

On the Endowment of the Chair of Old Testament Studies

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Introduction

I am grateful to my dear friends Jimmy and Janet Chee for generously initiating this endowed chair in Old Testament Studies at Regent College and naming it in my honor. And I am very grateful to my good friends Ralf & Helga Schmidtke for contributing so generously to this endowment. I am also grateful to the board of governors and the faculty for approving this endowment. Furthermore, I am grateful to Richard Thompson and his team for arranging this celebration and to all of you who honor me by your presence.

It is appropriate that I acknowledge my indebtedness to Elaine, who worked three years while I earned my ThM and another four while I earned my ThD and PhD degrees and who faithfully supported me. It is also fitting to acknowledge my indebtedness to all the pastors, teachers, peers, and students whom I admired and thus fashioned my basic nature to glorify God and better his Church as a professor of Old Testament Studies. I am especially indebted to John Walvoord (1910–2002), president of Dallas Theological Seminary, who encouraged me to become an academic, appointed me to that distinguished faculty, and gave me a leave of absence with scholarship to attend Harvard.

But above all, I am grateful to God who is the Source of every blessing. All glory belongs to him alone. Truthfully, I am exhibit A that God chooses the foolish and the weak things of the world so that none can boast. Years ago, Roy Bell, pastor of First Baptist Church, asked me to deliver a sermon on the doctrines of revelation, inspiration, and illumination. I chose as my text the story of Balaam and his talking donkey. The Tuesday before the Sunday I was to preach, the church secretary called and asked me for the title of the sermon. On the spur of the moment, I suggested: “The Talking Donkey.” When I arrived at the church, to my chagrin, I read on the prominent bulletin board on the corner of Burrard and Nelson:

The Talking Donkey: Dr. Bruce K. Waltke.

My first thought was: “Isn’t that the truth.” My second thought was “good thing I said donkey.”

To be sure, I am grateful that the chair of Old Testament studies at this distinguished college has been named in my honor; but, more importantly, I hope my name will be shorthand for my values and that they may be helpful to future incumbents of the chair. My imprint on students and the body of my writings testify to these values. Nevertheless, it is fitting on this occasion to encapsulate three of them: 1.) a passionate love of the Holy Bible; 2.) a threefold hermeneutic; and 3) interpreting the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament.

A High View of the Bible's Inspiration

A Rational Necessity

The presupposition that the Bible is the Word of God and thus the source of truth and values is a defensible partiality. The Bible claims for itself to be the Word of God and not to be set aside. Jesus said: "Scripture cannot be set aside" (John 10:36); the apostle Paul said: "all Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim 3:16); and the apostle Peter says: "For prophecy (i.e., words from God) never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet 1:21). This claim is rationally defensible.

Scripture answers the great questions of reality, of existence: what is the first-cause of our existence? Astrophysicist point back as far as the Great Bang, but to the source of that massive energy. Moreover, mortals cannot answer why anything exists. Our knowledge of physics and mathematics can get us to the moon but cannot tell us why the moon exists. We can overcome ignorance with knowledge but not mystery; we overcome mystery through faith. And finite mortals cannot know reality's destiny, its terminus. Moreover, mortals cannot establish eternal values; speak with certainty about what is good or bad, right or wrong. If the Bible does not answer those questions about our existence and speak with finality about ethics, then the human race is hopelessly lost, as shown by the recent resurgence of cultural Marxism, a worldview that defines truth and values through the lens of power and group identity.

On its own, unaided human reason cannot know with certainty how anything came into existence, or why anything exists, or what is its teleological end. Moreover, unaided human reason cannot determine with finality eternal values for the good of the individual or of society. This is so, because the finite mind cannot attain to infinite or comprehensive truth, and without comprehensive knowledge, mortals cannot answer the fundamental questions of our existence or of determining the eternal values for our well-being. But Cornelius Van Til went too far when he asserted: "Either man must ... know everything or he knows nothing at all."¹

¹ Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1969), 17.

Our conscience can get us only so far as to ethics but not to certainty. In the days of the judges, better “warlords,” “Israel did what was right in their own eyes” (Judg 21:25), and “Israel did evil in the eyes of the Lord” (Judg 2:11) and suffered his wrath: “he gave them over into the hands of raiders who plundered them?” (Judg 2:14). Without comprehensive knowledge, we have only relative knowledge, not absolute knowledge; and, as Harvey Cox said in *The Secular City*, we have only evaluations, not values.

I am not saying that rationalism is not valuable. Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth century, such as Voltaire and Kant, championed reason as the supreme guide to truth. They believed that rational discourse, empirical inquiry, and transparent institutions, could uplift society and bring about a good and beautiful world. The Enlightenment did much good; it lifted up society out of the superstitions that crept into the Church in its long history. Moreover, those values of the Enlightenment are necessary for democracy to work, for a nation’s well-being. Tragically, during the past seventy-five years, they have been increasingly replaced by sound bites, demagoguery, horror headlines, biased reporting, and thus producing a limbic response, not thoughtful reflection. Thinking with our glands instead of our heads is the path to violence. The loss of the Enlightenment’s wisdom and its replacement by media folly is tearing the fabric of our society apart, as Peter Zimmer argues in *The Disenlightenment Narrative*.²

But I am saying that rational discourse, empirical inquiry, and transparent institutions, is inadequate to establish a firm foundation of eternal truths and values upon which an individual life and society can be built firmly. For truth, absolutes, and abiding values mortals need comprehensive knowledge. I vividly and dramatically experienced the need for comprehensive knowledge to establish eternal values, rather than evaluations, when I taught at Westminster Theological Seminary (1985–1991). My office was in the school’s library, the finest and best located building on the campus. At least, we thought so. One day, however, when I came to my office, the library’s windows and doors were sealed with black and yellow tape with the warning: “Danger. Lethal material. Keep out.” When I inquired into the matter. I learned that one of our students, formerly a geologist with NASA in Huntsville, Alabama, as a specialist in radon gas, had set up his instrument to measure radon gas in the library’s basement. (Radon gas is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas that forms naturally from the decay of radioactive elements like uranium.) To appreciate his finding, it is necessary to know that the atmosphere we inhale daily contains four picolitres of radon gas. (A picolitre is one trillionth of a liter.) A chain smoker of a pack of cigarettes a day inhales forty picolitres, and a worker in a uranium mine inhales four hundred picolitres. In the early years of mining uranium, before its hazards were understood, many miners died of lung cancer due to the toxic gas. Our student’s instruments measured the amount of radon gas in the library as four thousand picolitres, ten times more than in a uranium

² Paul Zimmer, *The Disenlightenment Narrative* (copyright Paul Zimmer, 2025), 8.

mine. Our geologist, turned theologian, couldn't believe his reading. If correct, our library was the most dangerous place on the planet, along with Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Our student called NASA to report his findings; they brought the most sophisticated measuring instruments and confirmed his reading. In a word, my office was the most dangerous place in the world! The designers and architects of the Westminster, not knowing that probably forty miles below the library was a geological fault, had chosen the worst place, not the best.

Where then can prerequisite truth, absolutes, and eternal values be found? Only God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and its Sustainer, has comprehensive knowledge, and he revealed that knowledge in the Bible and more particularly in Jesus Christ. Job put this truth to poetry in one of my favorite poems in the Bible:

Where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell.

No mortal comprehends its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living.

The deep says: "It is not in me"; the sea says: "It is not with me."

It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed out in silver

.....

Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell?

It is hidden from the eyes of every living creature, concealed even from the birds in the sky.

Death and Destruction say: 'Only a rumor of it has reached our ears.'

God understands the way to wisdom and he alone knows where it dwells,

For he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens.

When God made a weight for the wind and measured out the waters,

When he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm,

then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; he confirmed and tested it .

And to the human race he said: "The fear of the LORD--that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding" (Job 28:12-31).

Without the revelation of wisdom, the skill of walking in the way of eternal life, humans are worse off than the grass of the field, the beasts of the forest, and birds in the air; for unlike humans, they do not seek meaning or reflect on ethics. But humans do. They long for truth, absolutes, meaning, but that wisdom cannot be satisfied apart from God's Word. As our stomach hungers for food, our souls yearn for truth and absolute values. God does not frustrate

us, but provides bread for the belly and the Word of God for the soul. Jesus said: "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).

A Spiritual Reality

The Bible is not only a rational necessity but a spiritual reality that satisfies that yearning of human hearts. God's people hear his Word in their hearts and know it to be true. There is a way of knowing that transcends the experience of our five senses; the way we know in hearing music and poetry. Pascal famously said: "The heart has reasons that reason does not know." He explains: "What is the reason of the heart? The instinctive recognition of truth, goodness, and beauty." That instinct, however, is not natural in case of the cross; the recognition of its goodness is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Christians respond instinctively to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to the truth that he died for our sins and was raised from the dead because the Holy Spirit convicts them of that truth (1 Cor 15:3-4; cf. John 16:8). To the church at the Corinthian, the apostle Paul wrote: "The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit" (1 Cor 2:14). To the Church at Thessalonica, he wrote: "For we know brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction" (1 Thess. 1:4-5).

On an Easter Sunday morning back in 1971, I took the family to the worship service at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem. As we walked up the driveway to the Garden, an Israeli soldier was coming down it from an earlier service. I had never seen an Israeli at a Christian site; and more than that, the Israel soldier's face was beaming. So exceptional was the sight, I stopped him and asked: "Tell me soldier: Are you a Christian or are you on your way to becoming a Christian." He replied robustly, "I am a Christian." I asked: "How did that happen." He said: "Someone gave me a New Testament. I read it through, and when I finished, I said in my heart: 'Christ is the Shepherd, and I am his sheep.'" He, like all God's people, heard the voice of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said: "My sheep listen to my voice" (John 10:27). There was a moment in my life when I prayed to God: "God, be merciful to me a sinner," and I knew in my heart that God heard my prayer.

When we hear the voice of God in Scripture, we love it. We hunger to hear it and to teach it. This is not something taught; it is a gift to be sought from the Spirit. It is my hope that the incumbents of the chair of Old Testament Studies will passionately love the Word of God that points to the embodiment of Truth in Jesus Christ, who says of himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except by me." May God grant all of us the grace to say with the psalmist, "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my

mouth”; “the law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold”; “I rejoice in your word like one who finds great spoil” (Ps 119:103, 72, 162).

A Threefold Hermeneutic

Professor Houston, in *I Believe in the Creator*, called attention to the saying of Gerald Manley Hopkins: “We must first stand under an object in order to understand it.” Hopkin’s pun expresses the truth that every object has its own logic and our preunderstanding of that logic enables us to design the right tool to better understand it. One doesn’t analyze a banana, an orange, and an apple in the same way because their logic differs. To study the stars, an astronomer must first have a preunderstanding of their distance from earth. With that preunderstanding, Galileo created his telescope to truly understand them. To study a micro-organism, a biologist must first have a preunderstanding of its minuteness; with that prior understanding, Hans and Zacharias Janssen created the first compound microscope and Ernst Ruska the electron microscope. If one uses a microscope to study the stars or a telescope to study a microorganism, they will see nothing and learn nothing; in fact, using the wrong lens, they might conclude that stars and micro-organisms don’t exist.

Similarly, when studying the Bible, a professor or teacher needs a preunderstanding of its nature, of its logic. The apostle Paul encapsulates that necessary preunderstanding in the oft-quoted verse: “All Scripture is inspired by God.” Here one discerns three aspects of the Bible’s being and for each facet of that being one must craft the appropriate lens. The divine author (“by God”), the human author (“inspired”), and the text (“all Scripture”). This 3D interpretation is necessary to interpret the Bible as accurately as possible and to achieve its objective of encountering God through it.

Knowing the Author: God

Let us first grind the lens for knowing God, the Bible’s Author, and the aim of the Bible. God is spirit, unrestrained by time and space, and to know him, a person must come to the Bible in the Spirit and in truth: with faith, hope, love, and the humility to listen and obey him. One time I taught the Book of Psalms at Victoria University. The students were mostly trained to know in the scientific method: to study an object with dispassionate objectivity. But the Psalms are hymns and prayers to God, and a reader cannot truly understand them unless he or she experiences praising God and praying to him along with the psalmist. To illustrate the wrongheadedness of approaching the psalms and attempting to know God through dispassionate objectivity, I asked one of the students to stand in front of the class and asked the other students to write down what they knew about him. They quickly realized the difference between knowing about a person and knowing a person. They could know some of the

student's physical properties, but they could not know him personally. To know the student, they had to interact personally with him. To know the Bible's Author, a reader must listen and pray to him, as the psalmists do. A Christian professor or teacher should begin his or her lecture with a spiritual exercise, such as prayer; not as a pro form act, like singing the national anthem before a ball game, but as an essential preparation for knowing Bible's Author: the aim of the Bible.

Understanding the Inspired Author

Let us now grind the lens for studying and understanding the inspired author's meaning. We understand his meaning or intention through empathy, not through skepticism. Without empathy, some critics even deconstruct the writer's intent. Walter Brueggeman faults God for unreasonably rejecting Saul and favoring the "upstart" David. He wrote: "What is clear to us, and to the narrative [of Saul and David] is that the lived experience of Israel has to come to terms with this inexplicable and inscrutable 'tilt' that the Yahweh does not act morally or reasonably or honorably or consistently."³ What is clear in fact that God rejected Saul because of his insolence in not obeying Samuel, the LORD's prophet who ordained him. Samuel told him to wait for him at Gilgal; Saul didn't (1 Sam 13), and he told him to annihilate the Amalekites; he didn't. Brueggeman deconstructs the author's obvious intention to legitimate David's kingship by God's rejection of Saul for his insolence and by his anointing David, a man after his own heart. Brueggemann missed the obvious, I suggest, because he lacked empathy with David's inspired biographer. Similarly, Harold Bloom in *The Book of J* faults Yahweh for Cain's murder of Cain. He says, "J [according to Bloom, a woman writing in the tenth century BC] offers us no motive for Yahweh's choice of accepting Abel's sacrifice and not Cain's, and so Cain's murder was "provoked by the arbitrariness of Yahweh...." According to Bloom, "Cain ... is a tragic rebel [against Yahweh's arbitrariness], and not a villain."⁴ Bloom, who claims to discern a text's subtlety, misses the subtle, spiritual difference between the brothers' sacrifices: "Cain brought an offering from some of the fruit of the ground [significantly not the firstfruits, as the Law required (Exod 23:16; Lev 2:14; Num 18:12; Deut 26:10)] and Abel brought the fat portions from some of the firstborn of the flock." Bloom misses the subtlety between Cain's token offering versus Abel's offering his best, I suggest, because he lacks empathy with the narrative's author.⁵ A simple believer who loves the Bible in almost any version interprets it better than the most erudite critic who lacks empathy with the inspired narrator.

³ Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1997), 371.

⁴ Harold Bloom, *The Book of J*, trans. from the Hebrew by David Rosenberg (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990), section 1 & 8.

⁵ Bruce K. Waltke, "Cain and His Offering," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 48 (1986): 363–372.

Erudition of the Bible's Text

Finally, let us grind the lens for understanding the text. The scholarly consensus is that the text is best studied through the lens of the grammatical-historical method. This is the only way to understand it authentically. That lens must be ground as finely as possible through erudition. We must garner as much knowledge as we can of the text's philology in its historical context as to understand it precisely.

Careful exegesis is essential for good theology. Arius, a priest in Alexandria (320 AD), split the Church apart by arguing that the Son had been created by the Father, and thus the Son was not God, but a creature. He and his followers, the Arians (aka *homoeans* [Son is "like God"]) based their argument on the mistranslation of Proverbs 8:22 in the Greek translation "The LORD created (Greek κτίζω) me [Woman Wisdom] the beginning of his ways." The Arians, like the Trinitarians [aka *homoiousia* [Son is "of the substance" of God] assumed that Woman Wisdom was Christ, and if Christ was created or made, then he was a creature, not God.⁶ However, the Hebrew word הָבִיחַ, mistranslated κτίζω ("created" or "made"), means "possessed" or, as I prefer, "given birth."⁷ There is vast difference between the birth of a baby and the creation or making of a table. The baby participates in the very nature of the begetters; a table, does not. Moreover, Woman Wisdom, is a personification of Solomon's proverbs, not the preincarnate Son, as I argue in *Proverbs 1-15: A Commentary*.⁸ The Arian heresy was based on mistranslation and misunderstanding due to the lack of considering the text's philology in its historical context. The Church needs authentic exegesis for sound doctrine.

Not everyone is called to this erudition, but those that are, such as professors of the Old Testament, have the responsibility of being as erudite as God enables them and disseminate that knowledge for the edification of the Church.

These three facets of hermeneutics—God, the human author, and the text are not studied apart from one another. One does not see the Bible through a tri-focal lens. All three lenses must be blended into one. With that "halogramic" lens, a professor Old Testament Studies interprets the Bible with greater clarity and less darkly than otherwise; and better achieves the objective of teaching the Bible—that is to say, of encountering God.

⁶ Peter Heather, *Christendom: The Triumph of a Religion, AD 300-1300* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2024), 31-35.

⁷ Bruce K. Walke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 408-409.

⁸ Waltke, *Proverbs: 1-15*, 127-133, 400-408.

Interpreting the Old Testament in Light of the New

Interpreting the OT in light of the NT is essential for three reasons: Christ has authoritative supremacy; the OT testifies to Christ, and was written down for the Church.

I argued that erudition in connection with the grammatical-historical method is necessary; I am now arguing that method is insufficient.

Christ Has Priority

Christ has supremacy over Moses because God's revelation through him is more direct and his status is greater than Moses, the supreme authority in the Old Testament. Early on in Israel's journey through the Wilderness, Moses's brother Aaron and sister Miriam criticized Moses for marrying an Ethiopian wife. His siblings challenged his authority, saying: "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" The LORD immediately rebuked them, saying "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to them in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. Not so with my servant. Moses. He is faithful in all my house [i.e. "my kingdom"]. With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the LORD [תִּמְנַת יְהוָה]. Why then were not afraid to speak against my servant" (Num 12:6-8). In sum, because God spoke to Moses face to face, in a theophany – he saw a form of God, not God himself (Exod 33:20)-- not in dreams and visions as he did with prophets; and because he spoke clearly to Moses, not in riddles needing interpretation, unlike the prophets. Thus, Moses has supremacy over prophets, who contributed the rest of the Old Testament.

Now Christ is greater than Moses, because His is a better revelation than a theophany. Moses saw a form of God, as we may see the president on a TV screen, but not God himself. But Jesus is God incarnate, the very embodiment of God (John 1:1-18; Col 1:15-19). Moreover, Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to his apostles to speak for him after his ascension, saying: "When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come" (John 16:13). In sum, Christ and his apostles have supreme authority in divine matters, not the Old Testament.

Moreover, Jesus has a better status in the kingdom of God than Moses. The writer of Hebrews infers Christ's supremacy from the same text (Num 12:1-6): "For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses ... Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, testifying to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a Son" (Heb. 3:5). Thus, if there is any tension between the Old and New in determining the doctrine and practice, the teachings of the New Testament have priority over the Old Testament.

Christ's transfiguration on the mountain reenforces this truth. Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus. Traditionally and rightly, it has been understood that Moses represented the Law and Elijah the prophet. Jesus's clothing shone with superhuman whiteness (Mark 9:3), as bright as a flash of lightning (Luke 9:29). Standing together with the representatives of the Old Testament and yet apart from them on account of his blazing white clothing, God said to the three disciples who witnessed Jesus's transfiguration: "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!" Inferentially, Christ's words, given to us though Spirit inspired apostles, have priority over the Moses and Elijah—that is to say, the Old Testament.

From this data, I draw the conclusion that a professor of Old Testament studies should not teach divine matters from the Old Testament discordant with the New Testament.

The Old Testament Testifies to Jesus Christ

Second, Jesus says that the Old Testament speaks of him. Luke tells us that in the resurrected Christ's encounter with his disciples on the Emmaus Road, he rebuked them for not knowing from the Old Testament the Messiah would die and be raised from the dead. In that connection, "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). So likewise, a professor of Old Testament should interpret the Old Testament to show from all the Old Testament truths about Jesus.

The story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch illustrates this obligation of a teacher of the Old Testament. Luke recounts that the Spirit told Philip to run up to the chariot of the eunuch who was in charge of all the treasury of the Queen Ethiopia and who was returning from his worship in Jerusalem. Philip ran and heard the official reading about the anonymous suffering servant as recorded in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. Philip asked him: "Do you understand what you are reading?" The treasurer answered: "How can I unless someone explains it to me ... Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about." So, he invited Philip into the chariot and asked him: "who is the prophet talking about?" Luke says that "beginning with that passage of Scripture, Philip told him about the good new about Jesus" (Acts 8:1-39).

In sum, a professor of Old Testament has the responsibility to explain to students how the Law and the prophets testify to the Lord Jesus Christ. Tragically, most do not. Presently, I am writing a commentary on the songs of ascents (Psalms 120—134). Almost none of the evangelicals who base their commentaries on the Hebrew text, explain how those psalms speak of Jesus.

The Old Testament Is Written for the Church

Third, the Apostle Paul says that the Old Testament was written for the Church and so, inferentially, not just for its original, historical audience. Christians at Corinth were in danger of going back to the worship of their old Greek Gods. Paul warns them that if they do, they will fail to reach the Promised Land as happened to the first generation of Israel, the generation that died in the wilderness under God's wrath. Paul writes: "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come" (1 Cor 10:11).

Someone might argue that the generation that died in the wilderness were Jews under the law and subject to God's wrath, whereas we Christians are mostly Gentiles under grace not law, and so are invalid examples, Paul begins his argument by calling the first generation of Israelites "our ancestors" (οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν, "our fathers")—that is to say, we Gentiles and they belong to the same family. More than that we and they participate in the two dominical sacraments: baptism and the Lord's.⁹ To make this argument, Paul interprets Exodus 13–17 from the perspective of the New Testament, even as earlier he referred to Christ as "our Passover lamb" (1 Cor 5:7), an allusion to Exodus 12. Their baptism and eucharist were not the same as ours but analogous and equivalent to it. As we are united to Christ by the baptism of water and the Holy Spirit, they were baptized into Moses by the cloud and the sea: "Our ancestors were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and the sea." The story of the cloud is recorded in Exodus 13, and the story of the sea in Exodus 14-15. As soon as the ancestors left Egypt, the cloud, which symbolized God's presence, guided Moses and protected him and his followers. And when they passed through the sea, they died, as it were, to Egypt, and became oriented toward the Promised Land.

Having been baptized, they participated in the eucharist in a way analogous to our bread and wine: "They all also ate the same spiritual bread and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ." It is called "spiritual bread" because, as explained in Exodus 16: "When the Israelites saw the manna, they said to each other: 'What is it.' ["Manna" means "What is it?"). Moses said to them: "It is the bread of the LORD that is given you" (Exod 16:15-16). Manna is more than just thin flakes like frost on the ground that they baked or boiled. Rather, manna is like the bread that Christ said "is my body given for you" (Luke 22:19). The story of the water from the rock is recorded in Exodus 17. It too is spiritual drink because it too is from the LORD and gives life to the spirit as much as physical water revives our physical lives. It is like the "cup," a metonymy for the wine in it, that Christ said: "Drink from it ... This is my blood ..." (Luke 26:27-28). Unquestionably Paul equates

⁹ The dominical sacraments are those authorized by the Lord Jesus, not the five additional sacraments authorized by the Roman Catholic Church.

their drinking that spiritual water from the rock with our drinking the wine that Christ's calls "my blood," because Paul says that that rock from which they drank was Christ.

We may fairly extrapolate from Paul's interpretation of Exodus 12–14 and from his statement that "these things were written down for us," that Christians should interpret the entire Old Testament, not just the warnings of its examples, in the light of the New Testament. Indeed, the New Testament in referring to the Old Testament usually uses pronouns that refer to those the apostles are addressing, not the historical audience, and present tense ("is/are/says," not "was/were/said") as the writer of Hebrews does in Hebrews 12:5–6 in citing Proverbs 3:11-12: "And you have completely forgotten this word of encouragement that *addresses you* as a father address his son? It says: 'My son' " The apostles are more concerned about what the text means than what the text meant.

I am not denying the necessity of erudition in the application of the grammatical-historical method of interpretation, but I am saying that it is insufficient. I hope the incumbent of the Bruce K. Waltke Chair of Old Testament Studies will correct the current neglect in evangelical scholarship of interpreting the Old Testament in light of the New. The church yearns "to see Jesus."

Conclusion

Professors and teachers of the Old Testament will teach its divine matters of doctrine and ethics to God's glory and the Church's edification better by holding a high view of its inspiration and teaching it in the Holy Spirit so that students will know God personally and better. Moreover, they will teach it better if they empathize with the inspired author and apply as much erudition as possible to his text's philology and historical and literary contexts. Finally, they will teach it most authentically by giving priority in their interpretation to the New Testament and show students how Moses and the prophets—in the broadest sense of that term ["speakers for God"], including its sages and psalmist—testify to Christ. After all, the Old Testament was written down for the Church (1 Cor 10:11).