THE FIFTH ANNUAL

STUDENT RELIGIOUS STUDIES CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY THE

MIDWEST REGION SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2011

OLIVET NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

BOURBONNAIS, ILLINOIS
**PROGRAM**

9-11 a.m.  
REGISTRATION  
Burke Admin. Bldg.

10-10:30 a.m.  
ORIENTATION  
Burke 411

10:30 a.m.-noon  
SESSION ONE

**Hebrew Bible/Old Testament A**  
Burke 403
chair: Will Andrews, Chicago Theological Seminary (wandrews@ctschicago.edu)

10:30  
**Avram R. Shannon**, The Ohio State University (Shannon.139@osu.edu)

*How the Mighty are Fallen: Reversal of Fortune in 1 Samuel 28*

First Samuel is a book about changes and reversals. Saul’s visit to the witch of En-Dor in 1 Samuel 28 is an example of how the theme of reversal of fortune plays out in Samuel. Saul is compared with a woman, who is a marginal necromancer. This scene is presented as the final reversal in Saul’s life. Saul must go to one he has previously persecuted, which is underscored by juxtaposition of the living and the dead. Saul is presented prostrated before Samuel, showing that the purpose of 1 Samuel 28 is to illustrate that Yahweh controls the fortunes of men.

11  
**Stephan Beaulieu**, Andrews University (smbeaul@yahoo.ca)

*A Case Study of Isaiah 19:19-25 and Its Allusions to the Exodus*

Isaiah 19:19-25 provides an overview of God’s relationship with Egypt and, more particularly, portrays the Egyptians as God’s people. When reading these concluding verses of Isaiah 19, one is struck by the question: How do the allusions to Exodus 3 in Isaiah 19:19-25 contribute to the meaning of the latter? Isaiah employs allusions with certain key words that lead the reader to see the associated story of Exodus. However, instead of Israel being the subject of a long narrative story, we have here a concise prophecy, but this time with Egypt as the subject.

11:30  
**Daryl Docterman**, Cincinnati Christian University (ddocterman@hotmail.com)

*Knowledge, Life, and Cryptic Critiques of Kings: A Rhetorical Purpose of Genesis 2-3*

This paper argues that one of the rhetorical purposes of Genesis 2-3 is to function as a covert critique of kingship, especially around the themes of knowledge and life. This critique works well, whether the critique is set during the time of the Exodus, the United Monarchy of Israel, the Divided Monarchy, or the Exile. There are other indications of such a critique in the Old Testament in 2 Samuel 14, 1 Kings 1-11, Deuteronomy, in
Ezekiel 28, and (perhaps) even in the Wisdom Literature. This idea of a cryptic critique is further supported by other ANE literature.

**New Testament A**

**chairs:** Jenny DeVivo, Loyola University Chicago (jdevivo@luc.edu)

10:30 **Kristen Kress**, Judson University (lkress@student.judsonu.edu)

*An Exegesis of Ephesians 3:1-21*

The paper I wish to present examines the history and literary approaches to the book of Ephesians. My paper focuses on Ephesians 3:1-21. Along with a detailed account of each verse, a conclusion summarizes the main points of the passage.

11 **Seth Rash**, Taylor University (seth.rash@gmail.com)

*What has Ecstasy to do with Prophecy? : Religious Experience in Pauline Communities and Early Christianity*

This paper explores the relationship(s) between prophetic “models” or experiences throughout the Mediterranean world in and around the 1st century CE and the ways in which Pauline-influenced communities and later generations of Christians adopted, adapted, and otherwise interacted with those models. This paper assumes a phenomenological approach where applicable and argues for a more “integrated” understanding of the role of “ecstatic experience” in the prophetic activities within Pauline-influenced Corinth.

11:30 **Andrew Dial**, University of Evansville (ad108@evansville.edu)

*Resurrection: The Centrality of the Physicality in 1 Corinthians 15*

Within the confines of Pauline literature, 1 Corinthians 15 contains one of the most detailed discussions of Paul’s understanding of the resurrection of the dead. This discussion addresses a theological issue—it is the belief of the Corinthians that must be corrected, an incorrect belief that has more than just behavioral consequences but drastic implications for the Christian faith. The entire argument of the letter hinges upon the correct understanding of the resurrection of the dead, an understanding that is often misunderstood but illumined by a full exegesis of the chapter.

noon-1:30 p.m. **LUNCH**

Ludwig Center Cafeteria

1:30-3 p.m. **SESSION TWO**

**Hebrew Bible/Old Testament B**

**chair:** Daryl Docterman, Cincinnati Christian University (ddocterman@hotmail.com)

1:30 **Alex Stewart**, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (zastewar@tiu.edu)
The Lord’s Anointed: Covenantal Kingship in Psalm 2

This study examines the title “anointed one” in Psalm 2:1-2, a designation derived from the royal anointing ceremony of Israel. Background material from the ancient Near East and other portions of the Hebrew Scriptures suggest that this use of oil signifies the confirmation of a covenant. The Israelite ceremony thus symbolizes a commitment by God to the monarch which crystallizes into what is known as the Davidic covenant. Psalm 2:1-2 draws upon this tradition by using the title, and the theology of the psalm as a whole is informed by the theme of covenantal kingship.

Brittany N. Melton, Fuller Theological Seminary (BrittanyNMelton@gmail.com)

Daughter Zion Grieves: Explaining the Structural and Theological Uniqueness of Lamentations Five

This paper postulates why many distinctive structural and theological components exist in the final poem of Lamentations, compared to the previous four. It will be argued that the unique features result from its later composition, possibly outside Palestine, on the basis of the disappearance of confession of sin and the observed progression of the grieving process throughout the book. In order to move beyond the various claims pertaining to the distinctive features of Lamentations 5 in its own right, this paper aims to emphasize the importance of this uniqueness for understanding the theology of the book as a whole.

Ron Haydon, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (zrhaydon1@me.com)

“A Man of Pleasant Parts”: Evaluating Daniel’s Roles as Sage and Community-Representative in Dan 9:1-23 and Other Rabbinic Sources

This paper will explore the hermeneutical impact of Daniel’s literary character as sage and community-representative in Dan 9:1-23. Mishnaic sources (b. Yoma, b. Abot and Genesis Rabbah), Josephus and Jerome offer similar perspectives on Daniel. First, we will observe how post-Danielic interpreters understood the literary nature of the character of Daniel (Against Apion; tractates b. Yoma 8, 76a; b. Abot 4a). These voices consider the Danielic figure in a “spirit of exempla” or “figure of wisdom.” Second, comparisons will be made between sapiential readings of Daniel and prophetic readings. Finally, we will assess the role of Daniel, noting the sage-like terminology and his mantle as community-representative (9:3-19, 20-23).

Theology chair: Rene’ Such Schreiner, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (rene.schreiner@garrett.edu)

Gnosticism and the Problem of Evil: Plotinus and Kazoh Kitamori in Dialogue

Geoff Arnold, Judson University (1garnold@student.judsonu.edu)
Plotinus and Kitamori address different problems of evil within different contexts, but they do share a similar vantage point—arguing against Gnosticism. Plotinus was concerned to show that matter itself was not evil, nor was the One ultimately responsible for its emanation. Kitamori attempts to resolve the problem of meaningless suffering with his theology of the Pain of God. I will show that the passibility of God represented by Kitamori’s theology of the pain of God counters Gnosticism to overcome the brokenness of this world, whereas the impassibility of God and the Soul in Plotinus’ thought leaves this world without hope as the Gnostics or Docetists would.

Joshua Snyder, Judson University (joshua.redyns@gmail.com)

Jürgen Moltmann and the Suffering of God

The “old question” of theodicy—to justify the existence of an all-powerful and good God despite evil and suffering—may not be the proper approach for finding the answer to suffering. Contrasting the methods and conclusions of Dostoyevsky, Camus, and Wiesel, Jürgen Moltmann suggests that suffering exists because God is good and all-powerful. God is the original sufferer, suffering willingly because he is love. God’s goodness causes him to suffer because the creating act itself and the allowance of human self-will required his self-limitation. God’s power provides endurance through, hope from, and meaning to suffering for himself and his creation.

Rosa P. Grant, University of Northern Iowa (rosapineagrant@gmail.com)

Baptist Theology and Religious Liberty During the American Founding Era

An understanding of the context in which American religious liberty was born can illuminate some of the incongruities in society today. There is a relationship between Baptist theology and religious liberty and it is influential during the founding of America. Sermons and confessions of faith show a connection between religious liberty and Baptist theology. The conversation regarding Baptists and religious liberty has typically covered Baptists’ political position and influence, but the theology behind that political position was the catalyst for the Baptists on this issue. Baptists were on the forefront of advocating for religious liberty because Baptist theology fosters religious liberty.

3:30-3:30 BREAK

3:30-5 p.m. SESSION THREE

Extracanonical and Patristic Literature

Burke 403

chair: Jeremy Miselbrook, Loyola University Chicago (mrdoctoryj@yahoo.com)

3:30 Kevin Holtz, Judson University (lkoltz@student.judsonu.edu)

The Problem of Evil: Nietzsche and Irenaeus in Dialogue
Concerning the problem of evil, many among both philosophers and theologians have proposed various solutions as to how it came to be. German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and second century Christian theologian and apologist Irenaeus of Lyons have put forth two quite different claims concerning evil. As both are quite dissimilar and an exposition of all differences would be lengthy, the focus here is to examine who is responsible for evil in the world and whose solution proves better than the other.

**Chris Jones**, University of Wisconsin–Madison ([ejones4@wisc.edu](mailto:ejones4@wisc.edu))

*This Year in Alexandria! Thirdspace and Emplacement in the Letter of Aristeas*

J. Z. Smith’s reading of Ezekiel’s Temple Vision, while brilliant, is overly abstract; this is evident in his dismissive treatment of the *Letter of Aristeas*. I argue that corrective attention to real spatial conditions, on the levels of both theory and analysis, demonstrates that the Jerusalem “map” in the *Letter of Aristeas* articulates a spatially-rooted system of power alongside the spatially-transferrable system of status articulated in Ezekiel. This vindicates Smith’s observation that systems of power, unlike systems of status, resist abstraction, and it shows how the Jewish community in Alexandria negotiated this reality by reconceptualizing Jerusalem according to the model of Alexandria.

**Romulus D. Stefanut**, University of Chicago ([romulus@uchicago.edu](mailto:romulus@uchicago.edu))

*NT Parallels in the Second Apocalypse of James*

The *Second Apocalypse of James* belongs to the famous corpus of the Nag Hammadi Library. In evaluating the date and the content of the *Second Apocalypse of James*, Charles W. Hedrick notes that “the almost total absence of allusions to the New Testament tradition suggest an early date for the origin of the tractate.” On the contrary, I would like to argue that one cannot read and interpret the *Second Apocalypse of James* without making sense of the numerous allusions and echoes of New Testament motives and themes. This paper will unpack the complex structure of the *Second Apocalypse of James* and point out the linguistic parallels by means of citations, allusions to, and echoes of the New Testament writings.

**New Testament B**

Burke 413  
chair: Neal Huddleston, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School ([znhuddle@tiu.edu](mailto:znhuddle@tiu.edu))

**Nick DiAntonio**, Assumption College (Mass.) ([ndiantonio@assumption.edu](mailto:ndiantonio@assumption.edu))

*The Reversal of Wealth and Poverty in the Gospel of Luke*

The Gospel of Luke has been referred to as the “Gospel for the Poor” with its emphasis on issuing blessings and inspiring words to those suffering from the various hardships of life. Another title that could be used to describe Luke could be the “Gospel of Reversal” based on the fact that a sort of role-reversal between the rich and the poor takes place throughout much of the Gospel. This paper will aim to discern the true
reality of the poor in Luke as well as discuss the notion of role reversal in Luke 6, 10, 12, and 16.

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Max Semenick, Asbury Theological Seminary (msemenick@secc.org)

Κύριος μου και θεός μου: Christological Implications of the Fourth Evangelist’s Reframing of Imperial Propoganda

Tom Wright argues that Caesar and his empire were merely the parodies for all that Jesus and his kingdom were reality. A brief study of four phrases commonly ascribed to Caesar but reframed by the Fourth Evangelist to describe Jesus presents this parody/reality motif in stark contrast. At the core of this discussion one finds the essence of Johannine Christology brought to light as Jesus of Nazareth is seen to be much more than simply a “son of a god,” but rather the one true God incarnate.

4:30

Amanda Kunder, Loyola University Chicago (AKunder@luc.edu)

Priority and Historicity: An Examination of John A. T. Robinson’s The Priority of John

The effort by John A. T. Robinson in The Priority of John to argue for the priority of the Gospel of John is an intelligent attempt to contend for the historical validity of the Fourth Gospel. This project aims to provide a fresh look at this work and to examine the implications of saying that John has priority. First, Robinson’s book will be reviewed, focusing on methodology, conclusions, and questions of priority and historicity. Second, the questions and implications raised by his proposal will be discussed, arguing for how his work brings important questions and points to current discussions of historicity.

Student Religious Studies Conference

Dr. Eric F. Mason, Judson University—SRSC Coordinator
Dr. Troy W. Martin, Saint Xavier University—Founder of the SRSC
Teresa Calpino, Loyola University Chicago—SBL Student Advisory Group Representative
Dr. P. Richard Choi, Andrews University—Midwest SBL Regional Coordinator
Dr. Clare K. Rothschild, Lewis University—President, Midwest Region SBL
Dr. Ann Fritschel, Wartburg Theological Seminary—Vice President, Midwest Region SBL
Dr. Kevin Mellish, Olivet Nazarene University—Coordinator of Facilities

Special thanks to Victoria Korinke, Judson University, for assistance preparing the program.

The SRSC is grateful to Olivet Nazarene University its warm hospitality for the 2011 meeting.