Operatives was held in his chapel. He was among those taken for trial at the Lancaster Assizes for sedition and incitation to riot, but he was acquitted.²⁶ Thomas Cooper (1805-92), the leader of Leicester Chartism

where he became known as 'The General', was for a time a Wesleyan Methodist local preacher. In 1841 he became editor of the Chartist paper, *The Midland Counties Illuminator*. Later, when sales dropped, he produced his own publication entitled *The Chartist Rushlight*.

Among others who played prominent district leadership roles in Chartism were Joseph Markham and John Skevington. In his autobiography, Cooper referred to Joseph Markham as 'an influential Chartist leader and a famous Methodist local preacher'.²⁷ John Skevington (1801-1850) was the leading figure in Loughborough Chartism. Until 1836, he was a travelling preacher with the Primitive Methodists. The springs of his Chartist activities are not far to seek. He declared:

As an advocate of the principles of the People's Charter, I found nothing on inspection to condemn them. . . but a firm conviction that though a man may be Chartist and not a Christian, a man cannot be a Christian and not a Chartist unless through ignorance.²⁸

There were other local preachers who were active in Chartist leadership. Joseph Capper was a Primitive Methodist local preacher in Staffordshire who suffered two years' imprisonment in 1842 for his strong stand on Chartist principles. Local preachers J. Black, J. Barratt and J. Harrison of Nottingham were active Chartist supporters.²⁹ John Vallance (1794-1882), who served an active role as chairman, speaker and delegate to various Chartist meetings in the Barnsley area, was a lifelong member of the town's Pitt Street Wesleyan Chapel.³⁰ William Chadwick (1829-1908) became a Wesleyan local preacher by the time he was fourteen. On 3 April 1848 he was appointed as Corresponding Secretary for the Manchester Chartists. He later had to endure a six-month prison sentence in Liverpool for urging labourers who did not possess a sword to sell all that they had in order to buy one.³¹

This list could doubtless be considerably extended, but even as it stands it is more than sufficient to demonstrate that Methodism imbued its local leaders with a heightened sense of social justice. This in turn motivated numbers of them to become active Chartist campaigners. The fact that their advocacy of the Chartist cause was taken up against the express disapproval of both the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist connexional policies suggests that this was much more than a case of Chartist leaders happening also to be Methodists.

Methodist Models of Organisation

Another way in which Methodism aided the growth of Chartism was in providing models of organization. In a comparative examination of the basic structure of Chartist and Methodist organizations, the most striking feature is the omission of the circuit from the Chartist structure. Methodism was founded on a four-tier structure of Conference, district meeting, circuit meeting and local society, whilst Chartism was based on a three-tier system of National Headquarters, districts and local branches. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Chartist district fulfilled a function which was very similar to that of the Methodist circuit. Chartist delegates, who were sometimes referred to as missionaries, had, as their main function, to move around the local area and give lectures or speak at public demonstrations and rallies.

One difference which R.F. Wearmouth observed was the way in which the Chartists skilfully democratized the structures they borrowed from Methodism. They wanted to guard against Wesley-style oligarchy and so Chartist leaders were elected not appointed, and time limits were frequently imposed on the duration of their office.³² Wearmouth's view of Chartist borrowing differed from Yeo's opinion that this was a case of Chartism and Christianity overlapping or mutually reinforcing each other.³³ Wearmouth interpreted the borrowings as demonstrating Methodism's, and particularly Primitive Methodism's, conscious attempt to influence the whole structure of the Chartist movement.

Perhaps the most prominent borrowings were the Chartist camp meetings. These were deliberate copyings of Primitive Methodist camp meetings, which were outdoor gatherings where large numbers of people came together, often in out of the way places, to hear 'revivalistic' preaching. Such assemblies were frequently characterized by euphoric singing and charismatic phenomena in which respondents sank to the ground, screamed out or cried aloud for mercy.

The first reference to Chartist camp meetings was at the Rochdale Conference of 25 June 1839. According to the *Manchester Guardian* of 29 June 1839, 'Camp meetings for political purposes were recommended'. In September of the same year, *The Northern Liberator* reported a Chartist camp meeting midway between the adjoining towns of Sheffield and Barnsley. According to its reporter:

On Sunday afternoon the men, and men they may emphatically be called, of Sheffield joined by immense assemblages from Barnsley and the surrounding districts held a religious camp meeting on Hood Hill; and never before was such a religious meeting held in Yorkshire. The Revd Mr Thornton of Bradford preached a sermon that must have gone witheringly to the souls of magistrates and minions of power that were present. Sure enough he did tear up by the roots the abomination of the State Church, plurality of livings and blasphemous mammon worshippers.³⁴

Robert Wearmouth wrote: 'From 1839 to 1850 the Chartist Camp Meeting remained the most regular and important form of political propaganda among the lower classes'.³⁵ He identified nearly 400 reports of Chartist camp meetings in these years, in the columns of *The Northern Star*, which served as the semi-official organ of the movement. 1842 appears to have been the most significant year with 90 camp meetings. There were 73 camp meetings reported in 1843 followed by fewer meetings till 1847 and then heightened activity in 1848 prompted by news of the revolutions on the continent. The preaching at such Chartist camp meetings appears to have been for the most part based on OT and revolutionary texts.³⁶

In 1839 the Magistrates of Sheffield put a ban on Chartist open air meetings in the town. In order, therefore, to maintain momentum for their cause, the Chartists borrowed another piece of Methodist organization, the class meeting. *The Sheffield Iris* of 3 September 1839 warned that upwards of 100 Chartist class meetings had been formed in every part of the town.³⁷ In the same year, Chartist classes were adopted and formed in a number of big towns, including Bolton, Manchester, Bradford, Barnsley, Birmingham, Bristol, Huddersfield and Rochdale. There were also a number of specifically Chartist class meetings established in connection with some Methodist chapels on the north-east coast.³⁸

In many Chartist class meetings, each member was expected to pay a penny a week. This was the same requirement as laid down by John Wesley for his class meetings. The Chartist class meeting system divided a town into districts. Each district was then subdivided into as many classes as were felt to be necessary. Each class had leaders, including a treasurer, who collected contributions. In Chartism, unlike Methodism, the class leaders were elected, not appointed. The effectiveness of the early Chartist classes can be gauged by a comment from Joseph Wild, Constable of Manchester, who reported that 'the Chartists of Oldham are meeting in houses and that their society consists principally of working men'.³⁹ The majority of Methodist-style class meetings seem to have been located in Yorkshire, but they are known to have existed in Tower Hamlets, Brighton, Bristol, Leicester, Worcester, Durham and Nottingham. Feargus O'Connor was evidently impressed with the utility of the class meeting as a vehicle for spreading the Chartist message. At one point in 1843, he proposed a general organization of each Chartist area group into classes:

Each class, when constituted, shall choose for itself a leader subject to the confirmation of the Branch Board. The duties of the leader will be to arrange for conversational meetings with his class at a place of meeting most convenient; to hold a friendly discussion relative to the principles and objects of the Association, to read the tracts and authorised documents and reports of the general body, to collect the subscriptions of the members and weekly hand them over to the branch secretary.⁴⁰

Although O'Connor's proposals were not adopted, they nevertheless testify to both his knowledge of the Methodist class system and its potential as a unit of organization.

Rather more remarkably, *The Northern Star* of 9 November 1839 announced at Sheffield: 'On Sunday week, the Chartists of this town held what is called a Love Feast, after the style of a body of religionists called Methodists.'⁴¹ The love feast had been adopted by Wesley from the Moravians and followed the early church practice of a simple fellowship meal which often included the sharing of bread and cake and drinking from a loving cup. The fact that Sheffield Chartists could organize a Chartist love feast suggests that a high proportion of Methodists were active in Sheffield Chartism. Since the love feast was a fellowship gathering for the religiously committed, it suggests that the town's leading Chartist officials had a strong personal involvement in Methodism.

Another way in which Methodism assisted Chartism was in the loan of its chapels for holding meetings. This happened despite the fact that both the Wesleyans and the Primitives had passed Conference resolutions forbidding the practice. In instances where a Methodist minister, such as Joseph Rayner Stephens, became a leader of a Chartist district it often followed that connexional premises were used for local branch meetings, at least until the trustees and circuit authorities forced the matter to a head. In Stephens's case, a number of Lancashire chapels seceded from Wesleyan Methodism following his resignation from the connexion in 1834. The Stephensite Methodists grew rapidly and could boast of ten preaching places and 31 preachers in the Ashton circuit alone. In this matter of the loan of chapels, the Primitive Methodists seem to have been more generous.⁴²

As well as holding branch meetings in the chapels, Chartists also organized specifically religious services. These proved a valuable way of raising funds, particularly in the winter months, when the weather prohibited the holding of camp meetings. The preachers on these occasions were usually working-class radicals with strong Christian convictions, men such as Ben Rushton, who preached to a cluster of radical churches in Lancashire, and William Thornton, who often held services in Primitive Methodist chapels in the North-West.⁴³

Methodist organization seems to have shaped Chartism at every level. Those aspects of Chartism which had counterparts in Methodism included 'delegate meetings', 'societies', 'associations', 'missionaries', 'weekly penny subscriptions' and 'lecturers' Plan of Engagements'. There were even, on occasion, Chartist tea meetings, such as that attended by a Government Commissioner in Birmingham in 1842.⁴⁴

Denouement

There is no doubt, as Yeo and others have indicated, that both Chartists and their opponents sought on occasion to buy into Christianity in an effort to assert the righteousness of their cause.⁴⁵ This was perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the town of Cheltenham, which in the nineteenth century had both a large and fashionable middle-class population, but also a decidedly vociferous and radical element which inhabited rows of terraced cottages at the lower end of the High Street. In a *Sermon Addressed to the Chartists of Cheltenham*, Francis Close, the ebullient incumbent of the parish church, denounced the local Chartists as 'a fire and faggot breed who came to set class against class'. They had 'lighted up the torch

of discontent and made the lowest labourer a prattling politician and taken him away from his duty'.⁴⁶ Close then went on to use the Bible in an attempt to justify his pontifications. 'The Book of Providence', he declared, 'is one grand scheme of subordination and mutual help. And you know,' he continued, 'that the Book which I have before me says that 'the poor shall never cease out of the land'.⁴⁷

However, the fact that both sides sought to strengthen the hand of their cause by drawing on biblical imagery does not displace the contention that Christianity served to both motivate and sustain the Chartist cause. This article has indicated that Methodist conversion experience helped to generate both compassion and tenacity on the part of Chartist leaders. It also schooled them in the skills of management, organization and public speaking. Methodist biblicism, which was often rooted in the OT prophets, instilled a sense of justice and also provided local preachers with biblical metaphors of protest and deliverance which were not the familiar currency of the generality of working-class people.⁴⁸

Methodist organizational structure offered good working models which the Chartist committees were able to adapt and, in some cases, take over wholesale. Methodism also made a major contribution to Chartism in the provision of many leaders at national, district and local levels. These leaders should not be regarded as Chartists who happened also to be Methodists. They were men, and in some cases women,⁴⁹ who were Methodists first and Chartists second. Many of their number had been converted in Methodist chapels and engaged in preaching and circuit work well before the emergence of Chartism. What is more, it cost them to be Chartists. It meant they had to defy official Conference pronouncements and likely as not run the risk of expulsion from a chapel community and fellowship which they and their families valued greatly. In 1839, for example, a meeting of Wesleyan preachers in Bath resolved that every Methodist who became a Chartist should be excluded from their body.⁵⁰ The Wesleyan Conference of 1848 spoke against the Chartists in severe tones as 'those disloyal and disaffected men who are endeavouring to allure the humbler of our fellow countrymen to take part in their schemes.'⁵¹ In view of all of this, it seems reasonable to maintain that, at the very least, Christianity fulfilled a forthright and positive role in helping to galvanize the Chartist movement into action and in sustaining its subsequent campaigns.

Conclusion

There has been considerable debate in recent years over the nature of the relationship between Methodism and working-class political movements. Historians of the 1970s such as Alan Gilbert saw popular evangelicalism functioning as a safety valve against violent protest on account of its often standing apart from the established church and its association with the ruling classes.⁵² More recently, however, David Hempton has suggested that this may not be the most accurate representation of the relationship between Methodism and radical movements. Rather, he has urged that we should regard the overlap between the two as a 'symbiosis' which generated a mutually reinforcing social and religious protest.⁵³ On such an interpretation, it is possible to say that there was little, if any, opposition between grass roots Methodism, on the one hand, and the Chartists on the other. Whatever the future of the Methodist inheritance, its past is nothing if not politically interesting!

- 1 H. Faulkner, *Chartism and the Churches* (London: Frank Cass, 1970).
- 2 See F.C. Mather, *Chartism* (London: Historical Association, 1965), p. 17.
- 3 E. Dolleans, cited in *ibid.*, p. 9.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- 5 J.R. Dinwiddy, *Chartism* (London: Historical Association, 1987), p. 8.
- 6 J.F.C. Harrison, in *Chartist Studies*, ed. Asa Briggs, (London: MacMillan, 1959), pp. 128ff.
- 7 R.F. Wearmouth, *Methodism and the Working Class Movements in England 1800-1850* (Clifton: Augustus Kelley, 1972 edn), pp. 129 -163.
- 8 E Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle', *Past and Present* No. 91, May 1981.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 109.
- 10 D. Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750-1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1984) p. 212.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 212.
- 12 J.F.C Harrison in *Chartist Studies*, ed. A. Briggs, p 129.
- 13 M. Edwards, *This Methodism* (The Epworth Press, 1939), p. 26.
- 14 W.R. Ward, *Religion and Society 1790-1850* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1972), pp. 137-140.
- 15 E.J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), p. 139.
- 16 O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (London: A&C Black, 1970), Vol. 1,p 229.
- 17 Yeo, *Op Cit*, p. 123.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 133.
- 19 E R Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London: The Lutterworth Press, 1957), p. 100.
- 20 Wearmouth, *op cit.*, p. 143.
- 21 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 27.
- 22 Mather, *op cit.*, p. 16.
- 23 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 25.
- 24 Yeo, *op cit.*, p. 114.
- 25 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 26.
- 26 R.G. Gammage, *History of the Chartist Movement* (New York: Kelley, 1969 reprint edn), p. 232.
- 27 T.Cooper, *Life of T Cooper*, ch., 9, cited in Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 28.
- 28 D. Thompson, *Chartist Studies* (Temple Smith, 1983), p. 131.
- 29 Edwards, *op cit.*, p. 29.
- 30 See article by F.K. Donnelly in *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (London: MacMillan Press), Vol. IX, pp. 282-283.
- 31 See E. and R. Frow and J. Saville, *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (London: MacMillan Press Ltd, 1984), Vol .VII, pp 53-55.
- 32 Cited Hempton, *op.cit.*, p. 211.
- 33 Yeo, *op cit.*,
- 34 R F Wearmouth, *op cit.*, p 139.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 142.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 142.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- 38 Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 145.
- 40 A. Armstrong, *The Church of England, the Methodists and Society 1700-1850* (University of London Press, 1983).
- 41 Wearmouth, *op cit.*, p. 141.
- 42 See S. Mayor, *The Churches and the Labour Movement* (London: Independent Press Ltd, 1967), p. 247.
- 43 Yeo, *op cit.*, p 117.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 116.

- ⁴⁵ See for example, O. Aston, 'Clerical Control and Radical Responses in Cheltenham Spa 1838-1848', *Midland History*, 1983, Vol. 8, pp. 121-147.
- ⁴⁶ Close, *Op Cit.*, p. 16.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- ⁴⁸ See N.A.D. Scotland, *The Revolt of the Field in East Anglia* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980), ch. 10.
- ⁴⁹ For women, see, for example, C. Dews, *From Mow Cop to Peake 1807-1932, Essays to Commemorate the One Hundred and Seventy Fifth Anniversary of the Beginnings of Primitive Methodism May 1892* (Wesley Historical Society, Yorkshire Branch, 1982), Occasional Paper No. 4, p. 51.
- ⁵⁰ *Bath Post*, 25 May, 1839, cited in Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
- ⁵¹ Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
- ⁵² A.D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England* (London: Longman, 1976) pp. 90 -91.
- ⁵³ D. Hempton, *The Religion of the People: Methodism and Popular Religion 1750-1900* (Routledge, London: 1996), p. 176.