

THE ONE GOD AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: AN EXEGETICAL EXAMINATION OF
THE HIGH CHRISTOLOGY FOUND IN PAUL, MARK AND JOHN

by

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(Under the Direction of Wayne Coppins)

ABSTRACT

During the formative years of Christian thought, little is known concerning what people believed due to a lack of information concerning what the church definitively taught. Because of this, there exist divergent views concerning what views were held from the beginning and how they evolved. My thesis hopes to contribute to this discussion with respect to Jesus' inclusion within the divine identity by focusing on three authors in particular, Paul, Mark and John, with the hope of showing that substantial continuity exists in their basic portrayal of Jesus' relation to the one God of Israel. This will be accomplished by showing that there is continuity between all three in their use of Scripture, specifically their use of Scriptural allusions, particularly those to Isaiah and the *Shema*. I also examine the subordination language in these texts to show that there is a consensus view of Jesus in the New Testament.

INDEX WORDS: 1 Corinthians, Christology, Gospels, Gospel of John, Gospel of Mark, Pauline Epistles, Philippians, Romans, Second Temple Judaism, Septuagint, *Shema*

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DEDICATION

To Wayne Coppins, for all of your assistance, advice and patience in aiding me to grow
as a scholar. ἐν φιλήματι ἀγίῳ.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Monotheism is a paramount topic in the field of New Testament scholarship because of the vital role it plays in understanding the beliefs and doctrines of both Judaism and Christianity. It is the foundation upon which the New Testament authors constructed their Christology, so it is extremely important to have an understanding of Second Temple Jewish Monotheism, which held an earnest belief in one God who alone is worthy of worship.¹ Since Christianity sprouted from the roots of Judaism, the upholding of “monotheism,” or, better, the retention of God’s unique status as the “One God of Israel,” was of supreme importance to the New Testament authors. Thus, the inclusion of Jesus in the divine identity was a striking step due to the Second Temple Jewish conceptualization of God. Martin Hengel states the predicament in which the early Christians found themselves, “It is... clear that the Christianity of the first century – like contemporary Judaism – was reluctant to transfer the term ‘God’ directly to a heavenly mediator figure, although it did not rule it out completely.”² This quote exhibits the paradox that exists for the New Testament authors: They were able to retain their inherited, Jewish Monotheism, while also possessing the capacity to incorporate another figure into the ‘divine-mix.’³

Unfortunately, the nascent period of Christianity is a nebulous time period because little is known concerning what was held at the onset of the formation of the church. Due to this lack of information, there is much confusion and uncertainty shrouding the topic, and, thus, there exists disparate views in scholarship on how the formative years of the church took place as well

¹ This will be argued more in depth later in the introduction.

² Hengel 1995, 367.

³ Essentially, the New Testament writers found a means to have their cake and eat it too!

as what views were held in the beginning. My thesis contributes to this discussion with respect to Jesus' inclusion within the divine identity by focusing on three authors in particular, Paul, Mark and John, showing that continuity exists in their portrayal of Jesus' relation to the one God of Israel. This will be accomplished by showing that a common trend exists between all three in their use of Scripture, specifically focusing on the tactic of Scriptural allusions to Isaiah and the *Shema*.⁴ I also wish to address this topic by approaching the subordination language that exists in the New Testament. These crucial verses must be dealt with properly in order to understand fully the framework in which the authors are operating.

This discussion is of utmost importance in the realm of New Testament scholarship because too often scholars either downplay or exaggerate such language to fit their theological persuasions. Scholars, like John Collins, wish to show that the nascent years of Christianity held a much lower Christology due to such subordination language. On the other hand, scholars like Larry Hurtado and Richard Bauckham downplay this language while highlighting the higher Christological claims. By doing so, they effectively claim that the subordination verses must be read through the lenses of the high Christological passages. Instead of siding with Collins or Bauckham, I prefer to take a middle stance claiming the subordination language exists for a greater purpose that must be understood from a newly-formed Christian group still firmly attached to Second Temple Judaism and their views of worshiping only one God

In the remainder of this introduction, I will discuss the history of scholarship in relation to both Monotheism and Christology in order to establish the context in which my thesis is set.

⁴ This is essentially expanding Richard Hays' thesis in his work *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* to include other authors other than just Paul, while also relocating the reason for these allusions. Instead of stressing the ecclesiocentric nature of these allusions, as he does, I hold that they can be strongly Christological (both for Paul and other New Testament authors).

This will also include a general discussion of the views held by Richard Hays, Larry Hurtado⁵ and Richard Bauckham since their works have been of particular importance for the formulation of my arguments. Finally, a general overview of my chapters on Paul, Mark and John will be presented emphasizing their broad arguments and how they relate to my overall claim.

1.1 Is Monotheism a Dirty Word?

The term “monotheism” has been heavily debated, and scholars have been divided on whether or not it is appropriate to still use the word. This discussion has become more prominent as scholars have continued to gain a better understanding of ancient Israel’s conception of God. R.W.L. Moberly asserts, “Although the Bible presents a picture that is apparently monotheistic from the outset, monotheism (in anything like its traditional sense) only emerged relatively late in Israel’s history during the biblical period, after centuries of religious and political struggle – both between Israel and its neighbours, and within Israel.”⁶ Thus, over time, the term has seemed to evolve and change due to our growth in understanding of ancient religions and how they related to one another. Biblical scholars have framed monotheism within the boundaries of both a “broad” and “narrow” definition. “In the former case, it suffices to have ‘monotheism’ refers to the belief in or worship of one, universal god. In the latter, narrower sense, however, the expression is applied in a way that specifically precludes a belief in the existence of other deities.”⁷ Michael Mach holds a similar view regarding two designations of the term: “Inclusive” versus “exclusive” Monotheism. He argues these distinctions arose so that one might be able to differentiate whether a ‘monotheistic’ belief left room for other gods.⁸ This discussion of terms

⁵ The work of Larry Hurtado will be scattered throughout the introduction because his influence is not as foundational as Bauckham and Hays on the development of my own thesis. His contribution lies more in the establishment of Second Temple Jewish monotheism and the early exaltation of Jesus.

⁶ Moberly 2004, 216.

⁷ Stuckenbruck 1995, 15.

⁸ Mach 1998, 24.

has led many scholars into dissatisfaction with the terminology based on three reasons according to Loren Stuckenbruck:

1. In the 19th and 20th centuries, scholarship frequently used the expression as “an influential theological category which was all too readily absorbed into idealistic perspectives.”
2. Many view the term as insufficient for accurately portraying “the distinctiveness of Israelite religion and Judaism.”
3. Other terms have been introduced more recently that are seemingly more descriptive such as ‘henotheism,’ ‘monolatry’ and ‘monarchism.’⁹

Stuckenbruck astutely points out that these first two claims are closely related, and “they illustrate that the expression has often been bound up with some form of theological idealism.” Hence, “the criticism, however, ought not necessarily be translated into a demand that the term be avoided... ‘Monotheism’ may be made to represent one end of a continuum of religious ideas and practices.”¹⁰ Stuckenbruck also contests the third point because the terms “henotheism” and “monolatry” were contrived in order to reconstruct the stages of development between polytheism and monotheism in ancient and Israelite religion.

As far as my thesis is concerned, the term monotheism should not be labeled as a useless, outdated term reserved for the 19th and 20th centuries. Instead, I wish to retain the word because it does have redeeming qualities that are still applicable and useful for the discussion of a belief in one deity. With reference to point three above, it is helpful to use such distinctions in relation to monotheism. The term can be inadequate on its own because of the negative connotations that are sometimes attached to it, but, if framed in the context in which it is being used, the term can be appropriately adopted. For this study in Christology, the term will be used to express the idea of a belief in the one God with respect to the views of Second Temple Judaism.

⁹ Stuckenbruck 1995, 16.

¹⁰ Stuckenbruck 1995, 16, 17.

1.2 Second Temple Judaism & Monotheism

The divine identity can most explicitly be expressed in Judaism through the opening statement of the *Shema*: “Listen, Israel: YHWH is our God. YHWH is one” (Deut. 6:4).¹¹ This is a powerful monotheistic claim which established YHWH as the one God of Israel who is worthy of worship for it is he alone whom “you shall love... with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deut. 6:5). Dunn claims that the recitation of the *Shema* was a long established ritual performed daily during the Second Temple period.¹² Richard Bauckham adds to this affirmation that the Decalogue (Exod. 20:2-6; Deut. 5:6-10) was also recited alongside the *Shema*. He concludes from this that the recitation of both of these passages asserts “the absolute uniqueness of YHWH as the one and only God.”¹³ That being the case, there should be little doubt that most Jews at the time would be fully aware of these passages and that they played a significant role in their theology and how they viewed their God – as one. The Jewish model of the divine identity of God is a strict one, which leaves room for the worship of no other gods except for YHWH alone (Deut. 5:6,7).¹⁴

Although the claim can be made that Jewish thought in the Second Temple period was extremely strict, some contention exists amongst scholars as to how exclusive this monotheism truly was. John Collins states, “By nearly all accounts, by the end of the first century C.E., strict monotheism had long been one of the pillars of Judaism.” He then follows up this statement inquiring “how was it possible for first-century C.E. Jews to accept this man Jesus as the preexistent Son of God and still believe, as they surely did, that they were not violating

¹¹ Friedman 2003, 321.

¹² Dunn 2004, 105.

¹³ Bauckham 2008, 5.

¹⁴ Cf. Appendix B on Dtr 1’s Monotheism examining the Decalogue and the *Shema*.

traditional Jewish monotheism?”¹⁵ Due to Christianity’s incorporation of Jesus into the divine identity, Collins argues that the Jewish monotheism during the Second Temple period is not as cut and dried as one might believe it to be. He points to the fact that during the Hellenistic period, several kinds of quasi-divine figures¹⁶ surface within the texts of the time, which leads one to consider the implications this has on the monotheism of the time. Collins lists three separate categories of characters present in these texts, which seem to function as divine agents similar to Jesus in the Gospel traditions. These are: 1) Angelic Figures; 2) Exalted Human Beings; and 3) Abstract Figures – Wisdom and the Word.¹⁷ These figures, which appear during the Hellenistic period, seem to augment the traditional idea of monotheism.

Collins claims that due to these figures participating in limited capacities in the divine identity, it was easier for Jesus’ status to be elevated over a period of time, but not to the level as the evangelist John exalts him.¹⁸ Thus, Jesus’ claim in the Gospel of John that “the Father and I are one,” “is without parallel in Judaism. By the end of the first century C.E., the exaltation of Jesus had reached a point where it was increasingly difficult to reconcile with Jewish understandings of monotheism.”¹⁹ Collins, thus, concludes that the trinity is an apparent contradictory position without admitting it, and that “the notion of God as three as well as one, obviously entails a considerable qualification of monotheism.”²⁰

¹⁵ Collins 2005, 179.

¹⁶ For a discussion of one such figure, the *Theios Aner*, cf. appendix F. Also, to examine a Jewish perspective of a Gentile “Christ,” cf. appendix C. Lastly, for other Christological figures in Jewish literature see appendices D and E (4 Ezra and 1 Enoch).

¹⁷ For a more in depth description of these groups, cf. Collins 2005, 180-186.

¹⁸ This line of argument is slightly more relevant to the Christology section of the introduction, but it is contingent on the previous discussion. That is why I have chosen to expound on it at this time and then make allusion to it later.

¹⁹ Collins 2005, 187.

²⁰ Collins 2005, 189. There is no such language present in the New Testament that expresses fully developed Trinitarian thought. For a discussion on this later development, cf. Appendix G.

In contrast to Collins, Richard Bauckham believes that Second Temple Jewish Monotheism held a stricter view of God's oneness than what Collins allows.²¹ Bauckham argues, "Most Jews in this period were highly self-consciously monotheistic, and had certain very familiar and well-defined ideas as to how the uniqueness of the one God should be understood."²² The Jews during the second temple period drew a very distinct line between the one God and the rest of reality. He then claims, "So-called intermediary figures were not ambiguous semi-divinities straddling the boundary between God and creation. Some were understood as aspects of the one God's own unique reality. Most were regarded as... exalted servants of God whom the literature often takes pains to distinguish clearly from the truly divine reality of the one and only God."²³ Bauckham concludes, therefore, that Jewish intermediary figures do not have a decisively important position in the study of early Christology, but that is not to say he holds that they do not have their place in the discussion. He wants to make clear that they are not the key to understanding the "Jewishness of early Christology."²⁴ In my judgment, it is more likely that Bauckham's assessment of Jewish monotheism during the Second Temple period reflects the true beliefs of the time period, and this strict sense of worship to the one God of Israel alone will be held throughout this thesis.²⁵

1.3 The Rise of Christology in the New Testament

The Christology present in the New Testament is varied and does not work in a single, systematic way as some might think. This is largely due to the fact that the New Testament is an

²¹ Summarizing a view he rejects, Bauckham (2008, 2,3) states, "Such views are closely related to a search for Jewish precedents and parallels for early Christian Christology... Because Jewish monotheism was not strict but flexible, and the boundary between the one God and all other reality relatively blurred by the interest in intermediary figures, the highest New Testament Christology can be understood as an intelligibly Jewish development."

²² Bauckham 2008, 3.

²³ Bauckham 2008, 3.

²⁴ Bauckham 2008, 3.

²⁵ This will be made clear throughout the discussion of Christology in the following pages. The culmination of Christology will ultimately involve this view of monotheism and will contribute to this discussion.

amalgamation of various writings over an extended stretch of time written by distinct authors with different emphases in mind. With that said, a working definition provided by Raymond Brown will be the starting point of this discussion: “Christology [is the] discuss[ion of] how Jesus came to be called the Messiah or Christ and what was meant by that designation... [It] discusses any evaluation of Jesus in respect to who he was and the role he played in the divine plan.”²⁶ That does not mean, however, that a fully developed Christology emerged immediately after the church was formed. The Christology of the New Testament was developed over time, but the temporal component of this process is a highly contentious topic in New Testament scholarship.

After the death of Jesus, there is approximately a twenty-year gap, which separates the actual life of Jesus and our first extant writing of the New Testament. This is the reason why so much debate dominates the discussion of Christology. Wilhelm Bousset argued in his landmark book (1913) that it was not until the “good news” came to the Gentiles and their Hellenistic cultural context that Jesus was worshipped as *Kyrios* – as a divine being. As Bousset states,

Nowhere may we forget that behind the personal piety of Paul and his theology there stands as a real power and a living reality the cultic veneration of the κύριος in the community. But what people worship in the cultus must stand wholly and unconditionally on the side of God. If Paul, following Old Testament instincts, still avoids the predicate of the deity of Christ and seeks to maintain a boundary line between θεός and κύριος, yet the massive faith of the community will ride smoothly over this careful distinction.²⁷

Thus, he concludes that Paul’s intention was not that Jesus should be worshipped; for there is no clear statement in our earliest writings that Jesus was equated to God nor is there any indication

²⁶ Brown 1994, 3. It is also noteworthy to add that “It is characteristic of New Testament Christology that Christ is connected with the total history of revelation and salvation, beginning with creation. There can be no *Heilsgeschichte* without Christology; no Christology without a *Heilsgeschichte* which unfolds in time. Christology is the doctrine of an ‘event’, not the doctrine of natures” (Cullmann 1959, 9). This in part is true, but I have contention with Cullman’s final remark because Christology does involve a definition of natures as will be shown throughout this thesis.

²⁷ Bousset 1970, 210.

that he was worshipped.²⁸ It was only after the Greek-speaking Gentiles were brought into the community that Jesus became the exalted Lord.

Contra Bousset, Larry Hurtado argues that the earliest, Jewish communities were the ones, in fact, who first began to exalt Jesus to the lofty position at the right hand of God. Hurtado states plainly, “That the historical evidence does not really permit the attribution of Jesus-devotion to pagan influences, and does not support an evolutionary model of development, with a divine Jesus emerging only at a secondary stage of the early Christian movement.”²⁹ This is argued by other scholars due to the presupposed Christology that seems to permeate the Pauline epistles. Richard Hays claims, “We rarely find Paul using Scripture to define the identity of Jesus Christ or to reflect theologically about it.”³⁰ Throughout the letters, Paul never tries to persuade the community that Jesus is the Christ, so, such scholars use this as evidence that the churches and Paul have a common understanding of who the person of Jesus is in relation to God. Hurtado summarizes his claim that devotion to Jesus had to be an early development because the chronological and demographic evidence does not allow such a slow, pagan evolution to occur. Instead, devotion to Jesus began extremely early and originated in a community of Jews.³¹

²⁸ For a well-developed argument on whether the first Christians worshipped Jesus, cf. Dunn 2010. Dunn answers the question as follows, “So our central question can indeed be answered negatively, and perhaps it should be. But not if the result is a far less adequate worship of God. For the worship that really constitutes Christianity and forms its distinctive contribution to the dialogue of the religions, is the worship of God as enabled by Jesus, the worship of God as revealed in and through Jesus. Christianity remains a monotheistic faith. The only one to be worshipped is the one God” (151). As will become evident, the argument of this thesis represents a challenge to Dunn’s answer in significant respects.

²⁹ Hurtado 2005, 32.

³⁰ Hays 1989, 86.

³¹ As was argued before, due to their extreme devotion to God alone, it is extremely unlikely that they would easily incorporate another person into the divine identity.

1.4 Perspectives for Progressing Forward

This section will be used to put present the views of Richard Hays and Richard Bauckham that have been crucial in formulating my thesis. I hope to establish these works, briefly stating their own basic thrusts, and then presenting additional material that will push them further showing their relevance to my own work.

1.4.1 An Analysis of Richard Hays' *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*

As one begins to read the epistles of Paul, it becomes quite apparent that he frequently uses passages from the Hebrew Bible (some of which are direct quotations, while others seem to be mere allusions of the original text³²) with the intent of strengthening his arguments. But can Paul's use of ἡ γραφή be read as an accurate representation of what the original writers intended, or has Paul just indiscriminately taken what was at his disposal and distorted it in such a way that it no longer reflects the author's original intent? Paul's seemingly nebulous execution of Scripture has undergone much scrutiny, and Richard Hays has written an excellent piece elucidating this tortuous discussion, which revolutionized the way in which I personally examine not only the Scriptural references found in Paul's letters, but also those found within the pages of other New Testament books.

The goal of *Echoes* is not to be a comprehensive examination of every quotation and allusion present within the Pauline corpus; rather, Hays seeks "to probe the complex significations created by a representative sampling of Paul's intertextual reflections."³³ Paul's reassessment of Scripture led him to believe that the gospel, his proclamation specifically, was prefigured within these sacred, inherited texts. Hays argues this is the crux of understanding Paul's execution of Scripture because Paul was a "Christian interpreter whose Bible was Israel's

³² In most instances, this would be the LXX and not the MT. Cf. Appendix A for a further discussion.

³³ Hays 1989, xii.

Scripture,” who sought to provide guidance for struggling churches as they also attempted to grapple with this gospel of Jesus Christ and the implications this had on their community.³⁴

Hays seeks to show how Paul structured his thoughts around the holy scriptures of Israel. This leads to his discussion of Paul and metalepsis. By using examples from works of more modern authors, Hays shows that proper understanding of certain passages within modern literature can be properly assessed only if one truly understands the allusion undergirding the text. Hence, Hays argues that Paul strategically executes this style of writing in his letters: “Allusive echo functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed... Paul’s citations of Scripture often function not as proofs but as tropes: they generate new meanings by linking the earlier text (Scripture) to the later (Paul’s discourse) in such a way as to produce unexpected correspondences, correspondences that suggest more than they assert.”³⁵ Thus, Hays’ argument suggests that Paul’s supposed “proof text” is in reality an allusion to the original intent of the author, but is made manifest later in Paul’s argument subtly supporting his claims.

As far as broadening the scope of Hays’ work, I would like to propose that such a reading of Scripture within the New Testament is also applicable with other authors. I will restrict this discussion to just a paragraph to show that this trend may be found elsewhere in the New Testament with a case study focusing on possible allusions to the *Shema*. This argument presupposes Hays’ criteria of Scriptural allusions for the Pauline corpus as well as Joel Marcus’ provocative claim that the use of the adjective εἰς would call to the reader’s mind the *Shema*.³⁶ Thus, I would argue that the use of the adjective εἰς can function as a scriptural allusion to strict monotheism because it is drawing to mind the claim described in the *Shema* that God is εἰς. In

³⁴ Hays 1989, 5.

³⁵ Hays 1989, 20,24.

³⁶ Marcus 1994, 196-211. – This will be fully evaluated in the Marcan chapter.

Mark, this adjective is connected with θεός twice as an indirect reference to the *Shema* in 2:7 and 10:18 (εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός). This can also be found in Paul, specifically 1 Cor. 8:4 (καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς), which is a strikingly similar construction found in the two passages in Mark described above. Furthering this point, 1 Cor. 8:6 is arguably a reworking of the *Shema*.³⁷ Moreover, building on Hays' thesis, it could be argued that if the allusion in v. 4 is viewed as support for a later development within the argument, then it could substantiate the suggestion that 8:6 is indeed a reworking of Deut. 6:4. The third and final potential allusion lies in John 10:30, but complications arise here since the evangelist uses ἓν instead of εἷς. If, however, Bauckham is correct in his analysis, then the author had to adjust the gender for the argument at hand, namely that God and Jesus are united as one God, not one person.³⁸ Suffice it to say, it would be an intriguing trend within the New Testament if it could be shown more definitively that such a writing convention was normal for its authors.

1.4.2 An Analysis of Richard Bauckham's View of New Testament Christology

Since Christianity arose from the strict, monotheistic mindset discussed in 1.2, it may be assumed that Bauckham is correct when he claims that there was a distinct difference between the one God and all other reality. It is important to have in mind that the highest Christological statements in the New Testament, according to Bauckham, are those that illuminate the divine identity, and how they “identify Jesus as intrinsic to who God is.”³⁹ If that is the case, it is imperative to establish what characteristics define this “divine identity.”

What truly sets God apart from all other entities in existence is the basic fact that God alone is worthy of worship – monolatry. No other being should receive this type of recognition, and this is a well established point engrained in the minds of every practicing Jew in Palestine

³⁷ This will also be discussed in detail later in the Pauline Epistles chapter.

³⁸ Bauckham 2008, 104. This, also, will be discussed in detail in the chapter that discusses John's Christology.

³⁹ Bauckham 1999, 42.

during the Second Temple period because of the daily recitation of both the *Shema* and the Decalogue. Monolatry is what truly sets God apart from all existence. But what sets God above all others and establishes him as worthy of worship alone? Bauckham suggests, “The uniqueness of the divine identity was characterized especially by two features: that the one God is sole Creator of all things and that the one God is sole Ruler of all things.”⁴⁰ Argued further, “These two identifying features of the unique God constantly recur in non-polemical evocations of God’s absolute superiority to all creatures and in polemical assertion of the uniqueness of the one God, YHWH, in comparison with pagan gods or creatures pagans worship as gods.”⁴¹ This plays such a foundational role for Christology since Jesus is depicted as participating in both of these roles. Jesus is shown in Mark as having an ἐξουσία that is foreign to all the people as well as reenacting a theophany when he walks on water.⁴² John depicts Jesus as the λόγος who was involved in the creation event. Even in Paul, Jesus is shown in the Philippian hymn as Ruler over all.⁴³

Although Bauckham states that these two characteristics are the most crucial indicators of the one God’s identity, arguably a third could be added to strengthen his thesis: God alone as the giver of Law and Covenant. In the Hebrew Bible texts, it is quite prominent throughout that God alone should be worshipped because of all that he has done for his chosen people. He is the God of Israel who made a covenant with his people to last for all eternity as was stated in Psalms 89. This covenant could be traced back to the time of Abraham when God told him he would multiply his descendants, but the covenant he had with the people of Israel was later during the time of Moses. The relationship between God and Israel was a very unique one because, unlike

⁴⁰ Bauckham 2008, 18.

⁴¹ Bauckham 1998, 45,46.

⁴² This passage exemplifies exquisitely Hays scriptural allusion thesis as well. This will be discussed in more detail in the Marcan chapter.

⁴³ There are more examples, which will be shown in the appropriate chapters of my thesis.

gods of the neighboring religions who equated their gods to natural forces, he is a God who established his interrelation with Israel through a covenant. He was seen as a God of history.⁴⁴ The Israelite people viewed God like a lord reigning over them because they established their relationship through the Ten Commandments, which appear to be modeled after an ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaty.⁴⁵

The Chosen People made a legal pact with YHWH by showing they alone were subject to him, and they set up a history of how God had served them well and what stipulations they would obey. Further on in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the two lay out the blessings and curses to the nation dependent on whether the people uphold the covenant given by God. But where the covenant and monotheism truly come together for the people in a defining statement is through the *Shema* in Deut. 6:4-9:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

This passage is claiming God's oneness, "the Lord alone" and the one whom "you shall love." Just before this section of scripture is where the Ten Commandments are repeated, so, here, the oneness of God and the covenant are closely connected in the mind of the Israelites.⁴⁶ There is also a call to the people to hold what God was "commanding [them] today in [their] heart[s]." The close relationship between the law/covenant with God is a constant theme, which runs

⁴⁴ Cf. Appendix C, which argues for YHWH as a God of History.

⁴⁵ Brassey 2002, 124. Cf. table 8 in Appendix C for a comparison of the Suzerainty treaty and the Decalogue.

⁴⁶ There are other passages which show YHWH's oneness in the Bible such as Deut. 4:35, 2 Kings 19:15, Nehemiah 9:6, Psalm 86:10, 2Sam 7:22, Deut. 4:39, 1Sam 2:2, Jer 16:19-20, Ps. 96:5, Ps. 82.7 (Smith 2001, 152) but none of these carry the same closeness to the Law/Covenant as the *Shema* does. Cf. Appendix B for a discussion of the connection between the *Shema* and the Decalogue constructed by Dtr 1.

throughout the Hebrew Bible. This has great implications in Isaiah 40-55 whose author focuses immensely on the covenant and the restoration of God's people.⁴⁷

The New Testament also establishes this as a crucial aspect of Jesus and his relationship to the church. Jesus is shown at the Last Supper initiating a new covenant for the people, which shows Jesus sharing in the divine prerogative. This is also evident in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 where Paul discusses the covenant ushered in by Christ, which is an early attestation of this tradition. Oddly enough, in Matthew 5, Jesus also states he did not come to abolish the Law. Here, Jesus is upholding the covenant between God and His People because there is not a sense of Jesus usurping God's authority nor is he nullifying the Old Covenant.⁴⁸ Thus, it could very well be argued that a defining characteristic of God is his position as Law/Covenant provider for His Chosen People and that what is said about Jesus' relation to the covenant in the New Testament writings is a way of including him in the divine identity.

1.5 Thesis Overview

In this final section I wish to give a basic overview of the main chapters of my thesis to serve as a quick reference as to what will be discussed. Keep in mind, the undergirding of my thesis resides on the Scriptural allusions present within these New Testament works. The second crucial aspect of my thesis is to show through, but not limited to, these Scriptural allusions that Jesus is being incorporated into the divine identity by being depicted as being the supreme ruler, creator and Law/Covenant giver. As far as approaching the Christology of the New Testament, I will not be focusing as much on the titles attributed to Jesus by the authors. Instead, I wish to focus predominately on these scriptural allusions and the narrative devices used in the works of

⁴⁷ Again, this is discussed in more detail in Appendix C.

⁴⁸ This also plays into the subordination language present in the New Testament. The authors are wary to not let the readers get the wrong impression that Jesus is taking over the throne. He sits at the right hand as part of the divine identity. In no way is the Old Covenant nullified; it is continued in Jesus.

Paul, Mark and John. This method will obviously involve incorporating titles when appropriate, but it is not the central focus for elucidating how each author perceives Jesus' relation to the Father. Each title is just a piece of the puzzle that comprises who Jesus is.

Chapter two will focus on the Pauline corpus, which is one of the most extensive groups of writings present in the New Testament, so a full analysis of every Christologically significant Scriptural allusion would be impossible. In this chapter there will be a focus on three significant passages. I will initially focus on 1 Corinthians 8:4,6 to show the Scriptural allusion to the *Shema* that Paul uses to incorporate Jesus with the divine identity. This reworking shows a close relationship between Jesus and God that is present in Paul's thought. This is foundational because it reveals how Paul can interchange the father and the Lord to serve the same role. I then explore Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:9-11 and their use of Isaiah 45:23. The surface level paradox present is caused by Paul quoting the same verse for two different reasons. This needs to be resolved in order to establish if Paul is contradictory in his thoughts or if he instead has a view of Jesus/God that is contrary to what one might expect. Since, as I shall argue, in Romans the *kurios* language used is in relation to God and that in Philippians for Jesus, a solution is imperative for understanding the way in which Paul operates in his epistles for discussing the roles of both the Son and the Father.

The Marcan chapter hopes to challenge the common misconception that Mark is working within a lower Christology than the other gospels. In this chapter, I bring to light the discussion of the secrecy motif that pervades the entire book through Scriptural allusions. I also establish a common thread in the New Testament that the authors do not work in a "this and not that" motif by comparing the walking on water theophany with the descent from the mountain after the transfiguration. This is also crucial because Scriptural allusions are present in these passages

exemplifying a theophany and Moses-typology. This also entails wrestling with the varied language that exists in the New Testament. Can Jesus be likened both to God and Moses and still be considered exalted? The third section of this chapter entails a discussion of Jesus' *ὁδός* to Jerusalem leading to his enthronement on the cross. This motif is commonly associated more with discipleship, but I would like to show that there are significant Christological implications that are tied with this paradigm of discipleship. The final section of the chapter focuses on the implicit references to the *Shema* in Mark working predominately with the work of Joel Marcus.

The final chapter focuses on the fourth gospel and specifically the oneness language, which permeates the book. The initial evaluation is on John 1 because it encapsulates the theological framework for the rest of the gospel. The "I Am" language also plays a crucial role, and I will take a non-traditional approach by first analyzing the "I Am" statements that appear in the mouths of figures other than Jesus (John the Witness, the man born blind and Pilate). I will then commence with a discussion of the predicated and absolute "I Am" statements in the gospel. This chapter also includes a discussion on the *Shema* present in the gospel as well as the significance of John's subordination language.

Although there is not a strict continuity within the New Testament, and albeit all these characteristics are not present within each of these three books, a red thread still runs through tying them together. All three contain subtle, Scriptural allusions as well as subordination language that must be reconciled, and both of these aspects aid the reader in understanding the multifaceted and complicated image of who Jesus is understood to be. Overall, these three make a cohesive whole that is representative of the New Testament because all the elements are in some way present within the corpus with varying degrees of emphasis.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF PAUL

The importance of monotheism remained a crucial aspect of Christianity during the formative period of the growing church. Since Christianity inherited its foundation from Judaism, it was crucial that the early church was able to retain monotheism in their belief system. Paul, the apostle from Tarsus, made it his prerogative to serve Christ as a missionary to the Gentiles and to preach the good news to the far corners of the world. While doing so, Paul progressively developed Christianity's monotheism by cleverly linking Christ, the Lord, to God, the Father.

Paul's letters are probably the earliest writings we possess from the New Testament era. These epistles were sent as pastoral correspondences to specific churches many years before the canonical Gospels were formulated.⁴⁹ It is also important to realize which Scriptures Paul designated as his sacred text. The Septuagint was his main means of accessing the Hebrew Bible, and this text would have been the one used by Hellenistic Jews in their synagogues during Paul's life. It was through this text that Paul quotes the majority of Scripture.⁵⁰

The prominence of monotheism in Judaism during the Second Temple period cannot be stressed enough as to its significance within the Jewish community. To them, God alone was one. This is a crucial point that needs to be understood from the beginning. By refusing to show

⁴⁹ Hays 1989, x.

⁵⁰ Hays 1989, xi. Cf. appendix A for a more detailed discussion of the Septuagint and the New Testament.

reverence to pagan gods, Christianity arose and developed from the monotheistic tendencies of their Jewish brothers.⁵¹

Prior to Paul's role as a major figure during the foundation of Christianity, Rome had a serious influence on the beliefs and practices of many people of the day. There was a significant amount of travel, trade, and communication around Israel and the Mediterranean at this time. This would have led to an increase of different people groups flowing in and out of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. Cultures and religions mixed. This would have led, not only to the trading of good and borrowing of cultures, but to a breeding ground for the sharing and acceptance of deities, practices, and beliefs. Hurtado claims, "The Roman period seems to have been a time of unprecedented religious voluntarism, with numerous people ready to consider religious options beyond their traditional deities and practices."⁵² This is excellently exemplified through the letters to the Corinthians and to the Christians in Rome.

As Paul began his ministry, it became apparent that monotheism was still a very important aspect of the Christian faith. Even by the close of the first century when the majority of Christians were Gentiles,⁵³ the monotheistic trend prevailed and was maintained amongst the followers. This early devotion can be expressed in the letters of Paul, which are, as was previously mentioned, the earliest extant writings of Christians. One should notice also that throughout Paul's letters there seems to be a presupposed knowledge. Not once does Paul specifically lay out all the doctrines and beliefs of the Christian faith; Paul did not need to explain God or these other aspects of Christianity because they were already common knowledge

⁵¹ Hurtado 2005, 14. – Cf. the introduction for a further discussion.

⁵² Hurtado 2005, 58.

⁵³ Hurtado 2005, 15.

to his readers.⁵⁴ If Philippians 2:5-11 is in fact a Pre-Pauline hymn, then this shows that reverence to Christ and his exhalation was a prominent belief shortly after Jesus' crucifixion.

Throughout this study, it will be argued that monotheism pervades Paul's letters and relates God and Jesus in such an intricate way that the relationship between the two seems inseparable. Three major passages from Paul's undisputed letters will be analyzed to show a deep thread of monotheism that strings throughout Paul's corpus. The first centers on 1 Corinthians 8:6 and how it relates to the *Shema*. The second searches through Romans 14:11 to see how Paul relates God and Christ in the final judgment. And finally the famous Philippian Hymn, Philippians 2:5-11, but specifically vv. 9-11, and how it compares to Romans 14 and the new implications it has on the correspondence between God and Jesus. Throughout these epistles, Paul was able to fashion a unique relationship between the Father and the Son by incorporating the Lord Jesus Christ into the identity of the one God the Father.

2.1 The First Epistle to the Corinthians

Prior to focusing on the central verse (8:6), the reading of the surrounding text is crucial for comprehension:

Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as in fact there are many gods and many lords – yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and from whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

I Corinthians 8:4-6 [NRSV]

This text appears to be drawing from Deuteronomy 6:4-9, also known as the *Shema*, which has been argued as a very monotheistic section of the Hebrew Bible upon which Paul is heavily

⁵⁴ Dunn 1998, 29.

relying in order to make his argument.⁵⁵ The view on Paul's use of the *Shema* is an interesting discussion which plays into whether Paul is in some way compromising his monotheism by incorporating Jesus Christ with God.⁵⁶

James Dunn makes an intriguing analysis of First Corinthians 8:6. He is one of many who believe Paul is drawing upon a Pre-Christian Jewish motif of Wisdom known as “Wisdom Christology.” Dunn draws on various Pre-Christian Jewish writings to attempt to prove that Paul is replacing the role of “wisdom” in these scriptures with Christ to show that he is the divine instrument of God through which God's design is fulfilled:

Prov. 3.10 – The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens...

Wisd. 8.4-6 – For she [Wisdom] is an initiate in the knowledge of God, and *an associate in his works*. If riches are a desirable possession in life, which is richer than wisdom *who effects all things*? And if understanding is effective, who more than she is *fashioner of what exists*?

Philo. *Det.* 54 - ...Wisdom, by whose agency the universe was brought to completion.⁵⁷

Looking at these three examples, it is clear Dunn draws upon these wisdom motifs to exemplify how Paul supplants wisdom with Christ to show how he relates to God and his oneness. Dunn claims that this passage contains pre-Pauline and pre-Christian elements in v. 6, which confess that “God is one” is a Jewish concept.⁵⁸ Dunn maintains that the statement, “There is one God, the Father,” is a basic monotheistic affirmation which the church in Corinth would have heard and believed.⁵⁹ Dunn argues that what is said about wisdom is also said about Christ, and Paul

⁵⁵ It should be acknowledged that this too may be a quotation Paul has adopted from either a hymn or a creed that the Corinthians would know and would consider authoritative (Hays 1997, 139).

⁵⁶ For a more detailed discussion on the ethics and community aspects and implications of this verse and its surrounding context, cf. Horrell 2005, 166-203.

⁵⁷ Dunn 1980, 165.

⁵⁸ Dunn 1980, 179.

⁵⁹ Dunn 1980, 180.

described Jesus' agency in a similar way as the Old Testament writers did to describe wisdom's role in the divine plan. They are both portrayed as being agents of God.

According to Dunn, Paul divides the *Shema* into two parts claiming God is one and Jesus is the Lord who shares in this oneness. This has no earlier parallel in Paul's writing. Paul's choice to split the *Shema* in this way mirrors Stoic beliefs of the one God ("from him") and the one Lord ("through him") in a way that parallels the Jewish Wisdom tradition. Dunn claims Paul does this in order

To stress the unity of creation and salvation, to prevent a split in the Corinthians' thinking between their experience of spiritual power and their attitude to the material world...The Lord through whom salvation comes is the Lord through whom all things come; salvation for us means that we live for the one God from whom all things and through the one Lord in the way that all things (come about) through the one Lord.⁶⁰

By doing this, Paul has split the creative power of God between himself, the Father, and the one Lord, Christ that is found in the Wisdom tradition of pre-Christian Judaism. This verse in Corinthians is not a departure from Paul's monotheistic path, which Dunn expresses quite well:

In an astonishing adaption of the Shema (Deut. 6.4), Paul attributes the lordship of the one God to Jesus Christ. And yet his confession of God as one is still affirmed. Evidently the lordship of Christ was not thought of as any usurpation or replacement of God's authority, but expressive of it. The one Lord attests the one God.⁶¹

This passage shows, in Dunn's mind, how Christ is the action of God and he embodies God's creative power.⁶² Dunn also believes this passage does not prove the pre-existence of Christ, but it shows how Christ functions within the Godhead.⁶³

⁶⁰ Dunn 1980, 180.

⁶¹ Dunn 1998, 253.

⁶² Dunn 1980, 182

⁶³ Dunn 1980, 183.

Richard Bauckham takes a different route in order to explain Paul's monotheism in this passage. Hereto, Bauckham argues the context in which the passage was written draws upon Paul's monotheistic beliefs; he claims Paul uses this particular rendering of Scripture in order to portray traditional Jewish monotheism, which supports devout loyalty to the only true God in a pagan context.⁶⁴ He draws upon the *Shema* to maintain his Jewish monotheism perceiving it through the lense of a Christian interpretation which “loyalty to the only true God entails loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ.”⁶⁵ Paul constructed this section of the argument in order to contrast God, “the one lord,” against the plethora of “many gods and many lords” of the Corinthians multi-religious environment in order to reveal that they should remain exclusively devoted to the one God and the one Lord.⁶⁶

By quoting the *Shema*, Paul has added in his own thoughts and interpretation in order to redefine monotheism as Christological. Remarkably, Paul does not add to the *Shema*, rather, he strategically identifies Jesus as the “Lord” whom the *Shema* itself declares as “one.” In so doing, Paul has cleverly and in an unprecedented way reconstructed the *Shema* to reflect the unique identity of the one God as one consisting of “one God, the father,” and “one Lord, Jesus Christ.”⁶⁷ In Richard Bauckham's own words:

He (Paul) distinguishes the one God to whom alone allegiance is due from all pagan gods who are no gods; he draws on classic Jewish ways of formulating monotheistic faith; and he reformulates them to express a Christological monotheism which by no means abandons but maintains precisely the ways Judaism distinguished God from all other reality and uses these to include Jesus in the unique divine identity. He maintains monotheism, not by adding Jesus to but by including Jesus in the Jewish understanding of the divine uniqueness.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Bauckham 1998, 37.

⁶⁵ Bauckham 1998, 37.

⁶⁶ Bauckham 1998, 37.

⁶⁷ Bauckham 1998, 38.

⁶⁸ Bauckham 1998, 38.

For Bauckham, Paul has not compromised his monotheistic background in the least. Paul has, instead, been able to cleverly incorporate Jesus within the divine identity and not sacrifice his core belief of one true, unique God.

Gordon Fee, along with Dunn and Bauckham, believes v. 6 is a restatement of the *Shema*, which is the basic theological confession for the Jews, which in turn became the core of the Christian faith.⁶⁹ He too maintains Paul divided the *Shema* into two parts consisting of God the Father and Jesus as Lord.⁷⁰ Paul, in Fee's opinion, sets God as creator and ruler over all things created, and he is ultimately the source of all redemption. Where Fee begins to differ significantly from Dunn is when he claims this passage alludes to the pre-existent Christ. He claims Paul used the *Shema* as a focal point for his argument concerning meat sacrificed to idols and attending their elaborate banquets. Fee asserts Paul has set up this section of Scripture to include the one Lord as Jesus Christ in order to forbid them from dining with these idols due to the Christian practice of the Lord's Supper. By running the two streams of thought parallel, Paul is able to show the Corinthians they cannot both sit at the table of the idols while communing with fellow brothers at the Lord's Table.⁷¹

Fee does not think that 1 Cor. 8:6 has the Wisdom motif. Some of Fee's main arguments entail showing how there is no real correlation between Christ and Jewish Wisdom. Fee argues that Paul never explicitly claims that "Christ is the wisdom of God,"⁷² nor is Wisdom in the epistle focused on Jewish wisdom. To the contrary, the Wisdom is more closely linked to that of Greek wisdom.⁷³ Fee's final argument is how Paul never uses Jewish Wisdom in isolation in this

⁶⁹ Fee 2007, 89.

⁷⁰ Fee 2007, 90.

⁷¹ Fee 2007, 81.

⁷² Fee 2007, 102.

⁷³ Fee 2007, 103

kind of usage in the entire corpus of his writings. Fee continues to show how “wisdom” used in the letter is more from the Corinthians' perspective than Paul's.⁷⁴

A Closer Look at First Corinthians 8:6

Since there has clearly been a developed discussion concerning the correlation between this verse and the *Shema*, let us first look at a comparison of the *Shema* and 1 Corinthians 8.

Table 1: The *Shema* (MT/LXX) and 1 Corinthians 8

<p>יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד Listen, Israel: YHWH is our God. YHWH is one. Deuteronomy 6:4 [Richard Friedman]⁷⁵</p>	<p>Περὶ τῆς βρώσεως οὖν τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων, οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἰδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς. καὶ γὰρ εἴπερ εἰσὶν λεγόμενοι θεοὶ εἴτε ἐν οὐρανῷ εἴτε ἐπὶ γῆς, ὥσπερ εἰσὶν θεοὶ πολλοὶ καὶ κύριοι πολλοί, ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν, καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ.</p>
<p>Ἄκουε, Ἰσραὴλ· κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν. Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one; Deuteronomy 6:4b</p>	<p>4Then concerning food sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no idol in the world and that no one is God except one. 5For even if there are so-called gods either in heaven or upon earth, as there are many gods and many lords, 6but to us there is one God the father from whom all things are and we are to him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we are through him. I Corinthians 8:4-6</p>

Paul clearly draws on the *Shema* to affirm his monotheistic beliefs while craftily equating Jesus to the uniqueness of God, and this is an example in which Paul is focusing on Scriptural allusions. This passage also shows how the MT and the LXX are not too far from one another because they contain essentially the same wording, but instead of “YHWH” the Septuagint uses “Lord”

Dunn constructed a logical development for how Paul incorporated Christ into the oneness of God, but the Wisdom motif appears to be a stretch.⁷⁶ Fee astutely pointed out how

⁷⁴ Fee 2007, 105.

⁷⁵ Friedman 2003, 321.

Christ and Wisdom do not share as many correlations as Dunn believes they have; Paul never makes a direct connection between the Wisdom passages in the Hebrew Bible and Apocrypha and Christ.⁷⁷ Although there is strikingly similar language, there is no reason to believe Paul is borrowing the Wisdom beliefs. He never directly quotes any Wisdom passage in his corpus such as he does here with the *Shema*. To think that Paul incorporated Christ into both the *Shema* and a broad, nonspecific Wisdom passage in the same verse is doubtful. One should note, as Thistleton precisely does, that v. 6 is the only passage in Paul's existing epistles, which incorporates Christ into a mediating function in creation.⁷⁸ Since there is no other mention of Jesus functioning in this 'Wisdom-like' manner, there seems no real reason to believe Paul is directly making a connection with Pre-Christian Jewish Wisdom scenarios.⁷⁹ If anything, as Fee claimed, Paul is speaking out against wisdom, which is being perceived from the Corinthians' perspective, not the Hebrew Bible's.

It is imperative to remember the general context behind v. 6 and Paul's use of the *Shema* in order to understand that it is an intricate element of Paul's well-constructed argument. He is trying to persuade the people that their loyalty is to God alone, and, because of this, they also

⁷⁶ Cf. Horsley (1998, 119), who also connects *Sophia/Logos* language with 8:6 stating, "The most striking parallels appear in Hellenistic philosophical reflection about the causes of primal principles of the universe (the source, "from which"; the cause, "by which"; the form, "according to which"; the instrument, "through which"; and the final cause, "for which"). Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom speculation, such as that represented by the Wisdom of Solomon and Philo, had long since appropriated these forms (Philo, *Cher.* 127; *Quaes. Gen.* 1.58; cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 65.4.8). Most notably, *Sophia/Logos* was that "through which/whom" all things had been created (e.g., Wis 8:1, 6; Philo, *Det.* 54; cf. *Fuga* 190; *Leg. All.* 3.96)." He thus progresses to say that Paul cleverly challenges the Corinthians' idea of *gnosis* and then replaces the creative and redemptive nature of *Sophia* with Jesus the Lord.

⁷⁷ But, as Conzelmann (1975, 144) asserts, "The formula makes use of a Hellenistic type of religious language which had been developed in Stoic pantheism." He claims in the footnote regarding this statement that this can be witnessed also in Rom 11:36. Fee may be correct, but he does not have a trump card when examining the parallel language used in other ancient sources, which would have shaped and influenced both the Wisdom literature and Paul (cf. Conzelmann for a longer explanation).

⁷⁸ Thistleton 2000, 638.

⁷⁹ Though it should be kept in mind as Thistleton (2006, 127) shows, "Paul will repeat these same three perceptions in Rom. 11:36, "from him, through him, and to him are all things"; while the Gospel of John and the Epistle to the Hebrews also use "through" (Greek *dia*) of Christ's role in creation (John 1:3; Heb. 1:2)."

owe Jesus Christ their sole allegiance because he is Lord.⁸⁰ When reading through the full epistle, there is what appears to be an educated elite class who feel that partaking of these idolatrous meals is of no real concern because their monotheism and spiritual maturity are at such a level that these banquets are a trivial cultural aspect of Corinth.⁸¹ Paul takes this into consideration but does not lessen the gravity of the situation because it could be dangerous both to these “educated elites” and their “weaker” brothers in Christ.⁸²

With this in mind, Paul draws upon not only the classic Jewish affirmation of monotheism, but he also alludes to the prophet Isaiah. The two phrases “no idol in the world really exists,” and “there is no God but one,” draws from Deutero-Isaiah which expresses some of the most stark monotheistic beliefs within Scripture. There are numerous monotheistic claims where God is said to be incomparable to any other being in Isaiah 40-55,⁸³ and there is a clear idol polemic expressed in chapter forty-four. 1 Corinthians 8:4⁸⁴ and 5 serve as transitional phrases into Paul's declaration of his belief in one unique God. Drawing upon the most monotheistic section of the Scriptures and then making a bold statement of how Jesus and God are intrinsically connected is a baffling move, which would appear to be compromising Paul's integrity, but it is not. Bauckham ingeniously makes the connection that Paul is not destroying

⁸⁰ Thus supported by Hays (1997, 140), “Still, we may observe in passing that the early Christian confession cited in verse 6 takes the extraordinarily bold step of identifying ‘the Lord Jesus’ with ‘the Lord’ acclaimed in the *Shema*, while still insisting that ‘for us there is one God.’” This is also supported by Collins (1999, 313), “Verse 6 sums up the theological basis of Paul’s entire argument: there is only one God. The traditional confession of faith is, however, to be understood within a soteriological perspective... The framework is that God is one but Jesus alone is Lord. The lordship of Jesus is the dominant referent in the determination of what is appropriate conduct for Christians.”

⁸¹ As observed by Horsley, “For Paul, eating food sacrificed to idols must have been virtually the same as idolatry... Participation in banquets held in temples was important in establishing the social connections and cultivating patronal relations, particularly for anyone wanting to curry the favor of social-economic superiors.”

⁸² Barclay 2006, 1121.

⁸³ Isaiah 40:12-14; 41:4-5; 43:10-13; 44:6-8; 45:5-6; 45:14b-15; 45:18b-19; 45:21b; 45:22b-23; 46:5; 46:8-10; 48:12-13. See further appendix C.

⁸⁴ V. 4 is particularly interesting since it seems to allude to what is going to be referenced in v. 6. The construction θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς seems to be an allusion to the *Shema* as well. Playing off of Hays’ thesis, it seems that Paul is using two different allusions to the *Shema* to build his case. This construction will be argued further in the chapter on Mark’s Christology, specifically the *Shema* in Mark. Twice in the gospel this same construction can be found.

his belief in the oneness of God; he is expounding on it and reinterpreting the verse as a new paradigm of Christian faith. The *Shema* was an intricate passage both theologically and socially within the Jewish populace, which tied the community in with God; Paul most likely hoped by revamping the *Shema* he could have it function in a similar way for Christianity.⁸⁵

By setting up this verse amongst a whirlwind of polytheism in the midst of the Corinthian Christians' troubles, Paul is showing a contrast between Christianity's monotheism and the pagan world's polytheism. Paul is in effect contrasting the “many gods and many lords” with the unique relationship of God and Christ, and he does so within a biblical tradition (the *Shema*).⁸⁶ In so doing, the passage calls into question whether this verse implies a pre-existent Christ. It is confusing when Paul claims, “to us there is one God the father from whom all things are and we are to him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we are through him.” For Dunn, pre-existence can only be seen in the passage if read out of context.⁸⁷ This does not seem entirely plausible; Dunn believes Christ is only the force by which God operates and does not see them in the same light. The passage should be analyzed with the broader context in mind and how it pertains to the surrounding argument, which Paul has formulated. Paul is attempting to connect Jesus with God in order to show that Christians are remaining in the Jewish tradition of monotheism, and the Corinthians owe their allegiance to God and Christ alone, not to these pagan deities.⁸⁸ In order to affirm this claim, it is necessary to draw the conclusion that Jesus and God have a unique relationship. The verse claims it is from God (ἐξ οὗ) our father all things came to be and “we are to him” (ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν), or we belong to him. It is to God alone we serve

⁸⁵ Beale/Carson 2007, 718. So here Paul could be seen as incorporating Jesus in this covenant-based relationship that existed between God and his people. Both are worthy of praise as was previously observed.

⁸⁶ Collins 1999, 315.

⁸⁷ Contra Dunn, cf. Hurtado 2003, 123-126.

⁸⁸ Cf. Hurtado 2003, 114 “We should also note 1 Corinthians 8:5-6, where there is another indication of the liturgical acclamation of Jesus as *Kyrios*, and the close association of him with God in devotional practice. Here, in explicit contrast to the worship practices of the polytheistic environment, Paul affirms a two-part exclusivistic confession of “one God [*heis Theos*] the Father” and “one Lord [*heis Kyrios*] Jesus Christ.””

because He created us, not these false idols. Paul then goes on to show that the one Lord, Christ Jesus, is the means by which all things and we came to be. In order to understand how Paul relates the two together, it must be understood that it is by God through Christ (δι' αὐτοῦ) all things came into existence according to Paul's theology. The only way Jesus could be the means by which God created is if he was pre-existent with the Father.⁸⁹

In summation, there are a few points, which need to be iterated and made clear in order to comprehend the full argument. God the Father and Christ the Lord, for Paul, share in a unique identity unlike anything else in creation. The two are pre-existent, and Paul reveals their relationship through a reconstruction of the *Shema*. Christianity is not a form of ditheism; Paul divided the *Shema* in a new Christological sense, which incorporates God as one and Jesus as Lord. It is imperative to realize the close connection, which Paul has formulated between the two beings, which comprise the one God.⁹⁰ In short, Paul draws upon the *Shema* to produce a fundamental confession that involves Christ, which is to stand in contrast with the many gods and lords that are present in the world.

2.2 The Epistle to the Romans

Since Paul quotes Isaiah 45:23 both in Romans and Philippians, the examination on Romans will be shorter because the passage from Isaiah will ultimately be covered more in depth when analyzing Philippians 2:9-11. In Romans 14:11, Paul is playing off Isaiah 45:23 in order to show the Roman Christians they should refrain from judging one another for this is the job of the Lord alone.⁹¹ But there is some ambiguity concerning what is meant when Paul uses the title

⁸⁹ At the Very least, Jesus must have been created before all other creation in order for it to have been created through him.

⁹⁰ As Larry Hurtado (2005, 51) would say regarding the relationship, "I contend that in terms of its historical derivation, and also with reference to the intentions of those for whom such expressions of devotion to Jesus were central in their religious life, this religious development represents a new "binitarian" form of *monotheism*."

⁹¹ So Wagner (2002,336) asserts, "Paul's concern is not to elevate one set of practices over the other, but to contextualize both within the larger narrative of the community's life in Christ. Framing his exhortation with the call

“Lord.” Scholars are divided as to whether Lord in this context indicates Lord God or Lord Jesus. This can be taken either way especially when reading the text from the perspective of 1 Corinthians 8:6 where Paul has connected Jesus with the one Lord.

Table 2: Comparison of Isaiah 45:23 (MT/LXX) & Romans 14:10-12

<p>בְּלִפְנֵי יְהוָה נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁתַּכְבֹּשׁ לִי כָּל לִשָּׁה יִשְׁבַּע לִי כָּל לִשָּׁה יִשְׁבַּע לִי כָּל לִשָּׁה יִשְׁבַּע</p> <p>By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.’ Isaiah 45:23[NRSV]</p>	<p>κατ’ ἐμαυτοῦ ὁμνύω Ἡ μὴν ἐξελεύσεται ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου δικαιοσύνη, οἱ λόγοι μου οὐκ ἀποστραφήσονται ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πάν γόνυ καὶ ἐξομολογήσεται πάντα γλῶσσα τῷ θεῷ⁹²</p> <p>By myself I swear, “Indeed, my righteousness will go out from my mouth, my words will not turn back, because to me every knee will bend and every tongue confess to God.” Isaiah 45:23</p>	<p>Σὺ δὲ τί κρίνεις τὸν ἀδελφόν σου; ἢ καὶ σὺ τί ἐξουθενεῖς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου; πάντες γὰρ παραστησόμεθα τῷ βήματι τοῦ θεοῦ, γέγραπται γάρ· ζῶ ἐγώ, λέγει κύριος, ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πάν γόνυ καὶ πάντα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται τῷ θεῷ. ἄρα ἕκαστος ἡμῶν περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λόγον δώσει [τῷ θεῷ].</p> <p>¹⁰But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you also look down on your brother? For we all will stand upon the bema (Judgment Seat) of God, ¹¹for it is written: As I live, says the Lord, to me every knee will bend and every tongue will confess to God. ¹²So each one of us will give account concerning ourselves [to God]. Romans 14:10-12</p>
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The argument for Christ being the “Lord” in this passage is significant in order to understand how Paul perceives Jesus’ relationship with the Father. This perspective is the minority view amongst scholars, but Gordon Fee establishes quite a firm foundation on which the argument is constructed. Fee argues that since Paul uses this same verse in Philippians to express Christ as Lord,⁹³ then here too it must also have the same connotation. The surrounding

to “accept one another” (14:1; 15:7), Paul commands each group to refrain from judging the other (14:1, 3, 4, 10, 13).”

⁹² As Horrell (2007, 186) notes, “Cf. too the distinction between κύριος and θεός in 14.6; and note also how Paul’s composite citation in 14.11 expresses acclamation of both ‘the Lord’ and ‘God’. Paul has achieved this by adding the common phrase ζῶ ἐγώ λέγει κύριος (see e.g. Num. 14.28; Isa. 49.18; Jer. 22.24; Ezek. 5.11; Zeph. 2.9) to Isa. 45.23 LXX (which adds the closing words τῷ θεῷ to the Hebrew text.”

⁹³ Wagner (2002, 338) claims, “Paul makes a similar interpretive move in his thoroughly christological rereading of Isaiah 45:23 in Philippians 2:10-11. In neither passage, however, does the Christological reading displace God as the

context must once again be considered: that Paul is expressing how the Roman Christians should not judge one another. Fee maintains that the entire passage up until this point in verse 11 has had to do solely with the congregation's relationship to Christ as Lord.⁹⁴ Fee asserts:

The present passage is dominated unequivocally by ὁ κύριος = Christ Jesus, and would therefore keep this referent intact. In the entire passage the only exception to *Christ* as Lord over all is when Paul brings in “the *bema* of God” in v. 12, precisely so that the final judgment is before both Christ, who as the risen One is thus “Lord” over both the living and the dead, and God the Father, before whom everyone will ultimately make “confession.”⁹⁵

Paul here is aligning the judgment to be connected with Christ while every tongue will praise the One God. Fee also argues that the passage has high Christological implication because of the double sense of the word “Lord” that is used by Paul for Christ. He argues that Lord in this instance holds both a “titular sense” and a “functional sense” which is used exclusively of God in the Hebrew Bible.⁹⁶ Fee argues that since 2 Corinthians 5:10 attests to Christ's role in the final judgment, here too it must also indicate Christ as Lord and that there is an assumed high Christology throughout the passage.⁹⁷

Some scholars believe κύριος does not signify Christ, but instead God. Schreiner believes the passage switches between Christ and God throughout which is exemplified by verses three and four. Paul specifically mentions God in verse three, and then continues on in verse four with κύριος to indicate, what he believes, to be Christ. He furthers his argument that κύριος should be

ultimate referent (cf. Rom 14:11b; Phil 2:11, εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς). In light of Paul's use of κύριος to refer to Christ, one wonders whether he might have understood ζῶ ἐγώ specifically as words of the *risen* Christ.”

⁹⁴ Fee 2007, 263.

⁹⁵ Fee 2007, 265.

⁹⁶ Fee 2007, 266.

⁹⁷ Fee 2007, 267. Cf. also Schreiner (1998, 722), “The alternation between God and Christ does not signal confusion of Paul's part. Instead it demonstrates the very close relationship between them. Christ functions as God's representative in the judgment, hence judgment in Paul can be ascribed either to Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) or to God (Rom. 14:10).” Bauckham (2008, 209) believes, “When Paul quotes this verse in Romans 14:11, he seems to take advantage of this possibility of distinguishing two divine subjects, identifying ‘the Lord’ (YHWH) as Jesus and ‘God’ as the Father. He makes this clear by inserting ‘says the Lord’ into the first part of his quotation... the same interpretation could lie behind Philippians 2:10-11...”

taken as God in verse 11 because the verse prior to it clearly says believers will stand before the bema of God (τῷ βήματι τοῦ θεοῦ) and in v. 12 all will be held accountable to God (θεῷ).⁹⁸ For Douglas Moo, this would make perfect sense for he believes Paul's use of κύριος from the Septuagint does not usually indicate Christ. He also believes the focus of the passage has alternated from Jesus to God.⁹⁹

Cranfield makes a very compelling argument as well for the belief that κύριος indicates God rather than Christ based on the Greek text of Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:9-11. Since both passages quote Isaiah 45:23, it is relevant to compare how Paul uses the two in dissimilar manners and how he quotes the two differently. Cranfield argues that when Paul uses ἐμοί, ἐγώ and κύριος he is referring to God. He claims that it is very difficult to separate the ἐμοί and the κύριος from τῷ θεῷ at the end of Paul's quotation. The reason why this passage can be linked to God and the quote from Philippians to Christ is due to the connection between τῷ θεῷ and ἐξομολογήσεται. This connection, for Cranfield, points to κύριος as God rather than Christ because the switch between Christ and Lord does not seem logical grammatically.¹⁰⁰ Fitzmyer also agrees that the later use of Isaiah in the Philippian Hymn extends the meaning of κύριος to indicate Christ, but here in Romans it is clearly a reference to God.¹⁰¹

A Closer Look at Romans 14:11

It is difficult to ascertain whether Paul is referencing God or Jesus when he uses the term κύριος. Fee's argument connecting this passage to 2 Corinthians seems to indicate that κύριος here should logically be linked to Christ since both pertain to the eschatological judgment. It is difficult to say, though, if Paul thought that the κύριος in v. 11 is Christ since the passage

⁹⁸ Schreiner 1998, 722.

⁹⁹ Moo 1996, 848.

¹⁰⁰ Cranfield 1988, 710.

¹⁰¹ Fitzmyer, 2008, 692.

consistently switches back and forth between Christ and God. Schreiner's argument concerning v. 11's relationship to vv. 10 and 12 is also intriguing and seems to make an equal amount of sense because it appears illogical why Paul would be talking about God's judgment seat and all confessing to God in the end, but have every knee bend to the Lord Jesus. It seems to interrupt the flow of the argument. I believe the two are not in opposition with one another, but, rather, they reveal the relationship between Jesus and God in Paul's thought.

First, we should call to mind the discussion of the *Shema* where Paul links the one God and Jesus into a unique relationship. It is God who created, but it was through Christ that the work was accomplished. If we are to believe that Paul remained a monotheist and has not in fact compromised his beliefs, it seems logical that he would perceive an interconnected relationship between Christ the Lord and God the Father. This would be of utmost importance in order not to compromise his monotheistic beliefs. If Paul can say in 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil," he can also say the same of God that "we all will stand before the judgment seat of God." After all, "Christ functions as God's representative in the judgment, hence judgment in Paul can be ascribed either to Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10) or to God (Romans 14:10)."¹⁰²

Paul was not unintentionally contradicting himself in the two letters. In his view of the relationship between God and Christ, he is able to interchange κύριος to either indicate Jesus or God depending on the context and the argument he presents. For in this instance, Paul showed Christ's redemptive work in verses 7-9 and God's in verses 10-12. This is the difference, which

¹⁰² Schreiner 1998, 722. See also Stuhlmacher (1994, 225), "In Phil. 2:10f. the same quotation [Is. 45:23] is related to the work of the exalted Christ. This makes it probable that here in vv. 10f. Paul is also thinking of the final judgment, at which, under the mandate of God, Christ is active. Christ has the mandate to subject all things to God, his Father, and to bring everything to the praise of the one God, who shall be all in all (1 Cor. 15:25-28)."

was expressed in 1 Corinthians 8. For from God we are all created, but it is through Christ we are saved and exist. The interchange is again seen in v. 8: “whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.” The argument from Schreiner makes perfect sense that κύριος in v. 11 must indicate God. This does not mean that Fee is entirely wrong or that Schreiner is precisely correct. It seems that both are focusing too much on terminology rather than examining how Paul uses his language throughout the corpus of his epistles to show the interconnectivity between Christ and God as one unique divine identity.

2.3 The Epistle to the Philippians

Philippians 2:5-11 is one of the most heavily debated sections of Scripture in the New Testament due to its significance with regards to Paul's view of Christ and how it relates to his Jewish monotheistic beliefs. Once again, Paul alludes to an Old Testament section of Scripture to verify the veracity of his claim. Paul references Isaiah 45:23, as he did in Romans 14:11, but this time it functions in a different way. The authorship of this section is under much scrutiny because of the ambiguity that is present; at some parts it appears to be very Pauline, but some sections deviate from the normal realm of Paul's use of vocabulary and style. This section is known as the Philippian Hymn because many scholars believe that another person composed these verses and that Paul used them as a framework for this section to the Philippians.

Table 3: The Philippian Hymn

<p>Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι ἐρέθεις ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ. διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα, ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσῃται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς.</p> <p>ΦΙΛΙΠΠΗΣΙΟΥΣ 2:5-11</p>	<p>5Consider this in yourselves which also was in Christ Jesus, 6who being in the form of God did not seek equality to God, something to be grasped, 7but emptied himself having taken the form of a slave, being born in the appearance of men; and having been found in the appearance as a man 8he humbled himself being obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9Therefore, God highly exalted him and bestowed to him the name that is above every name, 10so that in the name of Jesus every knee might bend in heaven and on earth and under the earth 11and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the father</p> <p>Philippians 2:5-11</p>
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James Dunn argues that Paul uses a distinct illusion to Adam in this passage to show a contrast between the first and last man. Dunn believes Phil. 2:6-11 is a prime example from Paul's extant letters that illustrates this Adam Christology, and he believes these Adam motifs were prolific in the time span before Paul wrote.¹⁰³ "Christ's Odyssey" is the phrase Dunn chose to describe vv. 6 and 7 because these coupled lines describe the basic journey Christ performed while on the earth. He maintains the first section is an allusion to Genesis 1-3 concerning creation and the fall of man mainly relying on the contrast of μορφῇ θεοῦ and μορφὴν δούλου. Dunn holds that the Greek word μορφῇ is synonymous with εἰκὼν (image) in Hebrew thought, which holds "the visible 'form of God' is his glory."¹⁰⁴ Thus, Christ and Adam shared in the δόξα (glory) of God. Then, when Christ took on the μορφὴν δούλου, he relinquished his share in the glory of God similarly to when Adam fell from God's glory and became a slave.¹⁰⁵ The difference between Jesus and Adam came to do with their temptation episodes. Adam partook of the fruit to seek equality with God, but Christ did not; instead he emptied himself into obedience

¹⁰³ Dunn 1980, 114,115.

¹⁰⁴ Dunn 1980, 115.

¹⁰⁵ Dunn 1980, 115.

and performed all God commanded him. He obeyed until death on a cross and was exalted as Lord over all.¹⁰⁶ Dunn concludes since Adam and Christ are paralleled to one another in this passage, and Adam was not pre-existent, then Christ also must not be taken as a pre-existing being from this passage. In essence,

The Christ of Phil. 2.6-11 therefore is the man who undid Adam's wrong: confronted with the same choice, he rejected Adam's sin, but nevertheless freely followed Adam's course as fallen man to the bitter end of death; wherefore God bestowed on him the status not simply that Adam lost, but the status which Adam was intended to come to, God's prototype, the last Adam... Phil. 2.6-11 is simply a way of describing the character of Christ's ministry and sacrifice.¹⁰⁷

Dunn's perspective on vv. 9-11 focuses on Jesus' divine Lordship and equality with God. He believes Paul indicates in this passage that the name God bestowed upon Christ is “Lord” since all of creation will confess Jesus' lordship at the end of time.¹⁰⁸ Paul believed the risen Christ was Lord and that one day all will acknowledge him as thus because, as was seen in 1 Cor. 8:5-6, there is a direct connection between Jesus as the one Lord and God as one; Paul can construct such an equation without compromising his Jewish monotheism.¹⁰⁹ In so doing, Paul was not trying to abdicate God from his heavenly throne and raise Christ to God's unique position, but, rather, Christ was just assimilated to the oneness of God.¹¹⁰

For Larry Hurtado, the Philippian Hymn is a very intricate part of how one should think about Paul's Christology. He believes this section of scripture to be “one of the most important early expressions of devotion to Jesus” due to its inclusion of Jesus with God and his function in

¹⁰⁶ Dunn 1980, 117.

¹⁰⁷ Dunn 1980, 119, 120.

¹⁰⁸ Dunn 1998, 248.

¹⁰⁹ Dunn 1998, 248.

¹¹⁰ Dunn 1998, 251.

the godhead.¹¹¹ As for the hymn-like construction, Hurtado maintains if it is in fact modeled off of an early Christian hymn, then it is one of the earliest existing works in our possession and its structure and style resembles those of the biblical psalms.¹¹² This hymn is so striking if it truly is one of the first hymns composed by early Christians because at this time the high Christology seems presupposed. If that is the case, then their view of Christ is already in very close association with God the Father. The hymn would have been sung in corporate worship and indicates an already high reverence for the figure of Jesus making it one of the most significant Christological passages in the NT.¹¹³ Hurtado holds that this use of Isaiah 45:23 would have been executed by the first generation Christians as a means of “charismatic exegesis” corroborating with other biblical passages in order to fully comprehend all the events which shaped their faith.¹¹⁴ In summary,

The creative adaptation and interpretation of Isaiah 45:23 reflected in Philippians 2:10-11 represents an effort to present the exalted place of Jesus in Christian devotion as valid and defensible, and precisely in terms of the biblical passage that was unsurpassed as an expression of God's uniqueness.¹¹⁵

For Larry Hurtado, this section is a key Christological passage not only for Paul, but also for understanding the wider view of how the church perceived Christ.

Gordon Fee rejects the idea of this section being a Pre-Pauline hymn. Fee does admit that the passage is self-contained and has a poetic feel to it, but he believes there are three sentences contained inside which have a very Pauline ring to them and that do not even begin to leave any room for debate as Hurtado does. He maintains the belief that the length and pattern of the “hymn” implies Paul attempts to do something more with the text such as lay a broader

¹¹¹ Hurtado 2005, 7.

¹¹² Hurtado 2005, 84,85.

¹¹³ Hurtado 2005, 86,87.

¹¹⁴ Hurtado 2005, 92.

¹¹⁵ Hurtado 2005, 107.

theological foundation most likely for the rest of the letter.¹¹⁶ The passage describes Jesus' pre-existence, which runs counter to Dunn, and Fee holds such a view based on vv. 6 and 7 which, in his opinion, describes Christ's life that he and the people to whom he is writing never experienced, so he presupposes the pre-existence for the story to be fully understood.¹¹⁷ Fee again goes against Dunn's notion of an Adam Christology in the Philippian Hymn. Philippians 2:5-11 does not share any one verbal connection with the Genesis 1-3 in the Septuagint upon which Dunn heavily relied, so Fee completely disregards any form of comparison between Adam and Christ.¹¹⁸

The last set of verses, which contains the reference to Isaiah 45:23, remains an important section for Fee. This section of Scripture is what provides one of the strongest senses of monotheism within Paul's letters because of the direct connection between Christ and Lord. Fee entirely rejects the theory of "Jesus" being "the name, the one above every name" which was bestowed upon Christ. He holds true to believe Paul transferred the Septuagint's use of κύριος (= YHWH) to indicated Jesus' exalted status. Through Paul's use of κύριος and Christ in 1 Corinthians and now here, Paul is able to "be an avid monotheist while including Christ [in] the divine identity."¹¹⁹ Paul's monotheistic beliefs are not compromised because of the final phrase he incorporates at the end of the passage: to the glory of God the father.¹²⁰

A Closer Look at Philippians 2:9-11

This portion of the study focuses particularly on Philippians 2:9-11 because it is the main focus of monotheism in the passage. In this section of Paul's epistle to the Philippians, he relies heavily on the Septuagint's version of Isaiah 45:23. The rest of the "hymn" leads into this

¹¹⁶ Fee 1995, 228.

¹¹⁷ Fee 2007, 373,375.

¹¹⁸ Fee 2007, 378,379.

¹¹⁹ Fee 2007, 398.

¹²⁰ Fee 1999, 101.

section, so some parts of it need to be made clear for proper understanding of the argument. First, whether the passage is a hymn or just a strange composition by Paul is of no real importance for my line of argument. Whether he composed it or not, Paul felt the piece was relevant to his argument and had pertinence to his gospel; if the passage is Pre-Pauline, then it strengthens the argument that there was a strong sense of monotheism within the early church which would have arisen shortly after Jesus' crucifixion in ca. 30/33CE.¹²¹ Second, I agree with Fee that there is no Adam Christology present in this hymn. If Paul (or the original author) had intended to use Adam as a comparison to Christ, he would have made it more explicit than by slight implications with the use of *μορφὴν δούλου* and attempting to connect it with *ἄνθρωπον*.¹²² Third, and finally, I also think that there is a pre-existent Christ implied in this passage. Since there is a rejection to any juxtaposition between Adam and Christ, there seems to be no reason that Paul did not presuppose Christ existing before time with God.

Again, Paul is using this key verse as he did in Romans 14:11, but this time there is a completely different feel to the passage's use.¹²³ In the context of the Pauline hymn, Paul is not indicating judgment by God, but rather, a fulfillment of Christ's sacrifice. There is a sense of presupposed knowledge of Christian faith and practices in this passage; there is no need for Paul to divulge concerning doctrine or Christian morals¹²⁴ like he did in the past two letters. Beare astutely describes verses 6-11 as “not a description of the moral disposition of our Lord, but an

¹²¹ The term “hymn” will be used, but there is no connotation behind its use. I am neither supporting nor rejecting the idea of Philippians 2:9-11 as being a hymn.

¹²² When Paul uses Adam as a comparison to human sin and Christ, he specifically mentions Adam by name. cf. Romans 5:12-21.

¹²³ As Fowl (2005, 103) explains, “The image of bowing of the knee is taken from Isa 45:23. In the context of Isaiah, and also here in Philippians, it signifies the recognition of authority, and it is a way of offering homage to Jesus... In Rom 14:11 Paul also quotes Isa 45:23 to support his claim of God's universal rule and God's subsequent judgment of all things. In this respect, it is interesting to note that the authority and power Paul attributes to God in Romans he here attributes to Christ by citing the same OT text.” So also Paul does with respect to judgment: cf. Rom. 14:10 and 2 Cor. 5:2. This seems to show that Paul can seamlessly interchange God and Jesus/Christ for performing actions that belong under the purview of God alone.

¹²⁴ Beare 1959, 29.

elevated recital of his saving acts.”¹²⁵ Paul composed this letter not simply as a rebuke or ethical correction as most of his other letters had been;¹²⁶ the epistle to the Philippians was designed to further unity amongst the congregation, and Paul used an affirmation of faith as the framework. By showing the oneness of Christ and God by exalting him to The Name, Lord (YHWH), Paul has declared unity between Christ and the one unique God. Just as in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, there is one body with many parts, yet they all work together for a common purpose. So too does Christ and God coexist for the benefit of man and the fulfillment of God's design.

Table 4: Isaiah 45:23 (MT/LXX) and the Philippian Hymn

<p>בְּשֵׁכֶם יִשְׁבְּעוּ מִפִּי כֹּל יִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה יִשְׁבַּע</p> <p>By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.’ NRSV Isaiah 45:23</p>	<p>κατ’ ἐμαυτοῦ ὁμνῶν Ἡ μὴν ἐξελεύσεται ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου δικαιοσύνη, οἱ λόγοι μου οὐκ ἀποστραφήσονται ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ καὶ ἐξομολογήσεται πᾶσα γλῶσσα τῷ θεῷ</p> <p>By myself I swear, “Indeed, my righteousness will go out from my mouth, my words will not turn back, because to me every knee will bend and every tongue confess <i>to God</i>. Isaiah 45:23</p>	<p>διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα, ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψη ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς.</p> <p>Therefore, God highly exalted him and bestowed to him the name, which is above every name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee might bend in heaven and on earth and under the earth¹²⁷ and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the father. Philippians 2:9-11</p>
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From a glance at the three texts, they all resemble one another and it is clear that they all stem from the Hebrew. As the text gets translated and then later used by Paul, the text lengthens and gathers more meaning (interpretation). The translation is nearly identical to its Hebrew partner, but a striking difference is where the LXX version tacks onto the end of the passage “to

¹²⁵ Beare 1959, 76.

¹²⁶ That is not to say that there is not a call to ethics present in this passage. It seems that Christ is to serve as a moral exemplar, but I do not believe that is its sole purpose. Cf. Horrell 2005, 206-214 for a further discussion.

¹²⁷ This resembles Deut. 4:39. Special thanks to David Callaway for leading me to this observation.

God” (τῷ θεῷ). This must have been the translator’s interpretation, and he added this final phrase to indicate a clarification that these things are done for God. It is a bit odd when one examines the wording, though. The passage is in the first person claiming “I swear,” “my righteousness,” “my words,” and “to me.” It is peculiar that 'to God' was added. This addition should be quite obvious since God is the one speaking and claiming every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, but it would have made more sense if the translator added ἐμοί (to me) rather than τῷ θεῷ. This would render the text to read, “to me every knee will bend and every tongue will confess to me.” This is absolutely unnecessary because it already claims all of this will happen “to me” at the beginning after the ὅτι; it just makes the sentence redundant. This addition, “to God” seems equally strange and redundant at first until one examines the Pauline rendition.

As was stated previously, the NT writers, Paul included, relied heavily on the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Bible as their primary reference source.¹²⁸ By doing so, Paul would have used this rendering of the Hebrew text, which had 'to God' added into the Scripture. His natural progression was to assume there was a subject change with the ὅτι and that this was affirmed by the end of the sentence with τῷ θεῷ, for it seems to be redundant because God appears to be speaking from the beginning. Since it seems Paul wishes to incorporate Christ within the divine identity, it does not seem so far fetched that the apostle would expand and capitalize on this small change in the LXX.¹²⁹ By doing so, Paul was able to place Jesus in the space where God was. Then, when every knee has bent and every tongue has confessed him to be Lord (Jesus), it will be for the glory of God.¹³⁰ This last verse is full of high Christology, which “emphatically

¹²⁸ Cf. Appendix B for a longer discussion.

¹²⁹ This can also be seen in Paul’s manipulation of the *Shema* in 1 Cor. 8:6.

¹³⁰ “To God” can be rendered “for” through the use of the dative case in τῷ θεῷ; this is expressed through Paul explicitly when he adds in the preposition εἰς as clarification. Paul saw the dative use of τῷ θεῷ and saw it as an opportunity to add Christological overtones to support his monotheism. It most likely seemed plausible to Paul to add in “for the glory of God” since the passage in the LXX already read τῷ θεῷ, thus giving Paul the opportunity to further his claim.

enhances rather than diminishes the glory of God, firmly securing the unequivocally monotheistic orientation of Paul's thought.”¹³¹

There is more to this passage pertaining to Isaiah 45:23, such as the name bestowed upon Christ. It should be noted that verses 9-11 show a very distinct change for the first half of the hymn had Christ as the subject of all the finite verbs and participles, but at verse 9 it appears that God has taken over as the subject in order to exalt the son for his obedience.¹³² There is debate concerning the pre-existent Christ and when he received the “name,” whether he was raised to his former position, or if he was raised above his pre-existent status after his earthly mission. Paul's use of ὑπερύψωσεν (highly exalted) is a *hapax legomenon* in the NT,¹³³ and it falls under one of Paul's typical transformations of verbs. Paul commonly adds ὑπερ to words usually to magnify or express a greater degree of something, not position. Therefore, Fee believes God “exalted him to the highest possible degree.”¹³⁴ O'Brien took this use of ὑπερύψωσεν as a superlative to indicate Christ was exalted higher than all other creations.¹³⁵ It makes no sense at all to believe Christ emptied himself of his divinity and then was exalted higher than he was before his departure from God. The two shared in a unique relationship, but God exalted Christ once again to the status of Lord once his earthly ministry was complete. Christ emptied himself to come to earth, but then was highly exalted and bestowed with the name, which is above every name back to his status at the right hand of God.

2.4 Concluding Remarks on Paul's Christology

¹³¹ Bockmuehl 1998, 148.

¹³² O'Brien 1991, 232.

¹³³ O'Brien 1991, 236.

¹³⁴ Fee 1999, 99.

¹³⁵ O'Brien 1991, 236.

Paul's undisputed letters are the earliest witnesses we possess that allow the reader to catch a glimpse of the nascent period of the ecclesia. Through this brief overview of three crucial passages in the Pauline corpus, I have shown that there is a form of unity that exists, at least in Paul's thought, between Jesus and God. It is difficult to ascertain precisely in what way Paul viewed how Jesus was part of the divine identity since it is never clearly spelled out, but, through inference and speculation, it seems a picture can be drawn from what Paul wrote to these various struggling churches.

Thus, by examining Paul's use of the *Shema* and Isaiah, this picture of Jesus has become a bit more lucid. As a recapitulation of what has been said, the *Shema* and Isaiah will play a paramount role when attempting to understand the Christologies of Mark and John. These other authors also wished to show a connection between God the Father and Jesus the Son, and this will be disclosed in the following pages.

CHAPTER 3

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF MARK

When speaking of the Gospel according to Mark, it is difficult to decisively point to a clear and exact statement that encompasses the Christology of the whole book better than the first sentence: Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ] (1:1).¹³⁶ This opening phrase allows the reader to see through the Christological lenses that Mark provided in order to present an accurate depiction of how he viewed Jesus in connection with the one God. This chapter aims to shed light upon who Christ is in relation to the one God of Israel, and I will do so by revealing how the implicit high Christology is presented throughout the gospel through not only the Hebrew Bible references, but also through various titles given to Jesus whether attributed to him or self-proclaimed.¹³⁷ This will also be accomplished by seeing how Jesus' ὁδός to Jerusalem sheds light on the true identity of Jesus portrayed in the gospel. It is imperative to remember that the highest Christological statements in the New Testament according to Richard Bauckham are those, which illuminate the divine identity, and how they "identify Jesus as intrinsic to who God is."¹³⁸ In other words, it is not a matter of defining what the divine nature is in Christ, but how Mark specifically incorporates Jesus into the divine identity.

¹³⁶ Although υἱοῦ θεοῦ may not be original to the text in verse one, it certainly fits Mark's Christology seeing as the Voice from heaven proclaims Jesus to be his "beloved son, in whom [he] is well pleased" (Mark 1.11) later in the 'prologue' of Mark. (Since υἱοῦ θεοῦ is omitted in ⱼ Θ 28^c many such as Marcus (2000, 141) and Collins (2007, 130) believe it to be secondary. The reason for its deletion may be due to a scribe's oversight while copying the text, and its addition could be explained by the fact that the copyist succumbed to the desire to expand the title, as they have been known to do. The phrase is supported by B D W and is "extremely strong." Due to the antiquity of the witnesses of the shorter reading, though, and possible expansion by a scribe, the committee decided to bracket the phrase and give the authenticity of the reading a C rating (Metzger 1994, 62).).

¹³⁷ That is, based upon how the author presents these titles of Jesus whether coming from the mouths of other people or demons or those uttered from Jesus' own lips. For more on Mark's use of titles cf. Boring 1999.

¹³⁸ Bauckham 1999, 42.

3.1 A Brief Summary of the Christology Present in the Gospel of Mark

It is imperative to first establish what is meant by the term “Christology” when attempting to describe the identity of Jesus and how he relates to the One God. For Mark, one major aspect of his Christology can be understood by analyzing the use of titles attributed to Jesus and how these relate him to the divine identity (the “big four” being *χριστός*, *κύριος*, *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*).¹³⁹ Throughout the gospel, many instances occur which point to the true identity of Jesus, but there is no clear, blatant exclamation that Jesus is God. On the one hand, there are possible implications that Jesus is to be understood as one with God, but, on the other, there are instances in which Jesus appears to be placed in a subordinate role to the father.¹⁴⁰ So what does this mean in relation to how we are supposed to understand the person of Jesus from the perspective of Mark’s gospel? This question cannot be answered simply, and it will require a closer examination of not only these titles¹⁴¹ used in relation to Jesus, but also examining the possible theophany language used and the transfiguration, the *ὁδός* to Jerusalem, and finally the *Shema* and how it is used in Mark.

3.2 Jesus Walking on Water in Comparison to the Transfiguration

The possible theophany language when Jesus walks on water (6.45-52) and the Transfiguration (9.2-15) are two foundational passages that portray two different ways one could view Jesus and his relation to the Father. These instances vary because one could argue that Jesus is being expressed in terms of high Christology in the walking on water narrative because he seems to be mirrored with God, yet represented in a “lower” sense in the Transfiguration

¹³⁹ France 2002, 23.

¹⁴⁰ It should be noted that there is not necessarily a conflict here in relation to Jesus’ relation to the divine identity. This topic will be discussed in greater depth later in relation to high Christology.

¹⁴¹ The examination of these ‘titles’ will not be a central focus throughout. Rather, they will be mentioned and developed as necessary, but these will not receive a large portion of attention seeing as they are only supportive of my claims and not the main emphasis of the chapter.

since he is more similarly paralleled to Moses. As far as the walking on water account goes, the two most significant aspects pertain to Jesus' desire to "pass by" the disciples and his declaration of "It is I" or "I am."¹⁴² In the Greek, it is of great importance that the language used to describe Jesus passing by the disciples is similar to what is used in the LXX when God's glory passes by Moses on Sinai:

Table 5: Exodus 33 and Mark 6

<p>ήνίκα δ' ἂν παρέλθῃ μου ἡ δόξα, καὶ θήσω σε εἰς ὀπήν τῆς πέτρας καὶ σκεπάσω τῇ χειρὶ μου ἐπὶ σέ, ἕως ἂν παρέλθῃ.</p> <p>Exodus 33:22</p>	<p>ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτοὺς περιπατῶν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς.</p> <p>Mark 6:48b</p>
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As I have indicated by bolding the verbs used, both Mark and the translator of Exodus 33 chose to use the verb *παρῆλθον*, "to pass by." This shows a verbal connection between the two accounts which could lead to the implication that Mark wants to express a theophany, equating Jesus' actions to those of God's.¹⁴³ The second aspect of this passage is the use of *ἐγώ εἰμι*, which is what is used also in the Septuagint for the Divine Name in Exodus 3:14. France would like to argue that, "a declaration of divinity does not seem appropriate at this point in identification" because he claims the phrase "*ἐγώ εἰμι* is [a] normal colloquial Greek [expression] (cf. Mt. 26.22, 25; Jn 4.26; 9.9; 18.5)." He also claims at this stage v. 52 "makes it

¹⁴² Clifton Black (2011, 165) cites Ps. 77:14-19; Ps 93:3-4; Job 9:8; and Hab. 3:15 as parallels to Jesus walking on Water (v.48) with God since he does this in the Hebrew Bible. This arguably shows Jesus being incorporated into the Divine Identity. The focus of this section, though, will concentrate on the "passing by" language and the "I Am" statement.

¹⁴³ Clifton Black (2011, 165) also points out "Divine self-disclosure to mortals never occurs head-on" quoting this passage in Exodus 33 as well as 1 Kings 19:11 – καὶ εἶπεν Ἐξελεύσῃ αὐριον καὶ στήσῃ ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἐν τῷ ὄρει. ἰδοὺ **παρελεύσεται** κύριος. Marcus (2000, 426) agrees with Black on these two allusions, but then states, "Under the impact of these passages the verb *parelthein* ('to pass, to pass by') became almost a technical term for a divine epiphany in the Septuagint; In Dan. 12:1 and Gen 32:31-32 LXX, for example, it was inserted into contexts that lacked it in the MT." Marcus continues to say that Mark desired to have Jesus be reunited with the disciples so he wrote that Jesus only *intended* to "pass by," but he did not actually carry through with the action. This is corroborated by France (2002, 272), "Liddell and Scott offer a few classical uses of *ἐθέλω* used in the sense of μέλλω, which would suggest a meaning here 'was about to' rather than 'intended to'. This usage is rare, however, and finds no clear parallel in the Greek of the NT period." Cf. also Cranfield 1972, 226. Collins (2007, 327) asserts that the emphasis is on the "divine power in a miracle, rather than on the revelation of the person of the deity."

clear that the disciples did not understand Jesus to have just revealed himself as God.”¹⁴⁴ Most assuredly France is correct. The disciples did not understand. But could not one argue that the disciples even after Peter’s climactic statement on the way to Caesarea Philippi still do not comprehend Jesus’ message and who he truly is?¹⁴⁵ It seems illogical to assume that Jesus could not be making a profound statement about himself solely because the disciples are unable to grasp the true significance of the situation. After all, they do not truly comprehend Jesus’ teachings until he has been crowned, enthroned, died and has risen from the dead. Cranfield concedes it is at least “conceivable that Mark intends his readers to be reminded of the O.T. use of the expression in Exod. iii. 14, Isa. Xli. 4, 10, lii. 6.”¹⁴⁶ Hurtado also agrees with Cranfield that “it [ἐγώ εἰμι] is used in the OT (e.g., Isa. 43.25; 48.12; 51.12) with special force as a formula for self-description by God, resembling the phrasing in Exod. 3.14 where God first reveals himself to Moses... In Mark the phrase reappears on the lips of Jesus in the trial scene (14.62), and there, also, is probably intended as an allusion to these OT passages.”¹⁴⁷ In light of Exodus 3:14 and 33:22, it seems that Mark intends his readers to pick up these Hebrew Bible echoes of the divine name and the “passing by” which in turn exalts Jesus to a lofty position. As Bauckham pointed out earlier, the definitive way of establishing an author’s Christology is by incorporating Jesus as intrinsic with the divine identity, and Mark has done so here with these two strong images drawn from the Scriptures.

The Transfiguration (9:2-15) also plays a key role in showing the dichotomy between the high Christology of the walking on water account to what appears to be a lower state here. Many might take this story to be a very high Christological point in the gospel because Jesus is

¹⁴⁴ France 2002, 273.

¹⁴⁵ There is some debate as to whether or not Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ is truly an accurate description of Jesus’ identity. This will be explored later when discussing the ὁδός to Jerusalem.

¹⁴⁶ Cranfield 1972, 227.

¹⁴⁷ Hurtado 1989, 106.

transformed in a way where he is seen as dazzling white and is in the presence of Elijah and Moses. Surely it is a sign of exaltation if one is to be in the company of two of the greatest figures in the Hebrew Bible. A voice from heaven once again proclaims Jesus is his beloved son in whom he is well pleased and those present (Peter, James and John) should listen to Him. This seems to be again an indication of Jesus' identity.

How does this compare to the story of the walking on the water? It pales in comparison because Jesus is only called the *son* and is not associated with God. He is in no way depicted as being intrinsic with the identity of God as he is in the previous account where he is paralleled as performing the acts of the Father. A major implication of this passage, which Joel Marcus astutely shows, is that this passage should be viewed as part of the “Mosaic typology” present in Mark 9.2-15:¹⁴⁸

Table 6: Exodus 34 & Mark 9

ὥς δὲ κατέβαινε Μωϋσῆς ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους Exodus 34.29a	Καὶ καταβαινόντων αὐτῶν ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους Mark 9.9
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Although Mark's construction is slightly different in the Greek expressing the action of descent in the form of a genitive absolute, the two are almost identical in word order and vocabulary. This continues from here into v. 15 with the healing of the boy with the spirit. When the people see Jesus, they are “overcome with awe” which is similar to when Moses descends from the mountain. Although there is a difference from the LXX of the people's reaction in verb usage,¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Marcus 2009, 642.

¹⁴⁹ In Mark the verb ἐξεθαμβήθησαν, “to be amazed,” and in Exodus 34.29-35 the verb is ἐφοβήθησαν, “to fear.” France (2002, 364) states “it is tempting to detect an echo of the Israelites' awe before Moses when he came down from the mountain with his face shining (Ex. 34:29-35), but we have noted that Mark has avoided any clear allusion to that narrative.” Hooker (1991, 223) believes the only explanation for their amazement is that Jesus is still shining from his transfiguration. She does mention Exodus 34:29, but states that “Mark does not spell this out, but the implication would probably have been much more obvious to his first reader than it is to us: the opening phrase – **When they came back to the disciples** – links the two stories together, and the **large crowd** is reminiscent of Exod. 34:30; perhaps these hints gave sufficient indication as to why the people were astonished.” Collins (2007, 437)

Marcus argues that “it may be that our story intends a comparison as well as a contrast: Moses’ radiance is terrifying, but Jesus’ is both awe inspiring and attractive.”¹⁵⁰ Here Mark is attempting to depict Jesus as a Moses-type figure since he was just seen as being in the presence of Moses and is now being paralleled to the action of Moses descending the mountain. Also, the “listen to him” language used in relation to Jesus is similar to that which is used in Deuteronomy 18. It should also be drawn to attention, however, that Jesus rejects Peter’s proposal to establish tents for the three (Jesus, Elijah, and Moses), so it seems to elevate Jesus to a status higher than the other two present with him. Jesus is to be seen as a higher figure than Moses since he is called God’s son and is essentially shown as “one-uping” Moses by the people’s reception of him. The striking comparisons of the two figures leaves one wondering how high the Christology of this passage is, and it seems reasonable to conclude that Jesus is not seen as highly here as in 6:48.

By expounding on these two passages, I have illustrated that in Mark the depiction of Jesus varies. At times, Jesus seems to be shown in a very high Christological standpoint whereas in others he is shown to be in a “lesser” status. It should not be taken, however, that the New Testament authors are working in a mindset of “this and not that.” The authors are able to draw parallels between “higher” and “lower” Christologies in order to corroborate the sayings into a clear and cohesive picture. They are able to work in this mindset of drawing as many parallels as possible, yet they are not in conflict with one another. Therefore, these depictions are not to be seen as in tension with one another. This is important for understanding how Mark wants us to view his Jesus. This will be a key focal point on the discussion on the *Shema* in Mark later in the paper because there, too, Mark appears to use a similar method of paradox to depict Jesus in

makes no connection with Moses here, but rather emphasizes the contrast the difference between Jesus and the disciples. Cranfield (1972, 300), like Collins, links this verb to 1:22 stating the parallels with Moses’s face as not likely.

¹⁵⁰ Marcus 2009, 652.

relation to the Divine Identity. Similarly, as Boring writes about titles in Mark, “Efforts to arrange Mark’s terminology in a vertical chart are too static for his own Christological mode of thought.”¹⁵¹

3.3 The ὁδός of Jesus to Jerusalem

We have just examined a general sense of the Christology thus far focusing on two prominent Christological passages in the gospel. Now, the focus will shift to Jesus’ ὁδός to Jerusalem. According to Graham Stanton, “in the important central section of Mark, from 8.26 to 10.52, the evangelist concentrates on the true nature of discipleship... to be a disciple of Jesus involves being prepared to go *the way* of Jesus, and that means *the way* of humility, rejection, and suffering – *the way* of the cross.”¹⁵² This statement is true, yet more can be added and extrapolated based on the text of Mark. The ὁδός does not begin in 8:26; it, in fact, originates at the very beginning of the Gospel in chapter 1: ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει **τὴν ὁδόν** σου· φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· ἐτοιμάσατε **τὴν ὁδὸν** κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. The ὁδός also does not end in 10:52, but, rather, at the beginning of chapter 11 with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The focus of the ὁδός may be on discipleship, but there is also Christological significance preparing the disciples for what is to come in their future. The way of the cross is not only to serve as an example of discipleship, but also plays a significant role for showing the true identity of Jesus as the unlikely Christ they were not expecting.

Prepare the ὁδός of the Lord (Mark 1:1-3)

One of the very few passages taken from the Hebrew Bible in Mark emerges right from the beginning to establish the main characters of the narrative. This section also, in some way,

¹⁵¹ Boring 1999, 458.

¹⁵² Stanton 2002, 48.

sheds light on what is to come on the way to the cross.¹⁵³ It is worthy noting that this quotation by Mark is a composite text quoting from Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 and Exodus 23:20.¹⁵⁴ The mixing of the Exodus and Malachi texts was a common phenomenon, and this technique of combining quotations was not uncommon in Judaism at the time.¹⁵⁵ Hurtado points out that these scriptures were used “to show that John the Baptist and Jesus are to be understood in the context of the prophecies regarded by ancient Jews and Christians as holy Scripture and divine revelation of God’s purposes” for they came into this world “not out of the blue but, rather, as fulfillment of God’s plan of redemption.”¹⁵⁶ There was a common trend in Judaism at this time that Elijah

¹⁵³ One piece of evidence is from Mark 1:1, Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ]. I will not discuss this topic in the main body of this chapter due to the uncertainty of the originality of this mention of Jesus’ “Son of God” status. Albeit, since “Christ” is also mentioned, the argument may still hold; the inclusion of ‘Son of God,’ though, would significantly strengthen the following claim. This title, υἱοῦ θεοῦ, would resonate well with the Jewish audience. As Collins (1995, 167) claims, “The designation ‘Son of God’ reflects the status rather than the nature of the messiah. He is the son of God in the same sense that the king of Israel was begotten by God according to Psalm 2.” As also Bultmann (1951, 128-129) asserts, “Hellenistic-Jewish Christians had brought along the *title ‘Son of God’* embedded in their missionary message; for the earliest Church had already called Jesus so. But one must recognize that the title, which originally denoted the messianic king, now takes on a new meaning, which was self-evident to Gentile hearers. Now it came to mean *the divinity of Christ, his divine nature*, by virtue of which he is differentiated from the human sphere; it makes the claim that Christ is of divine origin and is filled with divine power.” If this segment of the passage is original to Mark, it, in connection with the ὁδός, establishes at the onset of the gospel the “ironic king motif.” It establishes that the reader is to perceive Jesus as a “Davidic king,” but he is much more than that. Throughout the gospel he will be hailed as “son of the most high,” “Son of God,” “Christ,” “Son of David,” etc., which are all Davidic titles. The true identity of Jesus will be revealed at the end of the gospel with the High Priest ironically dubbing Jesus as the Son of God, Jesus receiving the garb of a king while being mocked and then his ultimate enthronement on the cross when the centurion states Jesus was truly the Son of God. As is claimed by E.P. Sanders (1996, 240), “In the Hebrew Bible three classes of people were anointed: prophets, priests and kings. The Christian tradition early fixed on the third of these as giving a clue to Jesus’ identity: he was descended from King David and was the Davidic Messiah – David’s physical descendant, chosen by God (spiritually ‘anointed’) to perform a David-like task.”

¹⁵⁴ Hurtado 2003, 307. For a more in-depth description of the original intentions of these verses cf. Black 2011, 49. By using these quotations from the Hebrew Bible, Black claims “First, ‘a way’ is once more being cleared for God’s people: a divine intervention that will transport readers along ‘straight paths’ (Mark 1:3c). Second, preparation of that way is again delegated to an envoy entrusted with God’s message: an emissary who stands in line with Moses, Elijah, and Deutero-Isaiah. Third, those led in that way are again called to abandon that to which they have become accustomed, for a life under radically changed circumstances: a shift no less extreme than that from the wilderness to Canaan, from foreign exile to a return home, from business as usual to ‘the day of the Lord’ (49-50). This conflated quote prepares the way for the reader in order that they may be able to navigate the gospel and ascertain its true significance.

¹⁵⁵ Watts 1997, 85. It should also be noted that the connection between these two passages in Mark is not known within Judaism, but that does not necessarily rule out a Jewish antecedent of the tradition.

¹⁵⁶ Hurtado 1989, 15.

would come and be a forerunner for God, or in this case the Messiah.¹⁵⁷ Jesus most likely knew of these expectations because after his transfiguration, he confirms, “Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things... But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him” (Mark 9.12a, 13).

The threefold use of “way” in this section of the introduction raises questions as to whose way is being prepared: John’s or Jesus’? According to Rikki Watts, “the answer can hardly be the way of John.”¹⁵⁸ This is shown by the fact that little is said concerning John after the composite quotation; Mark describes in detail John’s clothing and diet, which seems superfluous, but it is very important because it parallels Malachi’s Elijah “whose primary role was that of forerunner.”¹⁵⁹ Therefore, Mark reveals the messenger who was sent by God before the people is John the Baptist who was sent to prepare the *ódóc* of Jesus.¹⁶⁰ The second half of the quotation portrays the voice crying out, in the context of the composite quotation, as John the Baptist as well. This is made more explicit when the following verses tell of John baptizing all of Judea and Jerusalem for the repentance of sins. By doing so, he has begun to prepare the *ódóc* of the coming Christ, the one of whom John is not even worthy to stoop down and unstrap the sandals. The verse quoted claims, prepare the way of the *LORD*. Hooker points out, “For Mark, **the Lord** would already be familiar as a title used of the risen Jesus, making it easier for Old Testament passages referring to the Lord be applied to him. Nevertheless, since the title is used in the LXX to translate the Tetragrammaton..., its use here is a significant Christological development. God’s advent in salvation and judgement has taken place in Jesus... The messenger who is sent

¹⁵⁷ For more information on this particular aspect of John as the forerunner Elijah with attention to the use of these OT references as ‘proof’ of this expectation cf. Cranfield 1972, 38,39.

¹⁵⁸ Watts 1997, 59.

¹⁵⁹ Watts 1997, 59.

¹⁶⁰ Marcus (2000, 148) states, “John’s mission is described as preparation of the way of Jesus. As the Gospel progresses, we will learn that John has prepared the way for Jesus both by his preaching and by his martyrdom... John’s going before Jesus in the way of suffering and death also seem to be implied in 9:11-13.”

to **prepare the way** (v.2) is thus more closely defined as the voice crying ‘**prepare the way of the Lord**’ (v.3).”¹⁶¹ The voice crying out commands the people to also do as he does and prepare the *ὁδός* of the coming one, the one who will baptize with the spirit rather than water.¹⁶²

Peter’s Declaration on the *ὁδός* to Jerusalem and the First Passion Prediction (Mark 8:27-38)

Half of the gospel has come and gone since the first mention of the *ὁδός* in Mark 1, but it now surfaces at a crucial instance in the story. Also, it is significant that Χριστός has not been seen since the first mention of the *ὁδός*.¹⁶³ The turning point of the narrative has just occurred with Jesus’ two-part healing of the blind man,¹⁶⁴ and the depiction of Jesus will be forever changed in the gospel for we are on the *ὁδός* to the cross. It is time for the messianic secret to deteriorate in relation to the disciples because it is now Jesus’ prerogative to reveal himself to them fully. As Jesus continues to reveal himself to the disciples, they receive a glimmer of what is required to be a follower of Jesus: to take up your cross and follow Jesus on the *ὁδός* of suffering and martyrdom. The appearance of both *ὁδός* and Χριστός begins to slowly unravel the secret of Jesus’ true identity.

The story sets out with Jesus and his disciples traveling to Caesarea Philippi, and on the *ὁδός* there, Jesus asks them who people say that he is. They provide various answers that people

¹⁶¹ Hooker 1991, 35-36.

¹⁶² This will come to fruition and will be better understood later when we discuss Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. This is also supported by Isaiah 40:3 (“The way of the Lord”) since “it is the Lord’s *own* way, his triumphant march through the wilderness and into the holy city as he leads his people back from exile in a magnificent demonstration of saving power... Mark may understand ‘the good news about Jesus’ to be a fulfillment of Isaiah’s vision of saving holy war” (Marcus 2000, 148). This is fulfilled in Jesus’ triumphal entry and ultimate enthronement on the cross. This is the starting point of the gospel’s irony: the unexpected Lord of glory will march into Jerusalem from the wilderness, be declared ironically as king by the high priest, and will be enthroned on the cross.

¹⁶³ France 2002, 329.

¹⁶⁴ I call the story preceding Peter’s declaration the turning point of the gospel because it is here that we see a parallelism between the blind man’s sight and the comprehension of the disciples. Just as the man could not initially see clearly, so too the disciples (through Peter’s proclamation) will exhibit a similar pattern of understanding. They will confess Jesus as the Christ, but they show that their blindness has not been fully cured and they will continue to portray this incomprehension until Jesus has died and has risen. Only then will the healing be complete in the disciples and they will know who Jesus truly is.

have supposedly claimed Jesus to be, but then he asks ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι? Now we have Peter's famous confession: σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός. There is debate that surrounds this important text because unlike Matthew's account where Jesus confirms the statement, some argue Jesus does not do so here.¹⁶⁵ This does not seem entirely plausible to some degree. It seems likely Jesus did not confirm this statement as openly as the account of Matthew does because Mark is presenting the disciples still in this sense of not knowing who Jesus is.¹⁶⁶ Yes, Peter's claim is correct that Jesus is the Christ (cf. 1:1), but in the story after Jesus predicts his passion, Peter has the audacity to rebuke Jesus for what he has just said. This is evidence enough that Peter did not comprehend fully the claim he just made. Jesus' further reply indicates, "those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it" (Mark 8:35). It is imperative for the disciples to pick up their cross and follow Jesus as he will later in the gospel become the suffering Son of Man who will die and rise from the dead and who will come again. Still, for Peter, his Christ will not be one who will be handed over to the officials, beaten and killed.

On the ὁδός to Jerusalem: the Rich Man and the Healing on the side of the ὁδός, Bartimaeus

(Mark 10:17-31 and 10:46-52)

The next two accounts play a crucial role building up to Jesus' eventual arrival in Jerusalem. The first of which happens while Jesus is said to be setting out on a ὁδός, which

¹⁶⁵ One who holds such a view: Cranfield 1972, 266,267. Cf. Hooker 1991, 202, though she does qualify this statement with, "If Mark has not added (as Matthew has done) a commendation of Peter by Jesus, it could be because it did not occur to him that it was necessary to spell out that Peter's 'confession' represents the truth." Also, Black (2011, 192) shows that there is a lot of ambiguity shrouding the statement. Neither Peter nor Mark explains why this conclusion should be drawn.

¹⁶⁶ This can be seen in light of what has just previously occurred in the two-part healing. Just as the man born blind initially saw people walking as trees, so Peter also has a hazy picture of who Jesus truly is. This will be remedied once Jesus has been exalted. It is clear that there is a parallel here with Jesus' prerogative to silence demons when they proclaim Messianic titles. They use these titles correctly, but they are silenced due to the Messianic secret, but it is still apparent that Mark sees them as fitting for Jesus. Especially in connection with Mark 1:1, the titles are correct, but they need further explanation because they do not serve as complete representation of who Jesus is.

seems to present “Jesus continuing on the journey which is bringing him ever closer to Jerusalem.”¹⁶⁷ This journey has already exhibited the suffering aspect of the Christ that Jesus is, but in these narratives, we will see another facet of Jesus’ Messiahship but, this time, it is a side the reader does not expect.

The story of the rich man will be covered more in depth in the next section of the chapter focusing on the *Shema*, so the discussion here will be brief. First, it should be again noted that this story occurs while Jesus is about to depart on his ὁδός, which seems to imply the way to Jerusalem. Addressing Jesus as “Good Teacher,” the rich man burns to know what is required of him in order that he might gain eternal life. Jesus retorts, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone” and then quotes a number of commandments from the law. The man responds that he has kept these laws since his youth. Jesus then corners the man and claims he still lacks one thing: “go sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, **follow me**” (Mark 10.21).¹⁶⁸ Sadly, the man leaves Jesus grieved for he had many possessions; he failed Jesus’ call. The full Christological implications in this passage are extraordinarily important, but they will be discussed in greater detail below. It should be noted that Jesus appears to have placed himself in a subordinate role by claiming no one is good but God. As we shall see this is a significant piece in the puzzle of trying to construct Mark’s Jesus.

The healing of Bartimaeus is a fascinating story because it appears to be the climax of Jesus’ ὁδός before he arrives at the city of David.¹⁶⁹ This is the final healing occurrence in Mark,

¹⁶⁷ Hooker 1991, 240,241.

¹⁶⁸ My emphasis added.

¹⁶⁹ This is also an interesting development potentially created by Mark. The turning point of the gospel is in chapter 8 with the two part healing of the man born blind, which establishes how the disciples and others are going to perceive Jesus: they will understand up to a point, but will only fully comprehend his significance at his death and resurrection. The climax, now, is occurring with another miraculous healing of a blind man. This is a giant Marcan sandwich, which is being used to show that Jesus is about to enter the final stage of his ὁδός to Jerusalem. Jesus is

and this narrative is full of significant developments in both Christology and discipleship.¹⁷⁰ The story begins with Jesus and his disciples arriving in Jericho. This is of great pertinence because Jericho is roughly a day's walk from Jerusalem.¹⁷¹ The implication is that the *ὁδός* is rapidly approaching its end, and Jesus will soon approach the final suffering. A problem arises, though, with respect to the beginning of this passage because it is quite confusing. As we previously said, Jesus and the disciples had just arrived in Jericho, but it seems they came there just to leave immediately: *Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Ἰεριχὼ. Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ Ἰεριχὼ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὄχλου ἱκανοῦ ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου Βαρτιμαῖος, τυφλὸς προσαίτης, ἐκάθητο παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν.* Regardless of what implications this confusing beginning might have, Bartimaeus makes a striking comment right after when he realizes Jesus is passing by; he calls out to him: *υἱὲ Δαυὶδ*¹⁷² Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με. This is a striking scenario because only the demons and Peter until now have addressed Jesus by a Messianic title.¹⁷³ What is all the more peculiar is that Jesus does not silence the man!¹⁷⁴ It appears Jesus is accepting this Messianic title and desires the disciples and the surrounding large crowd to know who he is. Knowing what follows, this title could be pointing forward to Jesus' arrival at the City of David. The title itself "in Mark's view, was both

now going to be fully disclosed as the Son of David, the ironic, unexpected king who will be enthroned on a cross. So Meier (1991, 686, 691-2) claims, "Jesus heals the blind man at Bethsaida in two stages, a point that may have deep symbolic meaning for Mark... The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida... symbolizes the two-stage healing of the spiritual vision of Jesus' disciples: first with Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah at Caesarea Philippi (8:27-30) and finally with the full vision of Jesus as Son of Man and Son of God, a vision made possible only by his death on the cross and resurrection (cf. Mark 9:9-13; 15:39; 16:6-7)." Meier also draws to the readers attention the significance of Bartimaeus' confession of Jesus as the "Son of David" "is echoed in the very next pericope, the triumphant entry into Jerusalem (11:1-11) when the crowd cried out" (686-7).

¹⁷⁰ Cranfield 1972, 344.

¹⁷¹ France 2002, 422.

¹⁷² Clifton Black (2011, 234) states "David was considered the Lord's special designate (2 Sam 7:4-17; Ps 89:3-4); the DSS and the *Psalms of Solomon* (17:32) expected an eschatological messiah of the Davidic line." Hooker (1991, 252,253) shows that "**Son of David** became a fairly common title for the messianic king in later Jewish literature and would have been understood in that sense by Mark... the title points forward to the story of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem which immediately follows."

¹⁷³ Hooker 1991, 325.

¹⁷⁴ Cranfield 1971, 344,345.

proper to apply to Jesus and yet incomplete in describing his full significance.”¹⁷⁵ It is appropriate because Jesus is to be viewed as the expected Messiah, but it is inadequate because it does not fully encapsulate the identity of Jesus.

On the ὁδός to Jerusalem: Jesus’ Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:1-11)

The end of Jesus’ ὁδός has arrived. Jesus is now about to make his way into the holy city of David and be welcomed as a king.¹⁷⁶ This is a significant passage because it ties the journey together in a profound way. It is in a sense ironic because here Jesus is presented as entering and being praised as a king.¹⁷⁷ This can be seen in the fact that most who are pilgrims to Jerusalem for Passover customarily entered on foot.¹⁷⁸ In Mark’s account, Jesus enters royally: καὶ φέρουσιν τὸν πῶλον πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐπιβάλλουσιν αὐτῷ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπ’ αὐτόν. καὶ πολλοὶ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν ἔστρωσαν εἰς **τὴν ὁδόν**. A similar account to this occurs in the Hebrew Bible when Jehu rides in to Jerusalem and the people also lay their cloaks on the ground as he entered the city.¹⁷⁹ This parallel appears to be similar to Bartimaeus’ proclamation¹⁸⁰ because he was correct to address Jesus as the son of David, yet the statement was inadequate. The reader knows that Jesus is not just the son of David; he is the Son of God. So here, the people do not understand fully what they are doing. Yes, they are preparing the way of the Lord, but they see him more as a worldly king. That is the irony of the parallel. Jehu was described as a wicked king, and the people in the account laid their cloaks down before him, so

¹⁷⁵ Hurtado 1989, 174. This is true and will be fully explained later in the *Shema* section when discussing Mark 12.28-37.

¹⁷⁶ Marcus (2009, 778) makes note of the importance of Jesus’ entrance on a donkey as being an allusion to two passages from the LXX: Genesis 49:10-11 & Zechariah 9:9.

¹⁷⁷ Black (2011, 237) also shows that this is the entrance of a heroic figure: 1 Macc 4:19-25; 13:43-51; *Ant.* 11.325-39; 16.12-15; 17.194-239 (Judas Maccabeus’s return to Judea).

¹⁷⁸ Hurtado 1989, 179.

¹⁷⁹ France 2002, 433.

¹⁸⁰ Collins (2007, 520) makes a similar observation: “They bless ‘the coming kingdom of our father David’. Although here Jesus is not hailed explicitly as king, the context suggests that he is both. Such an inference is supported by the address of Jesus by Bartimaeus as son of David.” Black (2011, 237) also shows that Jesus has been proclaiming the Kingdom of God (1:15; 4:11, 26, 30; 9:1, 47; 10:14-15, 23-25).

here also, as Jesus enters, to show that the people are correct to hail him as king, but that they do not comprehend, Mark chooses to have them procession him in a correct but inappropriate manner. Jesus is worthy of such a greeting unlike Jehu, but the people do not know why. We the readers, however, know he is more than just an earthly ruler. Jesus is to be seen through the Christological lenses provided from the beginning that he is the Χριστός τοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ. The prologue of Mark has thus been fulfilled; the people have prepared the way of the Lord, and he is now ready to enter Jerusalem as the unexpected Christ.¹⁸¹

3.4 The Lord Our God, the Lord is ἔτι

Thus far a number of facets have been shown that encapsulate the Christology of Mark's gospel. Jesus' authority has been minimally examined already, and it will be developed further here. By having a closer look at the account of Jesus walking on water and the transfiguration, we have seen how Mark, at times, chooses to depict Jesus in different lights and parallels him to different figures (whether it is Moses or YHWH typology). This will also be of significance when examining how the *Shema* is used in relation to his Christology. Finally, the way of Jesus to Jerusalem was explored in order that we get a clearer picture of who Jesus is: a Messiah who did not fit the mold of the people. He is the Christ who will liberate in a radically different way, and Mark chose to reveal his true, divine identity subtly by grafting the *Shema* into his gospel. Jesus was more than what the crowd anticipated.

¹⁸¹ As a concluding remark, E. P. Sanders (1996, 240) writes, "In *Psalms of Solomon* 17, a son of David is depicted as purging Jerusalem of Gentiles and evil Jews. He rides a horse, and thus he sounds like a military leader. Yet it is not his troops that accomplish the task but rather God himself. Here we have a son of David who acts in some respects like David." In verse 30 of the Psalm, the writer claims [The son of David] shall purge Jerusalem, making it holy as of old." What follows in Mark almost immediately after the triumphal entry is the cleansing of the temple. There could be a loose connection with *Psalms of Solomon* 17 and Mark 11:15-19 where Jesus evicts the moneychangers and then quotes Isaiah 56:7 (restoring Jerusalem as of old – appealing to Deutero-Isaiah). This is, though, entirely speculative since there are neither verbal connections nor any clear allusions. It can only be said that there may be some subtle influences on Mark's gospel by *Psalms of Solomon* 17.

The *Shema* in the Mouths of Scribes – Who is Able to Forgive Sins on Earth?

According to Joel Marcus, there are three places where Mark uses the *Shema* in his gospel with respect to Jesus, and he does so by employing the words εἷς and θεός in conjunction with one another reveal who Christ is. These occurrences are found in 2:7, 10:18 and 12:29.¹⁸² These references are used in order to reveal the divine identity of Jesus and how he should be viewed in connection with the one God.

The first instance occurs in the healing of a paralytic while Jesus is in Capernaum (Mark 2.1-12). The basic scenario has Jesus teaching the word to many who heard he was in the area. A paralytic and a group of his friends greatly desired to meet Jesus in order that the paralytic might have a chance of being restored. Extremely driven, the men are forced, because of the crowd, to dig into the roof and to lower the man in front of Jesus. Witnessing their faith, Jesus proclaims τέκνον, ἀφίενταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι. This statement is the catalyst that produces the scribes to proclaim in their hearts τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός? Marcus makes a very astute point claiming that εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός is an awkward construction seeing as Mark could have used μόνον instead of εἷς as Luke does in his gospel (5.21). He concludes that the reason for using that particular adjective (εἷς) was to trigger a response in the reader's mind to think of the *Shema*.¹⁸³ This scribal controversy, in Marcus' opinion, has a more profound meaning than what lies on the surface of the reading. He argues this passage reflects early development of Christology in the church specifically associated with their baptismal theology. It was to show

¹⁸² Marcus 1994, 196.

¹⁸³ Marcus 1994, 198.

Jesus as the active agent of baptismal forgiveness.¹⁸⁴ For Mark, this elevation of Jesus to a “quasi-divine status” does not infringe upon the unity of God.¹⁸⁵

The story reaches a climax when Jesus commands the paralytic to rise and take his pallet and return home ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. The use of the phrase “the Son of Man” is only used by Jesus with respect to himself in Mark, and the significance of the title is debated. The debate revolves mainly at the level of the historical Jesus and whether he used the phrase and, if he did, how he used it in relation to himself. This phraseology does not only appear in the New Testament, but the authors of 4 Ezra and 1 Enoch¹⁸⁶ also employ the title. Many have argued the phrase can refer to just a man, the person speaking, or to someone in a similar situation as the speaker. Marcus maintains Mark drew the title from Daniel 7:13-14 when referencing “one like a son of man” presented before the Ancient of Days who has delegated power, dominion and authority in the earthly realm to this son of man figure.¹⁸⁷ Marcus further argues that Mark is drawing on more than just this section of Daniel 7, but also on verse nine where “thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne.” He argues that “thrones” is plural because the human-like figure is to be seated beside God and share in his royal authority.¹⁸⁸ He believes this reference is used in order to show God has transferred his royal power to “one like a son of man” (a human figure) in order that he might rule over the earthly nations.¹⁸⁹ In so doing, Jesus has the power and authority to forgive sins on earth as the Son of Man because he has been given¹⁹⁰ the ἐξουσία from God to exercise

¹⁸⁴ Marcus 2002, 222.

¹⁸⁵ Marcus 1994, 200.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Appendices D and E for a longer discussion on the Christological figures present in 4 Ezra and 1 Enoch.

¹⁸⁷ Marcus 1994, 202.

¹⁸⁸ Marcus 1994, 203.

¹⁸⁹ Marcus 2002, 223.

¹⁹⁰ It is important to note that Mark never explicitly makes use of the language of delegation concerning Jesus’ relation to God as does John in his gospel, for example 5.17ff. Mark simply claims the Son of Man has authority; he never indicates whether or not the power has been delegated to him from God, although it seems to be heavily

the divine reign on behalf of the Ancient of Days. In short, Marcus argues that there has been a division of labor where God rules in heaven, but Jesus, as ‘one like a son of man,’ exercises this authority on earth.¹⁹¹

The *Shema* from the Lips of Jesus – Is Jesus Good?

The next instance in which the *Shema* appears in Mark is when the “rich young ruler”¹⁹² approaches Jesus and hails him as διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ (Mark 10.17-22). He proceeds to ask Jesus what he must do in order to inherit eternal life. Oddly, Jesus at first does not address the man's inquiry directly, but instead calls into question the man's greeting: τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός. As in chapter two, Mark's construction of εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός is seen here as indicating a reference to the *Shema*. At first glance, it seems clear that Jesus denies any equality with God when he alludes to Israel's most monotheistic claim to a man who just praised him as good; he also seems to clearly exclude himself from being one with God when he claims no one is good except for God with the implications that he is not on that same level. It is striking, however, that no one in the gospel of Mark is portrayed as good, but in the other synoptics Jesus describes other human beings as such.¹⁹³ Marcus connects this usage of the *Shema* with that of chapter 2 to show that, in this present passage, Jesus seems to be excluding himself from the divine identity.¹⁹⁴ Marcus further develops this point when Jesus claims that as the Son of Man he is permitted to do such actions, Jesus is connected with the activity of God; in so doing, this does not violate monotheism for Mark because Jesus is essentially representing God on earth.

implied. Point being, Mark does not explicitly say from where Jesus' power originates, but the argument of chapter 11 may suggest that the power comes from God.

¹⁹¹ Marcus 1994, 203.

¹⁹² This traditional title is drawn from a combination of what the man is called in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

¹⁹³ Marcus 2009, 726

¹⁹⁴ Though, remember earlier the scribes use this construction to indicate Jesus *is* infringing on the divine prerogative to perform actions only the one God does, so it may not be entirely accurate to suppose Jesus is distancing himself from God's unique identity.

Marcus establishes Jesus as God's "divine agent, to whom he has delegated much of his own authority," and thus this role "falls short of equality with God."¹⁹⁵

Although Mark might depict to some degree Jesus as an individual who has been delegated the ἐξουσία of God in the earthly realm, this does not illuminate why Mark chose to place Jesus here in an almost negative light. It is worth noting Matthew leaves out this quotation from Jesus, and it is most likely because he felt it was too severe and appears to disassociate Jesus from the one God. Marcus argues that Mark does not depict Jesus in a lower status in the passage, for it is difficult to argue that Mark sees Jesus as holy and not good.¹⁹⁶ Instead, Jesus challenges "the man to attain a Christological insight, the realization that Jesus is good because God is good, and that Jesus as the Son of God, the earthly representative of the heavenly king, and the one indwelt by God's name, participates in the goodness of God's reign and manifests it eschatologically upon the earth."¹⁹⁷ This is based upon Marcus' claim that elsewhere in the gospel Jesus is implicitly depicted as doing good such as in 3:4 where he confronts the religious leader and asks whether it is better ἀγαθὸν ποιῆσαι ἢ κακοποιῆσαι.¹⁹⁸ Jesus then heals the man and it should be assumed that Mark has depicted Jesus as performing a good (ἀγαθός) act.

¹⁹⁵ Marcus 1993, 146.

¹⁹⁶ Marcus 1994, 1994, 209.

¹⁹⁷ Marcus 1994, 209-210.

¹⁹⁸ Marcus 1994, 209. Cf. Figure 7 for a comparison of how "good" is used in the synoptics. ἀγαθός is used in Mark only twice, which is significant because it is only used to describe God and implicitly to describe Jesus.

Table 7: How ‘Good’ is Portrayed in Mark with Synoptic Parallels

Mark	Matthew	Luke
καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ἐξεστὶν τοῖς σάββασιν <u>ἀγαθὸν</u> ποιῆσαι ἢ κακοποιῆσαι, ψυχὴν σῶσαι ἢ ἡἀποκτεῖναι; οἱ δὲ ἐσιώπων. (3:4)	πόσῳ οὖν διαφέρει ἄνθρωπος προβάτου. ὥστε ἐξεστὶν τοῖς σάββασιν <u>καλῶς</u> ποιεῖν. (12:12)	εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς αὐτούς, Ἐπερωτῶ ὑμᾶς, εἰ ἐξεστὶν τῷ σαββάτῳ <u>ἀγαθοποιῆσαι</u> ἢ κακοποιῆσαι, ψυχὴν σῶσαι ἢ ἀπολέσαι; (6:9)
καὶ ἄλλα ἔπεσεν εἰς τὴν γῆν τὴν <u>καλήν</u> , καὶ ἐδίδου καρπὸν ἀναβαίνοντα καὶ αὐξανόμενα καὶ ἔφερον ἐν τριάκοντα καὶ ἐν ἐξήκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκατόν. (4:8)	ἄλλα δὲ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν <u>καλήν</u> καὶ ἐδίδου καρπὸν, ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἐξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα. (13:8)	καὶ ἕτερον ἔπεσεν εἰς τὴν γῆν τὴν <u>ἀγαθὴν</u> , καὶ φυὲν ἐποίησεν καρπὸν ἑκατονταπλασίονα. ταῦτα λέγων ἐφώνει, Ὁ ἔχων ὅτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω. (8:8)
καὶ ἐκεῖνοί εἰσιν οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν <u>καλήν</u> σπαρέντες, οἵτινες ἀκούουσιν τὸν λόγον καὶ καὶ παραδέχονται καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν τριάκοντα καὶ ἐν ἐξήκοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκατόν (4:20)	ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν <u>καλήν</u> γῆν σπαρεῖς, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων καὶ συνιείς, ὃς δὴ καρποφορεῖται ποιεῖ ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἐξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα. (13:23)	τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ <u>καλῇ</u> γῇ, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἵτινες ἐν καρδίᾳ <u>καλῇ</u> καὶ <u>ἀγαθῇ</u> ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον κατέχουσιν καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν ὑπομονῇ. (8:15)
καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Πέτρος λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ, Ῥαββί, <u>καλὸν</u> ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι, καὶ ποιήσω μεντρεῖς σκηνάς, σοὶ μίαν καὶ Μωϋσεὶ μίαν καὶ Ἡλὶά μίαν. (9:5)	ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ, Κύριε, <u>καλὸν</u> ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι: εἰ θέλεις, ποιήσω ὧδε τρεῖς σκηνάς, σοὶ μίαν καὶ Μωϋσεὶ μίαν καὶ Ἡλὶά μίαν. (17:4)	καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ διαχωρίζεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ εἶπεν ὁ Πέτρος πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, Ἐπιστάτα, <u>καλὸν</u> ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι, καὶ ποιήσωμεν σκηνάς τρεῖς, μίαν σοὶ καὶ μίαν Μωϋσεὶ καὶ μίαν Ἡλὶά, μὴ εἰδὼς ὃ λέγει. (9:33)
<u>Καλὸν</u> τὸ ἅλας: ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας ἄναλον γένηται, ἐν τίνι αὐτὸ ἀρτύσετε; ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἅλα, καὶ εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἀλλήλοις. (9:50)	Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς: ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας μωρανθῇ, ἐν τίνι ἀλισθήσεται; εἰς οὐδὲν <u>ἰσχύει</u> εἰ μὴ βληθὲν ἐξω καταπατεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. (5:13)	<u>Καλὸν</u> οὖν τὸ ἅλας: ἐὰν δὲ καὶ τὸ ἅλας μωρανθῇ, ἐν τίνι ἀρτυθήσεται; (14:34)
Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς ὁδὸν προσδραμὼν εἰς καὶ γονυπετήσας αὐτὸν ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν, Διδάσκαλε <u>ἀγαθέ</u> , τί ποιήσω ἵνα ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Τί με λέγεις <u>ἀγαθόν</u> ; οὐδεὶς <u>ἀγαθός</u> εἰ μὴ εἰς ὁ θεός. (10:17,18)	Καὶ ἰδοὺ εἰς προσελθὼν αὐτῷ εἶπεν, Διδάσκαλε, τί <u>ἀγαθόν</u> ποιήσω ἵνα σχῶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ <u>ἀγαθοῦ</u> ; εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ <u>ἀγαθός</u> . εἰ δὲ θέλεις εἰς τὴν ζωὴν εἰσελθεῖν, τήρησον τὰς ἐντολάς. (19:16,17)	Καὶ ἐπηρώτησέν τις αὐτὸν ἄρχων λέγων, Διδάσκαλε <u>ἀγαθέ</u> , τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Τί με λέγεις <u>ἀγαθόν</u> ; οὐδεὶς <u>ἀγαθός</u> εἰ μὴ εἰς ὁ θεός. (18:18,19)

The *Shema* From Jesus – What is the First of All Commandments?

The third and final encounter with the *Shema* in Mark occurs when a scribe approaches Jesus and asks him what is the first of all commandments (Mark 12:28-34). Jesus responds with the only direct quote of the *Shema* in the gospel: ἄκουε, Ἰσραὴλ, κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν, καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου. Jesus then quotes from Leviticus 19 as the second greatest command to “love your neighbor as yourself.” The scribe then retorts an affirmation that God is one, “and besides him there is no other” which is reminiscent of Deutero-Isaiah.¹⁹⁹ When Jesus hears the man's response he acclaims “you are not far from the Kingdom of God.” After which, no one dared to question Jesus further. The story of the scribe ends here; however, Joel Marcus connects the next section of Mark, vv. 35-37, in close connection to this story.

The following passage is short, but it connects another Hebrew Bible reference to Jesus from his own mouth. Jesus asks, “How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David? David himself, by the Holy Spirit, declared,

“The Lord said to my Lord,
'Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet.”²⁰⁰

David himself calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?” All who heard these words, according to Mark, were delighted in what they heard.

Let us first examine how Marcus sees Mark orchestrating the *Shema* in Jesus' response to the scribe and then develop how it relates to this later passage. It is important to note primarily that the other synoptics chose to leave out the beginning section of the *Shema* (Deut. 6.4); the

¹⁹⁹ There are numerous such saying in Deutero-Isaiah which indicate YHWH's incomparable nature and how no other is equal to Him: Isaiah 40.12-14; 41.4-5; 43.10-13; 44.6-8; 45.5-6; 45.14b-15; 45.18b-19; 45.21b; 45.22b-23; 46.5; 46.8-10; 48.12-13. See further appendix C.

²⁰⁰ Psalm 110.1

inclusion of this “proclamation” is imperative for understanding what follows for Mark because it is a declaration of God's oneness and answers the question posed in 11:28²⁰¹: from where does Jesus' ἐξουσία come – from heaven or from sinful man?²⁰² Marcus concludes that Mark answers this by implying Jesus' authority comes from God; the final statement from Jesus to the scribe, “you are not far from the dominion²⁰³ of God” serves as a segue into the next section which focuses on the theme of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (the rule of God). By doing so, he has thus answered the question in 11:28 implicitly while artistically creating a link into the next group of verses to shed more light on the topic. By equating Jesus to this Lord figure in Psalm 110:1, he “will make the definitive first act in the extension of the βασιλεία from heaven to earth.”²⁰⁴

This is seen in the following section where Jesus will come ever so close to placing himself as equal²⁰⁵ to “the Lord” in the reference to Psalm 110:1. Marcus claims based on the implications of this verse that one is supposed to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and also to love and follow Jesus, which the scribe is close to doing.²⁰⁶ Joel Marcus believes that the *Shema* in 12:28-34 functions in the same way as the reference to Psalm 110:1 does in 12:35-37: it removes any doubt that God and Jesus are not connected in a bitheistic relationship. He further claims that Mark depicts Jesus enthroned on God's right hand which

²⁰¹ In this passage of Scripture, the religious leaders question Jesus from where does your authority originate? He responds by asking them the origin of John the Baptist's authority. When they claim they do not know from where his powers come, Jesus responds, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

²⁰² Marcus 2009, 842.

²⁰³ Changed from the NRSV version “kingdom” to “dominion” in order to follow Marcus' understanding of βασιλεία

²⁰⁴ Marcus 1993, 135.

²⁰⁵ Or at least Jesus interprets the text in such a way that Lord is used in relation to both God and to the Messiah with whom he is implicitly identified.

²⁰⁶ Marcus 2009, 842.

maintains God as one and further develops Christ as the enthroned son of man from Daniel 7 and should be viewed as subordinate to God.²⁰⁷

Synopsis – How then is Jesus related to the One God?

When speaking of the Gospel of Mark, it is difficult to establish exactly how Mark wants the reader to understand who Christ is in relation to the divine identity. On the one hand, it appears as if the gospel possesses a very high Christology since, from the beginning, it claims Jesus is the Son of God. Demons continually profess Jesus as the Holy One of God, the Son of God and Son of the Most High God, and Mark also implies in the prologue that Jesus is the Lord from the composite quotation. But, on the other hand, Marcus has cogently argued that Jesus can be viewed as a subordinate figure to God who has been delegated God's ἐξουσία on earth. I believe that to limit Jesus to a subordinate role or alternatively to elevate Christ to God himself is problematic since Mark never clearly spells out how Jesus relates to God in either of these ways; it seems to me that Mark has taken a middle of the road approach in depicting who Christ is. Although the gospel does not profess Jesus as the one God explicitly, Mark struggles to present Jesus as one with God without having the message appear to have Christ eclipse the Father; for Mark, God is still an intricate player and one, but Jesus in some way shares in the divine prerogatives and is now presented as part of the divine identity.

The secrecy motif in Mark is the cornerstone, which ties the entire gospel together in order to establish Christ in the divine identity. Like the parables, the Christology in Mark is implicit and requires a response from the reader; it is similar to why discipleship plays such a

²⁰⁷ Marcus 1993, 145. If Marcus is correct, Mark's appeal to Ps. 110 functions similarly to the way that the appeal to the Son of Man having authority functions in 2:1-12 – it responds to the suspicion of blasphemy by affirming that the *Shema* is not violated, but rather Jesus has the authority that he possesses as the Son of Man (Dan 7) or as the Lord (Ps. 110).

paramount role in the gospel – both require a response from the one who has been called to follow Jesus. After all, to those who are outside, everything is in parables in order that

'They may indeed look, but not perceive,
and may indeed listen, but not understand.'"²⁰⁸

As Morna Hooker presents the parables, “It seems likely that Jesus' intention in teaching in parables was to challenge his listeners and make them think for themselves,”²⁰⁹ and I am inclined to see Mark's implicit high Christology to function in a very similar fashion. Everything Jesus does is in order to show who he is and the ἐξουσία he has on earth for it is not so much the content of what Jesus had necessarily said or done that is important,²¹⁰ as it is the power Jesus possesses in the stories that matters.²¹¹

That being said, Jesus' claim that he, as the Son of Man, has the ἐξουσία to forgive sins on earth is a powerful statement when paralleled with the religious leaders who ask “who is able to forgive sins except one, God?”²¹² If Christ is claiming that the Son of Man has the authority to do such an act as forgive sins on earth – whether it is he or another human being – the individual would be infringing upon the divine prerogative and would be considered blasphemous if he were not indeed part of the divine identity. Instead, I believe Marcus is correct that this use of the Son of Man title is indeed playing off the Daniel 7 reference, but it functions in a more subtle way than declaring Jesus as a subordinate of the Ancient of Days. It appears as if Mark is using this term in a way that labels him as a man, but not just any man; he is the divine in human form with the ἐξουσία to forgive sins in the earthly sphere. In so doing, he is equating himself with the

²⁰⁸ Mark 4:11,12a

²⁰⁹ Hooker 1991, 127.

²¹⁰ This can be witnessed in the fact that very few teachings of Jesus are spelled out in detail concerning what he specifically said. In general, it focuses on the people's bewilderment or amazement when Christ taught or performed miracles. This can be seen marvelously when Jesus heals the man with an unclean spirit: They were all amazed and asked one another, “What is this? A new teaching – with ἐξουσία! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him” (Mark 1:27).

²¹¹ Achtemeier 1975, 50.

²¹² The accusation in 2:1-12 has a counterpart in the trial before the high priest at the end of the gospel.

title “Son of God” but from a human perspective. Hurtado describes the title “Son of Man” as ironic because the reader is already aware of Jesus’ significance based on chapter one verse one that declares Jesus as the Son of God.²¹³ Therefore, the reference to the *Shema* is done in order to show the connection between Jesus as the One God and as the earthly Son of Man who has the divine prerogative to forgive sins.

A significant development at the end of 2:1-12 raises a striking conclusion that one would not suspect if Jesus is to be seen as one with God. For after Jesus healed the paralytic “they [those who witnessed the miracle] were all amazed and glorified **God**, saying, ‘we have never seen anything like this!’”²¹⁴ It seems odd that the people would in fact glorify God if it is to be understood that Jesus is one with the divine identity. Again, I see Mark using not necessarily his secrecy motif, but a method other New Testament authors use in order to show co-equality. They do not wish to usurp God as the creator and the one God you shall love; that being the case, many times a phrase will be added to the end of a story or saying in order to bring glory back to God in order that it does not seem as if God is being replaced, when in fact there is a joining that is occurring. This can also be seen when Paul claims:

So that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.”

As can be witnessed here, Paul has made a claim that leans towards equating Jesus as one with the Father, but he in a way “amends” or “safeguards” the statement by shifting glory back to God the Father so that no one could possibly ascertain from the statement that Jesus has taken over the role of the Father.

²¹³ Hurtado 1989, 38.

²¹⁴ Mark 2.12 – my emphasis added

With regards to whether Jesus should be seen as good in Mark 10:17-22, Marcus has developed his stance in a very logical fashion. Mark 3:4 is to be taken as an implicit claim that Jesus has in fact performed a good act, which in a way connects him to the usage of the *Shema* in 10:18.²¹⁵ The way in which Marcus frames the first two *Shema* passages is not as strong. He suggests that the two shed light on one another in order to understand Jesus as one who is subordinate to God because he has been delegated the ἐξουσία from God and is seated at his right hand which makes him lesser to some degree. What appears to be problematic is when Jesus sends out the twelve in Mark 6:1-13 because he then bestows upon the disciples this same ἐξουσία for driving out spirits. Since God is the one who delegates the ἐξουσία such as what Jesus has, then it seems inconsistent that Jesus, as a subordinate of God, would have the authority and power to distribute the power which was granted to him by God to others.²¹⁶ This is once again a piece of the puzzle that sheds light on who Jesus is. He again has been incorporated into the divine identity because he is exhibiting the divine prerogative.

The final and most direct quotation of the *Shema* plays a crucial role in the significance of the implicit high Christology hidden within Mark (Mark 12:28-34 and 35-37). The first portion of this unit of scripture (vv. 28-34) establishes God as one and the point is affirmed again by the man in response to Jesus as Marcus previously showed. It is plausible as Marcus argues that Jesus' response "you are not far from the rule of God" is in connection with the next

²¹⁵ Marcus 1994, 209.

²¹⁶ It could be argued based upon John's gospel, for example, that this does not hold since Jesus claims the Father sent him and so he then sent out the disciples. That being the case, it could be argued further that Jesus' delegation of authority to the disciples does not imply that they share the full extent of the authority Jesus has, so it could then be supposed the same holds for Jesus with respect to his power and authority in connection with God. My retort would be the disciples most assuredly do not have the same level of authority as Jesus does! This can be seen when the disciples are unable to heal a boy possessed by a Spirit and Jesus must come to their aide and heal him. As far as Jesus sharing in the divine identity and in the divine prerogative, Jesus is not depicted as being less than the father when it comes to his authority. If anything, Mark depicts Jesus as having the divine prerogative when he tells of Jesus calming the winds and the waves and the theophany language used when Jesus walks on water. Both these instances seem to have Mark revealing Jesus as being a part of the divine identity and not possessing a lesser degree of authority than the Father.

body of scripture in order to tie Jesus to 'the Lord' in the Psalm 110:1 reference. It is problematic, though, because of the implication this has with regards to who Christ is. It seems to me that Mark is firmly establishing that God is one and there is no other than he. Jesus upholds this monotheistic belief and then proceeds to allude to himself as the Lord who was spoken of by the Lord. Darrell Bock argues based upon the Lucan account that “Jesus’ goal is not to deny either premise²¹⁷ but to show a relationship between two concepts that otherwise might appear to be in tension... Davidic sonship is not being denied... [but] the point is [the] Messiah’s authority, and thus by implication Jesus’ exalted position.”²¹⁸ That being the case, it does seem as though the Lord referenced here does push Jesus in a subordinate role at the right hand of God rather than in a co-equality as part of the divine identity. It is fascinating, though, what is stated in Mark 5 when Jesus heals the Gerasene demoniac and all fear what had just occurred and they plead with him to leave the land. The striking aspect of the story is when Mark seems to implicitly equate Jesus with the Lord: “But Jesus refused [to accept the recently cured man as a disciple], and said to him, ‘Go home to your friend, and tell them how much the **Lord** has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.’ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much **Jesus** had done for him; and everyone was amazed.”²¹⁹ Here, at the end of the story, Mark has equated the Lord, which was typically used in place of the Tetragrammaton, with Jesus as the one who performed the miracle. It seems as if the delegated ἐξουσία from God is not really being transmitted from the Father here, but instead has the implications that Jesus is performing the magnificent works from his own authority. One could argue that the “Lord” here was at first in reference to Jesus, but it should be noted that in Luke's gospel he substitutes “Lord” for “God,” which indicates he understood Mark to mean

²¹⁷ Whether Jesus should be seen as the Son of David *or* as David’s Lord

²¹⁸ Bock 1994, 328,329

²¹⁹ Mark 5:19,20 – my emphasis added

God in his usage of Lord (Luke 8:39). Between these two passages, it seems again Mark has taken the middle road in established Jesus as both a subordinate figure and in a high Christological view point. It seems most clear to take the initial passage, which we analyzed as a reminder that Jesus is not supplanting God, but should be seen as an intricate piece of the divine identity.

3.5 Concluding Remarks on Mark's Christology

Christology is a difficult topic when speaking of the different authors of the New Testament because they all seem to shape their Jesus in slightly different ways providing different focuses and nuances. The Marcan Jesus is multi-varied, and his true identity seems to lie between the lines regardless of the stance one might take. Mark has made his view of Jesus and his true identity implicit and difficult to find in order that we might wrestle with the text to try and surmise for ourselves how we think Jesus should be viewed. This seems to be the thread that runs through Mark which requires a critical reading of the text in order to truly find all that Mark intended for the readers and listeners alike to grasp.

A key difference that exists between Paul and Mark is the way in which they decide to expound on who Jesus is. For Paul, this knowledge is implied throughout his epistles. Most commonly, if a Christological statement is made, Paul does so as evidence for why the members of his churches should be acting in a particular way. Not once does Paul ever feel compelled to unpack what his particular Christology is. As for Mark, the gospel's sole intent is to tell the reader who this person Jesus is. Mark's prerogative is to slowly reveal Jesus' role in the world and what it means for the community to which he is writing.

Albeit this difference is perceived in the texts, that does not indicate that some form of commonality does not exist between Paul and Mark. A crucial aspect that persists in both is the

use of the *Shema*, particularly in 1 Corinthians 8:4 as well as in Mark 2:7 and 10:18. The Greek construction used (εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός), as stated by Marcus, is quite peculiar, and it is striking that both Paul and Mark have this similar composition. Arguably, this could have been a well-established way of alluding to the *Shema* in writing, or making a formulaic claim that God is one. This also reflects Richard Hays' thesis because Paul is alluding to this potentially well-known monotheistic formula in order to foreshadow what he is about to discuss. If Paul has used Scriptural allusion in v. 4 just before he reformulates the *Shema*, it reveals a clever strategy to affirm that he is including Jesus in the divine identity. Paul chose to divide the *Shema* and make it anew by incorporating Jesus as the one Lord. This also bears witness that there is a trend in the New Testament, at least between Paul and Mark, where Scriptural allusions and subtlety are common grounds for making a bolder statement. Although these authors never explicitly state that Jesus is God, they make some strikingly bold claims about Jesus.

Although this statement in 1 Corinthians 8:6 could be seen as an extreme breach of monotheism, it is counterbalanced later in the letter with the subordination language present in 15:28 where Paul writes, "When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all." Here, there is a blatant statement of subordination of the Son under God. Thus, as we saw in Mark, there are cases in which these authors undermine the exalted status of Jesus. The statement examined in Mark is not as blatant as this, but it still shows that this trend exists in the Paul and Mark to have exalted statements about Jesus while also labeling Jesus as subordinate.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF JOHN

The Gospel according to John is a grand reservoir of striking Christological moments, which seem absent from the synoptic gospels. Although this statement may not do full justice to the high Christology of Matthew, Mark and Luke, these other gospels lack sayings such as Jesus' claim ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἓν ἐσμεν (10:30) and Thomas' climactic confession ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου (20:28). But similar to the synoptic gospels, the purpose of the book is to reveal the *true* identity of Jesus of Nazareth. This is seen from the "Beloved Disciple's"²²⁰ own pen: "But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name" (20:31). Although the two previous statements hold Jesus in a vividly high position, contrasting sayings like ὁ πατήρ μείζων μου ἐστίν contribute to a multifaceted view of Jesus' relation to the Father. It is, therefore, self-evident how John views the position of Jesus because of such tensions.

The goal of this chapter is to bring together various aspects of John's gospel in order to paint a clearer picture of Jesus according to how the "Beloved Disciple" wished for him to be seen. This will encompass a twofold analysis of the text attempting to reveal how the use of oneness plays a crucial role in the development of John's Christology. First, the topic of Christology will be discussed focusing exclusively on the oneness language used by John. This chapter will explore three different pericopes including the prologue (1:1-18), Jesus' discourse

²²⁰ I am in no way insinuating that the beloved disciple is or is not the author of the Gospel of John. This title is used primarily because the text itself proclaims the unknown disciple as the author (21:24). The aim of this chapter is not to settle or discuss in any way the authorship or redaction history of the document. That being said, the approach to the gospel will be from a narrative critical perspective dealing solely with the gospel in its final form.

on his relation to the Father (5:19-47) and Jesus' claim that he and the Father are one (10:30). The Second part of the discussion will focus on the ἐγὼ εἰμι sayings in John and the significance they have with relation to the oneness motif.

4.1 The Relationship of the Father and the Son: The Importance of ONE

The importance of Deutero-Isaiah (Isaiah 40-55) and the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4) will play a crucial role in understanding how John is relating the Son to the Father. Jesus' claims to being intrinsic to God hinge on his use of this "oneness" language, which is particular to God in the Hebrew Bible. This section, however, will not focus exclusively on the mentioning of "one," but it will also consist of examining the language of mutual indwelling as well as the use of the copula linking God and Jesus together.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος: The Connection of ὁ λόγος with ὁ θεός (John 1:1-18)

The prologue is a crucial point in the Gospel of John because it lies at the forefront of his message of who Jesus Christ is.²²¹ It is at this time that the reader is ushered into proper understanding of who Jesus is and of what is to follow in the proceeding chapters. This introduction has a similar function as that of Mark's gospel: both begin with an ἀρχή followed by a glimpse of the true nature of Jesus.²²² From this framework, the reader will henceforth be able to understand the true significance of the person of Jesus.

The striking hymn-like structure sets the introduction of John apart from the rest of the gospels. Moloney points out the chiastic structure of the prologue, which can be paralleled to

²²¹ As is claimed by Moloney (1998, 34), "The first page of the Fourth Gospel is one of the most dense passages in the New Testament, a synthesis of the author's christology and theology."

²²² As Barrett (1978, 149) also writes, "Each of the evangelists begins his work by tracing back the activity of Jesus to its origin (ἀρχή)... John alone, however gives the narrative about Jesus an absolute theological framework, and, though he alludes to the starting-points used by Mark (vv. 6-8, 15) and by Matthew and Luke..., he must have regarded them as inadequate, and as possibly misleading." Barrett soon after also points out that "John's use of a cosmogony as a background for his message of salvation is paralleled in other Hellenistic literature, e.g. the *Hermetica*..., but his treatment of the theme is unique, not least in its combination of the characteristics of the Hellenistic or gnostic revelatory discourse... and of Targumic exposition."

various Psalms and other Semitic poetry that execute similar forms.²²³ Brown claims this hymnic structure is similar to Psalm 128, but, instead of the history of Israel being depicted, John's use of the hymn is a reflection of the history of salvation.²²⁴ Although the prologue has a rhythmic and poetic character to it,²²⁵ Lincoln believes that the present form of the prologue is not the original hymn, but it is an adaptation of "an exalted prose piece, celebrating Christ as Logos, that this original composition was influenced by the variegated Jewish Wisdom tradition."²²⁶ Wisdom plays a crucial role in this discussion because of the parallels that are present between the Logos and Sophia.²²⁷

The main focus of the prologue will be concerning vv. 1-2 predominately due to the emphasis on the copula relating the Word and God in connection with one another. First, an examination of the Greek text is crucial for understanding this section because the English translation is limited in its capacities to properly reveal what is occurring in the grammar: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.²²⁸ This section of John has caused a lot of discussion because of its parallels and

²²³ Moloney (1998, 34) who claims, "This Christian hymn... may follow some of the well-established patterns of biblical poetry, especially the use of parallelism."

²²⁴ Brown 1964, 23-24

²²⁵ cf. Craig Keener's two-volume commentary for a fuller description of the chiasmic structure he argues is present in the prologue. Keener 2003, 364-365.

²²⁶ Lincoln 2005, 93. Contra Lincoln, cf. Morris (1995, 63), "It is more likely that it [the prologue] was written for this place, for it accords so well with what follows. These verses bring before us some of the great thoughts that will be developed as the narrative unfolds."

²²⁷ For a more in-depth study, cf. Dodd 1953, 263-285. Cf. also Bultmann (1971, 22), "The figure of Wisdom, which is found in Judaism and also in the O.T. itself, does seem to be related to the Logos-figure in the Johannine Prologue. She is spoken of in mythological language as a divine figure, and has a myth, of which tradition has preserved at least fragments. She is pre-existent, and is God's partner at creation. She seeks a dwelling on earth among men, but is rejected: she comes to her own possession, but her own do not accept her. So she returns to the heavenly world, and sojourns there, hidden. She is indeed sought at the present time, but no one finds the way to her. She reveals herself only to individual religious men, and makes them friends of God and prophets. It is in accordance with the independence of this figure that she is simply designated "Wisdom". There can be no doubt, in fact, that a connection exists between the Judaic Wisdom myth and the Johannine Prologue."

²²⁸ The bolding and underlining provided for the discussion that follows.

difficulties pertaining to various other parts of scripture. The Wisdom tradition plays a key role in understanding what is occurring in this passage.

First, the ἀρχή is a fitting place to begin the discussion. Here, ἀρχή appears twice in reference to ὁ λόγος in a unique way. In v. 1, the ἀρχῇ has commonly been paralleled to Genesis 1:1,²²⁹ but Brown takes this further to show a division between the Logos and the Sophia. He takes the ἐν ἀρχῇ in a qualitative sense rather than temporally.²³⁰ Here, John is stressing the time prior to creation and is designating the λόγος' existence prior to the start of time.²³¹ This should be seen in contrast to Proverbs 8:22 pertaining to the Wisdom tradition: κύριος ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ. In proverbs, the Lord ἔκτισέν Wisdom at the ἀρχή, not before. With respect to John's perspective, ὁ λόγος ἦν, and there is no indication that it was created. Keener claims "the verb [ἦν] suggests a preexistence of greater magnitude than that of Wisdom/Torah in most Jewish texts."²³² In vv. 1-2, the copula ἦν plays a very important role in understanding the relationships that are being established in addition to the understanding of when the λόγος was.

The next section, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, relies heavily on the preposition for understanding the dynamics present. One way to translate this sentence is: The Logos was beside/with [the] God.²³³ The problem here mainly rests upon the preposition πρὸς, which is taking the accusative. Typically, the preposition plus the accusative indicates motion towards something (towards or to God).²³⁴ In Koine, this particular preposition can function semantically as παρά plus the dative, "with, near, beside," and this can also be attested in the Wisdom

²²⁹ For example: Brown 1964, 4; Keener 2003, 365; Lincoln 2005, 94; Schnackenburg 1980, 232.

²³⁰ Brown 1964, 4. Moloney (1998, 35) claims, "The first words of the Prologue... establish a parallel between the opening of the Gospel and the biblical account of the beginnings of the human story in Gen 1:1."

²³¹ John makes this even more explicit when Jesus has his final prayer with the Disciples. Here, Jesus references his preexistence multiple times: 17:5, 24

²³² Keener 2003, 369.

²³³ [the] is in brackets to show that the article is present in the Greek as can be seen above. This is important for the discussion of the third use of the copula in v. 2.

²³⁴ Hillard & North 2003, 237.

tradition with relation to God (Prov. 8.30 LXX).²³⁵ In summation, the preposition should be taken as “with” to indicate the relation the Logos had with God. Thus, so far, the text should be rendered “the Logos was in the beginning, and the Logos was with God.”

The difficult phrase of v. 1 is what follows: καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. The basic problem here lies in the fact that the λόγος is linked by the copula with θεός indicating a direct connection between the Word and God. The problem, though, is that θεός is anarthrous. This makes analyzing the sentence difficult because it is unclear whether θεός should be taken as a definite or qualitatively; the connotations vary significantly: if one takes θεός as definite, then one is claiming the Logos *is* the one God of Israel; if one takes θεός qualitatively, then it can be argued that it means the Logos is Divine.²³⁶ One could also take θεός as an indefinite, but that would indicate the Logos was “a god,” which would support polytheism, and that is certainly not what John desires to do.

There is great division around this topic, which complicates the implications of the Christology present in v. 1. To begin, it should be established that θεός is an anarthrous preverbal predicate nominative, which means the noun is without the article and is the object of the copula, but the noun comes before the linking verb. Daniel Wallace believes θεός here should not be taken as a definite. Instead, he holds that θεός should be taken qualitatively implying the λόγος should not be seen as “the God” or “a God,” but, rather, it partook of God’s godness.²³⁷ He also holds that it should be taken as qualitative because “the largest proportion of preverbal

²³⁵ Lincoln 2005, 97.

²³⁶ This could be considered unlikely because there is a separate word for divine: τὸ θεῖον. Although this is true, the author could still potentially be using θεός in this way. According to Moloney (1998, 35), “The Greek sentence (*kai theos en ho logos*) places the complement (*theos*: God) before the verb “to be” and does not give it an article. It is extremely difficult to catch this nuance in English, but the author avoids saying that the Word and God were one and the same thing. The translation “what God was the Word also was” indicates that the Word and God retain their uniqueness, despite the oneness that flows from their intimacy.”

²³⁷ Wallace 2000, 119-120.

anarthrous predicate nominatives fall into this category.”²³⁸ Hence, he argues that the sense of the prologue focuses on both the λόγος’ divine nature and its humanity (from v. 14). In summation, Wallace holds “such an option does not at all impugn the deity of Christ. Rather, it stresses that, although the person of Christ is not the person of the Father, their *essence* is identical... In other words, he shared the *essence* of the Father, though they differed in person.”²³⁹ Based on the grammar and theological push of the qualitative interpretation of θεός, he holds this view.

Wallace makes a strong argument, but there are other scholars who argue differing positions that are equally convincing. Keener argues that the θεός cannot just be taken in a sense of the weaker connotation of “divine” distinct from the character of the Father’s deity. He argues, based on the statistics of anarthrous nouns present in the New Testament in similar circumstances, that it is expected that the predicate nominative here would be anarthrous regardless of John’s argument.²⁴⁰ This can be furthered by Herbert Smyth’s discussion on articles in his *Greek Grammar*: “A predicate noun has no article, and is thus distinguished from the subject.”²⁴¹ It is more logical, based on Smyth, that θεός should be anarthrous in order that the λόγος can be affirmed as the subject.²⁴² This is also crucial because of the chiasmic construction in the text; the λόγος’ placement in each clause varies due to this construction, so it makes sense that the article is placed with the noun for clarity.

Raymond Brown complicates the issue by paralleling this to the “I Am” statements present in John. There, the predicates are not without the article, which could make this argument

²³⁸ Wallace 2000, 120.

²³⁹ Wallace 2000, 120.

²⁴⁰ Keener 2003, 373.

²⁴¹ Smyth 1920, 292 §1150.

²⁴² Thus, it is expected that the article is absent. It is based on context that determines the force of the noun rather than based purely on grammar. Those who argue for a qualitative interpretation also agree with this point, so it does not differentiate the two positions.

harder to sell,²⁴³ but, in comparison, the senses are very different. The “I Am” statements *should* have the definite article because Jesus is claiming to be the light of the world, the resurrection and the life, the bread of life. In these statements, Jesus makes definite claims strengthening his role as *the* Giver of Life. In this particular circumstance, John is showing the relation between the λόγος and θεός as connected with one another and chose to use the article with λόγος to show which is the subject. The trend of the author here has been to have this chiasmic feel to the prologue varying the placement of the λόγος in the sentence. In order that sense is not lost, the article is making clear the λόγος is remaining the subject. In addition, Keener astutely points out that John is clearly not shy of equating Jesus with ὁ θεός because this is done in Thomas’ climatic exclamation ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου (20:28).²⁴⁴ Although Wallace argues his point well and his view on the connection between the λόγος and θεός is correct to an extent, it still minimizes the main thrust of the Gospel that there is a unique relationship between the Father and the Son.²⁴⁵ The talk of sharing the same *essence* seems to miss the full effect of what is occurring in the passage. This is another aspect of a New Testament author showing that Jesus/the λόγος is God, but it is done in such a way that reveals Jesus is not usurping the Father. Jesus is “fully deity but not the Father,”²⁴⁶ is a good summation of what is being said in the prologue.

²⁴³ Brown 1954, 5.

²⁴⁴ Keener 2003, 373. – Although it should be noted that ‘my God’ is not the same as saying ‘is God.’ It still seems probable that the sense is still retained by calling someone their ‘God’ especially considering the speaker’s monotheistic background. To call another ‘my God’ other than YHWH would be blasphemous.

²⁴⁵ It is not to be assumed that Jesus and God are one in the sense that the Son is the Father. John strives throughout to make it clear that there is distinction between the two as well as a connection. There is a thin line that must be tread when discussing this topic because Wallace astutely points out that Jesus is sharing in the essence of God, but it also seems probable that John is making a strong connection between Jesus and God early in the narrative. This is shown in saying such as ‘The Father and I are one’ in 10:30 as well as all the mutual indwelling language as well as phrases such as in 5:17 revealing Jesus as participating in the divine prerogative.

²⁴⁶ Keener 2003, 374.

One final aspect of the prologue that should be analyzed is v. 14 due to its extreme importance for understanding other facets of the divine identity. The text reads as follows: Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. Again, there is a seemingly confusing occurrence of the λόγος being joined with another anarthrous noun: σὰρξ. In this instance, Wallace is correct when he claims σὰρξ is a qualitative predicate nominative. The sense of the sentence is to capture the thought that the λόγος took on humanity.²⁴⁷ Lincoln also aids in the understanding of the use of σὰρξ by explaining that the word does not always have the negative connotations as it sometimes does in the Pauline corpus.²⁴⁸ This phenomenon of the λόγος taking on σὰρξ can be paralleled to Philippians 2:6-7 where Jesus took on human-likeness: ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι ἐρέθεις ὡς ἄνθρωπος. This also can be used to bring clarity to John 14:28: ὁ πατὴρ μείζων μου ἐστίν. All of these passages are difficult to assess because they seem to be saying Jesus is in a lesser status than the Father. He was in the μορφῇ of God, but he took on the μορφὴν of a slave, becoming similar to a man. All in all, there is no wonder why 14:28 became problematic. The resolution to this partially revolves around Wallace's interpretation above. Jesus/λόγος should be seen as one with the Father, but there seems to still be a division.²⁴⁹ Here, σὰρξ is a qualitative predicate nominative unlike θεός above.

²⁴⁷ Wallace 2000, 118.

²⁴⁸ Lincoln 2005, 104.

²⁴⁹ This will be made clearer in the discussion on the *Shema*. Here, though Wallace's logic seems more appropriate since the λόγος took on σὰρξ. Here, σὰρξ should be seen as qualitative similar to how Wallace interpreted θεός above as a predicate adjective above. I argue that John wants to show a closer connection between the Father and the Son by using θεός. This is problematic because it is difficult to describe what John is attempting to do here in the prologue. If θεός is taken qualitatively, claiming the λόγος is "divine" it could lead to the implication that it is a second god (if the word is seen as equal to God) or as a demi-god or lesser divine being (if one takes the λόγος as less than God). If one interprets the passage as the λόγος was God, then the division/separation between the Father and λόγος is lost. This section of John is difficult to assess, and I would like to argue that both interpretations are correct in the sense that they portray what John is trying to show. Jesus, as the λόγος, is both divine and one with

This is a typical way of New Testament authors expressing Jesus' uniqueness while still expressing him to be intrinsic to God's own identity. 14:28 must be seen also in light of 13:16 where Jesus claims the sender is not greater than the one who was sent. All of this is pointing to strengthen the morale of the Disciples as Lincoln points out: "Nor is its primary point to make a statement about the incarnate Son's subordinate status in relation to the Father, though this is implied, since Jesus has already said that the one who is sent is not greater than the one who has sent him (13.16)... Its role, rather, is in being part of the reason why the disciples should rejoice."²⁵⁰ That being said, the λόγος becoming σάρξ should not lead one to believe the subordination of the Son; it is rather another facet of understanding the identity of who Jesus is: God's agent who is still God, but has humanity incorporated into his own identity.

The Son as Being Dependent on the Father (John 5:19-47)

This next body of scripture plays a significant role in the development of understanding how exactly the Father and the Son relate to one another. This theme of v. 19 is a reoccurring thought, which runs throughout the gospel: "Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise." The background to this saying is also crucial for understanding the relationship between Jesus and God. In the previous pericope, Jesus heals a paralyzed man on the Sabbath, and his rationale for doing so was: ὁ πατήρ μου ἕως ἄρτι ἐργάζεται καὶ γὰρ ἐργάζομαι (5:17). From that point on, the Jews sought to kill him because he made himself equal to God (ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ). Since John portrays Jesus as doing what God alone does (work on the Sabbath),

God (which is expressed later in the Gospel), yet still separate and he does not usurp God. In order to fully understand the complexities of Jesus' unique relationship with the Father, the composite picture presented in the Gospel is necessary to clear up the confusion present in the prologue.

²⁵⁰ Lincoln 2005, 398.

Jesus is shown to be incorporated into the divine prerogative; he is doing such things that only God is supposed to do.

The debate here is concerning the height of Jesus' rank in relation to the one, true God of Israel. The beginning of this discussion should start with 5:17 about what it meant for God to continue to work on the Sabbath. There was a belief at that time that God must keep active to sustain his creation as the giver of life, or else the world would collapse.²⁵¹ With this in mind, it could be argued that Jesus, by working on the Sabbath like God, is infringing on the divine prerogative. Keener claims Jesus is not attempting to claim equal rank with the Father; Jesus acts purely with obedience on the basis on the authority that has been given to him.²⁵² Morris takes this further stating, "the verse contains the thought of subordination, for the Son is pictured as completely obedient to the Father. But there is also a mighty claim, for the Son does 'whatever the Father does.'"²⁵³ Lincoln also expounds more on this saying in v. 19 claiming the subordination of the Son is assumed in the passage, but there is also a grander emphasis on the unity of the actions of the Father and Son.²⁵⁴ This line of thought seems to hold more to John's general argument about who Jesus is. He is one with the Father and acts accordingly so. Morris argues correctly that "whatever the Father does" is a "mighty claim" by the Son because it further reveals the interconnected nature of the Father and Son. The oneness of Second Isaiah and the *Shema* are coming to fruition as the narrative progresses. This passage anticipates so much farther ahead than what one might realize; this section points directly to the raising of Lazarus.

²⁵¹ Lincoln 2005, 197.

²⁵² Keener 2003, 648.

²⁵³ Morris 1995, 277.

²⁵⁴ Lincoln 2005, 202. I do not wish, though, to push the subordination language. Yes, it feels as if Jesus is being subordinated to the Father, but a more convoluted move is occurring, which will be explained further in this section.

It is only through the lenses of the “awakening” of Lazarus that one can appreciate the full beauty of the masterpiece John has created starting in chapter 5. John allows the reader a glimpse of what Jesus is to reveal himself to be when he brings his friend back to the world of the living.²⁵⁵ Although Martha’s extremely high Christological exclamation is crucial, the interconnected traits of this passage serve as a subtle, yet intriguing insight of who Jesus is in relation to the Father. Here, as Keener brilliantly shows, when Jesus calls forth in a loud φωνή to raise Lazarus from the grave, the reader is most assuredly to have in mind 10:3 with the discussion of the sheep knowing their master’s φωνή.²⁵⁶ Although this observation is paramount for understanding the Christological claims of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the roots of this saying reflects all the way back from chapter 5. Vv. 25 and 28 use φωνή in a like manner discussing the raising of the dead by the φωνή of the Son of God. In connection with 5:19, Jesus cannot act on his own “for whatever the Father does, the Son likewise does” and he is “able to do nothing by himself, only what he sees the Father doing.” By Jesus working on the Sabbath in chapter 5, he has taken on the divine prerogative to serve his role as the giver of life. This is seen later in chapter 6 at the feeding of the five thousand. There, Jesus is paralleled with God as both are viewed as being givers of life. In the discourse of Jesus as the “Bread of Life” (6:22-59), the Father is described as the one “who gives you the true bread from heaven” making him the giver of life. But in the following verse, the bread of God is what was sent to give life to the world. Jesus then has a climactic “I Am” statement as the Bread of Life, which is what provides life for the world. This interconnective language allows Jesus to be seen as one with God by having him act through the divine prerogative as the giver of life, which is the role he was meant to take. As the Father acted in giving bread to the Israelites, so here Jesus provides bread for the five-

²⁵⁵ And this is brought to final fruition with the raising of Jesus at the end of the gospel. Chapter 5 points forward to not only the raising of Lazarus, but also to Jesus. The three passages help illuminate each other.

²⁵⁶ Keener 2003, 849.

thousand. Jesus' feeding exemplifies that he does only that which he has seen the Father do (5:19).²⁵⁷ This comes to fruition when he literally gives life to Lazarus, and it becomes even more clear when Caiaphas' prophecy comes true when Jesus dies on behalf of the nation to impart life. Jesus and the Father are two "persons" who are in union with one another, so when Jesus claims he cannot act outside of the will of the Father, this is not a subordination, but, in fact, it is a heightening showing that Jesus is unable to act outside of his divine identity because he is intrinsic with God the Father.

The *Shema* in John: ἐγὼ καὶ πατὴρ ἓν ἐσμεν (John 10:30)

The *Shema* was mentioned previously at the beginning of this chapter, and it will now be discussed in reference to John 10:30. The *Shema* is one of Israel's most striking monotheistic claims, and it appears in many places within the New Testament, though, not always blatantly: 1 Corinthians 8:6; Mark 2:7, 10:18 and 12:29; and now in John 10:30. It is no wonder that the New Testament authors latched onto some of the most monotheistic claims in Judaism and reworked them to incorporate Jesus because they ardently desired to preserve their belief in one God. This has posed a problem, however, to devout Jews and Muslims who reject Christianity due to their devotion to Jesus.²⁵⁸ The topic concerning Jesus' relation to the Father is an ancient discussion, which still rages on today, and it is one of great importance to the Christian faith. So here, the discussion of the *Shema* in John will commence to see if some light might be shed on Jesus' connection with the Father in the evangelist's eyes.

The text of John 10:30 simply reads ἐγὼ καὶ πατὴρ ἓν ἐσμεν: "I and the Father are one." This is obviously not a direct quotation of the LXX reading of Deut. 6:4: Ἄκουε, Ἰσραὴλ· κύριος

²⁵⁷ In a sense, this can also be seen as a way of showing the preexistence of Jesus, which he discusses explicitly in chapter 17 in his final prayer to the disciples. There, he alludes to going back to the glory that he had with God before creation. During that time, before Jesus was sent, he saw the Father provide bread in the desert, so Jesus takes up the same action in chapter 6.

²⁵⁸ Hurtado 2005, 31.

ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν. This is a common occurrence in the New Testament of the *Shema* where the passage is not quoted in its entirety, but is implied. Of the passages listed above, only Mark 12:20 quotes the Deuteronomy 6:4,5 directly.²⁵⁹ Richard Bauckham purports this is common within Judaism. To claim God is one is an abbreviation of Deuteronomy 6:4; it is a monotheistic claim nonetheless.²⁶⁰ So, here, the *Shema* is being referenced in a shocking way, incorporating Jesus into the oneness of God. Hurtado astutely brings to mind a complication in this line of thought. He shows that the noun used in 10:30 for “one” is ἓν, which is neuter. The *Shema* and parallels to it in the New Testament use the masculine form εἷς.²⁶¹ With that said, this could make the incorporation of Jesus into the Divine identity lessened since it is not a direct parallel to the *Shema* or the abbreviated version. Bauckham makes a convincing argument to show that the evangelist still holds Deuteronomy 6:4 in mind. The use of the neuter noun is an adaptation necessary of the language because Jesus is not claiming that he and the Father are one, single person, but united they are *one* God.²⁶² Hurtado and Bauckham both agree that in this instance, the author of John is trying to express that Jesus is not usurping God in any form.²⁶³

This is common of all New Testament writers when speaking of the “divinity” of Jesus; they do not wish to have the Father overthrown from his authoritative status. He is still the one God of Israel. This is why subordination language like ὁ πατὴρ μείζων μου ἐστίν exists in the text.²⁶⁴ Indeed, the subordination and exaltation language of New Testament writers are arguably just different sides of the same coin. John desire to tell the story of Jesus Christ as part of the

²⁵⁹ The Synoptic Gospels quote it directly as well, but they leave off Deuteronomy 6:4. They do not state that God is one. This is due to a special emphasis Mark is making. Again, cf. the work by Joel Marcus above for the full argument.

²⁶⁰ Bauckham 2008, 96.

²⁶¹ Hurtado 2003, 374.

²⁶² Bauckham 2008, 104.

²⁶³ Hurtado 2003, 374: “...the author of John appears to have no intent to replace God with Jesus, or to confuse the two.” Bauckham 2008, 106: “Their unity does not erase their difference, but differentiates them in an inseparable relationship.”

²⁶⁴ It should be noted that some scholars do not believe this passage is subordinating Jesus. Cf. Lincoln 2005, 398.

unique divine identity, but he is unwilling to compromise his monotheistic beliefs. That being the case, John must show an interdependent relationship between the Father and the Son for they together are not separate gods. This is shown throughout John's μένω²⁶⁵ language and the discussion of Jesus and the Father being in one another throughout the gospel:

1. ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατήρ καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ (10:38)
2. ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐστίν... ὁ δὲ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοὶ μένων ποιεῖ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ. πιστεύετε μοι ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοὶ (14:10-11)
3. ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ μου καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν (14:20)
4. μένατε ἐν ἐμοί, καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν (15:4)
5. ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσιν, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ γὰρ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ᾧσιν, ἵνα ὁ κόσμος πιστεύῃ ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας. καὶ γὰρ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, ἵνα ᾧσιν ἐν καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἐν· ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ ἐν ἐμοί (17:21-23)

Leon Morris also agrees that the use of the neuter is to show a unity between the Father and the Son in order to show a connection between them.²⁶⁶ This is shown vigorously by the reaction of “the Jews” who witness the claim. In v. 31, they pick up stone in order to kill Jesus showing they interpreted his saying with the Johannine notion that God and Jesus are One.²⁶⁷

Craig Keener also has intriguing insights concerning 10:30. He also agrees with Bauckham that the *Shema* is being referenced in this section, but then furthers this thought claiming Jesus defines the relationship in terms of his sonship (10:36). Keener progresses this further by claiming “the informed reader understands that he [Jesus] is maintaining a level of ambiguity until the appropriate time for his hour of revelation and lifting up (1:1, 18; 8:28).”²⁶⁸ This surely can be tied to the Messianic Secret that is present in Mark’s gospel, but it functions differently. Mark’s version of the revelation of Jesus has the disciples and most everyone bumbling about striving to understand the identity of Jesus, yet they fail to do so until his glorification. The Messianic Secret does play out in a similar way in John, but the evangelist

²⁶⁵ This word is used for the “indwelling” and “remaining” language present in John.

²⁶⁶ Morris 1995, 464, 465.

²⁶⁷ Lincoln 2005, 306. Note that the language of blasphemy occurs only here in John’s gospel. This is similar to Mark 2:1-12 where the question of blasphemy also comes up when the *Shema* is evoked.

²⁶⁸ Keener 2003, 826.

chose to have Jesus proclaim many high Christological claims like the “I Am” statements, the mutual indwelling verses, and Jesus being incorporated into the divine prerogative.²⁶⁹ Here, in 10:30, Jesus is essentially calling upon the divine identity by relating himself to God since, “in this context, Jesus’ unity with the Father... reaffirms his divinity.”²⁷⁰

4.2 Ἐγὼ Εἰμι the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd... God?

Before an evaluation of the divine claims can be properly understood, an examination of the monotheism lurking behind the tradition must first be treated, which has been briefly covered. Christianity did not arise out of nothing; the religion is deeply rooted within Judaism. From early on, it is true, “Christians maintain that there was divine revelation about the identity of Jesus, but that does not mean that believers understood the revelation completely or at once.”²⁷¹ The understanding of Jesus’ unique relationship with the father was an evolution in the thought of early Christians. That being said, monotheism is a crucial aspect of Judaism that must be understood before the “I Am” statements can be properly assessed. Therefore, it is imperative to keep in mind the importance that Deutero-Isaiah plays in John.

The Importance of Ἐγὼ Εἰμι

A brief preface to this section is appropriate to establish how Hebrew Bible authors executed the phrase ἐγὼ εἰμι in order to fully understand the significance on John’s use of the statement. The phrase is not used frequently in the Old Testament only occurring seven times throughout the entire corpus. The phrase appears to be a translation of the Hebrew יהוה functioning as the name of God.²⁷² This derivation from the Hebrew Bible is interesting because of the significance of what the phrase represents, but it is also intriguing that John numerically

²⁶⁹ It should be noted that the other gospels do have some of these same elements in them (including Mark), but they are to a much lesser degree than they are in John.

²⁷⁰ Keener 2003, 825.

²⁷¹ Brown 1994, 5.

²⁷² Hurtado 2003, 371.

used the ἐγὼ εἰμι statements as many times in his gospel as are present in the Old Testament: based on the MT the phrase is seen in Deut. 32:39; Is. 41:4; 43:10,13; 46:4; 48:12; 52:6, and emphatically repeated twice in Is. 43:25; 51:12. Based on the LXX the phrase is seen three times in Deut. 32:39; Is. 41:4; 43:10 and also emphatically repeated twice in Is. 43:25; 45:18; 46:4; 51:12.²⁷³ John also follows this similar pattern as the MT by having the phrase used five times normally (4:26; 6:20; 8:24, 26, 58; 13:19) and then emphatically twice (18:5,6,8).²⁷⁴

The importance of the phrase ἐγὼ εἰμι can have connotations signifying more than just a simple affirmation; it is a parallel to the divine name. The absolute phrase used in the gospels “designat[es] Jesus with the same special referential formula that is used in the Greek Old Testament for God’s own self-declaration.”²⁷⁵ John uses ἐγὼ εἰμι in Jesus’ mouth in two ways: with a predicate where Jesus is claiming to be something (i.e. the light of the world, the bread of life, etc.) or in an unpredicated, or absolute, way such as in 8:58: ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί. This topic has been heavily explored and examined by various scholars and the implications it has on the Christology of the gospel. What is surprising about the gospel is how other characters in the narrative besides Jesus use ἐγὼ εἰμι. This less explored topic is of equal value for examining how Jesus used the phrase because it sheds light on how John is executing the phrase. For Jesus, it is commonly an affirmation of his being the giver of life (ἐγὼ εἰμι the Bread of Life, Living Water, the Good Shepherd, etc.) and his connection with the divine prerogative. But when characters such as John the Witness,²⁷⁶ the man born blind and

²⁷³ Bauckham 2007, 247.

²⁷⁴ Bauckham 2007, 247. This is an intriguing conjecture made by Bauckham, but one must also keep in mind that this could be totally coincidental since the saying in John and those in the MT/LXX are not precisely parallel. Regardless, the number seven seemingly does play a role in the gospel: the seven signs.

²⁷⁵ Hurtado 2003, 371

²⁷⁶ Commonly known as John the Baptist. Since the phrase is never used in the gospel, I wish to refrain from calling him “the Baptist.” I believe it is more accurate to call him “the Witness” because that is his primary function in the gospel.

Pilate use the phrase, one must wonder if John had a reason for putting the divine name in their mouths and what significance it plays in relation to Jesus' use.

The first occurrence of ἐγὼ εἰμι does not come from the lips of Jesus, but from the one who is “not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal” (1:27b). In this section of John (1:19-28) “the Jews” approach John attempting to establish who he is by asking σὺ τίς εἶ; Although there is no mention of the Messiah, John responds emphatically ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ὁ χριστός (v. 20). Rudolf Schnackenburg claims the time was ripe with Messianic movements, and so the claim is not that bizarre to come from John's mouth because the people were most likely imploring about his political allegiances.²⁷⁷ Aside from the historical context, the ἐγὼ εἰμι appears with οὐκ showing a negation of who John is. This is striking because the phrase is commonly used as an affirmation of who someone is (such as Jesus walking on Water: I Am; I Am the Bread of Life, etc.).²⁷⁸ Brooke Westcott shows that ἐγὼ appears throughout this section for emphasis (vv. 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 33, 34).²⁷⁹ Accordingly, Leon Morris asserts this repetition of the emphatic ἐγὼ is done in order to further establish John the Witness in his subordinate role.²⁸⁰ That being said, the ἐγὼ εἰμι here is a self declaration. The phrase's purpose is to show that John is acknowledging himself as the Witness to the Christ and that he himself is not the one they seek.

The second ἐγὼ εἰμι from another's mouth is in chapter 9 concerning the man born blind who has his sight restored to him by Jesus. V. 9 captures the sense of the passage well: ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν, ἄλλοι ἔλεγον· οὐχί, ἀλλὰ ὅμοιος αὐτῷ ἐστιν. ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι.

²⁷⁷ Schnackenburg 1968, 288.

²⁷⁸ Moloney (1998, 52) writes, “The Baptist's vigorous denial of this (v. 21: *ouk eimi*) is remote preparation for Jesus, who alone can claim “I am he” (*ego eimi*).”

²⁷⁹ Westcott 1908, 34.

²⁸⁰ Morris 1995, 116. So similarly Barrett (1978, 172) claims, “The sending of messengers, and the form of this negative statement, suggest that the possibility had been considered, perhaps even urged, that John was the Messiah. This John denies categorically. Possibly the ἐγὼ is emphatic (and so throughout the narrative): *I am not the Christ* – but there is a Christ at hand.” Also, Bultmann 1971, 88.

This is a common theme in relation to Jesus, “who is this?”²⁸¹ Here, though, Jesus is not the focus of the questioning, but the man who was restored is. The imperfect verbs here are iterative emphasizing the discussion occurred for an extended period of time. Raymond Brown takes the ἐγὼ εἰμι in this verse as a “purely secular use of the phrase”²⁸² implying he holds no real value to the phrase. Leon Morris also claims that divine overtones are not always in mind when the phrase is used as is seen here.²⁸³ It is true, the divine overtones are not present in this passage, but it is too simplistic to say the phrase has no significance. The ingressive imperfects show an extended duration of this conversation debating the discussion concerning this man’s identity. Identity is a major theme in John, specifically pertaining to *who* Jesus is. Here, the debate is about who this man is.²⁸⁴ It is no mere coincidence that the man affirms himself with ἐγὼ εἰμι. Correctly, Morris establishes this is not an appeal to the divine name, but Brown unduly belittles the significance of certain repetitions of words and phrases in the gospel. The reader is supposed to see this ἐγὼ εἰμι statement as a declarative sentence establishing the man’s identity, which sheds light on other uses of the phrase when they come from Jesus.

The final use of the phrase comes out of an unlikely mouth: that of Pilate.²⁸⁵ In 18:28-38 Pilate interrogates Jesus concerning who he is. When Jesus is asked if he is the King of the Jews, he responds, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” (18:34). Pilate

²⁸¹ As was also the case previously concerning who John was. Identity plays a crucial role in John’s gospel.

²⁸² Brown 1964, 373. So also claims Barrett (1978, 359), “I am he, the man you speak of. ἐγὼ εἰμι is used in the same way in 4:26. This simple use of the words warns the reader against assuming that ἐγὼ εἰμι was necessarily to John a religious formula. At this point he is writing simple narrative.”

²⁸³ Morris 1995, 429.

²⁸⁴ So also Moloney (1998, 292) makes a connection between Jesus and the man, “In a way similar to Jesus’ own self-identification (cf. 4:26; 6:20; 8:58), the cured man speaks for himself: “I am the man” (v. 9b: *ego eimi*).” The divine name does not necessarily always need to be called to mind when this phrase appears, even when Jesus says it. But, the phrases are important because they serve as a reminder of the importance of identity in the gospel.

²⁸⁵ It should also be noted that Peter also makes a similar “I Am” statement prior to this in 18:17, 25, though, only the words οὐκ εἰμι are present. This also is a proclamation concerning identity, but it will not be discussed fully in this section because the accompanying ἐγὼ is not present in the text. It is still a striking claim made by Peter since he is denying his true identity to save his own life while Jesus, who upholds his identity, will die for the sake of the nation.

responds, μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι; Again, the ἐγὼ εἰμι surfaces as a declaration of identification. The μήτι here is simply an interrogative particle,²⁸⁶ which supposes an answer in the negative. Morris says the combination of μήτι with ἐγὼ serves as a strengthening of the negative answer. Pilate is *of course* not a Jew!²⁸⁷ Lincoln takes an intriguing position with this exclamation made by Pilate. He sees this saying as ironic because the verse expects a negative answer with the μήτι establishing Pilate as distant from the Jews. Where the irony lies, though, is in the fact that since the statement “the Jews” has been used throughout the gospel as a slanderous term of those who rejected Jesus, Lincoln reads here instead, “I do not belong to the world that rejects you, do I?”²⁸⁸ The reader is supposed to think that, indeed, Pilate has in fact rejected Jesus despite the use of μήτι. Here again, though, there is no divine identity implications with the ἐγὼ εἰμι, but it is used as an emphatic affirmation of someone’s identity. Pilate is making clear he is not affiliated with the Jewish community, but he is also ironically aligning himself with those who have rejected him as the Christ.

These three examples of the use of ἐγὼ εἰμι will now be used to shed light on the grander picture of Jesus and how these can be used to broaden the view of Jesus’ own “I Am” statements. The seven predicated ἐγὼ εἰμι statements of Jesus are thus:²⁸⁹

ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς/I Am the bread of Life (6:35,41,48)
ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου/I Am the Light of the World (8:12; cf. 9:5)
ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ θύρα τῶν προβάτων/I Am the Sheep Gate (10:7,9)
ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός/I Am the Good Shepherd (10:11,14)
ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ/I Am the Resurrection and the Life (14:6)
ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ/ I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life (14:6)
Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή/ I Am the True Vine (15:1)

These seven sayings are used by Jesus to affirm who he is. All of them reveal Jesus as the “Giver of Life,” which is usually how God the Father is described. This can be seen in the feeding of the

²⁸⁶ cf. Gingrich 1983, 128 for further explanation.

²⁸⁷ Morris 1995, 680.

²⁸⁸ Lincoln 2005, 461.

²⁸⁹ For a more thorough examination of the “I Am” statements (predicated and absolute), cf. Ball 1996, 162-176.

five thousand (6:1-15). Jesus is the one who provided the sustenance for the people. Following soon after, Jesus makes the claim ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς to a group of Jews questioning him. They demand a sign from him because their “ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness” (6:31) as a sign that Moses was from God. Jesus reverses this and exclaims the manna came not from Moses, but from the Father. As the Father gave bread, so Jesus gives bread that will “give life to the world” (6:33). This bread that grants life is similar to the water Jesus offers the Samaritan woman in 4:1-42. This is complicated by the fact that the Father is described as the giver of life in 6:32, the one who gives “the true bread from heaven.” Jesus is that “true bread” which God has given. This is seen in v. 35 with the “I Am” statement: ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς. As Jesus promises water to the Samaritan woman, which will make one never grow thirsty again, so Jesus, as the true bread, will allow anyone who partakes to “never hunger.” In both accounts, the people desire what Jesus has to offer. In summation, all seven of these claims have Jesus affirm his identity as a Giver of Life, which implies he is acting within the divine prerogative.²⁹⁰ It is for this reason that many saw him equating himself to God, for he was incorporating himself with the unique identity of the one God.

As far as the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι statements, these function in a similar manner. Playing off the divine proclamation ἐγώ εἰμι from Exodus 3:14, Deut. 32:39 and Second Isaiah, Jesus makes similar pronouncements. In the context of the Hebrew Bible, as has been explained above with regards to Deutero-Isaiah, “it is a divine self-declaration, encapsulating YHWH’s claim to unique and exclusive divinity.”²⁹¹ In a similar way, Jesus claims to be “I Am” for a similar reason. This is seen when he walks on water (6:16-21); Jesus calls out to the Disciples ἐγώ εἰμι wishing to calm them for they were frightened. Lincoln argues this account is “even more

²⁹⁰ Paralleled to 5:17 where Jesus also takes on the divine prerogative: ὁ πατήρ μου ἕως ἄρτι ἐργάζεται καὶ ἐγώ εἰμι.

²⁹¹ Bauckham 2007, 246.

impressive” than the Marcan rendition²⁹² but the verbal connections are not as strong as in Mark.²⁹³ Nevertheless, the ἐγώ εἰμι is used here to parallel Jesus and God. In the Old Testament, God is seen as one who walks upon the sea (Job 9:8; Ps. 77:19; Is. 43:16) and, when he appears to mortals, they are frightened and are in need of being calmed (Gen. 15:1; 26:24; 46:3; Judges 6:23).²⁹⁴ These among others exemplify that “just as ‘I am he’ in the Hebrew Bible sums up what it is to be truly God, so in John it identifies Jesus as truly God in the fullest sense.”²⁹⁵

This can also be explicitly seen when Jesus is arrested in the Garden. When the group of Jews and Roman guards come to arrest him they ask who is Jesus of Nazarus. Jesus uses a common phrase, ἐγὼ εἰμι, as Raymond Brown explained in reference to the blind man, but in this context it is a clear reference to Jesus’ divine identity. The structure of the passage resembles a theophany because when Jesus makes the divine declaration, everyone falls to the ground (πίπτω). The verb used means “to fall,” but it can also have the connotation to “*Fall down* as a sign of devotion.”²⁹⁶ Lincoln also claims that this response is typical in instances of a theophany (cf. Ez. 1:28; Dan. 10:9).²⁹⁷ With that said, these two theophany accounts show a connection between God and Jesus because the divine name is evoked in such a way so as to reveal Jesus as having God’s authority. It is extreme that the evangelist is showing Jesus as intrinsic with God’s identity by revealing him as performing actions and receiving responses, which only God is worthy of doing and receiving.

²⁹² Lincoln 2005, 219.

²⁹³ Although the reasons are not directly related to this chapter, Mark’s version is a better example of Jesus displaying the divine prerogative because of the verbal parallels between Exodus 33:22 (the use of *παρῆλθον*) and Mark 6:48 are stronger. This combined with the ἐγὼ εἰμι makes Mark’s account a clearer theophany. It is a theophany here as well, but Lincoln’s statement is too bold when examined in this light.

²⁹⁴ Lincoln 2005, 218.

²⁹⁵ Bauckham 2007, 248.

²⁹⁶ Gingrich 1983, 159. Cf. also BAGD 659.

²⁹⁷ Lincoln 2005, 445

4.3 Concluding Remarks on John's Christology

Every passage in the Gospel according to John intends to show the reader who the person of Jesus is and how he not only relates to human beings but also his relation to the Father. This is done in various ways, which show there is a deep connection between the two in the mind of the evangelist. It is challenging to understand fully what the author intended because of the multifaceted language he chose to use when constructing his gospel. The Johannine Jesus is a character that, at first glance, seems to be elevated higher than the other synoptic writers' Jesus, but this is somewhat misleading. John's Jesus is, however, one that has a different persona than the others, and it is no wonder that Clement wrote, "John, perceiving that the other Evangelists had set forth the human side of the Person of Jesus, at the instance of his disciples composed a spiritual Gospel" (Eusebius, *Eccl. History*, 6:14.).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we have seen, striking statements of exaltation and subordination permeate the New Testament, but what do they truly say about the person of Christ? Is he Lord, or is he a divine agent of a lower status? These are difficult queries since the authors never pointedly address these issues; this in turn renders any evaluation of the texts more inferential than self-evident. Suffice it to say, although we may never truly know the actual intent of the authors, educated speculations may be made in order to shed light on this complex topic.

Understanding that the New Testament authors are not working in a “this and not that” modality is crucial for understanding the framework of these writings. This is why Jesus can be likened to God at one moment and then to Moses the next.²⁹⁸ Whenever an opportunity arose to compare Jesus with either God or a major Old Testament figure, the authors of the New Testament would capitalize on the moment and make a claim about who Jesus is. Therefore, when a Scriptural allusion can be made, as we have observed with the *Shema*, the authors used it to their advantage to make a bold claim about Jesus.

Monotheism is also a key element the early Christians inherited from their Jewish roots. Thus, upholding a belief in the one God of Israel who is alone worthy of worship was foundational in their thought. This is why the subordination language in the New Testament exists. The subordination of Jesus served as a safeguard for their strict belief in worshipping in God alone. The authors did not want people to believe that Christians held a belief in a second God who rivaled or eclipsed God, so, to protect this belief, they incorporated Jesus into the

²⁹⁸ Cf. Jesus walking on water and his descent after the transfiguration.

divine identity exalting Jesus to the right hand of God. They chose to use scriptural allusions to the *Shema* and to incorporate Jesus into that framework in order to uphold their belief in one God. It was initiative and bold, but the movement started amongst Jews who held strong beliefs in God alone, but believed that Jesus was the one Lord who was an active part in the divine identity.

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APPENDICES

A The Septuagint and the New Testament

To state broadly, the Septuagint (also abbreviated LXX) is the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek over numerous centuries. There is much debate concerning how the LXX was pieced together and what implications it has concerning Hellenistic Judaism as well as Christianity and the early church. Jobes and Silva insist the translation “marks a milestone in human culture” and much of the knowledge, which we have pertaining to the ancient world, would be seriously lacking without the LXX.²⁹⁹ It is also noteworthy to keep in mind that this text is the first known translation of the Hebrew Bible into an Indo-European language,³⁰⁰ and as such, it is imperative to note that the translators made some changes whilst working on the Hebrew in order to convey their particular reading of the verses; they were, in a sense, interpreters.³⁰¹ It must also be kept in mind that the intended audience that would receive the translation would determine what kind of translation was produced.³⁰² This then leads into how the Greek version of the Scriptures came into existence. The development of the completed manuscript in possession³⁰³ passed through the hands of numerous scribes and developed over the centuries, but the genesis of the work can be traced to *The Letter of Aristeas* which is a compelling letter composed by a pseudonymous author from Alexandria (a pagan Greek) named Aristeas writing to his brother Philocrates concerning how the translation of the Jewish Law from Hebrew into Greek arose.

²⁹⁹ Jobes/Silva 2000, 19.

³⁰⁰ Dines 2004, ix.

³⁰¹ Jellicoe 1968, 321.

³⁰² McLay 2003, 45.

³⁰³ The LXX to which I am referring, as the completed work is what Rahlfs contains in his Septuaginta.

In short, the letter is the primary source explaining how seventy-two Jewish translators were sent to Alexandria to translate the Jewish Scriptures into Greek. The Egyptian king of the time was Ptolemy II who ruled around 285-247BCE and he instructed Demetrius of Phalerum, his librarian, to amass every known book from around the world and have them stored in Alexandria; Demetrius suggested a Greek translation of the Jewish Law to be a fruitful addition to the collection. Demetrius contacted the High Priest at Jerusalem and it is agreed that six members from each tribe (totaling 72 scribes) would come and translate the Law, and once summoned, the fete was accomplished in precisely seventy-two days. Once completed, the version was read to the Jewish community and Demetrius pronounced a curse on anyone who dared to alter any part of the translation in order to exalt this copy as the authorized Greek translation.³⁰⁴

No scholar actually believes this letter to be accurate or to truly explain how the Septuagint was composed. The work is clearly an apologetic of the Jewish faith and their way of life, which is spelled out in their Law.³⁰⁵ Most scholars are under the impression that the letter was not written synchronically with the actual events recorded, but they purport that the author composed the letter in the second century BCE to defend the Greek translation since it appears to have not been well received within the Jewish community. The author most likely sought to illuminate the Greek scriptures of Alexandria to an equivalent status to the Hebrew Scriptures of Jerusalem.³⁰⁶ Although the letter is most likely pseudepigraphal, this does not mean there is no benefit in examining the LXX. If there is any truth in *The Letter of Aristeas*, the only part of the Hebrew Bible, which was translated at that time, would have been the Pentateuch, not the entire

³⁰⁴ Charlesworth 1985, 7.

³⁰⁵ Jellicoe 1968, 47.

³⁰⁶ Jobes/Silva 2000, 34.

corpus of Scripture. Therefore, the rest of the Hebrew Bible was translated at different times by various authors.³⁰⁷ Jellicoe claims,

The LXX presents “translations” rather than “a translation.” Hence any judgement of its quality must first take account of what might be termed 'translational units' as represented by a single book, part of a book, or more than one book.³⁰⁸

Over time, the Septuagint was constructed further from these 'translational units' and scribes eventually collaborated many of these documents to form numerous manuscripts, which became important to various groups. It also bears significance to the study of the evolution of the Jewish canon and the Masoretic text (MT), which we possess today. The LXX we possess now serves as an indirect witness to its *Vorlage* (The Hebrew Parent text) from which it was translated, and many scholars do attempt to reconstruct this text and compare it to the MT.³⁰⁹ By doing so, one is able to compare the Hebrew of the Septuagint to the Hebrew that is present in the MT and see how similar the LXX's parent text is to the MT, at least in theory.

The LXX with Respect to the New Testament

There are many uses of the Septuagint in New Testament (NT) studies because of its apparent wide use in many of the books. As one compares the Hebrew Bible references in the NT to the LXX, it becomes more apparent that the early church writers were heavily dependent on the Septuagint more so than the Hebrew texts. For the NT writers, the Greek version was the authentic and authoritative Bible, and it came to be their main (if not their only) reference source.³¹⁰ So being, the LXX played a significant role on the theology of the NT authors because some of the Septuagint was the interpretation of the scribes translating the Hebrew into Greek. The many usages of the Hebrew Bible are then used through the “Christological lens” of

³⁰⁷ Kraus/Wooden 2006, 9.

³⁰⁸ Jellicoe 1968, 315.

³⁰⁹ Joebes/Silva 2000, 21.

³¹⁰ Dines 2004, 142,143.

the NT writers in order to support their argument and reinterpret the Greek scriptures for their current usage.³¹¹ This led to many interesting conflicts because, as Christianity expanded and began evaluating scripture in differing ways, there arose disagreement not only among various Christians but also with their Jewish counterparts. Yet as time progressed, the NT writings and the Greek Old Testament were assembled to create one unified corpus of material.³¹²

As was stated earlier, the NT was very dependent on the LXX for its quotations, but it also thrived from adopting many aspects of the way in which the Septuagint constructed its Greek. The two pieces of work are not separate bodies, but, rather, they cover many of the same topics and used a similar form of Greek (Koine).³¹³ There are also many times when the NT writers either directly quote, paraphrase, or allude to passages from the Greek OT. Knowing this fact, it should be noted that the scribes who preserved the surviving manuscripts were mainly Christians who would have known the NT scriptures very well, and thus, they may have adjusted the text either accidentally due to a NT impression or intentionally because they believed the NT form to be true.³¹⁴ Along with this fact, it should also be brought to attention that there were a number of differences, which arose between the Greek and Hebrew witnesses of the same book; these vary from length to a different order of presentation.³¹⁵

When the NT writers used the Greek Scriptures in their works, there were discrepancies in either the Greek or in the Hebrew and, at times, there was a difference between both witnesses. According to Timothy McLay, “Quoting from memory would be one way to explain the way in which the NT authors sometimes blended several Scriptures together,” and this

³¹¹ McLay 2003, 36.

³¹² Dines 2004, 145.

³¹³ Jobes/Silva 2000, 184.

³¹⁴ Jobes/Silva 2000, 191.

³¹⁵ McLay 2003, 14.

blending does happen on occasion.³¹⁶ This was due to the fact that many of the writers of the NT were attempting to apply these old scriptures to a more present, Christo-centric mind-frame, which was not initially intended. This is also exemplified in the translation process when some freedoms were taken by either adding or deleting, which left the translation fairly different from the *Vorlage*.³¹⁷ In so doing, the theology of the NT would have been heavily impacted by the LXX because it was the primary source of scripture used by the early church.

³¹⁶ McLay 2003, 26.

³¹⁷ McLay 2003, 57.

B Monotheism in the Decalogue and the *Shema*

Dating becomes important in this discussion because it determines at what point in time the beliefs had developed in understanding how Israel saw their relationship with YHWH. Although tradition holds Moses wrote the book of Deuteronomy, numerous writings by different authors comprise the book. The author of Dtr1 who wrote 5:1-19 and 6:1-25 (the Decalogue and *Shema* respectively) wrote much later than the time of Moses. Some scholars such as Christoph Bultmann believe the book to have been written over the course of history by a “Deuteronomistic School” extending beyond the middle of the sixth century BCE and into the Persian Period. It was written by this group of scribes who wrote Deuteronomy rather than just one or two individuals. He believes the school developed the book and was considered in its canonical state no earlier than the fourth century.³¹⁸

What seems more logical, though, is what Richard Friedman purports. Friedman claims the book of Deuteronomy, which was found in the temple by Hilkiah in 622 BCE was written before the Persian period.³¹⁹ He believes that the book was written during the reign of King Josiah due to the emphasis on the centralization of religion in Deuteronomy. Both the book and Josiah's reign focus on centralizing the worship of YHWH at one single place, the temple.³²⁰ Friedman also claims the Deuteronomistic author places a huge emphasis on the role of Josiah in his writings which indicates it was during his reign when the author wrote. The author claims in 1 Kings 13 that a man of God “prophecies” the reign of Josiah by name, and this “prophecy” would have occurred hundreds of years prior to Josiah. This 'prophecy' occurs at the beginning

³¹⁸ Bultmann 2001, 136,137.

³¹⁹ Friedman 1997, 101.

³²⁰ Friedman 1997,102.

of the author's history, but what is striking is how the author ends his history with it being fulfilled with the birth of Josiah and ultimately with Josiah centralizing the religion. When telling the court history of Israel, Josiah is the only king whom the author credits as being a good king of Israel.³²¹

Friedman rejects the belief that Dtr1 was written during the Persian period due to the way the author uses certain phrases. He emphasizes heavily how the author of Dtr1 uses the term “to this day” as evidence that the book was written prior to the post-exilic time period. The author references certain aspects of religious life as existing “to this day,” so using such a phrase would have made no sense if the author was writing after the destruction of the temple.³²² The writing of Dtr1 was most likely in its canonical form by the time of the reign of Josiah and most certainly so before the destruction of the temple.

One of the most important aspects of the Hebrew Bible is YHWH giving the Decalogue to Moses on Mount Sinai. This event is recorded twice in Scripture: once in Exodus 20 and again in Deuteronomy 5:6-18. This was Israel's way of establishing their relationship with the one God, YHWH. The relationship between YHWH and Israel was a very unique one because, unlike gods of the neighboring religions who equated their gods to natural forces, YHWH is a god who established his interrelation with Israel through a covenant. YHWH was seen as a god of history. The Israelite people viewed YHWH like a lord reigning over them because they established their relationship through the Ten Commandments, which appear to be modeled after an ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaty, which was composed of six basic points.³²³

³²¹ Friedman 1997, 109,110.

³²² Friedman 1997, 107,108.

³²³ Brassey 2002, 124. Cf. Table 8 page 143 for a comparative chart.

1. Preamble
2. Antecedent history
3. Statement of substance concerning the future relationship
4. Specific stipulations
5. Invocation of the gods as witnesses
6. Curses and blessings

The Shema follows the Decalogue in 6:4-9 and shows a very interesting relationship with how the author relates Israel to YHWH. In verse 5, it says, “And you shall love YHWH, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” Moshe Weinfeld claims this phrase embodies all the elements of the treaty by emphasizing complete devotion to the Suzerain, or in this case YHWH. To love YHWH is to express loyalty to him with all your heart, and this is shown with your entire soul (willing to die on behalf of YHWH) and with all your might (to fight on behalf of YHWH).³²⁴

The first line of the Shema also plays great significance in relation to the way the Decalogue is used to express Israel's early monotheism. Weinfeld holds the first line “Listen, Israel: YHWH is our God. YHWH is one” is a restatement of the first two commandments in the Decalogue (unity of God and the rejection of other gods/idols).³²⁵ By aligning the scriptures in this way, the author has cleverly shown a connection that YHWH alone is to be worshipped. Ronald Clements claims Deuteronomy never explicitly denounces the existence of other gods, but implies that YHWH alone is the ruler of the universe and describes this as 'practical monotheism.'³²⁶ Weinfeld disagrees claiming this section of the Hebrew Bible does not imply any form of henotheism based on the surrounding context to worship YHWH alone.³²⁷ The affirmation of YHWH as God alone is to assert the covenant relationship between YHWH and his people, Israel. This can be seen through the fact that a covenant pact was used as a ruling

³²⁴ Weinfeld 1964, 351,352.

³²⁵ Weinfeld 1964, 328.

³²⁶ Clements 2001, 31.

³²⁷ Weinfeld 1964, 350.

Suzerain over a vassal state. YHWH is contrasted against the idols and other deities in the second commandment and it is YHWH alone who is worthy of Israel's obedience when they are commanded in 6:13-14, 17

It's YHWH, your God, whom you'll fear, and it's He whom you'll serve, and it's in His name that you'll swear. You shall not go after other gods, from the gods of the peoples who are around you, because YHWH, your God, is a jealous God among you... You shall observe the commandments of YHWH, your God, and His testimonies and His laws that He commanded you.³²⁸

If the people are to enter the land promised to them by YHWH, they are instructed to serve Him and His commandments alone. This is a strong emphasis on YHWH and a significant indicator that Israel, by this time, was monotheistic. Through this covenant relationship between Israel and YHWH, the author of Dtr1 links a clear monotheistic tendency required amongst the people of Israel.

³²⁸ Friedman 2003, 321.

C YHWH as the God of History

The beginning of monotheism in Judaism is difficult to trace because the Hebrew texts are not always clear when the people were polytheistic and when they adopted a pure sense of monotheism. It is true that at times the Israelites suffered the problem of believing in various gods, as is well attested in the books of the prophets. The prophet who really speaks out for the belief in YHWH alone above all others is the author of Isaiah 40-55. He was a Judean who sought to exalt YHWH above everything and have Him be the one who transcends all others. No idol or god can compare to His magnificence.

In order to understand the complexity of Second Isaiah, the historical context is necessary for “the prophets viewed the welfare and destiny of their people firmly within the context of world events.”³²⁹ Through knowing the events leading up to the author's time period, one might be able to better understand from where the author is coming and be able to discern why the writer portrays certain aspects of his or her book in the way that they do. This will be the approach taken in this study. After exploring the wider context of the author, the idol polemics and the oneness of YHWH will be explained and how it relates to the current predicament the Jews encountered during the Diaspora after the destruction of Jerusalem. Then the focus will shift to the importance of YHWH as a god of history and the significance of the covenant that was established between YHWH and His stubborn people.

³²⁹ Hanson 1995, 2.

The Historical Dilemma of Isaiah 40-55

Isaiah 40-55, commonly known as Deutero-Isaiah (Second Isaiah), is a section of scripture embedded in the canonical book of Isaiah. Most scholars today believe the book was not written at the same time as chapters 1-39, but later after the destruction of Jerusalem, and by a different author entirely. This section of text presupposes the destruction of the temple and the collapse of the city. The whereabouts of the author whilst composing this work is unknown, but the context of the chapters strongly implies a Babylonian location due to “the polemic against Babylonian deities, cults, and practices, as well as the theme of repatriation from Babylon.”³³⁰

The Babylonians were the dominant force at the current time and held significant power and influence over the Mediterranean. Between 550 and 515BCE, life was chaotic and hellish for the Israleites, and this would be the time frame in which the author constructed his piece of work. The Babylonians had already sacked Jerusalem and carted away the most useful and respectable inhabitants from the land of Judah; these exiles had a better chance of flourishing economically than their brothers left in their homeland, but spiritual alienation would have weighed down on the people being in a strange land with differing practices and religious beliefs.³³¹ This would have caused the exiles to plummet into a spiritual crisis because the God of Israel, YHWH, let his people fall; the people would have reevaluated their beliefs, and the Jews in Babylon could easily assimilate to the religious beliefs of this foreign land due to a loss of their Yahwistic identity.³³² The covenant YHWH established would be called into question for YHWH declared in Psalm 89:

³³⁰ Blenkinsopp 1996, 184.

³³¹ Hanson 1995, 1.

³³² Hanson 1995, 1,2.

You said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: 'I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations...' I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. Forever I will keep my steadfast love for him, and my covenant with him will stand firm. I will establish his line forever, and his throne as long as the heavens endure. If his children forsake my law and do not walk according to my ordinances, if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with scourges; but I will not remove from him my steadfast love, or be false to my faithfulness. **I will not violate my covenant, or alter the words that went forth from my lips.**³³³

Psalm 89:3-4; 27-34

This would have been a difficult passage to reconcile, especially for a religious Jew who knew this passage during the Babylonian exile. Those in exile would feel extreme pressure to convert to the ways of the Babylonians not only for economic gains, but also for new religious security, which they felt they had lost with YHWH.

Another important scenario to remember is the eminent rise of the Persian Empire under Cyrus who was steadily growing in power at the time of Deutero-Isaiah. This is a major topic of the author and he makes many predictions concerning the Persian king throughout this section of the text; it is apparent that the author knew of the surrounding historical events, which were mounting against Babylon's favor. Cyrus had congregated the Medes and the Persians in 550BCE and then went on to conquer Croesus in 546, the mighty king of the Lydian Empire in Asia Minor.³³⁴ This would not have been a small detail to be overlooked; many nations and empires would be aware of the amassing strength, which Cyrus had acquired in these few years. Once this had occurred, Isaiah 40-48 can be seen as propaganda for supporting Cyrus' campaign against the illustrious Babylonian Empire, and it would be a rational prediction for the author to

³³³ Emphasis added; keep in mind for a later argument.

³³⁴ Hanson 1995, 3.

make.³³⁵ But this prediction would not be without some risk involved; a prediction indicating Cyrus' victory over Babylon together with the mocking of Babylon's imperial religion³³⁶ could ensure risk of torture and execution by the authorities for preaching insurrection as is well attested in Jeremiah 29:21-22.³³⁷ This flourishing power resulted with the Babylonian king abdicating his throne in 539 when Cyrus trounced the Babylonian imperium under King Nabonidus (555-539BCE).³³⁸

When the Persians seized control over Babylon, many policies began to change with the shift of power. It is crucial to take note the different approaches Cyrus and the Babylonian kings took when dealing with conquered nations. The Babylonians were known for eradicating the culture of the people they defeated, but Cyrus instituted a new order to resuscitate the people's former culture by permitting them to return home and supplying monetary aid to rejuvenate their former economic, social, and religious society.³³⁹ Cyrus allowed people, like the Jews, to return home and rebuild their religious institutions. This is attested in not only Biblical accounts, but also in some outside sources. The Cyrus Cylinder states in two places:

He (Marduk) scanned and looked (through) all the countries, searching for a righteous ruler willing to lead him (i.e. Marduk) (in the annual procession). (Then) he announced the name of Cyrus, king of Anshan, declared him to be(come) the ruler of all the world... (he) order him to march against his city Babylon. He made him set out on the road to Babylon going at his side like a real friend... He delivered into his (Cyrus') hands Nabonidus, the king who did not worship him (i.e. Marduk).³⁴⁰

(As to the region) from...as far as Ashur and Susa, Agade, Eshunna, the towns Zamban, Me-Turnu, Der as well as the region of the Gutians, I returned to (these) sacred cities on the other

³³⁵ Blenkinsopp 1996, 186.

³³⁶ The author employs an idol polemic by establishing the greatness of YHWH over the gods of Babylon. This will be developed further.

³³⁷ Blenkinsopp 1996, 184.

³³⁸ Harding 2003, 5.

³³⁹ Hanson 1995, 3.

³⁴⁰ Harding 2003, 6.

side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been ruins for a long time, the images which (used) to live therein and establish for them permanent sanctuaries.³⁴¹

This shows how Cyrus proclaimed himself to other nations as being chosen by their chief god to issue in a new order and to declare him as king of the world. He also attests to have reestablished many religious institutions for many nations like he did for the Jews in the second passage. This is not so different from the author of Second Isaiah:

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who by myself spread out the earth... who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall carry out all my purpose;' and who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be rebuilt,' and of the temple, "your foundation shall be laid." Thus says the Lord to his anointed Cyrus,³⁴² whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him...

Isaiah 44:24, 28; 45:1³⁴³

When comparing Isaiah to the Cylinder, a key connection can be made. The two purport the chief god of the people chose Cyrus to act on their behalf for the well being of their people and that he will be the ruler of all the world. Both also claim that they will reinstitute the former religious practices of the nations by allowing them to return homeward and build a place of worship for their deity. In this respect, an outside source supports the biblical account, but some dissension arises in Isaiah 45:4 when the author claims "I call you (Cyrus) by your name, I surname you, **though you do not know me.**"³⁴⁴ The accounts of Ezra and Second Chronicles, both of which document a similar account to Deutero-Isaiah, leave out this key issue, which goes against the Cyrus Cylinder when it claims Cyrus to be a friend of Marduk. Most likely, Cyrus gave a similar decree to all nations claiming their god sent him to eradicate the Babylonians and to purge their religious intolerance so that all nations may return home and worship their own

³⁴¹ Harding 2003, .7.

³⁴² Isaiah 45:1 LXX: ὁ θεός τῷ χριστῷ μου Κύριος.

³⁴³ cf. Second Chronicles 36:22,23 as well as Ezra 1 which both also declare an edict from Cyrus to allow the Jews to return home by the order of "The Lord the God of Heaven"

³⁴⁴ My emphasis added

god. It was a political ploy to gain favor with the surrounding nations in order to suppress possible revolts and gain political allegiance. When examining the texts, Ezra and Chronicles seem to be reporting what Cyrus decreed to the Jews who were returning to their land to begin reconstruction. It is imperative to note that the author of Deutero-Isaiah is writing before the return so he does not have the decree issued to the Jews, but he may know of what was said to other nations, which Cyrus had defeated. Knowing this information, the author tactfully claims Cyrus is the instrument of YHWH, but it is still YHWH pulling the strings of His Persian puppet king who does not know YHWH. Throughout the text, the author describes how God was going to repair and restore his broken people;³⁴⁵ this is a very important aspect of the book because the rest of the prophet's message hinges on this fact that YHWH, and YHWH alone, is in control.

The Monotheistic God Against a Polytheistic World

Many argue Israel was not a monotheistic religion from its genesis, but that their monotheistic tendencies evolved over time. There is extra-biblical evidence which indicates YHWH was not alone the god of Israel such as the inscription of “Yahweh and his Asherah,” iconographic images dating to the same period of an Iron Age Judean goddess and archaeological evidence of female pillar figurines.³⁴⁶ The Bible does not explicitly and repeatedly spell out the uniqueness of YHWH as the author of Second Isaiah does.³⁴⁷ All the other prophets imply YHWH alone, but they do not drill it into the readers mind as Isaiah does here.

There are many other passages in the Hebrew Bible, which show the oneness of YHWH, but none of them compare to the constant repetition expressed in Isaiah 40-55. Mark Smith argues that “monotheistic exclusivity is not simply a matter of cultic observance, as in the First

³⁴⁵ Hanson 1995, 10.

³⁴⁶ Smith 2001, 155.

³⁴⁷ Brassey 2002, 25.

Commandment's prohibition against 'no other gods before me' in Exodus 20:3 and Deuteronomy 5:7. It extends further to an understanding of deities in the cosmos (no other gods, period).”³⁴⁸ Isaiah 40-55 does this excellently. There are numerous sayings, which indicate YHWH's incomparable nature and how no other is equal to Him.³⁴⁹ These passages, as were referenced earlier, are used as a polemic against the idols and gods worshipped by the Babylonians, two of which are mentioned in Isaiah 46:1, Bel and Nebo. Before discussing the idol polemics, the oneness of YHWH in Second Isaiah needs to be clarified.

The author of Second Isaiah uses many different methods of asserting YHWH's oneness throughout the text. One of these methods is through rhetorical questions. An example of this is Isaiah 40:12 when the author claims, “Who has measured the waters in the hallow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?” The obvious answer is of course YHWH, for no one else is capable of doing such actions³⁵⁰ because “nothing in the universe can compare to YHWH!”³⁵¹ There is also vivid imagery used of YHWH as creator throughout the passage, which gives Him a lofty status as creator of the universe;³⁵² this is used by the author to contrast YHWH against the idols later.

To speak of YHWH in Isaiah 40-55 is to speak of a god who is incomparable; there are none who can rival him. Another means that the author uses is by proclaiming that YHWH is the first and the last. In 41:4, YHWH claims, “I, the Lord, am first and will be with the last,” and in 43:10b,11, “Before me no god was formed nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and

³⁴⁸ Smith 2001, 151.

³⁴⁹ Isaiah 40:12-14; 41:4-5; 43:10-13; 44:6-8; 45:5-6; 45:14b-15; 45:18b-19; 45:21b; 45:22b-23; 46:5; 46:8-10; 48:12-13

³⁵⁰ Brassey 2002, 28.

³⁵¹ Brassey 2002, 38.

³⁵² YHWH depicted as a creator occurs approximately 12 times – Isaiah 40:25-26; 41:20; 42:5; 43:1; 43:7; 43:15; 43:21; 44:2; 44:24; 45:12; 45:18; 51:12-13

beside me there is no savior.” In these two passage, YHWH is claiming he has no rival, there was nothing at the beginning and he alone will exist in the end. He alone will be Israel's savior³⁵³ for He is “the first and [the] last; besides [Him] there is no god” (44:6b). This are striking monotheistic claims declaring YHWH to be the one and only; apart from whom there is no divine being. Roberts claims “the Lord alone has demonstrated his control of history by the prophetic word; there is no other god to challenge the Lord” (said of 44:6-8).³⁵⁴ Michael Thompson argues v.8 to be an indication that the prophet is emphasizing YHWH's commitment to His chosen people and he should be viewed as nothing other than the “Lord of Hosts.”³⁵⁵ It is here in vv. 6-8, according to Goldingay, that “YHWH alone has been behind world events from the beginning (creation, the call of Abraham, the exodus) to the end (the fulfillment of YHWH's intention to restore Jacob-Israel and be recognized by the whole world).”³⁵⁶ All of these views point to one thing which has been running throughout the beginning, middle and end of Deutero-Isaiah: YHWH, the omnipotent, through the mouth of his prophet, makes known that He is in control and will be steering the course of history the way he desires, for He is the “God of history.”³⁵⁷

Idols in this passage, like many other places in the Hebrew Bible, are slandered and are given a lowly status. Many times, authors depict idols as futile and as completely useless to those who worship them. This ploy is to indicate that none other than YHWH alone is the supreme being of the universe. The author of Second Isaiah makes full use of this polemic in chapter 44. In order to understand fully what the author is contriving, one must understand how the ancients

³⁵³ Keep in mind Cyrus. He is the instrument of YHWH who will “save” Israel, but the whole argument of Deutero-Isaiah is that YHWH is the redeemer of His people and he alone will be their savior. This will be developed much further.

³⁵⁴ Roberts, 2006, 968.

³⁵⁵ Thompson 2001, 48.

³⁵⁶ Goldingay 2001, 254.

³⁵⁷ This key section of monotheism should be remembered when discussing how YHWH is directing the course of history later in this appendix.

felt about the idols they worshipped. Primarily, the Babylonians did not envision their gods as being contained by the idol, which they made. The idol was a vessel used as something more tangible.³⁵⁸ Since these images were common in the Near East, there are some general characteristics, which apply to these creations. According to Smith, the idols are images, which denote presence. They are the divine recipients of sacrifice and the god's manifestation in ceremonies. They served as a substitution or a form representing a human devotee. These are contrasted with cult statues, which represent the deity's local manifestation, but these serve a similar function as being anthropomorphic substitute for those not present. The idols also gave people the recognition of some divine presence among them.³⁵⁹ Overall, the idols were not directly what the people worshipped; they were a physical portrayal of what they envisioned their god(s) to be.

Chapter 44 of Deutero-Isaiah is the climax of the idol polemic; it is here that the author goes full force in proving YHWH's superiority and His divine oneness compared to these hunks of wood. As was mentioned previously, YHWH was shown to be superior by asserting He alone is capable of performing certain actions. This was exemplified through the use of rhetorical questions. YHWH was then depicted as the divine creator who called everything into existence. This was then used in contrast to the actions of idols for, unlike YHWH, they were created. The author makes a clever move in building up YHWH's creative power and making a devastating blow against idols for they neither create nor act as the awesome YHWH does. The author constructs an ironic scenario in vv. 12-20 which depicts a man who goes about shaping an idol. The author tells how a man puts in countless effort in constructing this image by “stretch[ing] a line, mark[ing] it out with a stylus, fashion[ing] it with planes, and mark[ing] it with a compass;

³⁵⁸ Brassey 2002, 62.

³⁵⁹ Smith 2001, 182, 183.

he makes it in human form, with human beauty, to be set up in a shrine” (Isaiah 44:13). This is a high point in the author's argument because he shows that since idols are created and that they are visible, this demonstrates they are lesser than YHWH for He is one who creates and He is beyond physical representations.³⁶⁰ The writer continues to show how with the same piece of wood the crafter used to shape his idol, he uses to make a fire to cook his food. Exploiting this detail, the author illustrates the absurdity of idol worship because “they do not know, nor do they comprehend; for their eyes are shut, so that they cannot see, and their minds as well, so that they cannot understand” (Isaiah 44:18). These idols are depicted as lifeless and dead, they have a beginning and an end, they are not eternal for they are not as YHWH is who claims “Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me” (Isaiah 43:12).

YHWH: the God of History Who Will Not Break His Covenant

YHWH is the god of Israel who made a covenant with his people to last for all eternity as was stated in Psalms 89. The covenant between YHWH and His people could be traced back to the time of Abraham when YHWH told him He would multiply his descendants, but the covenant he had with the country of Israel was later during the time of Moses. The relationship between YHWH and Israel was a very unique one because, unlike gods of the neighboring religions who equated their gods to natural forces, YHWH is a god who established his interrelation with Israel through a covenant. YHWH was seen as a god of history. The Israelites viewed YHWH like a lord reigning over them because they established their relationship through the Ten Commandments, which appear to be modeled after an ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaty; when comparing the two, it is quite striking:³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ Brassey 2002, 96.

³⁶¹ Brassey 2002, 124.

Table 8: Suzerainty Treaty and YHWH's Covenant

<u>Near Eastern Suzerainty Treaty</u>	<u>Exodus 20:1-17³⁶²</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preamble 2. Antecedent history 3. Statement of Substance concerning the future relationship 4. Specific stipulations 5. Invocation of the gods as witnesses 6. Curses and blessings 	<p>I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.</p> <p>You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.</p> <p>Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.</p> <p>Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.</p> <p>You shall not murder.</p> <p>You shall not commit adultery.</p> <p>You shall not steal.</p> <p>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor</p> <p>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor</p>

³⁶² cf. Deut. 5:6-21

This reveals that Israel saw their god as one of history. They made a legal pact with YHWH agreeing to subject themselves to Him. They established the stipulations they would obey through their history of how YHWH had saved and served them. Further on in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the two lay out the blessings and curses to the nation if they uphold this covenant provided by YHWH. But where the covenant and monotheism truly come together for the people in a defining statement is through the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6:4-9:

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

This passage claims YHWH's oneness, “the Lord alone” and the one whom “you shall love.” Just before this section of scripture is where the Ten Commandments are repeated, so, here, the oneness of YHWH and the covenant are closely connected in the mind of the Jews.³⁶³ There is also a call to the people to hold what YHWH was “commanding [them] today in [their] heart.” The close relationship between the law/covenant with YHWH is a constant theme, which runs throughout the Hebrew Bible. This has great implications in Isaiah 40-55 whose author focuses immensely on the covenant and the restoration of YHWH's people.

The Covenant between YHWH and His people is paramount for understanding how the Jewish community viewed their co-existence with their eternal God. There are roughly sixteen references to the covenant in Isaiah 40-55 and the majority are in connection with YHWH

³⁶³ There are other passages which show YHWH's oneness in the Bible such as Deut. 4:35, 2Kings 19:15, Nehemiah 9:6, Psalm 86:10, 2Sam 7:22, Deut. 4:39, 1Sam 2:2, Jer 16:19-20, Ps. 96:5, Ps. 82.7 (Smith 2001, 152) but none of these carry the same closeness to the Law/Covenant as the Shema does.

restoring his people and upholding his word.³⁶⁴ Recall that previously when Psalm 89 claimed: “I will not violate my covenant, or alter the words that went forth from my lips.” In truth, YHWH upheld his side of the bargain when the Israelites fell short by committing apostasy and followed the ways of other gods; for instance when Ahab adopted many of the religious affiliations of his Phoenician wife Jezebel. Many of the kings of Israel and Judah desecrated the covenant between the two parties. The covenant made clear in the “Statement of substance concerning the future relationship” that Israel will have no other god than YHWH alone nor have any idols. The nation broke both of these tenants, so it was YHWH's right to terminate his pact with the people therefore abstaining Him from destroying Judah through the Babylonians. As the reigning suzerainty, YHWH had the right to deliver curses on the nation for disregarding their legally binding covenant. This is a key aspect of Deutero-Isaiah's message: YHWH is in control.

Second Isaiah goes through why YHWH is justified in treating the people of Israel in the manner he chooses to do. Even though Israel and Judah violated their end of the covenant, YHWH was torn between justice and mercy, and he had to give His people another chance to partake in His forgiveness and ever-lasting covenant. Although they were cut off from the land, this was the discipline YHWH promised in Psalm 89 if they chose to be an obstinate people. The author supports YHWH's decision in 42:24,25 by proclaiming, “Who gave up Jacob to the spoiler, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned, in whose ways they would not walk and whose law they would not obey?” This is the portrayal of YHWH rebuking his stiff-necked people, the rod he used to punish his children. Through exile and destruction, YHWH the father corrected His people and through which he removed their

³⁶⁴ Isaiah 40:21; 41:4; 42:6-9; 42:24-25; 43:21-24; 44:3, 5; 44:21-23; 45:17; 46:8-13; 48:3-5; 48:19; 49:8-50:3; 51:2, 6b, 8b; 54:10, 17

impurities.³⁶⁵ But YHWH cannot stay angry forever, and He declares in 44:3,5, “For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring... This one will say, 'I am the Lord's,' another will be called by the name of Jacob, yet another will write on the hand, 'the Lord's,' and adopt the name of Israel.” This is YHWH's renewing of the broken covenant; He will restore His spirit to the people and they will once again call YHWH their god and He will declare them His people. YHWH will restore the land and give them back that which was theirs.³⁶⁶ Then, in 48:19, there is a restatement of the Abrahamic covenant, “your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me.”³⁶⁷ This is what Israel would have enjoyed if they had listened to the commandments, if they had heeded the words of the Lord. Although this is a threat, hope is restored in 49:8, “Thus says the Lord: In a time of favor I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages...” The children of Zion are to return, their land is to be given back to them to once again be apart of the covenant which Jeremiah predicted when he purchased the land deed: We (Israel) will return home. And the final mark of the covenant comes to fruition in 54:10, “For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” So in the end, YHWH will restore His people and establish His eternal covenant with them once again.

³⁶⁵ Isaiah 43:21-24 also continues on this covenant motif where the people did not bring YHWH the offerings he deserved, but instead brought him burdens of sin and iniquities.

³⁶⁶ Isaiah 44:21-23 is another declaration of the unforgotten covenant: “O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.

³⁶⁷ Abraham is referenced again in 51:2

This use of the covenant is a continuation of YHWH as god of history and one who has direct influence over the course of time. After all, YHWH is the one “who confirms the word of his servant, and fulfill the prediction of his messengers,” (Isaiah 44:26) and Deutero-Isaiah predicted Babylon's fall by the hands of Cyrus and the restoration of Israel. This can be seen throughout this section of Isaiah that YHWH is in control: “YHWH [is] the ultimate responsibility for the major events of the exilic period: the destruction of Jerusalem, the deportation and exile of its inhabitants, the rise of Cyrus to hegemony, and the imminent return of the exiles to their homeland.”³⁶⁸ YHWH, by the time of this author, has already brought about the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation, but he has not yet brought Cyrus' reign or the return to Israel into reality yet. Deutero-Isaiah is able to make such claims that YHWH will bring such things to pass because of how the Jews viewed their god (one of history). He also called on the God of history motif in order to reassure the people that YHWH had not deserted them. By claiming his message came from YHWH (Isaiah 44:26), it raises the issues of whether or not YHWH was in reality backing the prophet's message; for many of the deportees must have abandoned their beliefs and discredited YHWH and his prophets because the ceremonies in Babylon honoring Marduk must have been a continual recollection of YHWH's humiliating defeat.³⁶⁹ Remember as well what the author claimed in 44:6-8, YHWH is the only god and none can compare; he is the true director of history. For not all was lost, because YHWH, the God of history, made such things come to pass, according to the author. That is why he can assert in 42:44,45 that Jacob and Israel were given up; it was by YHWH's will. And by this same will, the prophet can predict the coming of Cyrus and the redemption of YHWH's people to return to their promised land.

³⁶⁸ Brassey 2002, 220.

³⁶⁹ Blenkinsopp 1996, 187.

D The Christology of 4 Ezra

The Book of 2 Esdras is a fascinating book, which is in a collection of writings known as the Apocrypha or sometimes called “the books between the testaments.” The book is broken up into three sections called fourth, fifth, and sixth Ezra and they all claim to be written by the prophet Ezra. 4 Ezra is part of genre known as apocalyptic literature; this group of writings typically consists of heavenly secrets, which are revealed to a mortal being by a heavenly host. These heavenly secrets are mediated to the person most frequently by some form of vision.³⁷⁰ This book in particular focuses on Ezra being visited by an angel of God known as Uriel who reveals a series of seven visions each corresponding with an interpretation. One of the main focuses of the writing is concerning evil and how the author believes the Jews should view and handle their current situation exiled from Jerusalem. The book also emphasizes various eschatological viewpoints as well as beliefs of a coming messianic figure, which will save the Jews from their present predicament.

Background Information: Date, Author and General Characteristics

When dealing with an apocalyptic text, it is important to establish the time in which the book was written and also by whom it was written. The book of 4 Ezra is considered one of the longest and most theologically significant books contained in the Apocrypha, and should be carefully analyzed in order to understand the context in which the book was written so that we may extract as much pertinent information as possible and as accurately as possible when studying the text.³⁷¹ Most scholars such as Harrington, Stone, and Hayman agree that the book

³⁷⁰ Stone 1990, 705.

³⁷¹ Harrington 1999, 188.

was written around the first century CE around twenty to thirty years after the destruction of the temple in 70CE. Hayman came to the conclusion that the book was written around this time by analyzing the history recorded in the text through the vivid imagery of the eagle. The bird's heads and wings represent different Roman rulers, and when this representation's accuracy begins to cease, it seems logical to assume this is close to the year in which the book was written. The rest becomes real "prophecy." He believes it was written during Domitian's reign (81-96CE) around the mid 90s.³⁷² It is also argued that since the prophecy fails with the two "puny wings," the book could have been written a bit later because one of the "puny wings" was in fact weak. Nerva, an old senator, succeeded Domitian and his reign was in fact short (96-98CE). But the problem lies in the fact that Nerva's successor, Trajan, turned out to be the most successful emperor of Rome since Augustus reigning twenty years and increasing the empire's boundaries farther than they had ever been. Since the prophecy fails at the second "puny wing," it could also be inferred that the book was written some time during Nerva's reign.³⁷³

The author of the work is claimed to be Ezra at the beginning of the narrative: "In the thirtieth year after the destruction of the city, I was in Babylon – I Salathiel, who am also called Ezra" (3:1). Since the book is divided into seven visions, it was believed for some time that the book was written by several different authors brought together later as a unified writing. The general tendency today is to see 4 Ezra as a unified work written by a single author who possibly used some preexisting material. There is a slight problem with the scenario that is presented at the beginning of this work. The narrative setting claims to be established during the Babylonian exile about thirty years after 587/586BCE (around the destruction of the first temple); the problem resides in the fact that the historical Ezra led a group of refugees back to Israel one-

³⁷² Hayman 2001, 775.

³⁷³ deSilva 2002, 331.

hundred to one-hundred and fifty years later.³⁷⁴ It could be argued the thirty years later coincides with thirty years after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans. The author just chose to compare two temple destructions, and make his story essentially the same but pertaining to a different event. Although this may be the case, it is still believed to have been written by a Jewish author not long after the Jewish war against the Romans. It can be argued thus because the author seems to parallel the Jews' plight while exiled in Babylon to the current predicament concerning Rome.³⁷⁵ In addition, the book is believed to have been originally composed in Hebrew, and since the focus is on Jerusalem, it indicates that the work was formed in Israel.³⁷⁶ This was not always the case, though; it was also debated during the nineteenth century whether or not the book was originally written in Greek or in a Semitic language. Due to the work of Julius Wellhausen, it is popularly believed that the book was in fact originally composed in Hebrew but was then later translated early on into Greek and from there into several other ancient languages by Christian groups. These early works of Hebrew and Greek are no longer in extant.³⁷⁷

One of the most intriguing aspects to the book resides in its basic characteristics and the purpose behind which the book was written. The primary concern of the book lies in understanding the traumatic experience the Jews had just underwent through the destruction of their once great temple in 70CE and also the religious problem which arose because of this.³⁷⁸ The book ironically, though, was heavily circulated amongst Christians, and this can be seen by the fact that although the original Hebrew and Greek translations are lost, the secondary translations from Greek into Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and fragments from

³⁷⁴ Harrington 1999, 189.

³⁷⁵ Hayman 2001, 775.

³⁷⁶ Harrington 1999, 190.

³⁷⁷ deSilva 2002, 329.

³⁷⁸ Stone 1990, 707.

Georgian and Coptic translations are still in existence which were composed by earlier Christian groups.³⁷⁹ The book's importance is fascinating because it remains unknown what significant impact it had on the Jewish community because the tradition seems to have been lost at a very early date; though, it thrived and experienced wide circulation amongst the Christian churches.³⁸⁰ There is some speculation as to which social group the book may be attributed, and there is some information in the book that indicates the importance it may have had on a particular group in Judaism. The book speaks heavily of two different groups: the “people” and the “wise;” during this time of the Diaspora, a new social-structure was forming. There remain some rabbinic texts, which speak of a small group of sages led by Yohanan ben Zakkai who escaped from Jerusalem during the siege and received permission from Rome to establish an academy for the study of the law. This group became a very influential establishment in the Jewish community, and in the next century they helped form the social and political order in Judaism based on rabbinic authority to “expound and administer the law.”³⁸¹ It is quite interesting to see the commonalities between this group and the book of 4 Ezra, but it is still puzzling as to why the book dropped out early on from Jewish tradition, but seemed to thrive among early Christian churches.

Basic Plot Summary of 4 Ezra in Connection with the Messiah

The book of 4 Ezra is located in the book of 2 Esdras chapters 3-14 and is an apocalyptic writing consisting of seven visions brought to Ezra by the angel Uriel who interprets the visions and what they mean in context. A large part of the book pertains to three dialogues between Ezra and Uriel (3:1-5:20; 5:21-6:34; 6:35-9:25) where Ezra raises many hard theological questions concerning the exile and the Jews' predicament, and Uriel answers these questions with predictions about the future and the different signs that will indicate the beginning of the end and

³⁷⁹ deSilva 2002, 329.

³⁸⁰ Stone 1990, 705.

³⁸¹ Hayman 2001, 776.

the start of the “age to come.”³⁸² These first three visions all follow essentially the same pattern of Ezra's prayer, a dialogue between Ezra and Uriel, a vision, and an interpretation. The third dialogue, though, is a bit different because it does not have a vision and therefore no interpretation.³⁸³ The three discourses are followed by three dreams and their interpretations: the mourning woman (9:26-10:59), the eagle and the lion (11:1-12:51) and the man from the sea (13:1-58). The book then concludes with God's instruction to Ezra to write the law, which had been lost during the Babylonian exile (14:1-48).³⁸⁴

The main focus of this section will be concerning visions five (11:1-21:51) and six (13:1-58) pertaining to the eagle and the lion and the man rising from the sea. These two visions play a very important role in determining the theological significance of the book as well as seeing how the author portrayed a messianic figure to come. Vision five begins with Ezra falling into a deep sleep and dreaming on an eagle emerging from the sea possessing twelve feathered wings and three heads which “spread its wings over the whole earth (11:1,2). The rest of the chapters consist of Ezra seeing the eagle evolve over time gaining and losing various wings, and in the end three heads rise up as rulers with the middle one ultimately gaining total control. It is agreed amongst many scholars such as Hayman, Stone, and Nickelsburg that this part of the book is heavily modeled after the book of Daniel. The book itself even attests to this, but claims that it has a different view in mind: “The eagle that you saw coming from the sea is the fourth kingdom that appeared in a vision to your brother Daniel. But it was not explained to him as I now explain to you or have explained it” (12:11,12). Be that as it may, this fourth kingdom, which rose from the sea represents the rule of the Roman Empire, which will “spread its wings over the whole earth.” It is hard to pinpoint exactly which emperor goes with which wing in the dream,

³⁸² Harrington 1999, 188.

³⁸³ Hayman 2001, 782.

³⁸⁴ Harrington 1999, 188.

and there also lies a problem with the vision in the fact that there seems to be too many wings to match with up with known Roman emperors and usurpers before the author's writing. Be that as it may, scholars do agree that the first wing represents Julius Caesar, the second wing is Caesar Augustus, and the three heads are the Flavian emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian with Vespasian being the dominant head.³⁸⁵ The highlight of this dream comes with the lion that comes up “out of the forest and roaring and speaking to the eagle and reproving him for his unrighteousness” (12:31). The messiah is depicted here through the lion, which is serving as a parallel to the lion from the tribe of Judah, which depicts him as a descendent from the family of David, but the author portrays him as preexistent.³⁸⁶ This messianic figure is charged in God's mercy to “set free the remnant of [his] people” (12:34). This figure functions differently from the figure portrayed in Daniel, though, but he resembles the Chosen One in the Parables of Enoch.³⁸⁷

Vision six begins as the fifth with Ezra falling into a deep slumber and dreaming of another messianic figure, but this time he is a man rising from the sea. This character's title and super-human abilities have been compared to those of the Son of Man in 1 Enoch and other such New Testament references.³⁸⁸ This vision is again another adaption from Daniel 7 but it takes a striking difference. The Daniel 7 passage is playing off a Babylonian creation motif with Marduk (God) conquering a sea monster that rises from the depths of the sea. In this passage a “figure of a man” rose from the “heart of the sea” instead of this beast (13:3), and this eschatological hero is being equated to the Son of Man figure in Daniel 7:13,14 as well as 1 Enoch 37-71 acting as a judge and ruler. The difference from this vision compared to the fifth

³⁸⁵ Hayman 2001, 786.

³⁸⁶ Nickelsburg 2005, 275.

³⁸⁷ Nickelsburg 2005, 275.

³⁸⁸ Stone 1990, 715.

vision is that the figure is never called “messiah,” but instead he possesses the title son/servant of God like an Israelite king.³⁸⁹ The character is also known as God's Son throughout the passage who will destroy the multitude and gather together the remnant and rule over them.

The Birth of Evil and the Rise of a Messiah

As was stated previously, a main focus of the writing consists of dealing with this problem of the Jews' suffering at this time in relation to the destruction of the temple and being forced out of Jerusalem. Throughout the vision Ezra questions Uriel trying to understand why such a thing has happened to the Jews. It appears throughout that it is due to Israel's sin that they are entrapped in this current condition; this is a “standard biblical and early Jewish explanation of the exile.”³⁹⁰ Ezra pleads to God's mercy and claims that Israel has not sinned as greatly as Babylon (Rome) and should, therefore, not be dealt with as severely, but this sinful nation who oppresses them should be punished in their place. 4 Ezra clearly spells out how sin originated in Adam which is primarily discussed in the first vision. This tendency to sin was inherited from Adam and Ezra even steps out on a limb and blames God for being unjust for dealing with the Jews in such a manner. This is unparalleled in any apocalypses and could possibly be a reflection of the author's own inner-turmoil.³⁹¹ Throughout this book while dealing with the problem of suffering, the author focuses heavily on the obedience to the law and the Jews' plight is due to the fact that they have disobeyed God's commandments. This heavy emphasis should not be overstated and believed to be a “degeneration of a covenant religion into a legalistic religion.”³⁹²

³⁸⁹ Hayman 2001, 787.

³⁹⁰ Harrington 1999, 202.

³⁹¹ Stone 1990, 708.

³⁹² deSilva 2002, 342.

Since the Jews have been cast out of Jerusalem and their temple has been destroyed, what is to come of this once great nation? The author attempts to deal with this issue by raising up a messianic figure who will save them from the Roman Empire. This messianic figure is a very interesting character because of all the parallels associated with him. As was said earlier, he can be compared to a Davidic messiah ruling over the nation of Israel, but he is also associated with the Son of Man figure in Daniel and I Enoch. Another place in which he can be compared is to the wisdom descriptions in passages such as Sirach 24. It explains the preexistence of wisdom as does 4 Ezra's claim that "the Most High has kept [him] until the end of days, who will arise from the offspring of David" (12:32). This can also be seen in Christian writing such as in John 1:1 where "in the beginning was the word." In all three tellings (wisdom, Son of God, word) they all existed prior to creation and they all came to serve a purpose to mankind in order to redeem them and save them from their current predicament. And in all three, they left mankind after their mission was accomplished. Wisdom could not find a place to dwell among the tents of Jacob, the Son of God in 4 Ezra dies, and the word, which became flesh died on a cross. As there are comparisons to the three passages, there are also differences. Wisdom never died, she just left the world to dwell once again in heaven. The 4 Ezra's Son of God did not die on behalf of mankind as a redemptive act whereas John's "word" did. This is a sort of ironic point that the Son of God would die with no redemptive properties or any real significance. It could be postulated that maybe the author of 4 Ezra was making a dig at early Christians who were trying to associate Christ as the Jewish messiah. The author's intent could be to show that even though Jesus died on the cross and claimed to do so for the salvation of mankind, he was not in fact the messiah. He died and that was it.

Conclusion

The book of 2 Esdras is a compelling read which engages the reader to think more critically concerning why we may suffer. The author seems to have struggled with this issue in relation to his people because it is a constant stream, which runs throughout. His conclusion ultimately ends with: Obey God's commandments. The author heavily emphasizes the law/Torah, but he also leaves room open for a messianic redeemer. But in order to be saved the person must also be sure to be among the righteous, the ones who obey the law. Overall, the book focuses on the importance of obedience.

Now what should we take away concerning the lion or the Son of God figure presented in the text? Are they intended to be Jesus or some other figure? It most likely is not the Christian messiah Jesus because there is not a heavy emphasis on the figure's death as a redemptive act for the sins of mankind. The figure, though, does resemble the actions of I Enoch's Son of Man character who redeems the Chosen Ones who obey God's law and those who remain loyal to him. Even though it is a stretch to assume all these messianic figures are all pointing to the same person (like Jesus), it is intriguing to examine the comparisons between the authors usage because it may give us an idea of the current mindset at the times in which they were written. By doing so, we may be able to see a trend running through Jewish thought, which may lead to a better understanding of the development of the Christians' view of Christ.

E The Christology of 1 Enoch

1 Enoch 37-71 is commonly known as The Book of Parables or the Similitudes and it is part of a genre called apocalyptic literature. This term 'apocalyptic' is derived from Greek meaning an unveiling or revelation; in general, these pieces of literature can be characterized by the revelation of secrets of this world by an angelic mediator, and they are usually written pseudonymously, attributed to someone earlier in history in order to give the work more authority.³⁹³ The Similitudes of Enoch is a highly disputed book based on its date, authorship, and the titles appointed to certain characters in the narrative. The main focus of debate among scholars is around the protagonist of the revelations who goes by various titles: the Righteous One, the Anointed One, the Chosen One, and the Son of Man. It is highly disputed if all of these titles are to be attributed to one figure, or if some or all act symbolically describing different topics. One in particular stands out amongst the rest because of its connections to the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels pertaining to Jesus. This figure is The Son of Man.

A General Discussion of the Book of Parables

The Similitudes is comprised of five sections consisting of a prologue (Ch. 37), three separate parables (Ch. 38-44; 45-57; 58-69), and an epilogue (Ch. 70-71).³⁹⁴ These main categories are broken into different parts discussing various topics. The Prologue begins with the introduction of the central figure of discussion: 'The Chosen One.' The first parable relates the information about the coming judgment which will be executed by the main figure, and the second parable explains where this judgment and punishment will take place. The third and final

³⁹³ Harding 2003, 130.

³⁹⁴ Olson 2003, 915.

parable is the flood and final judgment and the enthronement of The Chosen One. The Book of Parables concludes with Enoch's final ascension into heaven and the unveiling of the Son of Man.

“The vision of wisdom that Enoch saw” is the compelling first words of the introduction to The Book of Parables (37:1a). This is a fitting start to what follows because it encompasses the overarching theme of the rest of the prologue. The focus of wisdom can be seen throughout the entire work, and it is intriguing how the first presentation of The Chosen One is also associated with wisdom. Through Enoch, God planned on revealing all for “this is the beginning of the words of wisdom” which are “the words of the Holy One” (37:2). In the prologue, God asserts his plan to reveal all through Enoch. God proclaimed, “let us not withhold the beginning of wisdom” and this “wisdom” mentioned is the first glimpse of the main topic of discussion: The Chosen One (37:3). This parallelism to wisdom and a messianic figure is not only seen in 1 Enoch, but it can also be traced throughout the Hebrew Bible in Proverbs 8 as well as in Apocryphal works such as Sirach 24. Wisdom in these two contexts does not necessarily point to a Messianic figure in particular, but there are similar phrases used to describe them, which are also used when speaking of the Messiah in other passages. These commonalities will be discussed further when speaking about the connections between various works and the Messiah.

The next three sections of I Enoch are categorized as “parables,” which show and explain the visions given to Enoch by The Holy One. These parables utilize the term “Son of Man” and other derivations as an “eschatological, judicial figure that is central to the three visions.”³⁹⁵ These parables are in essence the journey of Enoch who is accompanied by one known as 'the angel of peace' who is providing Enoch with these revelations about The Chosen One, the judgment, the punishment, and the restoration of the chosen. Each vision is characterized by a

³⁹⁵ Walck 2007, 299.

journey, vision, seer's question, and an interpretation by an accompanying angel.³⁹⁶ A similar motif can be seen in the *Inferno* with Virgil escorting Dante through Hell explaining different visions and scenarios and their true meaning.

The first of the three parables is the start of the true revelation of 'The Righteous One,' who is also known as The Chosen One. With the coming of the Righteous One, "light appears to the righteous and chosen who dwell on earth," and this is oddly similar to the beginning of John in the Gospels (38:2). John relates Christ as "The light" who "shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it" which is similar to the light appearing to those who are dwelling on the earth (John 1:5). It makes no mention of non-believers or the soon-to-be-mentioned rulers and kings who persecute the faithful to God. It appears as if John and the author of 1 Enoch have a similar mindset when it comes to this topic of "light" and a "chosen" savior. They both employ a savior motif associated with light. After the introduction of our main figure, the narrative quickly discusses the coming judgment, which will be done through the Chosen One. The passage continues further to discuss the descent of Angels, which is similar to Genesis 6. Then comes Enoch's first ascent into heaven where he is introduced to the Chosen One. This section discusses the descent of Wisdom to dwell among men, which can be seen as a parallel to Proverbs, Sirach, and Wisdom of Solomon, yet there are some differences. The similar word usage brings a messianic figure into contact with the wisdom tradition of various books.

Following the introduction of the Righteous One, the second parable begins "concerning those who deny the name of the dwelling of the holy ones and of the Lord of Spirits" (45:1). The second parable commences similar to the first in the respect that both begin "with a poetic introduction that anticipates the judgment and its consequences and refers to the Chosen One."³⁹⁷

³⁹⁶ Nickelsburg 2005, 248.

³⁹⁷ Nickelsburg 2005, 250.

As we read about those who are against the Lord of Spirits and how they will be judged by the Righteous One, we discover that “the dwelling place of the sinners is neither heaven nor earth but apparently a kind of non-place.”³⁹⁸ This introduction is a gloomy one, and speaks of the punishment of the ones who persecuted and rejected the righteous. Once again, a connection with John can be made with this 'non-place' when Enoch claims “darkness will be their dwelling;” this aptly can be seen in John 12:35,36 when Jesus is talking to his disciples about who is this 'Son of Man.' He clearly associates the Son of Man with the light and himself in contrast to those who walk in darkness whom “do not know where [they] are going.” This parallel interestingly enough shows some common influence, which may lie between the work of 1 Enoch and the Gospel of John. This leads into the next section of the second parable and the “blood of the righteous one [which] had been required in the presence of the Lord of Spirits” (47:4). There is much dispute on this topic amongst scholars on who is referenced as 'the righteous one.' Many scholars believe it is collectively the remnant of Israel, but Olson differs from most scholars believing this understanding does not make sense. He believes that this is referencing the 'Suffering Servant' motif in Isaiah and that it is illogical that the author would be switching between plurals and collective singulars in this passage.³⁹⁹ Many disagree with Olson and believe there is not a reference to Isaiah's suffering servant in the Similitudes.

The third and final parable is one “concerning the righteous and concerning the chosen” (58:1). Once again, the enthronement of the Chosen One is described as presiding over his Great Judgment of the kings and rulers who will plead for mercy, but they will not receive it. These men will come to the realization “their wealth can do them no good and [they] confess their guilt,

³⁹⁸ Olson 2003, 918.

³⁹⁹ Olson 2003, 919.

even though they realize that they have no hope of escaping punishment.”⁴⁰⁰ The righteous ones will be rewarded for their perseverance and their loyalty to the Lord of Spirits whereas the rest will be punished. The parable concludes with a reference to Noah and the coming of the flood which will be the ultimate judgment which is comparable to 2 Peter 2:4 who uses a similar motif of the flood of Noah as a judgment of men.

The epilogue in the Book of Parables concludes all of Enoch's experiences and it contains his final ascent to dwell in heaven. “He is raised on the chariots of the wind,” which is similar to how Elijah came to be with God, and he dwelled among the righteous. Here, Enoch is claimed to be the Son of Man which has been referenced throughout which is synonymous with 'The Chosen One' and 'The Righteous One' which is strikingly odd. There is much debate on this topic concerning whether or not it was original to the Similitudes, and this idea will be further examined later.

The Date of the Similitudes, Authorship, Interpolations and Authenticity

The time period in which 1 Enoch was written is highly disputed, and it is important to know when it was composed. Since the book itself is attributed to Enoch, it may seem natural to assume the book was indeed written by him, but there is no real evidence that attests to this. A very important find in regards to 1 Enoch was its discovery amongst other manuscripts from Qumran Cave IV, but, unfortunately, the Parables of Enoch were not part of the finding.⁴⁰¹ Also, this part of 1 Enoch is not extant in either the Semitic original nor in any Greek translation; the only surviving piece is in Ethiopic.⁴⁰² This makes the book much more difficult to date because of the lack of an original manuscript. Nicklesburg, on the other hand, believes just because the Similitudes are not present in the Qumran documents does not prove anything about the date of

⁴⁰⁰ Olson 2003, 923.

⁴⁰¹ Black 1992, 146.

⁴⁰² VanderKam 1992, 177.

the work.⁴⁰³ So for him, the missing section of the Similitudes does not play a significant role in dating the original writing. This has been highly debated between scholars as to when the book may have been written because it would make a serious impact on how we read the Gospels. As has been briefly noted above, there are some similarities amongst the gospels and 1 Enoch, so it is only logical to assume there is some borrowing or influence between the two works. After all, it may not be too far-fetched seeing as both appear to be drawing from similar sources such as Daniel, Isaiah, Proverbs, and other wisdom literature. According to Walck, “If the Book of Parables postdates the Gospels, then it could not have had an influence on the Gospels. But if it can be shown to predate them, then its possible influence is worthy of study.”⁴⁰⁴ Most scholars such as Black and Walck believe the piece was written between the first century BCE and the first century CE. Collins suggests the author is Jewish and that the work was written prior to 70CE because Enoch is identified as the “Son of Man.” He argues that if the author knew the close connection between the “Son of Man” and a Christological title, then he would not have given this character a central role. It is not clear as to when the book was written, and the author's background is another aspect of the work, which remains a mystery.

Depending on when some scholars date the Similitudes determines what background the author is said to have in relation to their writings because scholars are not positive what parts are true to the original and which may be interpolations by either scribes and/or later Christians. Borsch claims there is a growing community of scholars who believe the work to be fully Jewish and was written before 100 and some even before 70CE.⁴⁰⁵ Black, though, believes the work was originally a Jewish work composed at the turn of the millennium, but there was later Christian “editing” that occurred as the book was used. Collins argues one possibility of the

⁴⁰³ Nicklesburg 2005, 254.

⁴⁰⁴ Walck 2007, 300.

⁴⁰⁵ Borsch 1992, 141.

author dubbing Enoch as the 'Son of Man' as a response to early Christians giving the title to Jesus. He claims this identity would in turn render the Christological title associated with Jesus as false, and we should follow the example of Enoch since he was the one exalted to this position.⁴⁰⁶ It should be noted that the book of Jude references 1 Enoch, and this shows some Christians held the work to be influential. Even though this early Christian source sites 1 Enoch, “by the fourth century the book began falling out of favor in the church.”⁴⁰⁷ Also, the part of Jude which references the book is not even from the Similitudes, so this does not really help us with dating this particular section, but it does point us in a direction where some speculation can happen. If the book was falling out of credibility in the church by the fourth century, it can be assumed that any Christian interpolation, which may have occurred happened prior to this time period. The book must also have been in its final revisions and there was a consensus on what the book said. From there, it is still hard to tell whether or not the book was written prior to the Gospel writers.

Not only is the author's background in question, but also there is much dispute over chapters 70 and 71 and their authenticity to the original text since these two chapters appear out of place. Most scholars seem to speculate that these two chapters are in fact later additions to the piece. VanderKam believes that the chapters are additions. He first claims the introduction and conclusion to the piece do not fit the three-parable formula, and the two chapters are also repetitive of what has already been said in the revelations. The second point VanderKam makes is that the Son of Man figure is established before existence and Enoch is a descendant of Adam making him exist after creation.⁴⁰⁸ Collins also seems to distrust the authenticity of chapters 70 and 71 in the original text because he believes there is a clear distinction between Enoch and the

⁴⁰⁶ Collins 1998, 191.

⁴⁰⁷ Olson 2003, 904.

⁴⁰⁸ VanderKam 1992, 177.

Son of Man throughout the book. In addition, he also claims there is no other apocalyptic piece where the central figure fails to recognize themselves. Although not apocalyptic, there are other pieces of Jewish and Christian literature, which do reference the inability of key figures to not recognize central people. For example, in the book of Tobit the angel Raphael's true identity remains a mystery to everyone until the end of the story. Similarly, some of the disciples do not recognize Christ upon his initial return from his resurrection. A character who should have been clearly distinguished from the beginning escapes the notice of those who were closest to him. These examples are not exemplary in regards to a visionary failing to recognize themselves, but they do show some form of a failure to perceive an obvious situation used by various authors.

The Son of Man

As the third parable concludes, it is alarming Enoch is dubbed as the Son of Man which has been referenced throughout the parables as a savior to the righteous and the one's loyal to God. Although Enoch has been proclaimed as this Son of Man figure, many tend to believe this is a reference to some messiah that is to come. Although it is a stretch to assume the author of 1 Enoch was undoubtedly speaking of Christ as this messiah, it is fascinating to compare author's use of 'The Son of Man' along with its variations, wisdom in Scripture, Hebrew Bible references to a coming messiah, and the way in which Christ is described in the Gospels. The first place the author of 1 Enoch truly expounds on wisdom is in 42:1,2: "Wisdom did not find a place where she might dwell, so her dwelling was in heaven. Wisdom went forth to dwell among the sons of men, but she did not find a dwelling." This is similar to Sirach 24:8 when God commanded wisdom to come to earth and dwell in the Tent of Jacob, but it is different in the fact that wisdom did not find a place to settle in 1 Enoch. This can also be paralleled to John 1:8 when "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." In all three, we can see a similar theme: a

figure being sent from God in order that the people might prosper; not only this, but we can see how the origins of wisdom and the messiah are all connected: they are pre-existent with God. In 1 Enoch 48:3, Sirach 24:9, Proverbs 8:22, and John 1:1,2 all exemplify the existence of wisdom/word/messiah before the beginning of time. This shows that some connection may exist between all the different writings; there may be some commonality between them all since these are just two examples on how they are all similar. Be that as it may, “this suggests that possibly John knew the concepts and some of the characteristics of the Son of Man in the Parables, but he does not use them in such a way as to posit the direct influence of the Book of Parables on the Gospel of John.”⁴⁰⁹ It is likely that whichever writing came first influenced or was known by the author of the second, but that does not necessarily mean that there is a direct connection between the two; they very well could still be independent thoughts of each another. Not only are the origins of their prominent figures alike, but all of them pull on Hebrew Bible references, which are commonly associated with the messiah.

There are many Hebrew Bible references in 1 Enoch, which are commonly used by Christians to point towards a messianic figure, which leads ultimately to Christ. It must also be noted that not all the different figures in the Hebrew Bible were already understood as a form of a messianic figure; what is clear is that both 1 Enoch and the gospel writers did attribute a single messianic figure status to these different figures. These range from various messianic depictions. One such reference is in 1 Enoch 46:1 when the author is discussing when he “saw one who had a head of days, and his head was like white wool” which is the same wording used in Daniel 7:9.⁴¹⁰ The author also makes very good use of the book of Isaiah when the Son of Man is named in chapters 48 and 49. 1 Enoch 49:3 is paralleled to Isaiah 11:2 and 1 Enoch 49:4 to

⁴⁰⁹ Walack 2007, 336.

⁴¹⁰ Nicklelsburg & VanderKam 2004, 5.

Isaiah 42:1; these usages “expand on the call of the servant in Isaiah.”⁴¹¹ The author relies most heavily on passages from Isaiah when referencing the Son of Man specifically when he is named and in his judgment of the wicked. This use of 'The Chosen One' can be seen in all three of the parables and “it is drawn from the Servant Songs of Isaiah. The names themselves make it clear that there is a close bond between the 'chosen' community on earth and this heavenly figure.”⁴¹² According to Olson, there must be some connection between this heavy reliance on Isaiah's terminology for 'The Son of Man' and the reference to the holy community of God. Not only does the author pull terminology from Isaiah, but he also does so from Psalms to proclaim a more Davidic Messiah. In 1 Enoch 48:10 the kings and rulers “have denied the Lord of Spirits and his Anointed One” and also in Psalm 2:2 “The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.” The word usage is almost identical, so it can be seen throughout 1 Enoch this use of Hebrew Bible imagery of a coming Messiah had been developing.

Discrepancies Concerning this Son of Man Figure

The topic of the Son of Man figure continues to be debated more and more amongst scholars and they all seem to come to different conclusions based on the same information that is provided from the text. Opinions on the matter range from whether or not the use of *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* is functioning as a title or if it is just used as a various form of 'some man.' The many instances in which it is used in 1 Enoch and the gospels are interesting to compare because it may give us an insight as to how we are suppose to take this peculiar phrase. It is also important to delve into Jewish thought of the time and whether or not some form of a messianic figure was

⁴¹¹ Nickelsburg 2005, 251.

⁴¹² Olson 2003, 917.

believed to exist, and, if so, what type of savior would this messiah would be plays a significant role in understanding the uses of this phrase.

The most commonly used reference to the Son of Man comes from Daniel 7:13 and 14: “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of ever language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.” The phrase used here 'one like a son of man' has been the main topic of discussion as the influence behind 1 Enoch and the gospels. Borsch believes this conception of the Son of Man figure is being used as a description rather than a title in the book of Daniel.⁴¹³ He postulates that when Jesus used this phrase 'son of man' based on the Daniel text, he meant it more as “a man in my position” or “a man such as I” rather than any eschatological or messianic title.⁴¹⁴ Later, though, he develops the saying as possibly evolving into a title based on the definite Greek usage, which the gospels use. The use of the definite article is believed to possibly allude to some special emphasis, which readers are to regard as significant.⁴¹⁵ Collins claims that there is no room for doubt concerning the individual nature of the 'Son of Man' from the community in the Parables.⁴¹⁶ Maurice Casey claims to have derived the original Aramaic which Jesus would have spoken from the Greek and attempts to prove that ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, when derived from Aramaic, is just a descriptive phrase meaning 'a human-being,' and he does so through six various examples in the gospels.⁴¹⁷ He argues the phrase in Greek is not known in previous documents and it can only be fully grasped when you

⁴¹³ Borsch 1992, 131.

⁴¹⁴ Borsch 1992, 133.

⁴¹⁵ Borsch 1992, 134.

⁴¹⁶ Collins 1998, 185.

⁴¹⁷ Casey 2007, 116-143.

look at it in the Aramaic; and since the translation from the Aramaic to the Greek did not cause any difficulty in comprehension, then he claims it must be representative of an Aramaic expression.⁴¹⁸

This argument by Casey appears to be weak due to the fact he is deriving this from a Greek text. It is not known for sure if these are the words used by Christ verbatim, and to make such a claim as an absolute seems faulty. The phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου may not have been misunderstood because the audience to whom the various authors were writing may have understood it as a title because of the definite article. Not everyone who read the manuscripts would have been fluent in Aramaic because many were Gentiles. They would have had access to the gospel, but that does not mean that they would not have been familiar with the Aramaic usage. Ultimately, the use of the “Son of Man” is functioning as a title in 1 Enoch as well as the gospels because to assume it means just a “human-being” does not make much sense in a lot of the contexts. To use the phrase numerous times in the Similitudes and have it mean 'a man' seems misleading, and the importance of exalting Enoch to this status would have been anticlimactic and almost comical because he is of course a son of a man and is indeed a mortal. If Collins is correct in assuming a Jewish author wrote the piece in order to combat Christian thinking, then it makes perfect sense why ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is better seen as a title rather than just a descriptive phrase.

The Connection Between the Similitudes and the New Testament

Making the connection between The Similitudes and the gospels is probably the most crucial discussion topic that arises when comparing the two texts. The argument concerning the Son of Man is important, but it clearly evolved during this time period and must have had some

⁴¹⁸ Casey 2007, 116-117.

influence on the two pieces, for it is most likely that one text influenced the other in the course of their creation. Although it is a large assumption that the author of 1 Enoch was undoubtedly speaking of Jesus as this messiah, it is compelling to compare the books.

The use of the Son of Man in both the gospels and the Similitudes is fascinating because of all the similarities. The various words used in association with these messianic figures and wisdom motifs are also a cornerstone in attempting to understand what the Gospel writers and the author of 1 Enoch are trying to accomplish. Walck makes an astute point that “The Son of Man is temporarily on earth to reveal God's power and desire to impart abundant life. Thus heavenly origins, earthly activity, and revelation of God are characteristics of the Son of Man.”⁴¹⁹ The wisdom writers' description of Wisdom, the Similitudes' portrayal of the Son of Man, and the Gospel's presentation of Christ all reflect this keen observation. They all descended from Heaven by God's command, dwelt amongst the living to give God's instruction, and they all left to dwell back in the heavens with the righteous. It may be coincidental, but it seems more logical that each of them was pulling from a source as the tradition of a Messiah evolved. Also, John specifically seems to be in close connection with the Similitudes seeing as they both depict their Son of Man as “being both heavenly and earthly, divine and human.”⁴²⁰ The two authors may also be seen as playing off of earlier Jewish beliefs of a Messiah to come. Although its final form dates from the eighth century CE, the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* commentary on Genesis 3:1-20 shows a belief in a savior to come.⁴²¹ This tradition most likely would have evolved much sooner than the final completion date. According to James Dunn, he believes “the full spectrum of eschatological expectation within Judaism, so far as we know it, should be borne in mind, including the visions in which no recognized or potential messianic

⁴¹⁹ Walck 2007, 333.

⁴²⁰ Walck 2007, 335.

⁴²¹ Harding 2003, 152-53.

figure appears.” He seems to lean more on the side that there is no messianic imagery or belief in Judaism in reference to the Daniel, Psalms, I Enoch, Sirach, and other such writings.⁴²²

Conclusion

This topic of the Son of Man and its relevance to both 1 Enoch and the gospels is an intriguing topic, which seems to have many more questions than it does answers. It is apparent that it is difficult to determine when the book was written, but it seems that most scholars agree that it was written during first century CE. This is most likely the easiest question to answer because the author's background, the use of the 'Son of Man' title, and its possible influence on the gospels are highly debated.

It seems most logical the author was indeed Jewish and wrote around the first century. The writing was probably altered from its original form by both Christians and scribes. It seems most logical that it was written partly before the gospels and partly after. The connections to the wisdom motifs are most likely those of Jewish authorship well-versed in the Apocrypha and the Hebrew Bible, and the author creatively molded the work of Daniel 7 and Isaiah into his own creation. VanderKam makes a compelling statement that “the writer of the Similitudes did not just borrow; he transformed... [and he] drew from other messianic passages in the scriptures.”⁴²³ Christian interpolation most likely occurred when the document fell into their possession, and it can most vividly be seen in the light motifs, which appears to be drawn from the Gospel of John. Collins provides the most logical explanation for the awkwardness of chapters 70 and 71. It seems best to assume a scribe or even possibly the author wrote the conclusion to combat this view of the 'Son of Man' being used to describe Jesus as the Messiah. Enoch being exalted to this status, though, does not mean we are to follow in his footsteps per se, since so little is known

⁴²² Dunn 1992, 370.

⁴²³ VanderKam 1992, 188, 191.

about this figure from Genesis. He also does not show any exemplary characteristics in the Similitudes, so it seems odd if the author truly intended on the reader to assimilate their lives with that of Enoch.

The author of I Enoch draws upon many figures, expectations and scriptures in order to craft his Son of Man. This figure is exemplified through the wisdom traditions as well as other messianic symbols. The author pieced him together not only through wisdom motifs, but also through a Davidic Messiah from Psalms and the Servant from Isaiah. These connections can also be seen in the gospels, but it seems most reasonable the two works are independent of one another. Although they share connections in various motifs and wording, it could be argued that when the Christians found the document they made their own interpolations in order to show a basic trend running through Judaism to support their claim that Jesus is the Christ.

Although Christians may have had a hand in altering the work to be a bit more “Christian” or harmonious with the gospels, it could also be argued that the tradition of a messianic figure had evolved in Judaism. It may not be entirely clear that the “one like a son of man” in Daniel is a Messianic figure, but it is hard to believe that the figure is only a man of no real importance. The wording depicts him as an exalted person God chose to do his duty. Also, the evolution of Judaism during the diaspora and the writings of the Apocrypha also could be rendered to be seen as works expecting a coming messiah. The works of Prov 8:30, WisSol 9:4, and Sir 24:5 all seem to point to a messianic figure, or at the very least similar terminologies are used for both. Also, as mention before, the Jewish commentators of the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* exemplify some belief in a coming savior. It is not hard to believe that the Jews had various beliefs concerning a savior, probably more Davidic, to come during Roman rule to save them. The great acts of the Maccabees can potentially attest to the hope of a coming savior, or, if

anything, a messianic age. The early church was not some radical group who split off from Judaism with no sense of a savior or messianic figure, but, instead, “the earliest tradents within the Christian churches [were] preservers more than innovators, as seeking to transmit, retell, explain, interpret, and elaborate, but not to create *de nova*.”⁴²⁴

⁴²⁴ Dunn 1992, 371.

F The *Theios Aner*

One significant discussion relating to Christology has centered around the *Theios Aner* concept, which arose during the Hellenistic period of history. This term eventually crept into Christological developments, and many tried to make comparisons between these Hellenistic ‘divine-man’ models with the person of Jesus. The arguments centered primarily around the miracles of Jesus because these paralleled the Hellenistic sources most aptly. Carl Holladay purports, “it is equally important to notice the function which it plays in such discussions, viz. its role in establishing a Hellenistic origin not only of many of the Gospel miracle stories themselves but also of numerous motifs which are felt to have been added to originally Palestinian miracle stories.”⁴²⁵ The second emphasis of the debate revolved around titles since they have played a large role in the study of Christology. Specifically, the title υἱὸς θεοῦ played a crucial role in this development because, in antiquity, that it was a sign of divine personhood. Since Jesus was claimed to be the Son of God, scholars logically took this as an adoption of Hellenistic influence.

The argument presented for this influence progressed heavily due to the diaspora of the Jews and the Hellenization of the world. Since the *Theios Aner* model was so prevalent and popular worldwide, many believed it began to make heavy impacts on Jewish life and thought. Eventually, patriarchal figures, such as Moses, attained a “divine-man” status, and, so, by the turn of the millennium, it was a common occurrence for Jews to present their ‘heroes’ to non-Jews as *Theios Aner*. Thus, in conclusion, when Christianity sprung from the roots of Judaism,

⁴²⁵ Holladay 1977, 8.

running concurrently with Hellenism, it was commonly held that the church was strongly influenced more by Hellenistic thought rather than Jewish because of this progression.⁴²⁶

Although this argument seems well founded, Carl Holladay astutely establishes a number of key problem with this theory. First and foremost, the term never occurs in the Septuagint nor does it surface within the writings of the New Testament.⁴²⁷ Secondly, Holladay claims that the term in scholarship, in almost every situation, refers to the “divine-man” as a Hellenistic phenomenon. The strongest argument that Holladay presents resides in his discussion that

This tacit assumption that theios aner constitutes a pure strain, as it were, accounts for its function as a constant against which variables are measured, specifically its function in measuring relative degrees of Hellenization, i.e. the process in which a clearly defined constant (Hellenism) influences a clearly defined variable (e.g. Judaism). The very term Hellenization, of course, presupposes a one-way movement in the direction of the influence, and in the process the constant is assumed to be active, the variable passive.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ Holladay 1977, 16, 17.

⁴²⁷ This can be seen in the description of various Hellenistic figures. Cf. Sanders (1996, 243), “Such a story was told of Alexander the Great: he was the Son of Zeus; his mother was hit by a thunderbolt before she and Philip of Macedonia consummated their marriage, and so Alexander was a hybrid son. No ancient Jew, to our knowledge, used ‘Son of God’ in such a crudely literal sense.”

⁴²⁸ Holladay 1977, 6.

G The Council of Nicaea

The council of Nicaea in 325CE was the catalyst, which led to establishing particularly what orthodoxy was with respect to how the Father and the Son relate to one another. Although it is at this council that much of the developments begin to be finalized, the multifaceted debate emerged on the scene much earlier in church history, and it is crucial to understand the ranging theologies present leading up to this debate. These varied responses to the overarching question, “how does Jesus relate to the Father, God?” arose predominately from the fact that Scripture does not explicitly spell out the relationship between the Father and the Son. This can be aptly witnessed in the fact that there are paradoxical verses in the Bible: some of which speak of Jesus’ intimate connection with the father, whereas there are those, which imply a subordination of the Son to the Father. Unfortunately for Trinitarians, the specific “trinitas” language does not emerge until Tertullian and is present nowhere in the Bible.⁴²⁹ But, that is not to say, though, that there exists no such language that may support Trinitarian thought.

In this appendix, I wish to cover a wide range of topics that ultimately lead to the development of orthodox Trinitarian beliefs climaxing in 325 at Nicaea. This will be done through a diachronic examination of the diverse thoughts arising at the time, beginning with an examination of the New Testament, and then discussing briefly how it reveals the relation between God and Jesus. This will then lead into a discussion on the various “heresies,”⁴³⁰ which arose over time based upon the diverse sayings in the New Testament, and some influences from

⁴²⁹ Kelly 1978, 113.

⁴³⁰ This term is obviously very loose because orthodoxy had not yet been established. These heresies were deemed such on a case-to-case basis and were later finalized by the church. The term back then was not nearly as negative and loaded as it is now.

Greek and Jewish Philosophy. Thirdly, Origen must be discussed in relation to this topic since he was such a fountainhead for his time, and he ultimately had a great impact on this discussion influencing both sides. Finally, Nicaea will be examined focusing first on the views of Arius and his followers, then Alexander and his successor Athanasius, and lastly discussing briefly the Nicene Creed and its impact.

The New Testament and Its Presentation of the Trinity

Although Christians today assume the trinity is present in the New Testament, such language is shockingly not present. That being the case, this is why the church fathers and councils struggled with establishing how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit related to one another.⁴³¹ Although Tertullian's 'trinitas' language does not appear in Scripture, there are certain verses, which imply, or rather, which led many church fathers to develop their Trinitarian views. Some such passages are 1 Corinthians 8:6 [Reworking of the *Shema*]; Philippians 2:9-11 [Philippian Hymn]; and Matthew 28:19 [Great Commission].

These three passages play a crucial role in this discussion because the language present in all three have certain overtones, which could imply some form of unity between God and Jesus. 1 Corinthians 8:6, according to Richard Bauckham,⁴³² is a reworking of the *Shema*, which is an expression of the divine identity declaring YHWH as one. If Bauckham is correct concerning the relationship between God and Jesus in this passage, Paul has reworked the *Shema* in such a way, which would incorporate Jesus into the divine identity without, potentially, infringing upon the oneness of God. This is also true for the Philippian Hymn in Philippians 2:9-11. For Larry Hurtado, the Philippian Hymn is a very intricate part of how one should think about Paul's

⁴³¹ What this means is how the three interact with one another. Since the trinity had not yet been deemed as orthodoxy, it was uncertain how God and Jesus were linked together along with the Holy Spirit.

⁴³² For his full argument on Paul's reworking of the *Shema* as an expression of the co-identity of Jesus and God, cf. Bauckham 2008.

Christology. He believes this section of scripture to be “one of the most important early expressions of devotion to Jesus” due to its inclusion of Jesus with God and his function in the godhead.⁴³³ As far as Matthew 28:19, the expression, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” is intriguing because of the use of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The author of Matthew is attempting to show some kind of relationship between the three.⁴³⁴

Separate from these three authors is the evangelist of the Gospel according to John, who arguably has some of the most apparent high Christological claims within the New Testament. Such phrases as “I and the Father are one” (10:30), all the mutual indwelling language and the ἐγὼ εἰμι statements point to an interestingly close relationship between God and Jesus in John’s eyes. The most important, though, of all the contributions the author of the gospel provided for the discussion has to be the focus on ὁ λόγος in the prologue. The λόγος language is widely adopted by many when discussing the nature of Christ and the role he plays within the divine identity. That being the case, this will be further developed later when discussing the influences of Greek and Jewish philosophy.

Although high Christological statements exist, such as the ones previously discussed, there is a converse side of the coin, which seems to speak of a subordination of the Son. Alongside John 10:30, which talks of Jesus being one with God, there are passages such as John 14:28, “the Father is greater than I” and Mark 10:18, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone” that appear to have Jesus in this role of subordination to the Father. That being the case, it is no wonder why diverse camps arose in the first couple centuries of the church that

⁴³³ Hurtado 2005, 7.

⁴³⁴ That is not to imply, though, that the evangelist specifically has Trinitarian thoughts in mind. The basic point being made is that there is such language that exists in the New Testament, which speaks as if there is some connection between the ‘three persons’ of the trinity.

debated this topic of the relationship between the Father and Son. The ecumenical councils are proof of these emerging beliefs because it was necessary that orthodoxy be established in order that heresy would not be permitted to run rampant and corrupt the church. This can aptly be seen in the writings of Athanasius when addressing the Arians: “But let such madness of the Arians be banished; let the truth shine out and show that they are senseless.”⁴³⁵

The Heresies and Influences that Laid the Foundations for Debate

The two heresies that will be discussed are connected with one another because they are two of the main oppositions to Trinitarian theology: Monarchianism and Sabellianism. Both essentially belong under the same heading because they are interconnected on the basis that they share the same basic definition, as they are both forms of modalism. Stephen Tomkins describes modalism as “the belief that Father, Son and Spirit are three roles played by one God,” and that is the backbone of both of these viewpoints.⁴³⁶ Although they both fall under this rubric, their specificities differ from one another. It is important to explore this particular nuanced heresy because it is the opposition view of orthodoxy.

At the genesis of the early church, the term ‘monotheism’ did not exist in their vocabulary, but they still did hold a sense of loyalty to their Jewish roots in a belief in one God. Since this played such a crucial role, many desired to establish Christianity in this mindset. The term they commonly used to describe the Godhead was *μοναρχία* (monarchy). This eventually evolved into a movement where certain theologians latched onto the view of Monarchianism⁴³⁷

⁴³⁵ *Orations Against the Arians* 1.35. From: Anatolios 2004, 92.

⁴³⁶ Tomkins 2006, 249.

⁴³⁷ Monarchianism, in fact, was split into two different versions: Modalistic, which will be the focus of this appendix, and Dynamic (also known as adoptionism). Dynamic Monarchianism was similar to its Modalistic partner in the fact that they both sought to preserve the divine unity, or *μοναρχία*, which was discussed previously. Adoptionism split off with respect to how they viewed Christ. They held that he was only a ‘mere man’ “upon whom God’s Spirit had descended. It was essentially a Christological heresy.” Kelly 1978, 115.

to battle Gnosticism in order to retain the “sole role of the one God of the divine monarchy.”⁴³⁸ There were those, though, who did not side with the monarchians in this debate. Two figures who also asserted themselves as refuters of Gnostic dualism were Hippolytus and Tertullian, who were, ironically slandered as polytheists by modalists because they were the supporters of Trinitarian theology.⁴³⁹ With this in mind, one of the leading figures of Monarchianism was Noetus because he was the first theologian to purport the position.⁴⁴⁰ Hippolytus describes Noetus’ and his followers,’ who were later dubbed “Modalistic Monarchians,” beliefs concerning the incarnation and the Father/Son relationship:

As long as the Father was not begotten or born, he was rightly called the Father; but when it pleased him to submit himself to birth, through birth he became his own Son, not the son of another... What is named Father and Son is in reality one and the same; that is not one from another, but himself from himself, by name called Father and Son, depending on the change of times. It is one who appeared there and submitted to birth from the Virgin and walked as man among men; to those who saw him he made himself known as Son because of the birth that took place; but he is the Father and has not hidden it from those who could grasp it.⁴⁴¹

In summation, this view holds that there is no real distinction other than in name between “Father” and “Son.” The two names basically speak of two different modes of being (Latin, *modi*) of One God. Scripturally, they base this on passages such as John 10:30 (“I and the Father are one”), John 10:38 (“You will know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the father”), and also John 14:8-10 (“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father”).⁴⁴² Eventually, though, as time advanced and opposition mounted against modalism, they were forced to be

⁴³⁸ Dünzl, 2007, 25.

⁴³⁹ Kelly 1978, 110.

⁴⁴⁰ Kelly 1978, 120.

⁴⁴¹ Dünzl, 2007, 27.

⁴⁴² Dünzl, 2007, 27.

more specific concerning their beliefs. The term “Son” became to be understood as the human element of Jesus (σάρξ) and the ‘Father’ was the divine element (πνεῦμα).⁴⁴³

Modalism began to evolve and grow as other thinkers such as Sabellius began to contribute to the heresy. Noetus was the first to introduce Modalism, but it eventually took “a more systematic, philosophical shape” and this was prominently done by Sabellius.⁴⁴⁴ Just like Noetus and other Modalistic heretics, we know about Sabellius predominately from Hippolytus’ *Refutation of all Heresies*.⁴⁴⁵ This “more sophisticated modalism” as J.N.D. Kelly calls it still held to the same basic definition, but was expanded.⁴⁴⁶ Sabellius believed that the Godhead was a monad, which he called *υιοπάτωρ*, and this monad chose to express itself in three different “operations.”⁴⁴⁷

Now that a general understanding of Modalism has been outlined, the influence of philosophy must be discussed. These early figures relied heavily on traditions, which they inherited from Greek and Jewish philosophy; predominately they used language of the word or *λόγος* from these backgrounds. One particularly crucial was the emphasis on the preexistent word found in the Hebrew Bible. This led many of these early figures to believe Jesus, as the incarnate word based on the prologue in John 1, existed before creation.⁴⁴⁸ These beliefs were founded in such claims as “Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham **I Am**” (John 8:58). This unpredicated use of *ἐγὼ εἰμι* is a very high Christological moment in John because Jesus is identifying himself like YHWH does in Exodus 3:14 and in various verses in Second Isaiah. As Irenaeus attempts to reconcile the odd relationship between each members of the trinity, he

⁴⁴³ Dünzl, 2007, 29-30.

⁴⁴⁴ Kelly 1978, 121.

⁴⁴⁵ Dünzl, 2007, 28.

⁴⁴⁶ Kelly 1978, 121.

⁴⁴⁷ Kelly 1978, 122.

⁴⁴⁸ Justin and Irenaeus are both examples of such Fathers who held this belief. Kelly 1978, 148.

comes to the conclusion that the Old Testament theophanies were not appearances of God to man, but instead it was the Word who spoke to the patriarchs.⁴⁴⁹ This is also present in the writings of Justin (Martyr, the Greek Apologist). He argued that the λόγος was distinct in name from the Father as well as numerically. He believed the λόγος' otherness was implied in three ways: 1) the alleged revelations of God to man in the Old Testament; 2) the frequent Hebrew Bible references (like Gn 1:26 'Let **us** make man...') showing God talking with another; and 3) the Wisdom texts like Proverbs 8:22 ('The Lord created me a beginning of His ways...'), which indicates a created being is other than the creator.⁴⁵⁰

Another aspect of this discussion revolved around preserving Jewish monotheism. This is why at times Jesus would appear to be subordinated in their discussions. This is seen, as J.N.D. Kelly points out, when "all the Apologists stressed that His generation or emission resulted from an act of the Father's will, their object was not so much to subordinate Him as to safe guard the monotheism which they considered indispensable."⁴⁵¹ These early defenders of the faith wanted to stress that the λόγος was one in essence/substance (*ousia/substantia*) with the Father and, also, inseparable from his fundamental being.

Origen and His Theology

One of the most important figures with respect to theology in the third century was Origen of Alexandria. The pupil and successor of Clement of Alexandria, was a brilliant thinker and has been dubbed one of the most profuse writers. He was an extremely spiritual individual who, as it is rumored, castrated himself for the sake of purity in his spiritual life. He continued and developed the Biblical reading methods developed by his predecessor, which was to read the Bible allegorically using a three-tiered system: (1) The text has its apparent meaning (this could

⁴⁴⁹ Kelly 1978, 107.

⁴⁵⁰ Kelly 1978, 97.

⁴⁵¹ Kelly 1978, 101.

be erroneous or immoral) (2) as well as its moral parabolic reading and (3) it also had mystical symbolism lying beneath the text.⁴⁵²

His formal teaching can be summed up in the creed, which he wrote that,

There is one God, Father of the living Word... perfect begetter of the perfect begotten... There is one Lord, unique out of unique, God out of God, impress and image of Godhead, effective Word... And there is one Holy Spirit, having His subsistence from God and being made manifest by the Son... in Whom is manifested God the Father, Who is above all and in all, and God the Son, Who is through all. So there is a perfect Triad... in the Triad there is nothing either created or servile, nor anything brought in, as if it formerly did not exist and was subsequently introduced. Thus neither was the Son ever wanting to the Father, nor the Spirit to the Son.⁴⁵³

Origen was very active in the battle against Monarchianism and sided with the Logos-theologians. His arguments supporting this side of the argument revolved around his extensive studies in Alexandria focusing predominately on the Bible and philosophy. Like other Logos-theologians his focus on the debate centered on a concern of specifying the members of the Godhead as opposed to the unity. Origen himself described the Father, Son and Spirit as three “ὑποστάσεις.” Philosophically, this Greek term has the connotation of “an entity’s real existence, its own reality.”⁴⁵⁴ If each one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are three ὑπόστασις, then the three are three entities with their very own existence and there are distinctions between the three. This obviously would run counter to the beliefs of the Monarchians. The problem of Origen’s argument, though, arises with the fact that in the third century, φύσις and ουσία semantically meant the same thing, so he was unable to successfully express the unity of the three conceptually. Eventually, φύσις would speak of the divine nature and ουσία of the divine substance.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵² Tomkins 2006, 37.

⁴⁵³ Taken from Kelly 1978, 133.

⁴⁵⁴ Dünzl, 2007, 35.

⁴⁵⁵ Dünzl, 2007, 35.

Origen established in his theology that the ‘trinity’ consists of three ὑπόστασις, and he furthers this by explaining how the three entities relate. For Origen, he held that the difference between the three involves that “some are more God than others.”⁴⁵⁶ He remained in the tradition of the Apologists and the Logos-theologians in respect to the distinction between God the Father and the Logos; Origen furthered this by explaining the Logos appears in a lower state when compared to the Father, which in effect subordinates the Son.⁴⁵⁷ Thus, only the Father is God and the Son and Spirit derive their divinity from him.⁴⁵⁸ Now, as opposed to his Apologist companions, Origen diverges into philosophical thought explaining this phenomenon. He claims that God never changes, so the begetting of the Logos cannot imply such an action thus resulting in his belief in the eternality of the Logos and it cannot be disassociated from the Father.⁴⁵⁹ This line of thought can be seen as influential a century later when the Nicene Creed adopts similar reasoning claiming the Son is ‘eternally begotten of the Father.’⁴⁶⁰

The Nicene Debate: The Council of Nicaea 325CE

The Nicene conflict predominately revolved around the Eastern Church. As J.N.D. Kelly informs us, there is “little or no evidence [that] survives to show what Western theologians were thinking.”⁴⁶¹ For it was with Constantine’s recent rise to power that the dilemma addressed at an ecumenical council because, when he examined his newly conquered empire, he realized that there was a division amongst the Eastern Church concerning who the person of Jesus was.⁴⁶² This division was a touchy subject due to the previous heresies that had been squashed in the past, and also since an effort to uphold orthodoxy was prominent in the minds of all the Fathers.

⁴⁵⁶ Tomkins 2006, 37.

⁴⁵⁷ Dünzl, 2007, 38.

⁴⁵⁸ Tomkins 2006, 37.

⁴⁵⁹ Dünzl, 2007, 38.

⁴⁶⁰ Tomkins 2006, 38.

⁴⁶¹ Kelly 1978, 223.

⁴⁶² Tomkins 2006, 47.

This led to a schism because those who stressed the oneness of God were deemed modalists, while the ones who stressed the threeness were dubbed polytheists.⁴⁶³ This debate climaxed at Nicaea, which is the next point of discussion. In this section, each leading member in the debate will be examined (Arius and then Alexander and Athanasius) and then a discussion on “the” council’s decision focusing on the Nicene Creed.

The Rise and Fall of Arius

Arius played a crucial role as the “arch-heretic” of Nicaea, but he is often seen in the most negative of lights when his goal was not to be a raving heretic. This priest began his life in Libya until he finally moved his place of residency to Alexandria until he was promoted to be a presbyter first under Achillas and then Alexander.⁴⁶⁴ Since this schism had arisen within the church, Arius took it upon himself to seize the gauntlet and resolve the conflict festering within the holy church. Where he believed most had gone wrong was about Christ’s eternal nature. For Arius, he thought that if Jesus had no beginning, then there were two creators, two uncreated beings. He reasoned this to be preposterous and claimed “the Father must have brought him into being, and so ‘there was a time when he was not.’”⁴⁶⁵ This is because he adamantly believed that “two eternally ingenerate beings would in itself nullify the reality of the one God.”⁴⁶⁶

What is most unfortunate about Arius is that most of what we know about him is not from his own pen. We have in our possession much of what his opponents say about him, but most of his thoughts are lost, but many fifth-century historians describe him as a superb dialectician, yet was seriously misguided by his own logical prowess. It has been largely argued that Arius was unfortunately driven more by his logic than actual faith and that his monotheism

⁴⁶³ Tomkins 2006, 48.

⁴⁶⁴ Young 1983, 58.

⁴⁶⁵ Tomkins 2006, 48.

⁴⁶⁶ Weinandy 2007, 53.

was based more on his philosophical persuasions rather than scripture.⁴⁶⁷ With that being said, Arius held to four general ideas according to J.N.D. Kelly: (1) The Son is a creature (κτίσμα or ποίημα), whom the Father formed from nothing; (2) as a creation of the Father, the Son certainly has to have a beginning. Thus, ‘there was a time when He was not’ (ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν); (3) the Son has no direct communion with or knowledge of God. Even though Arius acknowledges Jesus as God’s Word, He is a distinct being; (4) The Son is susceptible to both change and sin, but that does not mean that Jesus did in fact sin.⁴⁶⁸ In Arius’ mind, Jesus is God, but only in title.⁴⁶⁹ He held that what makes God who he is revolves around the fact everything that is not God has an ἀρχή (indicating both a cause and beginning).⁴⁷⁰ Based on the previously mentioned and such passages as Proverbs 8:22, Arius claimed that the incarnate λόγος must be just another creation of God’s.

Since much of Arius’ own work is unknown to us, a fitting conclusion to this section would be to compare a writing of Arius with that of Athanasius describing Arius’ beliefs. The first will be Arius who is writing to Eusebius of Nicodemia describing why he is being persecuted:

God has always been, and the Son has always been: Father and Son exist together: the Son has his existence unbegotten along with God, ever being begotten, without having been begotten: God does not precede the Son by thought or by any interval however small: God has always been, the Son has always been; The Son is from God himself... [He himself holds] that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way part of the unbegotten; Nor from some lower *ousia* [i.e., from matter]; But that by his own [i.e. the Father’s] will and counsel he has subsisted before time, and before ages as God full, only-begotten, unchangeable. And that he was not, before he was begotten, or created, or purposed, or established. For he was not unbegotten.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁷ Young 1983, 61.

⁴⁶⁸ Kelly 1978, 229.

⁴⁶⁹ Tomkins 2006, 48.

⁴⁷⁰ Dünzl, 2007, 44.

⁴⁷¹ *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia* taken from Weinandy 2003, 55.

And so, from Athanasius' viewpoint, Arius held thus:

God was not always a Father: The Son was not always: But whereas all things were made out of nothing, the Son of God also was made out of nothing: And since all things are creatures, he also is a creature and a thing made: And since all things once were not, but were afterwards made, there was a time when the Word of God himself was not; And he was not before he was begotten, but he had a beginning of existence: For he has then originated when God has chosen to produce him: For he also is one among the rest of his works.⁴⁷²

The Hero of Orthodoxy: Athanasius

Although Alexander was the presiding bishop of Alexandria at the time of Nicaea, Athanasius is the one who actually bore the burden of confronting the dilemma afterwards. But, it should be shown that the dilemma's genesis arose around 318 between the priest Arius and his Bishop Alexander in Alexandria. Alexander spoke of God as always being the Father and that the Son was always the Son, which implied the eternal generation of the later.⁴⁷³ It was claimed by some that the real problem was spurred by the fact that Arius spoke out against his bishops views of the God head accusing him of being a Sabellian, but it is unlikely that this was the main cause according to Frances Young who claims based on Rufinus' description of Alexander as a 'gentle and quiet' man and the indications that Alexander also wished to give Arius a fair trial, shows that this dissension was most likely not a driving force for the conflict.⁴⁷⁴ The foundation of Athanasius' beliefs ride upon those of his predecessor, so, in summation, Alexander generally held that "the Son, as Son, is co-eternal with the Father, since God can never have been without His Word, His Wisdom, His Power, His Image, and the Father must always have been Father."⁴⁷⁵ He describes the two as having unique natures, and the Son mediates between God and creation

⁴⁷² *Ad Episcopos Aegypti*, 12 taken from Weinandy 2003, 56.

⁴⁷³ Ayres 2004, 16.

⁴⁷⁴ Young 1983, 58,59.

⁴⁷⁵ Kelly 1978, 224.

but the Son is not one of the creatures. He is only derived from God's being. The Father is alone ἀγέννητος (unoriginate/self-existent).

Athanasius took over for Alexander as bishop of Alexandria in 328CE around the age of 30.⁴⁷⁶ What historians are able to gather about Athanasius comes primarily from his apologetic works.⁴⁷⁷ Although he is the fountainhead of defenders regarding the divinity of Christ, his life long fight against the Arians was driven more by soteriology⁴⁷⁸ because he believed that "Arius' savior simply wasn't up to the job."⁴⁷⁹ This, though, does largely have to do with the fact that Arius' Jesus, as discussed previously, was not himself God. This posed serious problems for Athanasius. According to Young, Athanasius makes a contrast between that which is created from nothing and God; "Christ had to share humanity's creatureliness, just as he had to share the divinity of the Creator, so that Creator and creature could be united in him."⁴⁸⁰

As time passed by, it can be seen in Athanasius' apologist writings his ever long fight against the Arians. In his *Orations Against the Arians*, Athanasius vehemently attacks the Arians exclaiming,

But this one heresy, called the Arian, which is the last and which has now emerged as forerunner of the Antichrist, being deceitful and cunning and seeing that the other heresies which are its elder siblings have been openly denounced, hypocritically shrouds itself in the language of the Scriptures, as did its father the devil (cf. Mt. 4.1ff.), and forces itself again into the paradise of the Church, so that, by pretending to be Christian, it may deceive some to turn their minds against Christ by the persuasiveness of its false reasonings – for it lacks any good sense.⁴⁸¹

Other such quotes emerge in Athanasius' writings showing a clear opposition to the Arians. That being the case, here it can be seen that the heresies of old, which have been openly denounced,

⁴⁷⁶ Anatolios 2004, 1.

⁴⁷⁷ Young 1983, 65.

⁴⁷⁸ Young 1983, 72.

⁴⁷⁹ Tomkins 2006, 48.

⁴⁸⁰ Young 1983, 75.

⁴⁸¹ *Orations Against the Arians* taken from Anatolios 2004, 89.

have resurfaced to Athanasius. He stringently strives to eliminate such beliefs, which he adamantly believes the Arians hold. Thus, J.N.D. Kelly claims that from these writings it can be discerned that there is a “triple-onslaught” against the Arians: (1) claiming that Arians undermined the doctrine of God by claiming the Triad was not eternal, which implied polytheism; (2) it made Christianity appear foolish with respect to the established liturgy, which was used in baptizing in the name of the Son as well as the Father. This also included praying to the Son; and (3) it compromised the Christian ideal of redemption in Christ, for only the Mediator who was divine had any hope to re-connect man with God.⁴⁸²

Lastly, as was done with respect to Arius’ beliefs, it would be helpful to put forth a brief display of primary sources of Athanasius’ beliefs, which are in direct refutation to Arius. Athanasius addresses the four main claims purported by Arius as J.N.D. Kelly described earlier. The first two go hand-in-hand, so they will be addressed together. These claimed that the Son was just another creature and, therefore had a beginning:

If God is Maker and Creator, and creates his works through the Son, and we cannot but regard things which came to be as having existence through the Word, is it not blasphemous, since God is the maker, to say that his craftsman, his Word and Wisdom, ‘once was not’? ... If the Word is not eternally with the Father, then the Trinity is not eternal; there was first a unity which later has become a trinity by addition... And, what is worse, the Trinity is found to be disparate, consisting of alien and different natures and substances... It may conceivably receive further addition, *ad infinitum*... It may diminish; for clearly what is added may be subtracted.⁴⁸³

With regards to the Son’s knowledge of God:

The flesh is ignorant, but the Word, as Word, knows everything, even before it comes to be. For when the Word became man he did not cease to be God; nor because he is God does he avoid what is human. Far from it; rather, being God, he has taken the flesh to himself, and, in flesh, deified the flesh. In the flesh he asked questions; in the flesh he raised the dead; he knew where Lazarus

⁴⁸² Kelly 1978, 233.

⁴⁸³ *Contra Arianos*, i.17 taken from Bettenson 1956, 277.

lay; but he asked... The all-holy Word of God bore our ignorance so that he might bestow on us the knowledge of his Father.⁴⁸⁴

The fourth, and final point is the Son's susceptibility to change:

It is superfluous to examine their question 'Is the Word capable of change?' ... They ask such nonsensical questions... It is blasphemy even to utter such things. For if the Word be capable of change and alteration, where will he come to a stop, and what will be the end of his development? And how will the changeable possibly be like the changeless? In which of his states will a man be able to 'see the Father' in him? ... And how can he be wholly 'in the Father' if his moral decision is undetermined? Perhaps he is not yet perfect, since he is changeable, and is developing day by day!... But he must needs be perfect, if he is equal with God.⁴⁸⁵

The Council of Nicaea and the Nicene Creed

Leading up to 325, as has been discussed, there was much dispute on how orthodoxy would ultimately decide how the Father and Son related. Traditionally, it is at Nicaea that the church solidified its beliefs.⁴⁸⁶ But to think that the council's motives were so pure would be a foolish assumption. Through the writings of Athanasius and from the Creed itself, there is a clear opposition put forth from both against the Arians. First, the Creed should be read in full:

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things, visible and invisible;
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, who because of us men and because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead;
And in the Holy Spirit.
But as for those who say, 'There was when he was not', and, 'Before being born he was not, and that he came into existence out of nothing', or who assert that the Son of God is from a different hypostasis or substance, or is created, or is subject to alteration or change – these the Catholic Church anathematizes.

⁴⁸⁴ *Contra Arianos*, iii. 38 taken from Bettenson 1956, 290.

⁴⁸⁵ *Contra Arianos*, i. 35 taken from Bettenson 1956, 278.

⁴⁸⁶ Tomkins 2006, 50.

As had never been done before, the Council was forced to make distinctions and define the Son's divinity in such a way that made it clear that He is God as the Father is. It was also a concern to them to preserve traditional understandings of the New Testament with respect to Jesus' identity as both Son and Word.⁴⁸⁷ This was also due to the fact that Arius' own writings were rife with ambiguities and paradoxes, so the council was forced to make great efforts to ensure that no one would claim there was a time when the Son 'was not.'⁴⁸⁸

Although creating an anti-Arian document was at the forefront of most people's minds at this meeting, as can be seen in the final sentence of the creed, other topics of importance played a role. The seething term *homoousios* was clearly posited into the creed because Arius was known to have rejected it.⁴⁸⁹ Although this was a driving motive, it should not be misunderstood that it was the only reason for its inclusion. Kelly agrees that overall the creed was delegated to outlaw Arianism, but it also had a purpose "to affirm the Son's full divinity and equality with the Father, out of Whose being He was derived and Whose nature he consequently shared."⁴⁹⁰ In that regard, this document was composed as a part of apostolic succession in order to affirm the veracity of orthodoxy. In Athanasius' *On the Council of Nicaea (De Decretis)*, he asserts that "For true teaching is what the fathers have handed down, and truly, this is the mark of teachers: to confess the same things among each other and not to disagree among themselves or with their own fathers."⁴⁹¹ Thus, the document was accepted even though some were not particularly enamored by the term *homoousios*, but accepted it on the grounds that "it was a happily

⁴⁸⁷ Weinandy 2007, 60.

⁴⁸⁸ Tomkins 2006, 49.

⁴⁸⁹ Ayres 2004, 90.

⁴⁹⁰ Kelly 1978, 236.

⁴⁹¹ *De Decretis* i.4 taken from Anatolios 2004, 181.

ambiguous term.”⁴⁹² In which case, the Nicene Creed affirms that the Son is from the same substance as the Father and thus is one with the Father, through whom all things are created. It declares that the Son is not a creature, but, rather, He is equally God.⁴⁹³

Conclusion

Thus the Nicene Creed was birthed into orthodoxy and accepted under the rule of Constantine. The Creed eliminated Arianism for a time and asserted the intimate relationship, which exists between the Father and the Son. Despite the fact that it took numerous centuries to draw up a conclusive solution to the problem here in 325, the debate raged further through many other ecumenical councils because of various discrepancies held through the years. The Council of Nicaea nevertheless laid the foundation for future discussions on the Father and Son and continues to be of most importance when examining the debate of Christology and the relationship that exists between Father and Son. With that in mind, “for the glory, honor, and adoration is befitting to God the Father along with his Word and Son who with him is without beginning, together with the all-holy and life-giving Spirit, now and unto the endless ages of ages. Amen.”⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹² Tomkins 2006, 49.

⁴⁹³ Weinandy 2007, 64.

⁴⁹⁴ *De Decretis* i.32 taken from Anatolios 2004, 211.