



CONTENT

- 570 Letter from the editor, by *John Stringer*
- 571 Jesus' relationship to God, from his words in John 13-17, by *Donald Fairbairn*
- 593 How effective are chronological approaches? by *Colin Bearup*
- 599 Church and Mosque, by *Chris Flint*
- 696 Christ Church (Anglican) in Nazareth: a brief history with photographs, by *Duane Alexander Miller*
- 704 Mothers of all fears; with gentleness and respect. Another look at 1Peter 3:15, by *Salaam Corniche*
- 729 Book Review: Christian Zionism Examined (Steven Paas), by *Salaam Corniche*



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

In the August issue we published some articles about what happens after conversion from Islam to Christianity. In this issue we are focusing on questions relate to Christology.

First, Donald Fairbairn, whose work has been published with IVP Academic, explains Jesus' concept of his own relation to the Father. Our second article is concerned with chronological approaches to summarizing the Bible, which is itself the uniquely inspired and authoritative (for Christians) witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. Is chronological story-telling the most effective way to communicate the Gospel to Muslims?

St Augustine spoke of "Christ—head and body", referring to both the Word incarnate and his body, the Church. What is the biblical concept of Church? And how is that similar to or different from the Islamic concept of mosque? This article is an adaptation of Chris Flint's MTh thesis, so get ready for some in-depth scholarship.

Continuing with our recent commitment to communicating the lives of real, living Christian communities in the Muslim world, rather than just debates about theory, Duane Alexander Miller of Nazareth Seminary provides us with a brief portrait of the history and life of Christ Church (Anglican) in Nazareth of Galilee. Our editorial team has decided to capitalize on our online format and include from time to time color photographs in some articles.

Finally, Salaam Corniche concludes the issue with a critical view of how 1 Peter 3:15 has been used in recent missiological debates. He also wrote a book review on *Christian Zionism Examined: A Review of Ideas on Israel, the Church and the Kingdom* by Steven Paas,

The editors of *St Francis Magazine* welcome a response from one of the scholars he critiques.

Peace be with you,

Abu Daoud, Contributing Editor

JESUS' RELATIONSHIP TO GOD, FROM HIS WORDS IN JOHN 13-17

By Donald Fairbairn

Many of the papers and articles in the on-going Muslim Idiom Translation discussion (henceforth MIT) have taken as their starting point the use of the phrase “Son of God” in specific New Testament passages. Other papers and articles have offered more of a big-picture approach by surveying the use of the words “Son” and “Father” throughout the Bible. What I propose to do in this article is also big-picture in nature, but rather than surveying the broad uses of words, I would like to focus on one extended biblical passage that I believe undergirds not only the way the Bible presents the concepts of “Father” and “Son,” but also the way the Bible links those concepts to salvation and Christian life. This passage is John 13-17, and I believe that Jesus’ words here give us a window into the very heart of the Christian faith.¹

1 A Window into the Heart of the Faith: Jesus’ Words in John 13-17

There are several ways in which the words of the Upper Room Discourse and the High Priestly Prayer are central to the entire Christian message. First, of course, John was the last of the Gospels to be written, as a complement to the Synoptics. The first three Gospels focus on Jesus’ public ministry; John concentrates more on Jesus’ private ministry with the twelve disciples. The Synoptics give the broad sweep of Jesus’ actions; John includes more of what he said (even more than Matthew, and vastly more than Mark and Luke), and in so doing, John gives us Jesus’ own interpretation of the significance of his actions much more than the Synoptics do.

Second, Jesus’ words in these chapters were spoken just before *the* central events in all of human history, his crucifixion and resur-

¹ This article is adapted from chapter two of Donald Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity: An Introduction to Theology with the Help of the Church Fathers* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2009).

rection. He knew what was coming the next day—his betrayal, arrest, trial, and death by crucifixion—but his disciples did not. The words Jesus spoke at this time were full of meaning as they came from one who knew he was about to die a premature death.

Third, and most important, these chapters constitute essentially the only place in Scripture where anyone describes what God was doing before he created the world. Keep in mind that the disciples were expecting Jesus' words to point back to the Passover and the Exodus, the great deliverance of God's people that had taken place so long before. To their surprise, Jesus spends a great deal of time looking *forward*, speaking of the future—the way the disciples will love and serve one another. And when he does look backward, he points back not just to the Passover, but all the way back to the “time” (one can hardly even use that word) *before* the world existed. They are expecting a look at what to them seems like the distant past, but Jesus gives them a look at the past before the past, before there was even a universe. And then from the past he takes them to the future, a future that he sees clearly but they, of course, do not. In doing so, Jesus ties what Christian life will look like in the future directly to what his own relationship with God the Father has looked like for all eternity past. This connection is what gives these chapters the right to stand as a viable starting point for understanding the entire Christian faith.

If I am correct about the significance of Jesus' words in these chapters, then they are also an appropriate starting point for considering the way the Bible uses key words related to Jesus' and our relationships to God. These chapters undergird the conceptual framework for translating key biblical words and phrases. In this article I do not intend to go sentence-by-sentence through what Jesus says here. Instead, I would like to concentrate on a few key passages from John chapters 13, 15, and 17, and through these passages I would like to call our attention to the interplay between Jesus' own relationship to God and our relationship to him and to each other.

2 Interplay

2.1 Christian Love: The Reflection of Jesus' Love

Just after Jesus washes the disciples' feet in chapter 13, he says to the disciples:

Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once. My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. (Jn 13:31-35)²

At first glance, this passage seems to be utterly preposterous. Jesus is about to *die*. Why would he speak of *this moment* as the moment when God is going to *glorify him*? How can Jesus say that God will be glorified in the Son, who is about to undergo the most humiliating, un-glorious kind of death one can imagine? To understand this, we need to look fairly carefully at what “glory” means in the Bible.

Literally, the Hebrew word translated “glory” means “weight,” and the Greek word means “praise.” These words are starting from different ends of an idea, but the concept that both are heading toward is that God is the one who is massive, great, ponderous, magnificent, and thus worthy to be praised. So when we “glorify God” or “give God glory”, we are praising him because he is great and magnificent. This does not mean that we are giving him anything he does not already possess. He is majestic and spectacular whether anyone acknowledges this or not. Rather, for us to give God glory is to acknowledge that he is glorious, to state publicly that he is vastly greater than we are. This is why the Bible sometimes uses the phrase “ascribe to God the glory due his name” (see Ps 29:1-2) as a more precise version of the shorter phrase “glorify God”.

However, one should recognize that majesty or greatness is not all that is conveyed by the word “glory”. In addition, throughout the Old and New Testaments the glory of God is connected to his pres-

² In this article, all Scriptural quotations are from the New International Version.

ence with his people. A brief look back through Israel's history will make this clear. Just after the Exodus, as the people of Israel prepare to cross the Red Sea, God gives them a visible symbol of his presence with them—a pillar of cloud in the daytime, and a pillar of fire at night (Ex 13:20-22). This pillar guides them during the upcoming forty years of wandering in the wilderness before they enter the land of Israel promised to them. Shortly after this, as the people are camped in the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula, they begin to grumble against Moses and Aaron because they have no food. Moses and Aaron say to the people, "In the evening you will know that it is the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against him" (Ex 16:7). As promised, the next day the people "looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the Lord appearing in the cloud" (Ex 16:10). Here the cloud that has previously signified God's presence is specifically called "the glory of the Lord", and furthermore, this event coincides with God's beginning to give the people manna to eat, another visible sign of his presence with them and provision for them. (See all of Ex 16 on this point.) Later, as the people camp at the foot of Mount Sinai and God begins to give them the Law, starting with the Ten Commandments (Ex 20), he calls Moses up to the top of the mountain. The text reads: "When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from within the cloud. To the Israelites the glory of the Lord looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain" (Ex 24:15-17). Here, just after the breathtaking deliverance from Egypt that constituted Israel as a nation set apart for God, the Lord gives the people this constant reminder of his presence with them, his unique relationship to them. And the phrase Scripture uses for this presence is "the glory of the Lord".

For the rest of Old Testament history, God's majestic greatness is linked to his unique presence with his own people through this cloud of "the glory of the Lord". After the tabernacle—the *movable* place of worship representing God's presence with his people—is completed, we read: "Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.... So the cloud of the

Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel during all their travels” (Ex 40:34-38). Similarly, once the temple—the *stationary* place of worship representing God’s presence—is completed and the Ark of the Covenant is brought into the Holy of Holies, the text declares: “The cloud filled the temple of the Lord. And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple” (1 Kings 8:10-11). As he watches this event, King Solomon says, “The Lord has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever” (1 Kings 8:12-13).

Of course, the temple was not the final sign of God’s presence with his people, nor was this earthly temple permanent. Instead, the New Testament ties God’s majestic presence with his people to the incarnation and life of Christ. As the angels appear to announce Jesus’ birth to the shepherds, Luke writes, “The glory of the Lord shone around them” (Lk 2:9). When John describes the incarnation with the famous words, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us,” he explains by writing, “We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14). The glory of God is connected to the presence of God with his people, and this presence is uniquely shown in the entrance of his one and only Son into the world. Finally, in the chapter just before the Upper Room Discourse begins, Jesus speaks of his impending death by saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” (Jn 12:23). This brings us up to where we are now, in the Upper Room, puzzling over Jesus’ strange association of “death” with “glory”. But now we can recognize that the idea of glory is not just that God is majestic and great. It is that this God, the only God, the God who is majestic, is *with us* and acting *for us*.³

So with all this in mind, look at the first part of John 13:31ff again: “Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and

³ For other uses of the word “glory” in connection with God’s presence, see, e.g., Ex 33:12-22, Lev 9:23-24; Deut 5:24; 1 Sam 4:21-22.

will glorify him at once.” If God’s glory is not just his greatness, but his presence with us, then this passage must mean that the impending death of Jesus is the supreme way in which God is present with us. This is the very definition of what it means for God to be present with us. This is somehow going to be the most glorious moment in history.

With this most improbable description of glory in place, Jesus then tells the disciples what he wants them—and all of us who follow Jesus today—to do. In the latter part of the passage we are considering, he says: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (Jn 13:34-35). Notice two things about this passage. First, Jesus says that our love for one another is intimately connected to his love for us. *As* he has loved us, *so* we are to love one another. What is the nature of this connection? Does he mean *because* he has loved us, we should love one another? Surely he means at least this much. Does he mean we should love one another *in the same way* that he has loved us? Probably so, especially in light of the stunning demonstration of servant love he has given through washing the disciples’ feet. I suggest that what Jesus means here includes both of those ideas, but goes even further. Jesus means we should love one another *with the very same love* with which he has loved us.

What Jesus means here becomes clearer later in the Upper Room Discourse, but for now, we need to recognize that our love for one another is meant to be a mirror of the love Christ has shown us. And that leads directly to the second thing we should notice about the passage, that the way the world (that is, the broader society of people who do not yet follow Christ) will know we are Christ’s disciples is by the way we love one another. Our love somehow grows out of Christ’s love for us, and our love for one another *reflects* Christ’s love for us. It is so much like his love that when people see us, they are reminded of the way Christ acted when he was on earth. Thus, a life reflecting the love Jesus has shown us lies very close to the heart of Christian faith. Notice that this is not the same as saying simply that we should love one another, that we are looking for some kind of community life in which people get along and are nice to each other. This is more than that, and a different kind of love than that. This is

a love that is specifically connected to the life of one person who lived 2000 years ago. Near the heart of our faith, and thus near the heart of our theology, lies a love that reflects *that* love. As the Upper Room Discourse progresses, Jesus gets increasingly specific about the kind of love, and the kind of glory/presence, he is talking about here.

2.2 Christian Love:

The Same as the Love between the Father and Jesus

One of Jesus' best-known speeches is his vine-and-branches talk in John 15. As beloved as this talk may be, it probably does not have nearly the impact with us that it did with its original audience, since not that many of us live in agrarian societies. But for a group of Jews living in ancient Israel, nothing could have been a more appropriate image of the relationship between God, Jesus, and Christians than a grape vine. Grapes were one of the primary crops of ancient Israel, since they grew well in the arid climate, especially in the hill country where the contours of the land created natural terraces. They were essential to the lifestyle of the people, since wine was generally safer to drink than the available water was. Grapes were thus closely connected to life, to survival itself, and growing them provided the livelihood for a significant segment of the population.

Let us take a look at part of what Jesus says in this famous speech:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener... No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing... This is my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (Jn 15:1, 4-5, 8)

From these words it becomes clear why Jesus chose this image. Christians are the branches, the ones who bear the grapes and thus the most visible producers in the grape-growing operation. But the branches cannot produce grapes on their own. If they are cut off from the vine, they become useless. And they must be pruned every spring and protected from predators. The connection between the branch, the vine/root, and the gardener who tends the vine would have been perfectly clear to the disciples.

Notice also that in this paragraph, the fruitfulness of Christians is the Father's glory. Remembering that glory is connected to God's presence, we see that one of the ways God shows his presence on earth is through the actions of Christians, through the love we show for one another, through the fruit we bear. On our own, we can accomplish nothing. If we remain (or abide) in Jesus, then we can keep God's commands and bear the sort of fruit that God intends us to. First and foremost, then, Christian life is a process of abiding in Jesus, of relying on him, of recognizing and maintaining one's connection to him in all aspects of life. This image helps to explain what Jesus has said earlier in the discourse. Remember that when he said, "As I have loved you, so you must love one another" in John 13, I mentioned that there were various possibilities about how one might understand the connection between Jesus' love and ours. One possibility was that he means we should love others because he has loved us. But by this point, it is clear that this cannot be all Jesus meant there. If we were simply to love because he loved us, then that would mean that we love "on our own", merely by imitating Christ. But from what Jesus has said in chapter 14 (which I have not discussed in this article), we know that the Holy Spirit lives within us—helping us, enabling us, leading us to love others. And now the image of the vine and the branches removes any possibility that we could or should imitate Christ's love "on our own". The connection between his love and ours is closer than this: as we remain in his love, Jesus works through us to make us fruitful, so that the Father's glorious presence may be known.

This brings us to the next part of Jesus' speech, in which he pulls together the various threads of the tapestry he has been weaving so far and articulates most clearly the relation between Christians, himself, and God his Father. Jesus says:

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. In-

stead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. (Jn 15:9-15)

Previously Jesus has forged a link between his love for us and our love for one another. Here, he extends that link. His love for us is connected to his Father's love for him. Furthermore, he does *not* say merely that we are to love each other *because* the Father loved him and he loved us, or even that we are to love each other *in the same way* as the Father loved him and he loved us. Instead, he says, "Now remain in my love." We are to remain in *the very same* love with which Jesus has loved us, which is in fact *the very same* love with which the Father has loved him. Somehow we are called to do more than simply imitate God's love. We are called to remain in and to carry forward to the world the very love with which the Father has loved Jesus. The loving relationship between Father and Jesus, the glorious presence of the Father with Jesus, is not simply a model that we are to follow. That relationship is the very substance of what Jesus says Christians are to possess. Christ is not simply giving us an example; he is offering himself to us as a person, that we might share in his most deeply personal relationship, the relationship he has with God the Father.

Here Jesus is tying our human relationships to his own relationship with the Father. God loves him; he loves his Father and obeys him. In obedience to the Father, he comes into the world to love us *with the very same love* with which he and the Father have loved each other. He calls us to love each other with *that very same love*, and this will involve a willingness to be both leaders and followers, initiators and receptors of love. But another thing that we need to notice in this passage is that Jesus insists his disciples are not just servants, even though they are to obey him. In fact, "servants" is not his preferred word for describing them, even though many followers of Christ will later use that word to describe themselves. (See Rom 1:1 and Jas 1:1 for examples of this.) Instead, Jesus calls the disciples "friends". Why? Because someone who is merely a servant is not privy to his master's reasons for doing something; he is simply told what he should do. A servant who is also a friend shares in his master's purposes in a much greater way. He knows the big picture of who his master is and what his master is doing, and thus he sees

clearly why he is being called to do his part of the task. God the Father called on Jesus to obey, but at the same time, Jesus shared fully in both the Father's personal presence with him and in the big picture of the Father's purposes. He knew the Father's love toward him and thus the loving nature of the Father's purposes toward humanity. In a similar way, Jesus now calls us to obey, but he shows us who he is and what he is doing. He gives us a glimpse of the love that lies behind his purposes, and so he calls us his friends, rather than just his servants.

This is one of the ways in which Christian teaching about love and obedience differs radically from that of other religions. Islam and other religions command obedience, but they do not usually grant us much insight into why the commands are important or how they fit with what God is doing. In the Upper Room Discourse Jesus shows us that the key to Christianity is linking our lives to him, and indeed linking our lives directly to his own relationship with God the Father.

2.3 Christian Love and the Unique Relationship between Jesus and the Father

From what I have said so far, it may seem that the relationship between believers and God is essentially like that between Jesus and God, and therefore that Jesus does not belong in a fundamentally different category than us. But this is not what Jesus is saying here. Instead, what he is emphasizing is that there is both a similarity and a difference between himself and us with respect to the Father. To put it differently, his relationship to the Father is unique, but it is nevertheless the archetype for our own relationship with the Father.

In the Upper Room Discourse and High Priestly Prayer, Jesus articulates the uniqueness of his relationship to the Father in three major ways. First, he identifies himself with the Father through very startling assertions. In 14:1, he commands, "Trust in God; trust also in me", and in 14:12, he affirms, "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing". In these passages, he identifies himself with God the Father as the object of our faith. Even more famously, he declares himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life" in 14:6 and claims in 14:9, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father". Jesus is not merely a child of God on the same level that we are. In-

stead, his relationship to God is unique, even though we are meant to share in the love between the Father and him.

Second, Jesus indicates the uniqueness of his relationship to God by the intensely personal way he speaks *of* the Father in the Upper Room Discourse and *to* the Father in the High Priestly Prayer (which I will discuss in more detail later). He refers to God not only as “the Father” (in 14:6, 14:10, 14:24) and “Father” (in 17:1, 17:11), but also as “*my* Father”. In 14:2, he claims, “In my Father’s house there are many rooms”. In 14:7, he asserts, “If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.” In 14:20, he says, “On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.” (Notice that this passage shows clearly both the uniqueness of his relationship to God and the connection between his relationship and ours. God is *his* Father in a unique way, but just as he is in the Father, we are in him.) In 15:1, as we have already seen, Jesus begins the vine-and-branches speech by saying, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener”. And in 15:10 (as we have seen, a crucial passage because it shows most clearly the link between God’s love for him, his love for us, and our love for him), Jesus says, “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.” Contrast this uniquely personal way of speaking with the fact that Jesus elsewhere instructs his disciples to pray to “our Father” (Mt 6:9). There is at once a similarity between our relationship with God and Jesus’ relationship (we can call God “Father”), and a difference (God is Father to Jesus in a different way, such that Jesus can call him “*my* Father,” and we call him “*our* Father”). Notice here that what is essential to the articulation of Jesus’ unique relationship to God is not the phrase “Son of God” (which does not even occur in the Upper Room Discourse or High Priestly Prayer). What is essential is the word “Father” and the distinction between “my Father” and “our Father.”

This way of referring to Jesus’ relationship to the Father as both unique and the archetype of our relationship to God becomes the basis for one of the major ways the New Testament writers describe our salvation. For example, John himself affirms near the beginning of his Gospel: “Yet to all who received him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but

born of God” (John 1:12-13). Although this passage does not use the words “Father” and “Son” (it earlier refers to Jesus as “the Word”), John’s use of the word “children” to describe us establishes both a similarity to the one John will normally call “Son” and a difference from him. We are “children” because he is “Son”. Likewise, Paul affirms in Gal. 4:4-7: “But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons [literally, “the adoption as sons”]. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God made you also an heir.” Here the familial language is very direct: Jesus is God’s true Son, the one whom he sent. The purpose of sending the Son was that we might be adopted as sons, and the Spirit dwelling in us enables us to call God “Father”. Likewise, in Rom. 8:14-17, Paul declares, “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs— heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.” Here again, we are children because Christ is Son (although the passage does not use the word “Son”). As children, we are heirs of God along with Christ. There is both similarity and difference between our relationship to God and Jesus’ relationship to him. Jesus is the unique Son, but in a derivative way, we are also children of God.

But this is not all. The third way, and the most dramatic way, in which Jesus indicates the uniqueness of his relationship to the Father is that he asserts it to be an eternal relationship. Unlike us, he never began to be in this relationship as Son to Father; he has always had such a relationship. Jesus affirms this in the High Priestly Prayer, to which I now turn.

2.4 Christian Love and the Eternal Love between the Father and Jesus

In many ways, the High Priestly Prayer is an exact complement to the Upper Room Discourse. In the discourse, Jesus has laid out a picture of life as God intends it, and in the prayer, he asks his Father to bring about the kind of life he has just described to the disciples.

In this prayer, Jesus prays first for himself (vv. 1-5), and then for the twelve disciples (vv. 6-19), and then for all those who will later become his followers (vv. 20-26). Let us look at what Jesus prays for himself:

Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. (Jn 17:1-5)

In this passage, the phrase that may jump out at you first is “eternal life”. We all know that Jesus gives eternal life to those who believe in him. But what *is* eternal life? Most of us think that either it means “living forever” or it is a synonym for “heaven.” But neither of these really gets to the heart of what eternal life, in the biblical sense, means. “Heaven,” the way many people use the word, means little more than the actualization of whatever a particular person happens to like. Heaven is the place where you never have to work, or the place where you can play baseball all day long, or the place where you can eat whatever you want and not have to worry about your cholesterol level. The word “heaven” has been trivialized so much that it is almost meaningless today. And “living forever” can be very misleading as well. According to Scripture, *all people* are going to live forever, in one way or another. One of the marks of the significance God has given to *every* human being is that *all* will live forever, either with God or apart from God.⁴ But that is not what Jesus means by “eternal life” here. Rather, the phrase translated “eternal life” actually means “life of the age”. It is referring to a future age, to the new kind of life that God will establish at the end of history, a life that will be shared by all those who believe in Christ and follow him. Eternal life is not just living forever; it is living in a certain way, having a certain “quality of life” that is available only to those who have faith in Christ.

⁴ See, e.g., Dan 12:1-3; Mt 13:36-43, 47-50; 2 Thess 1:5-10; Rev 20:11-15, 21:1-8.

So what is this kind of life like? Jesus says here that eternal life consists of knowing God, and knowing Jesus Christ whom God has sent. Notice right away how personal this description is. Jesus is not saying eternal life is *something* that he will give us. He is not saying that because of what he has done, or what he will do, or what we do, then we will get x, y, or z while living forever in heaven. Eternal life *is* knowing Christ and his Father, God. At the very heart of the central idea of Christianity lies the reality that Christians will *know* the Father and the Son. This concurs very closely with what he has said in the Upper Room Discourse about our sharing in the love between the Father and the Son.

What makes this description of eternal life even more striking is that it comes not as Jesus is praying for *us*, but as he is praying for *himself*. His giving *us* eternal life is intimately connected to God's glory, so much so that Jesus speaks of our eternal life in the same breath as he speaks about his glorifying the Father and the Father's glorifying him. God does not just bask in his own magnificence; he shares it. He shares that greatness within himself among the persons of the Trinity, and he shares that glorious presence with his people as well. So part of the way that God shows forth his magnificence is by leading human beings to know him. And knowing him implies knowing both the Father and the Son whom the Father has sent.

In light of this idea, let us look at several other aspects of this passage from Jesus' prayer. We see that Jesus' completion of the work God has given him to do (living and dying for our salvation—a work that he has almost finished as he speaks these words) ascribes glory to the Father. That work shows the world just how magnificent God is. But notice verses 1 and 5. Jesus is praying that the Father would now glorify *him*, just as he has glorified the Father. And he describes that glory with the word "presence" and as something that he has had with the Father before the world began. The glory of God is the majestic presence of God. From all eternity, from before the moment he created the world, God has shared his magnificent presence. How? By sharing that presence between the Father and the Son. Christianity is unique among world religions in claiming both that there is only one God and that this one God exists as three persons, as the Trinity. Here Jesus indicates that God's majesty shines forth as God shares his presence. Before there was a world or any people to sense

that presence, God's glory shone forth in the relationship between the Father and the Son (and the Holy Spirit as well, although Jesus does not mention him here). As we come to know the Son, we too see God's glorious presence, and *this* is eternal life. The presence that God has shared within himself, between the Father, Son, and Spirit, is the heart of that knowledge of God which he gives to us and which constitutes eternal life. Through this part of the prayer, we see that eternal life is much more than just *something* Christians get because of what Christ has done. Eternal life is a deeply personal knowledge of the one who has shared from all eternity in the glory of the Father. Somehow, the eternally glorious relationship between the Father and Son is shared with us as we follow Christ. The *end*, the future that awaits Christians, involves sharing in the relationship that has characterized God from the very *beginning*, indeed from *before* the beginning, before there was human history or even earthly history. And again, this is very similar to what we have seen in the Upper Room Discourse.

Even more striking than what Jesus prays at the beginning of this prayer is what he says at the end, as he prays for all who will follow him. He continues to speak of glory and of the "time" before the creation of the world, but now he introduces another key idea, that of oneness or unity. Let us look carefully at the passage itself. Jesus says:

My prayer is not for them [the twelve disciples] alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them, and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. (Jn 17:20-24)

There are a number of things in this passage that we need to consider. First, notice that when Jesus prays that Christians would be "one", he explains this idea by saying that he is *in the Father*, the Father is *in him*, and Christians are to be *in the Father and the Son*. For followers of Jesus to be one with each other is somehow tied to

the relationship between the Father and the Son, and Jesus uses the word “in” to describe that relationship. Second, notice that the unity between Christians is to be a major sign to the non-Christian world that God has sent Jesus. In other words, part of the reason the world will believe that Jesus is really God’s Son is because of the unity or oneness between Christians. Third, and perhaps most important, Jesus ties oneness to love. In fact, he has talked a great deal about love in the Upper Room Discourse, and now as he prays for Christians, he speaks not only of love, but also of oneness. Saying that Christians should be one in the same way the Father and Son are one means the same thing as saying that Christians should love one another with the same love the Father has shown the Son. Fourth, notice that Jesus again speaks of eternal glory—of the presence of the Father with him before the world was created—and this time he ties that presence to the Father’s love for him.

So what kind of unity is Jesus talking about? He clearly has in mind something much greater than just a unity of purpose, like that which binds people together when they have a common task. He is not talking about a physical or emotional unity, like what binds wife and husband together. And he is not talking about a unity of substance, in which the distinction between God and people is lost, as is often the case in Eastern philosophical concepts of unity. In contrast to all of these, he is talking about a unity of love, and “unity” in this prayer is a synonym for “love” as Jesus has used that word throughout the Upper Room Discourse. To say that the Father and Son are “one” and are “in” each other is to speak of the love they have for each other, and Jesus says they have shared this love from all eternity, from before the time when they made the world. The glory of God has gleamed forth from all eternity past, through the loving presence of the Father with the Son (and the Holy Spirit, but again, Jesus does not mention him here). After God made the world and placed human beings in it, his desire for us was that we share that same glorious love with him and with each other. Jesus prays that those who follow him may be one with each other in the same way that he is one with the Father.

The link between the Son’s relationship to God and ours was one that the church fathers spent countless hours pondering. Perhaps the most insightful reflection on this idea comes from the fifth-century

father Cyril of Alexandria, who (like many others) makes adoption into the Son's relationship to the Father the key aspect of salvation. Cyril distinguishes two kinds of unity between the Father and the Son. The first is a unity of substance. To say that the Father and Son share the same substance is to say that they possess the same set of characteristics (what later western theology will call "attributes"). The Father and the Son do not share this kind of unity with us in any way whatsoever—we do not become divine in the sense of possessing attributes like omniscience and omnipotence that define what it means to be divine. The second, though, is a unity of love or fellowship that the Father and the Son have enjoyed from all eternity precisely because of their unity of substance. Cyril argues that God does, in fact, share this kind of unity with us. In his *Commentary on John*, while considering John 1:12-13, Cyril writes:

Shall we then abandon what we are by nature and mount up to the divine and unutterable essence, and shall we depose the Word of God from his very sonship and sit in place of him with the Father and make the grace of him who honours us a pretext for impiety? May it never be! Rather, the Son will remain unchangeably in that condition in which he is, but we, adopted into sonship and gods by grace, shall not be ignorant of what we are.⁵

Notice here that Cyril insists that we in no way mount up to the level of God himself. Instead, we are adopted as daughters and sons of God by grace, not by nature and in essence, as Jesus is. A bit later, he writes:

When he [the apostle John] had said that authority was given to them from him who is by nature Son to become sons of God, and had hereby first introduced that which is of adoption and grace, he can afterwards add without danger [of misunderstanding] that they were begotten of God, in order that he might show the greatness of the grace which was conferred on them, gathering as it were into natural fellowship those

⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*, bk. 1, chap. 9 [Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel According to S. John*, Vol. 1: S. John 1-8, trans. P. E. Pusey, Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, vol. 43 (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1874), p. 86 (translation modified)].

who were alien from God the Father, and raising up the slaves to the nobility of their Lord, on account of his warm love towards them.⁶

Notice that Cyril again clearly maintains the distinction between Christians and God, but at the same time he insists that we share in the natural fellowship between the Son and the Father. According to Cyril, we share *by grace* in the very same fellowship or love that the persons of the Trinity share *by nature*. This is why Jesus can pray that believers are to be one *in the same way* the Father and the Son are one. The Father and the Son are one in two ways, and we can be one with the Trinity and with each other in one of those two ways, by sharing in their fellowship of love.⁷

3 Implications

From Jesus' words in the Upper Room Discourse and the High Priestly Prayer, we can see that two crucial truths lie at the heart of his own understanding of his relationship to God and of our relationship to him/God. These are:

- 1) Jesus stands in a unique, loving relationship to God as Son to Father, and our relationship to God is derived from his unique relationship. We become sons and daughters of God by grace

⁶ Ibid., p. 106 (translation modified).

⁷ In fact, Cyril develops his own technical terms to distinguish these two kinds of unity. He uses the Greek word *idiotēs* to refer to the identity of substance or nature between the persons of the Trinity. Father, Son, and Spirit share *idiotēs* (identity of nature) with one another because they are the same God, the same being. Furthermore, Cyril uses the word *oikeiotēs* to refer to the unity of love and fellowship that binds the persons of the Trinity together. Even more strikingly, Cyril uses the phrase *oikeiotēs physikē* or "natural fellowship" to refer to the unity of love that the persons of the Trinity share precisely because they are of the same substance. They share *oikeiotēs physikē* (natural fellowship) because they share *idiotēs* (identity of nature). Armed with this distinction, Cyril insists that Christians do not in any way whatsoever share the *idiotēs* (identity of nature) of the Trinity (that would be pantheism!), but in spite of this, we do share in God's *oikeiotēs* (fellowship). For a comprehensive explanation of Cyril's use of *idiotēs* and *oikeiotēs* to lay out his understanding of our participation in God's fellowship, see chapter three of my book *Grace and Christology in the Early Church* (Oxford: University Press, 2003).

and adoption, based on the fact that Jesus is the unique Son of God.

- 2) Jesus' unique relationship to God is not merely a post-incarnational one. He has always been the unique Son of God, as shown by the fact that in these chapters he says he has always shared love, joy, fellowship, and unity with the Father (and the Spirit).

Notice that these two points constitute the most central affirmations of the Christian faith, the *foundation* on which other affirmations are based. The new life that God gives to Christians does not consist merely of a new status (justification) before him, or of a set of benefits (such as forgiveness of sins) that are achieved because of what Jesus did. Instead, justification, forgiveness, and other aspects of Christian identity grow out of a deeper reality that is fundamentally personal, relational, and familial. Notice also that these points aptly summarize the utter *uniqueness* of the Christian faith; there is nothing similar to them in Islam or any other religion. However much Christianity has in common with other religions, and thus however many legitimate entry points there are for evangelism, at some point Christian ministers need to make clear that Christianity offers a fundamentally different kind of salvation, on the basis of a fundamentally different understanding of God.

Notice also that in Scripture, the person who makes the connection between the eternal loving relationship between Jesus and the Father and the love we share with him and with one another clearest is the person who has the greatest "vested interest" in explaining it this way: Jesus himself. Paul, John, and the other NT writers make this point as well. But its clearest, most extended, and most detailed exposition comes in the words of Jesus himself. This is why I have chosen to make this portion of Scripture my focus in this talk.

As a result, it is clear that Jesus is *not* God's Son in merely the way that we are God's sons and daughters, because unlike us, he never *became* God's Son. He always was God's Son, beloved by his Father. Furthermore, he is *not* a man in merely the way that we are men and women. Although he *became* man, he did not *begin to exist* as a personal being when he became man, as we did. He *always was* God's beloved, unique Son, but in time he *became* human for our salvation. The Bible makes these truths clear in many ways, but

most significantly, in the words of Jesus himself, spoken to his best friends as he entered the darkest hour of his life prior to the crucifixion.

Notice further that John chapters 13-17 elucidate these central truths without relying on the phrase “Son of God” or the word “begotten” (or, for that matter, “Word” or “Wisdom”). None of these words or phrases on which the MIT discussions have focused occurs in these central chapters, and the two fundamental truths I have just elaborated do not depend on those words/phrases. Rather, in these chapters the phrase that is most central to Jesus’ articulation of his relationship to God is the phrase “my Father”, coupled with the descriptions of his eternal fellowship with his Father.

Therefore, I suggest that the theological starting point for discussions about how to translate divine familial language should not be the question of whether the word “begetting” or the phrase “Son of God” can have non-procreative meanings in certain biblical passages. Instead, the starting point needs to be the question of what words in a given receptor language can best convey both the similarity and the distinction between Jesus’ eternal filial relationship to God and our relationship to God. Even though it is true that Jesus’ “begetting” is associated with the resurrection in Acts 13:33 (cf. Psalm 2:7 and Rom 1:4) and could be understood as analogous to the coronation of an Israelite king, it is nevertheless true that Jesus has from all eternity had a personal relationship of warm fellowship, unity, and joy with his Father, because he says so directly in John 17:20-26. (In other words, the begetting/coronation of Jesus as royal Son at the resurrection is an act by which God shows that Jesus has always been the eternal Son.) Thus, he has always been a person and a Son, not just an aspect of God’s communication that became personalized in the man Jesus at the incarnation.

Similarly, even though in some contexts, “Son of God” may mean no more than “Messiah”, it is nevertheless true that the person to whom those statements refer, Jesus, has from all eternity been the Son of God, because he indicates this directly in these chapters of John’s Gospel and elsewhere. Likewise, even though the word “Logos” can refer to communication in general with no personal connotations, and even though “Logos” is used to describe the pre-incarnate One in John 1, it is nevertheless true that this pre-incarnate

Logos was personal and was in a relationship as Son to his Father before the incarnation (and indeed before creation), again because Jesus says so directly in John 17.

It is true that Jesus fulfills the role of Messianic King. It may be true that in some passages where “Son of God” occurs, this is all that the phrase means. But even if this is the case, it is not true that God’s Word or Wisdom (understood as an attribute or aspect of God’s character) became personified in the man Jesus, thus enabling this man to fulfill the role of Messianic King and “Divine Son”. Such an interpretation simply does not do justice to what Jesus says about himself in these chapters. An attribute or aspect of God’s character could not have fellowship with Another, and yet Jesus claims not only that he has shared love, joy, glory, and unity with the Father, but that he has done so from before the world was created. Indeed an interpretation of the Trinity in which the Word was an aspect of God that became personalized in the man Jesus would imply that the Trinity was not eternal at all, because God would not always have had a Son to love. Instead, Jesus has always, from all eternity past, been a person distinct from God the Father, possessing the same nature as the Father (just as human children possess the same nature as their parents), and existing in intimate fellowship with God the Father. True, he has not always borne the title “Christ/Messiah” (he was anointed for this role by becoming human, and this anointing—“messiahship”—was recognized publicly at his baptism), and one could even say that he has not always borne the name “Jesus” (this name was given to him at his human birth), but the person we call “Jesus” and “Christ” *has* always been a person and has always been *the same* person, the person who alone can call God “my Father.” Jesus’ act of calling God “my Father” points to the most fundamental truth of his identity, the truth on which the fundamental truth of our identity—our ability to call God “our Father”—is based. God is Father to Jesus in one way and to us in another way that is both derivative and distinct. The entire Christian understanding of salvation hinges on this similarity and distinction.

Moreover, if Jesus can call God “my Father” in a unique way, then Jesus is the Father’s “Son” in a way that is distinct from the way we are. He is “Son” in a unique way, an eternal way. In other words, if “Father” language serves to communicate Jesus’ under-

standing of his own *relationship* to God, then “Son” language likewise reinforces and communicates Jesus’ *identity* with respect to God. And if “Son” language describes Jesus’ identity, then the language of adopted sonship and daughtership also describes our fundamental identity as Christians. I believe we must allow both the uniqueness of Jesus’ eternal relationship as Son to his Father and the similarity between that relationship and our relationship to God to shine forth clearly in all Bible translations. What words we will use in a given receptor language to convey this similarity and distinction will depend, of course, on the words available in that language for describing father/son relationships. But it is worth asking, and discussing, whether there are likely to be any languages in which words describing other kinds of relationships than father/son relationships could possibly handle the theological weight that the Bible places on the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words for “father” and “son.” In any language, could any words taken from other semantic domains do justice to the interplay between “the Father,” “the Son,” and “the sons,” an interplay that lies at the heart of the Christian faith?

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE CHRONOLOGICAL APPROACHES?

By Colin Bearup¹

How effective is chronological story telling in Muslim evangelism? Has a serious evaluation been attempted? Many field workers have great faith in it. In the 1980s when I first went to work with Muslims in Africa, I learned that my senior colleagues had been accustomed to using the Creation to Christ materials of Gospel Recordings (now Global Recordings Network). Since then the methodologies developed by New Tribes Mission, originally intended for animist peoples, have been widely promoted. With the rise in various media presentations we now have a whole range of materials such as “All that the Prophets have spoken”, “The Way of Righteousness”, “the God Story”, and “the Hope”. The One Story is another recent manifestation.

These worthy initiatives have a rationale in common, namely that it is necessary to provide a context within which the relevance of the Gospel comes into focus. How can this be evaluated? It is no easy thing, for where there is success, how do you ascertain whether it was the material that made the difference? Where success is elusive, how do you ascertain whether it is the material that is failing? In parts of the world that are currently very fruitful all sorts of poor practice yields a harvest. So when there is a measurable success somewhere in a traditionally hard place, how do we know if it is the material that made the difference? At best we can speculate, because we do not know what would have happened if something else had been done. Nevertheless, I would like to question the rationale behind it.

The assumption that Muslims have to be taught foundational truth to appreciate the Gospel is an interesting one. Most of the examples that we have in the New Testament about the early presentation of

¹ A member of WEC international who worked in Chad for 25 years, primarily in Arabic. He wrote *Keys: Unlocking the Gospel for Muslims* (WEC Publications 2009 and soon to be an e-book c/o CanBooks).

the Gospel involve the good news being transmitted to the Jews and those Gentiles that associated with them, all people steeped in the narrative of scripture and looking for the fulfilment of God's promises. Relating the story, rehearsing the covenants and discussion of how the promises were to be fulfilled were part and parcel of their world. The Apostolic preaching to such people as recorded in Acts was rooted in this knowledge of the past. What happened when the apostles addressed those who were ignorant of salvation history? Did they feel the necessity of instructing them first in the Law and Prophets before they could broach the subject of the Messiah? Paul did not in Acts 14v8-18, nor in Acts 17v18-34, and maybe not for Felix either, Acts 24v25. Paul did not set out to re-educate them in order to make the Gospel accessible to them. He adapted his presentation instead. When writing to the churches in Rome, Galatia and Corinth, he draws heavily on Old Testament material that he expects them to recognise. In Thessalonians, Philippians, Ephesians and Colossians where the readership was overwhelming Gentile, he neither expected them to know the OT nor did he show any signs of attempting to teach it. In fact, the overall impression is that the apostles went over the history with those who already knew it but took a different approach with those who did not.

The vast majority of serious missionaries recognise that it is incumbent on the messenger to learn the language of the people rather than to expect the people to learn the language of the messenger in order to hear the Gospel. To do otherwise would be to restrict access to the Gospel and to ensure that it does not truly take root in the host community. We do not require them to learn English to be saved. In the same vein, my experience of talking with field workers from a variety of agencies suggests that over the last few decades there has been a growing recognition that the manner of Gospel presentation of the Gospel needs to be adapted to the culture. Oral societies transmit information quite differently to literate societies. Whereas I know of African churches planted in the early 20th Century that made learning to read a precondition to church membership, I now encounter missionaries who are striving to learn how to plant churches that function and thrive within an oral culture by harnessing the methods that already exist within oral societies. Such methodologies engage more authentically with their culture.

My colleagues who argue for chronological story telling argue that it is well adapted to both oral societies and to Muslims in particular. However, it could also be argued that it is an attempt to re-educate people so that the Gospel becomes accessible to them. It is argued that in the case of Muslims who have been shaped by such a strong anti-Gospel theology that a clean foundation is needed to prepare the way for the good news. I often find myself wondering how it is that we imagine that people will trust so much that they let us rewrite their worldview yet they will not let us proclaim salvation to them. If they are that receptive, why take the long way round? If they are not receptive, why should they believe our stories? Where we meet success, what makes us think that the methodology is the key? In my own area of ministry, the fruitfulness that has been seen has not come through the chronological story tellers, but through others.

The thing that has got me thinking about this is the place of chronology in Islam itself. The Qur'an makes frequent reference to people and events of the past, both historical and legendary, but it does not tell the story. To compile 'a history according to the Qur'an' you have to gather disparate verses. For example, the data on Adam is dispersed across seven *surahs* and the story of Noah over ten. The Qur'an does not attempt to present a single coherent narrative of God's dealing with men; rather it seeks to present one coherent message. Muhammad took examples from the past and wove them into his own message. The examples he drew on from the past were pressed into the service of that message. Muhammad alluded to events and person in history to enhance his own credibility, but he did not call on history itself to back him. The words he put into the mouths of the prophets were his own, see for example Noah (Q 7:59, 10:72) Abraham (Q 29:16-18) and Moses (Q 26:23-28). There is nothing comparable to the respect for history found in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Muhammad, as an oral messenger to a non-literate society, gave no serious encouragement to check documentary sources. When his message was later exposed to those with a knowledge of history, his followers accused them of having falsified the record.

It is by no means clear that Muhammad was aware of the order in which the prophets came, beyond Adam coming first and Jesus being

the most recent. We see for example the confusion about Mary being both sister of Aaron and mother of Jesus. Chronology was immensely important to Muhammad and his followers in one respect only, namely that he was the last prophet. This was and is taught in such a way that it not only disqualifies any who might come after him but also renders what came before him largely irrelevant.

The Qur'an is hard to interpret on its own. Islamic commentators draw on the many and contradictory accounts in the Hadith and on the varied pronouncements of other scholars. When Ibn Kathir was trying to piece together the story of Noah he commented "Muslim scholars hold contradicting opinion regarding how many people boarded the Ark with Noah"²¹. This includes, for example, whether Noah's wife was in the Ark or not.

The overwhelming tendency in the Qur'an is to present short pieces of narrative with lengthy discourse embedded in them that supports the core message. Genuine interest in the past is striking by its absence. In Muslims hands, history never contradicts the message of Islam. Mere history does not carry any weight.

Why is this of interest to anyone other than academics? I would suggest that Islam brings with it a high degree of indifference to history. The emphasis on Islam replacing all that went before discourages interest in historical sequence. To understand Paul it is essential to grasp that the promises given to Abraham preceded the Mosaic Law, but in Islam the sequence of pre-Islamic events is simply irrelevant. Chronology is not deemed an indicator of veracity. The truth as revealed through Muhammad trumps all other witnesses. Where Islam is successfully propagated, indigenous history is also assigned a lesser place.

If Islamic thought sets no great store by chronology, why should we expect teaching chronologically to have an impact? One answer would be that our task is to reach the people, not contend with Islam. The people are not simply local expressions of Islam. They are human beings over which Islam is but one influence. That is unarguable, but it does not in itself validate the chronological approach. It

² Stories of the Prophets p. 75, Imam Ibn Kathîr Ad-Damishqi (14th Century AD), English translation Rashad Ahmad Azami, pub. Darussalam, Riyadh, KSA.

also raises a serious question, especially where Islam is still spreading or consolidating itself, namely what enables it to do so? Islam grows strong among the peoples we want to reach but does so without making use of chronological teaching. There are other things that attract, not all of them unworthy.

Some of those reading this will probably assume that I see no merit whatever in Chronological Storying. That is not the case. One of its great strengths is the use of narrative. The recognition of the need to adopt oral methods has played a big role in the popularity of the method. In terms of basic message transmission, the telling of stories is essential. They are easier to listen to, easier to retain and easier to pass on. It is a lesson that Western missions have had to learn. But that does not settle the matter. Jesus frequently used stories, but they were not bible stories. Good communicators have always used stories. That does not necessarily mean that bible storying is to be recommended. I suspect that the effectiveness of the method is dependent to a large extent on the skills of the story-teller. A gifted communicator will not only tell it well but will know intuitively how to relate it to his audience. The method in that case is secondary. It has the advantage of being susceptible to being packaged and taught to a range of people but it does not necessarily enable those who are not gifted.

If anyone who espouses chronological story-telling as a method for evangelising Muslims has not already given up reading this in disgust, they are probably saying “But how can you not see the value of referencing the prophets?” The biblical characters named as prophets within Islamic thinking are indeed a precious area of common ground. It would be unforgivable to sideline names so intimately associated with the Gospel as Adam, Abraham and Moses in favour of unknown persons such as Peter and Paul. If Paul can use the notion of “an unknown god” as a platform, how much more should we reference these heroes of the faith?

So if I am all for the talking about the prophets and using narrative, why I am questioning chronological methods? It is because I believe that our faith in chronology is misplaced. In our own Judeo-Christian context, history is indispensable. In most cultures it is not, and in cultures influenced by Islam, history is particularly impotent. The reason why my fellow workers persevere through sequences of

stories that do not have impact is their need to satisfy the sense of obligation arising from their own culture, not from that of their listeners. Chronology becomes a straight jacket for them. The listeners do not need chronological integrity if history does not in itself carry authority. In Islam, it is authority that matters. This is true when Islam first takes root in a situation. It is also true when reformist movements within Islam seek to bring about a sea change within it. To communicate the Gospel to Muslim communities we need to refer to authority and citing key biblical characters has value precisely because it is a way of accessing authority.

I would argue that using narrative is indispensable, but we need to do so in a way that makes sense to our audience. Arranging narratives in chronological order is not compelling in itself. Telling a story that sets up the problem and then culminates in a solution is basic to story telling technique and evangelists have always used it. Spreading the telling of such a story over an extended period of time and expecting the same result is optimistic. Each story has to count and reinforce the one message. Stories need to be used to answer questions, not just programmatically. Furthermore, in addition to using narrative, we should back our key statements with reference to those heroes of faith we have in common. It is a matter of appealing to their authority. As Paul started with the unknown god and proclaimed what they did not know, so we can start with and expound the prophets that Muslims scarcely know but recognise as legitimate examples of faith.

CHURCH AND MOSQUE

A COMPARISON OF A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF *EKKLĒSIA* AND A MUSLIM VIEW OF THE MOSQUE AS PART OF THE *UMMAH* AND AN ANALYSIS OF THE MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THESE VIEWS

By Chris Flint¹

Introduction

“Every missionary path has to find the way between these two dangers: irrelevance and syncretism.”² So observed veteran missionary, Lesslie Newbigin, in 1994. Since the publication of John Travis’ “C1 to C6 spectrum” four years later,³ mission to Muslims has been increasingly polarised around Newbigin’s twin concerns.⁴

Travis’ spectrum contrasted “traditional” churches, and others which, to varying degrees, are culturally foreign to “the surrounding Muslim community,”⁵ with “Christ-centered Communities of ‘Messianic Muslims’”: “C5 believers [who] are viewed as Muslims by the Muslim community and refer to themselves as Muslims who follow Isa the Messiah,”⁶ yet “are our brothers and sisters in the Lord, even though they do not ‘change religions.’”⁷ Groups of “C5” Muslims seeking to follow Jesus whilst retaining their Islamic

¹ Chris Flint is an MTh student with ministry experience in Muslim-majority countries.

² Lesslie Newbigin, *A Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 67.

³ John Travis, “The C1 to C6 Spectrum: A Practical Tool for Defining Six Types of ‘Christ-centered Communities’ (‘C’) Found in the Muslim Context,” *EMQ* 34 (1998): 407-408. Note that “John Travis” is a pseudonym.

⁴ Matthew Sleeman charts the discussion from 1998-2010 in “The Origins, Development and Future of the C5 / Insider Movement Debate,” *SFM* 8 (2012): 498-566.

⁵ Travis, “The C1 to C6 Spectrum,” 407.

⁶ Travis, “The C1 to C6 Spectrum,” 408.

⁷ John Travis, “Must all Muslims Leave ‘Islam’ to Follow Jesus?,” *EMQ* 34 (1998): 411.

religious identity later came to be called “Insider Movements.”⁸ Herbert Hoefler is one of many missiologists today who, sensitive to the offense that terms like “Christian” and “church” can inadvertently cause in Islamic societies, advise that

[n]ew believers in these contexts do not identify themselves as Christians, but as members of their own societies and cultures. By clearly and publicly rejecting the name ‘Christian,’ they can dissociate themselves to some extent from ‘Christianity.’ By inventing a term rooted in their own society’s religious/cultural heritage, they can clearly proclaim who they truly are as followers of Jesus in their own society.⁹

Other missiologists, however, fear that such strategies promote syncretism. Phil Parshall responded to Travis’ article immediately, warning that “C5” falls “along the syncretism spectrum.”¹⁰ More recently, the contributors to *Chrislam: How Missionaries are Promoting an Islamized Gospel*,¹¹ have judged “Insider Movements” syncretistic.

Matthew Sleeman has observed that, curiously, despite more than a decade of missiological debate, one of Parshall’s initial assertions, that “[t]he mosque is pregnant with Islamic theology,”¹² “remains remarkably unexamined in any detail.”¹³ Redressing this oversight may help to take the discussion forward, especially as the two sides become increasingly entrenched.

⁸ Rebecca Lewis, “Promoting Movements to Christ within Natural Communities,” *IJFM* 24 (2007): 75, defines an ‘Insider Movement’ as “any movement to faith in Christ where a) the gospel flows through pre-existing communities and social networks, and where b) believing families, as valid expressions of the Body of Christ, remain inside their socioreligious communities, retaining their identity as members of that community while living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible.”

⁹ Herbert Hoefler, “What’s in a Name? The Baggage of Terminology in Contemporary Mission,” *IJFM* 25 (2008): 28.

¹⁰ Phil Parshall, “Danger! New Directions in Contextualization,” *EMQ* 34 (1998): 405.

¹¹ Joshua Lingel, Jeff Morton and Bill Nikides, eds., *Chrislam: How Missionaries are Promoting an Islamized Gospel* (Garden Grove, Calif.: i2 Ministries Publications, 2011).

¹² Parshall, “Danger!,” 409.

¹³ Sleeman, “The Origins, Development and Future of the C5 / Insider Movement Debate,” 541.

In this dissertation, I seek to lay some groundwork for successfully navigating between irrelevance and syncretism in Christian mission to Muslims. Drawing upon Paul Hiebert's process of "critical contextualization,"¹⁴ the mosque shall be "neither rejected nor accepted uncritically" but "explicitly examined with regard to its meanings and functions in the society, and then evaluated in the light of biblical norms."¹⁵

In chapter one I shall outline a Christian view of *ekklēsia*. It shall be seen that *ekklēsia* is a concept that includes both the local gathering and the "universal" church. Thus, my corresponding study in chapter two will consider a Muslim view of the mosque as part of the *ummah*,¹⁶ the worldwide Muslim community. In chapter three, I will then compare these *emic* analyses,¹⁷ and consider the missiological implications.

Abbreviations

1QH	<i>Hodayot</i> or <i>Thanksgiving Hymns</i> (Qumran)
1QS	<i>Serek Hayaḥad</i> or <i>Rule of the Community</i> (Qumran)
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i> (Josephus)
BDAG	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i>
DCH	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i>
ESV	English Standard Version
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
IDB	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
<i>J.W.</i>	<i>Jewish War</i> (Josephus)
<i>Life</i>	<i>The Life</i> (Josephus)

¹⁴ Paul G. Hiebert, "Critical Contextualization," *Missiology* 12 (1984): 287-296.

¹⁵ Hiebert, "Critical Contextualization," 290.

¹⁶ Foreign terms in the main text of this dissertation will be transliterated for the reader's convenience.

¹⁷ *Emic* analysis seeks to discover how people view themselves from within. This contrasts with *etic* analysis, in which the other is understood according to the categories of the outside observer.

LXX	Septuagint (the Greek OT)
MT	Masoretic Text (of the OT)
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
<i>Prob.</i>	<i>Quod Omnis Probus Liber Sit</i> (Philo)
<i>Spec. 2</i>	<i>De Specialibus Legibus II</i> (Philo)
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>Thuc.</i>	<i>The History of the Peloponnesian War</i> (Thucydides)

Chapter 1: A Christian View of *Ekklēsia*

Introduction

In this chapter I will develop the concept of *ekklēsia* that will then be assumed throughout the remainder of this dissertation. To ensure that this concept of *ekklēsia* represents a genuinely “Christian” position, I will derive it from an inductive study of the Biblical data, supported by the findings of wider Christian scholarship.¹⁸

To set this Biblical study in context, I shall begin with an investigation into how the word *ekklēsia* functioned in its first century context. Against this more general background, I will then consider how the New Testament authors employed the term *ekklēsia*, to discern the new shades of meaning that *ekklēsia* can adopt in specifically Christian contexts.¹⁹ These exegetical findings will then be augmented by other Biblical ecclesial imagery, and finally set within

¹⁸ Ecclesiology being such a contested field within contemporary Christian scholarship, my aim in this chapter is not to present *the* definitive Christian ecclesiology, but merely to set out *a* legitimate Christian position. For an introduction to some of differences in ecclesiology amongst Christians today, see, e.g., Brad Harper, *Exploring Ecclesiology: An Evangelical and Ecumenical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009), and *Evangelical Ecclesiology: Reality or Illusion?* (ed. J. G. Stackhouse; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

¹⁹ While supporting evidence may at times be drawn from early Christian documents outside the New Testament, a thorough study of *ekklēsia* in the apostolic fathers is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

wider Biblical and Systematic Theological contexts, to show that a justifiably *Christian* view of *ekklēsia* has been proposed.²⁰

Ekklēsia in its First Century Contexts

The word *ekklēsia* predates Christianity: it has been documented from as early as the fifth century B.C.,²¹ and was still used in common Greek parlance in the first century A.D.²² *Ekklēsia* also appears nearly 100 times in the Septuagint (hereafter, LXX). It is therefore necessary to consider how *ekklēsia* functioned both within Greco-Roman and Jewish contexts,²³ which are generally acknowledged as significant backgrounds against which the New Testament documents were written.²⁴

Ekklēsia in its Greco-Roman context

Etymologically, “*ekklēsia*” is derived from “*ek-kaleō*”, a call to summon an army to assemble,²⁵ and its primary lexical meaning is: an “assembly duly summoned”.²⁶ For example, for early Greek writers, *ekklēsia* denoted the assembly of the *polis* (the Greek city-state)

²⁰ This is based on the methodology advocated by Kuyper and G. Vos, who have argued that “biblical theology is a foundation for systematic theology in that it provides the rich fruit of exegetical study conducted with a proper relation to the original context and the development of divine revelation.” Roger Nicole, “The Relationship between Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology,” in *Evangelical Roots: a Tribute to Wilbur Smith* (ed. Kenneth S. Kantzer; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978), 193.

²¹ *Ekklēsia* is attested in the writings of Thucydides, Herodotus, Xenophon, Plato and Euripides. See Michael J. Vlach, *Has the Church Replaced Israel? A Theological Evaluation* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 207.

²² BDAG 303B.

²³ This distinction between “Greco-Roman” and “Jewish” contexts is made here only to simplify the lexical analysis, not to deny the genuine overlap between them, as embodied by, e.g., Josephus and Philo.

²⁴ D. A. Carson and D. J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2d ed.; Leicester: Apollos, 2005), 32, note that “[f]rom its inception, Christianity inevitably defined itself, at least in part, against the background of the various forms of Judaism prevalent in the first century.”

²⁵ Peter T. O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon* (WBC 44; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 57. F. J. A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia* (London: Macmillan and Col, 1898), 5, was thus right to insist that the etymology of *ekklēsia* gives no grounds in itself for reading into its biblical occurrences a reference to elect individuals “called out of the world or mankind.”

²⁶ Liddell and Scott 509A.

when it gathered to make political decisions.²⁷ Such *ekklēsiai* were not envisaged as ongoing entities or societies, but were rather regarded as existing only for the duration of the assembly.²⁸ *Ekklēsia* continued to be employed in the sense of a gathering in the first century A.D., as examples drawn from Philo and Josephus (when they were not themselves quoting from the LXX) demonstrate.²⁹

In the first century Greco-Roman context, then, the word *ekklēsia*, although not necessarily excluded from use in religious contexts,³⁰ was nevertheless a term without any inherent technical religious or cultic connotations.³¹

Ekklēsia in its Jewish context

In the LXX, *ekklēsia* always refers to gathered assemblies:³² for example, an army gathered for war,³³ or a hostile crowd.³⁴ In this sense, *ekklēsia* may also be used of religious convocations,³⁵ but again, only for as long as they are gathered.

It is instructive here to compare the semantic fields of *ekklēsia* and *sunagōgē*. On the one hand, there is clear semantic overlap between the two words, for when a gathering is in view, either word

²⁷ E.g., Thucydides, *Thuc.* 1:87, 139; 6:8; 8:69.

²⁸ O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 57. By contrast, the *boulē*, which was responsible to summon the *ekklēsia*, existed even when not in session.

²⁹ See, e.g., Philo, *Spec.* 2:44; *Prob.* 138. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 58, notes that "Philo employs the term [*ekklēsia*] some thirty times, all but five of which are in quotations from the LXX. These five appear in a classical Greek sense." Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980), 35, adds that "Josephus also uses the word frequently – eighteen times in LXX quotations and forty-eight times in all, always of a gathering." See, e.g., Josephus, *Ant.* 4.309 (religious gathering); *Life*, 268 (political gathering); *J.W.* 1.654, 666 (spontaneous assemblies).

³⁰ Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 34, observes that, similarly, in classical Greek, in those few examples where the word *ekklēsia* is used of a religious fellowship "the sense of 'meeting' or 'assembly' predominates."

³¹ Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 34.

³² O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 57-8.

³³ E.g. 1 Samuel 17:47; 2 Chronicles 28:14.

³⁴ E.g. Psalms 26 [LXX 25]:5; Sirach 26:5.

³⁵ E.g. 1 Kings 8:22; Nehemiah 8:2.

may be used interchangeably to translate the Hebrew *qāhāl*.³⁶ On the other hand, however, *ekklēsia* and *sunagōgē* are not completely synonymous: when a non-gathered people is in view, *qāhāl* may still be rendered by *sunagōgē*,³⁷ but never by *ekklēsia*. This indicates that for the LXX translators, *ekklēsia* was a word consciously reserved for actual gatherings,³⁸ a conclusion underscored by the observation that Hebrew word *‘ēdāh*, which can be used technically to speak of Israel as a nation even when not assembled,³⁹ is consistently translated by *sunagōgē*, and never by *ekklēsia*.

This is not to suggest, however, that *ekklēsia* gains no semantic shading at all from its use in the LXX. Indeed, *ekklēsia*'s first appearance in the LXX, at Deuteronomy 4:10, suggests otherwise. This verse looks back to the day when the people assembled (*ekklēsiazō*, the cognate verb of *ekklēsia*) at Sinai to hear God speaking the Ten Commandments, and characterises that occasion as “the day of the assembly” (*tē hēmera tēs ekklēsias*). This Greek phrase is twice repeated in Deuteronomy,⁴⁰ both times seemingly in a semi-technical sense to refer to the events of Exodus 19-20. Comparison with the underlying Hebrew text confirms that this phrase carried special significance for the LXX translators; for whereas its two subsequent appearances both translate the Hebrew phrase *b^eyōm haqāhāl*, its initial occurrence, in Deuteronomy 4:10, was introduced in the absence of any Hebrew equivalent.⁴¹

³⁶ E.g. In the chiasmic structure of Psalms 40:9-10 [LXX 39:10-11], *qāhāl* occurs twice in synonymous parallelism. The LXX translates the first instance of *qāhāl* with *ekklēsia*, and the second with *sunagōgē*. The cognate verbs also share this overlap: compare Leviticus 8:3-4, where *ekklēsiazō* is the verb used to describe the convening of a *sunagōgē*, with Numbers 1:18, where *sunagō* is employed.

³⁷ E.g. Genesis 28:3; Exodus 12:6.

³⁸ *Contra* Kevin Giles, *What on Earth is the Church? A Biblical and Theological Inquiry* (London: SPCK, 1995), 236, who, on the basis of a detailed word study of *qāhāl*, draws the unwarranted conclusion that “a clear distinction between the meaning of *ekklēsia* and *sunagōgē* in the LXX is not possible.”

³⁹ E.g. Joshua 9:21, 27.

⁴⁰ Deuteronomy 9:10 (*hēmera ekklēsias*) and 18:16 (*tē hēmera tēs ekklēsias*).

⁴¹ Cf. Deuteronomy 4:10, 9:10 and 18:16 in the Masoretic Text (hereafter, MT) and LXX. By choosing Deuteronomy 4:10, a verse in which considerable emphasis is placed on gathering in order to listen to the voice of God, as the verse to introduce their gloss, *tē hēmera tēs ekklēsias*, the LXX translators frame the *ekklēsia* of

Summary

In the Greek-speaking world of the first century A.D., the word *ekklēsia* was familiar both to Gentiles, particularly in political contexts, and to Jews, from the LXX.⁴² For both groups, *ekklēsia* was used to denote a variety of assemblies. In Jewish circles, however, the word *ekklēsia* could also at times allude specifically to the national gathering at Sinai in Exodus 19-20.

The New Testament, written within this milieu, recognises both of these uses of *ekklēsia*. In Acts 19, a Greek government official is quoted using *ekklēsia* according to its normal secular sense to describe both a political gathering (a “lawful assembly,” *ennomos ekklēsia*),⁴³ and an unruly mob.⁴⁴ Conversely, when in Acts 7 *ekklēsia* is found on the lips of Stephen, a Hellenistic Jew, its religious connotations are clearly in view.⁴⁵

Ekklēsia in New Testament Word study

The first-century background study has already shown that, in several instances at least, the word *ekklēsia* can occur in the New Testament without any distinctively “Christian” connotations.⁴⁶ This observation, however, does not necessarily preclude *ekklēsia* from displaying new polysemy elsewhere in the New Testament. To investigate this, a number of verses will now be examined to discern

Exodus 19-20 as an assembly convened specifically for the purpose of hearing God’s words.

⁴² O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 58, observes it is still a “disputed point” amongst scholars “[w]hether the Christian use of *ekklēsia* was first adopted from Jewish or Gentile usage.”

⁴³ Acts 19:39. Cf. 1 Corinthians 6:4 where *ekklēsia* may possibly also be taken in this secular sense.

⁴⁴ Acts 19:32, 41. This group is also described as a *dēmos* (19:30, 33) and an *ochlos* (19:33, 35).

⁴⁵ “[Moses] was in the congregation [*ekklēsia*] in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us” (Acts 7:38, ESV).

⁴⁶ As Giles, *What on Earth is the Church?*, 83, observes, “New Testament writers frequently use words that have rich Christian meaning non-theologically. This means we should no more derive Luke’s Christian meaning of the term *ekklēsia* from Acts 19 than we should derive the Christian meaning of *sōdzō* / save from his usage of this term in Acts 27.20 and 31, where it refers to rescue from drowning.”

how *ekklēsia* functions in a variety of immediate literary contexts.⁴⁷ An exhaustive study of the word *ekklēsia* in all its 114 New Testament appearances being beyond the scope of this dissertation, I will limit the analysis here only to as many examples of *ekklēsia* as will be necessary to illustrate the distinct semantic categories into which all the specifically “Christian” New Testament uses of *ekklēsia* naturally fall.⁴⁸

A local gathering of Christians

In 1 Corinthians 11:18, Paul tells the Corinthians that “when you come together as a church (*sunerchomenōn humōn en ekklēsia*), I hear that there are divisions among you.”⁴⁹ This is an example of the New Testament using the word *ekklēsia* according to its general secular sense of “an assembly duly summoned,” designating, in this instance, an assembly of Corinthian Christians. In this passage, then, *ekklēsia* maintains the same primary sense as used in the wider first century context, signifying a gathered Christian *assembly*.⁵⁰

Yet it is helpful to distinguish here between *denoted* and *connoted* meanings, and observe that this assembly, like others in the New Testament, is implicitly a *Christian* assembly. This nuancing of *ekklēsia* can be at times both conscious and significant. For example, Paul addressed a local gathering of Thessalonian Christians as “the church of the Thessalonians (*tē ekklēsia Thessalonikeōn*) in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”⁵¹ By means of the prepositional

⁴⁷ This method safeguards against “illegitimate totality transfer” and the “prescriptive fallacy.” See Craig Blomberg, *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 139-40.

⁴⁸ Being interested now in the specifically *Christian* meaning/s of *ekklēsia*, I exclude here the examples from Acts 7 and 19 which, as seen above, reflect the usage of *ekklēsia* in the wider first century context.

⁴⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:18, ESV. In this context, the “coming together” is in order to share the Lord’s Supper.

⁵⁰ Cf. 1 Corinthians 14:19, 28, 33-35, where Paul uses the term *ekklēsia* in this same sense when discussing decorous conduct in the context of local Christian gatherings.

⁵¹ 1 Thessalonians 1:1, ESV. Peter O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” in *The Church in the Bible and the World* (ed. D. A. Carson; Exeter: Paternoster Press 1987), 91, helpfully notes that “[f]rom the closing remarks of the letter it is clear Paul has in mind an actual gathering of the Thessalonian Christians. So he requests that his letter ‘be read to all the brethren’ and that they ‘greet all brethren with a holy kiss’ (1 Thes. 5:26f.).” *Contra* Giles, *What on Earth*

phrase “in God the Father,” Paul carefully distinguishes this particular *ekklēsia* from a political gathering, and the phrase “the Lord Jesus Christ” further differentiates the *ekklēsia* from a Jewish synagogue meeting;⁵² a distinction also made in Revelation.⁵³ Similarly, Paul addresses his Corinthian epistles to “the church of God (*tē ekklēsia tou theou*),”⁵⁴ a descriptor used elsewhere in 1 Corinthians to distinguish Christians from both Jews and Greeks.⁵⁵

One way, then, in which first century Christians could use the word *ekklēsia*, was in a non-technical sense, to denote a local gathering of Christians. Yet even in these instances, they were quick to invest this secular word with distinctively Christian connotations.⁵⁶

is the Church?, 7, who finds in this verse a New Testament precedent for predicating *ekklēsia* of “[a]ll Christians in a city or location.”

⁵² R. Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Historic Setting* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1980), 36. While James 2:2 suggests that *sunagōgē* could on occasion refer to Christian gatherings, normally the New Testament uses *sunagōgē* to denote non-Christian Jewish gatherings. Similar observations may hold true of the apostolic fathers: contrast, e.g., Justin, *Dialogue* 134:3 with Hermas, *Mandate* 11:9, 13, 14. For further details on the use of *sunagōgē*, see W. Schrange, “*sunagōgē*,” *TDNT*, 7:806-8.

⁵³ Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 distinguish the churches in Smyrna and Philadelphia from the “synagogue of Satan,” a phrase in which Giles, *What on Earth is the Church?*, 175, sees an implicit contrast to “the church of God.”

⁵⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 2 Corinthians 1:1, ESV.

⁵⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:32: “Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God” (ESV). Similarly, 1 Thessalonians 2:14: “For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews” (ESV). Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 37, apparently construes the construction “the church of God” as a genitive of production, or maybe a genitive of source, in the sense that the church is “not merely a human association, a gathering of like-minded individuals for a religious purpose, but a divinely-created affair.”

⁵⁶ This rapid investiture of new semantic content is particularly apparent if 1 Thessalonians is indeed the earliest of the Pauline epistles. However, even if 2 Thessalonians were written first, the same ascription is given to the church in this epistle, too (see 2 Thessalonians 1:1). For an overview of the issues involved in dating these epistles, see Carson and Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 543-44.

Christians who regularly attend a local gathering

James advises sick Christians to “call for the elders of the church.”⁵⁷ Here, *ekklēsia* refers not to a gathered assembly, but rather to an organised group of Christians with appointed leaders.⁵⁸ O’Brien suggests Acts 20:17 as another example, describing such a use of *ekklēsia* as a “natural extension or linguistic development of group words”.⁵⁹

In the New Testament, these local gatherings often take place in homes. Prisca and Aquila,⁶⁰ Nympha,⁶¹ Archippus,⁶² and possibly Lydia,⁶³ Mary,⁶⁴ and Titius Justus,⁶⁵ all host house churches.⁶⁶ Archaeological evidence suggests that house sizes would have constrained such meetings to no more than fifty people at a time;⁶⁷ for larger gatherings, bigger venues were used. So, for example, the early Jerusalem believers broke bread from house to house, but “the whole church” gathered by their thousands in the temple precincts.⁶⁸

⁵⁷ James 5:14, ESV.

⁵⁸ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 160.

⁵⁹ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 92.

⁶⁰ Romans 16:3-5 and 1 Corinthians 16:19.

⁶¹ Colossians 4:15.

⁶² Philemon 2.

⁶³ Acts 16:15, 40.

⁶⁴ Acts 12:12-17.

⁶⁵ Acts 18:7-11.

⁶⁶ On house churches in Acts, see e.g. J. H. Elliott, “Temple versus Household in Luke-Acts,” in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (ed. Jerome H. Neyrey; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 211-40; and Bradley Blue, “Acts and the House Church,” in *Graeco-Roman Setting* (vol. 2 of *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*; ed. David W. J. Gill and Conrad H. Gempf; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994), 119-222.

⁶⁷ Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth: Texts and Archaeology* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983), 156.

⁶⁸ Cf. Acts 2:46; 5:11-12, 42. Luke reports 3,000 believers in Acts 2:41, rising to 5,000 in Acts 4:4. Such numbers could easily have gathered in the temple courts, which spanned around 35 acres and could accommodate as many as 75,000 people. For the temple’s dimensions, see Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Jesus and the Twelve* (vol. 1 of *Early Christian Mission*; Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 419.

The church in Corinth apparently followed a similar pattern, gathering periodically as “the whole church” in larger, semi-public areas.⁶⁹

This distinctive New Testament extension of the singular *ekklēsia* to denote a group of believers outside their regular time and place of assembly is not, however, extended further to describe a collection of Christians who never assemble as one.⁷⁰ Such may instead be described using the plural *ekklēsiai*:⁷¹ for example, “the churches of Judea,”⁷² “the churches of Galatia,”⁷³ “the churches of Asia,”⁷⁴ “the churches of Macedonia,”⁷⁵ “all the churches of the Gentiles,”⁷⁶ and “all the churches of Christ.”⁷⁷ This indicates that a dynamic nuance remains intrinsic to the semantics of “*ekklēsia*”; a nuance apparently recognised by Paul: for example, when greeting “the church of God that is at Corinth,” Paul immediately distinguishes this *ekklēsia* from “all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia.”⁷⁸ If Banks is correct, *ekklēsia*’s intrinsic “gathering” connotations also explain why Paul did not address the Roman Christians as a “church”.⁷⁹ in Rome,

⁶⁹ 1 Corinthians 14:23. Larger meetings of “the whole church” were hosted by Gaius: cf. Romans 16:23 and the discussion in J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16* (WBC 38B; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1988), 910-11.

⁷⁰ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 92, observes that “[a]lthough we often speak of a group of congregations collectively as ‘the church’ (i.e. of a denomination) neither Paul nor the rest of the New Testament uses *ekklēsia* in this collective way. Also the notion of a unified provincial or national church is foreign to New Testament teaching.”

⁷¹ The New Testament’s frequent use of *ekklēsiai* contrasts with the LXX, where the plural form appears only once (Psalms 26 [LXX 25]:12). The phrase “*part of the church* [in a particular place]” never occurs.

⁷² “*tais ekklēsiais tēs Ioudaias*” (Galatians 1:22; cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:14).

⁷³ “*tais ekklēsiais tēs Galatias*” (1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:2).

⁷⁴ “*hai ekklēsiai tēs Asias*” (1 Corinthians 16:19).

⁷⁵ “*tais ekklēsiais tēs Makedonias*” (2 Corinthians 8:1).

⁷⁶ “*pasai hai ekklēsiai tōn ethnōn*” (Romans 16:4).

⁷⁷ “*hai ekklēsiai pasai tou Christou*” (Romans 16:16).

⁷⁸ 2 Corinthians 1:1, ESV. Again, *Contra Giles, What on Earth is the Church?*, 7, Paul is not here simply addressing “[a]ll Christians in a city or location,” but rather envisages an actual gathering of Corinthian believers, as evidenced, once again, by Paul’s concluding exhortation to “[g]reet one another with a holy kiss” (2 Corinthians 13:12, ESV).

⁷⁹ Paul addressed Romans to “all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints” (Romans 1:7, ESV). Graham Cole, “The Doctrine of the Church: Towards Conceptual Clarification” in *Church, Worship and the Local Congregation*

“[t]he ‘whole church’ never assembled in one place as it did in Corinth.”⁸⁰

A second way, then, in which first century Christians could use the word *ekklēsia*, was in this new technical sense, denoting specifically a group of Christians who regularly attend a particular local gathering.⁸¹ Yet, since *ekklēsia*’s dynamic connotations of “gathering,” though not now primary, are nevertheless not entirely lost from sight,⁸² the word *ekklēsia* is nowhere in the New Testament predicated of a provincial or national church.⁸³ Apparent counterexamples, on inspection, prove unconvincing. When Paul speaks of having persecuted “the church,”⁸⁴ he is referring specifically to the church in Jerusalem.⁸⁵ Luke’s description of this Sauline persecution aptly reflects a church which, as seen above, met both in smaller house groups and also collectively in the temple.⁸⁶ The reference in Acts 9:31 to “the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria” may be a manuscript error,⁸⁷ or, more likely, a literary device

(ed. B.G. Webb; Homebush West: Lancer Books, 1987), 10, suggests a similar explanation for the absence of the word *ekklēsia* in 1 Peter, which was written to the “elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Peter 1:1, ESV).

⁸⁰ Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 40. Banks suggests such a gathering would have been impractical given Rome’s size, and notes that in the second century A.D., combined meetings of all Roman Christians were unknown. Cf. *Martyrdom of Justin Martyr* (ANF 1:305-306).

⁸¹ Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 36.

⁸² *Contra* Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 116, who holds that “[w]hether or not those called ‘the church’ in a particular location ever ‘assembled’ together in their entirety is of no consequence.”

⁸³ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 92.

⁸⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13; Philippians 3:6.

⁸⁵ Cf. Acts 9:13, 21; 26:10. Also Peter O’Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 378.

⁸⁶ Acts 8:1-3 describes how Saul persecuted “the church in Jerusalem” by “entering house after house.” *Contra* Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 84-85, 114, who doubts that these believers gathered as one. Acts 20:20 might suggest a similar pattern of public and private meetings of the church in Ephesus. Cf. Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 617, n. 235.

⁸⁷ B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 322-23, notes that some early manuscripts attest here to the plural *ekklēsiai*. Metzger argues, however, that the

by which Luke ties together the narrative section, begun at Acts 8:1, tracing what became of the scattered Jerusalem church.⁸⁸ Finally, some passages apparently use *ekklēsia* terminology in a distinct “universal” sense; these verses shall be considered separately below.

The heavenly gathering of Christians

Hebrews 12:18-24 portrays Old Testament Israel gathered at Mount Sinai as typological of the New Testament Hebrew believers, who “have come to Mount Zion.”⁸⁹ Whereas the former came “to something that can be touched,”⁹⁰ the latter are presented as participating in “the heavenly Jerusalem” amidst the “assembly of the firstborn (*ekklēsia prōtotokōn*).”⁹¹ This phrase, as shall now be shown, illustrates another distinctive New Testament use of the word *ekklēsia*.

The membership of the “heavenly” *ekklēsia* may be deduced from the immediate literary context. Positively, the “firstborn” terminology signifies those whom God has redeemed.⁹² This group are fur-

singular *ekklēsia* is most likely to be original, this *lectio difficilior* being later emended to the more conventional plural form to harmonise with, e.g., Acts 15:41 and 16:5.

⁸⁸ Matthew Sleeman further notes that the mention of “Galilee” in Acts 9:31 is not necessarily inconsistent with this interpretation, given that Acts 9:1 has already located some of “the Lord’s disciples” as far north as Damascus (personal communication, 9 January 2012).

⁸⁹ As Peter O’Brien, *The Letter to the Hebrews* (PNTC; Nottingham: Apollos, 2010), 485, n. 210, observes, “[t]he typological parallels between Israel at Sinai and believers gathered at the heavenly Zion are clear.” On typology in general see, e.g. D. S. Dockery, *Biblical Interpretation Then and Now: Contemporary Hermeneutics in the Light of the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 33, who explains that “[t]ypological exegesis ... is based on the conviction that certain events in the history of Israel prefigure a future time when God’s purposes will be revealed in their fullness.”

⁹⁰ See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 605, for a discussion of the textual variant, “a mountain that can be touched.” Either way there is a contrast between the tangible Mount Sinai and the intangible Mount Zion.

⁹¹ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 156, notes that Qumran manuscripts have been discovered which also envisage the faithful on earth as sharing in the worship of heaven, e.g. 1QS 11:7-8; 1QH 3:21-23.

⁹² Whether from slavery in Egypt (e.g. Exodus 4:22-23) or from exile in Babylon (e.g. Jeremiah 31:9-11).

ther described as “enrolled in heaven,”⁹³ a biblical motif demarcating those appointed for salvation.⁹⁴ Negatively, however, the “assembly of the firstborn” is distinguished not only from “innumerable angels in festal gathering,”⁹⁵ but also from “the spirits of the righteous made perfect,”⁹⁶ best understood as Old Covenant believers.⁹⁷ This heavenly gathering, then, in which New Covenant believers participate even now,⁹⁸ should be understood as consisting of all Christians, whether living or dead.

The same heavenly reality is assumed throughout the Pauline epistles. Christians, living and dead, are “in Christ,”⁹⁹ united to him though faith.¹⁰⁰ Having died and risen with Christ,¹⁰¹ Christians are, in a sense, in heaven with Jesus even now, albeit invisibly until he returns,¹⁰² for God has “seated us with him in the heavenly places in

⁹³ Hebrews 12:23, ESV. The concept of being “enrolled in heaven” extends here the typological schema between Jerusalem / Zion and its “heavenly” counterpart (cf. Isaiah 4:3 and Psalms 87 [LXX 86]:5-6).

⁹⁴ Cf. Exodus 32:32-33; Psalms 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27. The passive voice, “enrolled in heaven,” is an example of a “divine passive.” Cf. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 437.

⁹⁵ Hebrews 12:22, ESV. That angels were similarly present at Sinai is assumed both in the Biblical writings (e.g. Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalms 68:17 [LXX 67:18]; Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19) and also, observes Clowney, “The Biblical Theology of the Church,” in *The Church in the Bible and the World* (ed. D. A. Carson; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1987), 18, in the Qumran writings (e.g. 1QS 2:25; 1QH 3:21; 11:11).

⁹⁶ Hebrews 12:23, ESV.

⁹⁷ So F. F. Bruce. *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT; rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 359-360. Cf. the similar expressions in 1 Enoch 102:4; 103:3-4 and the theology of Hebrews 10:14; 11:39-40.

⁹⁸ W. J. Dumbrell, “The Spirits of Just Men made Perfect,” *EQ* 48 (1976), 159, observes that: “[t]he paradox which is so characteristic of Hebrews is that these pilgrims in their conversion have come to that city (Heb. 12:22) for which they still seek (Heb. 13:14).”

⁹⁹ 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

¹⁰⁰ Galatians 3:26-27.

¹⁰¹ Romans 6:4.

¹⁰² Colossians 3:1-4. Cf. Matt Jenson and David Wilhite, *The Church: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2010), 15, who with reference to this text speak of “our bi-locality in the church.”

Christ Jesus,¹⁰³ participating in “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”¹⁰⁴ Christians are therefore to pursue priorities on earth consistent with their identity in heaven,¹⁰⁵ which determines and demands their primary allegiance above every other institution, whether political,¹⁰⁶ or religious.¹⁰⁷

The third distinctive way, then, in which the New Testament uses the word *ekklēsia*, is to speak of the gathering in heaven in which all Christians, living and dead, are even now participating.

All Christians

Sometimes in the New Testament the word *ekklēsia* bears a “universal” sense denoting “all Christians,” even when the heavenly gathering is not specifically in view. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10:32 Paul warns the Corinthian Christians to “[g]ive no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God.”¹⁰⁸ That “*tē ekklēsia tou theou*” is not here restricted merely to the local Corinthian congregation is clear both from its coordination with “Jews” and “Greeks,”¹⁰⁹ and also from the immediate literary context, as Paul goes on to root this command in his wider appeal to the Corinthians to imitate him as he

¹⁰³ Ephesians 2:6, ESV.

¹⁰⁴ Ephesians 1:3, ESV. Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 46, suggests the “heavenly church” is also specifically in view in Ephesians 3:10, and more broadly throughout the rest of the epistle.

¹⁰⁵ Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:1-2.

¹⁰⁶ Philippians 3:19-20, cf. Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 45: “In a highly significant passage [Paul] contrasts those who have their ‘minds set on earthly things’ with those whose ‘commonwealth is in heaven’, his language probably echoing the privilege of citizenship conferred upon the whole Roman colony of Philippi.”

¹⁰⁷ Galatians 4:21-31 argues that the true heirs of the Abrahamic covenant are not the Judaizers, associated with “Mount Sinai” and “the present Jerusalem,” but the Christians, allied with “the Jerusalem above.” See Chris Flint, “God’s Blessing to Ishmael with Special Reference to Islam,” *SFM* 7 (2011): 23-33.

¹⁰⁸ 1 Corinthians 10:32, ESV.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 32; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 403. Also R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 426-27.

seeks “to please everyone in everything I do.”¹¹⁰ Another “universal” use of *ekklēsia* comes two chapters later, where God is said to have appointed apostles “in the church”:¹¹¹ apostolic ministry is foundational for every Christian congregation.¹¹²

Some have observed an apparent incongruity in *ekklēsia* bearing this technical “universal” meaning, for in such cases, what has become of the sense of “gathering” which is always present, even if at times only implicitly, when *ekklēsia* occurs elsewhere in the New Testament?¹¹³ However, as Colossians and Ephesians reveal, this apparent absence of dynamic connotations is only superficial, for when *ekklēsia* is used in a “universal” sense in these epistles,¹¹⁴ the heavenly gathering of all Christians is presupposed. For example, while the universal *ekklēsia* in Colossians is an earthly reality that can suffer,¹¹⁵ O’Brien observes that, when *ekklēsia* is first mentioned in 1:18, “the context of Col. 1:15-20 which is moving on a heavenly plane suggests it is not an earthly phenomenon that is being spoken of in v. 18, but a supernatural and heavenly one.”¹¹⁶ Similarly in Ephesians, the concept of *ekklēsia* is first introduced, in 1:20-23, as “the body” of the ascended Christ;¹¹⁷ yet it would surely be incongruous to envisage Christ’s concern for his *ekklēsia*, described in 5:29, as focused exclusively upon the heavenly gathering.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 10:33-11:1, cf. 4:16. Cf. Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 497-498.

¹¹¹ 1 Corinthians 12:28.

¹¹² Acts 1:21-22; Ephesians 2:20. I here take “apostles” in the technical sense of those first century men whom Jesus personally appointed as his witnesses, including Matthias and Paul (cf. Acts 20:24; 26:16).

¹¹³ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 93, observes that “it is difficult to envisage how the world-wide church could assemble.”

¹¹⁴ BDAG 304A cites Colossians 1:18, 24 and Ephesians 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-24, 27, 29 and 32 as examples of “the global community of Christians, (*universal*) church.”

¹¹⁵ Colossians 1:24.

¹¹⁶ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 93.

¹¹⁷ The “body of Christ” metaphor will be considered in more detail in the next section below.

¹¹⁸ Arguably, other occurrences of *ekklēsia* in Ephesians (e.g. 5:23, 25) are also most naturally taken in a technical sense referring to “all Christians,” albeit with “heavenly” connotations in the near background.

The final way, then, in which the New Testament uses the word *ekklēsia*, is in a technical “universal” sense to denote “all Christians.”¹¹⁹ Linguistically, *ekklēsia* terminology is again being extended to a group of believers outside their usual time and place of assembly, though now, those believers are the special case of those gathered in heaven.¹²⁰

Summary

Our study has highlighted four different ways in which the word *ekklēsia* in the New Testament can be coloured with distinctively “Christian” semantic shading. Semantically, these four categories further reduce to two.

On the one hand, *ekklēsia* may be predicated of groups of Christians *envisaged as assembled*, either in “a local gathering of Christians” or in “the heavenly gathering of Christians.” In such cases, *ekklēsia*’s first century secular meaning of “an assembly duly summoned” remains its primary sense, though now shaded with the significant connotation that those assembling are distinctly Christian.

On the other hand, *ekklēsia* may be predicated of groups of Christians *envisaged as not assembled*. Here, a natural linguistic extension relegates *ekklēsia*’s original sense of “gathering” to the background, with the focus falling primarily on the members of the group, whether assembled as an earthly gathering, in which case *ekklēsia* denotes “Christians who regularly attend a local gathering,” or as the heavenly gathering, but viewed from their earthly perspective, in which case *ekklēsia* bears a “universal” sense denoting “all Christians.”

On the assumption that these patterns of usage reflect a deeper underlying theological reality, the New Testament would seem to envisage Christian *ekklēsiai* as Christians gathered around a locus

¹¹⁹ Not to be confused with a “generic” sense that denotes “Christians” in general, but not in their entirety.

¹²⁰ Ephesians 3:13 might also point in this direction, depending on how the verse is translated (e.g. NIV: “from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name”). Cf. Matthew Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 181, who discerns a notion of “heavenly ‘catholicism’” (emphasis original) implicit in the narration of Acts 8:9-25, by which the authority of the Jerusalem leaders is relativised.

which may be either in heaven or on earth. The nature of these *ekklēsiai*, and the unifying concept behind *ekklēsiai* with such qualitatively different loci, remains to be seen, and shall now be considered in the light of some of the imagery by which New Testament ecclesiology is developed.

Ecclesial Imagery in the New Testament

Since concepts are not words, but rather form the criteria by which appropriate words are selected to describe them,¹²¹ the concept of *ekklēsia* may be in view in New Testament passages that a word study alone would overlook.¹²² A fully-orbed Christian ecclesiology must therefore be sensitive to, and enriched by, the various ecclesial images the New Testament employs.¹²³ An exhaustive study of New Testament ecclesial imagery being beyond the scope of this dissertation,¹²⁴ we will briefly consider here just two of the main New Testament metaphors commonly recognised as images of the Christian *ekklēsia*: “the body of Christ,”¹²⁵ and “the temple.”¹²⁶

It must be remembered that, unlike the word *ekklēsia*, which is a descriptive term for an identifiable object, metaphors function analogically.¹²⁷ Thus, to guard against unduly importing too much from these two metaphors, they will not be *a priori* presumed coterminous with the concept of *ekklēsia*.¹²⁸ Rather, primary consideration will be given to how these metaphors function in their immedi-

¹²¹ See J. Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (3d ed.; London: Routledge, 1990), 38.

¹²² Cole, “The Doctrine of the Church,” 9.

¹²³ David G. Peterson, “The ‘Locus’ of the Church: Heaven or Earth?” *Churchman* 112 (1998), 213, insists: “It is certainly inadequate to formulate a doctrine of the church using merely a word-study approach and focusing on *ekklēsia* to the detriment of other terminology. Apart from the use of well-known metaphors for the New Testament people of God, such as ‘body’ and ‘temple’, there are passages that deal with the life and character of ‘the church’ without using any of the familiar terms.”

¹²⁴ Paul Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961), and his later article, “Church, Idea of,” *IDB* 1:607-617 enumerate over 100 phrases in the New Testament that are conceptually related to *ekklēsia*.

¹²⁵ E.g. Colossians 1:18; 1:24; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23.

¹²⁶ E.g. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-21.

¹²⁷ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 92.

¹²⁸ Cf. O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 98.

ate literary contexts,¹²⁹ so as to identify the entity the metaphor is describing, and the point being made about it.¹³⁰

The body of Christ

Chronologically, the “body” metaphor first appears in 1 Corinthians 10:17. In its immediate context,¹³¹ Paul is addressing the Corinthian congregation, and underscoring the incompatibility of their participation in both the Lord’s Supper and in idolatrous worship.¹³² Here, the metaphor functions to underscore the unity of the local congregation, for those who share the “one bread” also share together as “one body” in the benefits that flow from Christ’s sacrificial death in his physical body.¹³³ Partakers of the Lord’s Table, being partners with Christ, must not provoke his jealousy by also partnering with demons.¹³⁴

The “body” metaphor is developed more extensively two chapters later, as Paul confronts the elitist attitude of the pneumatics.¹³⁵ In 1 Corinthians 12:27, Paul writes: “Now you are the body of Christ (*humeis de este sōma Christou*) and individually members of it.”¹³⁶ Here once again, the local Corinthian congregation is in view,¹³⁷ and is metaphorically described as a “body”:¹³⁸ in particular, the “body of Christ.”¹³⁹ In view of the extended description that immediately pre-

¹²⁹ For a discussion of the hermeneutical issues involved, see Edmund P. Clowney, “Interpreting the Biblical Models of the Church: A Hermeneutical Deepening of Ecclesiology,” in *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: Text and Context* (ed. D. A. Carson; Exeter: Paternoster, 1984), 64-109.

¹³⁰ Cf. O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 105.

¹³¹ 1 Corinthians 10:14-22.

¹³² Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 103.

¹³³ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 106.

¹³⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:20-22.

¹³⁵ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 103.

¹³⁶ 1 Corinthians 12:27, ESV.

¹³⁷ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 106.

¹³⁸ The Greek grammar tells against *identifying* the Corinthian congregation with Christ’s physical body: *sōma* is anarthrous, and so, being a post-verbal predicate nominative, is here best taken qualitatively. Cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 263.

¹³⁹ C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (2d ed.; London: A. and C. Black, 1971), 292, identifies this construction as a genitive of possession rather than a genitive of identity.

cedes in verses 14-26, the metaphor here teaches that the local *ekklēsia* is no mere aggregation of individuals,¹⁴⁰ but rather a harmonious diversity of believers who suffer and rejoice together,¹⁴¹ and have been arranged precisely as God has chosen.¹⁴²

Yet in the verses immediately before and after this section,¹⁴³ the same principle and “body” metaphor are applied more widely to the *universal church*.¹⁴⁴ A clue as to why this image may be applied both locally and universally is given in verse 12, where this epistolary section begins: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ (*houtōs kai ho Christos*).”¹⁴⁵ Unity and plurality in the Christian *ekklēsia*, whether local or universal, is somehow rooted in the person of Christ.¹⁴⁶ “For,” the apostle goes on to explain, “in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body [*sc.* the body of Christ] – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one

¹⁴⁰ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 105.

¹⁴¹ 1 Corinthians 12:26. Nb. The category of corporate identity affirmed here, and elsewhere in the Bible, sits uneasily with the tendencies toward nominalism that underlie much of western philosophy today.

¹⁴² 1 Corinthians 12:18.

¹⁴³ 1 Corinthians 12:13, 28-30.

¹⁴⁴ R. Y. K. Fung, “Some Pauline Pictures of the Church,” *EQ* 53 (1981), 93.

¹⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:12, ESV.

¹⁴⁶ Various explanations of this have been suggested. D. B. Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), 269, notes that “Jesus’ personal identity cannot be defined in terms of mere individuality, since it is perichoretically constituted by his unity with the Father and the Spirit ... it is also constituted by his union with the church.” Michael S. Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press: 2008), 188, advances a “covenantal ecclesiology” in which “[t]he vassal is so identified with the suzerain that a threat or injury to the one is a threat or injury to the other. Yet this is not due to a biological unity of a single subject consisting of suzerain and vassal, but is based on the responsibility that the suzerain has freely assumed as the head of the imperial body.” For Sleeman, *Geography*, 168, the ascended Jesus is in a place “where all places are.” Biblically, one is reminded of the “Servant of the LORD” who, in Isaiah 49:3, is addressed both in the singular and the plural. Cf. John E. Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55* (London: T. & T. Clark International, 2005), 369 and J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), 309.

Spirit.”¹⁴⁷ Implicit within the “body of Christ” metaphor, then, is the reality of spiritual union with Christ for various types of believers.

When the metaphor is next employed, the source of the unity is made explicit by the phrase “in Christ”:¹⁴⁸ “we, though many, are one body in Christ (*en Christō*), and individually members one of another.”¹⁴⁹ By their common incorporation in Christ,¹⁵⁰ Christians, with their varied gifts,¹⁵¹ are also united to one another.¹⁵²

In the later epistles of Ephesians and Colossians, “body” imagery again teaches unity in diversity. In Ephesians, the unity of Jew and Gentile believers as “members of the same body” is a “mystery” revealed through the gospel,¹⁵³ Christ having “reconcile[d] us both to God in one body through the cross”;¹⁵⁴ similarly, the Colossians are exhorted to “let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body.”¹⁵⁵ Yet here, the particular application to harmony between Christians is just one facet of the more comprehensive theme that the “body” metaphor teaches in these two epistles: that God intends believers to grow to maturity not only as individuals,¹⁵⁶ but corporately as well.¹⁵⁷

Ecclesial growth depends on Christ, who, distinctively in Colossians and Ephesians, is described as “the head of the body, the

¹⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 12:13, ESV.

¹⁴⁸ Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 65.

¹⁴⁹ Romans 12:5, ESV.

¹⁵⁰ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 107, suggests that the Christians in Rome did not gather together, in which case Romans 12:5 is an example of the “body of Christ” metaphor being predicated of a broader group of Christians than a local congregation. In the context of Romans, the phrase “the many (*hoi polloi*)” (cf. Romans 5:15, 19) might suggest the universal church is in view.

¹⁵¹ Romans 12:6.

¹⁵² Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 103.

¹⁵³ Ephesians 3:6, ESV.

¹⁵⁴ Ephesians 2:16, ESV.

¹⁵⁵ Colossians 3:15, ESV.

¹⁵⁶ E.g. Colossians 1:28.

¹⁵⁷ E.g. Ephesians 4:11-16; 5:25-27; Colossians 1:21-22; 4:12. Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 71, notes that God has greater purposes for the *ekklēsia* than it merely being a means to individual ends, such as growth in personal holiness (without denying that participation in the *ekklēsia* is indeed highly significant in facilitating this.)

church.”¹⁵⁸ On the one hand, the head is the body’s life-source. Christ is the saviour, not only of individuals, but of the church,¹⁵⁹ which he “nourishes and cherishes ... because we are members of his body.”¹⁶⁰ He is the “the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”¹⁶¹ It is Christ who gives various gifts to those in the body for building up the body of Christ.¹⁶² On the other hand, the head is the body’s goal, to which it is increasingly conformed,¹⁶³ even while, in another sense, “the church, which is his body,” may already be described as “the fullness of him who fills all in all”:¹⁶⁴ that is, Lincoln explains, “[a]s Christ is filled with God (Col 1:19; 2.9), so his body is filled with Christ.”¹⁶⁵

In summary, “the body of Christ” is a metaphor in the New Testament which, though never applied to isolated individuals,¹⁶⁶ is regularly predicated of Christian *ekklēsiai*, be they universal or local,¹⁶⁷ earthly, and perhaps also heavenly,¹⁶⁸ such that at times it can be difficult to be certain precisely which referent is intended.¹⁶⁹ The metaphor’s comprehensive application indicates that theologically, ecclesiology is rooted in Christology: each Christian *ekklēsia* is “the body of Christ,” because, by the Spirit, Jesus is present with those

¹⁵⁸ Colossians 1:18, ESV; cf. Ephesians 1:22-23.

¹⁵⁹ Ephesians 5:23.

¹⁶⁰ Ephesians 5:29-30, ESV.

¹⁶¹ Colossians 2:19, ESV.

¹⁶² Ephesians 4:4-16.

¹⁶³ Ephesians 4:15.

¹⁶⁴ Ephesians 1:22-23, ESV.

¹⁶⁵ A. T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* (WBC 42; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1990), 76.

¹⁶⁶ Alan M. Stibbs, *The Church Universal and Local* (London: Church Book Room Press, 1946), 43.

¹⁶⁷ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 135.

¹⁶⁸ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 107.

¹⁶⁹ For example, while Peterson, “The ‘Locus’ of the Church,” 210, considers the *ekklēsia* described in Ephesians 4:1-16 to be “localized and congregational because of the intimacy of relationships envisaged,” Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 139, finds in the same passage “the church in its universal dimension,” and O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 112, thinks Paul is here envisioning a “heavenly entity.”

who gather,¹⁷⁰ empowering the *ekklēsiai* to realise ever more demonstrably the blessings that are already theirs in Christ, their head.¹⁷¹

The temple

1 Corinthians is also the first epistle to use the “temple” metaphor of the *ekklēsia*. Confronting disunity amongst the Corinthian believers,¹⁷² Paul warns: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple (*naos theou este*) and that God’s Spirit dwells in you (*en humin*)? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are (*este humeis*) that temple.”¹⁷³ Through emphatic repetition of second-person plural verbs and pronouns (*este ... humin ... este humeis*), Paul vividly attests that the multiple Corinthians are the singular *naos theou*:¹⁷⁴ the inner sanctuary in which God himself dwells;¹⁷⁵ a holy temple which may by no means be defiled by internal schism.¹⁷⁶ In these verses, then, the “temple” metaphor emphasises the holiness of the local congregation,¹⁷⁷ which has been sanctified by the Spirit of God who dwells within it: and to this God, Christian disunity is abhorrent.

Its second explicit application to Christians as a group comes in 2 Corinthians 6:16.¹⁷⁸ Concluding a series of antitheses begun in verse 14,¹⁷⁹ warning the Corinthians against compromising with unbelievers,¹⁸⁰ Paul concludes with a rhetorical question: “What agreement

¹⁷⁰ Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 63.

¹⁷¹ Consider, e.g., the interplay of the indicative and imperative in Colossians 3:15 and Ephesians 4:3-4.

¹⁷² R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple – the Church in the New Testament* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 101.

¹⁷³ 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, ESV.

¹⁷⁴ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 105.

¹⁷⁵ Significantly, Paul here does not use the word *hieron*, which designated the temple precincts as well as the inner sanctuary, but the more particular *naos*, drawing a parallel specifically with the holy of holies. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 146.

¹⁷⁶ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 100.

¹⁷⁷ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 99.

¹⁷⁸ The temple metaphor is also used in 1 Corinthians 6:19, but of individual believers, not an *ekklēsia*.

¹⁷⁹ The antitheses are: righteousness / lawlessness; light / darkness; Christ / Belial; believer / unbeliever.

¹⁸⁰ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 100.

has the temple of God (*naos theou*) with idols? For we are the temple of the living God (*hēmeis gar naos theou esmen zōntos*).¹⁸¹ Once again, repetition emphasises the holiness of the Corinthians as God's temple.¹⁸² Yet here, this holiness is to be demonstrated, not so much by preserving genuine internal harmony, as by eschewing false unity with outsiders.¹⁸³ Significantly here, the grammatical formulation, if original,¹⁸⁴ also includes Paul with the Corinthians, perhaps envisaging the "temple" metaphor as applicable to Christians universally.¹⁸⁵

Finally, the temple metaphor reappears in Ephesians 2:21-22, concluding Paul's argument that through Christ both Jews and Gentiles have access in the Spirit to the Father.¹⁸⁶ Here, a mixing of architectural and biological metaphors gives the "temple" image of the church a new dynamism:¹⁸⁷ Christ is the cornerstone "in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit."¹⁸⁸ These two verses describe, first, all Christians world-wide,¹⁸⁹ portrayed as a heavenly temple,¹⁹⁰ before then turning the focus to the specific local earthly congregation to

¹⁸¹ 2 Corinthians 6:16, ESV.

¹⁸² McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 94.

¹⁸³ Cf. G. K. Beale, "The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5-7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (ed. G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 236, who comments of this verse: "because the church is the temple of God, it should not live in peaceful coexistence with idolators [*sic.*] and their idols."

¹⁸⁴ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 512, considers *hēmeis ... esmen* more likely to be original than *humeis ... este*, which has poorer attestation and could be a later harmonisation influenced by 1 Corinthians 3:16.

¹⁸⁵ O'Brien, "The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity," 101.

¹⁸⁶ Ephesians 2:11-22.

¹⁸⁷ Paul Minear, *Images of the Church*, 253, surmises that "this profuse mixing of metaphors reflects not logical confusion but theological vitality."

¹⁸⁸ Ephesians 2:21-22, ESV.

¹⁸⁹ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 137.

¹⁹⁰ O'Brien, "The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity," 101.

which Paul is writing,¹⁹¹ which, significantly, is described in a distinctly parallel fashion, both structurally,¹⁹² and verbally.¹⁹³

In sum, the New Testament uses the “temple” metaphor to powerful rhetorical effect to underscore the importance of preserving a distinctive Christian unity in the *ekklēsia*, whether positively, by “being built up together” across racial or party lines, or negatively, by shunning compromise with unbelievers. Again, the metaphor roots ecclesiology in Christology: each *ekklēsia* is “the temple of God,” “in” Christ the cornerstone from which it grows, and upon whom it is built up by the indwelling Spirit who has sanctified it.¹⁹⁴ Once more, the theological reality behind the metaphor enables its application to Christian *ekklēsiai* both local and universal,¹⁹⁵ earthly, and perhaps also heavenly:¹⁹⁶ a diversity encapsulated in the parallelism of Ephesians 2:21-22.

Summary

The “body of Christ” and “temple” metaphors illuminate the common theological reality behind every Christian *ekklēsia*, whether lo-

¹⁹¹ If, as is possible, the original manuscript of Ephesians did not specify “Ephesus” as the epistle’s destination (see Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 532), it becomes yet more apparent that the description in Ephesians 2:22 is equally applicable to every local Christian congregation.

¹⁹² Both verses are framed by dative prepositional phrases (“*en hō ... en kuriō*” / “*en hō ... en pneumatī*”), and within these are parallel *eis* + accusative constructions (“*eis naon*” / “*eis katoikētērion*”).

¹⁹³ Both verses contain present passive verbal forms preceded by the *sun* - prefix (“*sunarmologoumenē*” / “*sunoikodomeisthe*”), which underscore the unity of the gatherings in their action; moreover, “*katoikētērion*,” the word chosen in verse 22 to denote a local *ekklēsia*, is often used in the LXX to describe God’s heavenly dwelling (e.g. 1 Kings 8:39, 43; 2 Chronicles 30:27; Psalms 33 [LXX 32]:14), apparently the “*naos*” which was in view in verse 21.

¹⁹⁴ A similar temple motif also appears in 1 Peter 2:4-5. These verses, however, were excluded at this stage of our study as here we have been considering how ecclesial images function strictly within their immediate literary context; in this context, it is uncertain that the specific entity Peter intends to describe with his temple metaphor is the *ekklēsia*: a word which never occurs in this epistle, addressed to “those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1:1, ESV).

¹⁹⁵ Giles, *What on Earth Is the Church?*, 135.

¹⁹⁶ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 107.

cal or universal, earthly or heavenly:197 union of its members with Christ through the Spirit, and hence also union with one another. The “body of Christ” and “temple” metaphors are used to encourage local *ekklēsiai* to grow corporately in Christlikeness, though with slightly different emphases: the “body” metaphor emphasises that ecclesial unity in Christ is diverse, whether in the gifts, race or vocation of its members; the “temple” metaphor that ecclesial unity in Christ is holy, a distinctiveness which must never be compromised, whether by fragmentation or by adulteration.198

Ekklēsia in its Biblical theological context

Having identified several themes associated with the New Testament concept of Christian *ekklēsiai*, we will now trace how these themes unfold along the Bible’s salvation-historical axis, in order to correlate our findings with the wider Biblical metanarrative.

As noted above, the Old Testament can use the word *ekklēsia* semi-technically to denote the gathering in Exodus 19-20. When so characterised, several elements of the Sinai *ekklēsia* are particularly emphasised. Those gathered heard the LORD speaking to them directly from a dark cloud on a fiery mountain,¹⁹⁹ where heaven and earth seemed to meet:²⁰⁰ an experience so awesome that the people desired an intermediary; thenceforth, God would address them only indirectly through Moses,²⁰¹ or, in the future, through a “prophet like Moses” who would directly receive and fully convey God’s com-

¹⁹⁷ O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 115-16.

¹⁹⁸ Nb. The general analytical distinction drawn here between the primary emphases of these two metaphors is not intended to deny the possibility that that both themes might interact within the same metaphor; indeed, in 1 Corinthians 10, discussed above, the “body” image seems to stress more the Corinthians’ *holiness* than their *diversity*.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Deuteronomy 4:10-11 (LXX); 9:10; 18:16.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Exodus 19:20 and 20:22, apparently synthesised in Nehemiah 9:13, “You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven” (ESV). The Sinaitic motifs of heavenly fire and angels recur in Deuteronomy 4:11; 33:2; and Psalms 68:17.

²⁰¹ Deuteronomy 18:16-19; cf. Exodus 20:19.

mands.²⁰² This prophet not yet having arisen by the end of Deuteronomy,²⁰³ provision was made for the priests to assemble (*ekklēsiaō*) the people every seven years to hear the law read “at the place that [the LORD] will choose.”²⁰⁴

After the conquest of Canaan, God chose Jerusalem as the site for his temple.²⁰⁵ This temple was built, as promised,²⁰⁶ by the son of David.²⁰⁷ At its dedication God’s glorious presence was manifested in a dark cloud and with fire,²⁰⁸ and Solomon pondered how the God of heaven could dwell on earth.²⁰⁹ During Solomon’s reign, the whole assembly (*pasa hē ekklēsia*) from Israel and Judah gathered to worship at the Jerusalem temple.²¹⁰

These united gatherings ceased under Jeroboam and his idolatry,²¹¹ and God eventually punished his people’s persistent sin with exile and the destruction of the temple.²¹² Nevertheless, the prophets foresaw a new temple,²¹³ more glorious even than Solomon’s,²¹⁴ to which not only the Jewish tribes would gather, but also, so evident would it be that God was with them,²¹⁵ all the nations.²¹⁶ These high

²⁰² Deuteronomy 18:15, 18. Cf. Acts 7:37-38, where Stephen also closely associates the “*ekklēsia* in the desert” motif with the promise of a forthcoming “prophet like Moses.”

²⁰³ Deuteronomy 34:10.

²⁰⁴ Deuteronomy 31:9-13, ESV; cf. Hebrews 7:11. References to “the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there,” looking forward to the fixed Solomonic temple, also occur in Deuteronomy 12:5, 11; 16:2; 26:2. Interestingly, the word “tabernacle” never occurs in Deuteronomy.

²⁰⁵ Psalms 68:16; 76:2; 78:68-69; 87:1-2; 132:13-14.

²⁰⁶ 2 Samuel 7:12-16; cf. 1 Kings 8:24; 1 Chronicles 17:11-14; 28:6, 10.

²⁰⁷ 1 Kings 6; cf. 2 Chronicles 6:4-11.

²⁰⁸ 1 Kings 8:10-13; cf. 2 Chronicles 6:1-2; 7:1-3.

²⁰⁹ 1 Kings 8:27-45; cf. 2 Chronicles 6:18-39.

²¹⁰ 2 Chronicles 30:25-26.

²¹¹ 1 Kings 12:26-30. Cf. Exodus 32, where idolatry of a golden calf provoked God’s wrath at Sinai.

²¹² 2 Kings 17:7-23; 25:8-17; cf. 2 Chronicles 36:18-19; Jeremiah 52:12-23.

²¹³ E.g. Ezekiel 40-48.

²¹⁴ Haggai 2:9.

²¹⁵ Zechariah 8:20-23; Isaiah 45:14.

²¹⁶ E.g. Isaiah 2:2-4; 25:6-8; 66:18-21. Cf. Psalms 87, where people from nations formerly hostile to Israel are described as having their names written in Zion.

prophetic hopes were not realised under the anticlimactic return from exile and temple-rebuilding under Ezra and Nehemiah.²¹⁷ Intertestamental writers still anticipated their fulfilment.²¹⁸

This fulfilment came in Jesus, the long-awaited prophet like Moses,²¹⁹ who heard directly from his Father and made everything known to his friends.²²⁰ Given this identity, Jesus superseded the Old Testament “day of the *ekklēsia*,” and consequently in his earthly ministry reconfigured its associated categories with reference to himself.

Teaching with a personal authority surpassing that of the law-teachers,²²¹ Jesus chose twelve Jewish apostles,²²² and described those who gathered around him to hear his teaching as his “brothers,” the *ekklēsia*.²²³ Membership in Jesus’ *ekklēsia*, which Jesus himself will build, belongs to those who, by divine revelation, share Peter’s confession of Christ’s divine Sonship.²²⁴

²¹⁷ Ezra 3:12; Haggai 2:3.

²¹⁸ 1 Enoch 90:28-29; Jubilees 1:29. The Qumran community saw these hopes fulfilled in themselves: see Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 16-46, and McKelvey, *The New Temple*, 46-53.

²¹⁹ Acts 3:22-26.

²²⁰ John 15:15. Jesus being the prophet whom Moses foretold is a particularly significant motif in John’s gospel, with further allusions to this theme occurring in John 1:45; 5:46; 6:14; 7:40; 17:7-8.

²²¹ Matthew 7:28-29; Mark 1:27; Luke 4:32. Cf. Douglas J. Moo, “The Law of Christ as the Fulfillment of the Law of Moses: A Modified Lutheran View,” in *Five Views on Law and Gospel* (ed. Wayne G. Strickland; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 350, who argues that “Jesus’ radical insistence on what *he* says as binding on his followers” belies an “independence from both Jewish tradition and from the Mosaic law itself” (emphasis original).

²²² Mark 3:14, paralleling the twelve tribes of Israel. Cf. William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 133.

²²³ Mark 3:34-35 with Hebrews 2:12. Cf. O’Brien, *Hebrews*, 486.

²²⁴ Matthew 16:16-18, cf. D. B. Knox, “The Church,” in *Selected Works Volume II* (ed. Kirsten Birkett; Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2003), 20. Clowney, “The Biblical Theology of the Church,” 16, observes that “the thought of the congregation being established upon the confession of the truth is also prominent in the Dead Sea writings... [as] is the figure of the rock, and of the building established upon it.” For a recent online discussion, see Jonathan Leeman, “What Are the Keys of the Kingdom?” n.p. [cited 1 March 2012]. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/blog/what-are-keys-kingdom>.

Being the focal point of his *ekklēsia*, Jesus necessarily also redefined temple categories.²²⁵ The Jerusalem temple was his “Father’s house,”²²⁶ which he had authority to cleanse,²²⁷ but this greater son of David built an even greater temple,²²⁸ resurrecting his own body.²²⁹ By his sacrificial death, Jesus prepared a place for his disciples in his “Father’s house”:²³⁰ an *ekklēsia* redeemed, like the firstborn at Sinai, by blood sacrifice.²³¹

Post-ascension, Jesus sent the Spirit so the Father and Son might be with all who love and obey Jesus, even those not seeing him in the flesh.²³² The Spirit completed Jesus’ “prophet-like-Moses” ministry to the apostles,²³³ that through believing their message subsequent generations might be united to God and each other.²³⁴

Today, worship in spirit and truth is not tied to specific earthly places,²³⁵ but to the ascended Christ,²³⁶ who is present wherever two

²²⁵ Nicholas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (London: SPCK, 2010), 190, concludes that “[t]he early Christian language about Jesus the temple was a way of speaking that drew together all that Israel hoped and longed for, all that God’s people – so went the firm belief – would one day see.”

²²⁶ Luke 2:49; John 2:16.

²²⁷ Matthew 21:12-27; Mark 12:15-33; Luke 19:45-20:8; John 2:13-22. Perrin, *Jesus the Temple*, 92, sees Jesus’ temple cleansing as one of the “essential aspects of Jesus’ self-understanding as the temple.”

²²⁸ Matthew 12:6, 42.

²²⁹ John 2:19-22.

²³⁰ John 14:2, cf. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (PNTC; Nottingham: Apollos, 1991), 489.

²³¹ Acts 20:28, cf. Exodus 4:22-23; 12:12-30.

²³² John 14:22-26. Cf. Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 36: “What is accomplished in the ascension is a decisive opening up not only of the Father’s house but of human being, which through the Spirit now realizes its true nature in a ‘perichoretic’ and communal form of existence – that is, in the *co*-existence of the faithful with Jesus and his Father” (emphasis original).

²³³ John 16:12-15 presents the Spirit in “prophet like Moses” terms, hearing directly from the Father and then revealing everything he hears to the apostles.

²³⁴ John 17:20-21.

²³⁵ John 4:21-24, cf. Clowney, “The Biblical Theology of the Church,” 27.

²³⁶ Cf. Acts 7:55-56, 59-60. Matthew Sleeman notes that the presence of a man in heaven post-ascension, and the presence of the Spirit on earth post-Pentecost, demands that salvation-geographical considerations be integrated into any fully-orbed Biblical theology (personal communication, 8 September 2011).

or three gather in his name.²³⁷ Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled as the nations come to the Christian *ekklēsia*.²³⁸ However, eschatological expectations are not yet completely fulfilled: though believers have already come to the heavenly Jerusalem,²³⁹ they nevertheless still await it.²⁴⁰ Christians, who belong to “the Jerusalem above,” must still be warned against returning to “the present Jerusalem.”²⁴¹ Unlike the *ekklēsia* at Sinai, Christians should rather accept God’s word,²⁴² and give thanks for the kingdom they are receiving.²⁴³

Christians await the promised eschatological assembly: a multinational people,²⁴⁴ who will reign on earth.²⁴⁵ In that new creation, portrayed as the holy of holies,²⁴⁶ heaven and earth unite as the new Jerusalem descends and God dwells with his people forever.²⁴⁷

²³⁷ Matthew 18:20.

²³⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:25, cf. Zechariah 8:20-23 and Isaiah 45:14. So R. B. Hays, “The Conversion of the Imagination: Scripture and Eschatology in 1 Corinthians,” *NTS* 45 (1999): 391-93.

²³⁹ Hebrews 12:22; note especially the perfect tense-form *proselēluthate*. O’Brien, *Hebrews*, 482 n. 200.

²⁴⁰ Hebrews 13:14. O’Brien, *Hebrews*, 488.

²⁴¹ Galatians 4:21-31. Cf. Flint, “God’s Blessing to Ishmael,” 28-33.

²⁴² Hebrews 12:25-27, cf. 2:1-3.

²⁴³ Hebrews 12:28-29.

²⁴⁴ Revelation 7:9.

²⁴⁵ Revelation 5:10. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 666-67 thinks that the future tense *basileusousin* is the preferred reading here. Thus, if, following Cole, “The Doctrine of the Church,” 8-9, the Christian *ekklēsia* is indeed less ultimate in God’s purposes than the more inclusive concept of “the people of God,” then in view of the differentiation observed above in Hebrews 12 between Old and New Covenant believers in the heavenly Jerusalem, and Revelation 6:9-11, where the number of martyrs in heaven is still incomplete, the heavenly *ekklēsia*, and hence the “universal *ekklēsia*,” is best understood as including all Christians who have lived up to this point in time, but not yet those of God’s elect still to be born again.

²⁴⁶ Revelation 21. G. K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough, “Revelation,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 1150-56, argue that Revelation’s final vision portrays the new creation “as equivalent to the new Jerusalem, the eschatological cubic temple, and to end-time Eden, the eternal home of God’s people.”

²⁴⁷ Revelation 21:1-4.

Ekklēsia in its Systematic theological context

Synthesising the preceding exegetical and biblical-theological considerations, a Christian *ekklēsia* may be defined as a group that gathers, or is gathered, around Christ. In its systematic-theological context, this conception of *ekklēsia* is in harmony with the distinctively Christian doctrines of the Trinity, salvation, and eschatology.

Post-ascension, Christ is bodily in heaven, spatially removed from Christians who are on earth.²⁴⁸ How, then, is it possible to gather around Christ in this era of salvation history?²⁴⁹ The answer is that, post-Pentecost, the Spirit has been poured out on earth to unite to Christ all those who hear and believe the apostolic gospel.²⁵⁰ Christian *ekklēsiai*, then, are not only the creations of Christ, by means of his sacrificial death,²⁵¹ but also creations of his Spirit,²⁵² by whom every Christian is now gathered around Jesus in the heavenly *ekklēsia*,²⁵³ and through whom Christ is present in the midst of those who gather in his name to hear his word in local earthly *ekklēsiai*.²⁵⁴

The eschatological age, however, has as yet only been inaugurated, not consummated.²⁵⁵ Until the ultimate union of heaven and earth, Christian *ekklēsiai*, like Christian individuals, remain *simul*

²⁴⁸ Acts 1:9-11. Cf. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* IV.xxvii.27.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 156: “How are we to have a Christ who is both here – in many places – and in heaven at the same time? And if he really is here, how can we lay hold of him with confidence?”

²⁵⁰ Acts 2; Ephesians 3:16-18. Cf. Calvin, *Inst.* IV.xxvii.12.

²⁵¹ Acts 20:28.

²⁵² As Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 150-151, summarises, “the church has its being from the Spirit, who allows it to participate in and with the person of Jesus Christ, and hence in a kingdom which does not derive from this world but *transforms it*” (emphasis original).

²⁵³ Hebrews 12:22-24. O’Brien, *Hebrews*, 488, suggests the grammar of Hebrews 12:24 gives the name “Jesus” prominence here; this literary device perhaps draws attention to his enduring, particular humanity.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1995), 31: “Not only do we come to the assembly where our risen Lord is; he comes by his Spirit to the assembly where we are.”

²⁵⁵ See, e.g., Alan J. Thompson, *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke’s Account of God’s Unfolding Plan* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2011), 39-47, 67.

justus et peccator.²⁵⁶ by virtue of its righteous head, the “body of Christ” is holy in God’s sight,²⁵⁷ yet this body is distinct from, and ever more closely conforming to, its head,²⁵⁸ as its various members,²⁵⁹ maturing under God’s word,²⁶⁰ exercise in loving unity the diverse gifts given them by Trinitarian grace.²⁶¹

Conclusion

The concept of *ekklēsia* described in this chapter was first distinguished from secular uses of *ekklēsia* in the first century Greco-Roman context. Its specific Christian contours were then discerned through a New Testament word study, and developed through analysis of two major ecclesial images: “the body of Christ,” and “the temple.” These findings, when viewed through the lenses of Biblical and Systematic theology, were found to be consistent both with a Christocentric reading of salvation-history,²⁶² and with doctrines that have historically been of central significance in Christian theology. The primary source for this chapter was the Bible, in dialogue with mainstream Christian scholarship.

In conclusion, therefore, the ecclesiological perspective set out in this chapter may legitimately claim to be a *Christian* concept of *ekklēsia*.

²⁵⁶ “Simultaneously righteous and a sinner”: a key reformation formulation. See especially Martin Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians* (trans. Erasmus Middleton; London: Harrison Trust, 1850), 130, who on [Galatians 3:6](#) comments, *inter alia*: “a Christian man is both righteous and a sinner, holy and profane, an enemy of God, and yet a child of God.”

²⁵⁷ 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 5:25-27.

²⁵⁸ Ephesians 4:15-16.

²⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.

²⁶⁰ Ephesians 4:11-14. As noted above, the motif of gathering to hear the word of God in assembly may be traced through the Bible from the Israelite *ekklēsia* at Sinai, where God’s word was mediated by Moses, through Old Testament gatherings, where the priests interpreted the law, to the New Testament: before the ascension, those gathered around Jesus heard him speak God’s word to them directly; post-Pentecost, the Spirit illuminates the Scriptures as pastors preach to Christians gathered in local *ekklēsiai*.

²⁶¹ 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. Cf. Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 586-588.

²⁶² See Luke 24:25-27, 44-48; John 5:39-40. Cf. Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991).

Chapter 2: A Muslim View of the Mosque as Part of the *Umma*

Introduction

In this chapter I will outline a Muslim view of the relationship between the mosque and the ummah.²⁶³ To arrive at a genuinely Islamic perspective, I will primarily base my research on the Qur'an and accepted hadith,²⁶⁴ in the context of wider Muslim scholarship, and in dialogue with two Muslim scholars,²⁶⁵ trained at al-Azhar University.²⁶⁶

I shall first consider the ummah. As with my above approach to ekklēsia, I shall begin by considering how the term functioned in its wider historico-cultural context, against which I will then be able to observe continuity and discontinuity in its Qur'anic usage and so identify the new shades of meaning ummah gained during Islam's formative days. I will then briefly note some historical developments of the ummah concept in Islamic history.

²⁶³ Perhaps owing to the strong Muslim emphasis on Arabic being the supreme language for conveying the teachings of Islam, a standard method for transliterating Arabic terms such as *ummah* and *ka'bah* into English does not yet seem to have evolved. Thus, rather than attempting a harmonisation, I shall preserve their original and varied authorial transliterations when these, and other, terms appear in quotations.

²⁶⁴ While every Muslim accepts the authority of the Qur'an, Islamic perspectives on the traditions (*hadith*) are more mixed. In this research, the *hadith* I cite will be drawn almost exclusively from the collection of Al-Bukhârî. Sunni Muslims, who account for 80-90% of the worldwide Islamic community, deem Al-Bukhârî's collection of traditions *sahih* ("reliable") and thus authoritative. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhârî: Arabic-English* (9 vols.; Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997), 1:19, explains: "Many religious scholars of Islâm tried to find fault in the great remarkable collection – *Sahih Al-Bukhârî*, but without success. It is for this reason, they unanimously agreed that the most authentic book after the Book of Allâh is *Sahih Al-Bukhârî*."

²⁶⁵ The Grand Mufti of Britain, Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy, and Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Hussaini, both received and commented on drafts of this chapter as it was being written.

²⁶⁶ Founded in A.D. 970, al-Azhar university in Egypt is the world's oldest continuously functioning university. Ameer Ali, "The State, the Mosque, and the Masses: Discordant Discourses," *DA* 22 (2009): 44, observes that "the *fatwas* or rulings on religious matters that emanate from al-Azhar are considered authoritative in all *Sunni* Muslim countries."

Next, I shall examine the mosque, here giving consideration also to the significance of mosque architecture and design, and structuring my approach primarily around the two paradigms which have historically shaped the Muslim view of the mosque: “the mosque as a temple,” based on the ka‘bah at Mecca; and “the mosque as a meeting-house,” based Muhammad’s house at Medina.

Finally, I will outline how the mosque, under each of these two paradigms, relates to the ummah.

The Ummah

Etymologically, the Arabic noun *ummah* probably derives from the Aramaic *umetha* or the Hebrew *ummâ*,²⁶⁷ meaning “people, tribe.”²⁶⁸ The Arabic term predates Islam, and is extant in the Christian poet al-Nābigha,²⁶⁹ who asked the question: “Can a man belonging to an *ummah* err if he is pious?”²⁷⁰ In this instance, *ummah* may perhaps denote more specifically a religious community.

Against this background, the meanings of the word *ummah* in the Qur’an, and in Islamic history, shall now be considered.

²⁶⁷ Frederick Mathewson Denny, “The Meaning of *Ummah* in the Qur’ān,” *HR* 15 (1975): 37.

²⁶⁸ *DCH* 312a. Cf. *HALOT* 62a, “tribe, small group of people.” In the MT, *ummâ* occurs seven times, always in plural form: three times in synonymous parallelism with *gōyyîm* (Psalms 44:14 [MT 15]; 117:1; 149:7), twice in synonymous parallelism with *‘ammîm* (Psalms 57:9 [MT 10]; 108:3 [MT 4]), and twice describing the clan structures of the Ishmaelites and the Midianites (Genesis 25:16 and Numbers 25:15, respectively). It is interesting to note that at times the OT can use “Ishmaelite” and “Midianite” interchangeably (Genesis 37:25-28, 36; Judges 8:22-24). For a discussion of the relationship between Ishmaelites and Muslims, see Chris Flint, “God’s Blessing to Ishmael with Special Reference to Islam,” *SFM* 7 (2011): 1-53.

²⁶⁹ Jennifer Hill Boutz, “□assān ibn Thābit, a True *Mukhaṣṣam*: A Study of the Ghassānid odes of □assān ibn Thābit,” (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 2009), 6, 12, notes that al-Nābigha was a Ghassānid poet who, with his contemporary □assān ibn Thābit, competed in poetry competitions across the Arabian Peninsula in the pre-Islamic *jāhilī* period.

²⁷⁰ “*Wa hal ya ‘thaman dhū ‘ummatin wahwa □ā i ‘u.*” As cited in Denny, “*Ummah* in the Qur’ān,” 37.

The ummah in the Qur'an

The word *ummah* occurs 64 times in the Qur'an,²⁷¹ bearing the general sense of "a community."²⁷² Consistent with its likely linguistic origins, *ummah* can specifically designate a people,²⁷³ or a tribe.²⁷⁴ On a much larger scale, *ummah* can also be used to designate all mankind.²⁷⁵ Indeed, the Qur'an teaches that humanity was originally one *ummah*,²⁷⁶ but was later divided into various different *ummahs*.²⁷⁷ To each of these *ummahs*, characterised by false religion, Allah sent messengers,²⁷⁸ warning them to worship him rather than idols,²⁷⁹ and to follow their appointed rituals.²⁸⁰ However, the *ummahs* disbelieved,²⁸¹ and for this unbelief all *ummahs* will ultimately be judged.²⁸² To the Jewish and Christian *ummahs* Allah also sent scripture.²⁸³ Although most of these "people of the book (*ahl al-kitāb*)" disbelieved,²⁸⁴ breaking their *ummah*,²⁸⁵ there remained some

²⁷¹ Online: [http://corpus.quran.com/qurandictionary.jsp?q=Amm#\(2:134:2\)](http://corpus.quran.com/qurandictionary.jsp?q=Amm#(2:134:2)) [cited 1 March 2012].

²⁷² The apparent exceptions are *Hūd* (11):8 and *Yūsuf* (12):45, where *ummah* takes a chronological sense: Denny, "Ummah in the Qur'an," 38, considers there to be "no relation between *ummah* as 'period, time' and *ummah* as 'community, people, nation.'" In *Al-Baqarah* (2):134, 141 and in *An Nahl* (16):120, Abraham is described as an *ummah*. However, although "paragon" and "exemplar" have been suggested as alternative translations for *ummah* in these verses, Denny, "Ummah in the Qur'an," 39, notes that classical Muslim scholars continued to see a communal sense to this Abrahamic appellation.

²⁷³ *Ar-Ra'd* (13):30.

²⁷⁴ *Al-A'rāf* (7):160 describes the twelve tribes of Israel as twelve *ummahs*.

²⁷⁵ *Hūd* (11):118; *An Nahl* (16):93; *Ash-Shūrā* (42):8; *Az-Zukhruf* (43):33.

²⁷⁶ *Al-Baqarah* (2):213; *Yūnus* (10):19.

²⁷⁷ *Al-A'rāf* (7):168.

²⁷⁸ *Al-An'ām* (6):42; *Yūnus* (10):47; *Hūd* (11):48; *An Nahl* (16):63, 84; *Al-Mu'minūn* (23):44. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy distinguishes between the prophets Allah sent before Muhammad, each of whom had jurisdiction over only specific local *ummahs*, and Muhammad himself, who was sent to be the prophet, not only for the Arabs, but for the whole world (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

²⁷⁹ *An Nahl* (16):36, 89; *Al-Malā'ikah* (35):24.

²⁸⁰ *Al-Hajj* (22):34, 67.

²⁸¹ *Al-Ankabūt* (29):18; *Al-Mu'min* (40):5; *Az-Zukhruf* (43):22-24.

²⁸² *An-Naml* (27):83; *Al-Qasas* (28):75.

²⁸³ *Al-Mā'idah* (5):66; *Al-Mu'minūn* (23):49-54.

²⁸⁴ *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):110-112.

believers among them:²⁸⁶ these faithful sub-groups the Qur'an also calls *ummahs*.²⁸⁷

In four ayahs,²⁸⁸ all deriving from the later Medinan period,²⁸⁹ the term *ummah* is predicated exclusively of the Muslim community,²⁹⁰ which is portrayed as the *ummah* "par excellence."²⁹¹

The first of these references comes in the context of Abraham and Ishmael's purification of the Meccan *ka'bah*,²⁹² which Allah describes as "a place of assembly for men and a place of safety ... My House for those who compass it round, or use it as a retreat, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer)."²⁹³ When Abraham and Ishmael "raised the foundations of the House,"²⁹⁴ Abraham prayed that Allah would make their descendants "a people Muslim [*ummatan muslimatan*],"²⁹⁵ and further entreated Allah to send them "an Apostle of their own, who shall rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom, and sanctify them."²⁹⁶ This prayer is understood to have been answered in Muhammad, and as the passage continues, the Muslim community is characterised as continuing in the undegenerated, archetypal faith of Abraham, Ish-

²⁸⁵ *Al-Anbiyā'* (21):92-93; *Al-Mu'minūn* (23):52.

²⁸⁶ *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):110.

²⁸⁷ *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):113; *Al-A'rāf* (7):159.

²⁸⁸ *Al-Baqarah* (2):128, 143; *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):104, 110. "Ayah" is the Muslim term for a Qur'anic verse.

²⁸⁹ Although identifying the precise historical context of the different surahs, and the ayahs within them, can be difficult, in this instance the consensus view of both the Nöldeke-Schwally chronology and the Egyptian chronology (based on traditional Muslim scholarship) is that surahs 2 and 3 are Medinan.

²⁹⁰ Denny, "Ummah in the Qur'an," 68.

²⁹¹ Denny, "Ummah in the Qur'an," 55.

²⁹² *Al-Baqarah* (2):125-29.

²⁹³ *Al-Baqarah* (2):125, 'Alī (cf. "a resort for mankind and sanctuary ... My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down and prostrate themselves (in worship)," Pickthall).

²⁹⁴ *Al-Baqarah* (2):127, 'Alī (cf. "And when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the foundations of the House," Pickthall).

²⁹⁵ *Al-Baqarah* (2):128, 'Alī (cf. "A nation submissive," Pickthall).

²⁹⁶ *Al-Baqarah* (2):129, 'Alī (cf. "a messenger from among them who shall recite unto them Thy revelations, and shall instruct them in the Scripture and in wisdom and shall make them good," Pickthall).

mael and Isaac,²⁹⁷ as received by Moses and Jesus,²⁹⁸ in explicit contrast to the Jews and Christians.²⁹⁹

At this point, the *qibla* theme is introduced,³⁰⁰ which becomes the central motif in the ensuing comparison between two groups.³⁰¹ On the one hand, there is the “Ummat justly balanced [*ummatan wasatāan*],”³⁰² who have changed their *qibla* to pray toward “the sacred Mosque [*masjidi al-harāmi*].”³⁰³ By obediently changing their direction of prayer toward “a Qibla that shall please thee,” they have passed the test of faith,³⁰⁴ “that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Apostle a witness over yourselves.”³⁰⁵ They contrast, on the other hand, with “the people of the Book,”³⁰⁶ who “conceal the truth which they themselves know,”³⁰⁷ and refuse to “follow Thy Qibla.”³⁰⁸

Similar themes characterise the Muslim *ummah* in the next surah. After an exhortation to “follow the religion of Abraham,”³⁰⁹ who was

²⁹⁷ *Al-Baqarah* (2):130-33. Gerald Hawting, “The Religion of Abraham and Islam,” in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham* (ed. Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten and Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 484, notes that in the Qur’an “the idea of the religion of Abraham is prominent, and there are links between it and the concept of submission (*islām*).”

²⁹⁸ *Al-Baqarah* (2):136.

²⁹⁹ *Al-Baqarah* (2):135-40. Cf. *Ā’lay Imrān* (3):65-68, which makes it clear that Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a Muslim, and that it is not the “people of the book,” but those who follow Muhammad, who may legitimately claim Abrahamic heritage.

³⁰⁰ The word “*qibla*” denotes the direction of prayer.

³⁰¹ “*Qibla*” occurs six times in *Al-Baqarah* (2):142-45.

³⁰² *Al-Baqarah* (2):143, ‘Alī (cf. “middle nation,” Pickthall).

³⁰³ *Al-Baqarah* (2):144, ‘Alī (cf. “the Inviolable Place of Worship,” Pickthall). So also 2:149, 150.

³⁰⁴ *Al-Baqarah* (2):144, ‘Alī (cf. “a qiblah which is dear to thee,” Pickthall).

³⁰⁵ *Al-Baqarah* (2):143, ‘Alī (cf. “that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you,” Pickthall).

³⁰⁶ *Al-Baqarah* (2):145, ‘Alī (cf. “those who have received the Scripture,” Pickthall).

³⁰⁷ *Al-Baqarah* (2):146, ‘Alī (cf. “knowingly conceal the truth,” Pickthall). ‘Alī’s footnote 149 on this passage alleges that “[g]limmerings of such a qiblah were already foreshadowed in Jewish and Christian practice but its universality was only perfected in Islam.”

³⁰⁸ *Al-Baqarah* (2):145, ‘Alī (cf. “they would not follow thy qiblah,” Pickthall).

³⁰⁹ *Ā’lay Imrān* (3):95, ‘Alī (similarly, Pickthall).

present at “[t]he first House (of worship) appointed for men,”³¹⁰ to which pilgrimage must now be made,³¹¹ the Muslims and the “people of the book” are again set in antithesis: the latter are castigated for “reject[ing] the Signs of Allah,”³¹² “obstruct[ing] ... those who believe, from the path of Allah,”³¹³ and enticing believers to become apostate;³¹⁴ the former are addressed as “ye who believe,”³¹⁵ are warned to “die not except in a state of Islam,”³¹⁶ and are reminded of how Allah “joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren.”³¹⁷ From this former group comes “a band of people [*ummatun*] inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.”³¹⁸ In antithetical parallelism, the next ayah describes the fate of the latter: “Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving Clear Signs: For them is a dreadful penalty.”³¹⁹ The eschatological judgment awaiting the unbelieving “peo-

³¹⁰ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):96, ‘Alī (cf. “the first Sanctuary appointed for mankind,” Pickthall).

³¹¹ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):97.

³¹² *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):98, ‘Alī (cf. “disbeliev[ing] ... in the revelations of Allah,” Pickthall).

³¹³ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):99, ‘Alī (cf. “driv[ing] ... back believers from the way of Allah,” Pickthall).

³¹⁴ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):100.

³¹⁵ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):100, 102 ‘Alī (similarly, Pickthall). Frederick M. Denny, “Some Religio-Communal Terms and Concepts in the Qur’ān,” *Numen* 24 (1977): 37, observes “that in the most developed usage of *ummah*, *’islām* and *īmīn* [belief] figure prominently, particularly regarding the covenant idea, as in e.g., 3:102, 103 (where *taqwā*, ‘reverential fear’ is also prominent).”

³¹⁶ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):102, ‘Alī (cf. “die not save as those who have surrendered [unto Him],” Pickthall).

³¹⁷ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):103, ‘Alī (cf. “made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brothers by His grace,” Pickthall).

³¹⁸ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):104, ‘Alī (cf. “a nation who invite to goodness, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. Such are they who are successful,” Pickthall). Denny, “*Ummah* in the Qur’ān,” 69, observes that the word *falāḥ*, here translated “felicity” or “successful,” “is a centrally important soteriological term and concept in the Qur’ān very closely connected with the concept of the Muslim Ummah.”

³¹⁹ *Ā ‘lay Imrān* (3):105, ‘Alī (cf. “And be ye not as those who separated and disputed after the clear proofs had come to them. For such there is an awful doom,” Pickthall).

“people of the book” is depicted,³²⁰ but the Muslims, in sharp relief, are told: “Ye are the best of peoples [*ummatin*], evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.”³²¹

A diachronic approach, then, suggests that *ummah* in the Qur’an is not a static concept. In early surahs, the meaning of “tribe” or “people” is common, consistent with non-Islamic usage. In later surahs, however, the label can be used exclusively of Muslims, and so bear distinctively Islamic connotations.³²²

The ummah in Islamic history

The Constitution of Medina,³²³ which Muhammad drafted in Medina shortly after the *hijra*,³²⁴ is a useful Islamic historical source contemporary with the Qur’an. In this document, the word *ummah* appears twice. In article one, *ummah* refers to the “believers and Muslims,”³²⁵ whether of Yathrib (Medina) or of the Quraysh (who had come with Muhammad from Mecca). This mirrors the meaning of *ummah* in the Qur’an’s latter surahs. Article 25, however, reads:

³²⁰ *Ā’lay Imrān* (3):106-11.

³²¹ *Ā’lay Imrān* (3):110, ‘Alī (cf. “Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind. Ye enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and ye believe in Allah,” Pickthall).

³²² Cf. Denny, “*Ummah* in the Qur’ān,” 36, who argues that “in the Qur’ān the *ummah* concept itself develops from a general one, applying to non-Arab groups, too, toward a more exclusive one which is limited to the Muslim community.”

³²³ The Constitution of Medina is reproduced in William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 221-25. Frederick M. Denny, “*Ummah* in the Constitution of Medina,” *JNES* 36 (1977): 39, observes that “[t]here is little doubt among scholars that [the Constitution of Medina] is authentic, and that it, like the Qur’ān, is intimately connected with Muḥammad’s thought and activity.” Peter Cotterell, *Muhammad: The Man who Transformed Arabia* (Brunswick East: Acorn Press, 2011), 81, considers the Constitution of Medina “a major achievement, and it introduced a radically new concept: loyalty to one’s own clan was replaced by loyalty to the entire community.”

³²⁴ The *hijra* refers to the emigration of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622, marking the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

³²⁵ Denny, “*Ummah* in the Constitution of Medina,” 43, observes that the term “believer” occurs in the Qur’an five times more frequently than “Muslim,” and so suggests the phrase “believers and Muslims” here indicates that the Constitution of Medina was written at an early date before “Muslim” had, in the post-Qur’an era, become the dominant label for Muhammad’s followers.

“The Jews of Banū ‘Awf are a community (*ummah*) along with the believers. To the Jews their religion (*dīn*) and to the Muslims their religion.”³²⁶ This instance apparently presupposes religious pluralism within the *ummah*, an idea more consistent with its pre-Islamic or early Qur’anic usage. The evidence from the Constitution of Medina, then, is consistent with the findings from the Qur’an that during Muhammad’s lifetime, *ummah* was a term undergoing semantic evolution.³²⁷

Nevertheless, in Muhammad, political and religious offices were inseparable, and for the Muslims in Medina, and, later, Mecca, Muhammad pronounced God’s will for every dimension of life.³²⁸ Islam claimed both national,³²⁹ and cultural space:³³⁰ as Al-Azami observes, “[t]he *ummah* that was created by the Prophet claimed the supreme loyalty of the new Muslims, changing their world view, thus marginalizing their tribal identity but not abolishing it completely.”³³¹

Maintaining its semantic trajectory, post-Muhammad, *ummah* came exclusively to denote Muslims.³³² Muhammad’s political and religious authority over the *ummah* passed to the Caliphate,³³³ and though differences of opinion later crystallised into various sects and

³²⁶ As cited in Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 223.

³²⁷ Denny, “*Ummah* in the Constitution of Medina,” 44, notes that article 25 could be translated in such a way as to designate the Jews as another *ummah* alongside the Muslims; this translation would reflect another way that *ummah* is used in the Qur’an: see, e.g., *Al-Mâ'idah* (5):66; *Al-Mu'minûm* (23):52.

³²⁸ Ira M. Lapidus, “The Separation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society,” *IJMES* 6 (1975): 363-64.

³²⁹ Yaqub Zaki, “Allah and Eternity: Mosques, Madrasas and Tombs,” in *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning* (ed. George Michell; repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2006), 15, observes that membership in Muhammad’s *ummah* “replaced the genetic accident of birth as the criterion of nationality.”

³³⁰ Hamilton A. R. Gibb, “The Community in Islamic History,” *PAPS* 107 (1963): 173, suggests that “[t]he key word for everything that has to do with Islamic culture is *Umma*, Community. ... *Umma* is at once a religious and a social term; it implies totality, as opposed to *ekklesia*.”

³³¹ Tarik Hamdi Al-Azami, “Review Article: Religion, Identity, and State in Modern Islam,” *MW* 84 (1994): 335.

³³² Denny, “*Ummah* in the Constitution of Medina,” 39.

³³³ Lapidus, “Separation of State and Religion,” 364.

law-schools, a sense of unity in the *ummah* was sustained through ritual prayer, the Ramadhan fast, and the *hajj*.³³⁴ Indeed, Schmidt notes, the *ummah* is “a central component in Friday prayers.”³³⁵

Today, the *ummah* is considered the brotherhood of all professing Muslims,³³⁶ unlimited by national boundaries,³³⁷ and is joined by pronouncing the *shahādah*.³³⁸ In Muslim countries, religion, politics and culture generally continue to be understood as an undivided whole,³³⁹ as has been the case throughout Islamic history.³⁴⁰

Summary

Under the influence of Islamic theology, the term *ummah* developed semantically from its general pre-Islamic roots, to designate specifically the Muslim community.³⁴¹

Drawing on its final stage of Qur’anic development, Muslims today consider their *ummah* the “best” human community,³⁴² characterised by belief in Allah and loyalty to Muhammad, and patterned on

³³⁴ Gibb, “The Community in Islamic History,” 174. Similarly Al-Azami, “Review Article,” 335, notes that today “the unity of their direction in prayers unites all Muslims despite sectarian differences.”

³³⁵ Garbi Schmidt, “The Transnational *Umma* – Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas,” *MW* 95 (2005): 575.

³³⁶ Saleha S. Mahmood, “A Word about Ourselves,” *JMMA* 25 (2005): 295.

³³⁷ Herbert Hofer, “What’s in a Name? The Baggage of Terminology in Contemporary Mission,” *IJFM* 25 (2008): 27.

³³⁸ C. A. O. van Nieuwenhuijze, “The Ummah – An Analytic Approach,” *SI* 10 (1959):18, n. 2. Note that this view of the *ummah*, although mainstream, is not held unanimously by all Muslims today. Vincent F. Biondo III, “The Architecture of Mosques in the US and Britain,” *JMMA* 26 (2006), 407, locates current Muslim views of the *ummah* on a spectrum: “In regards to envisioning the *ummah*, Muslims range from inclusive to exclusive in terms of their view of ideological messianism. On the left, *ummah* can mean a pan-Islam inclusive to all Muslims and not exclusive of non-believers. On the right, *ummah* can mean Saudi-influenced Islamic orthodoxy, exclusive of many Muslim sects, and exclusive of non-believers.”

³³⁹ Hofer, “What’s in a Name?”, 27.

³⁴⁰ Asghar Fathi, “The Islamic Pulpit as a Medium of Political Communication,” in *JSSR* 20 (1981), 163, observes that “[a] cursory examination of the history of the various Islamic lands reveals the special position of the mosque as the center of the Moslem community and the dominant role of the Islamic pulpit in the development of socio-political issues.”

³⁴¹ Denny, “*Ummah* in the Qur’ān,” 70.

³⁴² *Ā’lay Imrān* (3):110.

the authentic Abrahamic religion preached by the prophets. This *ummah* enforces right morality in this world,³⁴³ and will enjoy eschatological felicity in the next.³⁴⁴ It is ritually demarcated from the “people of the book” by prayer towards, and pilgrimage to, the *ka’bah*. Based upon Muhammad’s historical precedent, this *ummah* unites every sphere of life.³⁴⁵ As Zaki summarises: “Islam is pre-eminently the religion of unity on all levels: ontological, social, political. Socially and politically, the term used to describe that unity is *umma*.”³⁴⁶

The Mosque

The noun “mosque” occurs 28 times in the Qur’an,³⁴⁷ where it can be used broadly to refer to a place of worship,³⁴⁸ such as the Jewish temple;³⁴⁹ or more narrowly, to refer specifically to Islamic places of worship,³⁵⁰ distinct from churches,³⁵¹ such as the Masjid al-Haram

³⁴³ Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy observes that in Arabic, the word *ummah* is related both to the word for “mother” and also to the word for the top of the head above the brain: connotations he finds apt, given the *ummah*’s purpose is “to control the whole universe” (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

³⁴⁴ Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy believes that on Judgment Day, Muhammad will intercede for the salvation of all his *ummah*, and Allah will accept this prayer (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

³⁴⁵ As an example of this interplay between politics, religion and culture, consider the Malaysian Federal Constitution, which in Article 160(1) statutorily defines a “Malay” to be “a person who professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom and – (a) was before Merdeka Day born in the Federation or in Singapore or born of parents one of whom was born in the Federation or in Singapore, or is on that day domiciled in the Federation or in Singapore; or (b) is the issue of such a person.” As cited in USA International Business Publications, *Malaysia Country Study Guide* (4th ed.; Washington D.C.: International Business Publications USA, 2008), 192. For an example of the confusion this can cause, see <http://www.asiafinest.com/forum/lofiversion/index.php/t247378.html> [cited 1 March 2012].

³⁴⁶ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 15.

³⁴⁷ Online: <http://corpus.quran.com/qurandictionary.jsp?root=sjd#%282:34:4%29> [cited 1 March 2012].

³⁴⁸ *Al-A’râf* (7):31; *At-Taubah* (9):107, 108; *Al-Kahf* (18):21.

³⁴⁹ *Bani Isrâil* (17):7.

³⁵⁰ E.g. *Al-Baqarah* (2):187.

³⁵¹ *Al-Hajj* (22):40.

(“Sacred Mosque”) in Mecca,³⁵² or the Masjid al-Aqsa (“Farthest Mosque”) in Jerusalem.³⁵³ The *hadith* also accord Medina the status of a holy city,³⁵⁴ in which Muhammad’s house is often considered the first mosque.³⁵⁵

One approach to analysing the mosque, taken by Lefebvre and Biondo, is to analyse mosques as structures “planned,” “perceived,” and “lived,” or according to their “form,” “meaning,” and “function,” respectively.³⁵⁶ While these categories can give some insight into the mosque, it seems unlikely, as a brief discussion shall now illustrate, that this framework maps naturally onto a genuinely Muslim view of the mosque.

Formally, mosque architecture is not tightly controlled.³⁵⁷ While a Muslim consensus has been reached over the essential elements of a mosque,³⁵⁸ no fixed forms are prescribed for these components.³⁵⁹

³⁵² *At-Taubah* (9):19, 28; *Bani Isrâil* (17):1; *Al-Hajj* (22):25; *Al-Hujurât* (48):25, 27.

³⁵³ *Bani Isrâil* (17):1. Nevertheless, Doğan Kuban, “The Central Arab Lands,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity* (ed. Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan; repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 77, observes that neither of these two mosques were at that time in Muslim possession: “the Ka’ba was the Temple of Quraysh (the Prophet’s own tribe, who held Mecca); and the temple site in Jerusalem was in the hands of the Christians. Thus, the word *masjid* was used to denote a holy place, a place of worship, not only for Muslims but for everybody.”

³⁵⁴ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 34.53.2129 (Khan 3:197): “Narrated ‘Abdullâh bin Zaid ...:

The Prophet ﷺ said, “The Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) made Makkah a sanctuary, and asked for Allâh’s Blessing in it. I made Al-Madîna a sanctuary as Ibrahim made Makkah a sanctuary and I asked for Allâh’s Blessing in its measures.”

³⁵⁵ Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 22, 138. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy explains that it would be anachronistic to call the *ka’bah* the first mosque: although the *ka’bah* was built by angels before even the creation of Adam, for many years it functioned as a “house of worshipping” for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Only after Muhammad’s *mihraj* (night vision) was the *ka’bah* set apart exclusively for Muslim worship, and thus became a mosque (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

³⁵⁶ H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (trans. D. Nicholson-Smith; Oxford:

Blackwell, 1991), 1-67, outlined in Biondo, “The Architecture of Mosques,” 400.

³⁵⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 31, speaks of a “well-nigh endless variety of forms and uses.”

³⁵⁸ Oleg Grabar, “The Mosque in Islamic Society Today,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity* 243, lists the following: “large

Indeed, mosque architecture demonstrates significant regional influence,³⁶⁰ variations which today rest uncomfortably with pressures to conform to a more globally recognised Islamic style.³⁶¹ Moreover, while mosques are ideally orientated towards Mecca,³⁶² and inside are wide enough for the worshippers to pray in lines,³⁶³ historically, other religious places of worship, such as Hindu temples, have been converted into mosques,³⁶⁴ indicating that, at times, pragmatic considerations may supersede formal preferences.³⁶⁵

Nor are mosques, though rich in figurative significance, primarily concerned with transparently communicating their symbolic connotations; indeed, much of their meaning is frequently veiled from all but

space, *mihrab*, *minbar*, frequent (but optional) courtyard occasionally with composed inner façades, a place for ablutions, as well as a central location convenient to the living areas of a community and a standard procedure for the call to prayer.”

³⁵⁹ Grabar, “The Mosque in Islamic Society Today,” 243.

³⁶⁰ Ismail Serageldin, “Introduction: Regionalism,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 72.

³⁶¹ Hasan-Uddin Khan, “An Overview of Contemporary Mosques,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 267.

³⁶² Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 35.

³⁶³ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 36-8.

³⁶⁴ Cf. Serageldin, “Introduction: Regionalism,” 74, who observes that “the orientation of the mosque structure in Indonesia was until relatively recently allowed to follow the cardinal orientations of pre-Islamic temples, with the result that worshippers had to align themselves at an angle to the *qibla* wall in order to face Mecca.”

³⁶⁵ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 33. Cf. the analysis of “storefront mosques” in Biondo, “The Architecture of Mosques.” Following Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 138-9, a theological justification for such practices might be made from a threefold appeal to *Al-Baqarah* (2):115, 177 (“To God belongs the East and the West; whichever way you turn, God’s presence is there ... There is no piety in turning your faces towards the East or ... the West.”); to Muhammad’s own example when, in Mecca before the *hijra*, “he and his followers had prayed together in private houses or quiet open places,” and to a *hadith* which states that “[a]ll the world is a *masjid*.” Cf. *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 8.56.438 (Khan 3:280): “Narrated Jâbir bin ‘Abdullâh ...: Allâh’s Messenger ﷺ said, ‘... The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a *Masjid* (place for praying) and a thing to purify (perform *Tayammum*). Therefore anyone of my followers can offer prayers wherever he is, at the time of a □*alât* (prayer).”

the cognoscenti.³⁶⁶ Grube speaks of “hidden architecture” existing “[a]t all times and in all regions of the Muslim world.”³⁶⁷ Consider, for example, the Great Mosque of Qairawan, the floor plan of which, after a century of research, was discovered to have been based on the schematics of the Dome of the Rock and the Masjid al-Aqsa.³⁶⁸ Note also that calligraphic mosque inscriptions, while intrinsically legible, are often placed too high to be seen, or in obscured areas, where they are impossible to read.³⁶⁹

Within a century of Muhammad’s death, clear functional distinctions between two different kinds of mosques had arisen, and were reflected in two different Arabic terms for the mosque: *masjid* and *jami*.³⁷⁰ The *masjid*, derived from the verb *suju* or *sajada*,³⁷¹ “to prostrate,”³⁷² could simply be a small room within a building set apart for personal *salat*,³⁷³ in accord with its basic etymological meaning: “place of prostrations.”³⁷⁴ For the obligatory Friday

³⁶⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 20.

³⁶⁷ Ernst J. Grube, “What is Islamic Architecture?”, in *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning* (ed. George Michell; repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2006), 11.

³⁶⁸ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 20. Harold W. Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques: A Critical Analysis,” *SJRS* 2 (1981): 142, notes that the Dome of the Rock is “the oldest surviving Muslim monument, not a mosque but a shrine of wonderfully harmonious proportions built with expensive marbles and glass mosaics, and intended to outshine the Christian churches in Jerusalem, especially the Church of the Holy Nativity which it resembled.” Cf. *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 8.62 (Khan 1:284): “Ibn ‘Abbâs said, ‘You (Muslims) will surely decorate your mosques as the Jews and Christians decorated (their churches and temples.)’”

³⁶⁹ Wheeler M. Thackston, “The Role of Calligraphy,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 45.

³⁷⁰ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 40. Note that this distinction in vocabulary is rarely maintained in non-Arabic speaking countries today; Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 36, cites Turkey as a rare exception.

³⁷¹ Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society* (London: Pilcrow Press, 2006), 9.

³⁷² The verbal form of the *s-j-d* root occurs frequently in the Qur’an, in the sense of “to prostrate” or “to worship.” See e.g. *An-Naml* (27):24-25; *Fussilat* (41):37; *An-Najm* (53):62.

³⁷³ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 44. *Salat* is the Arabic term for Islamic ritual prayer.

³⁷⁴ Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan, “Preface,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 11. One *hadith*, cited by

prayers,³⁷⁵ however, performed in congregation,³⁷⁶ a larger structure was required.³⁷⁷ This became known as the *masjid-i jum'a* (Friday mosque) or *jami' masjid* (congregational mosque),³⁷⁸ Friday being the *Yawm al-Jum'a* (day of assembly),³⁷⁹ chosen in conscious distinction from Jews and Christians.³⁸⁰ The *jami'* is larger than the *masjid*,³⁸¹ and additionally requires, outside, a minaret for the *adhan*,³⁸² and inside, a *minbar* for the *khutba*.³⁸³ Yet, despite these differences in function and form, *masjid* and *jami'* are both equally considered mosques.³⁸⁴ So too are *īdgāhs*.³⁸⁵ large open spaces for public prayer,³⁸⁶ at which whole towns may congregate to pray at the *Īd al-Adha* festival,³⁸⁷ in annual solidarity with pilgrims on the *hajj*.³⁸⁸

An alternative to Lefebvre's approach, advanced by Turner, sees in each mosque an interplay between two underlying models: a "sac-

Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 31, makes this etymology entirely definitive: "Wherever you pray, that place is a mosque (*masjid*)."

³⁷⁵ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 34, explains that "the congregational prayer at noon on Fridays ... involves the obligatory attendance of all adult males and the optional attendance of adult females."

³⁷⁶ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 35.

³⁷⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 44.

³⁷⁸ Martin J. Frishman, "Islam and the Form of the Mosque," in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 20.

³⁷⁹ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 36. *Jami'* is derived from an Arabic root word meaning "to assemble."

³⁸⁰ Mohammed Arkoun, "The Metamorphosis of the Sacred," in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 269.

³⁸¹ Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy calls the *jami'* "the big mosque," because Friday prayers cannot be offered unless "at least forty or fifty" Muslim worshippers are present (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

³⁸² Frishman, "Islam and the Form of the Mosque," 40. *Adhan* is the Arabic term for the call to prayer.

³⁸³ *Minbar* is the Arabic term for the pulpit, from which the Friday sermon (*khutba*) is preached.

³⁸⁴ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 44, observes that, formally, "*masjids* were [often] built which yielded nothing in decorative splendour to the finest *jami'*s of the same style."

³⁸⁵ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 33.

³⁸⁶ Kuban, "The Central Arab Lands," 78.

³⁸⁷ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 19.

³⁸⁸ "Id al-Adha," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (ed. John L. Esposito; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 131.

ral” or “temple” paradigm; and a “non-sacral” or “meeting-house” paradigm.³⁸⁹ These two models find precedent in the “house of God” in Mecca, and the “house of Muhammad” in Medina, respectively; thus, Turner’s paradigmatic approach promises to replicate more closely an internal, Muslim view of the mosque.³⁹⁰ To this end, therefore, the remaining analysis of the mosque in this chapter shall be structured around Turner’s two paradigms: the mosque as a temple, and the mosque as a meeting-house.

The mosque as a temple

The Qur’an describes the *ka’bah*, which is the Arabic word for “temple,”³⁹¹ as the house of Allah,³⁹² to which pagans, on account of their ritual impurity, are refused entry.³⁹³ The *hadith* affirm Mecca’s perpetual sanctity,³⁹⁴ and thus today, planes are not allowed to fly over Mecca, lest the holy city be profaned by non-Muslims on-board.³⁹⁵ Similarly, the four schools of Sunni jurisprudence unanimously prohibit non-Muslims from visiting the Masjid al-Haram.³⁹⁶

Turner observes significant parallels between the Meccan *ka’bah* and the Jerusalem temple. Architecturally, the *ka’bah* is “a roughly cubic single-chamber building of approximately the same size and

³⁸⁹ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 135.

³⁹⁰ Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Hussaini (personal communication, 5 January 2012).

³⁹¹ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 136.

³⁹² *Al-Baqarah* (2):125; *Al-Hajj* (22):26.

³⁹³ *At-Taubah* (9):28.

³⁹⁴ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 28.9.1833 (Khan 3:53): “Narrated Ibn ‘Abbâs ...: The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Allâh has made Makkah a sanctuary, so it was a sanctuary before me and will continue to be a sanctuary after me.’”

³⁹⁵ Phil Parshall, *Inside the Community: Understanding Muslims Through Their Traditions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 85. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy adds that birds do not fly over the *ka’bah*, because there is an invisible spiritual link connecting the *ka’bah* to the seventh heaven directly above (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

³⁹⁶ Omar Bakri Muhammad, “The Role of the Mosque,” 27. Cited 1 March 2012.

Online:

http://www.izharudeen.com/uploads/4/1/2/2/4122615/role_of_mosque_www.izharudeen.com.pdf. Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 145, notes that, beyond Mecca, “[e]xclusion [from mosques] of non-Muslims as infidels is confined to some sects only and in most mosques all are welcome.”

shape as the inner Holy of Holies.”³⁹⁷ Emblematically, the *ka'bah* is “rich with the cosmic symbolisms characteristic of the *dominus dei* and similar to those found at Jerusalem”.³⁹⁸ Geographically, it is considered “the centre of the world and the navel of the earth, a reflection of the heavenly prototype and orientated in the cosmic direction – in this case the four corners faced the four cardinal points.”³⁹⁹ The compulsory *hajj* to Mecca bears resemblance to the Jewish pilgrimage to Jerusalem,⁴⁰⁰ and Muhammad “performed a ‘cleansing of the temple’ reminiscent of that of Jesus in Jerusalem.”⁴⁰¹ So holy is the *ka'bah* that, according to the *hadith*, prayers performed there are equivalent to one hundred thousand prayers elsewhere.⁴⁰²

Yet it is not only the Meccan mosque that exhibits sacral qualities; to a lesser degree, every mosque possesses a similar quality of holiness. According to the *hadith*, prayers performed in mosque congregations are twenty-five times more effective,⁴⁰³ and mosque atten-

³⁹⁷ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 136.

³⁹⁸ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 136.

³⁹⁹ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 136. Cf. the parallel attitude of the LXX translators, for whom the land of Israel was the “navel (*omphalos*) of the world” (Ezekiel 38:12, LXX). Philip S. Alexander, “Early Jewish Geography,” *ABD* 2:982, notes that the book of Jubilees similarly envisages Zion as “[t]he center of the world – its ‘navel.’”

⁴⁰⁰ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 136.

⁴⁰¹ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 137.

⁴⁰² *Sunan Ibn Majah, hadith* 1306, as cited in Mohammed H. Al Mojan, *The Honorable Kabah: Architecture and Kiswah* (Makkah: Al-Kawn Center, 2010), 17. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy considers this to be a strong *hadith* (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁴⁰³ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 10.30.647 (Khan 1:373): “Narrated Abū Huraira ...: Allāh’s Messenger said, ‘The reward of the *salāt* (prayer) offered by a person in congregation is multiplied twenty-five as much than that of the *salāt* offered in one’s house or in the market (alone). And this is because if he performs ablution and does it perfectly and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of offering *salāt*, then, for every step he takes towards the mosque, he is upgraded one degree in reward and his one sin is taken off (crossed out) from his accounts (of deeds).” Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*, 10, also observe that prayers performed at Muhammad’s mosque in Medina are considered 1,000 times more effective than usual, and at the Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, prayers are deemed 500 times more meritorious. Cf. *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 20.1.1190 (Khan 2:169): “Narrated Abū Huraira ...: Allāh’s Messenger said, ‘One *salāt* (prayer) in my

dance itself has salvific significance,⁴⁰⁴ especially for those who arrive early.⁴⁰⁵ Nor is it only prayers which are “enhanced” by the sanctity of the mosque, but, more generally, all the believer’s words and actions.⁴⁰⁶ Turner observes, for example, that “business and marriage contracts and oaths made in a mosque are more binding.”⁴⁰⁷

When a Muslim visits a mosque to pray, there is much in the experience to foster in him a sense of standing on holy ground.⁴⁰⁸ In the outer wall, which segregates the holy space (*haram*) from the outside world,⁴⁰⁹ the worshipper finds the main entrance: designed,

mosque is better than one thousand \square *alāt* (prayer) in any other mosque except *Al-Masjid-al- \square arām*.”

⁴⁰⁴ Muhammad, “The Role of the Mosque,” 11-12, catalogues several traditions to this effect. “Bukhari, Ahmad and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, ‘Allah will prepare a quarter in Heaven for he who frequently goes to the mosque each time he comes and goes.’ Ahmad, al Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah reported on the authority of Ibn Sa’id that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, ‘If you see a man going frequently to the mosques, bear witness that he is a believer.’ Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, ‘He who purifies himself at home and then walks to one of Allah’s houses to perform one of Allah’s commands, each one of his steps will wipe out a sin and the other will increase his reward.’”

⁴⁰⁵ *Sahih Al-Bukhāri* 11.31.929 (Khan 2:45): “Narrated Abū Huraira ...: The Prophet said, ‘When it is a Friday, the angels stand at the gate of the mosque and keep on writing the names of the persons coming to the mosque in succession according to their arrivals. The example of the one who enters the mosque in the earliest hour is that of one offering a camel (in sacrifice). The one coming next is like one offering a cow and then a ram and then a chicken and then an egg respectively. When the *Imām* comes out [for *salāt-ul-Jumu’ah* (*Jumu’ah* prayer)] they (i.e. angels) fold their papers and listen to the *khutba* (religious talk).”

⁴⁰⁶ Arkoun, “The Metamorphosis of the Sacred,” 268.

⁴⁰⁷ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 145.

⁴⁰⁸ I here assume the Muslim is male. While women are in theory permitted to enter the mosque when not menstruating, Khan, “An Overview of Contemporary Mosques,” 247, notes that the mosque today generally “retains its traditional role as the central public space for the men (and to a lesser extent, the women) of a neighbourhood or group.” Parshall, *Inside the Community*, 63, estimates that “among the sixty million Muslim women of Bangladesh, perhaps a few thousand have entered a mosque.” Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy is saddened by the reality that most Muslims who attend the mosque probably overlook the deeper symbolism which I outline in this section (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁴⁰⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 35.

decorated and inscribed to prepare him for the transition from the secular to the sacred sphere.⁴¹⁰ Entering the mosque, he offers supplication,⁴¹¹ covers his head,⁴¹² and removes his shoes,⁴¹³ to avoid ritually defiling this holy place.⁴¹⁴ Next, he crosses the courtyard:⁴¹⁵ the vast, serene, unbroken space impresses upon him that the workaday world has been left behind,⁴¹⁶ and the domes and minarets lift his eyes and contemplations from earthly to heavenly things.⁴¹⁷ Before praying, to attain ritual purity,⁴¹⁸ he performs the necessary ablutions (*wudu*),⁴¹⁹ perhaps in a pool in the courtyard,⁴²⁰ or using water drawn from a jar inside the mosque.⁴²¹ He then proceeds to the prayer-hall (*musalla*),⁴²² a carpeted area kept apart from the wet area of ablutions.⁴²³

⁴¹⁰ Jale Nejdert Erzen, "Reading Mosques: Meaning and Architecture in Islam," *JAAC* 69 (2011), 128.

⁴¹¹ According to Muhammad, "The Role of the Mosque," 17, it is mandatory to "say du'a (supplication) on entry into a mosque.... 'In the name of Allah, and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah. O Allah! Forgive my sins and open for me the gates, of Your mercy.'"

⁴¹² Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 35.

⁴¹³ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 32.

⁴¹⁴ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 20. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 32, cites a *hadith* reported by Abu Huraira: "most favoured of God in cities are their mosques and most abhorred are their markets."

⁴¹⁵ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 32, notes that mosques with courtyards "are the predominant type throughout the Islamic world."

⁴¹⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 55.

⁴¹⁷ Biondo "The Architecture of Mosques," 401.

⁴¹⁸ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 20.

⁴¹⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 55. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy explains that *wudu* is important because the worshipper must be pure on both the inside and the outside before going to the mosque: Allah does not hear the prayers of those who are impure, nor can the worshipper receive Allah's blessing unless he is first pure and clean (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁴²⁰ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 56. The Hanbali law school (*madhhab*) requires that running water be used in ablutions, so in Hanbali mosques today the water is provided by taps.

⁴²¹ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 35, explains that these "supplementary ablution facilities may be provided inside the mosque, often in the shape of a colossal marble jar with basin and taps so that the elderly may comply with the law without risk of exposure to the inclemency of the elements."

⁴²² Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 32.

⁴²³ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 35.

The spaciousness of the prayer-hall reminds the worshipper of his eschatological reward,⁴²⁴ which the Qur'an describes as a home "in Heaven, – lofty mansions beneath which rivers flow."⁴²⁵ Another Qur'anic depiction of paradise, occurring in over 120 passages,⁴²⁶ is as a garden with trees and springs of water,⁴²⁷ suggested architecturally by the mosque's ablution fountain, pillars and arches.⁴²⁸ By means of mosaics and other decorations, a sense of weightlessness is created:⁴²⁹ an equilibrium of tensile forces suggestive of the harmonious Islamic world, the "house of peace" (*Dar-el-Islam*).⁴³⁰ Reiterated geometric designs and floral patterns evoke a sense of the infinite,⁴³¹ reminiscent of the paradise garden,⁴³² which Ardalan describes as "a defined space encompassing within itself a total reflection of the cosmos."⁴³³ The common use of green, thought by Erzen to be "almost a sacred color for Islam," further enhances the mosque experience as "a metaphor for [paradise] in every sense."⁴³⁴

⁴²⁴ Erzen, "Reading Mosques," 127.

⁴²⁵ *Al-Ankabūt* (29):58, 'Alī (cf. "in lofty dwellings of the Garden underneath which rivers flow," Pickthall). A similar description is found in *Az-Zumar* (39):20.

⁴²⁶ Nader Ardalan, "'Simultaneous Perplexity': The Paradise Garden as the Quintessential Visual Paradigm of Islamic Architecture and Beyond," in *Understanding Islamic Architecture* (ed. Attilio Petruccioli and Khalil K. Pirani; London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 10.

⁴²⁷ E.g. *Al-Wāqī'ah* (56):10-34; *Al-Mursalāt* (76):11-22.

⁴²⁸ Erzen, "Reading Mosques," 128.

⁴²⁹ Grube, "What is Islamic Architecture?," 13.

⁴³⁰ Erzen, "Reading Mosques," 127.

⁴³¹ Grube, "What is Islamic Architecture?," 14. Jale Nejdert Erzen, "Islamic Architecture: An Alternative Way to Knowledge," *JAAC* 65 (2007), 71, explains that Islamic symbolism is particularly developed within the Sufi tradition.

⁴³² Ardalan, "Simultaneous Perplexity," 10-12, observes that "[t]he English word 'paradise' is simply a transliteration of the old Persian word *pairīdāeza*, referring to the walled gardens of this ancient time."

⁴³³ Ardalan, "Simultaneous Perplexity," 10. Cf. Jorge Luis Borges, "The Aleph" (trans. Norman Thomas Di Giovanni), n.p. [cited 1 March 2012], a short story at the end of which is mentioned a mosque in Cairo, within a pillar of which the entire universe is said to lie. Online: www.phinnweb.org/links/literature/borges/aleph.html

⁴³⁴ Erzen, "Reading Mosques," 128, notes the appropriateness of this imagery "[f]or a culture that first developed in the desert lands of Arabia." Cf. *Sahih Al-Bukhārī* 20.5.1195 (Khan 2:171): "Narrated 'Abdullāh bin Zaid al-Māzinī ...: Allāh's Messenger said, 'Between my house and my pulpit there is a garden from amongst

As the Muslim worshipper prepares to pray, he turns to face the *mihrab*: both the focal point,⁴³⁵ and the visual and liturgical climax of the mosque.⁴³⁶ The *mihrab* is a niche situated halfway along the *qibla* wall indicating the direction of Mecca.⁴³⁷ There the *imām* stands to lead the prayers, his voice amplified by the *mihrab*'s concavity.⁴³⁸ Often built from costly materials,⁴³⁹ and elaborately decorated,⁴⁴⁰ the *mihrab* symbolises a portal to paradise,⁴⁴¹ and is popularly held to be a gate to the heavenly garden.⁴⁴² Indeed, the *hadith* attribute to Muhammad a vision of heaven and hell when facing toward the *mihrab*.⁴⁴³

It is not, however, the *mihrab* itself which is sacred, but the direction in which it points.⁴⁴⁴ This orientation, based on the Qur'anic injunction to pray toward the *ka'bah*,⁴⁴⁵ is today the basic constraint upon mosque construction.⁴⁴⁶ The change of prayer direction toward Mecca, when viewed in its historic context,⁴⁴⁷ signals a clear disjunc-

the gardens of Paradise.” Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 19, however, reminds us that research into Islamic colour-symbolism is as yet “still at an early stage.”

⁴³⁵ Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 26.

⁴³⁶ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 33.

⁴³⁷ Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 33. The *qibla* wall is the Mecca-facing wall of the prayer-hall (i.e., orientated perpendicular to an imaginary line drawn from the mosque to the *ka'bah*.) Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 33, notes that this location was originally identified by an upright spear.

⁴³⁸ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 33.

⁴³⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 46.

⁴⁴⁰ Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 26.

⁴⁴¹ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 127.

⁴⁴² Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 17.

⁴⁴³ *Sahih Al-Bukhāri* 10.91.749 (Khan 1:420): “Narrated Anas Bin Malik ...: The Prophet led us and offered *salāt* (prayer). Then he went up the pulpit and beckoned with both hands towards the *Qiblah* of the mosque and said, ‘When I started leading you in *salāt*, I saw Paradise and Hell displayed on the wall of the mosque (facing the *Qiblah*.) I never saw such a good and bad thing as I saw today.’ He repeated the last statement thrice.”

⁴⁴⁴ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 34; Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 35.

⁴⁴⁵ *Al-Baqarah* (2):144.

⁴⁴⁶ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 35-6.

⁴⁴⁷ The precise date of this change is controverted: Biondo, “The Architecture of Mosques,” 401, thinks it came in A.D. 623; Cotterell, *Muhammad*, 85, suggests A.D. 624; and Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 33, prefers a date as late as A.D. 629. All

tion between Muslims and the “people of the book”:⁴⁴⁸ before Muhammad pronounced surah *Al-Baqarah*, Muslims, with Christians and Jews, prayed toward Jerusalem;⁴⁴⁹ thenceforth, the locus of prayer shifted to Mecca. Consequently, Zaki, explains, we may picture the Muslim world as “a gigantic wheel with Mecca as the hub, with lines drawn from all the mosques in the world forming the spokes. [...] But as well as this horizontal axis there is a vertical one, that of the spirit. At the Ka‘ba the two intersect.”⁴⁵⁰ Muslim prayer, then, is the “use of the horizontal axis by which one relates oneself to the vertical axis as represented by the Ka‘ba.”⁴⁵¹

These two axes, coincident in the *ka‘bah*, are also symbolically united in the mosque: just as the *mihrab* aligns the worshipper horizontally toward the *ka‘bah* and the centre of the world, so also the vertical spaces of domes and minarets orientate him within the universe.⁴⁵² Domes represent the vault of heaven,⁴⁵³ and are frequently inscribed with heavenly motifs,⁴⁵⁴ such as stars,⁴⁵⁵ or the tree of

agree, however, that the change of *qibla* occurred after the *hijra*. The location of the Masjid al-Qiblatayn (Mosque of the Two *Qiblas*), where, during a time of communal prayer, Muhammad announced this change of *qibla*, is also disputed. Biondo identifies the mosque with Muhammad’s house in Medina; Zaki locates the mosque “on the outskirts of Medina;” and Kuban, “The Central Arab Lands,” 78, believes it is the mosque at Quba, also mentioned in *At-Taubah* (9):108.

⁴⁴⁸ This contrast is made explicit in *Al-Baqarah* (2):142-147, a passage already discussed above. As Peter G. Riddell and Peter Cotterell, *Islam in Context: Past, Present and Future* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 46, explain, “the change was made to distinguish Jew and Christian from Muslim.”

⁴⁴⁹ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 34.

⁴⁵⁰ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 16. Cyril Glassé, *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam* (rev. ed.; London: Stacey International, 2001), 247, puts it similarly: the *ka‘bah* is “the center of a Holy of Holies that stretches out in all directions; thus the whole earth becomes the locus of prayer for every Muslim, who each day fulfils the role that the Jewish high priest performed only on the Day of Atonement.”

⁴⁵¹ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 33. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy explains that this unseen vertical link connects the *ka‘bah* to the house of worship directly above it in the seventh heaven, where each day 70,000 angels offer their worship, also facing toward the *ka‘bah* (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁴⁵² Erzen, “Islamic Architecture,” 70-71.

⁴⁵³ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 34. Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 145, considers that “domes have an almost unavoidable suggestion of the heavenly.”

⁴⁵⁴ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 18.

⁴⁵⁵ Erzen, “Islamic Architecture,” 70.

paradise;⁴⁵⁶ the omnidirectional light emanating from them is also suggestive of heaven.⁴⁵⁷ Moreover, Islamic art, in which patterns derived by rotation of a square within a circle represent a union of earth and heaven, finds similar expression in the domed mosque, where these two polarities are united architecturally.⁴⁵⁸

Mosque architecture, Erzen observes, is also scaled “to complement the human body, which is picked out as an actor to be watched.”⁴⁵⁹ The mosque is “a stage for prayer,”⁴⁶⁰ a “heavenly theater,”⁴⁶¹ wherein five times daily, as regulated by clocks within the mosque,⁴⁶² worshippers congregate to offer their performance to Allah,⁴⁶³ seeking annulment of their sins.⁴⁶⁴

The form and content of *salat* are inseparable.⁴⁶⁵ Maintaining harmony across space and time, the worshippers synchronise their movements with the *imām*'s,⁴⁶⁶ and align themselves, as the *hadith* commands, in horizontal rows;⁴⁶⁷ those in the front row, being close-

⁴⁵⁶ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 34.

⁴⁵⁷ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 127. Cf. Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 145.

⁴⁵⁸ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 130; “Islamic Architecture,” 70.

⁴⁵⁹ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 128.

⁴⁶⁰ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 126.

⁴⁶¹ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 130.

⁴⁶² Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 22.

⁴⁶³ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 128.

⁴⁶⁴ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 9.6.528 (Khan 1:323): “Narrated Abū Huraira ...: I heard Allāh’s Messenger saying, ‘If there was a river at the door of anyone of you and he took a bath in it five times a day, would you notice any dirt on him?’ They said, ‘Not a trace of dirt would be left.’ The Prophet added, ‘That is the example of the five (daily compulsory) *salāt* (prayers) with which Allāh blots out (annuls) evil deeds.” Cf. *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 8.61.445 (Khan 1:284): “Narrated Abū Huraira ...: Allāh’s Messenger said, ‘The angels keep on asking Allāh’s forgiveness for anyone of you, as long as he is at his *Musalla* (praying place) and he does not pass wind.’ They say, ‘O Allāh! Forgive him, O Allāh! Be Merciful to him.’”

⁴⁶⁵ Parshall, *Inside the Community*, 62, 66.

⁴⁶⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 36.

⁴⁶⁷ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 10.74.723 (Khan 1:409): “Narrated Anas bin Mālik ...: The Prophet said, ‘Straighten your rows as the straightening of rows is essential for *Iqāmat-as-salāt* (a perfect and correct prayer).’” Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 35, notes that this practice “explains the conventional rectangular plan of most mosques.”

est to the *qibla* wall, receive the greatest blessing.⁴⁶⁸ In imitation of the prophet David,⁴⁶⁹ the repeated sequence of standing and prostrating in prayer liturgically enacts the abasement of a servant before his master.⁴⁷⁰ This is accompanied by Qur'anic recitations which reaffirm allegiance to Allah and directly refute the doctrine of the Trinity.⁴⁷¹ *Salat*, then, symbolises, both in word and in action, the very meaning of Islam: submission to the will of Allah.⁴⁷²

Throughout the mosque, Islamic theology is further reinforced by inscriptions taken from the Qur'an and *hadith*.⁴⁷³ These are mostly oft-repeated and familiar passages,⁴⁷⁴ such as the polemical anti-pagan *At-Taubah* (9):33,⁴⁷⁵ and anti-Christian *Al-Ikhlâs* (112):1-4,⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁶⁸ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 36. Cf. *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 10.73.721 (Khan 1:407): "Narrated Abū Huraira ...: The Prophet said, '... If they knew (the reward for) the first row, they would draw lots for it.'"

⁴⁶⁹ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 60.39.3421 (Khan 4:395-396): "Narrated Mujāhid: I asked Ibn 'Abbas, 'Should we perform a prostration on reciting *Sūrat Sad*?' He recited (the *Sūrah*) including: '...And among his progeny, Dāwūd (David), Sulaimān (Solomon) ... (up to)... so follow their guidance...' (V.6:84-91). And then he said, 'Your Prophet is amongst those people who have been ordered to follow them (i.e., the preceding Messengers).'"

⁴⁷⁰ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 35.

⁴⁷¹ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 26.12.1797 (Khan 3:33): "Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar ...: Whenever Allāh's Messenger returned from a *Ghazwa*, *Hajj* or 'Umra, he used to say *Takbīr* (*Allāhu-Akbar*) thrice at every elevation of the ground and then would say, None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh; He is One and has no partner. All the kingdom is for Him, and all the praises are for Him, and He is Omnipotent. We are returning with repentance, worshipping, prostrating, and praising our Lord. He has kept up His Promise and made His slave victorious, and He Alone defeated all the confederates (of disbelievers).'" Parshall, *Inside the Community*, 62, notes that in Islamic theology, the phrase "has no partner" functions as "a direct refutation of the Trinity."

⁴⁷² Frishman, "Islam and the Form of the Mosque," 20. Parshall, *Inside the Community*, 63, agrees that "[t]he integration of form and content is seen in this interplay between posture and theology."

⁴⁷³ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 128.

⁴⁷⁴ Thackston, "The Role of Calligraphy," 45.

⁴⁷⁵ "It is He Who hath sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it)," 'Alī.

⁴⁷⁶ "Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him," 'Alī. 'Alī's footnote 6296 on ayah 1 explains that "we must not think of Him as having a son or a father, for that would be to import animal qualities into our conception of Him." Footnote

and there is usually significance in the locations in which they are found.⁴⁷⁷ For example, “[i]t is Allah Who sustains the heavens and the earth, lest they cease,”⁴⁷⁸ is typical of dome inscriptions;⁴⁷⁹ puns on Muhammad being the “Gate of Knowledge” are common on portals;⁴⁸⁰ the *shahada* may be inscribed at the top of a *minaret*;⁴⁸¹ lamps are frequently coupled with a quotation from the surah of light, where light is associated metaphorically with Allah;⁴⁸² and Qur’anic imperatives to pray,⁴⁸³ or mentions of the *mihrab*,⁴⁸⁴ are popularly chosen to decorate the *mihrab*.⁴⁸⁵

Not just the content, but also the form of epigraphic decoration is a theological statement. Negatively, calligraphy replaces figural decoration, which, to the Muslim mind, carries overtones of idolatry.⁴⁸⁶ Positively, Muslims consider calligraphy the greatest art form,

6299 on ayah 3 says: “This is to negative [*sic.*] the Christian idea of the godhead, ‘the Father’, ‘the only-begotten Son’ etc.”

⁴⁷⁷ Thackston, “The Role of Calligraphy,” 44.

⁴⁷⁸ *Al-Malâ’ikah* (35):41, ‘Alī.

⁴⁷⁹ Thackston, “The Role of Calligraphy,” 48, cites as an example of this the main dome of the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul.

⁴⁸⁰ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 18.

⁴⁸¹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 18.

⁴⁸² “Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star.” *An-Nûr* (24):35, ‘Alī, as observed by Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 59.

⁴⁸³ E.g. *Hûd* (11):114.

⁴⁸⁴ E.g. *Ā’lay Imrân* (3):37, 39.

⁴⁸⁵ Thackston, “The Role of Calligraphy,” 47. On page 53, Thackston observes that “[t]he famous *mihrab* of Ölyaytü in Isfahan has the prophetic *hadith* which states that ‘God builds a house in paradise for him who builds a mosque.’” This *hadith* is recorded in *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 8.65.450 (Khan 1:287): “Narrated ‘Ubaidullâh Al-Maulânî: I heard ‘Uthmân bin ‘Affân ... saying, when people argued too much about his intention to reconstruct the mosque of Allâh’s Messenger, ‘You have talked too much. I heard the Prophet saying, “Whosoever built a mosque, (Bukair thought that ‘Āsim, another sub-narrator, added, “With the intention of seeking Allâh’s Countenance i.e. His Pleasure”) Allâh will build for him a similar place in Paradise.’””

⁴⁸⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 128. A contrast Muslims sometimes draw here with Christianity is particularly stark in Uzbekistan, where the local word for “church” is, literally translated, “house of idols” (Tim Green, personal communication, 10 February 2012).

embellishing the Qur'an, Allah's own speech:⁴⁸⁷ a point emphasised by the consistent use of Arabic for all Qur'anic inscriptions.⁴⁸⁸ Thus these inscriptions, too, both in form and in content, emphasise that mosques are holy:⁴⁸⁹ the "houses of Allah" on earth.⁴⁹⁰

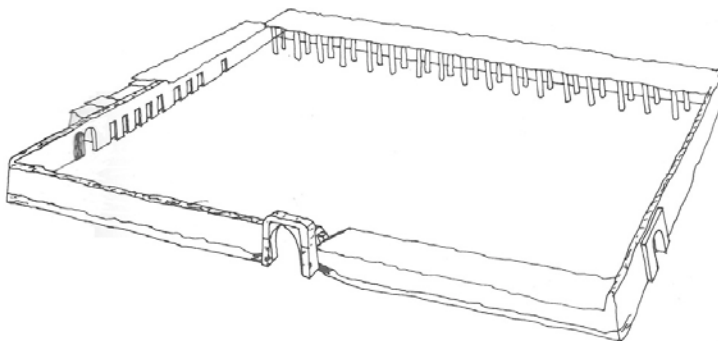


Figure 1. The mosque as a meeting-house

The mosque as a meeting-house

Along with the *ka'bah*, a second paradigm upon which mosques are deliberately modelled is Muhammad's house in Medina.⁴⁹¹ A diagram of this house is given in figure 1 above.

⁴⁸⁷ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 16. Cf. Zaki's comment on page 37: "The art of *tajwid*, or cantillation of the Qur'an, is one of the most cultivated arts in Islam, being the phonic equivalent of calligraphy, the Islamic art par excellence."

⁴⁸⁸ Dalu Jones, "The Elements of Decoration: Surface, Pattern and Light," in *Architecture of the Islamic World*, 168.

⁴⁸⁹ Frishman and Khan, "Preface," 14.

⁴⁹⁰ Tabarānī recited the *hadith*: "Masjids are the houses of Allah on the earth. They shine up to the inhabitants of the heavens just as the stars in the sky shine down to the inhabitants of the earth." As cited in Abdur-Rahman Ibn Yusuf, "Masjid or Musalla," n.p. [cited 1 March 2012]. www.central-mosque.com/fiqh/mmussalla1.htm. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy considers this to be a strong hadith (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁴⁹¹ Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*, 12.

The house's main feature was the square courtyard, measuring fifty-six metres on each side,⁴⁹² and enclosed by plain walls.⁴⁹³ To one side were located, almost incidentally, the private quarters for Muhammad and his wives:⁴⁹⁴ their location *outside* the courtyard,⁴⁹⁵ and the courtyard's comparatively vast size, suggests that Muhammad's house in Medina was purpose-built primarily as a public building.⁴⁹⁶ Apparently, after the *hijra*, Muhammad wanted a residence that would serve not only his own family, but also the exiled Muslim community.⁴⁹⁷

Other features of the building confirm this. A portico (*zulla*), constructed from palm-trunks and palm branches,⁴⁹⁸ ran along the *qibla* wall, providing shade for Muhammad's companions (*sahada*) when they gathered in the courtyard for prayer;⁴⁹⁹ and the opposite wall was partially overhung by a shed roof (*suffa*),⁵⁰⁰ under which indigent Muslims took shelter.⁵⁰¹ This also provided a forum for community discussions.⁵⁰²

The flexibility of Muhammad's Medinan residence made it an ideal focal point for the Muslim community,⁵⁰³ a social hub for the integrated pursuit of the spiritual and the secular.⁵⁰⁴ It functioned not only as a place of worship, but also, *inter alia* as: an information centre; a law court; a *madrasah* where Islam was taught; and the head-

⁴⁹² Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 39.

⁴⁹³ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 40.

⁴⁹⁴ Kuban, "The Central Arab Lands," 77, describes this residential accommodation as consisting of just "two rooms (later increased to nine to accommodate his wives) in the south-east."

⁴⁹⁵ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 39, points out that, "judg[ing] by later domestic architecture, the obvious location for rooms intended to be lived in would have been inside, not outside, the enclosure."

⁴⁹⁶ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 40.

⁴⁹⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 39.

⁴⁹⁸ Kuban, "The Central Arab Lands," 77.

⁴⁹⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 40.

⁵⁰⁰ Kuban, "The Central Arab Lands," 77.

⁵⁰¹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 40.

⁵⁰² Kuban, "The Central Arab Lands," 77.

⁵⁰³ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 39.

⁵⁰⁴ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 40.

quarters of the Islamic state where tribal delegations were received and treaties were signed.⁵⁰⁵

Both in form and in function, this first mosque at Medina has been the pattern for every subsequent mosque in Islamic history.⁵⁰⁶ Behind their many historical and regional stylistic variations, Kuban observes that Muhammad's "archetyp[al]" model, consisting of a courtyard, a sanctuary, and a hypostyle hall, still survives "to this day",⁵⁰⁷ and Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi,⁵⁰⁸ in a *fatwah* released in 2006,⁵⁰⁹ explains that for the Caliphs after Muhammad, the mosque continued to function as "their base for all activities political as well as non-political."⁵¹⁰ Although, over time, the mosque's role in religious education was increasingly outsourced to purpose-built *madrassas*,⁵¹¹ its judicial role, conducted by the *imāms*, persisted,⁵¹² and by the twelfth century, Grabar notes, the mosque had established itself as "the focal point for activities involving almost all aspects of collective life, from teaching to the exchange of information, from prayer to sheltering overnight while travelling."⁵¹³ Today, Hillen-

⁵⁰⁵ See Muhammad, "The Role of the Mosque," 7, and Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*, 12-13, for a list of these, and other roles performed at the Medinan mosque. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy describes Muhammad's Medinan mosque as "Buckingham Palace and 10 Downing Street together" (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁵⁰⁶ Turner, "The History of Islam's Mosques," 139, suggests that "[w]e find here the permanent pattern for the Muslim mosque, with basic features that have persisted in spite of later and somewhat contradictory influences."

⁵⁰⁷ Kuban, "The Central Arab Lands," 77. Kuban defines a "hypostyle hall" as "an interior space with multiple supports for the roof."

⁵⁰⁸ Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi is a highly significant voice in the Muslim world today: a trustee of the Oxford University Centre for Islamic Studies, who, in 2008, came third in a Foreign Policy Magazine poll of the world's top 20 public intellectuals.

⁵⁰⁹ The Arabic text of this *fatwah* is available online: http://web.archive.org/web/20060721050124/http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/SateLite?cid=1122528600828&pagename=IslamOnline-Arabic-Ask_Scholar/FatwaA/FatwaAAskTheScholar [cited 1 March 2012].

⁵¹⁰ As translated by Mark Durie, "What is a Mosque?," n.p. [cited 1 March 2012]. Online: <http://markdurie.blogspot.com/2010/09/what-is-mosque.html>.

⁵¹¹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 59-60.

⁵¹² Erzen, "Reading Mosques," 126.

⁵¹³ Grabar, "The Mosque in Islamic Society Today," 243.

brand observes: “the mosque can provide a place to live, food and accommodation for travellers, and facilities for teaching, administration and burial; all this in addition to its principal function of worship.”⁵¹⁴

Functionally, Muhammad’s original Medinan mosque finds its closest counterpart in today’s *jāmi‘* mosque, since Friday congregations add to the religious and social elements a distinctly political dimension.⁵¹⁵ In Islam, politics is closely associated with the *minbar*.⁵¹⁶ Initially Muhammad delivered his Friday sermons leaning against a pillar,⁵¹⁷ but as the congregation grew, an elevated pulpit eventually became necessary.⁵¹⁸ Customarily located immediately to the right of the *mihrab*,⁵¹⁹ the *minbar*, patterned after a throne,⁵²⁰ vividly illustrates the Islamic synthesis of religion and politics.⁵²¹ The Caliphs, following Muhammad’s example, led prayers from the *mihrab*,⁵²² before going on to preach from the *minbar*, one step down, out of respect for Muhammad.⁵²³ The content of the *khutba* was generally political, rather than dogmatic.⁵²⁴ Although later Caliphs devolved these duties to the *imāms*, the close connection between the

⁵¹⁴ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 5.

⁵¹⁵ Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 32. Note that this is a purely functional observation; as Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 44, explains, “the basic schema of open courtyard and covered sanctuary [is] common to both *masjid* and *jami‘*.”

⁵¹⁶ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 38.

⁵¹⁷ Kuban, “The Central Arab Lands,” 77.

⁵¹⁸ Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque,” 35.

⁵¹⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 46.

⁵²⁰ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 36.

⁵²¹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 45.

⁵²² Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 17.

⁵²³ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 36, records: “The first *minbar* was a rudimentary affair of three steps fashioned from tamarisk wood, from the topmost of which Muhammad addressed the Companions. Out of respect, Abū Bakr, the first caliph, occupied the intermediate step, and ‘Umar modestly used the lowermost; but ‘Uthmān said, ‘Shall we descend into the bowels of the earth?’, and thereafter everyone has used the first step from the top.”

⁵²⁴ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 18. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy feels strongly that “all our issues must be discussed in the Friday prayers, not just prayer and fasting” (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

mosque and politics remained:⁵²⁵ mosques were the places where rulers were installed,⁵²⁶ and formal mention of the ruler's name in the *khutba* was an essential mark of his continuing political legitimacy.⁵²⁷ Fathi observes that, "throughout the history of Islam the mosque has been the center and the scene of numerous political uprisings, revolts and social movements, often led by popular preachers from the *minbar*".⁵²⁸

It would, however, be incorrect to assume that the paradigm of "the mosque as a meeting-house" focusses exclusively on the Muslim community. Indeed, from the first Medinan mosque onwards, mosques have historically played a central role in propagating Islam. In Muhammad's mosque, *mujahideen* were trained,⁵²⁹ and jihad was planned.⁵³⁰ "From ancient times", Al-Qaradawi reminds us, "the mosque has had a role in urging jihad for the sake of Allah ... The mosque's role in the Afghan jihad, and in every Islamic jihad cannot be denied."⁵³¹

Later architectural developments of minarets and domes were also inspired, in part, by the desire for Islam's propagation and advance.⁵³² The call to prayer from the minaret, whilst announcing the prayer time, is simultaneously a method of campaigning for Islam,⁵³³

⁵²⁵ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 54.

⁵²⁶ Turner, "The History of Islam's Mosques," 141.

⁵²⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 46.

⁵²⁸ Fathi, "The Islamic Pulpit," 165.

⁵²⁹ Muhammad, "The Role of the Mosque," 7, who defines *mujahideen* as "those who fight in the way of Allah."

⁵³⁰ Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*, 12-13.

⁵³¹ As translated by Durie, "What is a Mosque?," n.p. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy explains that "when we start a war or end a war, the mosque is always the start-point and the end-point. We need to go to the mosque before we go anywhere to seek blessing for the action; then we guarantee God is with us in all we do" (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁵³² This has been poetically expressed by Recep Erdogan, the current Prime Minister of Turkey: "The mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers." See BBC News, "Turkey's charismatic pro-Islamic leader," n.p. [cited 1 March 2012]. Online:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2270642.stm>.

⁵³³ Muhammad, "The Role of the Mosque," 8.

both in spiritual warfare against Satan,⁵³⁴ and in conscious opposition to Jews and Christians.⁵³⁵ Indeed, as “lived” in diaspora settings,⁵³⁶ domes and minarets have become powerful symbols of Muslim presence.⁵³⁷ Where minarets face local government restrictions,⁵³⁸ domes, which traditionally were located along the *qibla* wall primarily to mark out the location of the *mihrab* to the outside world,⁵³⁹ are today increasingly becoming the dominant expression of Muslim identity to the non-Muslim majority.⁵⁴⁰ Post-colonialism,⁵⁴¹ and especially in today’s globalised world,⁵⁴² a growing desire to reassert a

⁵³⁴ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 10.4.608 (Khan 1:357): “Narrated Abū Hurairah ...: “Allāh’s Messenger said, ‘When the *Adhān* is pronounced Satan takes to his heels and passes wind with noise during his flight in order not to hear the *Adhān*. When the *Adhān* is completed he comes back, and again takes to his heels when the *Iqāma* is pronounced; and after its completion he returns again till he whispers into the heart of the person [to divert his attention from his *salāt* (prayer)] and makes him remember things which he does not recall to his mind before the *salāt* and that causes him to forget how much he has prayed.”

⁵³⁵ *Sahih Al-Bukhâri* 10.1.604 (Khan 1:355-356): “Narrated Ibn ‘Umar ...: When the Muslims arrived at Al-Madinā, they used to assemble for *As-salāt* (the prayer), and used to guess the time for it. During those days, the practice of *Adhān* for *salāt* (prayers) had not been introduced yet. Once they discussed this problem regarding the call for *salāt*. Some people suggested the use of a bell like the Christians, others proposed a trumpet like the horn used by the Jews, but ‘Umar was the first to suggest that a man should call (the people) for *As-salāt*; so, Allāh’s Messenger ordered Bilāl to get up and pronounce the *Adhān* for *As-Salāt*.”

⁵³⁶ To recall Lefebvre’s terminology.

⁵³⁷ Cf. Jonathan Bloom, *Minaret: Symbol of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). Biondo, “The Architecture of Mosques,” 406, has observed that “[i]n Southern California ... many American Muslims agree that a building is not really a mosque unless it is adorned with minarets and a dome.” Cf. Noha Nasser, “The Space of Displacement: Making Muslim South Asian Place in British Neighbourhoods,” *TDSR* 15 (2003): 15.

⁵³⁸ See, e.g. Jane O’Brien, “Muslim America moves away from the minaret,” n.p. [cited 1 March 2012]. Online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16825976>.

⁵³⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 53-54.

⁵⁴⁰ Biondo, “The Architecture of Mosques,” 406.

⁵⁴¹ Grabar, “The Mosque in Islamic Society Today,” 244.

⁵⁴² Khan, “An Overview of Contemporary Mosques,” 266, thinks “[t]he adoption of an Indian-style dome, imported into a region which never had such a traditional building form, raises issues not only of appropriateness but of Indonesia’s apparent need of validation from the heartland of Islam.”

national Islamic identity is making domes an increasingly necessary identity marker in Muslim lands, too.⁵⁴³

We may see here an expression of the *Shari'ah* principle, drawn from the *hadith*,⁵⁴⁴ that “Islam rises above all.”⁵⁴⁵ As Belteshazzar and Abednego explain, “[a] mosque must be the highest and, especially in the land of the unbelievers when surrounded by unbelief, the tallest, broadest, widest in whatever other manner its superiority can be demonstrated.”⁵⁴⁶

Summary

The term “mosque,” in some ways analogously to the semantic trajectory of *ummah*, traced above, became over time increasingly specific, developing from denoting generic places of worship, to today exclusively referring to what Hillenbrand deems “the Islamic building *par excellence*.”⁵⁴⁷ The fundamental integration of the sacred and the secular in Islam finds clear expression in these buildings, and arises from the synthesis of the two distinct paradigms that underlie them.

First, there is the “sacral” or “temple” paradigm, based on the Meccan *ka'bah*, which the Qur'an styles as Allah's holy house. A similar, albeit attenuated, quality of holiness is attributed to every mosque,⁵⁴⁸ and is fostered by mosque architecture,⁵⁴⁹ symbolism and rituals, especially liturgical prayer. The mosque's primary function

⁵⁴³ Hugh O'Neill, “South-East Asia,” in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 225, notes that “it was only in the nineteenth century that mosques with domes were first built in South-East Asia.” Today, however, domed mosques are becoming the local norm.

⁵⁴⁴ “Bukhari reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, ‘Islam stands highest and nothing else can stand above it.’” As cited in Muhammad, “The Role of the Mosque,” 5.

⁵⁴⁵ Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*, 37.

⁵⁴⁶ Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*, 37. Consider, for instance, that both the tallest building in the Islamic world (the Burj Khalifa, in Dubai) and the tallest building in the European Union (the Shard, in London: scheduled to be completed in time for the 2012 Olympics), are distinctively Islamic structures.

⁵⁴⁷ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 31.

⁵⁴⁸ Turner, “The History of Islam's Mosques,” 145.

⁵⁴⁹ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 32, deems mosque architecture “profoundly religious in its intent.”

is to provide a stage for *salat*,⁵⁵⁰ by means of which worshippers, properly orientated towards the *ka'bah*, express their submission to Allah, receive forgiveness of sins, and participate in the union of heaven and earth.⁵⁵¹ Zepp, then, is right to speak of the mosque as “theology in concrete”.⁵⁵²

Second, there is a “non-sacral” or “meeting-house” paradigm, based on Muhammad’s house in Medina. As Muhammad’s house was the focal point of the Muslim community, so too are mosques today.⁵⁵³ The place of prayer does not stand in isolation, but is complemented by spaces catering for wider community needs,⁵⁵⁴ spaces in which religious, social and political dimensions are inseparably linked. This second paradigm also gives the mosque its outward face to the non-Muslim world: the mosque is the centre from which Islam is to be propagated to the wider community. Indeed, this purpose is inherent in its very design: “in modern society,” Frishman and Khan agree, “the mosque serves as the single most important visible representation of Muslim identity and values.”⁵⁵⁵

The Relationship of the Mosque to the Ummah

The above surveys of the *ummah* and the mosque suggest that the two are significantly interrelated. On the one hand, the mosque upholds the Meccan focus by which the *ummah* is united;⁵⁵⁶ on the other, the mosque is the forum wherein the imagined corporate solidarity of the worldwide *ummah* is enacted practically at the local

⁵⁵⁰ Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, 31.

⁵⁵¹ Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy notes that, in the seventh heaven, the angels themselves are praying toward the *ka'bah* and circumambulating it (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁵⁵² Ira G. Zepp, *A Muslim Primer: Beginner's Guide to Islam* (London: Shed and Ward, 1992), 197.

⁵⁵³ Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy insists that a key purpose of the mosque is “to gather the people together and strengthen the people’s relationships” (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁵⁵⁴ Khan, “An Overview of Contemporary Mosques,” 267.

⁵⁵⁵ Frishman and Khan, “Preface,” 14.

⁵⁵⁶ Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy observes that, since Mecca is “the centre of the earth,” when Muslims around the world all pray toward the *ka'bah*, in effect, “everybody’s looking at each other” (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

level.⁵⁵⁷ For analytical purposes, these two relationships may be broadly correlated with the two mosque paradigms outlined above.

The temple and the ummah

In surah *Al-Baqarah*, the distinguishing mark of the *ummah* “justly balanced,” showing that they, not the “people of the book,” are the genuine *ummah* of Abraham, is that the Muslims have a *qibla* that points toward the *ka’bah* that Abraham purified.⁵⁵⁸

The mosque gives this theology tangible expression. As seen above, mosques are architecturally designed to create an atmosphere of “balance,”⁵⁵⁹ and their decorative focus falls inevitably upon the *mihrab* in the *qibla* wall. The *salat* enacted there has a significant unitive role.⁵⁶⁰ The highly standardised form of this intensely participatory ritual enables a Muslim to attend any mosque in the world, line up alongside worshippers he has never previously met, and, by facing in a common direction, speaking in a common Arabic language, and moving in a common pattern, to liturgically express solidarity in submission to Allah.

In Friday prayers, the *ummah* is a significant theme,⁵⁶¹ and the *hadith* make regular mosque attendance a definitive mark of the

⁵⁵⁷ Schmidt, “The Transnational *Umma*,” 577, explains that “[t]he *umma* is, above all, an idea or vision... Within certain disciplines (e.g., Islamic studies, political science, transnational studies), a recurring conceptualization of the transnational *umma* is that of an ‘imagined’ or ‘reimagined’ community.” Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (London: Hurst and Company, 2004), 202-203, perceives a conceptual link between a “detritorialised” *ummah* and Islamic “neofundamentalism.” Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy says that, in a sense, “you can’t distinguish the mosque and the *ummah*. If the mosque is being used in the right way – as a community centre, a school, a university, a training centre, a meeting place, etc., – then this will be an expression that we are one *ummah*. It represents the *ummah*” (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁵⁵⁸ *Al-Baqarah* (2):124-151.

⁵⁵⁹ Erzen, “Islamic Architecture,” 71.

⁵⁶⁰ Turner, “The History of Islam’s Mosques,” 140.

⁵⁶¹ Schmidt, “The Transnational *Umma*,” 575. Indeed, Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy connects the purpose of the Friday prayers directly to the Islamic theology of the *ummah*: based on an aspirational reading of Qur’anic descriptions of the whole world as one *ummah*, Elsharkawy explains: “we pray in congregation because the aim of Islam is to get people together” (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

faithful Muslim.⁵⁶² Unsurprisingly, then, when countries wish to more strongly assert their Islamic identity, there is often a correlating increase in emphasis on participating in the five times daily mosque prayers.⁵⁶³

The meeting-house and the ummah

As seen above, the “meeting-house” paradigm entails the mosque being the public face of the local Muslim community; a face increasingly coming to symbolise the world-wide *ummah*, as a global pan-Islamic architectural style becomes ever-more dominant.⁵⁶⁴

Surah *Ā'lay Imrān* describes Muslims as “the best of peoples [*ummatin*], evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.”⁵⁶⁵ In its immediate literary context, a central facet of what it means to be the “best” *ummah* must include the brotherly unity existing within the Muslim *ummah*,⁵⁶⁶ where tribal identities are, as Al-Azami’s puts it, “marginalised.”⁵⁶⁷ At the global level, the egalitarianism of the transnational *ummah* is actualised on the *hajj*;⁵⁶⁸ at the city level, however, this Muslim solidarity finds its equivalent expression at the mosque,⁵⁶⁹ where, as

⁵⁶² “Ahmad, al Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah reported on the authority of Ibn Sa’id that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, ‘If you see a man going frequently to the mosques, bear witness that he is a believer.’” As cited in Muhammad, “The Role of the Mosque,” 11.

⁵⁶³ Tim Green (personal communication, 10 February 2012).

⁵⁶⁴ Khan, “An Overview of Contemporary Mosques,” 267.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):110, ‘Alī (cf. “Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind. Ye enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and ye believe in Allah,” Pickthall). Cf. *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):104.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ā'lay Imrān* (3):103-104.

⁵⁶⁷ Al-Azami, “Review Article,” 335.

⁵⁶⁸ Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (10th ed.; London: Macmillan, 1970), 136, describes the *hajj* as “the major unifying influence in Islam and the most effective common bond among the diverse believers. . . . The socializing influence of such a gathering of the brotherhood of believers from the far quarters of the earth is hard to overestimate.” Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy explains that the purpose of the *hajj* is not merely for worship, but also that Muslims might meet together for discussion, for trade, and to make plans for the year ahead (personal communication, 15 March 2012).

⁵⁶⁹ Basim Musallam, “The Ordering of Muslim Societies,” in *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World* (ed. Francis Robinson; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 164.

salat expresses corporate theological unity, so too the practice of *shari'ah* law enforces harmony at the social level.

Mosques themselves draw Muslims together,⁵⁷⁰ helped by popular belief that they signify divine presence in the community.⁵⁷¹ Expression of Muslim unity reaches its highpoint at the annual *'Īd al-Adha* festival when, Zaki explains, “the climax of the pilgrimage rites in the Plain of Arafat outside Mecca coincides with the *'Īd* prayers being said throughout the Islamic world. Thus the *'Īd* ritual is a local reflection of the pilgrimage”,⁵⁷² and hence, simultaneously, a local expression of the worldwide *ummah*.

Summary

In some ways, the mosque is to the local Muslim community what the *ka'bah* is to the worldwide *ummah*. Parallels may be drawn between the compulsory Friday gatherings at the mosque and the compulsory pilgrimage to Mecca; between the symbolic union of heaven and earth in the local mosque and the convergence of vertical and horizontal axes at the *ka'bah*; and perhaps even between the circumambulation of the *ka'bah* during the *hajj* and the necessarily convoluted approaches to many local mosques.⁵⁷³

This relationship, however, is asymmetric: the mosque and the local Muslim community derive their Islamic identities in relation to the *ka'bah* and the *ummah*, not vice-versa. To quote Zaki:

⁵⁷⁰ E.g. Goolam Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa,” *JMMA* 20 (2000): 45, describes how in South Africa, “[a]n important step in reconstructing religious life among the Muslim community was the building of mosques. Mosques became the centre of Muslim worship and congregational prayer and became the means to build community spirit.” Ray Porter observes that an increased rate of mosque construction often correlates with a heightening of a region’s Islamic self-identity (personal communication, 24 February 2012).

⁵⁷¹ Arkoun, “The Metamorphosis of the Sacred,” 268.

⁵⁷² Yaqub Zaki, “Allah and Eternity,” 35.

⁵⁷³ Erzen, “Reading Mosques,” 129, suggests that “[a] comparison between the approach to the great mosque of Suleymaniye in Istanbul and the approach to a Christian basilica, such as St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, is revealing in this respect. In the former, although we see the building in all its monumentality from a distance, as we come near, we are led through labyrinth streets, and access to the entrance of the mosque becomes possible only after spiraling [*sic.*] toward it. In Rome, after a certain point, a straight path, creating a linear perspective, will lead us directly to the front of St. Peter’s.”

The Muslim world is spread out like a gigantic wheel with Mecca as the hub, with lines drawn from all the mosques in the world forming the spokes. These lines converge on a city and within that city on a point. The city is Mecca, and the point is the Ka'ba at its centre. Mecca, the birthplace of Muhammad, is Islam's holy city and the goal of pilgrimage. The Ka'ba, a hollow cube of stone, many times rebuilt, the original of which goes back beyond the time of Muhammad, is the *axis mundi* of Islamic cosmology ... the primordial symbol of the intersection between the vertical axis of the spirit and the horizontal plane of phenomenal existence.⁵⁷⁴

Conclusion

This chapter has identified and described the Muslim concepts of *ummah* and mosque and considered their interrelation. The major sources drawn upon were Islamic scriptures, traditions and architecture, in dialogue with Muslim scholars. Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Hussaini has read the final draft of this chapter and comments: "In my humble opinion, there is nothing in the chapter that contradicts an orthodox Sunni Muslim perspective."⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷⁴ Yaqub Zaki, "Allah and Eternity," 16. Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy explains that the black stone in the corner of the *ka'bah* comes from heaven, and is a sign that "Allah is here." Muslims who come to the *ka'bah* should kiss the black stone or, if this is impossible due to the crowd, at least stand opposite the black stone and salute it (personal communication, 15 March 2012). According to *Sunan At-Tarmazi*, *hadith* 968, and *Sahih Ibn Khazima* 4/223, *hadith* 2735: "Regarding the Black Stone, the Messenger says: 'By Allah, Allah will bring it forth on the Day of Resurrection, and it will have two eyes with which it will see and a tongue with which it will speak, and it will testify in favour of those who touched it sincerely.'" As cited in Al Mojan, *The Honorable Kabah*, 29. A recent display at the British Museum observed of the Black Stone that "[a]ccording to some Muslim traditions it had come from Paradise whiter than milk, but the sins of the descendants of Adam turned it black" (noted on a personal visit to the "Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam," British Museum exhibition, 22 March 2012).

⁵⁷⁵ Personal communication, 19 April 2012. Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Hussaini later commented: "I was honoured to be of some assistance ... with his excellent dissertation, and very pleased to offer the recommendation from my reading of his diligent research and analysis, which indicates that he has accurately reflected the understanding of Islam among a very large proportion of Orthodox Sunni Muslims." Personal communication, 25 April 2012.

In conclusion, therefore, the perspective set out in this chapter may legitimately claim to be a *Muslim* view of the mosque as part of the *ummah*.

Chapter 3: Comparison and Missiological Analysis

Introduction

In this chapter I will first summarise my findings from chapters one and two, outlining in tabular form the similarities and differences between a Christian view of *ekklēsia* and a Muslim view of the mosque as part of the *ummah*. I will then consider how these findings can help advance current missiological discussions concerning “Insider Movements.”

Table of Comparison

Eleven similarities and differences observed between the Christian view of *ekklēsia* outlined in chapter one, and the Muslim view of the mosque as part of the *ummah* outlined in chapter two, are tabulated below.

Similarities	Differences
Corporate religious identity is expressed at three distinct sociological levels: in the home (house church / <i>masjid</i>); in the wider community (local gathering / <i>jami'</i>); and in the transnational imagined community (universal church / <i>ummah</i>).	In Christianity, the <i>gathering</i> is holy, defining the building; in Islam, the <i>building</i> is holy, defining the gathering. Thus, while the Christian <i>ekklēsia</i> existed at all three levels for over two centuries before the first church building was constructed, ⁵⁷⁶ mosque buildings (the <i>ka'bah</i> in Mecca and Muhammad's house in Medina) have been a part of Islam from the <i>hijra</i> onwards.
Regular attendance at a local <i>ekklēsia</i> / mosque identifies the	Christians gather as a consequence of their prior salvation in Christ;

⁵⁷⁶ Peter O'Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” in *The Church in the Bible and the World* (ed. D. A. Carson; Exeter: Paternoster Press 1987), 93.

<p>worshipper as part of the wider religious Christian / Muslim community.</p>	<p>for Muslims, mosque attendance is itself salvific, and forgiveness of sins is sought by means of Islamic rituals (<i>wudu'</i>, <i>salat</i>) performed in a holy space.</p>
<p>Preaching and prayer are part of the local gathering.</p>	<p>Whilst gathering to hear and respond to God's word is an essential component for all Christian <i>ekklēsiai</i>, for Muslims, the <i>khutba</i> is associated only with the <i>jami'</i> mosque, and its content is frequently more political than scriptural. For Muslims, by contrast, a mosque is principally a stage for the performance of <i>salat</i>.</p>
<p>Both the local <i>ekklēsia</i> and the mosque were quickly invested with distinctively Christian / Islamic connotations to distinguish them from other gatherings / buildings at the time (e.g. synagogues; political assemblies).</p>	<p>Mosques and the gatherings therein were consciously distinguished from church buildings and meetings through differences in: the day of meeting (Friday not Sunday); the summons to assemble (by voice not bells); the direction of prayer (toward Mecca not Jerusalem); and a liturgy which enacts Islam and repudiates Christianity.</p>
<p>Both Christian <i>ekklēsiai</i> and Muslim gatherings are intended to express the harmony and reinforce the unity of former enemies united as brethren by God / Allah.</p>	<p>For Christians, brotherly unity is founded on their spiritual union with God and one another won by Christ at the cross; reinforced by strengthening the congregation's faith in the gospel; and expressed as different members of the body of Christ serve one another with varied spiritual gifts. For Muslims, brotherly unity is founded on a common submission to Allah; reinforced by intense corporate</p>

	<p>rituals (<i>salat</i>, the <i>ramadhan</i> fast, and the <i>hajj</i>); and expressed through synchronised <i>salat</i> toward the <i>ka'bah</i>.</p>
<p>A theological interrelationship is envisaged between gatherings in local <i>ekklēsiai</i> / mosques and the universal <i>ekklēsia</i> / <i>ummah</i>.</p>	<p>Both the local and universal <i>ekklēsiai</i> have Christ as their common locus and derive their identity in relationship to him, the temple in whom both heaven and earth unite. By contrast, in Islam, the vertical and horizontal axes unite in the <i>ka'bah</i>, and thus the <i>ka'bah</i> is the focal point and source of identity both for local mosque gatherings and for the universal <i>ummah</i>.</p>
<p>A union of heaven and earth is envisaged both in Christian <i>ekklēsiai</i> / and in Muslim mosques.</p>	<p>The Christian <i>ekklēsia</i> achieves this union by means of the Holy <i>Spirit</i>: by his Spirit, Jesus is present with Christians in local earthly <i>ekklēsiai</i>, and Christians are present with Jesus in the heavenly <i>ekklēsia</i>. Muslims, by contrast, seek participation in heaven by means of <i>salat</i> performed in the holy <i>direction</i>.</p>
<p>Both Christians and Muslims are to pursue priorities on earth consistent with their membership in the universal church / <i>ummah</i>. This identity demands primary allegiance over other identities, whether cultural heritage, political affiliation, social status or nationality.</p>	<p>A Christian's identity as part of the universal church is distinct from, relativises and sanctifies these other identities. By contrast, in Islam, religion, politics and culture form an undivided whole in the Muslim <i>ummah</i> which not only influences, but claims national and cultural space, and is extended through both spiritual and physical warfare.</p>

<p>The universal church / <i>ummah</i> each consider themselves to be the sole authentically Abrahamic religious community, and membership of this universal brotherhood is inseparable from salvation.</p>	<p>The Christian universal church claims continuity with Abraham through faith-union with Christ, who is the salvation-historical fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant; the Muslim <i>ummah</i> claims continuity with Abraham by practising the original Abrahamic religion preached by all the prophets.</p>
<p>Both Christianity and Islam teach that it is possible for believers, in this life, to participate to some degree in the universal gathering of all true believers in the most holy place.</p>	<p>Christians today, through faith, participate in the intangible heavenly gathering of all true believers, of which the Sinai assembly was a typological foreshadowing. By contrast, Muslims today, who identify God's holy temple as the earthly <i>ka'bah</i>, seek to participate in the tangible earthly gathering of all true believers through the <i>hajj</i> to Mecca.</p>
<p>Idolatry is abhorred by Christian <i>ekklēsiai</i> both local and universal; and both in Muslim mosques and throughout the Muslim <i>ummah</i>.</p>	<p>From a Christian perspective, Muslim prayer toward the black stone is idolatrous. From the Muslim perspective, Christian prayer offered in Jesus' name to the triune God is idolatrous.</p>

I have discussed this table with Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Al-Hussaini, and he agrees that it gives a fair comparison of the two views.⁵⁷⁷

Missiological Implications

From the above table we see that the Muslim view of the mosque as part of the *ummah* stands in antithetical relation to the Christian view of the *ekklēsia*. The underlying structural similarities reveal that the differences between these views are not incommensurable, but are

⁵⁷⁷ Personal communication, 19 April 2012.

genuinely contradictory. We thus have two mutually exclusive sets. Membership of the mosque and the Muslim *ummah* is theologically incompatible with membership of the Christian *ekklēsia*, and hence, by necessary implication, with a new identity in Christ.

Should Christian missionaries, then, be encouraging Muslims to retain their Islamic religio-cultural identity and follow Jesus as “C5 believers”? I shall now show how the above findings can shed light on this question, through interaction with two articles written by prominent advocates of “Insider Movements”. First, I will engage with J. Dudley Woodberry’s “Contextualization Among Muslims: Reusing Common Pillars,”⁵⁷⁸ which John Travis has described as “a landmark paper” that “pushed our thinking ahead in this area.”⁵⁷⁹ Second, I will consider “Honouring God-Given Identity and Community,”⁵⁸⁰ in which Rebecca Lewis elucidates the position of “Insider Movements” with respect to Christian ecclesiology.

“Reusing Common Pillars”

The “Common Pillars” advocated for “reuse” in Woodberry’s article are the five pillars of Islam: the *shahada*,⁵⁸¹ *salat*; *zakat*,⁵⁸² *sawm*,⁵⁸³ and the *hajj*. Woodberry argues that Islam derived each of these pillars from earlier Jewish and Christian traditions. “There were, of course, alterations of meaning as words and practices moved from Jewish and Christian systems of thought to a Muslim one; but, as will be seen, the systems were similar enough that the core meanings re-

⁵⁷⁸ J. Dudley Woodberry, “Contextualization Among Muslims: Reusing Common Pillars,” in *The Word Among Us: Contextualizing Theology for Mission Today* (ed. Dean S. Gilliland; Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989). This article was later reprinted in the *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, and it is the page numbers from this second printing that I shall cite henceforth.

⁵⁷⁹ John and Anna Travis, “Appropriate Approaches in Muslim Contexts,” in *Appropriate Christianity* (ed. Charles H. Kraft; Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 2005), 398.

⁵⁸⁰ Rebecca Lewis, “Insider Movements: Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” *IJFM* 26 (2009): 16-19.

⁵⁸¹ Confession of faith: “I testify that there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah.”

⁵⁸² Almsgiving.

⁵⁸³ The Ramadhan fast.

mained.”⁵⁸⁴ Considering each pillar in turn, Woodberry draws parallels with, respectively: the *shema*,⁵⁸⁵ “Christian prayer”,⁵⁸⁶ “Christian giving”,⁵⁸⁷ “Christian fasting”,⁵⁸⁸ and Old Testament Jewish pilgrimages.⁵⁸⁹ Given these similarities, Woodberry concludes that the five pillars of Islam can be adapted to “bear the weight of new allegiances to God in Christ in the Muslim world.”⁵⁹⁰

Woodberry’s provocative conclusion has been hotly contested by subsequent missiologists. Warren Chastain, for example, responded with “15 reasons for rejecting praying the Muslim prayer salat.”⁵⁹¹ Jonathan Culver, by contrast, welcomed Woodberry’s “seminal article,” and strove “to complement Woodberry’s insights.”⁵⁹²

Rather than entering here into what has become a protracted and increasingly entrenched debate, the research undertaken in this dissertation makes it possible to approach the topic from a fresh perspective. Let us grant, for sake of argument, that Woodberry is correct: with appropriate refinements, Islamic forms can indeed be brought into harmony with faith in Jesus. The question that now arises is: are Woodberry’s refashioned forms still authentically Islamic?

Consider, for instance, Woodberry’s suggested alterations for the Muslim *salat*. Functionally, Woodberry observes that “[t]he concept of acquiring merit through prayer is strong in Islamic thought – both in the Traditions and in contemporary practice.”⁵⁹³ By contrast, in the Bible, “[s]alvation is not seen as a result of merit (Tit 3:5); therefore, Protestants would want to eliminate this function of prayer.”⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁸⁴ J. Dudley Woodberry, “Contextualization Among Muslims: Reusing Common Pillars,” *IJFM* 13 (1996): 174.

⁵⁸⁵ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 174-175.

⁵⁸⁶ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 175-179.

⁵⁸⁷ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 179-180.

⁵⁸⁸ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 180-181.

⁵⁸⁹ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 181-182.

⁵⁹⁰ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 171.

⁵⁹¹ Warren C. Chastain, “Should Christians Pray the Muslim Salat?,” *IJFM* 12 (1995): 161-164.

⁵⁹² Jonathan Culver, “The Ishmael Promise and Contextualization Among Muslims,” *IJFM* 17 (2000): 61.

⁵⁹³ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 177.

⁵⁹⁴ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 177.

Thematically, Woodberry judges that “Christian prayer can include most of Muslim prayer except the emphasis on Muhammad and, for Protestants, prayer for the dead.”⁵⁹⁵ Finally, Woodberry gives a case study of “Muslim convert couples [who] developed a prayer ritual which follows the Muslim pattern but expresses their new allegiance to God through Jesus.”⁵⁹⁶ This involved “add[ing] ‘in the name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ’ before the traditional exclamation ‘God is greater’ (*Allahu akbar*),” and substituting Bible passages, and the phrase “All praise to Jesus Christ,” for certain Qur’anic texts.⁵⁹⁷

Missiologists who cite Woodberry’s article as confirmation of the viability of combining faith in Jesus with genuine membership of the Islamic religious community seem not to have grappled with the difficulty that the refashioned “*salat*” Woodberry proposes would be denounced as heretical by mainstream Islam. From the Muslim perspective outlined in chapter two of this dissertation, Woodberry’s alterations are not merely incidental to the *salat*, but, in several ways, challenge its very essence.

First, to deny the salvific efficacy of *salat*, and the prophetic supremacy of Muhammad, is to reject foundational tenets of Islamic orthodoxy. Second, to incorporate the liturgical elements Woodberry describes in his case study is to affirm beliefs which Woodberry himself admits, elsewhere in the article, are irreconcilable with Islamic theology: “Muslim prayer cannot include quite as much of Christian prayer because of the references to God as Father, Jesus as Lord, the Trinity, and the crucifixion of Christ.”⁵⁹⁸ Third, the direction of prayer undermines any possibility of harmonising faith in Jesus with performance of a recognisably Islamic form of *salat*. As discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation, in Islam, the *qibla* functions both negatively and positively. Negatively, praying toward Mecca expressly distinguishes the Muslim community from “the people of the book.” In an Islamic context, therefore, it would be inappropriate for a follower of Jesus to face Mecca in prayer. Yet positively, this

⁵⁹⁵ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 178.

⁵⁹⁶ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 183.

⁵⁹⁷ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 183.

⁵⁹⁸ Woodberry, “Reusing Common Pillars,” 178.

Meccan orientation is itself essential to Islamic *salat*, for it is by means of this holy direction that Muslim worshippers attempt to make a spiritual connection to heaven. Prayer towards Mecca, then, is incumbent upon all Muslims.

“Muslim followers of Jesus” are thus caught in a dilemma.⁵⁹⁹ To perform *salat* toward Mecca would be publicly to renounce their identity among the “people of the book”; yet to pray in any other direction would be, quite literally, to repent overtly of their Islamic religious identity. The dilemma is inescapable. Even if some of the difficulties could be overcome by discreetly praying Christianised words of a revised *salat* liturgy, a manifest choice of *qibla* remains an unavoidable part of the ritual.

“Honoring God-Given Identity and Community”

Rebecca Lewis, who strongly endorses Woodberry’s conclusions,⁶⁰⁰ is concerned to honour the “socio-political-religious identity” of believers in Jesus.⁶⁰¹ Citing Acts 17:26, Lewis argues: “[w]hen we encourage believers to remain in their families and networks, and to retain their birth identities, we honor these God-given relationships.”⁶⁰² Lewis contrasts “*planting* a church,”⁶⁰³ where “[i]ndividual believers, often strangers to one another, are gathered together into new fellowship groups,”⁶⁰⁴ with “*implanting* a church” in “a *pre-existing* community.... No longer does a *new* group try to become like a family; instead, the God-given family or social group becomes the church. The strong relational bonds already exist; what is new is their commitment to Jesus Christ.”⁶⁰⁵

⁵⁹⁹ I use here Travis’ terminology for individual “C5 believers.”

⁶⁰⁰ Writing in Dick Brogden, “Inside Out: Probing Presuppositions among Insider Movements,” *IJFM* 27 (2010): 38, Rebecca Lewis comments: “Dudley Woodberry’s article on Reusing Common Pillars of Islam explains that Mohammed himself got his recommendations from early Christian sources, so we do not need to be afraid if believers continue to fast, give alms, abstain from alcohol, and pray five times a day, etc., while depending solely on Christ for their salvation.”

⁶⁰¹ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17.

⁶⁰² Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17.

⁶⁰³ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17 (emphasis original).

⁶⁰⁴ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17.

⁶⁰⁵ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17 (emphasis original).

Lewis, keenly aware that “[i]n many countries today, it is almost impossible for a new follower of Christ to remain in vital relationship with their community without *also* retaining their socio-religious identity,”⁶⁰⁶ advocates that believers “[live] under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible, but *retain their socio-religious identity*.”⁶⁰⁷ This is a “distinct element” of “any insider movement,”⁶⁰⁸ for which Lewis finds justification by distinguishing “*spiritual identity*” in the “Kingdom of God,” entered “through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone,” from “*socio-religious identities*,” an example of which would be “Christianity,” which, for Lewis, is “a socio-religious system encompassing much more than simply faith in Christ... [namely] various cultural traditions, religious forms, and ethnic or political associations.”⁶⁰⁹ Lewis’ diagrammatic representation of this is reproduced below.

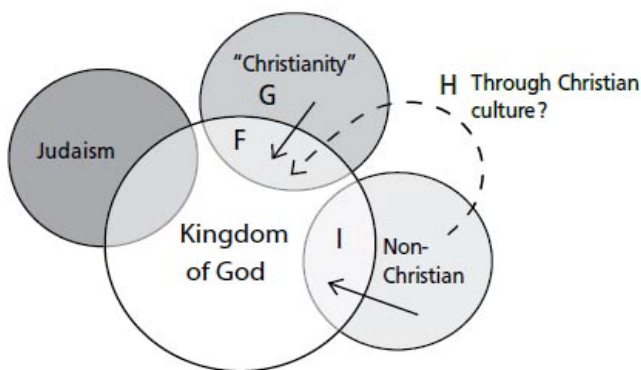


Figure 2: Kingdom Circles.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁶ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17 (emphasis original).

⁶⁰⁷ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17 (emphasis original).

⁶⁰⁸ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 16, who considers the other “distinct element” to be that “[t]he gospel takes root within *pre-existing communities* or social networks, which *become* the main expression of ‘church’ in that context. Believers are not gathered from diverse social networks to create a ‘church.’ New parallel social structures are not invented or introduced” (emphasis original).

⁶⁰⁹ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 18 (emphasis original).

⁶¹⁰ Reproduced from Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 18.

Lewis' "Kingdom Circles" distinguish several different groups of people. Many who belong to "Christianity", defined socio-religiously, are still outside the Kingdom of God (G). Through faith in Christ, however, these people may enter God's Kingdom directly, without changing their socio-religious identity (F). In the same way, a socio-religious "Non-Christian" may also, through faith in Christ, enter God's Kingdom directly, without needing to leave their socio-religious milieu (I). They should not first adopt "Christian culture" (H); indeed, Lewis counsels missionaries: "[i]f well-meaning Christians tell seekers that they must come to God not just through Christ but also through Christianity, help the Christians understand this requirement is 'not in line with the truth of the Gospel.'"⁶¹¹

Lewis' article is susceptible to critique along analogous lines to our response to Woodberry. Let us assume, once again, for sake of argument, that "implanted churches" may indeed be reconciled with a genuine communal expression of Muslim faith.⁶¹² Now, we ask: given the ecclesiological revisions that will be needed to achieve this reconciliation, is the resultant formulation still consistent with the Bible? In light of the Christian view of *ekklēsia* described in this dissertation, the answer to this question must be: "decidedly not."

Lewis is correct to observe that individual believers, through faith alone, receive a new "spiritual" identity in relation to God. She is mistaken, however, to overlook the new relationships with other believers that this "spiritual" identity also entails. As outlined above in chapter one, being "in Christ" is fundamental to biblical ecclesiol-

⁶¹¹ Lewis, "Honoring God-Given Identity and Community," 19. Lewis references Biblical texts from Acts, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and Colossians in support of this assertion. Cf. Rebecca Lewis, "The Integrity of the Gospel and Insider Movements," *IJFM* 27 (2010), 47: "if we demand that all believers adopt our own religious traditions and identity, then we are actually undermining the integrity of the gospel. We are subtly communicating that Jesus Christ cannot save people and gather them into His kingdom without using other religious traditions and institutions of godly men who have gone before. We are saying that the gospel alone is not powerful enough to save to the uttermost."

⁶¹² The analysis conducted in chapter two of this dissertation indicates that such "implanted churches" will need to be harmonised with both the "meeting-house" and "temple" mosque paradigms.

ogy. In him, restored vertical and horizontal relationships inseparably cohere, and it is for this reason that the Bible portrays Christian congregations as not merely aggregations of individuals, but as sharing a genuine corporate identity. Lewis, however, influenced perhaps by an unduly individualistic perspective, sees “church planting” only as the establishment of “aggregate churches”; explains the success or otherwise of such projects in purely naturalistic, cultural terms;⁶¹³ and thus, for pragmatic reasons, advances family bonds as an equally valid alternative basis for church membership. Lewis’ analysis of both the problem and the solution thus discloses underlying ecclesiological assumptions which contradict the biblical teaching that membership of Christ’s *ekklēsia* has a supernatural origin: incorporation “in Christ.” To instead root congregational relationality in some cultural factor, whether it be individualistic self-selection, or collectivistic familial ties, is to relegate the “church” to a sub-Christian institution: for “do not even pagans do that?”⁶¹⁴

Lewis’ inattention to the interconnections between ecclesiology and Christology comes into sharp relief when her description of “church implanting” is measured against New Testament ecclesial imagery. Consider, for example, the two metaphors discussed in chapter one. First, the “body of Christ” metaphor is employed biblically to emphasise the church’s *diverse unity* at both local and universal levels. For pragmatic reasons, however, Lewis’ scheme minimises diversity at the local level,⁶¹⁵ and entirely lacks any con-

⁶¹³ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17, writes: “Church planters try to help these individual believers *become like* a family or a community. This pattern of ‘aggregate church’ planting ... can work in individualistic Western societies. However, in societies with tightly-knit communities, the community is undermined when believers are taken out of their families into new authority structures.”

⁶¹⁴ Cf. Matthew 5:47. Consider also John 13:35; it would be reductionistic to dismiss this distinctive love as mere “Christian culture.”

⁶¹⁵ Lewis’ approach here seems to be an extension of the “Homogeneous Unit Principle” championed by the “Church Growth Movement.” See, e.g. Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (rev. and ed. 3d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 163: “People like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers.” Kevin Higgins, “Inside What? Church, Culture, Religion and Insider Movements in Biblical Perspective,” *SFM* 5 (2009): 75, observes that “Insider movements combine the insights of people movement or mass

ception of unity at the universal level. Second, the New Testament develops the “temple of God” metaphor so as to highlight the church’s *holy unity*, which demands that, at both local and universal levels, the church guards itself against both fragmentation and adulteration. Lewis’ “Kingdom Circles” diagram, however, apparently disregards both of these imperatives. On the one hand, with no recognition of the “universal church,” common participation in the “Kingdom of God” is not deemed in itself to be a sufficient basis for corporate identity:⁶¹⁶ believers are expected to fellowship only within non-overlapping, culturally homogenous groups. On the other hand, since “church implanting” depends upon each group preserving its particular socio-religious basis, it is hard to see how the believers in these congregations, still less the congregations themselves, can be meaningfully distinguished from the unbelieving society around them.⁶¹⁷

Lewis’ model seems far removed from the New Testament portrayal of the first century churches, which intentionally distinguished themselves from other assemblies in the surrounding socio-religious milieu, both religious and political. As already noted, their pointed choice of the word *ekklēsia* rather than the word *sunagōgē* to label their congregations differentiated them from the Jews, and their identity as those gathered “in God the Father” and “in the Lord Jesus Christ” showed that distinctive theological and Christological affirmations were intrinsic to their self-understanding. To minimise these claims, as would be necessary if an “implanted church” were to

movement thinking concerning the church with the point of view often referred to as C5.”

⁶¹⁶ *Contra* the more biblically defensible relationship of the Kingdom to the church advanced by George Eldon Ladd, *Jesus and the Kingdom: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (London: SPCK, 1966), 273, who considers the two to be “inseparable” but not “identified”: “The Kingdom creates the church, works through the church, and is proclaimed in the world by the church. There can be no Kingdom without a church – those who have acknowledged God’s rule – and there can be no church without God’s kingdom; but they remain two distinguishable concepts: the rule of God and the fellowship of men.”

⁶¹⁷ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 19, suggests that in these groups, the believers will be distinguishable from the unbelievers by their spontaneous “praise” and infectious “joy.” The distinctive sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are conspicuous by their absence.

take root and within an orthodox Islamic context,⁶¹⁸ would thus redefine the nature of that “church” so fundamentally as to render it no longer Christian.⁶¹⁹

In sum, Lewis is right to seek to honour “God-given identity and community.” Ironically, though, an inadequate recognition of the corporate implications of faith-union means that her proposal seriously backfires, and actually *dishonours* the primary “God-given identity and community” of every believer “in Christ.” Her article, then, does not resolve the dichotomy facing “Christ-centered Communities of ‘Messianic Muslims’”;⁶²⁰ rather, it serves only to underline the radical theological gulf which separates churches founded on Biblical faith from communities based on Islamic orthodoxy: a gulf which cannot be bridged. For a Muslim simultaneously to “[live] under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible, but *retain their socio-religious identity*,”⁶²¹ as Lewis proposes, is a chimera.

Summary

On the basis of the *emic* analyses conducted earlier in this dissertation, we have been able to offer symmetrical critiques of two significant articles used to promote “Insider Movements.” In response to Woodberry’s claim that Muslim worship forms may legitimately be harmonised with faith in Christ, we have shown that, even if this were possible, when considered from a Muslim perspective, the alterations Woodberry requires are so radical as to render the resultant forms no longer authentically Islamic. Similarly, in response to

⁶¹⁸ Ray Porter offers the following *a fortiori* argument: if orthodox Islam abominates the Ahmadiyya sect as heretical for accepting the prophet Ahmad, how much more unacceptable, from an Islamic perspective, must be a community that proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord (personal communication, 25 April 2012)?

⁶¹⁹ Cf. Doug Coleman, *A Theological Analysis of the Insider Movement Paradigm from Four Perspectives: Theology of Religions, Revelation, Soteriology and Ecclesiology* (Pasadena, Calif.: WCIU Press, 2011), Kindle e-book, loc. 303-304, who considers “Rebecca Lewis’ definition and distinctives of Insider Movements ... to be problematic in light of the clarity necessitated by biblical teaching on church membership, church discipline, and the ordinances.” Note that “Doug Coleman” is a pseudonym.

⁶²⁰ I am here using Travis’ corporate terminology for “C5 believers.”

⁶²¹ Lewis, “Honoring God-Given Identity and Community,” 17 (emphasis original).

Lewis' proposal that churches be "implanted" within Islamic religious communities, we have seen that the resultant "church," even if genuinely Islamic, must presuppose an ecclesiology so far removed from the biblical perspective as to be no longer recognisably Christian. At the individual and the corporate levels, then, Woodberry and Lewis have, respectively, failed to offer models which can uphold the dual identities envisaged in Travis' "C5" position: "Muslim followers of Jesus," who belong to "Christ-centered Communities of 'Messianic Muslims.'"⁶²²

The symmetry of the above critiques indicates that the deficiencies in both articles stem from a deeper common underlying fallacy. Crucial to the methodology of both Woodberry and Lewis is an atomistic treatment of Islam and Christianity. To assume, however, that particular elements of a religion, such as the Muslim *salat*, or Christian ecclesial relationships, may be independently abstracted from the religion and reinterpreted, runs contrary to the systemic nature of religions in general,⁶²³ and, as this dissertation has illustrated, the cohesiveness of biblical Christianity and orthodox Sunni Islam in particular. As Hendrik Kraemer famously observed at the third World Missionary Conference at Tambaram in 1938:

... every religion is an indivisible, and not to be divided, unity of existential apprehension. It is not a series of tenets, dogmas, prescriptions, institutions, practices, that can be taken one by one as independent items of religious life, conception or organization, and that can arbitrarily be compared with, and somehow related to, and grafted upon, the similar item of another religion.

Every religion is a living indivisible unity. Every part of it – a dogma, a rite, a myth, an institution, a cult – is so vitally related to the whole that it can never be understood in its real function, significance and tendency, as these occur in the reality of life, without keeping constantly in

⁶²² Travis, "The C1 to C6 Spectrum," 408.

⁶²³ For a carefully nuanced biblical Christian appraisal of other religions, see Daniel Strange, "Perilous Exchange, Precious Good News: A Reformed 'Subversive Fulfilment' Interpretation of Other Religions," in *Only One Way? Three Christian Responses on the Uniqueness of Christ in a Religiously Plural World* (ed. Gavin D'Costa; London: SCM Press, 2011).

mind the vast and living unity of existential apprehension in which this part moves and has its being.⁶²⁴

Apparently, Kraemer's warning went unheeded by Woodberry and Lewis: their enthusiasm for "reusing common pillars" reveals little awareness of how these pillars are organically connected to the religion as a whole.⁶²⁵ In view of the prominence of Woodberry and Lewis in contemporary missiological discussion, a further research project investigating how many other missiologists share their erroneous presupposition may prove highly illuminating. Could it be that the entire "Insider Movement" paradigm is predicated upon a "theology of religions" which is, at this fundamental point, misconceived?⁶²⁶

Conclusion

Phil Parshall's claim has been vindicated: an *emic* analysis has confirmed that the mosque is indeed "pregnant with Islamic theology."⁶²⁷ Parshall was also right to identify "C5" ministries as syncretistic,⁶²⁸ for the mosque's spiritual and sociological dimensions can-

⁶²⁴ Hendrik Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1938), 135.

⁶²⁵ Cf. Paul G. Hiebert, "Critical Contextualization," *Missiology* 12 (1984): 294-295, who, building on Polanyi's observation that the relationship between 'form' and 'meaning' lies along a spectrum, warns missionaries against incautiously assuming any particular religious form to be infinitely malleable: "symbols, whether words, objects or behavioral practices, operate in historical and cultural settings. Once forms have been given meanings, the relationship between them is no longer arbitrary. Attempts to redefine forms must always take into account the history and contemporary usage of those forms."

⁶²⁶ Doug Coleman has recently begun to open up this discussion. In *A Theological Analysis of the Insider Movement Paradigm*, Kindle e-book, loc. 262-263, 664-665, Coleman observes that Kevin Higgins is "the only major IMP [Insider Movement Paradigm] proponent to specifically address the issue of the IMP and theology of religions," and goes on to argue "that Higgins' approach rests on the shaky foundations of speculative exegesis, an overly positive view of religions, and a misplacement of non-Christian religions within the kingdom of God." Coleman does not, however, give specific attention to whether or not those whom he identifies as "IMP proponents" recognise the organic nature of religions.

⁶²⁷ Phil Parshall, "Danger! New Directions in Contextualization," *EMQ* 34 (1998): 409.

⁶²⁸ Parshall, "Danger!," 405.

not be decoupled: any legitimate claims to sociological continuity with the mosque community inevitably also endorse the Islamic theological commitments upon which that community is founded, and to which it in turn gives expression. On comparison with a Christian view of *ekklēsia*, these Islamic beliefs have been found profoundly antagonistic towards, and therefore incompatible with, faith in the Jesus of the Bible.

The concepts of “Muslim followers of Jesus” in communities of “Messianic Muslims,” widely accepted by proponents of “Insider Movements,” are theologically incoherent. One may be a Muslim, and, within Muhammad’s worldwide *ummah*, seek salvation through *salat* toward the earthly Mecca; or, one may be a follower of Jesus, and within his holy *ekklēsia* seek the heavenly Jerusalem, to which, through faith in Christ, true believers have already spiritually come. One may not, however, be both.

For too long, “Insider Movements” have wavered between two different opinions, but ultimately, a choice is inescapable. Will we bow the knee to Allah and kiss the *ka’bah*’s black stone, stained black by the sins of the world?⁶²⁹ Or, will we bow to the LORD and kiss the Son, the living stone, who conquered sin and death, now reigns from heaven, and calls sinners by grace into his holy church?

Surely their rock is not as our rock. Let us choose this day whom we will serve.

⁶²⁹ A recent display at the British Museum observed of the Black Stone that “[a]ccording to some Muslim traditions it had come from Paradise whiter than milk, but the sins of the descendants of Adam turned it black” (noted on a personal visit to the “Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam,” British Museum exhibition, 22 March 2012). Sheikh Dr. Mohamed Elsharkawy notes that pilgrims strive to kiss this stone (personal communication, 15 March 2012). *Sunan At-Tarmazi, hadith* 968 and *Sahih Ibn Khazima* 4/223, *hadith* 2735, may explain why: “Regarding the Black Stone, the Messenger says: ‘By Allah, Allah will bring it forth on the Day of Resurrection, and it will have two eyes with which it will see and a tongue with which it will speak, and it will testify in favour of those who touched it sincerely.’” As cited in Mohammed H. Al Mojan, *The Honorable Kabah: Architecture and Kiswah* (Makkah: Al-Kawn Center, 2010), 29.

Bibliography

- Al-Azami, Tarik Hamdi. "Review Article: Religion, Identity, and State in Modern Islam." *The Muslim World* 84 (1994): 334-342.
- Al-Bukhâri. *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhâri: Arabic-English*. Translated by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan. 9 vols. Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997.
- Alexander, Philip. "Early Jewish Geography." Pages 977-988 in vol. 2 of *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. London: Doubleday & Co., 1992.
- Ali, Ameer. "The State, the Mosque, and the Masses: Discordant Discourses." *Dialogue and Alliance* 23 (2009): 36-53.
- ‘Alī, Abdullah Yūsuf. *The Holy Qur’ān: Text, Translation and Commentary*. Rev. ed. Brentwood, Maryland: Amana, 1989.
- Al Mojan, Mohammed H. *The Honorable Kabah: Architecture and Kiswah*. Makkah: Al-Kawn Center, 2010.
- Ardalan, Nader. "'Simultaneous Perplexity': The Paradise Garden as the Quintessential Visual Paradigm of Islamic Architecture and Beyond." Pages 9-18 in *Understanding Islamic Architecture*. Edited by Attilio Petruccioli and Khalil K. Pirani. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.
- Arkoun, Mohammed. "The Metamorphosis of the Sacred." Pages 268-272 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Banks, Robert. *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting*. Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980.
- Barrett, C. K. *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. 2d ed. London: A. and C. Black, 1971.
- Bauer, Walter, Frederick William Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Beale, G. K. "The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5-7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2

- Corinthians 6:14-7:1.” Pages 217-247 in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*. Edited by G. K. Beale. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Beale, G. K., and Sean M. McDonough. “Revelation.” Pages 1081-1161 in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson. Nottingham: Apollos, 2007.
- Belteshazzar and Abednego, *The Mosque and its Role in Society*. London: Pilcrow Press, 2006.
- Biondo, Vincent F. III. “The Architecture of Mosques in the US and Britain.” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 26 (2006): 399-420.
- Blomberg, Craig. *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Bloom, Jonathan. *Minaret: Symbol of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Blue, Bradley. “Acts and the House Church.” Pages 119-222 in *Graeco-Roman Setting*. Vol. 2 of *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*. Edited by David W. J. Gill and Conrad H. Gempf. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. “The Aleph.” Translated by Norman Thomas Di Giovanni. No Pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://www.phinnweb.org/links/literature/borges/aleph.html>.
- Boutz, Jennifer Hill. “□assān ibn Thābit, a True *Mukha*□ram: A Study of the Ghassānid odes of □assān ibn Thābit.” Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 2009.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Brogden, Dick. “Inside Out: Probing Presuppositions among Insider Movements.” *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 27 (2010):33-40.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by Jon Van Hofwegen. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2002.
- Carson, D. A. *The Gospel According to John*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Nottingham: Apollos, 1991.

- Carson, D. A., and D. J. Moo. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. 2d ed. Leicester: Apollos, 2005.
- Chastain, Warren C. "Should Christians Pray the Muslim Salat?" *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 12 (1995): 161-164.
- Ciampa, Roy E., and Brian S. Rosner. *The First Letter to the Corinthians*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. 8 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993-2012.
- Clowney, Edmund P. "Interpreting the Biblical Models of the Church: A Hermeneutical Deepening of Ecclesiology." Pages 64-109 in *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: Text and Context*. Edited by D. A. Carson. Exeter: Paternoster, 1984.
- Clowney, Edmund P. "The Biblical Theology of the Church." Pages 13-87 in *The Church in the Bible and the World*. Edited by D. A. Carson. Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1987.
- Clowney, Edmund P. *The Church*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1995.
- Cole, Graham. "The Doctrine of the Church: Towards Conceptual Clarification." Pages 3-18 in *Church, Worship and the Local Congregation*. Edited by B. G. Webb. Explorations 2; Homebush West: Moore Theological College, 1987.
- Coleman, Doug. *A Theological Analysis of the Insider Movement Paradigm from Four Perspectives: Theology of Religions, Revelation, Soteriology and Ecclesiology*. Pasadena, Calif.: WCIU Press, 2011.
- Corniche, Salaam. "The *ekklesia* and the mosque: Same, similar or different?" *St. Francis Magazine* 7 (2011): 261-307.
- Cotterell, Peter. *Muhammad: The Man who Transformed Arabia*. Brunswick East: Acorn Press, 2011.
- Culver, Jonathan. "The Ishmael Promise and Contextualization Among Muslims." *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 17 (2000): 61-70.
- Denny, Frederick Mathewson. "The Meaning of *Ummah* in the Qur'ān." *History of Religions* 15 (1975): 34-70.

- Denny, Frederick M. "Ummah in the Constitution of Medina." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 36 (1977): 39-47.
- Denny, Frederick Mathewson. "Some Religio-Communal Terms and Concepts in the Qur'ān." *Numen* 24 (1977): 26-59.
- Dockery, D. S. *Biblical Interpretation Then and Now: Contemporary Hermeneutics in the Light of the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.
- Dumbrell, W. J. "The Spirits of Just Men made Perfect." *Evangelical Quarterly* 48 (1976): 154-59.
- Dunn, J. D. G. *Romans 9-16*. Word Biblical Commentary 38B. Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1988.
- Durie, Mark. "What is a Mosque?" No Pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://markdurie.blogspot.com/2010/09/what-is-mosque.html>.
- Elliott, J. H. "Temple versus Household in Luke-Acts." Pages 211-240 in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*. Edited by Jerome. H. Neyrey. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991.
- Erzen, Jale Nejdēt. "Reading Mosques: Meaning and Architecture in Islam." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 69 (2011): 125-31.
- Erzen, Jale Nejdēt. "Islamic Architecture: An Alternative Way to Knowledge." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 65 (2007): 69-75.
- Esposito, John L., ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Farrow, Douglas Bryce. *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999.
- Fathi, Asghar. "The Islamic Pulpit as a Medium of Political Communication." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 20 (1981): 163-172.
- Fee, Gordon D. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 32. London: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Flint, Chris. "God's Blessing to Ishmael with Special Reference to Islam." *St. Francis Magazine* 7 (2011): 1-53.
- Frishman, Martin J., and Hasan-Uddin Khan. "Preface." Pages 11-14 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Frishman, Martin J. "Islam and the Form of the Mosque." Pages 17-42 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Fung, R. Y. K. "Some Pauline Pictures of the Church." *Evangelical Quarterly* 53 (1981): 89-107.
- Gartner, Bertil. *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.
- Giles, Kevin. *What on Earth is the Church? A Biblical and Theological Inquiry*. London: SPCK, 1995.
- Gibb, Hamilton A. R. "The Community in Islamic History." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107 (1963): 173-176.
- Glassé, Cyril. *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Rev. ed. London: Stacey International, 2001.
- Goldingay, John E. *The Message of Isaiah 40-55*. London: T. & T. Clark International, 2005.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1991.
- Grube, Ernst J. "What is Islamic Architecture?" Pages 10-14 in *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*. Edited by George Michell. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2006.

- Guggenheim, Michael. "The Laws of Foreign Buildings: Flat Roofs and Minarets." *Social and Legal Studies* 19 (2010): 441-60.
- Harper, Brad. *Exploring Ecclesiology: An Evangelical and Ecumenical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009.
- Hawting, Gerald. "The Religion of Abraham and Islam." Pages 477-501 in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives on Kinship with Abraham*. Edited by Martin Goodman, George H. van Kooten and Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Hays, R. B. "The Conversion of the Imagination: Scripture and Eschatology in 1 Corinthians." *New Testament Studies* 45 (1999): 391-412.
- Hiebert, Paul G. "Critical Contextualization." *Missiology* 12 (1984): 287-296.
- Higgins, Kevin. "Inside What? Church, Culture, Religion and Insider Movements in Biblical Perspective." *St. Francis Magazine* 5 (2009): 74-91.
- Hillenbrand, Robert. *Islamic Architecture: Form, function and meaning*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.
- Hitti, Philip K. *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present*. 10th ed. London: Macmillan, 1970.
- Hoefler, Herbert. "What's in a Name? The Baggage of Terminology in Contemporary Mission." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 25 (2008): 25-29.
- Hort, F. J. A. *The Christian Ecclesia*. London: Macmillan and Col, 1898.
- Horton, Michael S. *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
- Hospers, J. *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*. 3d ed. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Jenson, Matt, and David Wilhite. *The Church: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010.
- Jones, Dalu. "The Elements of Decoration: Surface, Pattern and Light." Pages 144-175 in *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*. Edited by George Michell. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2006.

- Josephus, F. *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*. Translated by William Whiston. New upd. ed. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987.
- Khan, Hasan-Uddin. "An Overview of Contemporary Mosques." Pages 247-67 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Knox, D. B. "The Church." Pages 19-22 in *Selected Works, Volume 2*. Edited by Kirsten Birkett. Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2003.
- Koehler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Edited and translated by M. E. H. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- Kraemer, Hendrik. *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. London: Harper & Brothers, 1938.
- Kuban, Doğan. "The Central Arab Lands." Pages 77-99 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *Jesus and the Kingdom: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism*. London: SPCK, 1966.
- Lane, William L. *The Gospel of Mark*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.
- Lapidus, Ira M. "The Separation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6 (1975): 363-385.
- Leeman, Jonathan. "What Are the Keys of the Kingdom?" No pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/blog/what-are-keys-kingdom>.
- Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963.
- Lewis, Rebecca. "Promoting Movements to Christ within Natural Communities." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 24 (2007): 75-76.

- Lewis, Rebecca. "Insider Movements: Honoring God-Given Identity and Community." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 26 (2009): 16-19.
- Lewis, Rebecca. "The Integrity of the Gospel and Insider Movements." *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* 27 (2010): 41-48.
- Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. New 9th ed. rev. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.
- Lincoln, A. T. *Ephesians*. Word Biblical Commentary 42. Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1990.
- Lingel, Joshua, Jeff Morton, and Bill Nikides, eds. *Chrislam: How Missionaries are Promoting an Islamized Gospel*. Garden Grove, Calif.: i2 Ministries Publications, 2011.
- Luther, Martin. *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*. Translated by Erasmus Middleton. London: Harrison Trust, 1850.
- Mahmood, Saleha S. "A Word about Ourselves." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 25 (2005): 295-297.
- McGavran, Donald A. *Understanding Church Growth*. Rev. and ed. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- McKelvey, R. J. *The New Temple – the Church in the New Testament*. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Metzger, B. M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2d ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.
- Miner, Paul. *Images of the Church in the New Testament*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1961.
- Miner, Paul. "Church, Idea of." Pages 607-617 in vol. 1 of *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*. 4 vols. Edited by G. A. Buttrick. New York: Abingdon Press, 1962.
- Moo, Douglas J. "The Law of Christ as the Fulfillment of the Law of Moses: A Modified Lutheran View." Pages 317-376 in *Five Views on Law and Gospel*. Edited by Wayne G. Strickland. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Motyer, J. Alec. *Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999.

- Muhammad, Omar Bakri. "The Role of the Mosque." Cited 1 March 2012. Online: http://www.izharudeen.com/uploads/4/1/2/2/4122615/role_of_mosque_www.izharudeen.com.pdf.
- Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*. Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983.
- Musallam, Basim. "The Ordering of Muslim Societies." Pages 164-207 in *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*. Edited by Francis Robinson. Repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Nasser, Noha. "The Space of Displacement: Making Muslim South Asian Place in British Neighbourhoods." *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 15 (2003): 7-21.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. "Sunnah and Hadith." Pages 97-110 in *Islamic Spirituality: Foundations*. Edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. New York: Crossroad, 1987.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *A Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- Nicole, Roger. "The Relationship between Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology." Pages 185-194 in *Evangelical Roots: a Tribute to Wilbur Smith*. Edited by Kenneth S. Kantzer. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978.
- O'Brien, Jane. "Muslim America moves away from the minaret." No Pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16825976>.
- O'Brien, Peter. *Colossians, Philemon*. Word Biblical Commentary 44. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982.
- O'Brien, Peter. "The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity." Pages 88-119, 307-311 in *The Church in the Bible and the World*. Edited by D. A. Carson. Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1987.
- O'Brien, Peter. *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
- O'Brien, Peter. *The Letter to the Hebrews*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Nottingham: Apollos, 2010.
- O'Neill, Hugh. "South-East Asia." Pages 225-241 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*.

- Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- Parshall, Phil. *Inside the Community: Understanding Muslims through their Traditions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Parshall, Phil. "Danger! New Directions in Contextualization." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 34 (1998): 404-406, 409-410.
- Perrin, Nicholas. *Jesus the Temple*. London: SPCK, 2010.
- Peterson, David. "The 'Locus' of the Church: Heaven or Earth?" *Churchman* 112 (1998): 199-213.
- Philo. *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*. Translated by C. D. Yonge. New upd. ed. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993.
- Pickthall, Mohammad Marmaduke. *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*. No Pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://www.islam101.com/quran/QTP/index.htm>.
- Riddell, Peter G., and Peter Cotterell. *Islam in Context: Past, Present and Future*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Roberts, A. and J. Donaldson, eds. *The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*. Vol. 1 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973.
- Roy, Olivier. *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. London: Hurst and Company, 2004.
- Schmidt, Garbi. "The Transnational *Umma* – Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas." *The Muslim World* 95 (2005): 575-586.
- Schnabel, Eckhard J. *Jesus and the Twelve*. Vol. 1 of *Early Christian Mission*. Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
- Schrage, W. "*sunagōgē*." Pages 798-852 in vol. 7 of *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76.
- Serageldin, Ismail. "Introduction: Regionalism." Pages 72-76 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.

- Sleeman, Matthew. *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Sleeman, Matthew. "The Origins, Development and Future of the C5 / Insider Movement Debate." *St. Francis Magazine* 8 (2012): 498-566.
- Stackhouse, John G., Jr., ed. *Evangelical Ecclesiology: Reality or Illusion?* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Stibbs, Alan M. *The Church Universal and Local*. London: Church Book Room Press, 1946.
- Strange, Daniel. "Perilous Exchange, Precious Good News: A Reformed 'Subversive Fulfilment' Interpretation of Other Religions." Pages 91-136 in *Only One Way? Three Christian Responses on the Uniqueness of Christ in a Religiously Plural World*. Edited by Gavin D'Costa. London: SCM Press, 2011.
- Thackston, Wheeler M. "The Role of Calligraphy." Pages 43-54 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*. Edited by Martin J. Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2007.
- The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 1885-1887. 10 vols. Repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson 1994.
- Thompson, Alan J. *The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: Luke's Account of God's Unfolding Plan*. Nottingham: Apollos, 2011.
- Thucydides. *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. Translated by Richard Crawley. No Pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://classics.mit.edu/Thucydides/pelopwar.html>.
- Travis, John. "The C1 to C6 Spectrum: A Practical Tool for Defining Six Types of 'Christ-centered Communities' ('C') Found in the Muslim Context." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 34 (1998): 407-408.
- Travis, John. "Must all Muslims Leave 'Islam' to Follow Jesus?" *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 34 (1998): 411-415.
- Travis, John and Anna. "Appropriate Approaches in Muslim Contexts." Pages 397-414 in *Appropriate Christianity*. Edited by Charles H. Kraft. Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 2005.

- Turner, Harold W. "The History of Islam's Mosques: A Critical Analysis." *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies* 2 (1981): 135-150.
- USA International Business Publications. *Malaysia Country Study Guide*. 4th ed. Washington D.C.: International Business Publications USA, 2008.
- Vahed, Goolam. "Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 20 (2000): 43-73.
- van Nieuwenhuijze, C. A. O. "The Ummah – An Analytic Approach." *Studia Islamica* 10 (1959): 5-22.
- Vlach, Michael J. *Has the Church Replaced Israel? A Theological Evaluation*. Nashville: B&H, 2010.
- Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Watt, William Montgomery. *Muhammad at Medina*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956.
- Witherington, Ben III. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Woodberry, J. Dudley. "Contextualization Among Muslims: Reusing Common Pillars." Pages 282-312 in *The Word Among Us: Contextualizing Theology for Mission Today*. Edited by Dean S. Gilliland. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989.
- Woodberry, J. Dudley. "Contextualization Among Muslims: Reusing Common Pillars." *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 13 (1996):171-186.
- Yusuf, Abdur-Rahman, Ibn. "Masjid or Musalla." No pages. Cited 1 March 2012. Online: <http://www.central-mosque.com/fiqh/mmussalla1.htm>.
- Zaki, Yaqub. "Allah and Eternity: Mosques, Madrasas and Tombs." Pages 15-47 in *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*. Edited by George Michell. Repr., London: Thames & Hudson, 2006.

CHRIST CHURCH (ANGLICAN) IN NAZARETH: A BRIEF HISTORY WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

By Duane Alexander Miller

To understand the history of this parish one needs to understand a little bit of the background of what is now the Diocese of Jerusalem, which is one of the four dioceses of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, and which is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The diocese started out as a joint venture of the Lutheran Prussian Church and the Church of England, so it was really a Protestant diocese, and not only an Anglican diocese. The Protestant diocese was founded in the 1840's, in the days of the Ottoman Empire, and



Christ Church Nazareth from the courtyard, with a tower but no steeple. Duane A. Miller ©2011

our first bishop was Michael Solomon Alexander. He was a Jewish rabbi who came to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. He became a priest, and was then consecrated to be bishop of the newly formed Protestant Diocese of Jerusalem. He arrived in Jerusalem in 1842 with his wife and

children. In those days Jerusalem was a much-neglected, unhealthy place to live. Bishop Alexander died after only three years in Jerusalem and is buried on the Mount of Olives. The main goal of his ministry was to establish a Hebrew congregation on Mount Zion—a goal that he and his co-workers saw as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Though the congregation never grew very large, they were successful in this endeavor. Christ Church in the Jaffa Gate is the fruit

of this mission, and it was the first Protestant church built in what is now Israel-Palestine.¹



Figure 1: The bell ropes, in the choir loft. Duane A. Miller ©2011

But Christ Church (Jerusalem) never belonged to the diocese—it belonged to the missionaries (who were trying to evangelize Jews) and their society—the London Jews Society (LJS), or as it is known today, the Church’s Ministry to the Jews (CMJ). Christ Church in Nazareth has the distinction of being the first church owned by what is today the Diocese of Jerusalem. This church was constructed under the direction of the diocese’s second bishop, an industrious

and vigorous man named Samuel Gobat. Bp Gobat served the diocese from 1846 through 1879 and in many ways shifted the direction of the diocese’s ministry from what Alexander had envisioned. While Gobat still welcomed Jews into the church from time to time, he asked the evangelical Church Missionary Society (CMS) of the Church of England to send missionaries. In fact, he himself had been a CMS missionary in Ethiopia for some time before becoming bishop

¹ For more on Alexander’s life and ministry see Bridgeman 1943 and Crombie 2006. For a detailed history of the foundation of Christ Church in the Jaffa Gate (Jerusalem) see Crombie 2008. For an account of the difficulties faced by the early bishops see Jack 1995.

of Jerusalem—a title he cherished². The CMS missionaries were representatives of the evangelical group in the Church of England. They did not like elaborate liturgy, and they emphasized the power of the Bible as the Word of God, and the necessity for each Christian to have a lively, personal relation with God. On the other hand, the CMS missionaries, and Gobat himself, sometimes did not appreciate some of the wisdom of the ancient churches they found in the Ottoman lands—churches which had survived for centuries under the sometimes harsh rule of their Muslim masters³.



Figure 2: “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord...”
The priest greets people as they leave.
Duane A. Miller ©2011

Christians from these old churches approached Gobat on several occasions, asking for clergy and schools. Kenneth Cragg describes the birth of non-Jewish congregations:

“Samuel Gobat held himself obliged to set up a church-structure for the Arab folk--almost wholly from the (Greek) Orthodox population--when on

his view the situation required it by virtue of their adoption of his form of faith. From the 1860's, beginning in Nazareth, came the creation of Anglican 'parishes' and the ordaining of Arab clergy. The

² Gobat's autobiography has a large section on his mission to Abyssinia, and many collected letters to and from him as records of his lengthy career in Jerusalem.

³ Anglicans and their American counterparts, the Episcopalians, from the anglo-catholic movement, which emphasized commonalities with the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, and sometimes looked down on their evangelical brethren, did find much to appreciate in the ancient churches. For an example of this, see the ministry of Episcopal missionary bishop, Horatio Southgate in Constantinople (Bridgeman 1962, and for a contemporary criticism of said mission see Tyler et al 1845) and the Anglo-catholic mission to the Nestorians/Assyrians (Blincoe 1998 and Rowell 1997).

Anglicans, one might say, had church congregations in spite of themselves and yet also because of themselves.” (133)



Figure 3: Stained-glass window, detail.
(Duane Miller ©2011)

While CMS was connected to the Church of England, many of the early CMS missionaries were not English. Gobat was French Swiss, and A. Klein and Johannes Zeller, who both ministered here in Nazareth, were also from the Continent. In fact, Zeller married Hanna Maria Sophie Gobat, the bishop's daughter. She was a talented artist and composed the illustrations for a book entitled *Wild Flowers of the Holy Land*, which was reprinted a number of times. Protestants established a school in Nazareth (still functioning), an orphanage (no longer functioning), and Christ Church. While Alexander was not interested in seeing the church grow among the local non-Jews, Gobat was willing to do so, especially when the Christians from the old churches (mostly Orthodox) were punished by the clergy for holding bible studies and sending their children to the Protestant schools. He said that as a pastor he had no choice but to take in these Christians who had been rejected by their own churches. This was the beginning of a shift towards what we have today in the Diocese of Jerusalem—a diocese where most of the Anglicans are descendents of people who converted to Protestantism from Orthodoxy. (The diocese today does not actively seek to recruit people from other churches.⁴)

⁴ For a perspective on how this policy has affected the church in Jordan in its ministry today see Miller 2011.

Johannes (or John) Zeller lived and ministered in Nazareth for 20 years, and then in Jerusalem for another 20 years. He was the person who was the missionary-pastor here when the church building was consecrated. A story is told that when the prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VII, visited Nazareth in 1862 that Zeller asked for and received the first gift of £10 towards the construction



Figure 4: The nave of the church as seen from the choir loft (not used) where the bell ropes are. Duane A. Miller ©2011

of the church. But note that the church never was completed, as there is no steeple (figure 1). The church was consecrated by Bishop Gobat in 1871. It was also here that the first indigenous non-Jews were ordained—Michael Qa'war and Seraphim Boutaji. For those who can read Arabic, they will see many of these names (Klein, Zeller, Qa'war...) on the two ceramic records to the right and left of the door passing from the narthex to the nave.

In 1881 the agreement between the Lutheran Prussians and the Church of England was dissolved. Since then we can more properly speak of an Anglican diocese. It was the Diocese' fourth bishop, George Francis Popham Blyth who, after disagreeing with the CMS missionaries evangelical sensibilities, decided that he must build a proper church in east Jerusalem, which is today the Cathedral Church of St George the Martyr⁵. Blyth was too anglo-catholic for the CMS missionaries

⁵ For some history of the cathedral church and accounts of what worship there today is like, see Wright 1992 and Miller 2007b. Blyth was a great admirer of the Orthodox Church, and he never called St George's a cathedral; he always considered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre the Cathedral Church of Jerusalem (Blyth 1927:17).

and there was substantial tension between them and the bishop. In addition to raising funds for and building his own cathedral church, he established his own missionary society—the Jerusalem and the East Mission (JEM).



Figure 5: Behind the communion table is this verse in stylized Arabic from Jesus' Nazareth sermon in Luke 4: 'The Spirit of the Lord is on for he has anointed me...' (Duane A. Miller ©2011)

As time went on additional churches were established, including what is today the largest church in diocese, the Church of the Redeemer in Amman, Jordan⁶. Also, the enormous original diocese was divided and subdivided into additional regional churches. In 1920 a separate Diocese of Egypt and the Sudan was formed. Eventually, in 1974, the Sudan would become its own province in the Anglican Communion

and is today much larger in terms of membership than its mother province. Today, the other three dioceses of the Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East are Iran; Egypt, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa; and Cyprus and the Gulf States.

Presently, the vicar (pastor) of the parish is the Jordanian-born Emad Duaybis. He estimates that there are about 40 Anglican families in the Nazareth area. The next closest Anglican parish is in the town of Reine, which is about 20 minutes away by car. The church has provided a home for both local and foreign Christians since then, though today, aside from pilgrims and the author's family, the congregation is entirely indigenous.

⁶ See Miller 2007a for more information on the history of this church.

Bibliography

- Blincoe, Robert. 1998. *Ethnic Realities and the Church: Lessons from Kurdistan, a history of mission work, 1668-1990*. Pasadena, California: Presbyterian Center for Mission Studies.
- Blyth, Estelle. 1927. *When We Lived in Jerusalem*. London: John Murray.
- Bridgeman, Charles. 1943. 'Michael Solomon Alexander: First Bishop of the Church of England in Jerusalem (1841-1845)' in *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* Vol 12:1, pp 31-43.
- Bridgeman, Charles. 1958. *The Episcopal Church and the Middle East*. New York: Morehouse-Gorham.
- Cragg, Kenneth. 1991. *The Arab Christian: a History in the Middle East*. Louisville, Ky: Westminster/John Knox Press.
- Crombie, Kelvin. 2006. *A Jewish Bishop in Jerusalem: The life story of Michael Solomon Alexander*. Jerusalem: Nicolayson's Ltd.
- Crombie, Kelvin. 2008. *For the Love of Zion: Christian Witness and the Restoration of Israel*. Bristol: Terra Nova.
- Gobat, Samuel. 1884. *Samuel Gobat bishop of Jerusalem: his life and work: a biographical sketch*. London: J. Nisbet.
- Jack, Sybil M. 1995. 'No Heavenly Jerusalem: The Anglican Bishopric, 1841-83' in *The Journal of Religious History* Vol 19:2, pp 191-203.
- Miller, Duane Alexander. 2007a. 'Morning Prayer, Low Style, in the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem: Church of the Redeemer, Amman, Jordan, Sunday, 11 March 2007' in *Anglican and Episcopal History* Vol 76:3, Sep, pp 404-408.
- Miller, Duane Alexander. 2007b. 'The Installation of a Bishop in Jerusalem: The Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr, 15 April 2007' in *Anglican and Episcopal History* Vol 76:4, Dec, pp 549-554.
- Miller, Duane Alexander. 2011. 'The Episcopal Church in Jordan: Identity, Liturgy, and Mission' in *Journal of Anglican Studies* Vol 9:2, November, pp 134-153.
- Rowell, Geoffrey. 1997. 'Eastern Horizons: Anglicans and the Oriental Orthodox Churches' in *Religious Change in Europe*,

- 1650-1914: Essays for John McManners*. Nigel Aston ed. Oxford: Clarendon, pp 381-397.
- Wright, Lewis. 1992. 'Anglicanism in the Holy Land; St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem' in *Anglican and Episcopal History* Vol 61:3, pp 379-382.
- Zeller, Hannah, H. B. Tristram, and Edward Atkinson. 1875. *Wild flowers of the Holy Land: Fifty-four plates printed in colours, drawn and painted after nature*. London: J. Nisbet.

MOTHER OF ALL FEARS
“WITH GENTLENESS AND RESPECT”
ANOTHER LOOK AT 1 PETER 3:15

By Salaam Corniche

David Shenk relates that he was invited to the United Kingdom Muslim Students' Organization to a series of six public dialogues with a Muslim theologian. When he asked them why they had invited him they responded “We invited you because you believe the Gospel and respect us.”⁷ A recent book commemorating the life and labors of Dudley Woodberry is entitled “*Toward Respectful Understanding and Witness Among Muslims ...*”⁸ Along the same line is Miroslav Volf's 2011 *Christian Century* article: “All due respect: honoring others.”⁹ The motto of Frontiers' Mission reads: “With love and respect, inviting all Muslim peoples to follow Jesus.”¹⁰ It is immediately apparent that the twenty-first century is quickly becoming the century of respect, especially to Muslims.

As one surveys other recent literature on reaching out to other religions, mission statements of mission organizations, documents coming out of inter-faith dialogues and apologetic strategies, frequent appeal is made to 1 Peter 3:15 and its “gentleness and respect” motif. The entire verse reads:

But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect (ESV)

⁷ David W. Shenk in “Revelation in the Islam and the Gospel”
http://www.ttgst.ac.kr/upload/ttgst_resources13/20124-193.pdf (Accessed 2012/6/12)

⁸ Evelyne A. Reisacher ed. *Toward Respectful Understanding and Witness Among Muslims: Essays in Honor of J. Dudley Woodberry*. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011)

⁹ Miroslav Volf, “All due respect: honoring others” *Christian Century*, 128 no 16 (Ag 9 2011), pp. 10-11.

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Love_-_cite_note-4

The purpose of this paper is to conduct a brief, but representative survey of literature that advocates respect with a view to understanding what is being advocated. Secondly I will investigate two recent studies on 1 Peter which examine in detail the overall context of the epistle in light of Graeco-Roman history, and the response that Peter is advocating to the “elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1:1). The two studies will be used to demonstrate that Peter is advocating a Christ-honoring disposition by an individual or group of individuals in what is very likely an adversarial judicial context. This is not necessarily the message that has been suggested by some contemporary authors.

A select survey of contemporary literature on the idea of respect

1. News articles

> [2007] “Children of Abraham: Muslims and Jews in Conversation”
In 2007, ISNA [Islamic Society of North America] and the URJ [Union for Reform Judaism] partnered to promote a nationwide series of local interfaith dialogues focusing on Muslim and Jewish communities, to promote mutual respect, understanding, and communication and to strengthen their capacity to advance peace and social justice on a global scale.¹¹

> [2008] “Yale Christian/Muslim conference concludes with call for further interfaith talks”

An eight-day conference [July 24-31, 2008] at Yale University that drew scores of prominent Muslim and Christian leaders from around the world ended with a unanimously accepted declaration for mutual respect understanding and further interfaith discussions.¹²

> [2010] “Mission Strategist: Camel Method 'Very Useful' for Muslim Outreach”

¹¹ <http://www.isna.net/Interfaith/pages/Children-of-Abraham.aspx> (Accessed 2012/6/14)

¹² By Frank Brown, Assistant Director, Publications
http://www.yale.edu/divinity/news/080804_news_interfaith.shtml (Accessed 2012/6/14)

International Mission Board strategist Kevin Greeson developed the Camel method after working among Muslims for several years without success. The IMB is the mission arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest protestant denomination in the United States. Greeson says the method treats Muslims with respect while challenging them to confront their own sacred writings as a bridge to the Good News revealed in the Bible.¹³

> [2011] “Proselytizing in an multi-faith world: why mutual respect and tolerance require us to witness for Christ”¹⁴

2. Mission organization mission statements:

> “With love and respect, inviting all Muslim peoples to follow Jesus.”¹⁵

> “But with gentleness and respect”: Why missions should be ruled by ethics – An Evangelical Perspective on a Code of Ethics for Christian Witness” is the title of a World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) report on the meeting in Toulouse, France from August 8-12, 2007.¹⁶

3. Book title:

> Evelyne A. Reisacher ed. *Toward Respectful Understanding and Witness Among Muslims: Essays in Honor of J. Dudley Woodberry*. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011)

¹³ By Michelle A. Vu, Christian Post Reporter February 17, 2010| <http://www.christianpost.com/news/mission-strategist-camel-method-very-useful-to-reach-muslims-43801> (Accessed 2012/6/14)

¹⁴ Ed Stetzer, *Christianity Today*, 55 no 4 (Ap 2011), pp. 20-27.

¹⁵ <http://www.frontiers.org/>

¹⁶ The consultation between The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and the Office on Interreligious Relations and Dialogue (IRRD) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) with WEA delegates with the theme “Towards an ethical approach to conversion: Christian witness in a multi-religious world” was held at the Institut de Science et de Theologie des Religions.

http://www.iirf.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDFs/Toulouse_Engl_WEA.pdf (Accessed 2012/6/4)

4. Magazine articles:

> “There must be respect for Muslims as truth-seekers and God-fearers who long for a fuller knowledge of the One True God and his Messiah.”¹⁷

> “Paul was not the only Apostle who advanced the Kingdom with sensitivity to and respect for the sentiments of pagan peoples. Peter advocated a similar approach. . . *gentleness and respect.*”¹⁸

5. Apologetic materials:¹⁹

> “But surely, I hear someone say, the key thing about inter-faith dialogue is the sensitivity and respect for the other person's religion that should characterize our approach. Exactly. It should always be like that in all our dialogues. It is always a good thing if we behave Christianly, and in this particular area we have specific instructions, . . . *gentleness and respect.*” (1 Peter 3:15)²⁰

> “The clearest verse on evangelism is 1 Peter 3:15, which teaches that we should treat our contacts with gentleness and respect, meaning —as person or human beings. Since people are multi-faceted, and each person is unique, this means the evangelist should take time out to get to know the person and as much of her/his background and

¹⁷ Lyle VanderWerff, “Christian Witness to Our Muslim Friends,” *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, Vol. 13 no 3 (July-Sept 1996), p. 114.

¹⁸ Bernard Dutch, “Should Muslims Become “Christians”?: An examination of radical contextualization, “ in the *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, Vol. 17 no 1 (Jan .2000), p. 20.

¹⁹ John Frame in his *Apologetics to the Glory of God...* defines the work of the Christian in apologetics as “the discipline that teaches Christians how to give a reason for their hope” (p. 1) He distinguishes that from the apologetical methods of proving and defending the Christian faith, as well as confronting other forms of human knowledge outside of Christ as “the application of Scripture to unbelief.” (Ibid, fn 1) *An Introduction*. (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Pub, 1994). In his *Vital Apologetic Issues: Examining Reason and Revelation in Biblical Perspective*. Roy Zuck defines apologetics as ““a study of the clarification and defense of the total system of biblical Trinitarianism with reference to specific attacks against the total system, or against any of the basic elements inherent within the system.” (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Resources, 1995), p. 22.

²⁰ “Dialogue in Evangelism,” <http://www.bethinking.org/what-is-apologetics/introductory/dialogue-in-evangelism.htm> (Accessed 2012/6/22)

situation as possible, and not intrude prematurely or aggressively into her/his (inner and social) world...”²¹-

> “How will you proclaim the gospel with gentleness, respect, and with all boldness in your host context (especially in highly restricted areas)?

Biblical guidelines to consider: The apostle Peter teaches that in a hostile environment we should communicate the gospel with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15-16). Yet when Peter is dragged before local leadership, beaten, and told not to preach the name of Jesus, he declared “we cannot but tell all that we have seen and heard.” This was followed by fervent prayer with the body of Christ for greater boldness as the Word of God was fulfilled (Acts 4:29-30).”²²

6. Apologetic Materials in outreach to Muslims:

> Leaders of fifty-five Christian organizations from nineteen countries affirm the importance of respectful witness and specifically reject what has historically been referred to as “aid evangelism”: “We, who come from many cultures, countries and backgrounds, offer this message of peace to all people in love, with respect and cultural sensitivity, without coercion or material inducement (Affirmation 5).”The following texts from the New Testament emphasize the same thing: *gentleness and respect* (1 Peter 3:15).²³

²¹ David S. Lim, “Radical Contextualization for Insider Movements in the Buddhist World,” *AFMI/ASFM Bulletin*, No. 8 (Oct. 2011), p 57.

²² Erik Hyatt, “Questions and Biblical Guidelines for Missionaries among Muslim Peoples,”—Question # 7--- (May 16, 2012) <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/tgc/2012/05/16/questions-and-biblical-guidelines-for-missionaries-among-muslim-peoples/> (Accessed 2012/6/18)

²³ Rick Love, “The Da’wah-Evangelism Peace Project” presented at The Global Leadership Forum “Evangelicals & Muslims: Perspectives on Mission and Partnership” Co-sponsored by The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and The Institute for Global Engagement Georgetown University June 17, 2010 <http://ricklove.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Dawah-and-evangelism-peace-project.pdf> (Accessed 2012/5/19)

> Dudley Woodberry compares Islamic and Christian witness and remarks “Both are to witness in a gracious way.” He cites: Qur’an 16:125 “Invite to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and good exhortation and dispute with them with what is better (or in a better way).”

Qur’an 29:46 "Dispute not with the People of the Book except with what is better (or in a better way)."

1 Peter 3:15"Always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you with gentleness and respect."²⁴

> Charles Taber suggests that a wise strategy for missionaries is to “abandon triumphalism and develop sincere respect, appreciation and sensitivity for all Muslim persons, for their faith and for their way of life.”²⁵

> Fouad Accad instructs that “the Bible contains many passages that teach us how to approach people of different cultures and customs with the good news of salvation. We are specifically instructed to present our message ‘with gentleness and respect’ (1 Peter 3:15). When we approach Muslims, we are dealing with a culture where honor and respect are of utmost importance.”²⁶

²⁴ J. Dudley Woodberry, “Toward Mutually Respectful Witness” (pp. 171-177) in Mohammed Abu-Nimer, David W. Augsburger eds. *Peace-Building by, between, and beyond Muslim and Evangelical Christians*. (Lexington Books: A division of Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: Lanham, MD., 2009), p. 174. See also his “Comparative Witness: Christian Mission and Islamic Da’wah” in *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, (Vol 7 no. 1, 2009), pp. 67-72 where he states: “Christians seeking a wiser witness, especially in Muslim-majority societies, should have a firm understanding of their own mission tradition, as well as that of Islam. A comparative study of the Qur’an and the Bible not only prompts deeper understanding; it demonstrates a deep respect for the other’s traditions and beliefs. Grasping the challenges—and missteps—of mission’s history also engenders respect and displays wise humility.”

²⁵ Charles R. Taber "Contextualization: Indigenization and/or Transformation," in *The Gospel and Islam: A 1978 Compendium*, (ed.) Don M. McCurry, (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1979), p.150.

²⁶ Fouad Elias Accad. *Building bridges : Christianity and Islam!* (Colorado Springs, Colo. : NavPress,1997), p. 12 in a chapter entitled “The Qur’an as a Bridge to the Bible”

> Colin Chapman asserts: “Without a relationship of trust and an attitude of respect from our side (‘do this with gentleness and respect’, 1 Peter 3:16), Muslims cannot be expected either to listen to the challenges that we want to make or to our witness to Christ.”²⁷

> Keith Swartley in his *Encountering the World of Islam* addresses Muslim readers and states: “Even though Caleb Project is an evangelical ministry, we do not support proselytism or any other form of coercion or inducement. We actively discourage any negative forms of personal witness which are argumentative, or do not respect the traditions and opinions of others. We are evangelicals, and, as such, feel an obligation to share our faith. However, we understand this must be done in gentleness, love, and respect, and not on a conditional basis: 1 Peter 3:15 says... ‘gentleness and respect’. The response to our witness is in God’s hands, and Christians are not in any way to appear intimidating.”

> “God’s Spirit reminds us to answer only in gentleness and reverence. After all, Christ commanded us to turn the other cheek”²⁸

> Chawkat Moucarry in his “A Plea for Dialogue Between Christians and Muslims” states that “Christian apologetics is about giving a ‘defence’ of the Christian faith to those who attack it (see 1 Peter 3:15). This, however, should be done with ‘gentleness and respect’. Even in a heated debate the Christian apologist must refrain from polemics, personal attacks, and derisive arguments about Muslims and their religion.”²⁹

Summary

In a word, “gentleness and respect” are advocated as an attitude by Christians to members of other religions, especially Islam. Addition-

²⁷ Colin Chapman, “Christian responses to Islam, Islamism and ‘Islamic terrorism’” *Cambridge Papers*, Vol 16, no. 2, (June 2007), p. 6.

<http://www.ricklove.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Chapman-on-terrorism-Cambridge-Paper-June-07.pdf> (Accessed 2012/5/10)

²⁸ Keith E. Swartley. *Encountering the World of Islam*. (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005), pp. xxvi, p. 213.

²⁹ The Lausanne Global Conversation (04.03.2010)

http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/10023#article_page_2 (Accessed 2012/0711)

ally ‘mutual respect’ is asked for between Christians and the adherents of other religions. A question that is hiding in the background is this: at what point do these attitudes develop into a wholesale acceptance of the ideologies of other religions? This will be examined after a few observations from the 1 Peter 3:15.

1 Peter Overview:

1 Peter 2:21 reads: *For to this you were called, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in his steps.* In the context of the larger epistle this verse functions as a theme verse, namely the recipients should look to Jesus as their source of grace in the midst of suffering.³⁰ This theme is also suggested in 5:12: *Through Silvanus, whom I know to be a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, in order to encourage you and testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.*

The more precise nature of this suffering of these Anatolian believers is the subject matter of Paul Holloway’s *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-Psychological Perspective*,³¹ which focuses on the social prejudice they encountered. It is paralleled by Travis Williams’ “Contextualizing conflict: the persecutions of 1 Peter in their Anatolian setting” which closely examines historical setting and the text of 1 Peter.³²

Holloway’s main point is that the oppositioner by Christians was due to their group membership in Christ that resulted in “a negative social attitude toward members of an identifiable social

³⁰ Compare this with Edmund Clowney’s synopsis of the Epistle of I Peter: “Facing impending assaults on the gospel, Peter witnesses to the grace of God, the overwhelming reality of what God has done in Jesus Christ.” --cited by William Edgar. *Reasons of the Heart: Recovering Christian Persuasion.* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Book House, 1996), p. 34.

³¹ Paul A. Holloway, *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-Psychological Perspective.* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009)

³² Travis B Williams, “Contextualizing conflict: the persecutions of 1 Peter in their Anatolian setting,” (University of Exeter: PhD Thesis, 2010). This thesis was done under the supervision of David Horrell who previously wrote an article: “The Label Χριστιανός: 1 Pet 4.16 and the Formation of Christian Identity,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 126 (2007) 361-81

group based simply on their group membership.”³³ He goes on to show how this social prejudice had a sliding scale of hostility that ranged from passive marginalization, to more active ostracism, to verbal insults and the threat and actual denunciations before the Roman authorities which could and did result in death.

Williams examines previous studies on the nature of persecution in 1 Peter and suggests that they are insufficiently nuanced. Thus he takes quite seriously the word *various* in 1 Peter 1:6 (“by various kinds of trials”) and creates a list of such trials. One major trial was the pain Christians suffered from social withdrawal, especially when their faith in Jesus caused them to pull back from participation in the important social activities of voluntary associations, the imperial cult, and worship of the traditional gods. He shows that the theme of good works actually engendered--rather than prevented-- suffering due to its challenge of the morality of the surrounding society. He then catalogues explicit and implicit forms of conflict and suggests they include verbal abuse, physical abuse and legal action. Under the heading of conjectured forms of conflict he lists spousal tensions, economic oppression, social ostracism and spiritual (or religious) affliction.

The parallels between the persecution of believers in many parts of today’s world, and those at the time and shortly thereafter of the writing of the epistle as Holloway and Williams have detailed them are self-evident.

1 Peter 3:15 in its larger context

After bringing words of encouragement to the strangers/resident aliens (1:1; 1:17; 2:11) Peter stresses their exalted identity in Christ (1

³³ Holloway, p. 21. Williams (p. 196) examines the letter of Pliny to Trajan and determines that simply the name Christian was punishable. He quotes Paul Keresztes, “The Imperial Roman Government and the Christian Church, I: From Nero to the Severi,” in ANRW (eds. H. Temporini and W. Haase; Part II, Principat 23.1; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1979) 247-315 (277): “By his treatment of the people of the first category, the confessors, Pliny makes it clear that he knows that the name [i.e. being a Christian and adhering to Christian beliefs and confession] without crimes was punishable....Pliny’s treatment of the confessors and the renegades thus clearly shows that he regarded the name alone as criminally punishable.” (cf. Matt 10.16-23; 24.9; Luke 21:12—“brought before kings and governors...” “because of my name” c.f. I Pet 4:15-16)

Peter 2:9-10) by calling them a “holy nation” and a “people.” Purposely he accentuates the positive results of their identity in Christ even as the surrounding culture has mocking labeled them as ‘wicked people’ or criminals. Holloway calls this “anti-Christian stereotyping.”³⁴ This word *katalaléoo* and its cognates is rendered by various translators as “doing wrong,” “wrong doing”/“evildoers” or “wrongdoers.” The adjective first appears in 2:12:

“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”³⁵

The use of *katalaléoo* gives us a clue, suggesting that Christians were being labeled and so were subjects of prejudice. They were seen as “atheists” who could bring the entire community under divine retribution (cf. Tertullian, *Apol.* 40.2). Their new identity was perceived as a threat to Roman society by upsetting the ‘Pax Romana’. This is illustrated in the AD 111 letter of Pliny the Younger, who was the governor of Bithynia—where some of Peter’s audience also lived—to the Emperor Trajan. Pliny assures the emperor that he is doing his job to keep any subversive elements—including Christians—under his control by sanctions and even death.

In its closer context

In order to demonstrate that their prayers will be heard, and that they are not forgotten by the Lord who will ultimately vindicate them, Peter closes his previous section (1 Peter 3:12) with a quote from Psalm 34, the theme of which is suffering and deliverance:

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous
and his ears are attentive to their prayer,
but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. (NIV)³⁶

³⁴ Holloway, p. 67.

³⁵ See 2:12, 14 and 4:15 for the adjectival use of *katalaléō*, as a verb (3:17) and as an expression (3:13, cf. 3:10, 11). The word which is the opposite of this phrase, i.e. *doing good* is found as an adjective (2:14), as a noun (4:19), as a verb (2:15, 20, 3:6, 17) and as a related expression (3:11, 13, 16).

³⁶ The superscription of Psalm 34 reads: “Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left.”

Edmund Clowney closely examines this passage and suggests that it has the force of “Who, then in the light of the Lord’s care, and his control of evil, will do you evil?”³⁷

Even as exiles in the midst of suffering, both the Psalmist and Peter’s readers can “taste” the Lord’s kindness.³⁸

Peter then opens the final larger section of what Lenski calls “Hortations Due to Sufferings and Trials (3:13-5:11)”³⁹ He takes his clue from the likelihood of harm Christians will suffer for the Gospel; this continues to the end of the book.

v. 13 *And who is he that will treat you basely [or harm you--Holloway] if you be zealots [or ‘enthusiasts—Schwarz⁴⁰] for the good?* (Lenski)

This is not just a pie-in-the sky rhetorical question, but one that anticipates an answer of “no one will do that.” Holloway, however, observes that the words *harm you* normally imply physical mistreatment--and this had been the experience endured by some of the audience (1 Peter 2:20).⁴¹ As well Peter knew the precedent of Jesus who *went around doing good* and yet was treated with abuse. This would cause his audience to take pause. Thus the verse serves as a foreshadowing of what will follow.

v. 14 *But even if [or ‘But if indeed’] you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed.*

Peter implies a likelihood of suffering. We might call it a contingency plan that is formed around the fairly high possibility of some-

³⁷ Edmund P. Clowney. *The Message of 1 Peter: The Way of the Cross*. (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), p. 143.

³⁸ Eric James Gréaux, “The Lord delivers us: an examination of the function of Psalm 34 in 1 Peter,” *Review & Expositor*, 106 no 4 (Fall 2009), p. 609.

³⁹ R. C. H. Lenski. *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude*. (Minneapolis, Minn: Augsburg, 1966).

⁴⁰ Donald Swartz, “Exegesis of 1 Peter 3:13-22” Central Conference Western Wisconsin District Pastoral Conference, October 8, 1990]

⁴¹ Holloway, p. 69 and Williams, pp. 287-289 who observes that slaves could be subject to almost any and all kinds of abuse at the whim of their masters, especially when a slave did not follow the expectation that he/she would adhere to the religion of the master.

thing occurring and thus is stated as “when x happens, then...” It is not stated as “if x might or might not happen-- then.” Thus Peter surveys his context and concludes that past and present events mean that conflict in the future caused by the doing right is a very high possibility.⁴² Likewise he assumes this eventuality when he says, “...do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes... (4:12-13); “...After you have suffered a little while...” (5:10). In light of these trials, Peter promises that his readers are considered as being blessed based on Jesus’ words of the Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:10)

This next section of text (vv 14b-16a) has been dubbed a "praeparatio ad martyrium" by Norbert Brox.⁴³ In short, it consists of 4 concrete steps in preparation to be a witness or even a martyr, namely not giving to or controlling one’s fear, demonstrating exclusive loyalty to Christ, being in readiness to give an account, and remaining calm and respectful.

Peter then quotes from and adapts Isaiah 8:12-13 to his audience. This provides valuable background for correctly interpreting the next section of text.

- v. 14b *Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened,*
v. 15a. *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.* (NIV)

Consider a number of renditions of v. 14b:

- a. LXX of Isaiah 8:12 "Do not fear with the fear the people have!"
- b. John Brown (1848) “Be not then afraid of their terror, neither be troubled” (p. xiii)⁴⁴
- c. Bigg (1910)-“Be not afraid of their terror. Do not fear their threats.”⁴⁵

⁴² Lenski, p. 148. “We have with the optative (present, durative or iterative), a very rare construction in the Koine; it is a condition of potentiality: "might have to be suffering."

⁴³ Holloway, p. 70

⁴⁴ John Brown. *Expository discourses on the first epistle of the Apostle Peter.* (New York: Cartier Brothers, 1855), p. xiii.

⁴⁵ Charles Bigg. *The Epistles of St Peter and St Jude.* (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1901), p. 158.

d. Lenski (1949) “And do not fear their fear, neither be disturbed (shaken, upset), but...” or more colloquially, “Do not let them scare you!” (p. 149)

e. NASB “And do not fear their intimidation”

The difference between the NIV and the NASB is worth noting. The former picks up the sense of the LXX and suggests that the audience is not to fear the things that their non-Christian opponents themselves dreaded.⁴⁶ The NASB along with Brown, Bigg and Lenski focus on the intimidation that non-Christians could exert towards them and the attitude that believers should have, namely not to let fear control them. In a word the difference is the fear felt by someone or of someone.⁴⁷ Likely the sense of the NASB fits the historical context better, although there is reason to consider the NIV sense in that the audience should not have a fear of death or of shame as their detractors would have had.

Perhaps Jesus’ words in Matthew 10:28 give the clearest exposition: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” With pastoral insight Martin Luther commented on this passage and reflected: “Here we have great protection and support. On this we can depend. Therefore no one can harm us. Let the world frighten, challenge, and threaten as long as it wants to - this must come to an end. But our comfort and joy will not come to an end. Therefore we should not be afraid of the world. No, we should be courageous, before God, however, we should humble ourselves and fear”⁴⁸

Interestingly the word “fear” in 14b (i.e. *phóbos*) which has a semantic range of fear/ terror/ reverence/ respect/ honor is used in the first two senses here, and in the last three senses in v. 15c, “with gentleness and respect (i.e. *phóbos*).

⁴⁶ Technically known as the subjective genitive which could be rendered “the fear felt by someone”

⁴⁷ Technically known as the objective genitive which could be rendered “the fear felt of someone”

⁴⁸ Martin Luther. *Luther’s Works Vol. 30 The Catholic Epistles*. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967), p. 103.

- v. 15a. *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.* (NIV)
But in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy. (ESV)

Peter continues his encouragement in the face of suffering with words derived from Isaiah 8:13: [v.12 *Do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it.*] *The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread.* The larger context of that passage addresses the vital question: “Is God with us and in what or who shall we trust?” Isaiah reports that *the LORD spoke to me with his strong hand upon me, warning me not to follow the way of this people* (v. 11) and not to be swept along by the popular sentiments of paranoia of the day and to “call conspiracy conspiracy.” As well Isaiah would have been branded as a conspirator because he was critical of the ungodly alliance that King Ahaz had made with Assyria in the Syro-Phoenician war. It would appear that Peter is taking the example from Isaiah to encourage his audience not to be swept away by paranoia even as they might have heard reports of persecution and wondered if indeed God would be with them as in Isaiah’s time, nor to be anxious about their “anti-Roman” label when they showed allegiance to King Jesus.

But... in contrast to being paralyzed in fear of the threat of intimidation of humans, Peter suggests that a change of focus is demanded. In Isaiah 8:13, as Charles Kuykendall and John Collins suggest, “The nuance of the text is that the pious are to sanctify the LORD of Hosts, that is, to declare or acknowledge that he is holy.”⁴⁹ This same nuance is applied to Christ in this text, and so believers are to “sanctify Christ”—that is, to declare him to be holy, or to treat him as holy. Their literal rendition of the verse reads: “*but the Lord—Christ—is the one you are to revere in your hearts as holy,*” or in more colloquial language, “*but in your hearts revere Christ the Lord as holy.*”⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Charles Kuykendall, and C. John Collins, “1 Peter 3:15A: a critical review of English versions,” *Presbyterion*, 29 no 2 (Fall 2003), p 79.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 82. It should be noted that their review of various translations shows a wide range of strengths and weaknesses among them. They are convinced that the ESV in spite of its use of the word “regard” instead of their preference for “revere” is the closest to the intent of the text, namely: “but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy.”

At this juncture Peter is putting all instances of respect and honor in perspective. Elsewhere he has delineated relations between various parties as:

- ...respecting others, especially those in authority (2:13-14, 17), i.e. “honor everyone...honor the emperor” (2:17) not with a posture of abject subservience but of those who are free (2:16)
- ...servants to masters, irregardless if they are kind or not (2:18-20) as they follow Christ’s example (2:21)
- ...wives to husbands (3:1) irregardless if they are believers or not, also looking to Sarah as an example (3:5-6)
-husbands to wives (3:7)
- ...those in Christ (2:17; 3:8)
- ...younger to the elders (5:5)

All other honorific relationships now become subservient to Christ the Lord who is holy. That is to say, the fear of God in Christ completely eclipses the fear of people, or one could say that pleasing God eclipses pleasing people. This even trumps the Caesar, because as much as he enjoined people to declare him lord, he was anything but holy. Thomas Kayalaparampil suggests that this command was given specifically due to the likelihood of conflicting allegiances due to “the pressure likely to be put on Christians to join in Emperor-worship or to revert to heathen idolatry.”⁵¹ Just before he was to be martyred Polycarp was given the option to be free of his torments by declaring “Caesar is lord.” The letter of Pliny the Younger to Trajan showed how he compelled Christians to renounce Jesus as Lord and to declare Caesar as Lord. He states:

Those who denied that they were or ever had been Christians, when they swore before me, called on the gods and offered incense and wine to your image (which I had ordered brought in for this [purpose], along with images of the gods), and also cursed Christ (which, it is said, it is impossible to force those who are real Christians to do). [from a number of lapsed Christians he heard that]...the sum of their guilt or error

⁵¹Thomas Kayalaparampil, “Christian Suffering in I Peter,” *Bible Bhashyam* 3 (1977), p. 17 as cited by Williams, p. 300.

amounted to this, that they used to gather on a stated day before dawn and sing to Christ as if he were a god.⁵²

Albert Barnes expounds this verse as:

In your hearts, or in the affections of the soul, regard the Lord God as holy, and act towards him with that confidence which a proper respect for one so great and holy demands. In the midst of dangers, be not intimidated; dread not what man can do. but evince proper reliance on a holy God, and flee, to him with the confidence which is due to one so glorious.⁵³

It is this holy God, who has created the readers into a *holy nation* (2:9) and by extension they are expected to act its head. Thus Peter exhorts them to:

....do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance (1:14) but to be holy in all your conduct (v.15) as He is holy (v. 16)...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers... (1:17) and as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh... (2:11)...so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God... (4:1)...for the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality...(4:3) for which reason they will malign you (4:4).

In short, they will pray *Hallowed be thy name* and are expected to live like it.

v. 15 b. *Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*

Always be prepared... A.T.B. McGowan renders this portion of the text in a literal way as: *ready always for defense to everyone ask-*

⁵² Mark Harding. *Early Christian Life and Thought in Social Context: A Reader*. (New York: T&T Clark International, 2003), pp. 328-329.

⁵³ Albert Barnes. *Notes, Explanatory and Practical, On the General Epistles of James, Peter and Jude*. (New York: Harper, 1857), p. 193.

ing.⁵⁴ The accent is on readiness, and Holloway adds that that for stigmatized people—as the Peter’s Christian audience undoubtedly were---the threat of reprisal perpetually hung over their head.⁵⁵ Additionally, as one committed to declaring the exploits of God the rescuer (2:9) Peter wanted his audience to seize the day to give a positive testimony to their neighbors *for the end of all things is at hand* (4:3) and so prepared them for a state of readiness or as Paul said in Titus 3:1 *be ready for every good work*.

At this juncture is must be asked what kind of a situation would simultaneously provide the likelihood of fear or terror in one’s heart and the need to provide a defense of the Christian faith? In an ultimate sense it would be standing before the Judge of the whole world and Peter has prepared his audience for that (I Peter 4:5). In a less ultimate sense, out of the outflow of reverencing Christ as Lord and living holy lives as a result, the audience will incur conflict with the surrounding society. This is not because they are combative in an unsubmitive way, but because their allegiances are to Christ first and foremost. David Horrell called this stance ‘polite resistance.’⁵⁶ Williams, as well, suggests that court proceedings likely formed the backdrop for 2:11-17; 3:14b-16 and 4:15-16.⁵⁷

To give an answer - From the Greek word ‘apologia’ [translated “answer” (NIV); “defense” (ESV); “explanation” (New American Bible) we get the word apologetics or a defense of the faith.⁵⁸ Elsewhere in the New Testament it is used in the context of a cross-examination (Acts 22:1; 24:10; 25:8,16; 26:1,2,24; 1 Corinthians 9:3; 2 Corinthians 7:11; and 2 Timothy 4:16) or to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7, 16). Before an enraged crowd in Jerusalem, Paul

⁵⁴ A.T. B. McGowan, “Why Study Theology?” *Reformation and Revival Journal*, 11 no 1 (Winter 2002), p. 41.

⁵⁵ Holloway, p. 35.

⁵⁶ David Horrell in “Between Conformity and Resistance: Beyond the Balch-Elliott Debate Towards a Postcolonial Reading of 1 Peter.” Pages 143 in *Reading 1 Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter*. Edited by Robert L. Webb and Betsy J. Bauman-Martin. Library of New Testament Studies 364. (London: T&T Clark, 2007)

⁵⁷ Williams, p. 320.

⁵⁸ BDAG - 1. a speech of defense, *defense, reply*; 2 the act of making a defense, *defense*

calmly addresses them in their native language with the disarming words: *Brothers and fathers, hear the defense* [‘apologia’] *I am about to make to you.* (Acts 22:1). In Acts 24:10 Paul—only with amazing grace—sets the tone to respond literally--in good spirits---and with dignity to the governor in response to his attackers by saying *I cheerfully make my defense* [Gk. *apologeomai*].

Other Biblical examples of responses to questioning might include:

1. After worrying about his prisoner Daniel who had spent the night in a lion’s den, King Darius asked: “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?”
2. Just before throwing Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into a fiery furnace, King Nebuchadnezzar asked: “What god will be able to rescue you from my hand?”
3. Jesus before Pilate.
4. Festus and Agrippa asked Paul: “What do you have to say for yourself?”
5. The high priest asked Peter: “By what power or what name do you do this?”

These instances help us to understand Jesus’ words, *When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend* [verb form of ‘apologia’] *yourself or what you should say.* (Luke 12:11). In each case polite deference is shown, while being uncompromising about their ultimate allegiances.

To everyone - Frequently commentators appeal to the words *to everyone* as to each and every person without exception, yet it might be forcing to this text to have Peter say that he is trying to communicate sharing the gospel *in season and out of season---*to use Paul’s words from 2 Tim 4:2.⁵⁹ Holloway thus prefers to render the verse:

⁵⁹ For example: Alan Stibbs asserts: “The accompanying phraseology in this verse, however, combines forcibly to suggest something which might be called for at any time in the most informal and spontaneous manner. The verb ‘aitein’, asketh, suggests ordinary conversation rather than an official enquiry. The words always and to every man make the reference completely general and comprehensive. The Christian must remember that anybody at any time may ask him to explain and justify his

"be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks, including the governor." ⁶⁰

...*who asks you to give the reason* [Gk. *logos*] or an accounting
...*asking you a word concerning*... (Schwarz)

Peter's audience undoubtedly had to respond rationally to questions that likely represented an ascending scale of danger. In each case they were asked to give an accounting/reason/word for what drew their allegiances upwards and outwards of the society where they were found, albeit with an effect of being highly effective in the milieu where they were found.

1. A question of innocent curiosity as to why Christians had hope in Christ.
2. A question with an intention to slander (2:12; 3:16) the recipient.
3. A question which could involve false accusations with an intention to sentence the Christian to punishment or even death for anti-Roman sedition.⁶¹

With an ironic twist as well, Peter tells his audience that the very people who malign them (4:3) due to the fact that they no longer join them *in the same flood of debauchery* will also have to give an accounting [*logos*] to *him who is ready to judge the living and the dead* (I Peter 4:5).

...*for the hope that you* (plural) *have*... (NIV)

...*for the hope that is in you* (plural)... (ESV)

At the opening of his letter Peter described an objective and living hope (1:3) that is a result of Christ's resurrection from the dead and can be experienced by the new birth. That is to say it is a present hope or expectation in His ability to act also on their behalf due to their union with Him and that He will be true to his word. Consequently he describes the hope as "in all of you" i.e. resident within them. This hope also has a future aspect which influences their present action, and thus he exhorts them to prepare *your minds for ac-*

Christian confidence... in his *The First Epistle General of Peter: A Commentary*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) [1st ed. 1959], p. 135.

⁶⁰ See Holloway, p. 70 fn 200.

⁶¹ Holloway, p. 71 suggests that giving a defense and an accounting naturally implies courtroom language.

tion; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. (I Pet 1:13 cf. Rom 5:5; Col 1:27; Heb 10:23). This preparation for self-control is the subject of verses 13b to 17 as well.

Elsewhere Peter shows that this confident expectation in God in Christ is more than just hopeful or subjective feelings. Thus he tells them that their *faith and hope are in God* (1:21) just as *the holy women of the past had also put their hope in God* (3:5). Their hope as well is that their present shame and sufferings have guaranteed eternal rewards (1:4-6) as God always delivers on his promises, as witnessed by Jesus' resurrection.

v. 15c. *But do this with gentleness and respect...* (NIV)

But do this... It is possible that Peter is thinking that it is possible to give a response to the questioning with a response couched in fear (14b) characterized by abrasiveness or an arrogant attitude. Martin Luther described stance:

When you are challenged and are questioned with regard to your faith, you should not answer with proud words and act defiantly and violently, as though you wanted to uproot trees. No, you should conduct yourself reverently and humbly, as though you were standing before God's tribunal and had to give an answer there. (Luther, page 108).

Luther likely had taken his cue from 1:17 which reads *And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourself with [reverent] fear* (i.e. phóbos) *throughout the time of your exile...*" In light of a likely courtroom setting, Peter is contrasting the qualities of the Father as a judge and the local judicial authorities.

Another rendition of *But do this* has been furnished by Ceslaus Spicq and he prefers to use the words, 'however, moreover, notwithstanding, nevertheless' and this too could make sense as these dispositions would be added to the rational account for the hope in the believer.⁶² Thus the ESV, RSV, and NASB introduce the phrase "yet with..." Other renditions include:

⁶² Ceslaus Spicq and James D. Ernest, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*. Vol 3 (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1994), p. 171 fn 41.

...with gentleness and respect...

...in company with meekness and fear ... (Lenski)⁶³

...but make your defense with gentleness and reverence so that you may maintain a clear conscience. (Williams)⁶⁴

... with meekness and reverence (John Brown)

The word “respect” which is found most commonly in the usage of this text has been rendered “fear” and “reverence” above. These comply with the semantic range of the word *phóbos*.

This fear of God (2:17) that Luther recognized comes into play in apologetics and thus, a defense of the faith must be done first and foremost done with a disposition of holy fear and reverence towards Christ the Lord (v. 15). It is much more about Him than a posture with respect to another human being, or even their ideology. Ramsey Michaels thus renders this portion “out of humility and reverence” as he too asserts that “its Godward reference remains primary and basic.”⁶⁵

...with gentleness/ meekness/ humility

With gentleness can be rendered meekness and was seen in how Peter described the optimal ‘clothing’ of a Christian woman namely *the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit* (3:4). This ‘mildness of disposition’/ ‘gentleness of spirit’/ ‘meekness’/ is a translation of *prautēs*⁶⁶ Jesus was characterized by this attitude (Matt 11:29; 21:5) and it is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23). Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance ties together this disposition and suffering and in the context of 1 Peter it is worth quoting at length:

⁶³ Lenski, p. 151.

⁶⁴ Williams, p. 302, fn 49.

⁶⁵ J. Ramsey Michaels. *Word Biblical Commentary: 1 Peter*. Vol 49 (Dallas : Word, Incorporated, 2002), S. 189.

⁶⁶ BDAG---“the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s self-importance, *gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness, meekness* in the older favorable sense.” Additionally, “*Praütēs* is not readily expressed in Eng. (since the term “meekness” suggests weakness), but it is a condition of mind and heart which demonstrates gentleness, not in weakness, but in power. It is a balance born in strength of character.” (from the *Complete Word Study Dictionary, New Testament*)

Meekness toward God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. In the OT, the meek are those wholly relying on God rather than their own strength to defend them against injustice. Thus, meekness toward evil people means knowing God is permitting the injuries they inflict, that He is using them to purify His elect, and that He will deliver His elect in His time. (Is. 41:17, Lu. 18:1-8) Gentleness or meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over the situation. The gentle person is not occupied with self at all. This is a work of the Holy Spirit, not of the human will. (Gal. 5:23).⁶⁷

One could imagine a member of Peter's Christian community being brought before a provincial governor on charges that stemmed from a false accusation. As much as they would want to fight for their rights due to the injustice of the situation, Peter advocates that placing their lives completely into God's hands will set them free regardless of the judgment rendered. They could depend on Jesus' words: *Blessed are the meek* (Gk. 'praeis'), *because they shall inherit the earth* (Matt 5:5 cf Ps. 37:11)

Finally, Spicq would like to render *gentleness and respect* as "deferential meekness" and as long as it retains a Godward focus primarily, there is much to be said for this rendition.

...keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

Rather than advocating a tit for tat kind of response to slander, Peter advocates a Christ-like method of moving to higher moral ground. With behavior that is rooted *in Christ* their detractors, rather than themselves will be shamed. Holloway affirms that this will give Peter's audience the "subjective assurance that they are not at fault" in spite of an ordeal, and applies the term "attributional ambiguity" to this action. He defines this as "attributing one's suffering not to one's

⁶⁷ James Strong. *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.* electronic ed. (Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), S. G4239.

own failings but to the prejudice and hostility of others” and that this opens “one to imagine oneself suffering after the manner of Christ.”⁶⁸

Finally to close off this section, Peter makes one further appeal to an untarnished conscience in v. 17 in the face of the contingency plan for suffering. Holloway paraphrases it as:

*v. 17 If it is the will of God for you to suffer, it is better to do so with the good conscience of one who has done what is right than with the guilty conscience of one who has done what is wrong.*⁶⁹

Closing Summary

The exegesis of 1 Peter 3:15/16 with sensitivity to its context, both within 1 Peter and its Biblical antecedents, as well as its historical context would suggest that the passage has much more of a Godward focus than has been frequently suggested.

It suggests that a healthy reverence for God combined with a trusting disposition even in the face of suffering will inevitably result in strong Gospel witness. In a nutshell, the fear of God will eclipse the fear of people. The examples at the beginning of this paper, drawn from contemporary usage and which feature the words “mutual respect”, “respect” and “gentleness and respect” for all their talk of Gospel witness, are handicapped by an overly strong human to human dynamic. Frequently they appear to espouse people pleasing.

This exegesis, as well highlights a severe handicap of the human-centered respect dynamic. One does not observe controls on the fact that quickly what was a healthy honor or deference to a fellow human being, now translates into a wholesale acceptance of the ideologies that this person holds. Recall the seminal quote by Charles Taber who advocated that the Western missionary:

abandon triumphalism and develop sincere respect, appreciation and sensitivity for all Muslim persons, for their faith and for their way of life.

In short what Taber advocated some 30 years ago, has translated into a full blown admiration, under the rubric of respect, for almost

⁶⁸ Holloway, p. 205, also fn. 83 same page.

⁶⁹ Holloway, p. 206.

all aspects of Islam by proponents of the Insider Movement. This can include holding high the virtues of the Qur'an, the Islamic Jesus, the person of Muhammad, the benefits of Islamic ritual and so forth. Unfortunately, this posture has led to less Christian apologetics, than Christian apologies.

In contrast to the Insider Movement's advocacy of staying within the thought constructs of Islam, Peter suggests that the former way of life of his audience was characterized by *evil desires, ignorance* (1:13); an *empty way of life handed down...from the forefathers* (1:18); originating from *perishable seed* (1:23); characterized by items like *deceit and malice* (2:1); *darkness* (2:9) and *doing what pagans do* (4:3). Peter's audience is not stuck in the old, but has been brought into the new, and this is what makes their witness powerful.

Finally, Peter advocates wise and polite deference to members of other religions who share the "common ground" as being made of material from clay ground. Politeness will go a long way in being a "friend to sinners" yet wisdom is needed to see the ignorance and darkness possessed by all—including their religions---who are not reborn in the new Adam. The Apostle Paul, as well demonstrated that apologetics has both an element of defending the faith, and also counteracting ignorance and false beliefs. The later emphasis is virtually absent in much of present day interfaith-dialogue language.

Conclusion

Recall the words of Edmund Clowney concerning the theme of 1 Peter: "Facing impending assaults on the gospel, Peter witnesses to the grace of God, the overwhelming reality of what God has done in Jesus Christ." As he sets out to fortify Christians who had to suffer for bearing that name and everything that its identity involved (4:14, 16), Peter demonstrates that he is keenly aware of their context, as well as their exalted identity in Christ. This identity in effect provides an impenetrable shield against fear and so Peter provides no hint of escapism from harsh realities. Rather as Norbert Brox called it he is delivering "a preparation for witness/martyrdom." In short, Peter's ultimate context in Christ, redefines the local context.

It is the local context, as we have seen, which drives many of the quotes on "gentleness and respect" and "mutual respect." Would that the same group who had invited David Shenk with the words "We

invited you because you believe the Gospel and respect us” would say, “We invited you because you believe the Gospel and the one you revere in your heart as holy is Christ the Lord” and as a consequence many would come out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9).

Book Review

A review of *Christian Zionism Examined: A Review of Ideas on Israel, the Church and the Kingdom* by Steven Paas, (VTR Publications, Nürnberg / RVB, Hamburg: 2012), 135 pp., ISBN 978-3-941750-86-9, Retail price: € [D] 14.95 / £ 12.95 / \$ 18.95

At a time in history when Christian talk shows and Christian television originating in the West, regularly dish up yet another version of “the end is near” and “all things pertaining to Israel are dear,” Steven Paas comes on to the scene with a refreshingly—and I would say—Biblical view of the matter. It is refreshing in that his *Christian Zionism Examined* is not afraid to explore in some depth, the roots and shoots of a movement that in his opinion has “has subjected the Bible to extreme literalism, underrating the covenant, and decentralizing Christ. This has distorted conceptions of the Church and Israel and the Church and the Kingdom” (p.22).

A loaded statement such as that one requires ample justification, and that is the mandate of Paas’s book. The author has obviously interacted with a large number of authors and presents his case systematically. In a nutshell he observes that Christian Zionism (CZ) has “failed to find a safe sailing route in between the cliffs of hostile and enthusiastic fascination with the people, the land and the religion of Israel” (p.5). In service to his readers, Paas also takes the time to give ample definitions of political Zionism and Christian Zionism, as well as the historical developments of each. Paas spends a considerable amount of time in examining the linkages between Pietism in Western Europe and the growth of Christian Zionism. His work amply displays that ideas have consequences.

Besides distilling down centuries of church history on the subject, as well as a wide range of current literature, Paas is willing to make some hard-hitting recommendations as a corrective to what he sees as a heterodox theology that in effect has two salvation schemes: one for Israel, and one for the Church. To the CZ Biblical interpretation scheme that picks and chooses literalistic interpretations willy-nilly,

his words are “change hermeneutics” (p.116). Specifically he charges CZ with ignoring the fact that Christ is the ultimate hermeneutical key for the Scriptures. To the CZ fascination with millennial schemes centered around a piece of real-estate beside the Mediterranean, he asserts “drop Zionistic Millennialism” (ibid). Specifically he charges CZ with demoting the role of the heavenly Zion to that of the physical Zion. To the CZ rose-colored glasses of gushing over anything Jewish, Paas says that it is high time to “normalize attitudes” (p. 117). Concretely he sees that it is time to get beyond the CZ “misty complex of exaggerated emotions and expectations” (p. 17) and examine the place of political Israel as such and the “Israel of God” (c.f. Galatians 6:16) as such. Finally to the CZ apathetic and borderline apartheid attitude towards proclaiming the Gospel to Jews, he advocates “be mission minded” (p. 118).

Concretely, Paas looks through the eyes of Asians and Africans who see the fascination bordering on adulation with one ethnic group—namely the Jews by CZ, and an apathetic stance to missions to them due to its dispensational theology, as a new kind of colonial spirit bordering on apartheid.

Due to its brevity, the work could not examine critical passages like Romans 11, or Galatians 6 to the depth that this reviewer would like to have seen. Perhaps this is an encouragement for the author to produce a follow-up work to this already very useful examination.

Salaam Corniche, September 6, 2012