

PATRISTIC INTERPRETATION

especially invites comparison with Yochanan's. Matthew's subplot concerning the appropriate wedding garment (vv. 11–13) provides another point of similarity. Still, the meanings generated by the two parables are distinctive. Where Yochanan speaks of servants who either are or are not prudent in their assessment of the king's capacity, Jesus speaks of guests invited to a feast who respond with extraordinarily bad and finally violent behavior, which is answered in kind. Beneath that distinction, of course, there is a thematic similarity. The readiness to accept and act upon the invitation is called for, especially since the king is none other than God. But each parable urges a particular kind of response upon the hearer. Yochanan's narrative involves dropping normal obligations to await God's promised banquet, while Jesus' parable of recalcitrant guests is more fraught in its warning against obstinacy.

Perhaps most importantly, comparison with rabbinic parables reveals what has frequently been overlooked: there is a surrealism possible within the genre, from Ezekiel through Jesus and on to Yochanan ben Zakkai. Parables are not just lively stories taken from nature; the point can often turn on what is striking, peculiar, unpredictable. Even in Jesus' parables of growth, elements of hyperbole are plain. In the narrative of the man, the seed, and the earth (Mark 4:26–29), action is abrupt and unmotivated. The man sleeps for no apparent reason, and puts in his sickle 'immediately'; the seed sprouts in no stated time, and the earth produces 'as of itself.' Similarly, mustard seed becomes a 'tree' (Matt. 13:31–32; Luke 13:18–19), or makes 'big branches' (Mark 4:30–32) without an interval of time being indicated. The point lies in the contrast of beginning and result, miraculous transformation rather than predictable process. The hyperbolic comparison of start and finish is also evident in the parable of the leaven (Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20–21). The parables of the hidden treasure and pearl (Matt. 13:44–46) are surprising, rather than hyperbolic, when they concern the discovery of what is valuable, but the reaction of those who find them, in selling everything to acquire them, is exaggerated. In these cases, also, ethical themes are especially conveyed by the least realistic motifs.

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PATRISTIC INTERPRETATION

- 1 Scripture as literal truths embodying general principles (halakhah)
- 2 Scripture as that which, though historically true, narrates events and persons that are types of eternal and future realities (antitypes)
- 3 The narratives as redemptive allegories

There were approximately three possible modes of understanding the sacred texts of the Old and New Testament open to the various early Christian groups. They believed that a certain collection of texts, first the Old Testament and subsequently the New Testament, constituted divine revelation. But those texts consisted of a variety of works and genres, including historical narrative, addressed to a particular historical situation. In consequence, the following possibilities of interpreting divine revelation opened themselves:

(1) The historical contexts and narratives of the Old and New Testament were literally true, and the events, persons, and words that they described enabled the derivation of general principles, and also role models, whether for good or for evil.

(2) The historical contexts and narratives were true but the events and persons described were mysterious. Events and persons were not exactly what they seemed: behind the literal, an eternal story was unfolding in which type gave way to antitype, and the present was to be fulfilled in the future.

(3) The texts themselves are misunderstood if they are believed to be literal and historical, or paraenetic, poetic, or prophetic products addressed to a specific historical situation: rather they are allegories in which each person and event of the story is a cipher for the eternal drama of salvation. Redemption will be achieved by whoever grasps the true meaning of the allegory or redemptive story.

These three approaches have their roots in exegesis as found in the various forms of Judaism before the uniformity imposed by what became orthodox rabbinic

Judaism, perhaps at Jabneh, find the purpose of halakhic decisions about particular sacred text regarded as liturgical method, in which a story involved developing it make it applicable to a current situation to pesher interpretation. Qumran community, in witness of narrative passages prophecies are exploited in the present. For example, the identified in 1Qp II–IV offering the significance of a situation to another. In the method of Philo who exhorts by the actual words, but that lies beneath them' (Origen).

Philo, like Origen his an extreme position of insisting that the story, the allegorical interpretation, was (Praem. 11.61). Indeed Origen gives first, briefly, the which he calls the historical which he can draw geographical 'knowledge, and natural the text. He then goes on allegorical meaning. Just spirit, so too, he insists, tures in three ways, literal and spiritually (Or. Princ. respect he may be thought to systematize all three methods of exegesis. However, i never consistently applied deny the historicity of Genesis when he claims that no earth that there could be a moon, and stars, or that up to a high mountain: the domes of the world (Origen).

Origen does not state but rather is symptomatic and separate approach in early Christian literature. Indeed the New Testament to the separateness of responsibility for their central examples of the

1 Scripture as literal truths embodying general principles (halakhah)

Many sayings of Jesus according to Mark 12 Psalm 109:1 (LXX) 'I

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Literal truths embodying general principles (halakha)

Contexts, though historically true, and persons that are types of biblical realities (antitypes) and their redemptive allegories

Ultimately three possible modes of interpretation of biblical texts of the Old and New Testaments among the various early Christian groups. In the first, a certain collection of texts, first the Old Testament, and subsequently the New Testament, are taken as literal. But those texts consisted of various genres, including historical narratives, and addressed to a particular historical situation. The following possibilities of interpretation opened themselves:

1. In the contexts and narratives of the Old Testament were literally true, and the events, persons, and principles, and also role models, described were mysterious, and not exactly what they seemed: the eternal story was unfolding in the past, and the present was its antitype, and the future was its fulfillment.

2. The contexts and narratives were true, but the persons described were mysterious, and not exactly what they seemed: the eternal story was unfolding in the past, and the present was its antitype, and the future was its fulfillment.

3. The contexts and narratives were true, but the persons described were mysterious, and not exactly what they seemed: the eternal story was unfolding in the past, and the present was its antitype, and the future was its fulfillment.

These have their roots in exegesis of the Old Testament, and in the forms of Judaism before the time when it became orthodox rabbinic

Judaism, perhaps at Jabneh around AD 95. In (1) we find the purpose of halakha as a system of deriving decisions about particular contemporary issues from the sacred text regarded as literal. In (2) we find the haggadic method, in which a midrash or retelling of a sacred story involved developments and additions in order to make it applicable to a contemporary situation. Midrash led also to peshet interpretations, characteristic of the Qumran community, in which the obscurities and vagueness of narrative passages either describing past event or prophecies are exploited as mysteriously applying to the present. For example, the *Kittim* of Habakkuk 1:8-9 are identified in 1Qp II-IV with the Romans, thus transferring the significance of the text from one historical situation to another. In (3) we find the characteristic method of Philo who exhorts: 'Let us not, then be misled by the actual words, but look at the allegorical meaning that lies beneath them' (*Cong. Quae.* 172).

Philo, like Origen his Christian successor, modified an extreme position of allegorical interpretation by insisting that the story, though capable of a proper allegorical interpretation, was nevertheless literally true (*Praem.* 11.61). Indeed Origen in his biblical commentaries gives first, briefly, the literal meaning of the text, which he calls the historical or corporeal meaning, on which he can draw geographical, philological, medical knowledge, and natural history in order to elucidate the text. He then goes on to draw out the spiritual or allegorical meaning. Just as there is body, soul, and spirit, so too, he insists, we must interpret the scriptures in three ways, literally or corporeally, psychically, and spiritually (*Or. Princ.* IV.2.4; *Philocal.* 1.11). In that respect he may be thought, like Philo, to have sought to systematize all three methods into a coherent method of exegesis. However, in practice such a system was never consistently applied. Origen himself appears to deny the historicity of Genesis 1-3 and of Matthew 4:8 when he claims that no one of intelligence could accept that there could be a day of creation without sun, moon, and stars, or that Jesus literally had to be taken up to a high mountain and physically saw all the kingdoms of the world (*Or. Princ.* IV.3.1; *Philocal.* 1.17).

Origen does not stand alone in such inconsistency but rather is symptomatic of the existence of three distinct and separate approaches to biblical interpretation in early Christian literature that are ultimately irreconcilable. Indeed the New Testament itself bears witness to the separateness of such approaches and must bear responsibility for their continuation. Let us see some central examples of these three additional approaches.

1 Scripture as literal truths embodying general principles (halakha)

Many sayings of Jesus are in this category as when, according to Mark 12:35-37, Jesus concludes that if in Psalm 109:1 (LXX) 'David' calls the Christ (anointed

Messiah) his Lord, then the Messiah cannot be David's son. For another example see Mark 12:28-34.

In the letter of the Church of Rome to the Church at Corinth, written by Clement c. AD 95, we find a continuance of such exegesis uninformed by neither a typology nor allegorization. The famous passage on Church Order (*1 Clem.* 40.5) may initially be thought to represent a typology in which the Israelite high priest stands for the Christian bishop, the sons of Aaron for the presbyters, the Levites for the deacons. But this is clearly not the case since Clement assumes a plurality of presbyter-bishops whose legitimacy is guaranteed not by an exact Old Testament typological correspondence, but by a lineal episcopal succession initiated by the apostles themselves (*1 Clem.* 44.1-2) in fulfilment of a prooftext loosely derived from Isaiah 40:17 (*1 Clem.* 42.5). His allusions to Old Testament liturgies are simply one example of divine order amongst others, which include a stoically conceived cosmos (*1 Clem.* 20.1-3) or indeed the Roman army (*1 Clem.* 37.1-3).

With Clement's exposition of the general principles of ministerial order from the Old Testament we may compare that found in c. AD 265, in *Didasc.* chs 8-9 (= *CA*, ed. Funk, II.25.7-26.8) of that document. Here we find a different exegetical method from that of Clement where the principle of provision from sacrifices preserved for the upkeep of the ministry of the Old Testament Tabernacle is applied to payment for a professionally organized and paid clergy. However, the Didascalist goes beyond using the Old Testament for the provision of general principles of church government. Instead he deploys a typology in which high priest, priests, and Levites are types of the threefold order of bishop, presbyter, and deacons, with the Holy Spirit as type of the deaconess. The use of *patros* by the Didascalist is here, by contrast with Ignatius of Antioch, indicative of a different exegetical method. Although Ignatius uses the term *patros* (of bishops, priests, and deacons), he does not regard ecclesial structure as derived exegetically from the Old Testament. Rather he regarded the bishop as 'type of the Father,' the presbyterate that liturgically encircled the bishop, the spirit filled 'council of the apostles,' and the deacons as types of Christ (*Ign. Magu.* 6.1; *Trall.* 3.1). Thus the three ecclesial orders are images or models of the persons of the Trinity, and thus reflect the mystery of the transcendent godhead, rather than constituting antitypes of Old Testament types.

The Old Testament is not for Clement, any more than for Ignatius, a mysterious typology but a book of historical characters providing models for Christians, or embodying principles illustrative of the divine order of the world and society. Cain and Abel, Jacob, Esau, and Joseph, Moses, Aaron and Miriam, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram are each examples of what happens when jealousy upsets the peace of the community (*1 Clem.* 4.1-13). Enoch, Abraham, Lot and Noah, and Rahab

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are principally models of grace and single-mindedness (1 Clem. 9.3-4; 10-12). Clement allows himself to see in Rahab's scarlet thread 'redemption through the blood of Christ' but this is an example of 'not only faith but prophecy in the woman' (1 Clem. 12.8) rather than an indication of a future mystery unfolding behind the literal and historical text.

There is, however, a problem for the concept of historical revelation which avoids typology and denies allegory as valid exegetical methods. In the light of the finality of the sacrifice of Christ, what is to become of the laws of sacrifice, ritual, and food in the Old Testament, let alone descriptions of divine action that are morally abhorrent? If it is not to be allowed that Old Testament sacrifices are typological, mysterious prior runs of the act of Christ the true redeemer, least of all ahistorical, allegorical expressions of these, then there are few general principles to be derived from the texts that are ceremonial and sacrificial. The *Didascalia*, without the availability of a general typological or allegorical exegesis, had accordingly to produce a doctrine of the *deuterosis* (or second legislation) in order to distinguish Old Testament principles and practices that were specific to Israel, and those of which were general and universally applicable for all time.

Paul in Galatians 3:13 had referred to the law as a schoolmaster bringing us to Christ and had argued that the reason why the law has no more dominion over us is because we have died with Christ who was made a curse for us under the law in accordance with Deuteronomy 21:22ff. The *Didascalia* goes much further than this. His claim is that subsequent to the Ten Commandments, the remaining law had been given in order to punish the Jews for making with Aaron the Golden Calf. Sacrifices, food laws, ritual purification were not rudimentary preparations for redemption by Christ but were punishments that effected nothing. God commands such things merely 'as though he had need of these things.' Deuteronomy 21:22 is interpreted in this context as divine deception so that Christ is made to appear cursed in order that the Jews might not receive him. Christ therefore affirms the first legislation but abolishes the punishment for idolatry that was the *deuterosis* or second legislation (*Didasc.* p. 222.5-34-p. 223.7 [= C.A., ed. Funk, VI.16.6-27.1]).

It is interesting to compare this approach to exegesis with that which emerges in the Pseudo-Clementines. For the *Didascalia* the *deuterosis* was clearly of relevance in itself as divine revelation, albeit as the revealed commandments whose intentions were solely punishment upon the Jews and therefore intended for no one else. There is no hint here, as we shall see shortly was the case with Barnabas, of divine revelation in the form of allegory misunderstood and reconstructed literally as a First and Jewish Covenant. But in the Pseudo-Clementines what is problematic in the Old Testament in terms of divinely revealed prescriptions is dealt with

by an alternative method that is reminiscent of a kind of nascent, nineteenth-century higher criticism. Here what is acceptable is distinguished from the unacceptable by claiming that the relevant texts are false interpolations that have distorted the sense and meaning. It is a method of coping with unacceptable passages rather akin to those used by both Clement of Rome and Justin Martyr. The former is quite capable of devising additional Old Testament quotations to suit his desire to find the principle of episcopacy in the prophets (1 Clem. 42.5). Certainly both Justin and Trypho indulge in mutual accusations regarding who has changed or interpolated which Old Testament passage, and indeed over the use of the LXX (Just. *Dial.* 67.1-2; 71.1-2; 72-73).

In (Ps.) Clem. *Hom.* III.43.1-4, in reply to Simon Magus, Peter claims that amongst false expressions (*ῥῆματα ψευδῆ*) are descriptions of God reasoning with himself as if he needed to make up his mind, or tempting Abraham, or having to descend from heaven in order to see human wickedness (Gen. 22:1; 11:7). The exegetical or even editorial principle proposed is: 'As many expressions as accuse God of ignorance or any other grave offence are convicted of being false reconstructions by other expressions which state the opposite' (*Hom.* III.43.3). If God can prophesy the future to Abraham or Moses, clearly he does not need to reason with himself or to descend from heaven to see what has come about (*Hom.* III.44.1-2). God did not desire animal sacrifices or first fruits (*Hom.* III.45.1-4). Moses as prophet is infallible but his words were entrusted orally to the seventy elders. His alleged written works clearly come from another writer after his death, which is recorded in Deuteronomy 34:5 (*Hom.* III.47.1-3).

Finally, in the fourth and fifth centuries, Theodore of Mopsuestia and his school represent literal and critical exegesis in its last and final form. Theodore was the pupil of Diodore, who became bishop of Tarsus in AD 378. Unfortunately we have lost the theoretical treatment of exegesis in Diodore of Tarsus' *On the Difference between Allegoria and Theoria*, and Theodore's own work *On Allegory and History*. But we do have Diodore's commentary on the Psalms, in the prologue to which he distinguishes between *historia*, *theoria*, and *allegoria* (*Diod. Com.Ps.* prol. 123-162). Superficially, Alexandrian exegesis, like that of Philo, had subscribed to the three senses of scripture that we considered in our introduction. But Diodore limits the use of *theoria* and *allegoria* by the prescription that *theoria* must follow from the literal meaning of the text: there must exist a true *anagoge* or justifiable analogy. Without such an *anagoge*, *historia* dissolves into *allegoria*, which Diodore is anxious to reject (*Com.Ps.* prol. 125). Accordingly he claims that Paul's use of *allegoria* (Gal. 4:24) is really equivalent in meaning to *theoria*, or the observation of the spiritual antitype in the literal events or words of scripture (*Com.Ps.* prol. 133-135). Pure allegorization was exegesis that leads to heresy and paganism (*Com.Ps.* prol. 141).

A consequence of logical interpretation led Diodore to regard 45(44) as referring to the presence as one of the second psalm is proffered by the literalist exegesis led him to referring to Christ's referring to David's own: 'it is David who appears mind the causes of his suffering.' The LXX of Psalm my offences are far the quest for the literal to investigate the historical which to set the Old refers to the sin w Hezekiah, Psalms 31(3) Indeed, *Com.Ps.* 51 provenance in direct inscription that it app Nathan's condemnation 14(13), 15(14), 20(19) ascribed to the reign of their inscriptions. A P to the period of the

Theodore as Diodore Antiochene exegetical the Psalms. He used the Septuagint. Unfortunately fragmentary form. At the Ecumenical Council at had in a letter rejected although that letter referred to text that fits neither in of history and which (PG 66.699). Clearly interpretation of that genuine Hippolytus, c. text became of question (c. AD 500) also c. work (Leont. B. Nest. (3.13), Ezra, and Christ James in the New Testament latter was in the canon nessed by its presence in that Psalms 22(21) and similar reasons as those psalmist's indications of applicability of the latter *Ps.* 21.1-2; 68.1-2).

Cosmas Indicopleustes Theodore's exegetical eler, in his *Topographia* references only to Psalm Ind. *Top.* 5.252 A; 5.252 sianic reference is made

is reminiscent of a kind of higher criticism. Here, freed from the unacceptable texts are false interpretations of sense and meaning. It is acceptable passages rather than unacceptable ones that are capable of devising additions to suit his desire to conform to the prophets (1 Clem. 1 and Trypho indulge in additions that have changed or interpreted the passage, and indeed over 67.1-2; 71.1-2; 72-73). 1-4, in reply to Simon and other false expressions (*fonai*) in reasoning with himself, or tempting his mind, or tempting him from heaven in order to 22:1; 11:7). The exegetical proposal is: 'As many in ignorance or any other way being false reconstructions which state the opposite to prophesy the future to does not need to reason from heaven to see what God did not desire (Hom. III.45.1-4). Moses' words were entrusted to alleged written works after his death, which 5 (Hom. III.47.1-3). In the centuries, Theodore of Antioch's present literal and critical method Theodore was the pupil of Tarsus in AD 378. In the theoretical treatment of the difference between Theodore's own work and the work of Diodore's commentary, and *allegoria* (Diodore), Alexandria especially, attributed to the three senses of our introduction. But *allegoria* and *allegoria* by the willow from the literal exist a true *anagoge* or an *anagoge*, *historia* disfigure is anxious to reject he claims that Paul's is equivalent in meaning of the spiritual antitype scripture (Com.Ps. prol. 141).

A consequence of this prescription that limited typological interpretation by the literal features of the text led Diodore to regard only Psalms such as 2, 8, and 45(44) as referring to Christ. But he regards that reference as one of prophetic vision (Com.Ps. 2.1: 'The second psalm is prophecy regarding the Lord'). His literalist exegesis led him to reject Psalm 22(21) as in total referring to Christ's suffering and exaltation, but rather to David's own: 'it does not accord with the Lord; for David appears mindful of his own sins, and attributes the causes of his sufferings to his sin' (Com.Ps. 22(21).1). The LXX of Psalm 22(21):2b said: 'The reckoning of my offences are far from my salvation.' Furthermore, the quest for the literal meaning led Diodore to investigate the historical background and chronology within which to set the Old Testament text. Thus Psalm 5 refers to the sin with Bathsheba, Psalm 41(40) to Hezekiah, Psalms 31(30), 43(42), and 48(47) to Babylon. Indeed, Com.Ps. 51(50).1 argues typically an exilic provenance in direct contradiction to the claim of the inscription that it applies to David when he had heard Nathan's condemnation of him over Bathsheba. Psalms 14(13), 15(14), 20(19), 27-30(26-29), 31-34(30-33) are ascribed to the reign of Hezekiah despite the claims of their inscriptions. A Psalm such as 44(43) actually refers to the period of the Maccabees.

Theodore as Diodore's pupil continued the Antiochene exegetical tradition, particularly regarding the Psalms. He used the Hebrew text rather than the Septuagint. Unfortunately his works survive only in fragmentary form. According to the Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council at Constance (AD 553), Theodore had in a letter rejected the canonicity of Canticles, although that letter refers to this work more as a problem text that fits neither into the category of prophecy nor of history and which is unsuitable for public reading (PG 66.699). Clearly if the history of the allegorical interpretation of that work, which had begun with the genuine Hippolytus, c. AD 225, were rejected, such a text became of questionable value. Leontius of Byzantium (c. AD 500) also claims that Theodore rejected this work (Leont. B. Nest. et Eutyph. 3.16) as well as Job (3.13), Ezra, and Chronicles 2 (3.17). He also rejected James in the New Testament (3.14), even though the latter was in the canon of the Syrian Church as witnessed by its presence in the Peshitta version. He denied that Psalms 22(21) and 69(68) could apply to Christ, for similar reasons as those given by Diodore, due to the psalmist's indications of his sins in the former, and applicability of the latter to the Maccabees (Thdr.Mops. Ps. 21.1-2; 68.1-2).

Cosmas Indicopleustes (c. 535) was a follower of Theodore's exegetical method. A navigator and traveler, in his *Topographia Christiana* he finds messianic references only to Psalms 2, 8, and 110(109) (Cosm. Ind. Top. 5.252 A; 5.251 D; 5.256 C). Where a messianic reference is made in a New Testament passage

such as to Psalm 22(21):19, 68(67):18, or 69(68):21-22, Cosmas simply claims that what is applied to Christ's servants can selectively be applied to him. His justification is that Paul adopts a similar exegetical principle in Romans 10:6 when he transforms Deuteronomy 30:12 into a messianic reference (Top. 5.256 C-260 A).

It is possible to regard this critical and historical approach to the Old Testament as a rejection of the ambiguities of the allegorical approach that had led to Arian exegesis. However, we have seen the pre-Arian roots of that literalist exegesis in the third-century *Didascalia* and its concept of the *deuterosis*. Undoubtedly the eclipse of the nascent critical approach of Theodore and his school was their relegation to the Nestorian side of the two natures debate, and the condemnation of Origenism. Pope Vigilius (AD 537-555) specifically rejects Theodore's claim that Psalm 22(21) cannot refer directly to Christ (Vigil. Const. Trib. Cap. 21-24).

Such, then was the literal approach to the Old Testament and its development over the first five centuries. But let us look at precisely what were the other two distinct approaches to exegesis (with which we began) that this literalist movement had threatened.

2 Scripture as that which, though historically true, narrates events and persons that are types of eternal and future realities (antitypes)

Paul in his references to the pillar, the cloud, the manna, and the rock in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:1-4) or to Sara, and Hagar (Gal. 4:21-31) did not deny the historical character of any of these scenes. Rather he claimed that they had happened, and that they embodied mysterious and prophetic messages regarding what was to come: "These have become our types [*tauta de tupoî hēmōn egenēthēsan*] (1 Cor. 10:6). The message that they bore was of the spiritual and eucharistic food that is Christ seen in the water from the rock, and the spiritual food that was the manna, and Christian baptism seen in the cloud and the passing through the sea. It was essentially this kind of exegesis that was to find its development in the writings of Justin Martyr (AD 110-167).

There is clearly no sense of allegory as a substitute here for the literal truth of the events. Rather in the events in all their facticity the mystery of Christ as the cosmic savior was unfolding. Theophilus of Antioch (AD 169), as representative of the tradition of the Eastern Church of the mid-second century, in his three volumes addressed to Autolychnus quotes from the Old Testament in a manner that conforms to such a principle. In Genesis 1:1, at the literal Creation, the Logos of God was operative, and the divine Sophia who foresees all things, and speaks through the prophets, was literally present in space and time (Theophil. Ant. Autolychnum 2.10). Indeed, it is the literal truth of the Old Testament that makes the Christian message super-

rior to that of Greek poets and philosophers who never got the history of the past right in the way that Genesis does. What is older is superior to what is more recent, and Moses can be shown to be more ancient than Solon, and indeed even than the reign of Zeus in Crete and the Trojan War (*Autolycom*. 2,29–33; 3, 26–29). Justin Martyr, who wrote at Rome between AD 150–160, was to continue such an exegetical tradition.

Justin's view was that Christ the Logos had preexisted not only as the Word of the Lord that came to the prophets but also as the angel of the Lord in the Pentateuch. As such the preexistence of the Logos could be personal. God's 'logos-like power [*logikē dunamis*]' which God generated as the first principle [*archē*] 'is called by the Holy Spirit sometimes the glory [*doxa*] of the Lord, and sometimes Son, and sometimes Wisdom, and sometimes an angel, and sometimes God, and sometimes Lord and Logos' (Just. *Dial.* 61.3). Indeed he appeared in human form to Joshua as the Leader of the Host (*archistratēgos*) (*Dial.* 62.5). Justin will insist that if scripture appears to be at variance with itself, it is due to the limits of human understanding (*Dial.* 65). Clearly Justin required a mystical rather than a literal interpretation of scripture to preserve his exegetical method from the conclusions which the Pseudo-Clementines and Theodore's school were later to draw.

Theodore was interested in prophecy as divine inspiration capable of the test of veracity in terms of fulfilment. Justin appears to adopt that principle without accepting what Theodore was to conclude from it. For him all the Old Testament was prophecy since it involved the activity of the preincarnational Logos. Such a case applies not only to the *Dialogue* with Trypho but also to the *Apologia* addressed to a pagan audience. Thus he will focus upon the prophetic writings as evidential for Christianity, with Moses included as the first prophet (*1 Apol.* 33.6). Justin knows the Synoptic Gospels, and will quote from them for his account of Christ's birth, life of healing and teaching. But when he focuses on Christ's death, resurrection, and second coming, he prefers to tell the narrative through Old Testament quotations rather than those from the Synoptic Gospels. After all, it is better to have Christ's *ipsissima verba* that he speaks before the incarnation as the preexistent Logos, rather than the secondhand accounts of the Gospel writers themselves. He will quote an amalgamation of Luke 1:32 and Matthew 1:21 for a virgin birth without the intervention of sexual intercourse with a human-like Jupiter, but most of the narrative will be told from Genesis 49:10, Isaiah 11:1 and 7:14, and Micah 5:2. Here is described the star of Jesse, with robes of blood, born of a virgin so that, with the exception of the latter, no quotes about Wise Men or angelic promises of death and anguish need be given from the Gospels (Just. *1 Apol.* 32–34). Indeed, when he describes the Passion he has no direct quotes from the Synoptists either on the Triumphal Entry or Crucifixion scene, but rather the

Passion according to Isaiah, Zechariah, and the Psalms (Isa. 9:6, 65:2, 58:2, Zech. 9:9, and Ps. 22:16 [*1 Apol.* 35.1–8, 10–11]). Indeed, his claimed source for corroboration for his pagan audience is the lost *Acts of Pontius Pilate* (*1 Apol.* 35.9).

It is important therefore to note that this is the general character of Justin's exegesis – preferring to tell the story of Jesus from the Old Testament with but minor support from the New – and not simply anti-Jewish apologetic when used in the *Dialogue*. When challenged regarding Malachi 4:5, he quotes Matthew 3:11–12, 11:12–15, 17:12 and Luke 3:16–17, 16:16 as showing John as the Elijah to come (*Dial.* 50–51). It is to be emphasized here that Justin will not see Elijah as an allegory of John, but both are literal and historical persons. The dilemma of how there can be, as it were, two Elijahs is resolved by Justin's claim that the same spirit that was in Elijah was also in John, just as Moses transmitted his spirit to Joshua, in a confused reference to Numbers 11:17 and 27:18. He will quote Luke 20:35–36 on the resurrection body (*Dial.* 81), and, for the Virgin Birth, Luke 1:35 in fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14 (*Dial.* 66 and 100). In the conclusion of the *Dialogue* he will quote Luke 6:35 on loving one's enemies (*Dial.* 96), Matthew 11:27 on Christ's claim of oneness with the Father (*Dial.* 100), and Matthew 16:21 in which Christ himself is prophet of his own Passion. He will continue such quotes up until the agony in the garden itself described in Matthew 26:39 (= Luke 22:42). But on the Triumphal Entry, or the Passion, and Resurrection narratives themselves there are simply allusions and no direct quotes, save one from Luke 23:46. The preexistent Logos speaking in prophecy can be allowed to tell the story in his own and direct words found in Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Jonah 4:10, and in many other such Old Testament passages (*Dial.* 101–107).

In view of the quotes from Luke 1:35, 23:46, and Matthew 26:29, we cannot hypothesize the existence of a sayings source such as Q available to Justin without a birth or Passion narrative. His allusions to the text are rather to be explained by his belief in the superiority of the Old Testament as the spoken prophecy of the preexistent Logos. As such his exegesis involves typology but not allegory. Indeed, his comments at various points say as much. The object of his exegesis, he specifically states, is what was 'spoken in a hidden way [*apokekalummenōs*] and in parables [*en parabolais*] or in mysteries [*en mustēriōis*], or again in symbolic actions [*en symbolois ergōn*]' (*Dial.* 68.6). He speaks of his Old Testament subject matter, rather as the Fourth Evangelist describes the miracles of Jesus, as signs or *semēia*, as when Moses sets up the serpent in the wilderness. With both writers, whether of a miracle of Jesus or of an Old Testament happening, 'sign' is clearly a reference to the spiritual or eternal message of the Logos mysteriously concealed in the event. As such it is synonymous with *typos* or 'type.' The latter terms, however,

have a more predictive significance, and seem always to be fulfilled in what others would later call an 'antitype,' although Justin never uses this specific term (e.g., Gregory Nazianzen, *Orat.* 45.22; Epiph. *Haer.* 11.31.2).

Melito of Sardis (c. AD 160) systematically developed such a use of type fulfilled in antitype in his exegesis of the Old Testament. Melito on Abraham's offering of Isaac speaks of the latter as the type of Christ, and the scene on Mount Moriah excites astonishment and fear as it is a 'strange mystery' (Mel. *Fig.* 9.10). In the course of his homily on the Passover, he describes accurately how he regards the Old Testament in relation to Christ (Mel. *Pasc.* 33-35). The word 'type' in Greek can mean both 'model' and 'picture.' The Old Testament contains for Melito the 'preliminary sketch' or 'preliminary structure,' in wax, or clay, or wood, in contrast to the finished work that will arise 'taller in height, and stronger in power, and beautiful in form, and rich in its construction' (*Pasc.* 227-234). Melito refines this typological exegesis that he otherwise shares with Justin so as to produce a systematic parallelism between Old and New Testaments. This exegetical parallelism was centered on the Pascal Lamb and Christ (*Pasc.* 769-780). But Melito can also reason in terms of antitheses of fulfilment, as opposed to Marcion's follower, Apelles' antitheses of contradiction. From Deuteronomy 28:66 he derives the antitheses 'He who hung the earth is hanging, he who fixed the stars has been fixed, he who fastened the universe has been fastened to a tree' (*Pasc.* 711-713).

Clearly such a method of exegesis was reinforced by the controversy with Marcion conducted by Irenaeus and Tertullian. For Irenaeus there is both an Adam-Christ and an Eve-Mary typology (Iren. *Praed.* 31 and 33; *Haer.* III.22.3; V.19.1). On the one hand, his insistence on the literal character of the Old Testament enables him to reject the scriptural evidence for Gnostic claims based upon an excessive reliance on allegory. On the other hand, his typological fulfilment enables him to refute Marcionite claims that the descriptions of the Old Testament God show him to be morally defective. Unlike the Gnostics, he can normally insist on literal interpretations of the New Testament that complete and fulfil the Old, and in which mystery vanishes into what is clear and definitive (Iren. *Haer.* IV.2.1-5; III.11.5). He does, however, on occasions interpret the New Testament as he does the Old, regarding, for example, the unjust judge of the parable as a type of the Antichrist (Luke 18:2), or the widow at the temple as a symbol of the earthly Jerusalem (*Haer.* V.25.4). Irenaeus also reveals his debt to Justin in his use of the Old Testament to reveal the work of the preexistent Logos before the incarnation (*Praed.* 45; cf. Just. *Dial.* 56-60).

One writer in the Hippolytan school is an heir of both the Old Testament Christological exegesis of Justin, Athenagoras, and Irenaeus, and of Melito's

concept of antithetical fulfilment. Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum* (10.4) identifies Logos/Wisdom with the pre-existent Christ in Isaiah 40:12 and Proverbs 8:22, even though, unlike in Justin's case, the 'unfleshed logos [*logos asarkos*]' is not completely personal before the incarnation when it becomes perfected by being born from the Virgin as 'perfect Son [*teleios huios*]' (CN 4:10-13; 15.7). The proof-text in question is Daniel 7:13. Unlike his predecessor in (P.) Hippolytus, *Refutatio* (X.33.11), therefore, Hippolytus did not cite Psalm 109:3 in evidence that Christ was already 'first born son of the father [*prōtogenos patros pais*], the voice before the dawn-bringing morning star [*hē pro heōsforou fōsforos fonē*].' But both writers were in this respect within the general tradition of a typology of preexistence. The genuine Hippolytus, in writing *De Antichristo*, also deployed an antithetical exegesis in order to draw a picture of Antichrist in contrast to Christ. Just as Christ is a lion (Rev. 5:5) so the Antichrist is called a lion (Dan. = Antichrist in Deut. 33:22). Christ is king, as is Antichrist (John 18:37; cf. Gen. 49:16). Christ is born from Judah, the Antichrist from Daniel, etc. (Hipp. *Antichr.* XIV-XV).

Both Tertullian and Cyprian continue the typological approach to exegesis.

Tertullian mentions disparagingly pagan, allegorical interpretations of the myth of Saturn in *Ad Nationes* (II.12.17), but—uses typological exegesis against both Jews and Marcion. It was the latter's literalist 'method of errors [*rationem errorum*]' that had concealed from him the true meaning of Isaiah 53 (Tert. *Marc.* III.7.1-2), as well the example of the serpent of bronze in Numbers 21:8-9 amongst many others (*Marc.* III.18). Here we find examples of what we understand as typology rather than allegory. Tertullian uses the words *allegoria* and *allegorizare* of his exegetical method (*Marc.* IV.17.12), but apparently equivalently with *figura* (*typos*), as well as *parabola* and *ainigma*, expressive of the mystery of literal historical events which are nevertheless mysterious and other than they seem rather than pure allegories (*Marc.* IV.25.1). 'The facts [*res*] are contained in the letters [*in litteris*], the letters are read in the facts. Thus not always and in every instance have the speech of the prophets an allegorical form, but only seldom and in certain of them' (Tert. *Res.* 20.9).

Cyprian has left in his *Ad Quirinum* a large collection of Old Testament testimonies interpreted typologically. There is, however, a far greater use of Old Testament typology in defence of Cyprian's view of the nature of the church in his writings. In Cyprian (*Ep.* LXIX.6,1-3) Novatian is compared with Jeroboam and his schism with the two nations, only one of which possessed a valid sanctuary. However, the New Testament antitype of the Old Testament type in this case is Matthew 10:5 ('Do not go into the way of the gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans'). But in this case it is the type that gives clarity to the

vagueness and mysteriousness of the antitype, and not the other way around. It is thus curious that Cyprian's exegesis often regards the Old Testament as fulfilling the New rather than vice versa.

Within the writings of the Hippolytan school, however, in the generation before Cyprian, we witness a definite movement in exegetical method from the typological toward that of allegory. In his exegesis of Daniel, which, in Theodotian's version of the Greek Old Testament, has the history of Susanna as a preface to the text, the author begins with a strictly historical treatment in which he relates Josiah to Jehoiakin, Susanna's husband. Susanna in turn is the sister of the prophet Jeremiah and her father, Helkesiah, was the priest who discovered the lost book of the law in the time of Josiah (Hipp. *In Dan.* 1.12). But the writer clearly believes that the history comes from a vision of Daniel about events that are to him in the future. In consequence, he is able to apply a systematically typological interpretation that approaches pure allegory. Susanna becomes a type of the church, Jehoiakin that of Christ. The garden of this rich man represents the society of saints, Babylon is the present age, and the two elders are the two peoples who conspire against the church, namely, the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. Susanna's bath represents baptism, etc. (*In Dan.* 1.14–17). Here types are not occasional and isolated mysterious events but are woven together in a continuous narrative that becomes more allegorical than typological. Thus we can now turn to our third category of exegetical method.

3 *The narratives as redemptive allegories*

We shall now see that the allegorical approach to exegesis has its roots in some parts of the New Testament as the two other approaches that we have considered have their roots in others.

One of the strange paradoxes of the Fourth Gospel is that however committed the writer is to the doctrine of the enfleshment of the divine Logos (John 1:14), his actual description of Jesus' humanity is highly ambiguous (John 6:20–21). Similarly, if he is committed to that doctrine, it would suggest something like Justin's doctrine of the Old Testament as literal events embodying nevertheless mysterious appearances of the preincarnate Logos. Yet the exegesis of scripture attributed to Christ himself is at times purely allegorical. In the discourse arising from the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the Jews refer to Moses feeding them miraculously with the manna in the wilderness, and suggest that Jesus does the same. Jesus then replies: 'Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven that a man may eat of it and not die' (John 6:49–50). Here Jesus appears to deny the historical character of the text of Exodus. If the Jews of Moses' time had eaten the true

manna, they would still be alive. Old Testament references to this event were therefore intended to be read allegorically and not literally, as the Jews had done as the representatives of a world of darkness and error.

Such an exegetical method was reminiscent of Philo who nevertheless, as we have seen, did not deny the literal as one valid level of interpretation as this allegorical strategy appears to do. It is reflected moreover both in the speech attributed to Stephen in Acts 7 as well as Hebrews. Stephen attacks the building of the Temple of Solomon as the result of a gross misinterpretation of what God had intended. The story of the Tabernacle in the wilderness had been an allegory of the heavenly realm: it was constructed 'according to the pattern [*kata ton tupon*]' of what Moses had seen (Acts 7:44). Solomon in building a house had failed to understand that 'the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands' (7:47–48). Similarly, and representing a similarly Hellenistic milieu, Hebrews will regard the true significance of the Tabernacle in the wilderness as a pattern of the heavenly order (Heb. 8:6). 'The Law possessing a shadow of good things to come, was not the express image of actual things' (10:1). While the author does not deny the actuality of patriarchal history (11), he nevertheless denies any efficacy for the temple ritual itself. It was only to the one sacrifice of Calvary that such ritual pointed, since its need for repetition revealed its inadequacy. His final conclusion drawn from such a line of reasoning is that: 'it was impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin' (10:4).

Such New Testament approaches that draw typological conclusions very close to allegorical ones become even more blatant in (Ps.) Barnabas. Circumcision in the flesh was not commanded to Abraham since Egyptians, Syrians, Arabians, and idolatrous priests are also circumcised. Abraham's words were prophetic of Jesus, and his words are therefore to be interpreted allegorically ((Ps.) Barn. *Ep.* 9.6–7). The food laws moreover were never intended to be taken literally. Being forbidden to eat pork, hare, falcon, or fish without scales was really an injunction not to have qualities of men who have the moral characteristics of these animals (*Ep.* 10.1–9). It was not simply that God provided, as Hebrews had claimed, a new, eternal, and more real Second Covenant. Rather there was only ever one Covenant, and it was Jewish misunderstanding that claimed the Old Testament for themselves, rather than seeing it as prophetic allegory for the future (*Ep.* 13.1–7a). Here there is no doctrine of the *deuterosis* that we have witnessed in the later *Didascalia*, in which certain laws and customs are not efficacious but were actually and historically given as a punishment. God had spoken allegories to Moses, which were converted by the perversity of Jewish understanding into ceremonial and sacrificial laws. Allegorization thus solved the Didascalist's difficulty of regarding the Old Testament as divine revelation in a different way.

Justin and Irenaeus, however, used the allegorical method of this method that the Old Testament was the work of Gnostics or the Logos. But with Clement and Irenaeus and successively, the method became of fundamental importance in the development of the literal exegesis of the Old Testament as part of the tradition. Justin's view of the Old Testament as the work of the Logos has been in the cloud, and the Law through Moses (1.7.60.1), 'the Logos' (*Exc. ex Theod.* 1.1). Clement's doctrine

To read the Old Testament as the Logos is to confront the incarnate Logos as an 'enigma [*ainigma*] [*parabolē*],' or 'symbolic' characteristics of the Logos. The mystery of the Logos is found in the saving and expounding 'the mystery' (*menon noun*)' (Clement 5.2). Scripture, in the New Testament, thus comes to the interpreter as the latter. The true Gnosticism as Logos in scripture (*Strom.* VII.16.95.9) is to the contemplation into the mystical leading to the attainment of the *theologikon eidos* (theological form) of the Old Testament narrative. Aspects that he will primarily redemptive means by which he grasps the mystery and transforms the knowledge.

At this point Clement's pagan, Middle Ages quotation from Neoplatonist speaking Attic Greek means by which he allegorical exegesis as seen in such writers as an argument for the Logos in terms of the Philostratus will not in Egypt, despite Philo from whom he has the true philosophy of

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Justin and Irenaeus had resisted a thoroughgoing allegorical method of scriptural interpretation since it was this method that was deployed by the Gnostics for both Old Testament and New Testament texts, unless they were Gnostics or Marcionites who denied that the Old Testament was the revelation of the supreme and perfect God. But with Clement of Alexandria and his associates and successors, the allegorical method was to become of fundamental importance, however much the literal exegesis may have been acknowledged as well as part of the tradition. Clement was to draw out and refine further the implication that had been implicit in Justin's view of the appearances of the Logos in various Old Testament passages as the preexistent Christ. Since the Logos has revealed himself in the Burning Bush, in the cloud, and in the prophets, and has given the Law through Moses (Clem. Alex. *Prot.* 1.8.1-3; *Paed.* 1.7.60.1), 'the Logos becomes flesh again' (Clem. Alex. *Exc. ex Theod.* 19.2; *Paed.* 1.9.88.2-3). Thus arises Clement's doctrine of a double incarnation.

To read the Old Testament therefore is like confronting the incarnation, the Logos veiled in flesh. Thus 'enigma [*ainigma*],' 'allegory [*allēgoria*],' 'parable [*parabolē*],' or 'symbol [*symbolon*]' are his terms for the characteristics of the Old Testament as the experience of the mystery of the incarnation. Exegesis involves finding 'the saving words [*tē tōn sōtērion logōn heuresēi*]' and expounding 'the concealed sense [*ton . . . kekrummenon noun*]' (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* VI.15.126.1; *Dives* 5.2). Scripture, whether Old Testament or New Testament, thus constitutes both body and soul: the aim of the interpreter is to move from the former to the latter. The true Gnostic embraces the teaching of Christ as Logos in scripture, as opposed to the simple believer (*Strom.* VII.16.95.9). The final end of exegesis thus leads to the contemplation (*epopteia*), which is a full initiation into the mysteries, whether pagan or Christian, leading to the attainment of the 'divine rational form [*theologikon eidos*]' (*Strom.* IV.1.3.2). Thus for him Old Testament narratives, despite the literal and typological aspects that he will acknowledge, are nevertheless primarily redemptive allegories in which knowledge that grasps the mysterious nature of the incarnate Logos transforms the knower.

At this point Clement parallels in his hermeneutic his pagan, Middle Platonist background. Indeed, his quotation from Numenius, 'What is Plato but Moses speaking Attic Greek?' (*Strom.* 1.21.150.4), shows the means by which he will justify a Middle Platonist allegorical exegesis as one strand in his hermeneutic. We see in such writers as Philostratus and Diogenes Laertius an argument for the validity of a philosophical tradition in terms of the antiquity of its historical origin. Philostratus will not concede that philosophy originated in Egypt, despite Plato's reference to the Egyptian priest from whom he had learned his doctrines. Rather the true philosophy comes from India and the gym-

nosophists (Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* 8.7). Laertius, on the other hand, will locate the origins of philosophy purely within Hellenism in the Seven Wise Men of Ancient Greece and their philosopher successors (Diogenes Laertius 1.1-2 and 1.12). Clement is arguing the superiority of the Old Testament in terms of an account both of antiquity and ultimate origin that shows its rivals to be copies of it and therefore inferior to it.

Clement, as Justin before him, claims that Moses is older than Plato, and the latter's philosophy was derived from the former, helped of course by Philo's Platonist and Stoic exegesis of the Pentateuch. The Stoics were able to allegorize obscene fables such as the castration of Ouranos that the highest principle of refined fire does not need genitals in order to procreate (Cicero *Nat. Deor.* 2.63-64). If the aetherial, refined, fiery Logos was the imminent divine principle of reason permeating all matter and life, and giving to them order and rationality, then indeed there was an inner light incarnated in all cultures concealed behind myths that might seem childish and without substance. A Middle Platonist such as Plutarch could read the story of Isis and Osiris in the light of his version of Plato's philosophy (Plut. *Is. et Os.* 372E, 53 and 373A-B, 54).

Origen was Clement of Alexandria's successor, whether of a definite school, or simply a tradition of ideas. He too will insist that Jesus is not present in the world only through the incarnation, since he has previously sojourned in the world in the form of the pre-existent Logos to which the Old Testament as prophecy testifies (*Or. Hom. In Jer.* IX.1.20-25). Thus, all that followed from this fact for Clement did so also for Origen. Origen, as we stated in our introduction, distinguishes three levels of meaning of which scriptural exegesis will take account, the corporeal, the psychological, and the spiritual. But here Origen will distinguish between literal readings of the Old Testament and those of the New Testament. Literalism regarding the Old Testament could lead to Marcionite heresy, or a God of human passions and mood swings. But in the case of the New Testament, literalism is never damaging, though it must lead to a higher, spiritual interpretation (*Or. Princ.* IV.2.1). The Sadducees were in error in interpreting the resurrection in a different way from what can be expressed as historical truth (*Or. Com. In Matt.* X.20.4-10). Some events or laws found in the Old Testament cannot be given a literal meaning since this would make them either impossible or morally scandalous. But such features of the Old Testament have been deliberately implanted there by divine providence to perform an educative role. If all parts of scripture had been literal and clear, there would be no stimulus for the spiritual believer to advance beyond the literate to the spiritual meaning veiled and incarnate in the text (*Or. Princ.* IV.2.8-9; 3.5). To admit that such impossibilities or scandals could be part of the literal meaning of the text would be to breach the principle

that scripture forms a harmonious whole, not one part of which ought to be interpreted as at variance with another. Thus Origen will not support the idea of the Clementine *Homilies* that the *falsae voces* are pernicious interpolations, nor of the later Theodore and his school. His exegetical position became generally accepted within the church before the rise of higher criticism at the Enlightenment, as Article XX of the Church of England at the Reformation shows, where it says of the church: 'neither may it expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another.'

Rather than removing by editorial fiat texts that expressed theologically unsound content, Origen was able thus to engage in the kind of primitive textual criticism represented by the Hexapla. Here along with the Hebrew text and its Greek transliteration stood the LXX along with the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion and two others. He placed obelisks beside passages in the LXX which did not appear in Hebrew, and asterisks besides Hebrew passages that did not occur in the LXX. Believing in the full inspiration of every text of scripture, he clearly shows sensitivity to the problem of the necessity to establish the correct text of inspired revelation. His problem was that there were variant readings of the LXX, which he sought to correct from the Hebrew particularly where this might agree with other Greek versions (*Or. Ep. In Afric.* 6-7). However, his method of exegesis in such cases assumed a maximizing approach. He will accept the Hebrew version as the true reading but will nevertheless also give the LXX reading as well if it expands the meaning of the Hebrew so that he conflates two interpretations of a text. In Origen's *Homilia In Psalmis* (2.12) we find that the LXX has added 'right' to 'lest you perish from the [right] way.' He will also interpret passages marked with an obelisk which he admits has therefore no corresponding Hebrew version. His justification appears to be that such omissions or additions are the work of divine providence, which thus assists the exegete in multiplying the interpretations of the words of God who wills to say many different things (*Or. Ep. In Afric.* 8).

It is important to note that Origen in none of his surviving works mentions the *Letter to Aristas* and the belief that the LXX was itself a divinely inspired translation. This is of great importance, since Origen's distinctive approach to exegesis was to prevail within Christianity up until the Enlightenment and the rise of higher criticism. All scripture is divinely inspired, but its spiritual message completes and perfects its literal narrative rather than being at variance with it. Nevertheless, critical research regarding the state of those texts is essential given that human hands capable of human error must transmit those texts.

We find that Ambrose will deploy the allegorical method as will Jerome, subject to Origen's restraints, and Jerome will additionally engage in textual criticism.

The alternative, embryonically higher-critical stance of Theodore was not to prevail. A clear indication that it was not to do so can be seen from the fact that Diodore of Tarsus was the teacher of John Chrysostom. The latter delivered a panegyric in his honor in 392. John rarely interprets allegorically anything that it is not clear by the context that scripture itself acknowledges as allegory. In *Hom. In Is.* 6.4 John makes it clear that while an allegorical meaning can be given of Isaiah's vision as an eschatological image of the Last Judgment, he prefers to interpret the passage literally and historically.

It was the Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea, who compiled the collection of Origen's writings known as the *Philocalia* between 360 and 378. Basil's own commentary on the days of Creation, the *Hexameron*, had been literalist and arguably influenced by Diodore. But clearly by the time of writing the *Philocalia* he had become Origenist in his exegesis. But his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, was further committed to Origenist exegesis, in particular in his work on the Psalm titles and Ecclesiastes (*Gr. Nyss. Pss. Tit.*; *Hom. 1-8 In Ecl.*). In *Hom. 1-15 In Cant.* 6 Gregory argues that the voice of the bridegroom is Philosophy addressing the soul. In *Vit. Mos.* (PG 44.327-329) the birth of Moses subsequent to the pharaoh's decree to kill male children requires a deeper understanding than the literal sense. Gregory proceeds to expound the passage as a psychological allegory about the hostility of vice to virtue struggling to be born.

Jerome was to continue Origen's influence in the West with particular emphasis on the later's textual criticism. In 386-390 Jerome worked on the Old Latin (*Vetus Latina*) text of the Bible, which he proceeded with the use of the Hexapla to make closer to the text of LXX. But in 389, in his commentary on Ecclesiastes, he began to use the Hebrew text and to make his Latin version far closer to that than the LXX. Thus he came to challenge the view that the LXX was itself an inspired translation or even, as Origen claimed, a providential aid. Jerome challenged the legend of the seventy, and, in his commentary on the Pentateuch (398), he held that they were men of education but not of prophecy (*Jer. Praef. In Pent.*). Whilst accepting that allegory was a legitimate means of interpretation, his philological work reveals an interest in the literal or historical meaning of the texts, which he takes sufficiently seriously to find contradictions such as the conflicting genealogies between Matthew and Luke an intractable problem. He falls back on the principle that whatever may be incredible to the human imagination is so due to the limitations of human knowledge (*Jer. Ep.* LVII.9.1).

Augustine clashed with Jerome's newfound faith in the Hebrew original, the *veritas Hebraica*, and claimed that the LXX was the divinely authorized translation (*Aug. Civ. Dei* XV.14.48 and XVIII.43.1-50). To ignore the LXX would place in danger the apostolic tradition, and put Greek and Latin Christendom at vari-

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ronically higher-critical stance of prevail. A clear indication that it be seen from the fact that Diodore teacher of John Chrysostom. The egyptic in his honor in 392. John rically anything that it is not clear ripture itself acknowledges as alle- 5.4 John makes it clear that whilst g can be given of Isaiah's vision image of the Last Judgment, he ie passage literally and historically. ocian Fathers, Gregory Nazianzus , who compiled the collection of own as the *Philocalia* between 360 m commentary on the days of ron, had been literalist and arguably ore. But clearly by the time of he had become Origenist in his her, Gregory of Nyssa, was further rist exegesis, in particular in his titles and Ecclesiastes (Gr. Nyss. n *Eid.*). In *Hom. 1-15 In Cant. 6* the voice of the bridegroom is ng the soul. In *Vit. Mos.* (PG rth of Moses subsequent to the ill male children requires a deeper e literal sense. Gregory proceeds ge as a psychological allegory about to virtue struggling to be born. continue Origen's influence in the emphasis on the latter's textual cri- rome worked on the Old Latin f the Bible, which he proceeded Hexapla to make closer to the text in his commentary on Ecclesiastes, ebrew text and to make his Latin hat than the LXX. Thus he came that the LXX was itself an inspired as Origen claimed, a providential d the legend of the seventy, and, on the Pentateuch (398), he held of education but not of prophecy Whilst accepting that allegory was nterpretation, his philological work the literal or historical meaning he takes sufficiently seriously to ch as the conflicting genealogies d Luke an intractable problem. He iple that whatever may be incred- agination is so due to the limita- ledge (Jer. Ep. LVII.9.1). with Jerome's newfound faith in the *veritas Hebraica*, and claimed e divinely authorized translation 14.48 and XVIII.43.1-50). To old place in danger the apostolic tek and Latin Christendom at vari-

ance with each other (Aug. Ep. LXXI.2.4; *Doctr. Chris.* II.15.22). Jerome had insisted that language was the key to the sense of scripture: 'We must not think that the Gospel is found in the words of the Scripture, but in its meaning' (Jer. *Com. In Gal.* I.1.386). But Augustine regards Jerome's philology as indicative of a theory of meaning that equates words with their meanings and ultimately with their truth. Undoubtedly Jerome did call the Hebrew language the *matrix omnium linguarum* (Jer. *Soph. Proph.* III.14-18.540). But to regard Hebrew as the most accurate human language in recording the truth of divine revelation is not equivalent to regarding truth and word to be one and the same.

Language for Augustine, as for the Stoics, was a sign rather than a symbol embodying in itself the truth of that to which it made reference (Aug. *Doctr. Chris.* II.2-4.4; II.1.1-8.8). When a spoken word is written down, then it becomes a sign for what was originally itself a sign (*Doctr. Chris.* II.4.5.1-4). Thus any human language, by its very nature, is one or two removes away from the real and true and only erroneously identified with what is true itself. As the Tower of Babel shows, languages are themselves a judgment of God upon human sinfulness, and the means of preventing too close an access to God (*Doctr. Chris.* II.4.5.5). The God who inspires the sacred text has, in accordance with this punishment, placed there deliberately obscure passages and concepts in order to obstruct human pride (Aug. *Confess.* XII.14.17-25; 25.35; XI.3.5). The mystery of their meaning results from the action of grace rather than of nature so that scientific philology and linguistic translation have their limitations. Augustine really did need therefore the translation of the LXX duly inspired and kept immune from error by divine grace for there to be a written revelation.

Augustine's intellectual conversion through hearing the sermons of Ambrose involved his acceptance of the validity of the allegorical method. As a Manichean he had spurned the Old Testament as depicting a lesser God who changed his mind, who required the 'sweet savour' of an animal sacrifice, who robbed the Egyptians, etc. (*Confess.* III.5.; III-V). Ambrose's method of exegesis was allegorical, as shown in his works in which the images of the individual soul in quest for God are united with images of the church. In Ambrose's *Isaac* 1-2, Isaac as the soul finds in Rachel the heavenly Jerusalem and receives in figure the waters of baptism from Rachel's well. Indeed Ambrose uses allegory in a way that has a greater orientation toward issues of Church Order and discipline than appears in his predecessors. Certainly in Ambrose's *Hexam.* I.8.30 and III.7.32 the goodness of Creation by Father and Son is asserted specifically against the Manicheans. In Ambrose's *Noe* 22.78 it is asserted that Noah's sacrifice was one of thanksgiving on his part and not by God's command, who was not therefore 'greedy for reward.' Here also the allegorical character of the Old Testament,

as Ambrose presented it, convinced Augustine that it was after all 'a matter concealed from the proud . . . and veiled in mysteries' (Aug. *Confess.* III.5.9).

Thus Augustine, in work composed AD 388-389, claims that what is written can only be devoutly understood 'figuratively and enigmatically [*figurate atque in aenigmatibus*]' (Aug. *Gen. Con. Manich.* II.2.3 [= *Gen. Litt.* 8.2]). Later, however (c. 393), Augustine (*Gen. Litt.* Impf. 3.1) emphasizes to the contrary that the account 'must be accepted according to history [*secundum historiam accipiendum*].' But he was even later to express his rejection of this thesis with the momentary wish to destroy the book altogether (Aug. *Retract.* II.24). Later still, in 401, in *Gen. Litt.* 8.1, whilst still holding to the principle *secundum historiam*, Augustine will modify the rejection of his early allegorism. The serpent, like the garden of Eden, although not part of usual everyday experiences, is nevertheless to be interpreted *secundum historiam* except where the literal sense is absurd, as with the prediction that 'your eyes will be opened.' Their eyes could not have been literally closed before otherwise they could not have witnessed and spoke about all that went before. Within the narrative that is historical and literal there may be instances where literal interpretation would be illogical or impious and so here understanding in terms of metaphor or even allegory may be used, as in anthropomorphic expression of divine activity. In this case it is permitted to the reader to consider 'in what significance and sense what is written is written.' But the principle remains that 'everything cannot be accepted figuratively [*ne. . . figurate accipiendum est*] on account of the transferred meaning of one word [*propter unius verbi translationem*]' (*Gen. Litt.* 11.31). Here he was prepared to hold fast to the implications of Philo's and Origen's tripartite approach to exegesis where, at least in theory, the three levels of the physical or literal, the psychological, and the allegorical. The narrative of Genesis 1-3 is not for Augustine allegorical like Canticles. Adam is literally the father of Cain and Abel, and Eden as much a literal creation as the world itself, however much the experience of creation is not of an everyday character (*Gen. Litt.* 8.1).

Augustine did however have the intellectual honesty to admit that literal interpretation frequently raises problems to which it gives only provisional and doubtful solutions (*Retract.* II.24.1). Thus he articulated the enduring dilemma of the church's official and formal exegesis before the Enlightenment and the rise of critical biblical scholarship.

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PAUL AS INTERPRETER OF THE BIBLE

Paul's Bible consists of the Jewish scriptures as these had come to be generally recognized by the first century AD in Israel. Paul's use of these scriptures in his Epistles can be categorized under four headings: quotations, allusions, echoes, and language structures. Consideration of

Paul's explicit quotation textual tradition of his common Hebrew tradition (approximately 40 percent), and these quotations agree with neither the LXX nor the Hebrew, but more often

Paul's basic pattern of the theological statement, introductory quotation(s). Frequent quotation, or instruction based on the quotation, as the apostle develops his particular argument also indicates that what was 'true' now (e.g., Resurrection characters or events) connected to contemporary culture is to be uncovered (e.g., 1 Cor. 10:6, 11), and still, Paul's use of the direct quotations, for texts and material from the times texts and images from through Paul's writing. In the nature of Paul's own language shaped according to scriptural language contribution of specific theological types of biblical usage are easily distinguishable, but interpretation of scripture.

Paul interprets scripture as belief that Jesus is the crucified and risen one who appeared to him on the day of Pentecost. The scripture points forward to the fulfillment of the law (1:1–2; 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:20). Paul normally uses scripture to support the church's claim that the law is fulfilled (17:2–3; 28:23). The issue of the scripture directly most often concerns the law and the place of the Gentiles and of the church's return. Though in Paul juxtaposes two different understandings of the law (1 Cor. 3:1–4:6) (let that, for him, to understand the law is to misunderstand it) there is a new orientation and in this 'ministry of the word' with Christ and his image are intimately linked.

Paul's explicit quotations requires attention to the textual tradition of his citations. A large number of Paul's quotations are in substantial agreement with the common Hebrew traditions and the LXX (approximately 40 percent), and a significant group of quotations agree with neither the Hebrew nor the LXX (some over 30 percent). Where the Hebrew traditions and the LXX vary, Paul in a few cases agrees with the Hebrew, but more often he reflects the Greek text.

Paul's basic pattern of explicit citation is opening theological statement, introductory formula, and scriptural quotation(s). Frequently, an interpretation, application, or instruction based on the scriptural text follows the quotation, as the apostle weaves images together and develops his particular argument. Paul in some cases also indicates that what was shown to be 'true' in scripture is 'true' now (e.g., Rom. 3:10-18; 10:18-20), that scriptural characters or events are typologically connected to contemporary characters or events (Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11), and that the meaning of scripture is to be uncovered by means of allegory (Gal. 4:24). Still, Paul's use of scripture is not exhausted by the direct quotations, for he himself often alludes to texts and material from the scriptures, whereas at other times texts and images from scripture appear to echo through Paul's writing. In still other cases, the structure of Paul's own language and thought appears to be shaped according to scriptural language patterns, as biblical language contributes to the generation and formation of specific theological discussions. These four types of biblical usage are not discrete, nor are they easily distinguishable, but commonly overlap in Paul's interpretation of scripture.

Paul interprets scripture from the perspective of his belief that Jesus is the crucified and risen Messiah who appeared to him on the Damascus Road and commissioned him to be apostle to the Gentiles. For Paul, scripture points forward to Christ and the Gospel (Rom. 1:1-2; 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Gal. 3:6-9), but he does not normally use scripture in his Epistles to establish the church's claim that Jesus is the Christ (cf. Acts 17:2-3; 28:23). The issues that prompt Paul to quote scripture directly most often relate to matters of Jew-Gentile concern: righteousness by faith, works of law, and the place of Israel in the scope of salvation (see especially Rom. 4, 9-11; Gal. 3-4). Paul uses scripture in the service of his missionary work among the Gentiles and of the church, as it awaits Christ's imminent return. Though many scholars reject the idea that Paul juxtaposes two different interpretive methods in 2 Corinthians 3:1-4:6 (letter versus spirit), it is the case that, for him, to understand scripture merely as inscribed text is to misunderstand it. In the 'ministry of the spirit,' there is a new orientation to the scriptures of Israel; and in this 'ministry of the spirit,' Paul's experience with Christ and his interpretation of Israel's scriptures are intimately linked.

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JAMES W. AAGESON

PAULINE LETTERS

- 1 Exegetical issues in the interpretation of the Pauline corpus
- 2 History of interpretation
- 3 Modern interpretative approaches
- 4 Future issues in Pauline interpretation

The Pauline letters are central to Christian history and theology. The letters attributed to Paul comprise the largest corpus in comparison with all the other New Testament authors. They are the earliest witness to the life and faith of the first Christians, pre-dating the writing of the canonical Gospels. As such, they present firsthand insight into the expansion of Christianity beyond the borders of Palestine into the wider Mediterranean world. These letters also provide the foundation for many of the central Christian beliefs and statements of faith, with Paul himself regarded as one of the first and one of the greatest Christian theologians.

Understanding and interpreting the Pauline letters has occupied a key place in the life and theology of the church since the late first century AD until today. In order to survey the interpretation of these letters, four key issues will be surveyed: exegetical issues in the interpretation of the Pauline corpus, the history of interpretation of Paul, modern interpretative approaches, and future issues in Pauline interpretation.

1 Exegetical issues in the interpretation of the Pauline corpus

Thirteen letters list Paul as the author in the epistolary opening. Scholarship since the early critical period of biblical interpretation (the seventeenth century) has questioned the authorship of some of these letters. Seven are generally regarded as authentic, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon. The authorship of 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, and Ephesians is highly debated, with the Pastorals (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) generally regarded as inau-