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# Evangelical Hermeneutics: Restatement, Advance or Retreat from the Reformation?

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.

There can be little doubt left in the minds of most leaders in the church of the last half of the twentieth century that we are now going through a hermeneutical crisis perhaps as significant in its importance and outcome as that of the Reformation. This is not to say that the subject of hermeneutics played no role in the discussions and formulation of doctrine prior to 1950; the fact of the matter is that every doctrinal advance in the history of the church exhibits some key hermeneutical decisions even though these stances usually involve a host of other considerations.

## I. Introduction

The crisis upon us at the moment is the result of the Kantian and neo-Kantian climate produced by such writers as Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976), and Hans Georg Gadamer (b. 1900). Now, instead of defining hermeneutics as Johann August Ernesti (1707-1781) did, namely, "the science which teaches [us] to find . . . the meaning of an author, and appropriately to explain it to others,"<sup>1</sup> in Gadamer the hermeneutics of the reformers and the writers of the seventeenth century (such as William Ames,<sup>2</sup>) and eighteenth century (like Johann Ernesti) have been turned 180 degrees.

For many who have tasted the heady wine of modernity in Hans Gadamer (and to a lesser degree in Paul Ricoeur, b. 1915), the meaning of a text lies in its subject matter, rather than in what an author meant by that text. In fact, the meaning of a text *always* goes beyond what any author had intended in his affirmations and that sense is an unending process which can never be exhausted or captured by an infinite line of interpreters. The process of exegesis of a text is no longer linear but circular — one in which the interpreter affects his text as much as the text (in its subject matter) somehow affects the interpreter as well. Clearly, there is a confusion of ontology with epistemology, the subject with the object, the "thereness" of the propositions of the text with the total cultural and interpretive "baggage" of the interpreter.

Pitted against this revolutionary reversal in Gadamer of the traditional role, aims, and procedures of hermeneutics are the lonely voices of Emilio Betti,<sup>3</sup> an Italian historian of law, and E.D. Hirsch, Jr.,<sup>4</sup> an English professor at the University of Virginia. At the heart of their case is the distinction between "meaning" or interpretation and "significance" or application. "Meaning," they rightfully contend, is that which is represented by a text, its grammar, and the author's truth-intentions as indicated by his use of words, while "significance" denotes a *relationship between* (note well — it must be linked) that meaning and another person(s), time, situation, or idea (s). Meaning, they added, was unchanging once the writer committed himself to words, while significance did and had to change since the interpreter or reader usually found himself or herself in other times, interests, questions, and situations.

Very few, if any, in the contemporary church have been left untouched by this hermeneutical crisis. The evangelical community has also been severely affected by this debate even though it has spent most of its energies up to this point on the issues of the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. "It would be the ultimate irony," I complained in a 1979 *Christianity Today* article, "if our generation were to be noted as the generation that contested most earnestly for the sole authority and inerrancy of Scripture as its confessional stand, but which generation also effectively denied that stance by its own hermeneutical practice and method of interpretation. This in itself . . . is reason enough to call the evangelical community throughout Christendom to a whole new hermeneutical reformation."<sup>5</sup>

#### A. *Who are the Evangelicals?*

But who are the evangelicals? Certainly their presence was significant enough for *Newsweek* magazine to declare 1976 "the year of the evangelicals" and for several of the largest publishing houses of religious books like Harper and Row, Westminster, and Abingdon openly to court evangelical titles in response to this burgeoning market. Yet for all this public exposure, the exact identity of the evangelicals remains elusive.

Gerald T. Sheppard<sup>6</sup> dared to suggest a simple solution to this problem of identity. After he had briefly surveyed five successful books written or edited by evangelicals as self-portraits of the group,<sup>7</sup> Sheppard contends that evangelicalism has made of Biblical hermeneutics a social contract thus overcoming the necessity of defending point by point the five items listed in the

older fundamentals of the faith: the plenary inspiration of Scripture, Christ's deity, His virgin birth, His bodily resurrection, and His second coming. He stated it this way:

In theory, the burden of proof for individualistic doctrines could be almost entirely relieved simply by finding and defending *the one correct view of biblical hermeneutics* which would be sufficient to guarantee an orthodox reading of Scripture at every point. By heavily investing in these more efficient formulae concerning the authority of Scripture, the advocates of evangelicalism have minimized other "secondary" matters of doctrinal debate so that a large number of rather diverse denominations have found a single confessional identity over against the rest of Christendom. The major weakness in this strategy, however, lies in the inflexibility of evangelical hermeneutics, since a question about these formulations is at once a challenge to the social contract at the heart of the evangelical identity.<sup>8</sup>

Interestingly enough, Sheppard's suggestion is countered in a footnote citation from Benjamin B. Warfield, probably the single most influential writer of the last generation on the doctrine of Scripture. Warfield certainly did not rest the distinctiveness of his brand of Christianity on the doctrine of Scripture even though he found that doctrine to be extremely important for consistent theologizing. He warned:

Let it not be said that thus we found the whole Christian system upon the doctrine of plenary inspiration. We found the whole Christian system on the doctrine of plenary inspiration as little as we found it upon the doctrine of angelic existences. Were there no such things as inspiration, Christianity would still be true, and all its essential doctrines would be credibly witnessed to us in the general trustworthy reports of the teaching of our Lord . . . Inspiration is not the most fundamental of Christian doctrines.<sup>9</sup>

An evangelical, then, is one whose personal faith is centered on the evangel or good news about the person and work of Jesus Christ. But what of the issue of Scripture? Can a believer be an evangelical if he or she does not believe in inerrancy? Kenneth S. Kantzer, editor of *Christianity Today*, boldly asserts that "Inerrancy, the most sensitive of all issues to be dealt with in the years immediately ahead, should not be made a test for Christian fellowship in the body of Christ. The evangelical watchword is 'Believers only, but all believers.'"<sup>10</sup> Kantzer recognizes several distinct meanings for the word "evangelical": (1) ". . . in its

broadest sense [it] refers to all people who hold to the essential Good News that sinful men are saved solely by the grace of God, . . . [focused on] Jesus Christ, the divine-human Lord and Saviour of man";<sup>11</sup> (2) " . . . in its narrower sense [it] denote(s) all who remain fully committed to Protestant orthodoxy";<sup>12</sup> and (3) it " . . . sometimes refers merely to historical churches and movements originally characterized by orthodox Protestant or evangelical theology, irrespective of whether the body continues to adhere to traditional evangelical doctrine."<sup>13</sup> It is the first two senses that concern us in this essay.

Where then does all the concern for Scripture fit into the evangelical agenda? Only at the point where *consistency* and concern for *full* orthodoxy are involved, where officers of denominations and institutions, teachers of the churches' educational institutions and her ordained ministry are involved. Kenneth Kantzer phrased it this way:

Although the doctrine of inerrancy should not be made a test for Christian fellowship and cannot be included in the term evangelical as sometimes used, inerrancy, nevertheless, is important. It is essential for *consistent* evangelicalism and for a full Protestant orthodoxy . . . to fail to require belief in the inerrancy of Scripture on the part of [the church's] leadership would be to jeopardize the evangelical heritage of a strict orthodoxy.<sup>14</sup>

Sheppard correctly senses the *value* evangelicals place on a correct view of Scripture, but he is overly dramatic when he fabricates a social contract out of correct biblical hermeneutics. In fact, as we will argue later on, evangelicals (yes, even among those who belong to the "Northern establishment") are woefully divided on hermeneutical systems. More often than not, they tend to mimic many of the systems already existing in the non-evangelical world without always reflecting critically on that usage. Evangelicals in this century have often been occupied with many other issues, usually not of their own choosing, so that in-depth discussion on issues, especially in the area of general hermeneutics have, unfortunately, been missing from their discussions.<sup>15</sup>

### *B. How Broad is "Hermeneutics"?*

Traditionally, "exegesis" involves the process of explaining the meaning of a text which its writer conveyed by means of his own distinctive grammar, syntax, and context; while "hermeneutics" deals with the principles the interpreter employed in that exegesis.

Now, however, the word “hermeneutics” has assumed a broad semantic field embracing the various forms of literary criticism as well as both ends of the interpretive spectrum involving the text and the reader. Indeed, the reader, his times, culture, psychology, and “pre-understandings” are now as much the object of the hermeneutical process as is the text itself.

This is not in itself all bad; but interpreters must not presume that the literary tools upgraded to hermeneutical principles will unfailingly point us to the real matters of the text as if discussions about the process by which the text was formed are equivalent or tantamount to interpreting that text. When such overconfidence in critical methodologies supplants what formerly was the humble desire to learn what the text meant and then to apply it to one’s personal life and society, then the role assigned to hermeneutics has overextended itself. Likewise, the opposite concern is important: the impact that a text makes on its listener-reader. But hermeneutics has moved from its epistemological search for meaning and become instead an ontology and a statement of being or existence when hermeneutics focuses mainly on the listener-reader instead of the text.

The most valuable contribution that Gadamer and the school of the new hermeneutic brings is that application finally receives the attention it so richly deserves as an important concluding step in the interpretive process. The unfortunate aspect is that “the necessary grounding of application in understanding what the author meant by his use of his words is now swallowed up [by the reader setting the agenda for the text].”<sup>16</sup> When that happens, hermeneutics has become unmanageable and communication itself is threatened.

## II. Significant Reformation Principles Affecting Interpretation

### A. *Sola Scriptura*

The Reformers of the Protestant Reformation steadfastly maintained that the Bible *alone* contained all that was necessary for our salvation and manner of living. The Bible *alone*, the Bible without the *Glossa ordinaria* (a uniformity of interpretation maintained for several ages by the Church of Rome on doctrine and discipline) was the supreme and final authority. Moreover, the Scriptures, not the church fathers or the Church of Rome, were sufficient in and of themselves to set doctrine and discipline. The Bible alone was more than adequate and sufficient in itself as the fountain of religious truth.

The turning point for Luther had come in his debate with Eck in 1519. From then on, no longer did religious authority have a dual source nor did interpretation of the Scriptures follow the lines laid down by church tradition. Scripture by itself was (1) a supreme and final authority and (2) sufficient apart from any other controls, guides, or sources of truth.

### B. *The Single Meaning of a Text*

A second important step was taken by the Reformers when they overthrew the wearisome fiction of the fourfold sense of Scripture. Luther was as incisive as usual: "The literal sense of Scripture alone is the whole essence of faith and of Christian theology."<sup>17</sup> As Luther analyzed the situation, the problem of his day was this:

In the schools of theologians it is a well-known rule that Scripture is to be understood in four ways, literal, allegoric, moral, anagogic. But if we wish to handle Scripture aright, our one effort will be to obtain *unum, simplicem, germanum, et certum sensum literalem*. Each passage has one clear, definite and true sense of its own. All others are but doubtful and uncertain opinions.<sup>18</sup>

Again, Luther affirmed:

Only the single, proper, original sense, the sense which is written, makes good theologians. Therefore [the Holy Spirit's] words can have no more than a singular and simple sense which we call the written or literally spoken sense.<sup>19</sup>

This principle of a single meaning to the text is second only to the principle of *sola Scriptura*. Yet, no principle in the whole area of hermeneutics is in more doubt and debate among evangelicals and the descendants of the Reformers. Nothing threatens the work and heritage of Luther and others more in the last half of the twentieth century than the contest over a single or polyvalent meaning for any given text of Scripture.

### C. *The Analogy of Faith*

The *analogia fidei*, or proportion of faith, though first employed by Origen,<sup>20</sup> who innocently borrowed the words of Romans 12:6 ("according to the analogy of faith"), became one of the watchwords of the Reformation. In practical usage, it is often confused with the rule that "Scripture interprets Scripture." But in the hands of its best exponents, it forbade interpreters from taking an isolated passage and distorting it into an authoritative contradiction to the whole tenor of Scriptural teaching. The analogy of faith was never intended by the Reformers to be an

exegetical tool, otherwise, they would only have exchanged Rome's *Glossa ordinaria* and *regula fidei* ("rule of faith") for a new one of their own! In that case, *sola Scriptura* would have been dissolved.

On the contrary, in the hands of the Reformation's best exegetes, the analogy of faith was a *relative* expression aimed at the tyrannical demands of church tradition. "It was intended," commented Herbert Marsh,<sup>21</sup> "solely to deny that tradition was the interpreter of the Bible; it was designed to rescue the interpretation of the Bible from an authoritative rule . . ." Accordingly, it did not intend to set forth that Scripture was everywhere announced with equal clarity or that a trained ministry along with the use of grammars, commentaries, and other aids were unnecessary at best. It only argued that one of the confirming signs that a person had properly understood and expounded a Biblical passage could be seen in the fact that that interpretation would not countermand or contradict anything written anywhere else in Scripture. Thus, after one's exegesis was complete, it was possible for one to collect all the exegeses of all passages on the same subject and bring that teaching together in such a way as to show the proportionality and total sum of the teaching of Scripture on that aspect of doctrine of discipline.

These three lodestars, then, set the course for the Reformation: *sola Scriptura*, single meaning of the text, and the analogy of faith. Evangelicalism would be well advised to remember her roots and these three guiding principles if she is to build on that heritage and make a lasting contribution.

### III. An Evangelical Agenda for the Future

There are four areas that call for a restatement of the Reformation principles for our generation and signal an advance in the hermeneutical debate which rages in our day.

#### A. Critical Use of Criticism

The current debate over the use of the historical-critical methods is the first challenge. Since it is becoming fashionable to label the studies engendered by the literary criticisms as "hermeneutical questions,"<sup>22</sup> evangelicalism must face something the reformers were, in large measure, spared.

Much of the current confusion over the legitimate application of criticism to the interpretive task revolves around the ambiguity of definition of the word "criticism," the starting point of critical studies, and the methodologies employed. If by "critical" we only



meant that any interpretation of Scripture ought to provide adequate grounds for that meaning and those grounds could be contextual, syntactical, philological, historical, grammatical, geographical, or cultural, then there would be little debate. But when the interpreter must first pay his dues to modernity and state in advance what he is prepared to accept based on the interpreter's own rational processes and world-life view, then the price for acceptance by the academy is placed too high and the invitation to subscribe to a "canon within a canon" must be turned down. Views which demand allegiance in advance to a closed universe with such a heavy economy on miracles as effectively to deny all miracles suggest a starting point which is already in need of criticism itself. Nor will the easy retort that all of us carry pre-suppositions to the task of interpretation be sufficient. Of course, we do; but they too are subject to critical analysis.

Furthermore, *hypothetical* sources proffered as the true origins for the present text of Scripture must yield their place to real sources mentioned in the text (Chronicles lists some seventy such sources!) or discovered in the epigraphic materials of archaeology. Since the method for "uncovering" these hypothetical sources admittedly is deductive, they must never be raised to the level of a new induction. Instead, the "truth" discovered is already present in the major premise allowed.

Especially significant is the fact that when many of the current critical methods are applied wholesale to non-biblical epigraphic materials rescued from the sands of antiquity, they often yield some ludicrous results since the historical provenance of the text usually can be dated. A two-source theory for the third millennium Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, exhibiting as it does such close affinities at points with the Genesis flood story, is altogether inappropriate since the text of Gilgamesh antedates the alleged dual sources by many centuries and millennia.<sup>23</sup>

More to the point, however, is the fact that our primary concern in hermeneutics is not to investigate the so-called pre-history of the text, but to explain the meaning of the present text. Very seldom does even an awareness of real sources mentioned in the text help us in this process. To see how some text might have changed from its original usage may not be as helpful as some imagine since only its Scriptural use claims to be inspired in the use to which it is put.

Evangelicals do, however, profit from and have employed various aspects of form criticism, redaction criticism and

rhetorical criticism.<sup>24</sup> They are no more afraid to submit their learning and reason to the authority of the Word and the legitimate canons of scholarly investigation in the areas of higher criticism than they are to do so in lower criticism with the highly regarded field of textual criticism.<sup>25</sup> They just insist on objective criteria, non-prejudicial commitments of the scholar, and an obligation for the scholar to stay with the interpretive process beyond mere investigations into the so-called pre-history of the text or even a cold descriptive task. As a document of the church, the academy must continue its work into applying the text and dealing with the question of the normative expectations legitimately made of this generation given the proper understanding of the text.

### *B. A Reaffirmation of the Single Meaning of the Text*

Evangelicals must be reticent to adopt any theory of multiple meanings of a text. As an illustration of the diversity among evangelicals on this issue, I would point to the contribution of Vern Poythress<sup>26</sup> of Westminster Theological Seminary. Sadly, Poythress concludes that a passage may have as many as ten levels of meaning. The real problem in this whole thesis is admitted by Poythress: "Distinguishing different types of meaning can therefore be useful. But by itself, it will not tell us *which* meaning or meanings are to be treated as 'canonical'."<sup>27</sup>

The tragic results of such argumentation were not long in coming, for Lloyd Bailey, writing in Abingdon's "Interpreting Biblical Texts" series on *The Pentateuch* cited Poythress with appreciation and discovered these levels of meaning in the Pentateuch:

- Level I: What the author actually said
- Level II: What the author meant to say
- Level III: What the author intended to accomplish
- Level IV: What the audience understood
- Level V: What the editor (redactor) meant
- Level VI: What later generations within the Old Testament understood
- Level VII: New Testament reinterpretation
- Level VIII: Traditional understandings in other than canonical literature
- Level IX: What the text means to the modern reader —  
"What it means to me"<sup>28</sup>

What is all of this but a return to the four-fold (now ten-fold) meaning of the text? We have argued elsewhere against similar

options which fall into the same trap such as *sensus plenior*,<sup>29</sup> a double-author theory in which the author writes better than he knows because his word is inspired,<sup>30</sup> and the New Testament's use of Old Testament prophetic texts.<sup>31</sup>

Interpretation must, as Betti and Hirsch argue, be grounded in the single meaning of the text as the words, grammar, syntax, context, and culture of the author demands. The price for ignoring the clear distinction between "meaning" and "significance" will be (1) a loss of validating any one "meaning" against any and all other aspirants, and (2) a loss of communication itself. The price is too high.

### *C. A Readjustment of the Analogy of Faith As an Exegetical Principle*

Since the reformers never intended the analogy of faith to be a hermeneutical or exegetical tool, and since it was only a *relative* expression aimed at the imposition of claims prior to or competing with Scripture, we would propose that evangelicals adopt another tool for doing theological analysis of a text. However, we would strictly limit the purview of this tool solely to those theological constructs already in existence at the time when the target text being examined was written.

Moreover, we would require that this antecedent theology be made an issue in the exegesis of a passage only when the target text specifically quoted, clearly alluded to, or openly utilized that theological principle from an earlier text as an illustration or in some other overt manner. We agree with those who complain that the interests of responsible exegesis are violated when a later New Testament text is pulled in to loose the interpretation of an earlier text. Even when we are dealing with a true verbal parallel passage or a topical parallel passage, we must not prematurely introduce these passages from *later* texts *until* we have established the meaning of the target passage on other grounds.

Some prefer to call this method, with John Bright, "informing theology." But whatever it is called, it is most important that our exegesis does include a legitimate form of theologizing which does not level-out the whole Bible so that every passage says basically the same thing. We must also go beyond a mere descriptive exegesis and theologizing and continue into the more difficult work of normative considerations.<sup>32</sup>

The analogy of faith should be reserved for summarizing a section of a Biblical exposition or for relating a particular

passage, once expounded, to the concerns and teaching of the whole canon on any given aspect of that passage embraced by all of Scripture, for we cannot pretend that we are without the entirety of the Old and New Testaments or that the Christian era has not come.

*D. A Reappraisal of the Process of Applying Biblical Texts to Contemporary Men and Women*

Gadamer justifiably insists that every interpretation also must involve an application to the present moment and reader-listener. Of course, he would not put it in just that form. The goal, as he would view it, is one of sharing the horizon of the interpreter and the horizon of the text. Meaning, in his terms, is something that happens and takes place; it is not an objective meaning of the text. However, in spite of the refusal of the new hermeneutics to adopt the crucial distinctions between “meaning” and “significance” as pointed out by Betti and Hirsch, it has performed a great service in asking us also to concentrate on the horizon of reader-listener. Very little has been written on this, the most crucial step in the interpretive process.

In our textbook entitled *Toward an Exegetical Theology*<sup>33</sup> we have tried to develop a method to which we gave the coined name “principlizing.” “To ‘principlize’ is to state the author’s propositions, arguments, narrations, and illustrations in timeless abiding truths with special application of those truths to the current needs of the Church.” What is to be discovered, however, is not some new idealism or some over-arching Platonic form of reality. Instead, we should only seek to extract the particularity, uniqueness, and individuality of the text once we have gained an understanding of the contribution which its historical setting makes to its interpretation. Our purpose, now, is to ask why this word of the text was preserved for the community of faith and what is the author commanding, summoning, encouraging, rebuking, challenging some or all of the new believing community to do in light of what the writer has said in this text — in spite of its admittedly particularistic setting? If evangelicalism is weak at this point, it shares that weakness with many others. The gap that exists between the abilities and interests of the departments of Bible and homiletics in almost every theological institution easily illustrates the gap that exists in most theological students’ education. It is the most reprehensible of all the wrongs in current theological education and we must move quickly to repair it.

#### IV. Conclusion

Evangelicals face many of the same issues that the Reformers faced; in these they stand united with these gallant men of the sixteenth century. There is no word of retreat. But there are a large number of new issues and some which the Reformers left for more detailed definition. One of these is the meaning of "meaning." Perhaps G.B. Caird's<sup>34</sup> distinctions will help us most. He distinguishes between meaning R (referent — identifies a person or thing named), meaning S (sense — what is said about a person or thing), meaning V (value — "this means more to me than anything else"), meaning E (entailment — "this means war"), and meaning I (intention — the truth intention of the author). Too frequently interpreters have used "meaning" in a very slippery way. It has been our contention in this essay that meaning must be the focus of the hermeneutical process. Only then may we "relate" that single meaning to other "meanings." But the most important fact of all, given the proclivities of our generation (evangelical *et. al.*), is exactly where Caird left the issue:

A fortiori, we have no access to the Word of God in the Bible except through the words and the minds of those who claim to speak in his name. We may disbelieve them, that is our right; but if we try, without evidence, to penetrate to a meaning more ultimate than the one the author intended, that is our meaning, not theirs or God's.<sup>35</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Johann A. Ernesti, *Elements of Interpretation*, 2nd ed., trans. Moses Stuart (Andover: Flagg and Gould, 1824), p. 2. See Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), pp. 24-27, for a description and generous sample of Ernesti's definitions.
2. William Ames (1576-1633) wrote the text most frequently used by seventeenth century American Puritans, *The Marrow of Theology*, ed. and trans. John D. Eusdey (Boston: Pilgrim, 1968).
3. Emilio Betti, *Die Hermeneutik als Allgemeine Methodik der Geisteswissenschaften* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1962). See a description of his thought in Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Scheiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University, 1969), pp. 54-60.
4. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1967).
5. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "Meanings from God's Message: Matters for Interpretation," *Christianity Today* 22 (October 5, 1979), p. 33.
6. Gerald T. Sheppard, "Biblical Hermeneutics: The Academic Language of Evangelical Identity," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 32 (1977), pp. 81-4.

7. These books included Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals* (Harper and Row Publisher, 1974); *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing*, edited by David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975); Harold Lindell, *The Battle For the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976); Donald Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); and Carl F.H. Henry, *Evangelicals in Search of Identity* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1976).
8. Gerald T. Sheppard, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
9. Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Authority and Inspiration of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948), p. 210.
10. Kenneth S. Kantzer, "Evangelicals and the Inerrancy Question," *Christianity Today*, 22 (April 21, 1978), p. 18.
11. *Op. cit.*, p. 19.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. We tried to make this point in our essay entitled "Legitimate Hermeneutics," in *Inerrancy*, ed. Norman L. Geisler (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), pp. 117-47, 457-60.
16. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, pp. 30-31.
17. As cited by Frederic W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, Bampton Lectures, 1885 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961), p. 327.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Martin Luther, *Works* (1897), vii, p. 650.
20. Origen, *De principiis*, 4.26.
21. Herbert Marsh, *A Course of Lectures Containing a Description and Systematic Arrangement of the Several Branches of Divinity* (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1815), 3:16.
22. See *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, ed. I. Howard Marshall (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 11.
23. No one has addressed this point more courageously than Cyrus H. Gordon, e.g., "Critics and the Forbidden Fruit," *Christianity Today*, 4 (Nov. 23, 1959), pp. 3-6; and Kenneth Kitchen, *The Bible and the Ancient Orient* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1966).
24. See Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "The Present State of O.T. Studies," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 18 (1975), pp. 69-78, especially pp. 77-78.
25. Contrary to complaints of Harry R. Boer, *The Bible and Higher Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981).
26. Vern S. Poythress, "Analyzing a Biblical Text: Some Important Linguistic Distinctions," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 32 (1979), p. 113.
27. Poythress, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
28. Lloyd R. Bailey, *The Pentateuch* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), chapter three, "Levels of Meaning in the Text," pp. 95-124.
29. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, pp. 109-110.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-36.
31. For example, W.C. Kaiser, "The Davidic Promise and the Inclusion of the Gentiles (Amos 9:9-15 and Acts 15:13-18): A Test Passage for Theological Systems," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 20 (1977), pp. 97-111; *idem*, "The Current Crisis in Exegesis and the Apostolic Use of

- Deuteronomy 25:4 in 1 Corinthians 9:8-10," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 21 (1978) pp. 3-18; *idem*, "The Promise of David in Psalm 16 and Its Application in Acts 2:25-33 and 13:32-37," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 23 (1980), pp. 219-29.
32. We have addressed these concerns extensively elsewhere. See *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, pp. 125-27; 134-40.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 149-63; especially p. 152.
34. G.B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), pp. 37-40.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

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