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Teacher of Holiness

The Holy Spirit in Origen's
Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans

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Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans

MAUREEN BEYER MOSER



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ABBREVIATIONS

I. ANCIENT SOURCES

Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*:

- Comm. in Rom.* *Commentarii in epistolam ad Romanos.*
References first cite the book and chapter numbers in PG, which correspond to those in the English translation by Scheck (FaCh 103 and 104). I then give the book and chapter numbers in the critical edition ("Hammond Bammel") and the column number in the Migne volume ("PG 14").
- Hammond Bammel *Der Römerbriefkommentar des Origenes: Kritische Ausgabe der Übersetzung Rufins Buchs 1-10.* Edited by Caroline P. Hammond Bammel et al. VL 16, 33, and 34. Freiburg: Herder, 1990-1998.
- Frag. in Rom.* Scherer *Le Commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III.5-V.7 d'après les extraits du papyrus no. 88748 du Musée du Caire et les fragments de la Philocalie et du Vaticanus gr. 762.* Edited and translated by Jean Scherer. Bibliothèque d'étude 27. Cairo: L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1957.
- Frag. in Rom. JThS* "The Commentary of Origen on the Epistle to the Romans." Edited by A. Ramsbotham. *Journal of Theological Studies* 13 (1912): 209-24; 357-68; 14 (1913): 10-22.
- Frag. in Rom. BZ* "Neue Fragmente aus dem Kommentar des Origenes zum Römerbrief." Edited by Karl Staab. *Biblische Zeitschrift* 18 (1928): 72-82.

Other texts of Origen:

<i>Cant.</i>	<i>Commentarius in Canticum canticorum.</i>
<i>Cels.</i>	<i>Contra Celsum.</i>
<i>Comm. in I Cor.</i>	<i>Fragmenta ex commentariis in I Corinthios.</i>
<i>Comm. in Eph.</i>	<i>Fragmenta ex commentariis in epistulam ad Ephesios.</i>
<i>Comm. in Gen.</i>	<i>Fragmenta ex commentariis in Genesim.</i>
<i>Comm. in Mt.</i>	<i>Commentariorum in Matthaeum libri.</i>
<i>Comm. ser. in Mt.</i>	<i>Commentariorum series in Matthaeum.</i>
<i>Dial.</i>	<i>Dialogus cum Heraclide.</i>
<i>Engast.</i>	<i>De engastrimytho.</i>
<i>Exc. in Ps.</i>	<i>Excerpta in Psalmos</i>
<i>Exp. in Pr.</i>	<i>Exposita in Proverbia</i>
<i>Fr. ex Princ.</i>	<i>Fragmenta ex De Principiis.</i>
<i>Fr. in Jer.</i>	<i>Fragmenta in Jeremiam.</i>
<i>Fr. in Lc.</i>	<i>Fragmenta in Lucam.</i>
<i>Fr. in Ps.</i>	<i>Fragmenta in Psalmos</i>
<i>Hom. in Cant.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Canticum canticorum.</i>
<i>Hom. in Ex.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Exodum.</i>
<i>Hom. in Ezech.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Ezechielem.</i>
<i>Hom. in Gen.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Genesim.</i>
<i>Hom. in Is.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Isaiam.</i>
<i>Hom. in Jer.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Jeremiam.</i>
<i>Hom. in Jos.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Josua/ Homiliae in Jesu Nave.</i>
<i>Hom. in Lev.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Leviticum.</i>
<i>Hom. in Lc.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Lucam.</i>
<i>Hom. in Num.</i>	<i>Homiliae in Numeros.</i>
<i>Jo.</i>	<i>Commentarii in Johannem.</i>
<i>Mart.</i>	<i>Exhortatio ad martyrium.</i>
<i>Or.</i>	<i>De oratione.</i>
<i>Philoc.</i>	<i>Philocalia.</i>
<i>Princ.</i>	<i>De principiis.</i>
<i>Schol. in Cant.</i>	<i>Scholia in Canticum canticorum.</i>

<i>Schol. in Mt.</i>	<i>Scholia in Matthaeum</i>
<i>Sel. in Gen.</i>	<i>Selecta in Genesim.</i>
<i>Sel. in Ps.</i>	<i>Selecta in Psalmos</i>

Texts by other ancient authors:

Athan. <i>Ep. ad Ser.</i>	Athanasius. <i>Epistula ad Serapion.</i>
Aug. <i>Hept.</i>	Augustine. <i>Quaestiones in Heptateuchum.</i>
Aug. <i>Psal.</i>	Augustine. <i>Enarratio in Psalmos.</i>
Aug. <i>Trin.</i>	Augustine. <i>De Trinitate.</i>
Bas. <i>Spir.</i>	Basil of Caesarea. <i>Liber de Spiritu sancto.</i>
Cassian. <i>Coll.</i>	John Cassian. <i>Collationes.</i>
Cassian. <i>Inst. coen.</i>	John Cassian. <i>De institutis coenobiorum.</i>
Clem. <i>Paed.</i>	Clement of Alexandria. <i>Paedagogus.</i>
Clem. <i>Str.</i>	Clement of Alexandria. <i>Stromateis.</i>
Gr. Thaum. <i>Pan. Or.</i>	Gregory Thaumaturgus. <i>In Origenem oratio panegyrica / Address of Thanksgiving to Origen.</i>
Herm. <i>Mand.</i>	Hermas. <i>Mandata pastoris.</i>
Herm. <i>Sim.</i>	Hermas. <i>Similitudines pastoris.</i>
Herm. <i>Vis.</i>	Hermas. <i>Visiones pastoris.</i>
Philo. <i>QE.</i>	Philo of Alexandria. <i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum.</i>
Philo. <i>Gig.</i>	Philo of Alexandria. <i>De gigantibus.</i>
Philo. <i>Spec.</i>	Philo of Alexandria. <i>De specialibus legibus.</i>
Ruf. <i>Symb.</i>	Rufinus of Aquileia. <i>Commentarius in symbolum apostolorum.</i>
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> , ed. von Arnim.
<i>T. Reuben</i>	<i>The Testament of Reuben.</i>

II. MODERN JOURNALS AND SERIES

ABR	<i>Australian Biblical Review.</i>
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers, Westminster, MD [etc.].
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums, Leiden.

AKG	Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte, Berlin.
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers. Peabody, MA.
<i>AsbTJ</i>	<i>The Asbury Theological Journal.</i>
<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Augustinianum.</i>
<i>AugSt</i>	<i>Augustinian Studies.</i>
BEThL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, Leuven.
BEvTh	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie, München.
<i>BLE</i>	<i>Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique.</i>
BT	Bibliothèque théologique, Neuchâtel.
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift.</i>
<i>CaC</i>	<i>Christianity and Crisis.</i>
CChrSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, Turnholt.
<i>CbH</i>	<i>Church History.</i>
CGT	Contemporary Greek Theologians, Crestwood, NY.
<i>CTM</i>	<i>Concordia Theological Monthly.</i>
DLSM	Dissertationes ad Lauream, Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, IL.
<i>EeT</i>	<i>Église et Theologie.</i>
<i>ER</i>	<i>Ecumenical Review.</i>
<i>ETbL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologiae Lovanienses.</i>
FaCh	Fathers of the Church, Washington, D.C.
FC	Fontes Christiani, Freiburg.
GCS	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderten</i> , Berlin.
<i>Gr.</i>	<i>Gregorianum.</i>
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion, Missoula.
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review.</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History.</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies.</i>

JSOT.S	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, Sheffield.
<i>JThS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> .
<i>JThS</i> ns	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> , new series.
LCL	Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA.
PatSor	Patristica Sorbonensia, Paris.
<i>PBR</i>	<i>The Patristic and Byzantine Review</i> .
PG	J. P. Migne. <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> .
PL	J. P. Migne. <i>Patrologia Latina</i> .
PTMS	Princeton Theological Monograph Series, Allison Park, PA.
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien, Berlin.
<i>RAM</i>	<i>Revue d'ascétique et de mystique</i> .
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i> .
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des études grecques</i> .
<i>RestQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i> .
<i>RHE</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i> .
<i>RMM</i>	<i>Revue de métaphysique et de morale</i> .
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature.
SC	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i> , Paris.
SHCT	Studies in the History of Christian Thought, Leiden.
<i>SJTh</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i> .
SPMed	Studia Patristica Mediolanensia, Milan.
StAns	Studia Anselmiana.
<i>StPatr</i>	<i>Studia Patristica</i> , Papers Presented at the International Conferences on Patristic Studies held in Oxford.
<i>StTh</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i> .
STL	Studia Theologica Lundensia, Lund.
SVigChr	Supplements to <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i> .
<i>TbTo</i>	<i>Theology Today</i> .
<i>TI</i>	<i>Theological Investigations</i> .
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i> .

TST	Toronto Studies in Theology, Lewiston, NY.
<i>VigChr</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i> .
VL	Vetus Latina, Freiburg.
WCC	World Council of Churches.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The Holy Spirit increasingly occupies a significant place in theology, with pneumatological references abounding in the writings of both Western and Eastern Christians.¹ It is no longer appropriate to bemoan the absence of the Spirit in theological reflection, as theologians did in the first half of the twentieth century.² The Second Vatican Council made an attempt to integrate an explicit pneumatology into Roman Catholic ecclesiology and liturgy,³ while the World Council of Churches dedicated its 1991 Assembly to discussion of the Holy Spirit.⁴ Systematic theologians

¹ See the overview provided by Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen in *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002). See also Molly T. Marshall, *Joining the Dance: A Theology of the Spirit* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 2003), especially 1-18; Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B., “A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?” *TJ* 46 (1985): 191-227; and McDonnell, “The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” *TbTo* 39 (1982): 142-161.

² Karl Barth, towards the end of his life, pointed to the need for new theological efforts focusing on the Holy Spirit. See his *Theology of Schleiermacher*, ed. Dietrich Ritschl, tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982), 276-279 and the discussion in Laurence W. Wood, “From Barth’s Trinitarian Christology to Moltmann’s Trinitarian Pneumatology,” *AsbTJ* 55 (2000): 51-67.

³ Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, tr. David Smith (New York: Seabury, 1983), 1: 167-173. See also James B. Anderson, *A Vatican II Pneumatology of the Paschal Mystery: The Historical-Doctrinal Genesis of Ad Gentes I, 2-5*, *Analecta Gregoriana* 250 (Roma: Pontifica Università Gregoriana, 1988).

⁴ See World Council of Churches, *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report, Seventh Assembly, Canberra, Australia, 7-20 February 1991*, ed. Michael Kinnamon (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), 39ff. For further

from different traditions share an interest in reexamining Christian theology with the Holy Spirit explicitly at the center of their projects.

“Spirit”-centered language seems to provide new possibilities for theology. Many view the Spirit as a force of liberating love, opening new doors for the radical re-imagining of the world. Liberation theologians speak of the Spirit’s freeing presence in the daily lives of the oppressed and marginalized;⁵ feminist theologians interpret the Spirit through women’s experiences of loving relationships as one of the clearest ways in which human beings can see the feminine in God.⁶

Nevertheless, the contemporary interest in the Spirit has little history on which to draw. As Kilian McDonnell has observed, “Anyone writing on pneumatology is hardly burdened by the past and finds little guidance there.”⁷ While a milestone in the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the council of Nicea says very little about the Holy Spirit beyond acknowledging the Spirit’s divinity and involvement in inspiring the Scriptures and the Church.⁸ Similarly, Augustine’s trinitarian influence on Western pneumatology has relegated the Holy Spirit to the bond of love between the Father and the Son.⁹ Because of the influence of

discussion of the Seventh Assembly, see *CaC* 51 (1991) and Tissa Balasuriya, “Liberation of the Holy Spirit,” *ER* 43 (1991):200-205.

⁵ José Comblin, *The Holy Spirit and Liberation*, tr. Paul Burns, Theology and Liberation Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989); Comblin, “The Holy Spirit,” tr. Robert R. Barr, *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, ed. Ignacio Ellacuria, S. J. and Jon Sobrino, S. J. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 462-482.

⁶ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992) 124-49; Johnson, “Mary and the Female Face of God,” *TS* 50 (1989): 511-517; and Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 3: 155-64.

⁷ Kilian McDonnell, “Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine of the Holy Spirit?” *Gr* 75 (1994): 191.

⁸ On the Nicene and Apostles’ creeds, Frances Young notes that they “stated the essential components of [the more or less common doctrine of God], though never spelt it out conceptually.” See her *Making of the Creeds* (London: SCM Press, 1991), 56.

⁹ E.g., Aug. *Trin.* 12.11.12. See Catherine LaCugna’s analysis in her *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1973); and Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 1: 85-92 and 3: 80-95.

Augustinian trinitarian theology, systematic theologians in the West often profess the Trinity while describing only the Father-Son relationship.¹⁰ Even for those who express clearly the communal nature of God,¹¹ it is not particularly clear who this Third Person is.

In some ways, this lack of historical foundation for a doctrine of the Holy Spirit may contribute to the liberating sensation of Spirit-centered theology. However, one must question the ease with which different causes and institutions sculpt their depictions of the Spirit. For the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox communions, the Spirit is inseparably linked to the sacraments and theology of their institutions. For liberation theologians, the Spirit is freedom from institutions, working rather in the daily experiences of the poor and the humble. For some, the Spirit is linked to mysticism; for others, the Spirit permeates the earth. The Spirit is cited as the authority both for structural change and for keeping structures the same. The Holy Spirit is, assuredly, the giver of many diverse gifts and thus is present in many diverse ways in creation, but institutions and individuals alike must question whether they are using the Spirit for their own ends.¹²

Augustine's own pneumatology is, however, richer than his later influence shows. See also the discussion of Augustine's pneumatology by Cara Anthony in "The Love of God Poured into our Hearts: Experience of the Holy Spirit in Christian Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 2003), 107-137.

¹⁰ For example, although Hans Urs von Balthasar speaks daringly of the inner "trinitarian" life in the fifth volume of his *Theo-Drama*, the Holy Spirit remains an unclear, and perhaps unnecessary, part of the "trinity" he describes. See his *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*, vol. 5, tr. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1998). Although Balthasar provides a clearer focus on the Spirit in other works, particularly in the third volume of the *Theologiké*, *Der Geist der Wahrheit* (Einsiedeln: Johannes, 1987), the fifth volume of his *Theo-Drama* still serves to illustrate a larger problem in Western theology. In addition to these difficulties in describing a trinitarian, rather than a binitarian, God, the Catholic tradition in particular also tends to confuse the role of the Holy Spirit with that of Mary or that of the institutional Church. See Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 1: 160-64.

¹¹ E.g., John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, CGT 4 (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1993).

¹² Karl Barth says it well: "But theology now supposes it can deal with the Spirit as though it had hired him or even attained possession of

Who is this Spirit who represents so many things to so many people? Are all discovering the Spirit of Jesus Christ—or simply seeing the Spirit as their own needs and causes? Any invocation of the Holy Spirit must be founded in revelation and in the experiences of the Christian tradition. How is a theologian to discern the Spirit among a multiplicity of spirits? To assist in answering this question, it is important to search for new historical perspectives to bring into the current discussions of the Holy Spirit.

Origen of Alexandria (185-254 A.D.) has a contribution to make to contemporary struggles with the Holy Spirit. Although some, like Adolf Harnack, have argued that the Spirit was not an essential part of Origen's theology,¹³ this book attempts to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is a crucial link between Origen's doctrine of God and his spiritual anthropology. As the necessary connection between God and humanity, the Spirit pervades Origen's theology in a way that serves as an inspiration for theologians today, who seek to integrate the Spirit fully into their work, rather than just paying lip-service to the Spirit's Person and action.

Although Origen's most commonly referenced passages on the Holy Spirit are found in *On First Principles* 1.3 and the *Commentary on John* 2.6, pneumatology permeates his works. A reader would be hard-pressed to find any scriptural commentary or homily of Origen that does not point to the specific work of the Spirit in the biblical text and in the lives of human beings. In order to observe pneumatology at work in Origen's theology, I turn to his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* for a point of entry into the

him. It imagines that he is a power of nature that can be discovered, harnessed, and put to use like water, fire, electricity, or atomic energy. As a foolish church presupposes his presence and action in its own existence, in its offices and sacraments, ordinations, consecrations and absolutions, so a foolish theology presupposes the Spirit as the premise of its own declarations. The Spirit is thought to be one whom it knows and over whom it disposes. But a presupposed spirit is certainly not the Holy Spirit, and a theology that presumes to have it under control can only be unspiritual theology." Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*, tr. Grover Foley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1963), 58.

¹³ Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma*, tr. Neil Buchanan (New York: Dover, 1900), 2: 357.

richness of his theology of the Holy Spirit. As Caroline Hammond Bammel indicates, this lengthy commentary¹⁴ is a good source “for illustrating the range of Origen’s ideas”;¹⁵ to read it is to encounter a microcosm of Origen’s theological corpus. In addition, because of the pneumatological content of Romans 8, Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* specifically addresses the functions and gifts of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶

This project examines Origen’s theology of the Holy Spirit, as we find it in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Initially, my work is descriptive, setting forward Origen’s own answers to these questions:

1. What is the relationship of the Holy Spirit to other spirits mentioned in the Scriptures?
2. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation?
3. What is the function of the human spirit in the work of the Holy Spirit?

In addition to describing Origen’s own thought, this project critiques and reconsiders his pneumatology with an eye to its significance for the contemporary discussion. Origen’s images for the Holy Spirit convey the intersection of theology and anthropology in his thought. In particular, his picture of the Holy Spirit as the Teacher of the saints is one that can be helpful in twenty-first century thought, adding a depth to trinitarian theology

¹⁴ The *Commentary on Romans* is by far the longest of Rufinus’s translations of Origen. While it occupies 455 columns in the Migne edition, the next longest, Origen’s *On First Principles*, occupies only 296 columns. See C. P. Hammond, “The Last Ten Years of Rufinus’ Life and the Date of his Move South from Aquileia,” *JThS* ns 28 (1977): 428-429.

¹⁵ C. P. Hammond Bammel, “*Philocalia* IX, Jerome, Epistle 121, and Origen’s *Exposition of Romans* VII,” *JThS* ns 32 (1981): 77. She says, however, that the *Commentary on Romans* is not particularly helpful for “answering questions about what his view was on particular disputed topics.” In any case, the commentary provides the scope needed to see Origen’s pneumatology at work in his theological project.

¹⁶ Henri Crouzel, the magisterial scholar of Origen, mentions in passing that this commentary contains significant “expositions of the functions of the Holy Spirit and his gifts.” See his *Origen*, tr. A. S. Worrall (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 202.

and to theologies that strive for human liberation.¹⁷ Although Origen's theology is drawn from a historical context radically different from our own, it contains central insights that are relevant today. His descriptions of the involvement of the Spirit in the education of human beings provide a patristic dialogue-partner for contemporary theologians, as they strive to express the Spirit's transformative presence in human lives.

1.1 THE TEXT OF THE COMMENTARY

Any work about Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* must first acknowledge the complexities of the text itself.

Origen wrote the fifteen books of the commentary in Greek during the latter part of his life. He wrote them in the early 240s, after he departed from Alexandria and settled in Caesarea.¹⁸

¹⁷ This takes issue with Kilian McDonnell's conclusions with respect to the possibilities of using Origen's pneumatology as a point of departure today. McDonnell asserts that Origen's theology of the Holy Spirit would be alienating to Christian laypersons: "Origen's pneumatology is too cramped to serve the whole of the Christian community." McDonnell likewise claims that Origen's theology is overly restricted to the interior life and is thus inappropriate as a basis for many of the liberating moves made with pneumatological bases today. See his "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine," 32-33. The fifth chapter of this book will address McDonnell's conclusion in more detail.

¹⁸ Pierre Nautin contends that Origen, after arriving in Caesarea, preached and produced homilies on a wide range of biblical books from 239 to 242. He then began his Pauline commentaries with the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* around 243. See Pierre Nautin, *Origène: Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), 385-86, 411. Hammond Bammel argues that there is no evidence to support this overall chronology. She insists that "there would be no reason to exclude the possibility that some at least of the *Pauline Commentaries* were composed at an earlier period prior to the *Homilies* or overlapping with them. In particular I think it unlikely that Origen's earliest Pauline commentary was that on Romans, which he himself describes as reputedly the most difficult of Paul's letters." See Hammond Bammel's detailed discussion in her "Origen's Pauline Prefaces and the Chronology of his *Pauline Commentaries*," *Origeniana Sexta*, ed. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluc (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 495-513. Thomas Scheck (FaCh 103, 8) dates the commentary at 246. Scheck notes that Theresia Heither and Adolf von Harnack both set the date at 243-44.

However, the most complete form of the commentary in existence today is the translation made by Rufinus of Aquileia into Latin¹⁹ circa 405-406.²⁰ This Latin version of the text has been viewed suspiciously by many scholars, although the discovery of the Tura papyrus,²¹ enabling a comparison of longer Greek excerpts with the Latin text, has inclined scholarly opinion to look much more favorably on Rufinus' translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*.

Although this book is not a study of Rufinus' fidelity to Origen's original text, it is nevertheless important to note the limitations of Rufinus' translation work, viewed with suspicion even in his own day, because of the criticisms of Jerome.²² Rufinus, as well as Jerome, did not understand "translation" in a twenty-first century sense. Rather than viewing his job as that of transferring Origen's commentary from Greek into a Latin equivalent, Rufinus was more concerned with presenting a version of Origen's commentary that would be morally beneficial to his own fifth-century audience.²³ With this goal in mind, Rufinus abbreviated those texts which he thought would mean little to his readers and lengthened others to address contemporary concerns more fully. He used the Latin biblical text familiar to him, instead of the text which Origen quoted.²⁴ In addition, and perhaps most importantly,

¹⁹ For a discussion of the Latin manuscript tradition, see Caroline Hammond, "Notes on the Manuscripts and Editions of Origen's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans in the Latin Translation by Rufinus," *JThS* ns 16 (1965):338-57.

²⁰ C. P. Hammond, "The Last Ten Years of Rufinus' Life and the Date of his Move South from Aquileia," *JThS* ns 28 (1977): 403-05, 428.

²¹ *Le Commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III.5-V.7 d'après les extraits du papyrus no. 88748 du Musée du Caire et les fragments de la Philocalie et du Vaticanus gr. 762*, ed. and tr. Jean Scherer (Cairo: L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1957).

²² See M. Monica Wagner's discussion in her *Rufinus, the Translator: A Study of his Theory and Practice as illustrated in his Version of the Apologetica of St. Gregory Nazianzen* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1945), 1-22.

²³ Caroline P. Hammond Bammel, *Der Römerbrieftext des Rufin und seine Origenes-Übersetzung*, VL 10 (Freiburg: Herder, 1985), 43-58.

²⁴ When Rufinus quotes a passage of Romans at the beginning of a section of commentary, he cites it from the version of the Bible commonly used among his own readers; however, he retains Origen's own biblical text in the commentary itself. Hammond Bammel

Rufinus altered certain—although not all—“impious” ideas that he found in Origen. Particularly interesting for the current inquiry is Jerome’s accusation that Rufinus’ translation of *On First Principles* improved on “the things that Origen had said impiously about the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” At the same time, Jerome pointed out that Rufinus retains many of Origen’s other “heretical” ideas, particularly those concerning the fall and the restoration of all things.²⁵

In his own prologue to Origen’s *Commentary on Romans*, Rufinus bears witness to further shortcomings in his translation. To begin, he says, Origen’s work is so overwhelming in its content “that there may be a great reason to fear...that [his translator] may be overwhelmed by the magnitude of his insights as by the immensity of waves,” and Rufinus’ “breath is frail for filling so magnificent a speaking trumpet as his.”²⁶ To make his task even more difficult, he says, there are volumes of Origen’s text missing, and some of the existing books have been interpolated. Hammond Bammel believes that Rufinus may have lacked the Greek for Origen’s commentary on Romans 9:1-19 and Romans 12:16-14:10a. It appears that he reconstructed the commentary for these parts of

reconstructs Rufinus’ text of Romans in *Römerbrieftext*, 505-37 and discusses Rufinus’ text of Paul in *ibid.* 140-63.

²⁵ “Quae cum legissem contulisseque cum graeco, ilico animadverti quae Origenes de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto impie dixerat...in meliorem partem ab interprete commutata...” from *Apologia adversus Rufinum* I. 6, cited in Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, 50. It is interesting to note that Jerome himself makes changes in Origen’s texts when he translates. As Wagner says, “St. Jerome, with no hint of apology, openly admits expurgations and alterations of his own. Both he and St. Hilary had translated useful matter in Origen and had eliminated the harmful.” See *Rufinus the Translator*, 21.

²⁶ “tenuis mihi est spiritus ad implendam eius tam magnificam dicendi tubam.” *Comm. in Rom.* praef. Ruf. 2: Hammond Bammel praef. Ruf. (35.9-11)=PG 14: 833. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Origen’s *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* first give the traditional book and chapter numbers (those in PG 14, which match those in the English translation in FaCh 103 and 104), then book, chapter, page, and line numbers in the critical edition of the text, *Der Römerbriefkommentar des Origenes: Kritische Ausgabe der Übersetzung Rufins Buch 1-3*, ed. Caroline P. Hammond Bammel, VL 16, (Freiburg: Herder, 1990), and finally page numbers in PG 14.

Romans by using other texts of Origen to which he had access.²⁷ In addition to these difficulties, Heraclius asked Rufinus to abbreviate Origen's fifteen-book commentary to one of ten books. Because of the abbreviated nature of Rufinus' translation, which is probably half the length of Origen's original work, it seems often to give, as Henry Chadwick says, "a résumé, rather than a literal translation."²⁸ For Chadwick, this résumé nonetheless faithfully represents Origen's ideas. Jean Scherer, more skeptical of Rufinus' translation, questions both the materials Rufinus used and the precision with which he was able to render Origen's exegetical style.²⁹

Despite all of these shortcomings to his work, Rufinus provides the only summary of Origen's complete commentary. Any study of Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* is dependent on Rufinus for substantial sections of the text. Nevertheless, Rufinus' text is significant for other reasons; in the history of theology, his version of the commentary has been preserved, read, and become influential in its own right. It seems likely, from textual evidence, that Augustine and Pelagius read the commentary in Rufinus' translation,³⁰ and it is Rufinus' Latin text that played a role in the Reformation period.³¹

Scholars today are fortunate that Rufinus' translation of Origen's Romans commentary is accessible in its entirety. Since Rufinus' translation of the *Commentary on Romans* is the most complete version of the text, this book treats it as Origen's own text. However, in situations where existing Greek fragments differ from the Latin translation, I consider both the Latin and Greek variants. When appropriate, I also use other texts of Origen

²⁷ See her detailed discussion in *Römerbrieftext*, 58-104.

²⁸ Henry Chadwick, "Rufinus and the Tura Papyrus of Origen's Commentary on Romans," *JThS* ns 10 (1959): 28.

²⁹ Scherer, 85-121. Hammond Bammel defends Rufinus's translation procedure; see her *Römerbrieftext*, 53.

³⁰ Hammond Bammel, "Justification by Faith in Augustine and Origen," *JEH* 47 (1996): 223-235; Alfred J. Smith, "The Commentary of Pelagius on 'Romans' Compared with that of Origen-Rufinus," *JThS* 20 (1919): 127-77.

³¹ Thomas P. Scheck, "Justification by Faith Alone in Origen's Commentary on Romans and Its Reception During the Reformation Era," (paper presented at the Origenianum Octavum, Pisa, 27-31 August 2001).

containing similar pieces of exegesis and theological discussion in order to demonstrate that the theology of the *Commentary on Romans* is reflected in the larger scope of Origen's corpus.

Given the significance of Rufinus' translation for a study of Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, it is important to note the critical edition of the text that was completed by Caroline P. Hammond Bammel and published by Herder from 1990 to 1998 as *Der Römerbriefkommentar des Origenes: Kritische Ausgabe der Übersetzung Rufins Buch 1-10*.³² Prior to Hammond Bammel's edition, translators and theologians were dependent on the 1759 edition of Delarue found in J.-P. Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* 14. Hammond Bammel summarizes her extensive work with the Latin manuscripts of Rufinus' translation in "Notes on the Manuscripts and Editions of Origen's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans in the Latin Translation by Rufinus."³³

Greek remainders of Origen's text exist only in fragments today.³⁴ The longest sections of the Greek, commenting on Romans 3:5-5:7, were discovered in 1941 at Tura, near Cairo, and have been edited and translated into French by Jean Scherer in *Le Commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III.5-V.7 d'après les extraits du papyrus no. 88748 du Musée du Caire et les fragments de la Philocalie et du Vaticanus gr. 762*. The fragments found in the Tura papyrus, the longest continuous sections that survive in Greek, are important in any study of the commentary's text.

The *Philocalia* also preserves sections of the commentary in Greek: *Philocalia* XXV contains book 1 of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*,³⁵ and *Philocalia* IX also reflects parts of the commentary.³⁶

³² Due to Hammond Bammel's death in the midst of the project in 1995, Hermann Josef Frede and other scholars used her collations and notes to make ready books 6-10 for publication.

³³ *JThS* ns 16 (1965): 338-57.

³⁴ For a detailed discussion of these fragments and the various editions in which they can be found, see Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, 18-43.

³⁵ Origène, *Philocalie* 21-27: *Sur le Libre Arbitre*, ed. and tr. Éric Junod, SC 226 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1976), 212-33.

³⁶ Origène, *Philocalie* 1-20: *Sur Les Écritures*, ed. and tr. Marguerite Harl, SC 302 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1983), 349-64. However, there is ongoing debate about whether this chapter is actually an extract of the commentary. Hammond Bammel outlines and addresses this debate in her "*Philocalia* IX," 50-81. After comparing texts from the *Philocalia*,

Small excerpts of the Greek commentary also survive in catena fragments³⁷ and in a tenth-century codex of the Bible (Laura 184) which was discovered on Mount Athos and edited by Eduard von der Goltz.³⁸ The text of Romans in the codex von der Goltz may derive directly from that in Origen's commentary. The codex also preserves notes on the text of Romans attributable to Origen.³⁹

The discovery of the Tura papyrus, which has improved scholarly opinion of Rufinus' text, has, at the same time, shown discrepancies in both the *Philocalia* and the catena fragments. As Henry Chadwick concludes of the selections in the catena,

The papyrus shows that the order of the fragments of the catena does not always correspond with that of the original commentary, and the lemmata are not identical. It follows that the catena was not compiled directly from Origen's work but from an existing abridgment, and therefore that the plan of the original cannot be deduced from these fragments. Above all, the catena gives only a highly compressed précis, which completely desiccates the thought of the original work.⁴⁰

Information about Origen's Greek text is also found in the references of other ancient authors. Most relevant to this study is a

Jerome's Epistle 121, catena fragments, and Rufinus' translation, she concludes that *Philocalia* IX's discussion of law contains material from Origen's *Commentary on Romans* 7:7. She also indicates that the section on the hardening of Pharaoh's heart in *Philocalia* XXVII may be from Origen's *Commentary on Romans* 9, material that Chadwick believes may not have been available to Rufinus. Her conclusions are not universally accepted, however; Junod and Scherer understand the textual evidence differently.

³⁷ These fragments, from Vaticanus gr. 762, are critically edited by A. Ramsbotham in *JThS* 13 (1912): 209-24; 13 (1912): 357-68; 14 (1913): 10-22. Supplemental fragments, from Vindob. gr. 166, saec. xiv, are edited by Karl Staab in his "Neue Fragmente aus dem Kommentar des Origenes zum Römerbrief," *BZ* 18 (1928): 72-82.

³⁸ E. von der Goltz, *Eine textkritische Arbeit des zehnten bzw. sechsten Jahrhunderts*, herausgegeben nach einem Codex des Athosklosters Lawra (Leipzig: Texte und Untersuchungen 17, 1899).

³⁹ Caroline P. Bammel, "A New Witness to the Scholia from Origen in the *Codex von der Goltz*," *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 137-41. These statements are based on her study of Vat. Pal. 204.

⁴⁰ Chadwick 13.

one-sentence quotation from Origen, commenting on Romans 3:8, in Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* 29.73: "The holy powers are able to reflect the Only-Begotten, and the divinity of the Holy Spirit."⁴¹ Socrates, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.32, makes reference to a theological discussion of the Θεοτοκος that he has found in Origen's text,⁴² and Jerome and Ambrose make use of Origen's exegesis of Romans in several of their own works.⁴³

It is important to consider the evidence presented by these fragments and references. However, all of these Greek fragments together still give only a very partial picture of Origen's commentary. In particular, they say almost nothing explicit about the Holy Spirit and a small amount about spirit in general, although their theological contents, as a part of Origen's overall theology, are relevant to discussions of the Holy Spirit.

Since the discovery of the Tura papyrus, Origen's *Commentary on Romans* has become the focus of a number of studies. The commentary, as it appears in the Delarue edition in the *Patrologia Graeca*, has been rendered into modern languages by Francesca Cocchini, who translated the commentary into Italian,⁴⁴ by Takeshi Odaka, who translated it into Japanese,⁴⁵ and by Theresia Heither,

⁴¹ The Greek, as well as a German translation, may be found in *De Spiritu Sancto/ Über den Heiligen Geist*, tr. and ed. Hermann Josef Sieben, (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), 300-01. An English translation is available in *On the Holy Spirit*, tr. David Anderson (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's, 1997), 109. This Greek excerpt is also found in the Tura papyrus; see *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer, 158-60.

⁴² "Origen also, in the third volume of his Commentaries on the Apostolic Epistle to the Romans, gives an ample exposition of the sense in which the term Theotokos is used." The Greek and Latin texts are found in PG 67: 811-812; an English translation is available in Socrates, *History of the Church* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853), 372.

⁴³ For a more detailed list, see Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, 34-35.

⁴⁴ Origene, *Commento alla Lettera ai Romani*, tr. Francesca Cocchini, 2 vols. (Casale Monferrato: Casa Editrice Marietti S.p.A., 1985-86). For her translations of the preface and prologue, she refers to Simonetti's 1961 edition of Rufinus' works.

⁴⁵ For a reference to the first part of this translation, see Henri Crouzel, *Bibliographie Critique d'Origène, Supplément II* (Turnhout: Brépols, 1992).

who translated it into German in 1999.⁴⁶ Since its completed publication in 1998, Caroline Hammond Bammel's new edition of the Latin text has been translated into English by Thomas Scheck.⁴⁷

1.2. ORIGEN'S HERMENEUTICS AND CONTEXT

In reading Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, one must work both with an awareness of his other extant works and with a sensitivity to the specific time and place that contextualize him as an author.

Origen's own hermeneutics⁴⁸ are a crucial element in any study that strives to describe his theological content. His method is a humble one, since he explicitly places his speculations on the table for discussion and criticism by others. Origen's own comments make clear that he does not view his theology—or anyone else's—as a finished project.⁴⁹ Instead, theology, as the collective work of ongoing generations of Christian scholars, will always unfold new levels of meaning. Any attempt to set Origen's theology up as a monolithic system misunderstands its very nature.⁵⁰ The *Commentary on Romans*, like Origen's other writings and homilies, is intended to spark further thought and dialogue.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Origenes, *Commentarii in Epistulam ad Romanos. Römerbriefkommentar erstes und zweites Buch*, tr. Theresia Heithner, O.S.B. (Freiburg: Herder, 1999).

⁴⁷ Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 1-5*, tr. Thomas P. Scheck, FaCh 103, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2001) and *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 6-10*, tr. Thomas P. Scheck, FaCh 104, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2002).

⁴⁸ See Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Structure in Origen's Exegesis*, PTS 28 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986).

⁴⁹ E.g., "But if someone has thought of something better, let him not hesitate..." *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.9: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (428.127-128)=PG 14: 1041. The *Commentary on Romans* is peppered with such comments.

⁵⁰ Henri Crouzel speaks of Origen's work, filled with contradictions and tensions: "Living human thought is more interesting than a system. And when it is a matter of God and the divine realities, unknowable by nature, every system is revealed as gravely deficient, often heretical, because it does not grasp the antitheses that express the real, and because it is the result of a certain narrowness of spirit. A man as passionate about God and divine knowledge as Origen does not reach God by a system, but by all the means, intellectual and mystical, that are at his disposal, even if these means do not form a system ruled by rationalist logic, and in the

Origen's theology is almost always a form of scriptural interpretation. His own work follows the pattern he identifies as the Scriptures' own: from the literal to the allegorical. Karen Jo Torjesen describes the movement of Origen's exegesis:

The subject matter of Scripture is the saving doctrine of Christ concealed in the literal sense in a symbolic form and revealed in the spiritual sense in a visible form. The corresponding theological structure which determines Origen's exegetical procedure consists of two levels: the original, historical pedagogy of the Logos represented in the literal sense of Scripture and a contemporary pedagogy of the Logos directed toward the hearer given in the spiritual sense.⁵²

Torjesen shows, through close textual readings, that Origen's hermeneutic for reading the New Testament is different from that for reading the Old Testament. The Old Testament merely foretells, but the Gospel (i.e., the entire New Testament) announces Christ as one already present.⁵³ Thus, the literal sense of the Gospel "is about the humanity of Christ and his coming within history; the spiritual sense is about his divinity, that is, his universal presence

dark places of the faith that is ours he is not ashamed to feel his way. But that groping is much more moving and interesting than the best constructed systems." Crouzel, *Origen*, 266. See also *ibid.* 167-169.

⁵¹ E.g., In discussing the meaning of "the first-fruits of the spirit," Origen gives one possible explanation, then says, "This would be one way by which we could to explore the understanding of this passage. Let us look now at another." Moving on, he offers a new way of looking at the same passage, different, and, for him, equally possible. See *Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.3-4: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (572.48-49)=PG 14: 1114. And then he offers yet another possible interpretation, saying, "Another order here occurs to us in explanation of the first-fruits of the spirit, and you will see if it must be approved. Nevertheless, we will add yet a third." In the end, "one who reads may approve which of these most agrees with the apostolic sense." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.7: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (574.94-101)=PG 14: 1116.

⁵² Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 13. Robert Daly identifies Christ himself as "the center of Origen's attention, or, his central hermeneutical principle." See Daly, "The *Peri Pascha*: Hermeneutics and Sacrifice," *Origeniana Tertia*, ed. R. P. C. Hanson and Henri Crouzel (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1985), 113.

⁵³ Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 66. See *Jo.* 1.5-6 (SC 120: 74-80).

and coming to us.”⁵⁴ However, it is better for the education of each person if she begins with reading the Old Testament,⁵⁵ which will prepare her for the New Testament. From Christ foretold, she will progress to her encounter with the living Christ. In the Christian’s personal spiritual journey, she should follow in the metaphorical footsteps of salvation history.⁵⁶

In the *Commentary on Romans*, Origen begins with the historical Paul and his mission to bring Christ’s Gospel to his Jewish and gentile hearers, then moves to the meaning of Paul’s evangelization for Christians of the early third century. He asks first what Christ is teaching through Paul in the first century, then how this teaching is meaningful to Christians today.⁵⁷ The Scriptures are all authored through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This common inspiration gives their interpreter license to read one scriptural book in light of another. This is even more true of scriptural books that share a common human author. The *Commentary on Romans* wanders freely throughout the corpus of Pauline letters;⁵⁸ Paul’s words in one letter elucidate his meaning in another.

Along with a consideration of Origen’s hermeneutical method comes that of the historical context that produced the *Commentary on Romans*.⁵⁹ Origen himself wrote in a specific time and place in the history of Christianity, and his translators worked in yet other times and places. Origen wrote the original commentary in early third century Palestine, Basil of Caesarea and Gregory Nazianzen collected parts of it in the *Philocalia* in the fourth century in Asia

⁵⁴ Ibid. 68.

⁵⁵ Origen suggests that one should start with those having the most meaningful literal levels: Esther, Judith, Tobit, or Wisdom. These books are the “milk” given to the child to prepare her for more complex foods later. See *Hom. in Num.* 27. 1.

⁵⁶ Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 107.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 143.

⁵⁸ Origen includes in the Pauline corpus the letters to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and the Hebrews. For a detailed discussion of Origen’s relationship to the Pauline letters, see Francesca Cocchini, *Il Paolo di Origene: Contributo alla storia della ricezione delle epistole paoline nel III secolo*, Verba Seniorum N.S. 11 (Roma: Edizioni Studium, 1992), 67-93.

⁵⁹ See Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History: Questions of Interpretation and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1992).

Minor, and Rufinus translated it in early fifth century Italy. John Rist points out that some of the differences between Origen's text and Rufinus' are

subtle and unconscious...aris[ing] from Rufinus' being a product of Latin rather than Greek culture, from his Latin desire for rhetorical embellishment and Vergilian echoes, and from his emphasis on law and the judiciary, rather than on philosophical enquiry and the quarrels of the schools.⁶⁰

If Origen's and Rufinus' contexts already differed so much in less than two centuries, it is all the more necessary for scholars today, divided from Origen by eighteen centuries, to recognize the differences of his world. To understand what Origen says about the Holy Spirit, one must contextualize his statements amidst the philosophy and theology with which he was familiar: forms of Stoicism and Platonism, the works of Philo, and *The Shepherd of Hermas*, among others.

Strongly influenced by the intellectual diversity of both Alexandria, where he was born and spent most of his life, and Caesarea, where he wrote the *Commentary on Romans*, among other works, and died after persecution for his Christian faith, Origen used in his theology every tool he could find to assist in his understanding of the Scriptures: those provided by Jewish exegesis as well as by a wide range of contemporary philosophies. In addition to his use of Philo,⁶¹ Origen worked with rabbinic methodologies. In fact, his corpus provides a glimpse of Jewish scholarship in both Alexandria and Palestine in his day. It seems that his knowledge of Jewish scholarship was shaped by contact with Jewish scholars and attendance at their lectures.⁶²

Origen's reliance on the living Jewish tradition is one of the most distinctive features of his exegesis, and serves to mark

⁶⁰ John Rist, "The Greek and Latin Texts of the Discussion on Free Will in De Principiis, Book III," *Origeniana*, ed. Henri Crouzel and Gennaro Lomiento (Bari: Istituto di letteratura cristiana antica, 1975), 111, cited in Hammond Bammel, *Römerbriefstext*, 45.

⁶¹ David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1993), 157-183.

⁶² Nicholas de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in third-century Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1976), 20-21.

him out from all earlier and contemporary Greek fathers...the Rabbis of third-century Caesarea unwittingly made an important contribution, through Origen, to the whole Christian exegetical tradition.⁶³

Origen similarly engaged with the philosophical traditions surrounding him—to such an extent that he has at times been accused of being first a philosopher and only second a Christian exegete, of using allegorical interpretation as a method of disguising Platonic philosophy in biblical language.⁶⁴ Although scholars such as Henri Crouzel have successfully refuted this particular accusation, showing that Origen is first a Christian theologian, it is nevertheless undeniable that Origen's thought is steeped in philosophy. His relationship to it had many shades; one recent work even argues that Origen used philosophy to protect Christian theology from certain contemporary philosophical movements such as Platonism.⁶⁵ Whatever the extent of Origen's sympathy for pagan philosophies of his day, it is clear that he employed all available intellectual tools in his search for truth—a truth identical with Christ, the Incarnate Word. An exploration of Origen's theology encounters a range of dialogue partners and influences, from named Gnostics to the unnamed, but clearly influential, Philo.

Nearly two centuries after Origen, Rufinus lived in a very different context—a largely Christian world of budding monasteries rather than philosophical schools, with more deeply established ecclesiastical authority and scriptural canon. Rufinus tried to bring the thought of Origen into his own world in ways that would benefit this new audience. As Hammond Bammel says,

His readers were on a different spiritual level than those of Origen. The difficult concepts needed to be explained for them or combined together. Rufinus' goal was this: to edify his readers, not to put out his own learning as a show; thus he often left out problems or glossed over difficulties. His standpoint was necessarily different from that of Origen. In

⁶³ De Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, 134.

⁶⁴ See, for example, R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (London: SCM Press, 1959).

⁶⁵ Mark Julian Edwards, *Origen Against Plato*, Ashgate Studies in Philosophy & Theology in Late Antiquity (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002).

the translation of the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, one notices, for example...that he could understand less well Paul's problem in relation to Jewish Christians.⁶⁶

Rufinus looked at Origen's text particularly for theological issues of interest to his contemporaries; thus, his translation emphasized points that became relevant in the Pelagian controversy, which broke out shortly after his death in 411: grace, freedom, Adam's sin, and God's justice and foreknowledge.⁶⁷

One example of the difference between the worlds of Origen and Rufinus is seen in varying approaches to the authority needed for scriptural exegesis—likely influenced by the more firmly established scriptural canon. As Torjesen notes, Rufinus' contemporary Jerome turned to his own scholarship to claim authority for his interpretations, despite the fact that he was “living at the heart of monastic life in Bethlehem,” while Origen, “as erudite a textual scholar as Jerome,” appealed to his way of life for his authority as a biblical interpreter.

The rhetorical language by which each exegete seeks to establish his authority reveals what was persuasive at a particular moment in the history of the churches...For Origen, scripture is prophecy, laden with mysterious meanings, its interpreter must be a spiritual teacher who can discern the mysteries. For Jerome scripture is historical truth, simple and

⁶⁶ “Seine Leser waren von einem anderen geistigen Niveau als diejenigen des Origenes. Die schwierigen Begriffe mußten für sie erklärt oder vereinfacht werden. Rufins Ziel war es, seine Leser zu erbauen, nicht etwa seine eigene Gelehrsamkeit zur Schau zu stellen; so hat er oft Probleme vereinfacht oder Schwierigkeiten übertüncht. Sein Standpunkt war notwendigerweise anders als derjenige des Origenes. In der Übersetzung des Römerbriefkommentars merkt man z.B...daß er die Probleme des Paulus gegenüber den jüdischen Christen weniger gut verstehen konnte.” *Römerbrieftext* 44-45.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 45-46. Yet, as Hammond Bammel points out, Rufinus did not himself need to worry about the terms of the Pelagian controversy. Although the questions had aroused interest before his death, the battle itself had not yet begun.

clear, its interpreter should be a scholar, fluent in the original languages.⁶⁸

Working in this different context, where scriptural interpretation had changed and theological debates had shifted, Rufinus translated Origen's theology to suit the needs of his own Christian world. Despite the way in which this new context altered the text of the *Commentary on Romans*, readers today can still hear Origen's voice through the translation. The words are not Origen's own—presented as they are in a different language for a different culture—but the creative exegesis and sense of eschatological hope bear the clear stamp of the Alexandrian himself.

With respect to pneumatology in particular, Rufinus's own thought seems different from the rich picture that unfolds in the *Commentary on Romans*. There is a brief reference to the doctrine of the Spirit found in Rufinus's own *Commentary on the Apostles' Creed*, composed in 400, just a few years before his translation of the *Commentary on Romans*.⁶⁹ In this text, Rufinus states that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son and that even the grammar of the Creed indicates the Spirit's personhood—Christians only believe *in* the persons of the Father, Son, and Spirit, but *in* is omitted when we speak of the church, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection.⁷⁰ The short, rather dry passage on the Spirit, orthodox in the fifth century, bears little resemblance to the living pneumatology of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Torjesen, "The Rhetoric of the Literal Sense: Changing Strategies of Persuasion from Origen to Jerome," *Origeniana Septima*, ed. Wolfgang Bienert and Uwe Kühneweg (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 642.

⁶⁹ Hammond, "Last Ten Years," 428. Francis X. Murphy puts the date at 404. See his *Rufinus of Aquileia (345-411): His Life and Works* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1945), 185.

⁷⁰ Ruf. *Symb.* 35 (PL 21: 372-373). See the discussion in Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia*, 183.

⁷¹ There is, however, a resemblance between Rufinus' interest in the preposition *in* and a similar interest in the nuances of prepositions in the *Commentary on Romans*. See *Comm. in Rom.* 3.10.2-5: Hammond Bammel 3.7 (253.22-256.83)=PG 14: 955-957. However, there is no reason to think that this discussion of prepositions in the *Commentary on Romans* may not stem from Origen's own exegesis. See *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 170, 10-172-11, where the Greek shows an extended discussion of the importance of the prepositions *ἐκ* and *διὰ* in speaking of justification *from* and *through*

While noting the way in which Rufinus's context influenced his translations of Origen, it is also important to point out that, from these and other translations, Origen's thought has become interwoven with the fabric of Christian theology.⁷² Origen's presence in the theology of both East and West is undeniable, yet it is a "translated" presence, with aspects emphasized as needed for different people in different times.⁷³

With an eye to the ways in which Origen's context shapes his pneumatology, it is nevertheless possible to bring aspects of it into dialogue with twentieth and twenty-first century theology. Rufinus finds meaning for his contemporaries in Origen's theology, causing him to translate not only words, but also what he perceives to be Origen's true message, for the spiritual aid of fifth-century Christians. Similarly, twenty-first-century Christians may find theological depths in Origen's theology. However, before bringing Origen into contemporary dialogue, in the footsteps of Rufinus, this project attempts to treat Origen in his own context, something not always done even by his ardent disciples. It is in reading Origen's pneumatology in this way that his contribution to Spirit-centered theologies becomes clear.

1.3. THE SCOPE OF THE COMMENTARY

The *Commentary on Romans* is generally only available through Rufinus' translation, although selections are extant in the Greek. Therefore, its sweeping scope is only visible in the ten books of the Latin translation, which, despite their abridged form and style,

faith. Though shorter than Rufinus' Latin translation, the Greek reflects the same general argument.

⁷² See, for example, Bernard McGinn, "The Spiritual Heritage of Origen in the West: Aspects of the History of Origen's Influence in the Middle Ages," *Origene maestro di vita spirituale/ Origen: Master of Spiritual Life*, ed. Luigi F. Pizzolato and Marco Rizzi, SPMed 22 (Milan: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 2001), 263-289.

⁷³ For example, as Crouzel comments, "Some have seen in Origen 'the common ancestor of the Arian heresy and of the Cappadocian orthodoxy' which overcame Arianism. That is a striking formula, brilliant and paradoxical, to be sure. But if Origen had an influence on Arius...that influence came from misunderstood fragments of Origen, not from his doctrine as a whole." See *Origen*, 203-204.

allow their reader to watch Origen as he wanders through the theological questions he finds raised in Paul's letter to the Romans.

Approaching Romans with the concern that the epistle has been twisted by Gnostics to show that human beings are not truly free,⁷⁴ Origen makes it a main goal of his commentary to show that Paul is asserting that humans have the freedom to embrace Christ in the virtues and to become the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit. However, Origen explores numerous additional theological questions, at times giving several possible answers to them.

Throughout the commentary, Origen returns to several key themes again and again. He is especially interested in the vocation and apostleship of Paul (and in vocation in general) and emphasizes Paul's ministry to both Jews and gentiles.⁷⁵ Paul is the *arbiter* between Jews and gentiles, speaking to each audience what they need to hear for their spiritual good.⁷⁶ Thus, the letter to the Romans sometimes addresses all people and sometimes switches between audiences, with Paul assuming the *persona* needed for his audience's better understanding at any given time.

In addition to his concerns with freedom and with Paul and his vocation, Origen speaks often of the work of the Holy Spirit in hiding and revealing in the Scriptures, of Paul's diverse uses of "law," "death," "spirit," and "circumcision," and of the unity of the virtues in Christ. The *Commentary on Romans* interweaves Origen's belief in divine pedagogy, reflected in the pedagogy of Paul, with an insistence on the glory to which human beings are called—a glory found in the lives of Old Testament patriarchs and New Testament apostles. Just as the death of Christ brings life, and the mortification of the flesh leads to spiritual joy, the diversity of Paul's words and the Holy Spirit's meanings tends towards the peace of eschatological unity.

⁷⁴ *Comm. in Rom.* praef. 1.1 : Hammond Bammel 1.1 (37.4-9)=PG 14: 833.

⁷⁵ In the *Commentary on Romans*, Origen often uses "gentiles" to indicate non-Christians and "Jews," the type of the chosen people, to represent the Christians of his day.

⁷⁶ See the work of Peter Gorday on this emphasis: Gorday, "The *iustus arbiter*. Origen on Paul's Role in the Epistle to the Romans," *StPatr* (1989): 393-402; *Principles of Patristic Exegesis: Romans 9-11 in Origen, John Chrysostom, and Augustine* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), 43-102.

1.4. CONTRIBUTION

This book explores the Holy Spirit as understood by Origen in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, a commentary available today in Greek and Latin forms clearly different from the text that Origen wrote. Origen's commentary, as it exists, has a contribution to make to theological discussion, just as it has contributed from its first appearance in Greek in the third century and from its Latin translation in the fifth. My project is to explain what Origen's work on Romans has to say about the Holy Spirit, who is central to his theology, and to analyze Origen's pneumatology in the light of contemporary discussion.

Prior to the 1940s, scholars tended to emphasize Origen as a philosopher who merely cloaked his philosophy in Christian language. With the work of Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, and others, this emphasis shifted, and Origen scholars turned increasingly to Origen's exegetical works, editing, translating, and commenting on his preserved homilies and commentaries.⁷⁷ Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* played a role in this new interest in Origen the exegete, especially because of Scherer's 1957 publication of the selections found in the Tura papyrus, which allowed scholars to check the credibility of Rufinus' translation work.

For a time, the limited scholarship on the *Commentary on Romans* concentrated on the important textual issues which the Tura papyrus highlights, rather than on theological issues. Crouzel bemoans, in a 1988 article on the state of Origen studies, the paucity of literature on the *Commentary on Romans*, calling it "the *parent pauvre*, the most neglected of his writings."⁷⁸ However, with modern translations of the commentary and Hammond Bammel's new critical edition, theological interest in the commentary has increased. It tends to focus on two main areas: questions of justification and freedom⁷⁹ and questions about the status of the

⁷⁷ Robert Daly, "Origen Studies and Pierre Nautin's *Origène*," *TS* 39 (1978): 508-14.

⁷⁸ Henri Crouzel, "The Literature on Origen 1970-1988," *TS* 49 (1988): 506.

⁷⁹ Francesca Cocchini, "La 'quaestio' sul libero arbitrio e l'interpretazione origeniana di Rm 9 nel *Commentario alla Lettera ai Romani*," *Il cuore indurito del faraone: Origene e il problema del libero arbitrio*, ed. Lorenzo Perrone (Genova: Casa Editrice Marietti S.p.A., 1992), 105-18; Caroline

Jews and the law of Moses.⁸⁰ Examination of Origen's text has also contributed to the understanding of the state of Paul's text in the third century.⁸¹

Despite this increased scholarly interest in Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, no one has written about the doctrine of God found in the text. Several authors, like Henri Crouzel, acknowledge with footnotes the importance of the *Commentary on Romans* on questions concerning the Holy Spirit, but a systematic study is lacking. In this work, I will begin to fill this gap by examining this crucial aspect of Origen's lengthy commentary.

By providing a close study of Origen's treatment of the Spirit throughout one whole work, I also hope to contribute to a larger discussion of Origen's pneumatology. General interest in Origen's teaching on the Holy Spirit has increased in recent years. Scholars

Hammond Bammel, "Justification by Faith in Augustine and Origen," *JEH* 47 (1996): 223-235; Hammond Bammel, "Rufinus' Translation of Origen's Commentary on Romans and the Pelagian Controversy," *Storia ed esegesi in Rufino di Concordia*, ed. A. Scottà (Udine: Arti Grafiche Friulane, 1992), 131-42; Theresia Heither, O.S.B., *Translatio Religionis: Die Paulusdeutung des Origenes in seinem Kommentar zum Römerbrief* (Wien: Böhlau, 1990); Romano Penna, "Interpretazione origeniana ed esegesi odierna di Rm 9, 6-29." *Il cuore indurito del faraone: Origene e il problema del libero arbitrio*, ed. Lorenzo Perrone (Genova: Casa Editrice Marietti S.p.A., 1992), 119-40; Thomas P. Scheck, "Justification by Faith Alone in Origen's Commentary on Romans and Its Reception During the Reformation Era" (paper presented at the Origenianum Octavum, Pisa, 27-31 August 2001). For Scheck's argument, see his thematic essay on justification in the introduction to his English translation of the commentary, *FaCh* 103, 25-48.

⁸⁰ Peter Gorday, "The *iusus arbitri*: Origen on Paul's Role in the Epistle to the Romans," *StPatr* (1989): 393-402; Gorday, *Principles of Patristic Exegesis: Romans 9-11 in Origen, John Chrysostom, and Augustine* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), 43-102; Caroline Hammond Bammel, "Die Juden im Römerbriefkommentar des Origenes," *Christlicher Antijudaismus und jüdischer Antipaganismus: ihre Motive und Hintergründe in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*, ed. H. Frohnhofen (Hamburg: Steinmann & Steinmann, 1990), 145-51; Reimer Roukema, *The Diversity of Laws in Origen's Commentary on Romans* (Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1988).

⁸¹ Francesca Cocchini, *Il Paolo di Origene: Contributo alla storia della ricezione delle epistole paoline nel III secolo* (Rome: Edizione Studium, 1992); Roukema, *Diversity of Laws*.

continue to discuss the problem of Origen's "subordinationism," although interest tends to focus more on the Son than on the Spirit.⁸² There are, however, some studies of Origen's pneumatology⁸³ that move beyond the question of subordination and others that more specifically examine the charisms given by the Spirit.⁸⁴ Of these studies, three broadly describe Origen's doctrine of the Spirit as it is found throughout his works. Jacques Dupuis' detailed book, the earliest of these studies, focuses on Origen's theological anthropology, which involves discussion of his pneumatology.⁸⁵ The other two, by George Berthold and Kilian McDonnell, move the discussion of Origen's doctrine of the Spirit beyond questions of Nicene orthodoxy. Berthold's article argues

⁸² J. Nigel Rowe, *Origen's Doctrine of Subordination: A Study in Origen's Christology* (Berne: Peter Lang, 1987), which does not address questions about the Holy Spirit at all, and Henri Crouzel, "Les personnes de la Trinité sont-elles de puissance inégale selon Origène, Peri Archon 1, 3, 5-8?" *Gr.57* (1976): 109-25.

⁸³ George Berthold, "Origen and the Holy Spirit," *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 444-48; John Dillon, "Origen's Doctrine of the Trinity and Some Later Neoplatonic Theories," *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought*, ed. Dominic J. O'Meara (Norfolk, Virginia: International Society for Neoplatonic Studies, 1982), 19-23; Franz Dünzl, *Pneuma: Funktionen des theologischen Begriffs in frühchristlicher Literatur* (Münster: Aschendorffsche, 2000); Jacques Dupuis, *L'Esprit de l'homme: Étude sur l'anthropologie religieuse d'Origène* (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer, 1967); Michael A. G. Haykin, "The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 Cor. 2:10-12 by Origen and Athanasius," *SJTb* 35 (1982): 513-28.; Joseph T. Lienhard, "Origen's Speculation on John the Baptist, or: Was John the Baptist the Holy Spirit?" *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 449-53; J. Rebecca Lyman, *Christology and Cosmology: Models of Divine Activity in Origen, Eusebius, and Athanasius* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993); Kilian McDonnell, "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine," 5-35.

⁸⁴ Gunnar af Hällström, *Charismatic Succession: A Study on Origen's Concept of Prophecy* (Helsinki: The Finnish Exegetical Society, 1985); Ronald Kydd, "Origen and the Gifts of the Spirit," *EeT* 13 (1982): 111-16; Joseph W. Trigg, "The Charismatic Intellectual: Origen's Understanding of Religious Leadership," *ChH* 50 (1981): 5-19.

⁸⁵ An earlier work on Origen's theological anthropology also discusses pneumatology: Stephanus Tavares Bettencourt, O. S. B., *Doctrina Ascetica Origenis, seu Quid docuerit de ratione animae humanae cum daemonibus*, *StAns* 16 (Rome: Ponteficius Institutum S. Anselmi, 1945).

that Harnack, in criticizing Origen's pneumatology, misunderstands the Alexandrian's theological project, which in fact places the Holy Spirit at the center of God's work of divinization of each Christian. McDonnell, after providing a thorough survey of the scholarship on Origen's pneumatology, argues that only Irenaeus, of patristic Greek and Latin authors, gives as much attention as Origen to the Holy Spirit and the Trinity. McDonnell's very sympathetic understanding of Origen's pneumatology enables him to carry him into the contemporary pneumatological discussion, where he finds his doctrine of the Spirit too limited to be helpful.

Most of these current studies of Origen's pneumatology make some reference to the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. However, the discussion of Origen's pneumatology would clearly be enriched by a fuller understanding of the contribution of the *Commentary on Romans*. To this end, I use the method of close textual reading to explore Origen's pneumatology both as doctrine of God and as theological anthropology. My conclusion engages McDonnell's concern about Origen in contemporary dialogue, looking to the pneumatology of the *Romans Commentary* and particularly to Origen's imagery for the Spirit and the Spirit's work in the world.

In contributing to the understanding of Origen's theology of the Holy Spirit, this study adds as well to the larger discussion of pneumatology among systematic theologians. Patristic perspectives have always had a place in this discussion; the voice of Augustine, for example, still rings out clearly. However, Origen is often ignored because his language does not easily fit the later conciliar definitions.

Origen's voice should become audible again in the struggle for new linguistic and theological paradigms with which to speak of the Holy Spirit. Beyond the language of trinitarian definitions, Origen has a theology and an anthropology imbued with the Holy Spirit. This understanding of the Spirit, gained from his reflection on the Scriptures, is one that should not be ignored to gather dust on the shelves of history.

1.5. METHOD AND CONTENT

To shed light on Origen's pneumatology, I approach Origen's text, primarily in Rufinus's translation, to observe the movement of his pneumatology among the main theological themes of the

commentary. Rufinus' translation, providing, as it does, a look at the scope of Origen's theology, is an excellent window onto the importance of the Spirit in Origen's work. In ten books of Origen's theological questions and interests, the Holy Spirit is clearly central—at the root of all speech about God, as Paul tries to offer to each listener what she needs to hear, and at the root of the Son's incarnation in the world for the salvation of all. To see the Spirit's centrality, I will examine Origen's images for the Spirit, images that bring together theological themes throughout the *Commentary on Romans*. Where it is possible, I draw on Greek fragments of the text; more often, I compare other texts of Origen to illustrate the pervasiveness of these theological themes in his thought.

Chapter II first examines Origen's understanding of "spirit" in a general sense throughout the commentary. This provides the basis for the rest of the book, since Origen's view of "spirit," shaped by both the Scriptures and understandings of "spirit" in his third century context, is a necessary backdrop to his theology and his anthropology. From Origen's general understanding of "spirit," the chapter moves to a specific exploration of the ways in which Origen distinguishes the various spiritual beings—including the human spirit—that he sees described in the biblical text. Origen's *Commentary on Romans* is concerned with the spirits of slavery and of adoption, with ministering spirits, with evil spirits, and with the spirits of prophecy, among others. It is through a careful examination of these many spirits that Origen is able to discern the person of the Holy Spirit and the ways in which God relates to humanity through the spiritual world. These spirits also serve an important role in Origen's theological anthropology. Ultimately, spiritual existence is communal existence, which is unsurprising in a universe teeming with created spirits, each performing a positive or negative pedagogical function.

Chapter III focuses on the Holy Spirit as God's movement into the world and into the lives of individual human beings, discussing the way in which Origen's *Commentary on Romans* treats the place of the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation. This chapter explores three pivotal images for the Spirit in the commentary, those of Teacher, Ring, and Cherub, images which illustrate both the way in which the Spirit pervades Origen's thought and also the clear roles of the Spirit in working with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit described by Origen is a figure

intimately involved in the entire spectrum of human activity and is central to God's outreach into the world, working with those healed by Jesus and leading them on to ever-deeper paths of holiness.

Chapter IV examines the Spirit as the path by which human beings return to God. According to Origen, there is fundamental goodness in every human being precisely because of the existence of spirit in each person—spirit which is ontologically related to the Holy Spirit. Origen sees holiness as a genuine possibility for each person who freely chooses to become “spiritual” by following the promptings of the Holy Spirit, who instructs in the conscience and through prayer. This chapter examines the moral potential that Origen describes as the “gifts” of the Spirit. The holy are called in particular to imitate the pedagogy of the Spirit in their own lives. An essential part of the call to discipleship is a call to teach. For Origen, then, the road to holiness necessarily involves taking part in the Spirit's own pedagogical role.

This book concludes in chapter V with a critique of Origen's view of the Holy Spirit and considers ways in which his view can enter into discussion with contemporary pneumatology. Origen writes with a clear sense that the Holy Spirit pervades human existence and indeed underlies the very possibility of human sanctity. As the Divine Teacher, the Spirit, while holding disciples to the highest of standards, nevertheless begins with the rudiments of holiness, leading each person forward individually, one step at a time. Origen's understanding of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit removes unnecessary barriers between Creator and creature and gives creatures an active role in their own sanctification.

At the same time, Origen's pneumatology is even more beneficial if brought into discussion with contemporary theologians. In expanding Origen's images for the Spirit, pneumatology finds a challenging dialogue-partner at the heart of the Christian tradition. As an influence on Augustine and Basil, among numerous others, Origen has already touched the development of pneumatology, albeit anonymously.⁸⁶ However, a

⁸⁶ In examining Cara Anthony's close study of the Holy Spirit in Augustine and in Cyril of Alexandria (“Love of God,” 107-176), it is striking to see how many of the pivotal themes of each derive from Origen's pneumatology. Both associate the Spirit's activity with the Christian community, paralleling Origen's connection of the Spirit with

direct rereading of Origen moves beyond the specific ways in which he influenced these bishops in the fourth and fifth centuries. This exploration of Origen's commentary seeks to find new hope for today's Christians in the thought of this pre-Nicene theologian. Descriptions of the Spirit, we find, can go beyond trinitarian definitions; they need not be either solely psychological or ecclesial. In Origen, the Holy Spirit, the ontological ground for every human spirit, creates a universal potentiality for holiness. This Spirit is the locus of both grace and freedom, the seat of individuality and the root of community. Following in the footsteps of the Holy Spirit-Teacher, individual Christians must provide spiritual edification for one another and can even bring the presence of the Spirit into others' lives by speaking and living out the Gospel. Students of holiness cannot sit passively by while the Teacher lectures, but must learn their lessons and work hand in hand with the Instructor. Such a view of the Spirit is liberating, opening possibilities for radically new understandings of God's self-communication. The Spirit and Teacher of holiness continues to point to increasing depths of knowledge and love in ways that may require the disciple to reconceptualize the world. More than that, the Spirit-Teacher calls each disciple to be herself a teacher who works for the conversion of the world.

the converted. Augustine, like Origen, compares the Spirit to the human conscience, finds the Spirit inspiring outward witness to Jesus in the world, and insists that the Spirit is the unifying force that holds the Christian community together. Cyril, also like Origen, "highlights the Spirit's *teaching* and *empowering* of Christians." See Anthony, "Love of God," 139.

CHAPTER II: THE SPIRITS OF THE *COMMENTARY ON ROMANS*

“Spirit” plays a number of significant roles in Origen’s thought, pointing to specific good and evil beings, to a part of each human being, and to God’s own Spirit. Origen’s discernment of the spirit-beings of the Scriptures provides the background for his discussion of the Holy Spirit, the central spirit-figure in his theology. This background is a complicated one, since Origen tries to consider seriously the many various scriptural references to spirits. This chapter examines the range of meanings for “spirit” in the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, categorizing the different ways in which Origen speaks of spirits. The diversity of ministering and evil spirits raises a number of questions with regard to Origen’s thought. How does one distinguish among any of these spirits, either in reading the text or in life? Is “spirit” only a positive appellation, or can it describe spirits who are genuinely opposed to God? To what extent are evil spirits also ministering spirits? There are no simple answers to these queries, but the proposals offered in the *Commentary on Romans* add to an understanding of Origen’s spirit-world and thus provide a background for everything he says about the Holy Spirit interacting with the created world.

Throughout his corpus, Origen’s approach to “spirit” takes into consideration the polyvalence of “spirit” in the Bible and in the common understanding of the early third century. His respect for every word of the scriptural texts requires that he must treat each biblical reference to “spirit,” whether in the Old or the New Testament, as revelatory of the meaning of spirit-language. Confusion can, and does, arise from a serious reading of every instance of “spirit” in the Bible. However, Origen points to the divine Spirit as true spirit and thus retains a clear focus. Despite the

different meanings for “spirit,” the majority of spirit-beings play pedagogical roles in the School of the Holy Spirit.¹

Although Origen forms his pneumatology as a Christian thinker deeply steeped in the Scriptures, he is also part of a rich developing tradition studying the meanings of “spirit.” This tradition includes Stoic, Gnostic, Jewish, and earlier Christian thinkers. A brief survey of a few representative pneumatologies both contextualizes Origen and points to the diversity of ways in which “spirit” can be understood in the early centuries of Christianity.

2.1. BACKGROUND FOR ORIGEN’S UNDERSTANDING OF “SPIRIT”

“Spirit” is a complex concept in the ancient world. The Greek word πνεῦμα and the Latin word *spiritus* can mean physical wind as well as the breath of respiration, life itself, divine inspiration, the human spirit, the divine spirit, or any immaterial being.² Thus, a reader of Greek or Latin is confronted with a variety of possible interpretations for spirit-language. This variety is mirrored in the range of roles that spirit plays in a number of different systems.³

Spirit occupies a particularly central position in the thought of Stoic philosophers. Although there are distinct ways of speaking of spirit in different types of Stoicism, the role of spirit shares certain features in the writings of most Stoics.⁴ For them, everything that

¹ Origen’s work also plays its own important pedagogical role in explaining these varied spirits. As Rebecca Lyman says, “the varieties of material and spiritual existence are described by Origen for the purpose of educating the fallen soul.” Lyman, *Christology and Cosmology: Models of Divine Activity in Origen, Eusebius, and Athanasius* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 61-62.

² “πνεῦμα” in Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996). Other meanings include a sentence declaimed in one breath, the breathing with which a vowel is pronounced, and flatulence. It is interesting that the Latin “spiritus,” used by Rufinus in his translations of Origen, shares this polyvalence. Its meanings include respiration, life, the incorporeal part of a person, divine inspiration, an essential quality, enthusiasm, physical wind, and a scent or odor. See “spiritus” in *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P. G. W. Glare (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997).

³ See Cécile Blanc, “Dieu est *pneuma*. Le sens de cette expression d’après Origène,” *StPatr* 16.2 (1985): 224-27.

⁴ Gérard Verbeke discusses in detail different nuances in Stoic conceptions of πνεῦμα. For example, Cleanthes, Posidonius, Seneca, and

exists is material; there is no conflict between spirit and matter.⁵ Spirit is not only material, but the force which holds together everything in the cosmos.⁶ Generally, the Stoics see spirit as the divine matter containing and supporting all of life. Everything is material and participates in the divine spirit.⁷

The Gnostics⁸ of the second century,⁹ on the other hand, speak of *πνεῦμα* as transcending matter. The details of their

Marcus Aurelius, influenced by Platonism, spiritualized *πνεῦμα* and inclined towards a dualistic perspective on the *πνεῦμα*-body relationship. See Gérard Verbeke, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma du Stoïcisme à S. Augustin*, Greek and Roman Philosophy 43 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1945; New York: Garland, 1987), 172-74.

⁵ *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, ed. Hans von Arnim (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978), 1: 87.

⁶ See, for example, *SVF* 1.137, 1.533, 2.473. Martha L. Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: I: Stoicism in Classical Latin Literature*, SHCT 34 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985), 23-27.

⁷ For the divinity of spirit, see *SVF* 2: 1051, which is also cited by Origen in *Cels.* 6.71 (SC 147: 356-358).

⁸ A study of Gnosticism, even limited to the second century, involves an extremely complicated picture; there was no one "Gnosticism" in Origen's world. For a sense of the variety of Gnostic movements and groups, see Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, tr. ed. Robert McLachlan Wilson (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983); Riemer Roukema, *Gnosis and Faith in Early Christianity: An introduction to gnosticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity International, 1998); and Christoph Marksches, *Gnosis: An Introduction*, tr. John Bowden (London: T & T Clark, 2001).

⁹ In his *Commentary on Romans*, Origen refers several times to Marcion, Valentinus, and Basilides, and once to Ebion. His references are all polemical. However, none of his criticisms of these Gnostics in this commentary relate to their pneumatology. Rather, he objects to their doctrine of natures, which he sees as a threat to human freedom (*Comm. in Rom.* 2.10.2: Hammond Bammel 2.7 (139.89-95)=PG 14:894; *Comm. in Rom.* 4.12.1: Hammond Bammel 4.12 (354.5-9)=PG 14:1002; *Comm. in Rom.* 8.11.2: Hammond Bammel 8.10 (692.15-18)=PG 14:1191); to their blasphemy with regard to the God of the Old Testament (*Comm. in Rom.* 2.13.27: Hammond Bammel 2.9 (169.463-467)=PG 14:910; *Comm. in Rom.* 3.11.2: Hammond Bammel 3.8 (257.16-19)=PG 14:957; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.6.2: Hammond Bammel 5.6 (412.4-8)=PG 14:1032); to Marcion's selective reading of the Scriptures (*Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.3: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (87.28-32)=PG 14: 865; *Comm. in Rom.* 10.43.2: Hammond Bammel 10.43 (855.7-13)=PG 14: 1290); and to the doctrine of

schemas differ, but the spiritualizing of $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ is common to all.¹⁰ $\Pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ has a number of meanings; it can describe a complicated variety of good and evil spirits, the soul in a small group of elect human beings, and the Holy Spirit.¹¹ The distinction between the human soul and the Spirit of God is often difficult to discern.

Those Gnostics who refer specifically to a “Holy Spirit” also provide a confusing picture. This “Holy Spirit” sometimes occupies an unclear position with respect to Sophia-Wisdom and a subordinate one with respect to the Pleroma.¹² Basilides places the Spirit outside the Pleroma and limits its role to a sweet odor and the wings of ascent encountered by the soul rising from one “filiation” to another.¹³ One passage even refers to the Holy Spirit as the “attendant Spirit.”¹⁴

Another significant use of $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ in Gnosticism is an anthropological one. Valentinus describes three classes into which all humanity is divided.¹⁵ Each person, he holds, is created with a certain nature: pneumatic, psychic, or hylic. This doctrine of natures is one to which Origen is adamantly opposed and against

metensomatosis (*Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.27: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (378.392-396)=PG 14: 1015).

¹⁰ However, Verbeke cites the position of H. Leisegang (*Die Gnosis*, 1924), who argues that even the Gnostic understanding of $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ is more material than the abstract modern notion. Leisegang asserts that the Gnostic $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ has a material quality, although it is very subtle. Verbeke agrees with the distinction between the modern and Gnostic concepts of $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ but insists that pneumatic matter must be sharply distinguished from earthly matter. See Verbeke 306.

¹¹ See Robert McLachlan Wilson, “The Spirit in Gnostic Literature,” *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen Smalley (Cambridge: University Press, 1973), 345-55.

¹² Wilson 353-54; Verbeke 293-96; Jorunn Jacobsen Buckley, “‘The Holy Spirit is a Double Name’: Holy Spirit, Mary, and Sophia in the *Gospel of Philip*,” *Images of the Feminine in Gnosticism*, ed. Karen L. King (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 211-27.

¹³ Wilson 354; Verbeke 296-98.

¹⁴ Clem. *Str.* 2.8.36.1, tr. John Ferguson, FaCh 85 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1991), 182.

¹⁵ Rudolph 92, 321; Verbeke 299-300; Wilson 349. For the ways in which Gnostics found this paradigm in Paul’s letters, see Elaine Hiesey Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), especially the chapters on Romans and 1 Corinthians.

which he argues throughout his *Commentary on Romans*; his chief concern is the denial of freedom that he believes is inherent in this Valentinian doctrine. Pneumatics and hylics, who are saved and damned by nature, are in sharp opposition to each other. Psychics, close to hylics in their ignorance,¹⁶ may yet be convinced to convert to the pneumatic state and thus be redeemed.¹⁷ However, despite their preordained status, even pneumatics must struggle while in the body. Each is divided into three parts: *πνεῦμα*, *ψυχή*, and *ὕλη*,¹⁸ with *πνεῦμα* being the highest of the three, the genuine, innermost self. Gnostics say that Paul demonstrates this struggle in Romans 7:14-25, where he shows that the pneumatic is still tied down and tormented by materiality.¹⁹ In any case, “pneumatic,” like “*πνεῦμα*,” clearly refers to something that transcends materiality. Although the pneumatic person, while in the body, is limited by matter, this person will ultimately trade earthly matter for a truly spiritual existence.

Like Gnostics, Jewish thinkers during the early centuries of Christianity tend to spiritualize *πνεῦμα*, rather than viewing it as material. Beyond that, their pneumatologies differ substantially from those of the Gnostics. While first and second century Jewish scholars are affected by philosophers contemporary with them, all draw heavily on the language of the Scriptures. There are a number of instances of “*ru’ach*” in the Hebrew Bible (translated as “*πνεῦμα*” in the Septuagint).²⁰ However, this spirit is only described as “holy” in two Hebrew passages: Isaiah 63:10-11 and Psalm 51:11.²¹ The Septuagint version of Daniel also contains

¹⁶ Ignorance is the origin of evil in Gnostic systems and is often described metaphorically as the drunkenness or sleep of the soul. See Rudolph 110-11.

¹⁷ This group of people often included ordinary Christians. See Rudolph 92.

¹⁸ As Kurt Rudolph says, “Gnostic anthropology is therefore basically tripartite, although in distinction to similar contemporary conceptions a clear line is drawn between the material and psychic and the spiritual part.” Rudolph 91.

¹⁹ Pagels 32-33.

²⁰ There are more than 80 such references.

²¹ John R. Levison, *The Spirit in First Century Judaism*, AGJU 29 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 65. Despite this, “holy spirit” plays a significant role in rabbinic writings.

references to the young man's "holy spirit."²² The diversity of references influences the interpretations of spirit in first and second century Judaism.²³

Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 B.C.-ca. 50 A.D.), whose work and methodology influence Origen in many different ways, speaks of "πνεῦμα" in several senses. Primarily, πνεῦμα is a specific spiritual being, although it shares its nature with the angels and the incorporeal human soul. This θεοῦ πνεῦμα, associated closely with wisdom,²⁴ mediates communication between divinity and humanity. Thus it is the spirit of prophecy and inspiration which descends upon particular human vessels from time to time and in rare instances even stays with a person like Moses for an extended period of time.²⁵ This spirit seems often to be more angelic than divine, a spirit that maintains a distance between God and creatures while still serving as intermediary.²⁶ Philo also uses πνεῦμα in a number of other ways: as the element of air, the rational and immortal aspect of the human soul, the corporate spirit of Israel, and pure knowledge.²⁷ It is not possible to summarize Philo's notions of spirit in a few simple definitions, since he treats πνεῦμα in widely different ways in different texts. However, Philo generally maintains that cosmic or divine spirit is distinct from the human soul.²⁸ At the same time, he draws from Stoicism the understanding

²² Daniel 5:12 and 6:4 (LXX). See also Susanna 45.

²³ See Levison, *Spirit*; Rivka G. Horwitz, "Ru'ah Ha-Kodesh," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Macmillan Co., 1971), 14: 363-68.

²⁴ Philo says, in *Gig.* 23 (LCL 2: 456), quoting Ex. 31:1, "'God called up Bezaleel...and 'filled him with the divine spirit, with wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to devise in every work.' In these words we have suggested to us a definition of what the spirit of God is." All English translations of Philo are by F. H. Colson and are available in the eleven volumes of Philo's works in the LCL edition.

²⁵ On the spirit inspiring the passive human being, see Philo. *Spec.* 4:49 (LCL 8: 36-38). However, indwelling is rare. As Philo says in *Gig.* 20 (LCL 2: 454): "The spirit sometimes stays awhile, but it does not abide for ever among us, the mass of men." N.B. that even in the case of Moses, the spirit remains by his side, rather than within him. See Philo. *Gig.* 55.

²⁶ Levison, *Spirit*, 27-55.

²⁷ Horwitz 366-67; Verbeke 236-60.

²⁸ This is a complicated problem in Philo, since he handles it differently in different texts. In some passages (i.e., *De Homini Opificio* 135), he seems to concur with Seneca that the transcendent divine spirit

that this spirit can share itself with other beings without being diminished. In fact, such self-sharing gradually brings the universe to perfection.²⁹

In rabbinic writings³⁰ and the Dead Sea Scrolls,³¹ "Ru'ach ha-Kodesh" also has the primary characteristic of inspiring prophecy and wisdom. "Ru'ach" indicates a gift from God, bestowing insight and joy on those who faithfully study or teach the Torah or perform mitzvahs. In some cases, "Ru'ach ha-Kodesh" is used interchangeably with "shekinah" and is a synonym for God. It does not, however, represent anything separate in the Godhead.³²

In rabbinic writings, "spirit" also becomes a part of eschatological discussions; there is a prevailing concern that the spirit has left Israel because of Israel's sinfulness, but that the same

and the human soul are identical. However, he insists in other passages that the divine spirit is distinct, bringing wisdom and understanding in a more transitory way. John Levison, who outlines this problem, concludes that Philo ultimately does not identify the cosmic spirit with the human soul, since the human spirit is not itself capable of producing an uninterrupted life of virtue. See Levison, *Spirit*, 144-151.

²⁹ Philo, *Gig.*, 26-27 (LCL 2: 458): "So the giving of instruction to others, constantly repeated, entails study and practice to the instructor and thus works the perfect consummation of knowledge. If, then, it were Moses' own spirit, or the spirit of some other created being, which was according to God's purpose to be distributed to that greater number of disciples, it would indeed be shredded into so many pieces and thus lessened. But as it is, the spirit which is on him is the wise, the divine, the excellent spirit, susceptible of neither severance nor division, diffused in its fullness everywhere and through all things, the spirit which helps, but suffers no hurt, which though it be shared with others or added to others suffers no diminution in understanding and knowledge and wisdom."

³⁰ Although the midrash, for example, are not actually compiled until the fifth century, it is clear that they represent the fruits of earlier rabbinic discussions; the theology contained within these later rabbinic writings are likely the fruit of earlier discussions that may well be contemporary with Origen. For the relationship between Origen and certain rabbinic discussions, see De Lange, *Origen and the Jews*.

³¹ There is no evidence that Origen had any contact with the Dead Sea Scrolls. In this case, they serve as a further example of common strands in the Jewish pneumatology preceding and contemporary with Origen.

³² Alan Unterman, "Ru'ah Ha-Kodesh," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Macmillan Co., 1971), 14: 364-66.

spirit will return to Israel in the age to come.³³ In the same way, the presence of God's spirit is a reward and a sign that the recipient of the spirit is worthy.³⁴

The Qumran community also emphasizes God's spirit as God's presence coming to abide with them. In fact, the Essenes speak of themselves, thus indwelt, as the new Temple. However, despite this belief that they are the Temple in an eschatological sense, the Essenes are very aware of present human sinfulness. They speak of two spirits, one good and one evil, inhabiting each human being.³⁵ Thus, spirits play a constant role in human life. Since "ru'ach" can be the spirit of God or of a human being, an angel, a demon, breath, or a physical wind, it is helpful that the Hebrew of the Qumran writings distinguishes these spirits grammatically, always using a feminine singular form for the human spirit and a masculine singular form for an angel or demon.³⁶ The Greek and Latin used by other first and second century thinkers do not allow for these distinctions, thus adding to an already complicated understanding of "spirit."

Although first and second century Christian theologians do not engage in the kind of trinitarian pneumatology that becomes standard in the fourth century,³⁷ the spirit-world of the Scriptures plays an important role in shaping their thought. The Holy Spirit is the one who inspires the Scriptures and who indwells the baptized. Angels and demons, as well, are involved in the daily struggle of the human spirit.³⁸ Two texts that particularly influence Origen's

³³ Robert P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Specific Reference to Luke-Acts*, JSOT.S 54 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 67, 76, and 111.

³⁴ God's spirit is a reward for faith; e.g., "It was on account of this faith that the Holy Spirit rested upon them..." *Midrash Rabbah, Exodus*, tr. S. M. Lehrman (London: Soncino, 1961), Beshallah 23.2.

³⁵ Arthur Everett Sekki, *The Meaning of Ruah at Qumran*, SBL 110 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 213; Susan E. Ramsey, "An Exploration of Pneumatic Cousins: The Holy Spirit in Macarius and the Dead Sea Scrolls" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the North American Patristic Society, Chicago, Illinois, 23-25 May 2002).

³⁶ Sekki 185.

³⁷ See, for example, Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century*, SVigChr 27 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994).

³⁸ For an overview of the Holy Spirit in this period, see Henry

approach to “spirit” are *The Shepherd of Hermas* (*Shepherd*) and *The Testament of Reuben* (*T. Reuben*).

Shepherd, a second century text,³⁹ is one of the most significant Christian works before Origen in the area of pneumatology.⁴⁰ Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* mentions *Shepherd* explicitly when he comments on the “Hermas” of Romans 16:14: “But I think that this Hermas may be the author of that book that is called the ‘Shepherd,’ which writing seems to me very beneficial and, as I think, divinely inspired.”⁴¹ Origen’s suggestion that the Hermas of Romans 16 is the author of *Shepherd* is implausible. However, this mention of *Shepherd* in the *Commentary on Romans* is a testimony to his respect for the text and its author, a respect which reveals itself more subtly through *Shepherd*’s influence on his work.

Shepherd’s contribution primarily concerns the discernment of spirits. Like the *Epistle of Barnabas*, it describes an inner struggle within each human being; there are “two angels..., one that is right and one that is evil.”⁴² Temptations are demon-spirits; the good life is a battle won against the devil and his spirits. A good, or holy,

Barclay Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1912); J. Patout Burns and Gerald M. Fagin, *Message of the Fathers of the Church: The Holy Spirit* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1984); Dünzl, *Pneuma*.

³⁹ *Shepherd* probably passed through several editions, which complicates the process of assigning a date to the text. Suggested dates range from 90 to 140, depending on how one weighs the evidence of the Muratorian Canon. For the most recent discussion of authorship and manuscripts, see Carolyn Osiek’s introduction to her English translation, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, Hermeneia 63 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 1-10. See also James S. Jeffers, *Conflict at Rome: Social Order and Hierarchy in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 106-20.

⁴⁰ *Shepherd* uses forms of “πνεῦμα” 58 times in the Mandates, 9 times in the Visions, and 39 times in the Similitudes. Of these, 10 in the Mandates and 9 in the Similitudes are references to “πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.” There are also numerous uses of forms of “ἄγγελος”: 20 in the Mandates, 9 in the Visions, and 47 in the Similitudes.

⁴¹ “Puto autem quod Hermas iste sit scriptor libelli illius qui Pastor appellatur, quae scriptura ualde mihi utilis uidetur et ut puto diuinitus inspirata.” *Comm. in Rom.* 10.31: Hammond Bammel 10.31 (840.3-5)=PG 14: 1282.

⁴² Herm. *Mand.* 6.2.1. The English translations here are Carolyn Osiek’s. A critical edition of the Greek text is available in GCS 48.

spirit is associated closely with joyfulness and purity in the human being.⁴³ Because of this connection, a person who is indwelt by the spirits of rage and anger cannot also contain a holy spirit, nor does a joyful holy spirit remain in one who is given over to the spirit of grief.⁴⁴ Good spirits are sensitive and delicate, easily driven away by evil ones. As *Shepherd* says:

“When all these spirits [silliness, bitterness, passion, anger, rage] live in one vessel, where the holy spirit also dwells, the vessel cannot contain them all, but overflows. The sensitive spirit, unused to living with an evil spirit or with hardness, distances itself from that person and seeks to live with gentleness and quiet...from then on, that person is filled up with evil spirits and is disoriented in actions...”⁴⁵

It is not clear how, if at all, this sensitive good and holy spirit is distinguishable from God’s Holy Spirit.⁴⁶ *Shepherd* also seems to identify the Spirit with the Son in a way that often seems confusing

⁴³ “‘Listen now, foolish one,’ he said, ‘how sadness wears down the holy spirit...put on joyfulness, which is always attractive and acceptable to God, and luxuriate in it. Every joyful person does good...’” *Ibid.*, 10.1.2-3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.1.2-3. See *Comm. in Rom.* 10.14.9: Hammond Bammel 10.14 (828.130-829.131)=PG 14: 1275, where Origen also speaks of God’s love of cheerfulness, rather than grief, in giving.

⁴⁵ *Herm. Mand.* 5.2.6-7.

⁴⁶ On the “holy spirit,” in *Shepherd*, Carolyn Osiek comments, “it is not clear that the one spoken of here is identifiable with *the* Holy Spirit as usually understood in Christian sources...though the whole attempt to distinguish one good spirit from another and from the ‘spirit of God’ begs the question and would have been beside the point for Christian writers at this period, when many Jewish and Jewish-Christian believers found spirit possession, either good or bad, as a viable way to explain the otherwise inexplicable changes and contrasts in human behavior.” See Osiek, *Shepherd*, 119. It is interesting to note that Tertullian shares this understanding of the fragility of good spirits, speaking of God’s Holy Spirit as delicate in several different texts. J. E. Morgan-Wynne, “The ‘delicacy’ of the Spirit in the Shepherd of Hermas and in Tertullian,” *StPatr* 21 (1989): 154-57. Morgan-Wynne cites several texts of Tertullian: *De Spectaculis* 15.2, 3a, 4; *De Oratione* 12.1; *De Patientia* 7.7; and *Exhortatione castitatis* 11.1.

to readers today.⁴⁷ Neither of these distinctions concerns the author or authors of *Shepherd*.

Shepherd does not attempt to distinguish God's Spirit and the human spirit from other spirits in the nuanced way that Origen does, but instead it is content to separate good spirits from evil ones. Nevertheless, it influences Origen's pneumatology in two significant ways. First, *Shepherd's* insistence on the delicacy of the holy spirit, which is easily driven away by sin, finds a counterpart in Origen's own limitation of the Spirit's active presence to the saints. Secondly, *Shepherd* presents the paradigm for discernment in the spiritual life with which Origen and other Christians continue to work, the sense that each person must confront good and evil spirits within.⁴⁸ Overall, *Shepherd* elaborates on the spirit-vocabulary of the Scriptures, speaking of the spirit of the devil,⁴⁹ earthly spirits,⁵⁰ and the holy spirits which are the powers of the Son and the clothing of the saints.⁵¹

Similarly, *T. Reuben* expands and refines language about spirits in a way that influences later authors. The origins and date of the *Testaments of the Patriarchs* are disputed; it is unclear whether they are Jewish texts interpolated by Christians or Christian texts based on earlier Jewish materials.⁵² Regardless of whether the *Testaments* begin

⁴⁷ E.g., Herm. *Sim.* 5.6.5-6. Osiek describes this as a "pneumatic adoptionist Christology" (179). Lage Pernveden says that "The Son of God has then two different meanings, but both are pneumatologically determined." See Pernveden, *The Concept of the Church in the Shepherd of Hermas*, STL 27 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1966), 44.

⁴⁸ Columba Stewart notes the way in which Origen moves beyond the *Shepherd*, "While Hermas was primarily concerned with behavioral criteria for detecting the presence of the evil angel, Origen probes the etiology of evil." Stewart, "Evagrius Ponticus and the 'Eight Generic Logismoi,'" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the North American Patristic Society, Chicago, Illinois, 23-25 May 2002), 3-4.

⁴⁹ Herm. *Mand.* 11.3.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.6.

⁵¹ Herm. *Sim.* 9.13.1.

⁵² H. C. Kee and R. H. Charles are among the defenders of the text's Jewish origins. For example, see Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1.775-780. Marinus de Jonge and others take the opposite view, saying that the documents were written in Greek by Christians. For a survey of the state of the question, see Marinus

as Jewish or Christian, they are available in Greek to Christians by the third century. Origen himself provides the earliest attestation to the Greek text in his *Homilies on Joshua* 15.6, which makes reference to *T. Reuben* 2.

Structured as Reuben's deathbed advice to his sons and grandsons, *T. Reuben* focuses on how to live a good life by avoiding evil, particularly the evil of fornication. The section important for pneumatology is 2.1-3.8.⁵³ *T. Reuben* describes two sets of spirits: seven given to humans at creation to assist in every human action, and "seven spirits of error."⁵⁴ The seven spirits given at creation are those of life, sight, hearing, smelling, speech, taste, and begetting.⁵⁵ Here, *T. Reuben* is applying the term "spirit" to natural human senses and functions. At the same time, "spirit" also describes human vices; the seven spirits of error are those of fornication, gluttony, fighting, trickery, arrogance, lying, and injustice. Both lists share an eighth spirit, the spirit of sleep. This spirit, clearly a natural function, is also the doorway to the vices, since it is both "the image of death" and "combined with error and phantasy."⁵⁶

de Jonge, "The Main Issues in the Study of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *Jewish Eschatology, Early Christian Christology and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 147-63; Robert A. Kugler, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 31-39.

⁵³ This section is an excursus from the story told in the rest of *T. Reuben*. De Jonge says that this excursus is "derived from sources other than those behind the rest of the Testaments;" it may be an interpolation by another scribe or an addition by the author of the *Testaments*. See Marinus de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of their Text, Composition, and Origin* (Assen: Van Gorcum and Co., 1953), 77.

⁵⁴ "ἐπὶ πνευμάτων τῆς πλάνης." *T. Reuben* 2.1. The Greek *editio maior* is in *Testamenta XII Patriarcharum*, ed. Marinus de Jonge, PVTG 1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964). For the English translation, see "Testament of Reuben," tr. Marinus de Jonge, *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984). An English translation is also provided by H. C. Kee in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, rendering this phrase as "seven spirits of deceit."

⁵⁵ The Stoics also call the senses "πνεύματα."

⁵⁶ "εἰκὼν τοῦ θανάτου" (*T. Reuben* 3.1) and "συνάπτεται πλάνη καὶ φαντασία" (*T. Reuben* 3.7). These translations are De Jonge's. Kee renders 3.7 as "results in error and fantasy."

Although these spirit-lists themselves do not control or limit Origen's own spirit-discussions, they are reflected when he mentions "spirits" of specific vices and virtues.⁵⁷ He does not explicitly refer to the senses as "spirits," but *T. Reuben* adds a new dimension to the already complex scriptural evidence for "spirits."

With the exception of the more materialistic view of "spirit" presented by the Stoics, a generally "spiritual" and more dualistic perspective pervades Platonic, Jewish, and Christian thinkers before Origen. The divine, or cosmic, spirit embraces creation or inspires human beings, generally in a spiritual way. Even so, "spirit" has many different meanings, referring to both the good and the bad in human beings and in the cosmos, to life itself, to physical though rarefied substances, to some aspect or presence of God. Most thinkers seem satisfied to allow these diverse meanings without trying to systematize them.⁵⁸ Origen, though willing to accept multiple meanings for one word, tries to explain his reasons for doing so and to clarify his word-choice as far as scriptural language permits.

2.2. READING "SPIRIT" IN ORIGEN'S COMMENTARY

2.2.1. Homonymy

Origen points out that the Scriptures themselves use many words in a variety of different ways. He approaches this problem through the Aristotelian notion of homonymy, recognizing that one word may name two or more completely different realities.⁵⁹ His clearest

⁵⁷ "Thus while the Devil rules over all evil spirits, lesser 'prince' spirits rule each kind of sin (e.g., fornication, anger, avarice, pride), who in turn have innumerable agent demons who attack individual human beings." Columba Stewart, "Evagrius Ponticus," 5, referring to Origen's *Hom. in Num.* 20.3.4.

⁵⁸ E.g., Levison, *Spirit*, 238-39: "Each of these biblical interpreters [Philo, Josephus, Pseudo-Philo] preserves an astounding *variety of effects* of the spirit's presence...[They] also allow a dramatic *diversity of natures* to accrue to the spirit."

⁵⁹ Aristotle's *Categories* 1 illustrate the idea of homonymy, and Origen's language in *Philoc.* 9 reflects that of Aristotle. "ὁμωνυμία" is the first word in the *Categories*, while Origen uses "ὁμωνύμοι," (9.1) and "παρὰ τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν" (9.3). Aristotle explains what equivocal naming is: "Things are said to be named 'equivocally' when, though they have a

discussion of this principle of homonymity at work in the Bible is found in *Philocalia* 9, a section not included in Rufinus' translation of the *Commentary on Romans*, perhaps because Rufinus did not have access to it.⁶⁰

Origen is aware of the difficulties of defining scriptural language, especially when, like him, a Christian is reading both Old and New Testaments as one book. In *Philocalia* 9, he points out that

The Scriptures do not always use the same words for the same realities. Instead, they operate now equivocally, now tropologically...one takes a word in one text in a different sense from the same word which is in a different text. If we observe this carefully, we avoid many problems and erroneous interpretations.⁶¹

common name, the definition corresponding with the name differs for each. Thus, a real man and a figure in a picture can both lay claim to the name 'animal;' yet these are equivocally so named, for, though they have a common name, the definition corresponding with the name differs for each. For should anyone define in what sense each is an animal, his definition in the one case will be appropriate to that case only." See "Categoriae," tr. E. M. Edghill, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 7; and Aristotle, *The Categories, On Interpretation, and Prior Analytics*, ed. and tr. Harold P. Cooke and Hugh Tredennick, LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1973).

⁶⁰ See Origen's own discussion of the principle of homonymity in *Philocalia* 9.1 (*Philocalie* 1-20: *Sur les Écritures*, SC 302). Marguerite Harl's analysis of *Philocalia* 9 leads her to assert that it represents material that was originally part of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*. See Harl, "Origène et l'interprétation de l'Épître aux Romains: Étude du chapitre IX de la Philocalie," *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou*, ed. Jacques Fontaine and Charles Kannengiesser (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 305-316. For a general analysis of the text of *Philocalia* 9, see Caroline P. Hammond Bammel, "Philocalia IX, Jerome, Epistle 121, and Origen's *Exposition of Romans* VII," *JThS* ns 32 (1981): 50-81. Henry Chadwick makes the suggestion that Rufinus may not have had access to these sections of the commentary (τομος ιά) see Chadwick, "Rufinus and the Tura Papyrus," 40. Hammond Bammel thinks that this is plausible.

⁶¹ "διὸ καὶ ἡ ἐπιμελὴς τὸν ἀναγινώσκοντα τὴν θεῖαν γραφὴν τηρεῖν ὅτι οὐ πάντως ταῖς αὐταῖς λέξεσιν ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν πραγμάτων χρῶνται αἱ γραφαί. τοῦτο δὲ ποιῶσιν, ὅτε μὲν παρὰ τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν, ὅτε δὲ παρὰ τὴν τροπολογίαν, καὶ ἔσθ' ὅτε παρὰ τὴν σύμπρασιν ἀπαιτοῦσαν ἄλλως τῇ λέξει χρήσασθαι ἐν τοῖσδε τισιν ἢ ὡς κεῖται ἐν

Origen's *Homilies on Jeremiah*, partly extant in Greek and written in the 240s, also comment on the scriptural use of homonyms. In Homily 20, Origen says, speaking of God's "anger" and "regret,"

His regret is a homonym to our regret. And a homonym is where the name alone is common, but its concept, according to the name of its substance, is other. Thus only the name of a wrath of God and a wrath of anyone is common, and only an anger of anyone and the anger of God is common.⁶²

This notion of homonymity is present throughout Rufinus' translation of the *Commentary on Romans*,⁶³ as well as in the *Philocalia*. Origen's *Commentary on Romans* treats a number of words as homonyms, including "law" and "death." Origen asserts that the Scriptures mean a number of different things by the word "law": the law of Moses according to the letter and according to the spirit, the natural law, the history written by Moses, the prophets, and the

ἑτέροις. καὶ τοῦτο ἔαν ἐπιμελῶς παραφυλαττόμεθα, πολλῶν σφαλμάτων ἀπαλλαττόμεθα καὶ παρεκδοχῶν." *Philoc.* 9.3. See also *Philoc.* 9.1.

⁶² In the Greek fragments: "τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἡ μεταμέλεια αὐτοῦ ὁμώνυμος ἐστὶ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ μεταμέλειᾳ. ὁμώνυμα γὰρ ἐστὶν ὧν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν. Ὁ δὲ κατὰ τοῦνομα τῆς οὐσίας λόγος ἕτερος. Μόνον οὖν ὄνομα κοινὸν θυμοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ θυμοῦ οὐτινοσοῦν, καὶ μόνον ὄνομα κοινὸν ὀργῆς οὐτινοσοῦν καὶ ὀργῆς Θεοῦ." In the Latin: "eadem ratione et poenitentia ejus cum nostra poenitentia aequivoca est, siquidem aequivoca sunt, quorum nomen solum commune, sed secundum nomen substantiae ratio est diversa. Solum igitur nomen commune est furori Dei et furori cujuslibet, ac solum nomen commune irae Dei, et irae cujuscumque." *Hom. in Jer.* 20.1.2 (PG 13: 501-502); Smith 222-223. All English translations of these homilies are by John Clark Smith, available in FaCh 97 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1998). Book and chapter numbers also follow those in the English translation. The italics in this passage are provided by the translator.

⁶³ For example, the Latin translation speaks of the homonymity of "death" (*Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.9=Hammond Bammel 5.10 (445.78-446.112): PG 14: 1050-1051) and the homonymity of "law" (*Comm. in Rom.* 6.11=Hammond Bammel 6.11 (520.3-523.64): PG 14: 1091-1093). As Roukema points out, "Origen argues that this sort of homonymity is usual in the Scripture, as it also applies to, e.g., 'harvest,' 'drinking,' 'water,' and 'blind.'" See Roukema, *Diversity of Laws*, 35. See also *ibid.* 85, footnote 18.

teaching of Christ, among others.⁶⁴ Thus, a Christian like Paul can make positive statements about “law,” referring to specific realities, and negative ones, referring to completely different realities that share the same name. Another frequent homonym in Romans is “death,” which can mean the common death of all humanity, as well as the death of sin, the devil himself, hell, or death to sin, which relates to baptism.⁶⁵

The word “spirit” is also an equivocal term. Origen recognizes the complicated scriptural uses of the word and says:

Just as we have shown that diverse laws are noted by Paul in this letter under the one word of “law,” and diverse deaths are named under the one word of “death,” so we now also see diverse spirits indicated under the one word of “spirit.”⁶⁶

This statement, introducing Origen’s exegesis of Romans 8:14-16, prepares a foundation for the commentary’s most substantial discussion of diverse spirit-beings.

While Origen’s acknowledgment of the homonym-quality of “spirit” in the Scriptures is an important factor as he categorizes the different spirits, he is not quick to assume that any given spirit is unrelated to the divine Spirit, particularly in scriptural references to “spirit.” Homonymity is only one part of his hermeneutic. Vital to his biblical interpretation is Origen’s belief in the divinely inspired nature of the Bible, which requires that he take seriously

⁶⁴ *Comm. in Rom.* 3.7.8-12: Hammond Bammel 3.4 (232.117-233.144)=PG 14: 944-945; *Comm. in Rom.* 4.5.6-7: Hammond Bammel 4.5 (302.64-305.118)=PG 14: 976-977; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.9: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (446.101-109)=PG 14: 1050. See Roukema, *Diversity of Laws*, especially 9-10, where he lists these different meanings for “law” and gives scriptural references.

⁶⁵ *Comm. in Rom.* 5.7.8-10: Hammond Bammel 5.7 (420.74-422.104)=PG 14: 1036-1037; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.6.5-7: Hammond Bammel 6.6 (480.23-483.68)=PG 14: 1067-1069.

⁶⁶ “Sicut diuersas commemorari leges in hac epistula a Paulo sub uno uocabulo legis ostendimus et diuersas mortes sub una mortis appellatione nominari, ita et diuersos spiritus nunc uidemus sub uno nomine spiritus indicari.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (553.1-4)=PG 14: 1103.

the spirit-language that he finds there.⁶⁷ Although he is confident that “spirit” can refer to different realities, he shows that many of these realities share qualities and participate in the divine Spirit in some way. “Spirit” is a homonym, but not a name conferred casually, since God is identified as Spirit in the Scriptures.⁶⁸ Thus, Origen searches for as many common links as possible among the spirits of the Bible. He employs this method frequently throughout his exegetical works, trying to find common relationships between scriptural passages and exploring the way the same word is used in two different books of the Bible. He often finds that one use of a word illuminates another; for example, the Song of Songs’ verses on the beloved’s feet add to his understanding of Jesus washing the apostles’ feet in John.⁶⁹

The word “spirit” may represent different beings, but Origen finds a strong common ground for them in their relationship to the Spirit that is God. In addition to their own participation in Spirit, most spirits are a part of the pedagogical schema directed by God as Spirit. Their roles are not always positive ones, as in the case of evil spirits. However, even their disruption of pedagogy is itself a form of instruction, showing further that all spirit plays an educative role in drawing creation closer to the Creator.

⁶⁷ However, taking the language seriously does not entail taking it literally. Karen Jo Torjesen explores Origen’s scriptural hermeneutics in *Hermeneutical Procedure*. As she explains, “Origen defines the particular referent of the literal sense differently and very precisely for each book and exegetical genre” (68). For the Gospels, this literal sense is always the coming of Christ, while the spiritual sense is Christ’s divinity and continued presence in the world. Torjesen examines Origen’s exegesis of Psalm 37, Jeremiah, Numbers, the Song of Songs, Luke (in the Homilies), and Matthew (in the Commentary). Although she does not look specifically at Origen’s exegesis of Paul, her work is helpful for working with the *Commentary on Romans*. As she notes, “Whenever Origen encounters a distinction in Scripture he organizes it into a hierarchy” (70). This kind of attention to detail plays a significant part in his structuring of the spirits of the *Commentary on Romans*.

⁶⁸ John 4:24.

⁶⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* 8.5.5-7; Hammond Bammel 8.4 (657.105-118)=PG 14: 1168-1169; Song 5:3, Song 5:15, John 13: 3-16, et al.

2.2.2. Types of Spirit-Language

Spirit-language pervades Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. The ten-book Latin translation contains 407 references to specific spirits ("spirits" of sanctification, unfaithfulness, etc.).⁷⁰ Among these references to specific spirits⁷¹ are 47 to good spirits,⁷² 35 to evil spirit-beings,⁷³ and 22 to the human spirit.⁷⁴ However, the majority (307) are to God's Spirit, showing that the Holy Spirit is the "first fruits" of all spirit in Origen's text.⁷⁵ The Holy Spirit also serves as a basis for many of Origen's other uses of "spirit," not included in this number. Such expressions as "in the spirit" (43) and "through the spirit" (5) and numerous other mentions (36) of the newness, law, wisdom, patience, and fruits of the spirit tend to have the Spirit of God as a reference point.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ This number does not include the many references just to "spirit" or "spirits." It only includes references to "spirit of," and "Holy Spirit," in order to obtain a general idea of the particular spirits of the commentary. Rufinus' translation provides an excellent opportunity to compare Origen's references to God's Spirit with those to other spirits over the course of ten books of one commentary, rather than using occasional references throughout a series of different texts.

⁷¹ Almost all refer to rational spirits; only three references are to "irrational" spirits. See *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.4: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (556.64-68)=PG 14: 1104.

⁷² This excludes references to God's Spirit. Most of these references are to specific spirits, like the spirit of peace.

⁷³ This number includes seven references to "spiritual hosts of wickedness," two references to "demons" (the demon of dissension and the demon of "a python," i.e., of divinization), and one to the satan of anger. For the demon of a python, see *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.2: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (610.2-27)=PG 14: 1137; for the demon of dissension and the satan of anger, see *Comm. in Rom.* 10.37.4: Hammond Bammel 10.37 (849.41-850.43)=PG 14: 1287.

⁷⁴ There are, however, many additional mentions of "spirit" in general which likely refer to the human spirit.

⁷⁵ Included in this number are references to the spirit of adoption, since the Latin text equates this spirit with the Holy Spirit. *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (553.11-12)=PG 14: 1103; τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ 'εἰς υἰοθεσίαν' ἀνάγον." *Frag. in Rom.* BZ I.

⁷⁶ There are, of course, many more references to "spirit" in the text. These numbers only indicate these specific usages.

Origen himself reads the Scriptures with an assumption that “spirit” relates to God’s own Spirit. As he says in *On First Principles*,

Now some of our predecessors have observed that in the New Testament, whenever the Spirit is mentioned without its qualifying adjective, the expression should be understood to refer to the Holy Spirit;...We, however, think that this peculiar use may be observed in the Old Testament also...For undoubtedly everyone who walks upon the earth...is a partaker of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁷

Generally, “spirit” either refers to or derives from God’s own Spirit. Origen frequently identifies God as Spirit; his eighth homily on Jeremiah speaks of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as ruling Spirit, right Spirit, and holy Spirit.⁷⁸

The homonym “spirit” has one meaning when applied to God and another when applied to other beings, although the meanings bear a relationship to each other. The divine Spirit is utterly incorporeal; “spirit,” like the words “light” and “fire,” is used

⁷⁷ *Princ.* 1.3.4 (SC 252: 148); Butterworth 31-32. All English translations for *Princ.* are from G. W. Butterworth’s translation from Paul Koetschau’s edition. The Latin reads: “Quidam sane ex praecessoribus nostris in nouo testamento obseruarunt quod, sicubi spiritus nominatur sine adiectione ea, quae designet qualis sit spiritus, de spiritu sancto debeat intellegi...Nos uero etiam in ueteri testamento putamus distinctionem istam posse seruari...Sine dubio enim omnis qui calcatur terram, id est terrena et corporalia, particeps est spiritus sancti...” Origen then goes on to point to specific texts that illustrate this principle: Gal. 5:22, Gal. 3:3, and even the Old Testament text of Is. 42:5. Athanasius later suggests a narrower reading, saying that the Holy Spirit should only be understood in texts which give a specific article or qualifying phrase. *Ep. ad Ser.* 1.4, cited in Maurice Wiles, *The Divine Apostle: The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistles in the Early Church* (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), 34.

⁷⁸ *Hom. in Jer.* 8.1.2 (PG 13: 335-336). Although this passage interprets Psalm 51 (LXX 50):12-14 in a trinitarian way, Origen elsewhere reads the Psalm as referring only to the Holy Spirit. See Henri-Charles Puech, “Origène et l’exégèse trinitaire du Psaume 50.12-14,” *Aux sources de la tradition chrétienne: Mélanges offerts à M. Maurice Goguel à l’occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire*, BT (Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1950), 180-94. N.B. that the *Commentary on Romans* contains a passage in which the Holy Spirit is identified as the “ruling spirit” of the psalm; see *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (554.24-29)=PG 14: 1103.

allegorically of God.⁷⁹ In Origen's *On First Principles*, written earlier than the *Commentary on Romans*,⁸⁰ and in the *Contra Celsum*, written later,⁸¹ there is a consistent argument against applying the Stoic materialistic notion of spirit to God.⁸² With respect to divine Spirit, Origen's concept is spiritualized like Philo's and that of the Gnostics.⁸³ However, all other spirit is somewhat corporeal, though not fleshly.⁸⁴ Angels possess ethereal bodies,⁸⁵ and both good and wicked spirits can be bound to,⁸⁶ or associated with,⁸⁷ specific locations. The human spirit, too, is associated with the earthly body in this life and with the spiritual body in the life to come.

Despite these differences between the divine Spirit and many lesser spirits, the name "spirit," as well as the adjective "spiritual," emphasizes participation in God's Spirit and is opposed to

⁷⁹ Blanc, "Dieu est *pneuma*," 227-41.

⁸⁰ *Ca.* 229-230 A.D. Nautin, *Origène*, 410.

⁸¹ *Ca.* 247-248 A.D. See Henry Chadwick's introduction to *Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), xiv-xv. Nautin (*Origène*, 412) sets the date at 249.

⁸² Origen explains that "spirit," like "light," describes God only in an allegorical way, since he is a "simple intellectual existence." *Princ.* 1.1.1-6 (SC 252: 90-100); Butterworth 5-12. See also *Jo.* 13.129-150 (SC 222: 98-112).

⁸³ This view is basically platonic. Origen, however, follows the Stoics in speaking of rational souls in terms of fire. See Alan Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars: A History of an Idea* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 116.

⁸⁴ E.g., *Cels.* 6.71 (SC 147: 358-360); Chadwick 385-386: "The Stoics may destroy everything in a conflagration if they like. But we do not recognize that an incorporeal being is subject to a conflagration, or that the soul of man is dissolved into fire, or that this happens to the being of angels, or thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." All translations of the *Contra Celsum* are from Chadwick's 1965 version. See footnote 81 above.

⁸⁵ *Princ.* 2.2.2 (SC 252: 248).

⁸⁶ *Cels.* 7.5 (SC 150: 22).

⁸⁷ In the *Commentary on Romans*, Origen speaks of the angels associated with each nation and with the churches in various countries. Some of the angels among whom the nations were divided (Deut. 32:8-9) seem to be a source of temptation for them, while those who preside over the churches assist in offering believers to God. See *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.6: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (612.91-613.95)=PG 14: 1139; *Comm. in Rom.* 8.12.3: Hammond Bammel 8.11 (699.16-700.22)=PG 14: 1195-1196; *Comm. in Rom.* 10.19: Hammond Bammel 10.19 (835.4-11)=PG 14: 1279.

“flesh.”⁸⁸ “Spirit,” even when it is not divine, describes “intelligible things,” “by way of antithesis to sensible things.”⁸⁹ Even more fundamentally, spirit is connected to life.⁹⁰ As Origen says in the *Commentary on John*, “It is clear that this ‘making alive’ refers not to ordinary life, but to that which is more divine.” This life of the spirit is that which joins the human soul to God, to the Lord, and to the Holy Spirit.⁹¹ “Spiritual” is related to understanding and living in a way that goes beyond the physical senses to the truth and wisdom that are also names for the divine. Thus, the spiritual understanding of the Scriptures⁹² is the truest meaning given to it by the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual person follows the true law of the Spirit.⁹³

Origen sees the Spirit of God at work in and through many lesser spirits. His insistence on the priority of the Holy Spirit influences his exegesis of all spirit. “Spirit” is a homonym, but most spirits share more than their name with the Spirit of God, who elevates created spirits to participate in God’s work. In exploring the different spirits of the Scriptures, Origen attempts to show how they lead to divine truth and understanding.

2.3. DIVERSE SPIRITUAL BEINGS

“Spirit” is most truly a reference to God’s Spirit, but the numerous references to spirits in the Scriptures lead Origen to explain

⁸⁸ On participation in God’s Spirit, see, for example, *Cels.* 6.64 (SC 147: 338-340); Chadwick 379: “God does not even participate in being. For he is participated in, rather than participates; and he is participated in by those who possess the Spirit of God.” See also Dupuis, *L’esprit de l’homme*, 1-8.

⁸⁹ “Πρὸς γὰρ ἀντιδιαστολὴν τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἔθος τῇ γραφῇ τὰ νοητὰ ὀνομάζειν πνεύματα καὶ πνευματικά.” *Cels.* 6.70 (SC 147: 354); Chadwick 384.

⁹⁰ 2 Cor. 3:6.

⁹¹ “τὸ πνεῦμα γὰρ κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν λέγεται ζωοποιεῖν, φανερόν ὅτι ζωοποίησιν οὐ τὴν μέσσην ἀλλὰ τὴν θειοτέραν.” *Jo.* 13.140 (SC 222: 106); Heine II.97. All English translations of the *Commentary on John* are from Ronald Heine’s translation in FaCh 80 and 89. My references will designate volume 80 as “Heine I” and volume 89 as “Heine II.”

⁹² E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 7.11.3; Hammond Bammel 7.9 (600.23-25)=PG 14: 1131.

⁹³ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 2.13.7: Hammond Bammel 2.9 (153.137-154.148)=PG 14: 902.

specifically the different types of spirit that he finds there: the human spirit,⁹⁴ the spirits of slavery and of adoption,⁹⁵ ministering spirits,⁹⁶ spiritual hosts of wickedness,⁹⁷ and spiritual gifts which Origen calls “spirits.”⁹⁸ His references to these spirits are consistently biblical, yet he strives to explain them as a part of his own sweeping view of the soul’s journey to God, a journey in which these spirit-beings play pivotal roles.⁹⁹ Like the “two angels” of *The Shepherd of Hermas* and the Dead Sea Scrolls, the spirits of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* are at war over each human soul.¹⁰⁰ For Origen, the battle is both cosmic and psychological; the spirits are both external and internal to the human being.¹⁰¹ While evil spirits war against the human being, “every higher creature watches our struggles and contests and suffers when we are conquered but rejoices when we win.”¹⁰² The outcome of this battle, as Origen describes it, may only be determined by the free choice of the human being.¹⁰³ Thus, while the Holy Spirit is the perfection of spirit itself, it is the human being who stands temporarily at the center of spirit-struggle, opening the door to one spirit and rejecting another.¹⁰⁴

Every spirit can play a role in guiding a human being, whether for good or evil. As Origen concludes, “all people, as it seems, are

⁹⁴ E.g., 1 Cor. 2:11.

⁹⁵ Rom. 8:15.

⁹⁶ Heb. 1:14.

⁹⁷ Eph. 6:12.

⁹⁸ 1 Cor. 12:4-11. I will treat these gifts in chapter IV.

⁹⁹ Origen’s understanding of the soul’s journey toward God has been described and explored by many scholars. See, for example, Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 70-107.

¹⁰⁰ Origen speaks of this battle throughout his works; one clear discussion is found in *Princ.* 3.2.1 (SC 268: 152-158).

¹⁰¹ See Annie Jaubert’s introduction to Origène, *Homélies sur Josué*, SC 71: 66-67; also, on natural and supernatural temptations, see Bettencourt, *Doctrina Ascetica Origenis*, 69-70.

¹⁰² “Omnis enim creatura superior agones et certamina nostra spectat et dolet cum uincimur cum uero uincimus gaudet.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.4.15: Hammond Bammel 7.2 (570.207-209)=PG 14: 1113.

¹⁰³ *Princ.*, praef.5-6 (SC 252: 82-84); Joseph T. Lienhard, “On ‘Discernment of Spirits’ in the Early Church,” *TS* 41 (1980): 511-14.

¹⁰⁴ See *Comm. in Rom.* 1.19.9: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (90.85-91.101)=PG 14: 867.

led by some spirit, just as Paul himself writes: 'However, you all know also how you, when you were gentiles, were led to speechless idols.' In this he shows that even gentiles¹⁰⁵ are led to idols by some spirit."¹⁰⁶ Despite this power to guide to good or evil, spirits are, Origen insists, merely parts of God's plan: "For we have already taught that all creatures and all spirits, whether good and upright or of evil and depraved intention, serve God...."¹⁰⁷ This statement has little to do with a particular role of any spirit, and instead speaks of God, who is far greater than any created spirit-being. God's ability to bring good out of a situation far outweighs the deprivation of any creature.

All spirits, including those who war against human beings, are a part of the School of God's Spirit.¹⁰⁸ The Holy Spirit is the head Teacher,¹⁰⁹ who oversees the spiritual growth and education of every human being. However, like schools in Origen's day, the Spirit's School involves a number of lesser teachers. These spirit-teachers are different from and inferior to the divine Spirit, but they assist in aspects of the Spirit's work.

¹⁰⁵ "Gentiles" here indicates non-Christians. See page 21, note 75.

¹⁰⁶ "Omnes ergo homines ut uidetur spiritu aguntur aliquo sicut ipse Paulus scribit: 'scitis autem et uos cum essetis gentes quomodo ad idola muta agebamini.' In hoc ostendit quia etiam gentes ad idola aguntur aliquo spiritu." The scriptural citation is to 1 Cor. 12:2. *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (554.18-21)=PG 14: 1103.

¹⁰⁷ "Etenim omnem creaturam omnesque spiritus siue bonos et rectos siue etiam prauī malique propositi Deo ministrare...in superioribus iam docuimus." *Comm. in Rom.* 9.30.1: Hammond Bammel 9.30 (753.6-9)=PG 14: 1229.

¹⁰⁸ The term "School of the Spirit" is mine, derived from the schema at work in Origen's *Commentary on Romans*. For a discussion of the figure of the teacher in Origen's works, see Guido Bendinelli, "Il 'didaskalos' origeniano, tra amore delle letter e ricerca del Logos: Teoria e prassi di un ministero ecclesiale," *Origene maestro di vita spirituale/ Origen: Master of Spiritual Life*, ed. Luigi F. Pizzolato and Marco Rizzi, SPMed 22 (Milan: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 2001), 187-209. See also Trigg, "Charismatic Intellectual."

¹⁰⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.5: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (580.59-70)=PG 14:1119-1120. See the discussion below, beginning on page 118.

* * *

EXCURSUS: EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL OF THE SPIRIT

Origen and his readers share the understanding that education involves a number of different instructors with various specialties and degrees of importance. This model helps to shape Origen's own presentation of the spirit-world. The beginning of one's life as a student often involved some kind of initiation rite before he was a full member of a school. Once in the school, a student encountered a variety of instructors. Pedagogues, who had little social status¹¹⁰ and not necessarily much education, played a particular role in maintaining discipline and teaching basic knowledge, occupying the role of tutors or teaching assistants.¹¹¹ Libanius, who studied in fourth-century Athens, describes pedagogues as the victims of student harassment; students often had little respect for their disciplinary role.¹¹² Head teachers, on the other hand, were revered. These teachers were the focal points around which schools were founded, the reason for their existence. This was true for both Christian and non-Christian teachers and their schools.¹¹³ Philo describes the role of teacher with respect, saying that those with ability

must...be ranked...among the teachers and instructors, and...should provide as from a fountain to the young who are willing to draw therefrom a plenteous stream of discourses and doctrines. And if some less courageous spirit hesitates through modesty and is slow to come near to learn, that teacher should go himself and pour into his ears as into a conduit a continuous flood of instruction until the cisterns of the soul are filled.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Slaves served as pedagogues to well-to-do boys from the time that they began to attend school. The Greek word *παιδαγωγός* originally described a slave who accompanied a child to and from school and was responsible for maintaining discipline.

¹¹¹ Lieu 131.

¹¹² Lieu 130-31.

¹¹³ H. Gregory Snyder, *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World: Philosophers, Jews and Christians*, Religion in the First Christian Centuries (London: Routledge, 2000), 223-27.

¹¹⁴ "...ἀλλ' ἐν διδασκάλοις καὶ ὑφηγηταῖς, καὶ παρεχέτω τοῖς ἐθέλουσιν ἀρύεσθαι τῶν νέων ὥσπερ ἀπὸ πηγῆς τῶν λόγων καὶ

Gregory Thaumaturgus, in the third century, speaks of the stages in his education that brought him finally to study with Origen.¹¹⁵ After learning from his parents and studying more elementary subjects, Gregory proceeded to work with a rhetor and then to learn the Latin language and Roman law.¹¹⁶ It was not until he had explored these lesser studies with a variety of teachers that he was prepared to encounter Origen and to learn philosophy from a teacher on a higher level. As he describes the process of learning:

I consider it no small sign of the holy and wonderful providence in my regard that this encounter was thus proportioned to my years, so that everything that preceded that age, all the works of error, had been transmitted to childishness and ignorance. That way, the holy Word was not transmitted in vain to a soul not yet reasonable, but to one which had become reasonable already.¹¹⁷

These studies with Origen also illustrate the challenge involved in study of the truth: “At first it was hard for us and not without grief, as he was introducing us novices, who had never practiced following an argument, to his own reasoning, and

δογμάτων ἄφθονον νᾶμα. κὰν τῶν ἀτολμοτέρων τις ὑπ’ αἰδοῦς μέλλῃ καὶ βραδύνῃ προσέρχεσθαι μαθησόμενος, αὐτὸς ἰὼν ἐπαντλείτω καὶ ἐποχτενέτω ταῖς ἀκοαῖς ἀθρόας ὑφηγήσεις, ἄχρις ἂν αἱ δεξαμεναὶ τῆς ψυχῆς γεμισθῶσι.” Philo. *Spec.* 4.140 (LCL 8: 94-96).

¹¹⁵ See Richard Valantasis, *Spiritual Guides of the Third Century: A Semiotic Study of the Guide-Disciple Relationship in Christianity, Neoplatonism, Hermetism and Gnosticism*, HDR 27 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 13-33. Just as the actual identity of Gregory’s teacher is irrelevant for Valantasis’ study, it is Gregory’s way of speaking about his master teacher and the process of education that is significant here. However, it is fascinating to imagine Origen himself filling this kind of pedagogical role, serving as an instrument of the Spirit’s School.

¹¹⁶ Gr. Thaum. *Pan. Or.* 5.56-60.

¹¹⁷ “Ὁ δὲ καὶ οὐ μικρόν, εἰ καὶ μὴ πάλαι, νῦν γοῦν ἀναλογιζόμενος ἐγὼ σύμβολον τίθεμαι τῆς ἱερᾶς καὶ θαυμαστῆς περὶ ἐμῆ προνοίας, τὴν συνδρομὴν ταύτην οὕτως τοῖς ἔτεσι διηπιθμημένην. ἵνα τὰ μὲν φθάνοντα πάντα τήνδε τὴν ἡλικίαν, ὅσα πλάνης ἦν ἔργα, νηπιότητι καὶ ἀλογία παραδεδομένα ἢ, μὴ μάτην δὲ ὁ ἱερὸς παραδοθῇ λόγος ψυχῇ οὐδέπω λογικῇ, λογικῇ δὲ ἤδη γενομένη.” Gr. Thaum. *Pan. Or.* 5.51-53 (SC 148: 116); Slusser 99. English translations, by Michael Slusser, are available in FaCh 98.

purifying us at the same time.”¹¹⁸ In the end, however, Gregory’s soul and mind were both educated, by the example as well as the words of the master-teacher, to whom he was led, he believed, by God’s own plan.

* * *

In Origen’s theology, this pattern of struggle for education, as the student moves from one teacher to another, loftier one in the pursuit of higher knowledge, is the pattern of the human spiritual journey. Spirits occupy the positions of the many teachers encountered along the way, preparing the student in various ways for the ultimate meeting with the Teacher who is God’s own Spirit.

In order to categorize these created spirits, Origen makes some basic distinctions, distinctions that are necessary because of the many nuances of the words *πνεῦμα* and *spiritus*. He first distinguishes between “rational spirits” and “material spirits.”¹¹⁹ “Material” or “irrational” spirits are, for example, the spirits of wind and of burning¹²⁰ sent by the Lord in certain circumstances and mentioned in Isaiah 4:4. In establishing this distinction, Origen makes clear that he is indicating a rational spirit, rather than a force of nature, when he uses only the word “spirit,” without any adjective or phrase stating otherwise. He does not tend to use “spirit” to describe fleshly realities, despite its possible Greek nuances.

Rational spirits, are still, however, a very diverse group. Origen finds that they, as they are described in a number of different biblical passages,¹²¹ can be either good or evil. Yet the line between these good and evil spirits often seems unclear, since even evil spirits, as ministering spirits and spirits of punishment, can

¹¹⁸ “δυσχερῶς μὲν ἡμῖν καὶ ’οὐκ ’αλύπως τὸ πρῶτον, ὅτι αἱ δὲ ἁήθες καὶ κατακολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ οὐδέπω μεμελετηκόσι προσάγων τοὺς παρ’ ἐαυτῷ λόγους, ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἑκκαθαίρων ὁμοῦς.” Gr. Thaum. *Pan. Or.* 7.98 (SC 148: 136); Slusser 107.

¹¹⁹ “materiales” and “rationabiles spiritus;” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.4: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (556.67-68)=PG 14: 1104.

¹²⁰ “spiritus procellae” and “spiritus ardoris;” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.4: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (556.66-67)=PG 14: 1104. See Ps. 107:25 (LXX 106:25) and Is. 4:4.

¹²¹ Ps. 104: 4 (LXX 103:4); Dan. 3: 86 (LXX); Rom. 8:16; 1 Thess. 5:23. See *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (555.35-556.68)=PG 14: 1104.

sometimes play a role in the pedagogical work of God with respect to humanity.

In general, Origen's *Commentary on Romans* applies the language of "spirit" to beings only insofar as they do God's work. When evil beings serve God's pedagogical purposes and participate, however obliquely, in the Holy Spirit's work, they are called "spirits."¹²² However, in discussing their relationship to the devil, Origen tends not to use "spirit" language. In the *Commentary on Romans*, Origen speaks of "the devil and his angels,"¹²³ rather than "the devil and his spirits" and never refers to the devil himself as "spirit." In addition, "the spirit of this world," a complicated figure, is "spiritus" in Latin but "ἄρχων," and not "πνεῦμα," in a remaining Greek fragment.¹²⁴ For the most part, beings which are either like God or serve God's purposes seem to have the name of "spirit." Amid the confusion of struggling spirits is the human spirit, the center of God's pedagogical activity as it is revealed in the Scriptures.¹²⁵

2.3.1. The Human Spirit

In analyzing the diverse spirit-beings of the *Commentary on Romans*, we begin with the human spirit, crucial to Origen's pneumatology. Like the other spirit-beings, Origen finds the human spirit described in the language of the Scriptures. He quotes again and again from one of his favorite passages about both the human spirit and the Holy Spirit, "For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of

¹²² See *Frag. in Rom.* BZ XIII, which speaks of God communicating his wrath "δι' ἀγγέλων πονηρῶν." There is one wrath which comes from heaven and another which comes from below, from "τοῦ διαβόλου" ἡ τινοῦ τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ." The ministers of the wrath from heaven are spirits: πνευματικά τῆς πονηρίας. A similar passage is found in *Frag. in Rom.* JThS XLIX.

¹²³ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.6: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (88.55)=PG 14: 866; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.29: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (379.421)=PG 14: 1015; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.12.5: Hammond Bammel 7.10 (605.64-66)=PG 14: 1134; *Frag. in Rom.* BZ XIII; *Philoc.* 25.4; *Frag. in Rom.* JThS LII.

¹²⁴ ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου; *Frag. in Rom.* JThS LII.

¹²⁵ See, for example, *Princ.* 3.3.4-6 (SC 268: 192-198).

God.”¹²⁶ This passage, comparing the spirit in a human being to the Holy Spirit in God, provides a basis for Origen’s understanding of the Holy Spirit and for his pneumatological anthropology. To understand the human spirit as a particular kind of spirit-being, one must first explore its relationship to the human body and soul and then turn to its relationship with God’s own Holy Spirit. Like other spirit-beings, the human spirit is a teacher in the Spirit’s School.

The human spirit, pivotal in the choice that each human being must make, is closely related to the Holy Spirit and plays a particularly intimate role in the education of the human person. The relationship between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit is first contextualized by the human spirit’s relationship to the human body and soul. Origen describes the human person as the spirit-soul-body being of 1 Thessalonians 5:23.¹²⁷ In this schema, he emphasizes a bipartite opposition that reflects the fleshly and spiritual choices of the soul.¹²⁸ This two-part structure also involves Pauline language, as he speaks of the opposition of flesh and spirit

¹²⁶ 1 Cor. 2:11. Scriptural passages, unless cited as part of Origen’s own text, are from the Revised Standard Version. Origen cites 1 Cor. 2:11 frequently in the *Commentary on Romans*, as in, for example, *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.6: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (708.92-94)=PG 14: 1201.

¹²⁷ Origen distinguishes his version of this tripartite anthropology sharply from that of Valentinian Gnosticism by insisting that every human being has spirit, soul, and body and that each has the freedom to choose whether she will be a pneumatic or hylic being. Origen’s emphasis on created freedom is central to the *Commentary on Romans* as he denies Gnostic readings of Romans. He raises this concern in his introduction; Romans is difficult for the commentator, in part, because of consideration of the passages “which the heretics are accustomed to build up as supports, that the cause of the agency of each person must not be for a purpose, but referred to the diversity of nature, and from a few of the words of these letters, try to pervert the whole meaning of the Scripture, which teaches the lawful freedom of the human will, given by God.” *Comm. in Rom.* praef.: Hammond Bammel 1.1 (37.5-9)=PG 14: 833.

¹²⁸ Henri Crouzel discusses these seemingly different anthropologies in “L’anthropologie d’Origène dans la perspective du combat spirituel,” *RAM* 31 (1955): 364-85. Acknowledging that the coexistence of two different anthropologies can create problems, Crouzel points to the tripartite structure as the more significant one throughout Origen’s works, particularly his exegetical ones. In reading the tripartite structure as Origen’s primary anthropology, I follow Crouzel.

(Gal. 5:17), or the outer person and the inner person (Rom. 7:22; 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph.3:16).¹²⁹ This dual perspective on the human being plays a role in the *Commentary on Romans*. As Origen says, Paul describes each human being as having two parts:

one of which he is accustomed to name one the outer and the other the inner, and of these he says that the one according to the flesh (*secundum carnem*) is different from the one according to the spirit (*secundum spiritum*)—I think this is from that which is written in Genesis, where one is made in the image of God, and the other is formed from the mud of the earth... For there are certain things which take their beginning from the inner person and attain to the outer person; but there are others which, having begun from the outer person, reach the inner person.¹³⁰

This two-part treatment should be understood in the context of the overarching anthropology of the commentary, his tripartite view of each human being. In the bipartite struggle, the soul (the implied third party) is at the center, choosing to wed itself either to spirit or to flesh.¹³¹ Origen expresses his overall structure in the first book of the commentary, as he examines Romans 1:3-4. Paul knows, Origen says,

that the soul (*animam*) is always in between the spirit (*spiritum*) and the flesh (*carnem*), and either joins itself to the flesh and

¹²⁹ Dupuis 33-42; Wiles, *Divine Apostle*, 30-32; Padraig O'Cleirigh, "The Dualism of Origen," *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 346-50.

¹³⁰ "quorum alterum exteriorem nominare alterum interiorem solet, eorumque alterum secundum carnem esse alterum secundum spiritum dicit—opinor ex illis institutus quae in Genesi scripta sunt ubi alius ad imaginem Dei factus alius de limo terrae fictus refertur... Nam sunt quaedam quae ab interiore homine initium sumunt et usque ad exteriorem perueniunt; alia uero ab exteriore homine inchoata perueniunt usque ad interiorem." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.13.34-35: Hammond Bammel 2.9 (174.569-175.580)=PG 14: 912-913. See also *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 202, 7-9 for the language of the inner and the outer person (κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον...)

¹³¹ As Crouzel says, "Ces trois notions d'esprit, d'âme et de corps ne désignent pas trois éléments qui, composant entre eux, formeraient l'unique substance qu'est l'homme. Mais le personnalité humaine est essentiellement dans l'âme: l'esprit et la chair (ou le corps) désignent les deux pôles entre lesquels l'âme est disputée." Crouzel, "L'anthropologie," 365. In this, Crouzel expresses himself in agreement with Henri de Lubac.

becomes one with the flesh or associates itself with the spirit and becomes one with the spirit; from which, in fact, when it is with the flesh, human beings become carnal; and truly, when it is with the spirit, they become spiritual.¹³²

Thus, it is the soul that works out human freedom, choosing what the person will be and do and thus uniting itself with either the flesh or the spirit. To grow in the image of God, the soul joins itself with the spirit; a union with the flesh is similar to a union with a prostitute.¹³³

Because of the ongoing struggle between the spirit and the body, as each vies to rule the soul, a brief discussion of Origen's view of the body¹³⁴ will help to elucidate his understanding of the human spirit. Peter Brown provides a fair and sympathetic analysis of Origen's overall perspective on the body; describing "Origen's profound ambivalence about the human body," he asserts that

...in the eyes of God, each particular human spirit had been allotted a particular physical constitution as its appropriate sparring partner. Each person's flesh and blood was particular

¹³² "...puto quod consuetudine sua apostolus utatur etiam in hoc loco sciens mediam semper esse animam inter spiritum et carnem et aut iungere se carni et effici unum cum carne aut sociare se spiritui et esse unum cum spiritu; ex quo si quidem cum carne sit carnales homines fiant; si uero cum spiritu spirituales." *Comm. in Rom.* 1.5.3: Hammond Bammel 1.7 (58.44-48)=PG 14: 850. See also *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.9: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (90.86-87)=PG 14: 867, where Origen describes "a dwelling-place in which, with the body and the spirit, the soul may live as if among two advisors." Depending on which advisor the soul heeds, either the crowd of the virtues will be admitted to its home—or a multitude of vices.

¹³³ "Nec mireris si carnem meretricem uocet, quae illis omnibus quae supra enumeravimus utiis atque peccatis tamquam turpissimis amatoribus subiacet." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.1.5: Hammond Bammel 6.1 (458.59-61)=PG 14: 1057.

¹³⁴ There are many different "bodies" in the commentary, including the body of death (*Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.8: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (446.93)=PG 14: 1050), the body of the church (*Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.10: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (575.127)=PG 14: 1117), and the body of Christ (*Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.1: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (483.7)=PG 14: 1069; this reference is a direct quote from Romans). Because this excursus is only intended to provide an overview of Origen's perspective on the human body, it will not explore these other "bodies."

to that person, and had been exquisitely calibrated by God...to challenge the potentially mighty spirit of each to stretch beyond itself.¹³⁵

The embodiment of each soul is medicinal, allowing the person the opportunity to move towards God.¹³⁶ Even the temptations of embodiment are pedagogical. Mark Julian Edwards points out that this understanding differs in important ways from that of Platonism. As he says,

No Platonic triad, and no use of the term *hypostasis*, anticipates the passage¹³⁷ in which Origen...argues that the blessings of the Father become substantial—that is, present and accessible—through the Spirit...No Platonist could have toyed with the conceit that the Holy Spirit conveys the ‘matter’ of divine benevolence; such a trope is possible only where matter was believed to be an appointed, not an adventitious factor in the great design, created by the same God who informs it, and not merely as a receptacle for his overflowing goodness but as an instrument of his special love for man.¹³⁸

Ultimately, each body will be transformed, along with the soul and spirit. This transformation will involve a profound change in the relationships among human beings. Brown describes Origen’s eschatological perspective:

The body was poised on the edge of a transformation so enormous as to make all present notions of identity tied to sexual differences, and all social roles based upon marriage, procreation, and childbirth, seem as fragile as dust dancing on a sunbeam.¹³⁹

The *Commentary on Romans*, like Origen’s other writings, does not view the human body as necessarily evil, although it must be governed by the spirit. The body, as well as the soul, is God’s

¹³⁵ Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University, 1988), 165.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 164-65; see also, for example, *Princ.* 1.7.5 (SC 252: 219-220), where Origen cites Phil.1:24 with respect to corporeal existence, and *Princ.* 4.4.8 (SC 268: 422).

¹³⁷ *Jo.* 2.10.77 (SC 120: 256).

¹³⁸ Edwards, *Origen Against Plato*, 76.

¹³⁹ Ibid. 168.

creation, and Jesus himself had a physical body.¹⁴⁰ Human bodies can become dwelling places for God and temples of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴¹

At the same time,¹⁴² Origen is acutely aware of the body's corruptibility and weakness¹⁴³ (e.g., the need to eat and the drive to procreate),¹⁴⁴ which, if allowed to govern the soul, can weigh down the whole human being.¹⁴⁵ The soul must be "circumcised," "if some impurity sticks to the soul from association with the body."¹⁴⁶ The soul ruled by the spirit is able to put its earthly members to death by carrying Christ's death around in the body. This carrying of Christ helps to "sow" the "animal" body, so that it will rise as a spiritual body.¹⁴⁷ The person whose body, governed by the spirit, has begun this transformation, is already able to enjoy the "invisible goods" of the age to come.¹⁴⁸ However, full understanding is only possible after the earthly body has passed away:

One who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than the one who is still in the body, even if it is John, he who was

¹⁴⁰ *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2.10: Hammond Bammel 9.2 (723.89-91)=PG 14: 1210.

¹⁴¹ *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.2: Hammond Bammel 6.9 (508.27-29)=PG 14: 1085, et al.

¹⁴² If it is not governed by the spirit, the body is very problematic; even more, it is marked with evil. In both Greek and Latin texts of *Comm. in Mt.*, Origen says that the body "bears the bodily mark of the Prince of Bodies." While the spirit can be the human point of contact with divinity, the body can tempt the person to evil. See *Comm. in Mt.* 17.27, quoted in Gerard E. Caspary, *Politics and Exegesis: Origen and the Two Swords* (Berkeley: University of California, 1979), 155.

¹⁴³ N.B. Gen 6:3, to which Origen often refers.

¹⁴⁴ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.4.10: Hammond Bammel 7.2 (566.127-134)=PG 14: 1110.

¹⁴⁵ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 8.11.7: Hammond Bammel 8.10 (694.68-70)=PG 14: 1192.

¹⁴⁶ "Per hoc ergo indicari figuraliter reor amputandam esse ab anima si qua illa ex consortio ei carnis adhaeret impuritas si qui eam libidinis malesuadae sensus obtexit." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.13.20: Hammond Bammel 2.9 (164.366-368)=PG 14: 907.

¹⁴⁷ 2 Cor. 4:10 and 1 Cor. 15: 42-44; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.4-8: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (443.32-446.98)=PG 14: 1048-1050.

¹⁴⁸ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.11: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (577.168-174)=PG 14: 1118.

greater than any other born of women...And truly, since the apostle himself says that he knows in part and understands in part, who will be the one who is said to understand? For as much as anyone will understand, he will have understood in a glass and in an enigma, since that understanding face to face is reserved for after the putting away of the earthly body, but now as the Scripture says: "the corruptible body weighs on the soul", that is why "there is no one understanding," nor one seeking for God; for while we are busy with the worries of the body and seek the things which pertain to humans, we are not able to seek God or the things which are of God.¹⁴⁹

Despite its limitations, the body *per se* is not the soul's problem. As long as the spirit governs the soul and the body, a truly spiritual life is possible; if the body and its desires govern, a fleshly existence will deteriorate the soul. No body ruled by the spirit is "fleshly" in Origen's sense, although it is still corporeal. In the same way, if the spirit does not govern, even a person who is physically pure commits "fleshly" sins.¹⁵⁰ Ideally, the "male" spirit and the "female" soul

have concord and agreement among themselves,...increase and multiply...and produce sons, good inclinations and understandings or useful thoughts, by which they fill the earth

¹⁴⁹ "...quicumque ille minimus est in regno Dei maior sit eo qui in corpore est etiamsi Iohanes ille sit quo maior inter natos mulierum non fuit...Et reuera cum apostolus ipse ex parte se dicat agnoscere et ex parte intellegere quis erit qui dicatur intellegens? Quantumcumque enim quis intellexerit in speculo et aenigmate uidebitur intellegere, quia post depositionem terreni corporis reseruatur facie ad faciem intellegere, nunc uero ut ait scriptura: 'corruptibile corpus aggrauat animam...' Unde fit ut non sit intellegens quis nec requirens Deum; dum enim corporis sollicitudinibus occupamur et quae hominum sunt quaerimus Deum quaerere uel quae Dei sunt cogitare non possumus." *Comm. in Rom.* 3.2.13-14: Hammond Bammel 3.2 (212.192-213.205)=PG 14: 933.

¹⁵⁰ N.B. that "all sins are works of the flesh: fornication, impurity, passion, desire, wrongdoing, shamelessness, idolatry, wickedness, enmity, quarrels, jealousy, fury, contention, dissensions, heresies, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. But if you inquire how heresies are also counted among the works of the flesh, you will find that they proceed from the sense of the flesh." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.1.2: Hammond Bammel 6.1 (455.12-456.18)=PG 14: 1055. Even intellectual sins are "fleshly."

and have dominion over it. This means they turn the inclination of the flesh...to better purposes and have dominion over it...¹⁵¹

The human spirit, to which the soul should join itself, is the most intimate teacher of the human being. In one passage, Origen equates the spirit with the conscience, a significant pedagogical role, as well as an important link between God and the individual human being.¹⁵² As he says, “It seems necessary to examine what the thing is which the apostle calls ‘conscience’—whether it is some specific reality other than heart or soul (*anima*).”¹⁵³ Origen’s answer to the question he has posed manages to differentiate conscience from both heart and soul, while showing that it relates closely to both:

¹⁵¹ “Masculus spiritus dicitur, femina anima potest nuncupari. Haec si concordiam inter se habeant et consensum, convenientia inter se ipsa crescunt et multiplicantur, generantque filios sensus bonos, et intellectus vel cogitationes utiles, per quae repleant terram, et dominantur in ea; hoc est, subjectum sibi sensum carnis ad meliora instituta convertunt, et dominantur eis, scilicet cum in nullo caro contra voluntatem spiritus insolescit.” *Hom. in Gen.* 1.15 (PG 12: 158); Heine 68. The English translation, by Ronald E. Heine, is available in FaCh 71. This is an allegorical interpretation of Gen. 1:28, as Origen explores the meaning of humanity’s creation “male and female.” For Origen, the physical characteristics of male and female are merely a temporal, earthly matter; they cannot be the true subject matter of the biblical account.

¹⁵² Dupuis 71-72. As Dupuis says of the connection in Rufinus’s translation between the conscience and the human spirit, “l’on est assuré de l’authenticité origénienne de la pensée, car elle se trouve confirmée par un fragment grec où Origène parle du ‘logos’ qui, ‘selon la conception commune, est semé dans l’âme, et, selon l’Écriture, est écrit dans le cœur...’ Il s’agit, précise Origène, de ‘la loi écrite dans les cœurs,’ où encore ‘écrite par la nature...dans notre hégémonie.’” See *Philocalia* IX (Robinson 55.29-56.9), which combines the ideas expressed in *Comm. in Rom.* 3.7.6: Hammond Bammel 3.4 (230.59-73)=PG 14: 943 and those in *Jo.* 5. See also *Frag. in Rom. JThS* XXXVI and *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 200, which express similar ideas.

¹⁵³ “Unde necessarium uidetur discutere quid istud sit quod conscientiam apostolus uocat; utrumne alia sit aliqua substantia quam cor uel anima.” *Comm. in Rom.* 2.9.3: Hammond Bammel 2.7 (136.39-41)=PG 14: 893. Origen is referring to Paul’s mention of “conscience” in Rom. 2:15.

I think that it may be the spirit (*spiritus*) itself which is said by the apostle to be with the soul, according to what we have taught above, associating with it as a pedagogue and also as a guide, that it may either warn it of better things, or chastise and censure it concerning sins; of which the apostle also says, ‘Because no one human knows the things which are in a man, except the spirit of the man which is in him;’ and it may be the same spirit of the conscience of whom he says, ‘The Spirit himself returns witness with our spirit.’ And perhaps it is this same spirit who coheres with the souls of the just, which will have been obedient to it in all things...”¹⁵⁴

Later, in a discussion of Romans 9:1, Origen praises Paul by saying that “what he holds in his conscience is contained in the Holy Spirit.”¹⁵⁵ The conscience, then, is the spirit in the person, a spirit which is so close to the Holy Spirit that its contents can be contained within the Spirit.

Spirit, in its role as guide, or governor, of the soul, bears some similarity to the Stoic ἡγεμονικόν, although it is not a direct translation of the concept. The Stoic ἡγεμονικόν, like Origen’s idea of spirit-conscience, rules over the soul. As Chrysippus describes it, the soul stretches out the senses, like branches, from the ruling part (ἡγεμονικόν), “as if from a tree,...[and the ruling part] renders judgment, like a king, on the things [the senses] will have

¹⁵⁴ “...arbitror quod ipse sit spiritus qui ab apostolo esse cum anima dicitur secundum quod in superioribus edocuimus uelut paedagogus ei quidam sociatus et rector ut eam uel de melioribus moneat, uel de culpis castiget et arguat; de qua et dicat apostolus: ‘quia nemo scit hominum quae sunt hominis nisi spiritus hominis qui in ipso est;’ et ipse sit conscientiae spiritus de quo dicit: ‘ipse spiritus testimonium reddit spiritui nostro.’ Et forte hic ipse spiritus est qui cohaeret animabus iustorum quae sibi in omnibus oboedientes fuerint...” *Comm. in Rom.* 2.9.3-4: Hammond Bammel 2.7 (137.49-57)=PG 14: 893. The biblical quotes are from 1 Cor. 2:11 and Rom. 8:16.

¹⁵⁵ “quod in conscientia habet Sancto Spiritu continetur.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.3: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (611.49-50)=PG 14: 1138.

reported.”¹⁵⁶ In the same way, Origen describes the human spirit as the guiding spirit of the human being.¹⁵⁷

As the judge of the soul, this guiding spirit-conscience adheres to the good soul but evaluates the evil one harshly. As the locus of the Holy Spirit’s embrace of the human being, the human spirit remains holy, even when the human soul and body become corrupt. As Origen says of the conscience,

such is its freedom that it rejoices and exults always in good deeds, yet it is not censured in bad deeds, but blames and censures the soul to which it coheres... If, indeed, a soul is disobedient to it and obstinate, the soul will be divided from it after death and will be separated from it. And I think it is because of this that it is written in the gospel about the evil steward: “that the Lord will divide him and will put his portion with unbelievers.” Perhaps it is the spirit itself of which it is written: “that an incorruptible spirit is in all things.” And according to these things which we have said above, that it is divided and separated from the sinful soul, so that the soul may receive its portion with the unbelievers, it can likewise be said of them that: “There will be two in the field and one will be taken up and one left, and two at the mill and one taken up and one left.”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ “...velut ramos ex principali parte illa tamquam trabe pandit, futuros eorum quae sentiunt nuntios, ipsa de iis quae nuntiaverint iudicat ut rex.” This view of Chrysippus is described in Chalcidius *In Timaeum* 220, *SVF* II 879.

¹⁵⁷ See the scholarly opinions cited in Mihály Kránitz, “La fonction de la conscience et de l’ange gardien chez Origène,” *BLE* 93 (1992): 203.

¹⁵⁸ “Quia ergo tantam eius uideo libertatem quae in bonis quidem gestis gaudeat semper et exultet, in malis uero non arguatur sed ipsam animam cui cohaeret reprehendat et arguat... Si uero inoboediens ei anima et contumax fuerit diuidetur ab eo post excessum et separabitur. Et propter hoc puto dictum esse in euangelio de malo uilico: ‘quia diuidet eum Dominus et partem eius cum infidelibus ponet.’ Ipse fortassis est spiritus de quo scriptum est: ‘quia incorruptibilis spiritus est in omnibus.’ Et secundum ea quae supra diximus, quia diuiditur ac separatur ab anima peccatrice, ut illa cum infidelibus accipiat partem, potest similiter his aptari et illud quod dictum est: ‘erunt duo in agris unus assumetur et unus relinquetur, et duae ad molam una assumetur et una relinquetur.’” *Comm. in Rom.* 2.9.3-4: Hammond Bammel 2.7 (137.46-138.68)=PG 14: 893.

In his *Homilies on Jeremiah*, Origen continues this discussion by saying that the good person, whose conscience does not condemn him, “has an openness before God,” while the one condemned by his conscience, like Adam, “hides’ himself from the face of God.” The person whose soul adheres to the conscience “has a heart with openness with God due to the holy life.”¹⁵⁹

The spirit, which enables one to have this openness before God, is also the source for renewal and for growth in the knowledge of God. Unlike the flesh, which is corporeal and corruptible, and can only draw the soul further into corruption if allowed to govern it, the spirit can draw the soul into the life of true virtue. The blessed soul, which has thus joined itself to its spirit, is enlarged so that God’s own Word and Spirit come to dwell within. Origen’s metaphorical language speaks powerfully of the work of the human spirit. While the flesh “narrows” the soul, rendering it fit as a dwelling only for the devil, who crawls like a serpent, the spirit opens it up to be a place for the flight of God’s own Spirit. God not only dwells in this largeness of the heart of the saints, but he also walks there.

Indeed, in the hearts of sinners, where there are narrownesses because they have provided a place for the devil to enter, he does enter, but not in order to dwell, nor to walk among them—for they are narrow—but that he may hide in them as if in a hole; for he is a serpent. So thus the unhappy soul, which the evil serpent has frequented, becomes motionless with the serpentine chill and is confined and driven into every narrowness. But that soul which obeys truth is enlarged and spread out like the heavens and, having been illuminated by the sun of justice, is made the palace of wisdom and of truth.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ In the Greek: “Ὁ δὲ ἅγιος...ἔχει καρδίαν μετὰ παρρησίας τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἁγίαν πολιτείαν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν.” In Jerome’s Latin: “Sanctus...conscientia actuum suorum habet fiduciam ad Deum.” *Hom. in Jer.* 16.4.4 (PG 13: 443-444); Smith 171. Scriptural references are to Gen. 3:8, Gen. 4:16, and 1 John 3:21-22.

¹⁶⁰ “In peccatorum uero cordibus ubi angustiae sunt quia locum dederunt diabolo ingrediendi, ingreditur quidem sed non ut habitet neque ut inambulet—angustiae enim sunt—sed ut lateat tamquam in cauerna; enim est serpens. Sic ergo infelix anima, quam pessimus hic anguis obsederit, serpentine frigore rigens attrahitur et coartatur atque in omnes angustias cogitur. Illa uero quae obtemperat ueritati instar caeli dilatatur

Jesus' soul, perfectly united to his spirit, provided the most perfect of such dwellings: "Indeed, you will find no soul among humans so blessed and so exalted except only this one in which the Word of God finds so great a width and such capacity, and the Holy Spirit, as it is said, not only dwells, but spreads wings and even flies..."¹⁶¹

In all of its roles, the human spirit serves as the intimate connection between the soul and God's Spirit. Contained in the Holy Spirit, it is itself a part of the human experience of God, the possibility of growing in God's image that still exists even within earthly humanity.¹⁶² For this reason, it can be difficult to distinguish

atque diffunditur et solis iustitiae inlustrata radiis aula sapientiae ac ueritatis efficitur." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.6.6: Hammond Bammel 2.5 (123.221-124.229)=PG 14: 886.

¹⁶¹ "Nullam uero inter homines ita beatam et ita excelsam repperies animam nisi hanc solam in qua tantum latitudinis tantum capacitatis inuenit uerbum Dei et Spiritus Sanctus ut non solum habitare sed et alas pandere et nouo sacramenti ritu aliquando etiam uolitare dicatur." *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.6: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (241.119-123)=PG 14: 949. Although a section of the exegesis of Rom.3:25-27, of which this is a part, survives in the Tura papyrus, this particular discussion unfortunately does not.

¹⁶² This image is, however, strictly inward. Those who mistake the outer appearance of a human being for the image of God are in great error. See *Comm. in Rom.* 1.19.8: Hammond Bammel 1.22 (96.102-98.131)=PG 14: 871-872. The use of "anthropomorphite" in this section raises the possibility that Rufinus may have inserted arguments relevant to the controversies of his own day. For a discussion of the anthropomorphite controversies, see Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: University Press, 1992), 43-84. However, this does not raise questions about the human spirit's connection with the image and likeness of God, which is present throughout Origen's writings. Every human being, according to Origen, receives the seed of the *imago Dei* in creation. The full *similitudo*, in which one becomes the likeness who can know and be known by God in the most profound sense, is the result of growth in right thoughts and works. Thus, the *imago Dei* is never a passive one. Becoming the full *similitudo* of God, though dependent on the help of God, is nevertheless the choice of each person, a choice which some do not make. Origen speaks in his *Commentary on Romans* about the term "hard heart," which is used throughout the Scriptures, in his reading, for those who refuse to develop the image of God, "as if obstructed by the coldness of iniquity." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.4.1: Hammond Bammel 2.4 (103.3-

the human spirit from God's working in the person.¹⁶³ Although Origen points to a few texts where he believes the Scriptures are speaking specifically of God's Spirit, he does not give his own reader a key for discerning his use of the word πνεῦμα, unaccompanied by an adjective, a prepositional phrase, or a clear scriptural context. In some cases, Origen identifies the human spirit clearly as "our," "my," or "your" spirit, or explicitly as *spiritus hominis*.¹⁶⁴ However, unlike a ministering or an evil spirit, which is always described with further terms than just *spiritus* or πνεῦμα, the human spirit is frequently designated by the unadorned noun for "spirit." One example of this confusion involves Origen's numerous citations of Galatians 5:17.¹⁶⁵ Some texts seem to imply that the flesh wars against God's Spirit, while others appear to reinforce the conflict of human spirit and flesh which is explicitly discussed in many passages of the commentary.

Jacques Dupuis, in his 1967 book, reviews possible linguistic solutions offered to solve the problem of distinguishing the human and divine spirits: perhaps Origen refers to God's own Spirit when he uses τὸ πνεῦμα, with the article, or when πνεῦμα is modified by αὐτὸ, θεοῦ, or κυρίου.¹⁶⁶ However, as Dupuis says, there are

5)=PG 14: 875. See Arne J. Hobbel, "The *Imago Dei* in the Writings of Origen," *StPatr* 21 (1989): 301-07.

¹⁶³ In addition to Dupuis' book, see Maurice Wiles' summary in *Divine Apostle*, 30-34.

¹⁶⁴ In almost every case, Origen's use of *spiritus hominis* or πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is based on his citation of, or indirect reference to, 1 Cor. 2:11. E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 2.9.4: Hammond Bammel 2.7 (137.54)=PG 14:893. In Origen's Greek corpus, 13 of the 16 uses of πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου are references to 1 Cor. 2:11. See *Cels.* 4.30.53; *Or.* 1.1.29; *Dial.* 7.11 and 7.12; *Hom. in Ezech.* 340.25; *Comm. in Mt.* 13.2.81, 13.2.86, 13.2.91, and 14.6.78; *Comm. in I Cor* 47.18; *Comm. in Eph.* 26.14; *Jo.* 32.18.218.9 and 32.18.225.3.

¹⁶⁵ Origen approaches Gal. 5:17 with a range of nuances. See *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.5: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (88.42-45)=PG 14: 866; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.1.4-5: Hammond Bammel 6.1 (456.24-27)=PG 14: 1055-1056; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.8.5: Hammond Bammel 6.8 (500.63-67)=PG 14: 1081; *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer, 232, 7-8 (which has "τοῦ πνεύματος").

¹⁶⁶ See discussion in Dupuis 108. Rufinus renders *idem spiritus* for αὐτὸ πνεῦμα. See *Princ.* 1.3.7 (SC 252: 160).

exceptions to these linguistic “rules” in the Greek text.¹⁶⁷ And even when these so-called “rules” function in the Greek, the situation is even more complex when one is dealing with Rufinus’ Latin text, where there are no articles at all. The text is only clear when *spiritus* is accompanied by an identifying adjective or prepositional phrase, such as *spiritus hominis* or *Spiritus eius qui suscitavit Iesum a mortuis*.

Despite possible linguistic confusion, the human spirit plays a substantial role in Origen’s theology. Origen describes the human spirit as a part of the created human being. Like other spirits, the human spirit is spirit inasmuch as it participates in God’s own Spirit. This spirit is the highest element in the person; if the soul embraces it, the spirit leads it in prayer¹⁶⁸ and in action.¹⁶⁹

Apart from those passages where he explicitly refers to the human spirit or the divine spirit, in so many words, Origen himself does not spend time in the *Commentary on Romans* differentiating between the human and divine spirits. Since he does trouble himself with distinctions among good, evil, and ministering spirits, it seems that he, or at least Rufinus, in translating him, does not see this as a question that needs to be addressed. The human spirit is the individual person’s potential for participation in God’s Spirit, a participation that must be learned and developed over a lifetime. For this reason, the human spirit itself is never opposed to God’s Spirit, rendering such distinctions irrelevant in Origen’s descriptions of the human spiritual journey.

Intimately related to the Holy Spirit and at the same time an integral part of the human person, the human spirit provides the foundation for Origen’s pneumatological anthropology. Within the being of each person is the potential for intimacy with God’s own Spirit. Only human choice can fulfill this potential, but, once

¹⁶⁷ For example, πνεῦμα κυρίου, one of Origen’s seemingly clearer phrases, describes an angel in *Exp. in Pr.* 19.4. See Dupuis 108.

¹⁶⁸ However, the flesh interferes in prayer, if the soul chooses to join itself to the flesh: “...the Lord himself teaches what our weakness is when he says: ‘The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ Therefore, our weakness comes from the weakness of the flesh. For it is that which lusts against the spirit; and while it brings in its concupiscence, it hinders the purity of the spirit and obscures the sincerity of prayer.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.4: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (580.51-56)=PG 14: 1119.

¹⁶⁹ This is best exemplified in the spirit’s role as conscience, discussed above on pages 62-65.

chosen, this intimacy with the Spirit reveals itself in the human being's actions in the world. Each human spirit, embraced by the Spirit, is the possibility of ever-increasing participation in God.

2.3.2. Ministering Spirits

“Are they not all ministering spirits sent to serve, for the
sake of those who are to obtain salvation?”
(Heb. 1:14)

The inner teacher that is the human spirit is only one of the encounters of the human being with the spirit-world. Each human “student” is taught by a variety of ministering spirits, who, like pedagogues, provide discipline and preliminary knowledge. In the end, the prepared student proceeds to study with the true Teacher, the Holy Spirit of God.¹⁷⁰

The *Commentary on Romans* presents this structure most clearly in Origen's exegesis at the beginning of book seven, where he discusses Romans 8:14-16.¹⁷¹ The passage in Romans reads:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba, Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

This passage provides an opening for Origen to catalog different types of spirit-beings, since it mentions the Spirit of God, the spirit of slavery for fear, the spirit of adoption, and “our” human spirit. These spirits represent a range of spirit-beings that assist in God's work.

¹⁷⁰ A parallel idea is expressed in Origen's *Hom. in Num.* As J. N. Rowe summarizes, speaking about these homilies, “It is stated that in the early stages of spiritual development it is the angels who are deputed to take charge of human souls, but that in due course they offer the firstfruits (*primitiae*) of their cultivation to Christ, Who in turn offers them to God the Father, just as he offered himself.” See Rowe, “The Eventual Reconciling of Human Beings to the Father by Christ, and his Consequent Subjugation to the Father,” *Origeniana Tertia*, ed. R. P. C. Hanson and Henri Crouzel (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1985), 141-142. His references are to the *Hom. in Num.* 9.3-4 and 11.5.

¹⁷¹ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1-7.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (553.1-558.98)=PG 14: 1103-1105.

At the center of God's work is God's own Spirit. The "spirit of adoption,"¹⁷² as described by Paul, is another name for this Holy Spirit.¹⁷³ They must be one and the same, Origen concludes; after all, only the Spirit of God could lead one to cry out "Abba, Father!"¹⁷⁴

Origen points out that the Scriptures also call the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of Christ" or "the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead." It is the only Spirit truly proceeding from God's self, one who sanctifies all other spirits.¹⁷⁵ This Spirit, closely connected to the work of Jesus Christ, is the final Teacher of human sinners healed by the Savior. The Spirit is not given until a person is worthy,¹⁷⁶ but, once one has turned away from sin, God's Spirit is poured out into her heart.¹⁷⁷ This divine Spirit patiently teaches genuine holiness to those who are ready to learn, illuminates the human spirit,¹⁷⁸ and joins prayers with human prayers, offering unutterable groanings to God.¹⁷⁹ The Holy Spirit is the one who brings human beings to God as true heirs.

¹⁷² "spiritum adoptionis;" *Comm. in Rom.* 1.1.1: Hammond Bammel 1.3 (45.3)=PG 14: 837; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (553.10, 11, 23)=PG 14: 1103; τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ 'εἰς' υἰοθεσίαν 'ἀνάγον;' *Frag. in Rom.* BZ I.

¹⁷³ The Latin version of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* equates the spirit of adoption with the Holy Spirit. Other texts are less clear. *Comm. in Mt.* 13.26, for example, calls the spirit of adoption an angel of the Lord. See Dupuis 232-41.

¹⁷⁴ See Dupuis 231-41.

¹⁷⁵ "...ita et spiritus multi quidem sunt sed unus est qui uere ex ipso Deo procedit et ceteris omnibus uocabuli ac sanctificationis suae gratiam donat." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (554.32-34)=PG 14: 1103.

¹⁷⁶ E.g., among many such references, "ut spiritum Dei in uobis habere mereamini" *Comm. in Rom.* 6.12.8: Hammond Bammel 6.12 (529.120)=PG 14: 1096; "ut etsi sit in aliquo mensura fidei tanta quae excelsiorem gratiam mereatur accipere" *Comm. in Rom.* 9.3.4: Hammond Bammel 9.3 (729.47-49)=PG 14: 1214.

¹⁷⁷ *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.1: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (336.1-337.31)=PG 14: 992-993; *Frag. in Rom.* JThS XXVIII.

¹⁷⁸ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 5.7.9: Hammond Bammel 5.7 (421.89-92)=PG 14: 1037; *Comm. in Rom.* 4.8.10: Hammond Bammel 4.8 (336.173-176)=PG 14: 992.

¹⁷⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (578.1-582.115)=PG

However, human beings do not begin with the direct pedagogy of the Holy Spirit; they must come to spiritual maturity before receiving the divine teaching. The spirit of slavery for fear¹⁸⁰ plays a pedagogical role, as a ministering spirit, in leading human beings to God. As the human being progresses in knowledge of God and of God's law, she passes through different spiritual stages, with different "spirits" influencing her through her conscience. Fear as a teacher of the conscience is one of the lower levels in the spiritual life of a rational person. As Origen says:

And the teacher for the little ones is fear. Thus the apostle says of such a little child: "As long as the heir is young, nothing distinguishes him from a slave, even were he the lord of all, but he is under tutors and also governors until the predetermined time set by the Father. Thus, we, when we were little children, were serving under the elements of this world." You see how, according to wisdom allowed him by God, Paul here called the spirits of slavery which are given for fear the "tutors" and "governors" of young children, who guard each one of us, as long as one is a little child, in fear according to the interior humanity, until he comes to the age when he may deserve to receive the spirit of adoption of sons and may be now a son and the master of all. For all things, he says, are yours and he has given all things to us with Christ.¹⁸¹

The spirit of slavery, as tutor and governor of the spiritual child, uses fear as a pedagogical tool until the person has matured

14: 1118-1121; *FragRom*, JTS, XLVIII.

¹⁸⁰ "spiritum servitutis...in timorem;" *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (553.6-9, 554.14-17)=PG 14: 1103; "τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ εἰς φόβον τὸν τῆς δουλείας ἄγον;" *Frag. in Rom.* BZ I.

¹⁸¹ "Et paruulis utique paedagogus est timor. Unde et apostolus de tali paruulo dicit: 'quamdiu heres paruulus est nihil differt seruo cum sit dominus omnium, sed sub tutoribus est et procuratoribus usque ad praefinitum tempus a patre. Ita et nos cum essemus paruuli sub elementis huius mundi eramus seruientes.' Uides secundum concessam sibi a Deo sapientiam Paulus quomodo spiritus seruitutis qui dantur in timorem hic tutores paruulorum et procurators appellauerit, qui unumquemque nostrum donec paruulus est secundum interiore hominem in timore custodiant usque quo ad id aetatis ueniat quo spiritum adoptionis filiorum mereatur accipere et sit iam filius ac dominus omnium. Omnia enim inquit uestra sunt et cum Christo nobis omnia donauit." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (557.78-91)=PG 14: 1105.

and no longer needs such discipline. Fear, however, is a necessary step in the inner life. After all, says Origen here, “the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.” Since all begin in a “childish age,”¹⁸² the spirit of slavery teaches each one until she is spiritually mature enough to become the student of God’s own Holy Spirit, becoming the adopted child of God. This spirit, using fear as its instrument, prepares the person for spiritual adulthood and thus assists in God’s work.

The spirit of slavery for fear is one of the ministering spirits (ministeriales spiritus, *λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα*) of Hebrews 1:14.¹⁸³ Origen refers specifically to this biblical passage whenever he uses the term “ministering spirits;” in Rufinus’ translation of the *Commentary on Romans*, he quotes it directly four times.¹⁸⁴

Origen mentions these ministering spirits throughout his writings and does not always explain them in the same way, although he uses the same scriptural language to identify them. For example, his interpretation in *Contra Celsum* 5.4 seems to limit this category to good spirits; there, ministering spirits are angels who bring benefits to the deserving and intercede for them with God.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² “in aetate puerili;” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.8.7: Hammond Bammel 6.8 (501.93)=PG 14:1082.

¹⁸³ All 12 mentions of “*λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα*” in Origen’s Greek corpus clearly refer to Heb. 1:14. For these references, see *Cels.* 8.34.20, *Engast.* 7.15, *Philoc.* 23.21.12, *Philoc.* 23.21.13, *Comm. ser. in Mt.* 148.21, *Comm. in Mt.* 12.13.39, *Comm. in Gen.* 12.84.45, *Sel. in Gen.* 12.101.33, *Schol. in Cant.* 17.269.17, *Schol. in Mt.* 17.304.35, *Jo.* 32.17.199.4, *Jo.* 32.17.200.4.

¹⁸⁴ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.6: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (89.62-63)=PG 14: 866; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (555.36-38)=PG 14: 1104; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.4.11: Hammond Bammel 7.2 (567.162-568.164)=PG 14: 1111; *Comm. in Rom.* 9.30.1: Hammond Bammel 9.30 (753.10-12)=PG 14: 1229. See also Paul Lebeau’s discussion of *Comm. in Rom.* 7.4 in “L’Interprétation origénienne de Rm 8. 19-22,” *Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, ed. Patrick Granfield and Josef A. Jungmann (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1970), 1: 336-345.

¹⁸⁵ “...καὶ ἀγγέλους φαμέν, *λειτουργικὰ ὄντας πνεύματα* καὶ εἰς διακονίας ἀποστελλόμενα διὰ τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν, ἀναβαίνειν μὲν προσάγοντας τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐντεῦξαις ἐν τοῖς καθαρωτάτοις τοῦ κόσμου χωρίοις ἐπουρανίοις ἢ καὶ τοῖς τούτων καθαρωτέροις ὑπερουρανίοις...” SC 147: 20. The *Commentary on Romans*, however, rarely mentions “angels” in a ministering role. Of the 52 passages mentioning angels in the Latin text, only 5 refer to good angels

The *Commentary on Romans*, however, contains a broader definition of these spirits, pointing to both good and evil spirits doing God's ministry. This understanding of ministering spirits, however, requires careful description; spirit-ministry may fulfill God's purposes, but the "minister" is not necessarily united to God. Spirits who minister can have their own evil intentions but still fulfill God's pedagogical purpose. After all, as Origen says in book nine, "all spirits minister to the life of human beings, but each one...ministers according to its own dignity and merit."¹⁸⁶ In book ten, Origen turns to Psalm 104, which speaks of God as one "who makes his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire."¹⁸⁷ Origen says, "of course he has named the good angels 'spirits' as if they are 'spiritual,' but those who govern the ministries of punishments and prepare the flames for sinners he has named the ministers of burning flame." This work of pedagogical torment is an aspect of God's work, yet those who do it are "ministering" as spirits, rather than "spiritual" in their own intentions.

One ministering spirit that does God's work is the "spirit of remorse,"¹⁸⁸ mentioned in Romans 11:8.¹⁸⁹ This spirit of remorse

assisting human beings, while 10 describe evil angels either punishing on God's behalf or struggling against human beings.

¹⁸⁶ "Ministrant ergo omnes spiritus hominum uitae, unusquisque tamen ut diximus pro dignitate et merito sui." An example, cited by Origen in his next sentence, is the "spiritum huius mundi" of 1 Cor. 2:12. *Comm. in Rom.* 9.30.2: Hammond Bammel 9.30 (753.9-754.18)=PG 14: 1229-1230.

¹⁸⁷ The scriptural citation is Ps. 104:4 (LXX 103:4). "Ergo per huiusmodi ministerium etiam illud aduertendum puto quod in psalmis dicit: 'qui facit angelos suos spiritus et ministros suos flammam ignis;' ut scilicet bonos angelos spiritus appellauerit tamquam spiritales, eos uero qui praesunt poenarum ministeriis et flammam peccatoribus parant ministros flammae ardentis nominauerit." *Comm. in Rom.* 10.14.8: Hammond Bammel 10.14 (828.115-120)=PG 14: 1275.

¹⁸⁸ "spiritus compunctionis;" *Comm. in Rom.* 8.8.1-4: Hammond Bammel 8.7 (673.1-674.35)=PG 14: 1179.

¹⁸⁹ As Origen finds this discussed in the Scriptures (Rom. 11:8 and Ps. 68:23): "as it is written: God has given them the spirit of remorse; eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear until today'...And David says: 'Let their table be made into a snare and into deceit and into a stumbling-block and into retribution. May their eyes be darkened so that they do not see, and bow their backs always.'" "sicut scriptum est: dedit

can give people ears so that they may not hear and eyes so that they may not see.¹⁹⁰ Although this work of this spirit sounds like a form of retribution against sinners, Origen explains the way in which the spirit of remorse is actually doing service on God's behalf. The "eyes" and "ears" which are blinded and deafened are actually the eyes and ears of the soul. Some people use these senses of the soul to grow in wisdom, while

others use these eyes in the opposite way, namely, training themselves daily and seeking to weaken the teachings of the truth and, however it seems good to them, to assail the faith of Christ. Then let us suppose that someone prays for these people, who are clever and argumentative in false knowledge, and says: May God give them eyes that their perverse understanding may not see tricks, and ears, of course, so that they may not hear the teachers of lies, and may their eyes be darkened that they may not see; does it not seem to you that one who wants these things for them, through which their sins may be lessened, must be embraced? For it is much better not to know than to know wickedly.¹⁹¹

The spirit of remorse, truly understood, is actually providing a form of deliverance to people who have been misusing the spiritual hearing and sight given by God. Rather than sitting by while people "look at" perverted interpretations and "hear" deceitful teachings, this spirit can darken their spiritual senses, keeping them from

illis Deus spiritum conpunctionis, oculos ut non uideant et aures ut non audiant usque in hodiernum diem;'. . . et Dauid dicit: fiat mensa eorum in laqueum et in captionem et in scandalum et in retributionem illis. Obscurentur oculi eorum ne uideant et dorsum illorum semper incurua.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 8.8.1: Hammond Bammel 8.7 (674.26-675.46)=PG 14: 1179.

¹⁹⁰ Is. 29:10; Deut. 29:3; Matt. 13:13; Acts 28:16-17.

¹⁹¹ "alii uero utuntur his oculis in contrarium exercentes scilicet semet ipsos cotidie et inquirentes quomodo dogmata ueritatis infringant et fidem Christi quantum ipsis uidetur impugnent. Ponamus ergo aliquem orare pro his qui perspicaces et argumentosi sunt in falsa scientia et dicere: det illis Deus oculos ut non uideant peruersi sensus acumina et aures ut non audiant mendacii scilicet magistros et obscurentur oculi eorum ne uideant; non tibi uidetur amplectendus is qui haec optat eis per quae eorum peccata minuatur? Multo enim melius est non sapere quam male sapere." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.8.6: Hammond Bammel 8.7 (676.76-85)=PG 14: 1181.

further evil understandings. Origen gives the examples of Marcion, Valentinus, and Basilides, who would have benefited from the ministry of the spirit of remorse, that they might not be able to “see” or “hear” the substance of their wicked teachings. The pedagogy of the ministering spirits, then, is sometimes assistance in un-learning evil, before one can advance in the good.

Among the ministering spirits who serve God’s purposes there are also spirits of punishment, sometimes called evil spirits and evil angels.¹⁹² These, who are called evil, Origen says, “because of their own intention and will,” nevertheless do the work of God, bringing the punishment that is needed for spiritual progress.¹⁹³ In the story of Saul, for example, Origen finds an evil spirit sent to suffocate him. In this story, the evil spirit seems to him clearly sent as God’s executioner, to punish Saul for his sins. Similarly, he speaks of one called a “lying spirit,” sent to deceive Ahab through false prophecy, so that he may fall into needed punishment.¹⁹⁴

God also raises up “satans,”¹⁹⁵ or adversaries, for humans as they need to be challenged in the great spiritual contest.¹⁹⁶ The struggle of each human being is one of universal significance. Thus,

¹⁹² Ps. 78:49 (LXX 77:49); 1 Sam. 16:14 (LXX 1 Kings 16:14); Judges 9:23; see *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.3: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (555.45-556.68)=PG 14: 1104. The passage from Psalm 78 refers only to “angelos malos,” with no explicit “spirit” language. The other two passages use “spirit” explicitly; the references are, respectively, “spiritus malignus” and “spiritum malignum.”

¹⁹³ “Et quamvis mali propter propositum suum uoluntatemque dicantur, in his tamen qui poena digni sunt diuinae uoluntati exhibent ministerium...” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.3: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (556.55-57)=PG 14: 1104. See also *Comm. in Rom.* 9.30.1: Hammond Bammel 9.30 (753.6-9)=PG 14: 1229: “For we have already taught that all creatures and all spirits, whether good and upright or of evil and depraved intention, serve God...”

¹⁹⁴ “mendax spiritus;” 1 Kings 22:20-22 (LXX 3 Kings 22:20-22); see *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.3: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (556.58)=PG 14: 1104.

¹⁹⁵ *Comm. in Rom.* 10.37.1-4: Hammond Bammel 10.37 (847.1-850.46)=PG 14: 1286-1287. In Greek, σατανα; *FragRom*, BZ, IX.

¹⁹⁶ *Comm. in Rom.* 2.7.4: Hammond Bammel 2.5 (126.268-271)=PG 14: 887; *Comm. in Rom.* 4.12.4: Hammond Bammel 4.12 (356.60-62)=PG 14: 1003; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.4.15: Hammond Bammel 7.2 (570.207-210)=PG 14: 1113; *Comm. in Rom.* 10.15.4: Hammond Bammel 10.15 (830.21-831.46)=PG 14: 1277.

evil spirits are involved in outer persecution and inner temptation, just as good spirits cheer human victories and suffer with human sin. Origen gives examples of spirit-adversaries: the spirit of unfaithfulness, the spirit of error, the spirit of infidelity, and the demon of dissension.¹⁹⁷ Although, in the end, God will help humans to crush these satans under their feet, there are times when, for example, one needs to be stirred out of negligence.¹⁹⁸ In every case, the work of these evil spirits accomplishes God's end. They, like other spirits, serve a pedagogical purpose for human beings.

2.3.3. The Spiritual Battle:

Spiritual Hosts of Wickedness in the Heavens

“For we are not contending against flesh and blood,
but against the principalities, against the powers, against
the world rulers of this present darkness, against the
spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

(Eph. 6:12)

However, Origen's spirit-world is still more complex. Although “spirit” tends to refer to beings who assist in God's pedagogy of the human being, there are some “spiritual” beings who seem directly opposed to the divine Spirit. They may operate as an initiation into the Spirit's School, or they may be only a further example of the homonymity of “spirit,” bearing no relationship to the educative function of other spirits, even those who punish and tempt human beings at God's behest.

Origen's clearest word for a purely evil being is *daemon* or δαίμων.¹⁹⁹ Just as “spirit” tends to refer to those participating in God's work, Origen uses “demon” only for those who oppose it. As he says in *Contra Celsum* 7.69, “in our opinion all demons have fallen from the way to goodness, and previously they were not demons; for the category of demons is one of those classes of

¹⁹⁷ *Comm. in Rom.* 10.37.4: Hammond Bammel 10:37 (849.27-850.46)=PG 14: 1287. See also the passages referenced above, page 46, note 73.

¹⁹⁸ Origen is commenting on Rom. 16:20 and using an example from the story about Solomon found in 1 Kings 11:14. *Comm. in Rom.* 10.37.1-4: Hammond Bammel 10.37 (847.1-849.31)=PG 14: 1286-1287.

¹⁹⁹ *Diabolus*/ δiάβολος, of course, fills a similar role.

beings which have fallen away from God.”²⁰⁰ “Angel” is, on the other hand, a more ambiguous term: “there are some angels of God and some of the devil.”²⁰¹

Like “spirit,” “demon” has a variety of meanings in the ancient world. Origen uses it only for evil beings, but earlier thinkers have a more flexible idea of its connotations.²⁰² The thought of Plutarch is representative of earlier Greek philosophy; his corpus speaks of “demon” as (1) the divine; (2) the souls of the deceased; (3) intermediate spiritual beings, neither good nor evil; (4) a personal guardian spirit.²⁰³ This last understanding of “demon,” firmly rooted in Plato’s Socrates,²⁰⁴ gives way, in later Stoicism, to primary notions of “demons” as supervisory spirits and especially evil beings, “whom the gods use as executioners and avengers” of the unjust.²⁰⁵ Rabbinic texts also tend to describe demons as God’s own servants, although they are also God’s enemies; demons disrupt God’s world but also serve God’s purposes in punishing sinners.²⁰⁶ Early Christians, insisting that demons have become entirely evil by their own choice, also say that they play a role in God’s plan for human beings.²⁰⁷

Origen uses “demon” rarely in the *Commentary on Romans*.²⁰⁸ The Latin translation contains only eleven references to *daemones*,

²⁰⁰ “κατὰ δὲ ἡμᾶς πάντες δαίμονες ἀποπεσόντες τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ ἄγαθὸν ὁδοῦ, πρότερον οὐκ ὄντες δαίμονες. καὶ ἔστιν εἶδος τῶν ἐκπεσόντων θεοῦ τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων.” *Cels.* 7.69 (SC 150: 174); Chadwick 452.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* 8.25.

²⁰² Everett Ferguson, *Demonology of the Early Christian World*, Symposium 12 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1984).

²⁰³ *Ibid.* 35.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 43.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 44-50. The quote, cited on Ferguson 50, is from Plutarch, *Roman Questions* 51. This notion that the gods themselves do not punish clearly parallels Origen’s own understanding in the *Commentary on Romans* that God knows good, but has nothing to do with evil.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 90-91, 94. Ferguson cites, for example, the *Midrash Rabbah*, *Numbers* 14:3 and *Midrash on the Psalms* 17:8.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 105-34.

²⁰⁸ Demon-language is no more prevalent in his other works. In his entire Greek corpus, there are only seventeen references, twelve of which are found in the *Contra Celsum*. At least half of these references are determined by Celsus’ own language.

although there are further uses of “evil angels” and “satans,” terms closely connected, for Origen, with demons. Origen’s few references make it clear that Christians have been set free of the demons by Jesus Christ and are only subject to them by their own free choice. In an allegorical interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan,²⁰⁹ he says:

For if you search carefully for who is our neighbor, you will learn in the Gospel that our neighbor is the one who came upon us while we were lying wounded by robbers and stripped by demons, and he placed us on his body as a beast of burden and returned us to the inn of the church and gave for our care and attention to the innkeeper—or to Paul himself or to each person who governs the church—the two denarii of the New and Old Testament; he promised to pay the expenses of our care.²¹⁰

As part of Jesus’ care for the wounds inflicted by demons, he also gives Christians the power to withstand demons through prayer and virtuous living.²¹¹ Origen associates demons with pagan worship,²¹² heretical teachings,²¹³ and vices.²¹⁴ However, the only specific vice to which he gives the name “demon” is the demon of

²⁰⁹ Luke 10: 29-37.

²¹⁰ “Nam si diligentius requiras qui sit proximus noster disces in euangelio illum esse proximum nostrum qui uenit et iacentes nos uulneratos a latronibus et nudatos a daemonibus iumento corporis sui superposuit et ad stabulum ecclesiae detulit et stabulario pro cura nostra et diligentia—uel ipsi Paulo uel omni qui ecclesiae praeest—duos denarios Noui ac Ueteris Testamenti ad nostrae curae concessit expensas.” *Comm. in Rom.* 9.31.2: Hammond Bammel 9.31 (757.24-31)=PG 14: 1231-1232.

²¹¹ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.2: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (609.18-610.36)=PG 14: 1137; *Comm. in Rom.* 9.15.1: Hammond Bammel 9.15 (740.8-741.13)=PG 14: 1221.

²¹² *Comm. in Rom.* 5.2.10: Hammond Bammel 5.2 (396.116-397.118)=PG 14: 1024; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.4.2: Hammond Bammel 6.4 (470.14-16)=PG 14: 1063.

²¹³ *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2.9: Hammond Bammel 9.2 (723.80-85)=PG 14: 1210; *Comm. in Rom.* 10.5.7: Hammond Bammel 10.5 (796.46-50)=PG 14: 1256.

²¹⁴ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.16.4: Hammond Bammel 1.19 (83.52-55)=PG 14: 863; *Comm. in Rom.* 9.42.3: Hammond Bammel 9.42 (780.32-781.45)=PG 14: 1246; *Comm. in Rom.* 10.37.4: Hammond Bammel 10.37 (849.27-850.46)=PG 14: 1287. See also *Jo.* 20.330-336.

dissension,²¹⁵ tied to heresy and unrest among Christians, and discussed by Origen in a group of “satans” sent by God to challenge human beings.

Despite Origen’s limited use of “demon,” the one term which he defines as always evil, he also uses both “angel” and “spiritual hosts” to describe evil beings. Although he has moved away from the ambiguity of the word δαίμων in early Greek philosophy, Origen retains a similar ambiguity in his use of other words for spiritual beings. There are scriptural passages that use spirit-language to describe evil beings, and these passages influence Origen’s own language. Ephesians 6:12 (*spiritalia nequitiae*, τὰ πνευματικά τῆς πονηρίας²¹⁶) helps to shape Origen’s references to spirits in the *Commentary on Romans*.²¹⁷ Apart from references to this passage, Origen rarely uses *spiritus* or πνεῦμα to designate the

²¹⁵ *Dissensionis daemonem*, see *Comm. in Rom.* 10.37.4: Hammond Bammel 10.37 (849.41-42)=PG 14: 1287.

²¹⁶ While *spiritalia*/πνευματικά is generally positive language for Origen, *nequitiae*/πονηρίας is terminology for the completely and voluntarily evil. As Henri Crouzel says of these words, “Dans l’homélie II sur le Psaume 36 Origène distingue la *nequitia* des autres péchés: le mot grec correspondant, cité lui aussi par Rufin, est πονηρία. Il désigne une malice spontanée et volontaire: ‘autre chose est de faire le mal par ignorance et d’être ainsi vaincu par le mal; autre chose est de faire le mal volontairement et en s’y appliquant: c’est là la *nequitia*. C’est pourquoi à bon droit le diable est appelé πονηρός, c’est-à-dire malin et mauvais.’” The quote is from *Hom. in Ps.* 36.2.4.1. See Crouzel, “Diable et Démons dans les Homélie d’Origène,” *BLE* 95 (1994): 321.

²¹⁷ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.16.4: Hammond Bammel 1.19 (83.48-49)=PG 14: 863; *Comm. in Rom.* 3.5.3: Hammond Bammel 3.2 (220.354-355)=PG 14: 937; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.12.9: Hammond Bammel 7.10 (607.108)=PG 14: 1135; *Frag. in Rom.* BZ XIII, 7-8; *Frag. in Rom.* JThS V, 12-13; *Frag. in Rom.* JThS XLIX, 4-5; *Frag. in Rom.* JThS LII, 35-36; *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.6: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (88.55-89.57)=PG 14: 866; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.17: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (370.237)=PG 14: 1011; *Comm. in Rom.* 10.15.3: Hammond Bammel 10.15 (830.26-27)=PG 14: 1276-1277. In Origen’s Greek corpus, there are 21 mentions of πνευματικά τῆς πονηρίας, all references to Eph. 6:12. See *Cels.* 8.34.37, *Fr. ex Princ.* 30.5, *Jo.* 10.29.182.7, *Or.* 26.3.3, *Or.* 26.3.9, *Or.* 26.5.10, *Or.* 29.2.17, *Fr. in Lc.* 197.3, *Hom. in Ex.* 222.33, *Comm. in Mt.* 17.2.68, *Comm. in I Cor.* 20.35, *Comm. in Eph.* 33.30, *Fr. in Ps.* 118.118, *Sel. in Ps.* 12.1601.48, *Sel. in Ps.* 12.1613.32, *Sel. in Ps.* 12.1653.15, *Exc. in Ps.* 17.141.20.

spirit-beings who war against God as well as human beings. These descriptions of “spiritual” evil beings who are opposed to God stand in stark contrast to Origen’s usual handling of spirit-language. Even as they show an inconsistency in his schema, they highlight his respect for the Scriptures, which surpasses any system of his own invention.

Seven passages in Rufinus’ translation cite these “spiritual hosts of wickedness;” two are paralleled by remaining Greek passages.²¹⁸ It is clear throughout that, despite their name, these “spiritual” hosts fight on the side of the “flesh” against the spirit.²¹⁹ In the first, in which Origen discusses Romans 1:18-19, he observes different kinds of wrath and different ways in which human beings experience it.²²⁰ God’s own wrath can come through evil angels,²²¹ through trials, like those of Job,²²² and even through one’s own conscience (i.e., spirit);²²³ in all these forms, wrath comes as a form of pedagogy upon those who sin knowingly. However, there is also wrath that is not from God, but from submitting to evil. Thus, for those who subject themselves to the “spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavens,” it is said that they receive punishment, or wrath, from heaven; this is not, however, God’s own wrath:

Or certainly because the spiritual hosts of wickedness against which we wrestle, which are said to be in the heavens, it follows that wrath is said to be thrown from heaven upon those who are conquered by them; as if we might say that fiery

²¹⁸ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.16.4: Hammond Bammel 1.19 (82.45-83.55)=PG 14: 863, paralleled by *Frag. in Rom.* BZ XIII, 7-8 and by *Frag. in Rom. JThS* V, 12-13; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.12.9: Hammond Bammel 7.10 (607.106-111)=PG 14: 1135-1136, paralleled by *Frag. in Rom. JThS* LII, 35-36. See also *Comm. in Rom.* 3.5.3: Hammond Bammel 3.2 (220.352-355)=PG 14: 937 and *Frag. in Rom. JThS* XLIX, 4-5.

²¹⁹ See *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.6: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (88.54-89.57)=PG 14: 866. Origen also uses them as an example of sin “outside” this world. *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.17: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (370.234-237)=PG 14: 1011.

²²⁰ As the two Greek fragments say, there is one wrath of God, and one of the devil and his angels. *Frag. in Rom.* BZ XIII and *Frag. in Rom. JThS* V.

²²¹ Ps. 78:49 (LXX 79:49).

²²² Job 6:4.

²²³ Rom. 2:5.

spears are brandished at them from there, and from there they receive wounds by which they fall into sins;...they bear wrath either from their vices and passions or from the demons to whom they have subjected themselves willingly.²²⁴

These spiritual powers of wickedness, then, are not doing God's work, even in punishment. Instead, submission to them brings the person face to face with the evil she is doing herself; this is a self-punishment, an experience of self-wrath in alienation from God.²²⁵

In another passage, Origen again cites Ephesians 6:12 to distinguish between God and evil beings. Quoting Romans 3:18, "There is no fear of God before their eyes,"²²⁶ Origen emphasizes that the fear of God precludes any other fear, including that of other spiritual powers:

One who fears God does not fear the powers of this age. And why do I speak about the powers of this age? One does not fear those principalities and powers and rulers of this world, nor the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavens. And that we may strengthen this by the authority of Paul himself, listen to how he speaks of human powers: "Do you wish, he says, not to fear power? Do what is good, and you will have praise from it." And the prophet says: "The Lord is my help, and I will not fear what a human may do to me." But it seems to me that the same prophet has thought about adverse spiritual powers when he says: "Many who subdue me throughout the day from the height will be afraid." And again: "If the armies stand together against me, my heart will not be afraid." Thus, it is a great and magnificent work to have the fear of God always

²²⁴ "Uel certe quia spiritalia nequitiae aduersum quae nobis certamen est in caelestibus esse dicuntur consequenter in eos qui ab his superantur ira de caelo dicitur iaculari; uelut si dicamus quia ignita in eos tela inde uibrantur et uulnera quibus in peccata corruunt inde suscipiunt;...iram uel uitiorum suorum passionumque uel daemonum quibus se sponte subdiderint perferunt." *Comm. in Rom.* 1.16.4: Hammond Bammel 1.19 (83.48-55)=PG 14: 863.

²²⁵ Similarly, Origen says, "it must be observed that in all of these, nowhere is God said to have destroyed anyone, but each one suffers that which destroys him from himself." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.8.5: Hammond Bammel 2.6 (133.50-52)=PG 14: 891.

²²⁶ "non est timor Dei ante oculos eorum" *Comm. in Rom.* 3.5.3: Hammond Bammel 3.2 (219.343)=PG 14: 936.

before the eyes of the heart, that fear which filled the rod which arose from the root of Jesse and the flower which grew up from his root; of which is said: “and he filled him with the spirit of fear of God.”²²⁷

This passage, like the one on God’s wrath, uses spirit-language (*spiritalia nequitiae in caelestibus; aduersis potestatibus spirituum*) to speak of beings who are opposed to God and are not assisting in God’s pedagogy. Of course, God works through the combat in which they are involved, using it to strengthen the struggling humans; yet these spiritual beings, as wholly wicked, are not doing God’s work in the way that punishing spirits do. The language of the Scriptures controls Origen’s word-choice here; if the Bible describes hosts of wickedness as “spiritual,” then Origen cannot depart from this terminology.

Two other passages use similar language, again showing that God is opposed to the spirits of wickedness in Ephesians 6:12. One Greek fragment of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* 8:31-32 points out that Christians will be hated for the sake of Jesus’ name, attacked not only by human beings but by the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavens.²²⁸ Another surviving Greek passage

²²⁷ “Qui Deum timet potestates saeculi non timet. Et quid dico de potestatibus saeculi? Nec illos principatus et potestates et mundi huius rectores neque spiritualia nequitiae in caelestibus timet. Et ut ipsius hoc Pauli auctoritate firmemus, audi quomodo dicit de humanis potestatibus: ‘uis inquit non timere potestatem? Fac quod bonum est et habebis laudem ex ea.’ Et profeta dicit: ‘Dominus mihi adiutor non timebo quid faciat mihi homo.’ De aduersis uero potestatibus spirituum idem profeta sensisse mihi uidetur ubi dicit: ‘multi qui debellant me de excelso per diem timebunt.’ Et iterum: ‘si consistant aduersum me castra non timebit cor meum.’ Opus ergo grande est et magnificum semper habere ante oculos cordis timorem Dei, illum timorem qui repleuit uirgam quae surrexit de radice Iessae et florem qui de radice eius ascendit; de quo dicitur: ‘et repleuit eum spiritus timoris Dei.’” *Comm. in Rom.* 3.5.3; Hammond Bammel 3.2 (220.352-366)=PG 14: 937.

²²⁸ “ἑώρα γὰρ κατὰ τὸ καὶ ἔσεσθε μισούμενοί ὑπὸ πάντων διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου ὡς πολλοὶ καθ’ ἡμῶν, καὶ οὐ μόνον ἄνθρωποι ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ πρὸς ἃ ἡ πάλῃ, ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἐξογισίαι καὶ κοσμοκράτορες τοῦ σκότους τούτου καὶ τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις καὶ αὐτὸς ὁλος ὁ πλεονεκτεῖν ἡμᾶς θέλων Σατανᾶς.” *Frag. in Rom. JThS* XLIX. Rufinus’ version of the commentary does not include this

speaks of the attempts of the ἄρχων of this world and other powers to separate humans from the love of God in Jesus Christ; however, neither the “heights”—the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavens—nor the “depths”—those under the earth—are able to prey on the soul of a human being.²²⁹ Similarly, Rufinus’ text of the *Commentary on Romans* 8:38-39 speaks of the unsuccessful attempts of wicked powers to separate human beings from God’s love:

Likewise both the height and the depth attack us, as also David says: “many who subdue me from on high”; doubtless when he was driven by the spiritual hosts of wickedness from the heavens; and again he says: “from the depths I cry to you, Lord”; when he is attacked by these who have been cut off by hell, the spirits of gehenna.”²³⁰

These references to the “spiritual” hosts of wickedness, though opposed to God in every way, are structured by scriptural language. An understanding of Origen’s theory of “homonymity” in the Scriptures helps to explain how these beings can be “spiritual.” The word “spiritual,” in these cases, takes on a negative meaning, without affecting Origen’s otherwise positive understanding of “spirit” and “spiritual.”

2.4. CONCLUSION

Origen’s picture of the spirit-world reflects the influences of many earlier thinkers. He adapts from the Stoics the idea that spirit is both cosmic and personal, presenting his view of God’s Spirit as both the

reference in his discussion of Rom. 8:31-32, although Greek passage is certainly similar to other passages in Rufinus’ text.

²²⁹ “μήποτε <οὐν> ἡ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ ἐπιβουλεύεται ὑπὸ μὲν ὑψώματος κατὰ τὰ ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ὑπὸ δὲ βάθους κατὰ τὰ καταχθόνια.” *Frag. in Rom. JThS* LII. “καταχθόνια” is a reference to Phil. 2.10.

²³⁰ “Similiter et altitudo et profundum impugnat nos, sicut et David dicit: ‘multi qui debellant me de alto;’ sine dubio cum ab spiritalibus nequitiae de caelestibus urgetur; et iterum dicit: ‘de profundis clamaui ad te Domine;’ cum ab his qui inferno deputati sunt et gehennae spiritibus impugnatur.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.12.9: Hammond Bammel 7.10 (607.106-110)=PG 14: 1135-1136. *Comm. in Rom.* 10.15.3: Hammond Bammel 10.15 (830.26-27)=PG 14: 1276-1277 also describes these spiritual hosts of wickedness as attacking human beings and all that is good.

force behind a vast network of spirits in combat and the intimate instructor present within each human being. Although Origen also sees most spirits as material, albeit in a rarefied way, he separates his spiritual physics sharply from Stoicism with respect to God's Spirit, leaning more towards the spiritualized notions of his Gnostic and Jewish predecessors and contemporaries. Origen's descriptions of spiritual combat are clear descendents of earlier Jewish and Christian thought. In the tradition of the *Testament of Reuben*, he uses "spirit" and "demon" language for virtues and vices.

Primarily, however, Origen's *Commentary on Romans* presents a view of the spirit-world based on scriptural exegesis. His recognition of "homonym" words in the Scriptures helps him to cite "spirit" in a number of different ways without disrupting either his view of God as Spirit or his pedagogical schema for each human being.

In the commentary, the Spirit-School begins with the spirit-combat. This combat is important for the development of freedom, both for humans and for the spirits themselves. It is crucial that each person journeys toward God with real striving; Origen worries frequently that Christians may become lax in their efforts.²³¹ Human movement toward participation in God is genuine development and maturity. The student in the Spirit's School must work hard in order to study with the Spirit, or all the Spirit's teaching will be meaningless to her.

"Spirit," Origen says, is used allegorically for God, who cannot be described by human language. God, as Spirit, is not the same type of being as any of the diverse spirits who lead humans to participation in the Spirit of God. The word "spirit," like all words applied to God, is only a shadow and an enigma. However, in an ultimate sense, it is the other, lesser spirits who are the shadows. Ministering spirits, for example, reflect only the will of God's Spirit. The diversity of spirits is the greatest of allegories. The human spirit, the good spirits, and even evil punishing spirits present a parable of spirit, an allegorical story leading its hearers to the reality of God's own Spirit. It is fitting that the spirit-universe in which humans study and struggle is itself shaped by the Teacher at its center.

²³¹ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 3.9.4: Hammond Bammel 3.6 (249.57-60)=PG 14: 953.

CHAPTER III:

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOD'S *EXITUS* INTO THE WORLD

As the head Teacher of the pedagogical spirit-world, the Holy Spirit is the center of God's contact with humanity. Origen shows that, in reaching out from God to creation, the Spirit shares in the creative and salvific work of the Father and the Son, carrying out that work among the saints. With every created spirit in potential intimate relation to the Holy Spirit, this Spirit is well situated to be God's outreach to those who choose to become truly spiritual beings.

Despite this, some scholars¹ in the past century have spoken dismissively of the role of the Holy Spirit in Origen's theology, agreeing with Adolph von Harnack² that Origen only makes reference to the Spirit to echo the rule of faith and that the Spirit is not essential to his theology. Pavel Florensky asserts that "The Holy Spirit is in fact not necessary to the profound metaphysical analysis of Origen's system; it is...a 'false window' for the sake of the symmetry of the structure, and nothing more."³ W. D. Hauschild reads Origen's theology as fundamentally binitarian⁴ and even states that Origen could have described the process of sanctification without mention of the Holy Spirit.⁵

¹ See the summary provided by Kilian McDonnell in "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine," 8-9.

² Harnack 2: 357.

³ Pavel Aleksandrovich Florensky, "On the Holy Spirit," *Ultimate Questions: An Anthology of Modern Russian Religious Thought*, ed. Alexander Schmemmann (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1977), 143.

⁴ Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, *Gottes Geist und der Mensch: Studien zur frühchristlichen Pneumatologie*, BEvTh 63 (München: C. Kaiser Verlag, 1972), 140-41.

⁵ Ibid. 148-150.

Other scholars, rather than focusing on the importance of the Holy Spirit for Origen, have examined the specifically “trinitarian” nature of Origen’s theology. Charles Kannengiesser, for example, argues that the Trinity is basic to the whole structure of Origen’s thought.⁶ Joseph Trigg, on the other hand, asserts that the Trinity as such was not a central concern for Origen, although the Holy Spirit was important to his theology.⁷

It is not the purpose of this project to address all of these scholarly concerns. In fact, in order to understand the pneumatology of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans*, this chapter sets aside post-Nicene questions about the specifically “trinitarian” nature of Origen’s theology as well as anachronistic critiques of his “subordinationism.” Origen’s view of God involves Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but he does not define the three clearly in a way that can be compared to later doctrine. To read Origen through the spectrum of Nicene criteria is to remove him from his own context. Origen’s whole view of reality is different in fundamental ways from that of Nicene orthodoxy. For example, while Origen sees an ontological divide between spirit and matter (with human and divine spirit on the same side of the divide), Christians of the Nicene period see a fundamental divide between Creator and creature.⁸

Despite the procrustean attempts of some scholars to categorize Origen’s pneumatology in ways that mean nothing to an

⁶ Charles Kannengiesser, “Divine Trinity and the Structure of *Peri Archon*,” *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, ed. Charles Kannengiesser and William L. Petersen (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1988), 231-49; “Écriture et théologie trinitaire d’Origène,” *Origeniana Sexta*, ed. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 351-64.

⁷ “Actually the word ‘Trinity’ is anachronistic when speaking of Origen’s doctrine since it implies a more fully developed doctrine than the church in his time proclaimed. ‘Triad’ is the word Origen used...He thus explained the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Son on the analogy of the relation of the Son to the Father in terms of separate hypostatic existence, eternal generation, and subordination. The doctrine of the Trinity, however, was not one of Origen’s major interests, and he made little contribution to the church’s understanding of it.” Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church* (Atlanta: J. Knox, 1983), 103.

⁸ See Russel Moroziuk, “Origen and the Nicene Orthodoxy,” *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 488-93.

early third century context, a close reading of his texts reveals a powerful theology of the Holy Spirit. It may not be the theology of the Spirit for which the post-Nicene reader is searching, but, left to speak on its own, it has a distinctive voice and paints an unmistakable picture of the Spirit's activity in the world.

The Holy Spirit is at the very roots of Origen's theology, playing a fundamental role in the relationship between God and every human being.⁹ For Origen, the Spirit is fundamental to both God's *exitus* into the world and humanity's *reditus* to God. The Spirit, far from being a mere requirement of the *regula fidei*, has a distinct divine role in God's outreach to human beings and in their transformation.

This chapter will explore the way in which Origen's *Commentary on Romans* treats the place of the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation, focusing both on the unique work of the Holy Spirit and on the way in which this work relates to that of the Father and the Son. Because of Origen's willingness to allow for a range of various theological possibilities, and because of his emphasis on biblical language, the Spirit's economic role is not identified by simple definitions. Just as Origen's precision in distinguishing certain spirits from others does not cause him to elaborate, for example, the differences between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit which contains it,¹⁰ his acknowledgment of a central role for the Holy Spirit does not cause him to address all the questions that his assertions leave in his reader's mind. If the Father and Son are spirit, as Origen says, how is the Holy Spirit unique? If the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it seems, share characteristics and missions, how is the Christian to distinguish their work in the economy?

⁹ George Berthold comments that one who agrees with Harnack that the Spirit was not an essential part of Origen's theology misunderstands "what Origen is trying to do. In seeking for a penetration of the letter of Scripture to its spirit, to ascend from carnal to spiritual realities, Origen is engaging in a trinitarian enterprise made possible by the Holy Spirit whose goal was divinization of the Christian and eternal bliss with the three divine Persons." See Berthold, "Origen and the Holy Spirit," *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 447.

¹⁰ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.3: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (611.49-50)=PG 14: 1138. See discussion above on page 66-67.

Although Origen's tendency to leave open questions such as these can frustrate theologians' interest in clear classifications, his unwillingness to limit the Spirit to one role serves as an important reminder of the multifaceted nature of the Spirit, who relates to Father and Son, as well as to each human being, in a wide range of ways. The Spirit known in the lives of Christians and in the revelation of the Scriptures, like the Spirit described by Origen, is a complicated one, beyond simple definitions and categories.

Acknowledging the complexities of attempting to systematize Origen's pneumatology, this chapter sets out to examine the ways in which Origen sees the Holy Spirit reaching out to the world. This exploration helps to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit, complex and difficult to define, has an essential role in Origen's thought. More than that, the Holy Spirit described by Origen is a vital figure involved in a tapestry of activity in human lives. This vitality in Origen's descriptions stems, in part, from the scriptural basis of his theology. It stands in contrast to the flatness of a mere citation of doctrinal statements.

In reading the *Commentary on Romans*, this chapter will search for Origen's answers to the following questions:

Who is the Holy Spirit?

What is the role of the Spirit in the economy of salvation?

How does the work of the Spirit relate to that of the Father and to that of the Son?

Origen approaches these questions as a man of the third century, speaking of the Spirit in his own voice and attempting to reflect faithfully the Holy Spirit who confronts him in his reading of the Scriptures and in his experience of Christian life. This Spirit whom Origen encounters is central to God's outreach into the world, working with those healed by Jesus and leading them on ever-deeper paths of holiness.

In order to explore the Spirit as God's *exitus* into the world, this chapter first describes the general structure of Origen's pneumatology, made explicit in *On First Principles* and the *Commentary on John* and clearly reflected in the *Commentary on Romans*. Then, to appreciate the way in which the Spirit permeates Origen's work, we explicate three different metaphors for the Spirit present in the *Commentary on Romans*: Cherub, Wedding Ring, and Teacher. Each of the three metaphors shows (i) that, for Origen,

the Holy Spirit is the link between God and humanity, crucial even to the person of Christ and (ii) that to speak of the Holy Spirit, Origen speaks of the action of both God and human beings in the world. The discussion of each metaphor ranges among many major themes of Origen's theology, illustrating how firmly the Holy Spirit is interwoven into Origen's thought.

3.1. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ORIGEN'S CORPUS

Origen's *Commentary on Romans* addresses the identity of the Spirit and the Spirit's work in a particularly focused way, as Origen reflects on the Pauline epistles through the lens of Romans. A close reading of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* adds depth to the picture of the Holy Spirit provided throughout his writings. However, such a reading of the *Commentary on Romans* must first note the outline of his pneumatology that Origen provides in certain other works.

On First Principles 1.3¹¹ and the *Commentary on John* 2.73-88¹² are important for understanding Origen's pneumatology. These texts present a fairly consistent picture of the particular roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The harmony of these two texts with regard to the Holy Spirit is especially significant because the second book of the *Commentary on John* is preserved in Greek, while *On First Principles* is primarily extant in the Latin translation of Rufinus, despite the existence of some Greek fragments. *On First Principles* 1.3 provides an explanation of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as Origen finds it revealed in the Scriptures. Origen clearly defines the Holy Spirit as divine, rather than as part of the created order. He says that the Holy Spirit, like the Father and the Son, is uncreated¹³ and had no need to develop into the Holy Spirit.¹⁴

¹¹ SC 252: 142-164.

¹² SC 120: 252-262.

¹³ See *Princ.* 1.3.3 (SC 252: 148). N.B., however, that Origen cites his "Hebrew master" as interpreting the "two seraphim" of Isaiah 6:2 and "the two living creatures" of Habukkuk 3:2 (LXX) as Christ and the Holy Spirit. Ibid. 1.3.4 (SC 252: 148-150); Butterworth 32. *Princ.* 4.3.14 (SC 268: 394); Butterworth 311 elaborates on this interpretation, saying that "since the beginning or the end of all things could not be comprehended by any except our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, this was the reason why Isaiah spoke of...two seraphim only..."

¹⁴ Ibid. 1.3.4 (SC 252: 150-152).

Although Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work salvation together,¹⁵ as is evidenced by the need for all three names in the baptismal formula,¹⁶ each nonetheless has activity particular to himself.¹⁷ These activities reflect how fundamental each is to the ordering of the universe, mirroring the hierarchy in which both the Son and the Spirit derive their existence from the Father.¹⁸ The Father, who is the foundation of all being, gives the gift of life to the whole creation, while the Son bestows the gift of reason on rational creatures.¹⁹ It is thus that any human being can know something of God the Father through creation and that any rational being may come to an awareness of the Son through both the Old and the New Testaments.²⁰ The Holy Spirit, however, gives spiritual gifts only to the saints.²¹ Because the Holy Spirit works among the holy, within a more rarefied sphere, knowledge of the Holy Spirit is possible only through special divine inspiration.²²

¹⁵ Ibid. 1.3.5 (SC 252: 152).

¹⁶ Ibid. 1.3.2 (SC 252: 146). Origen here cites Matt.28:19.

¹⁷ Note that, as Mark Julian Edwards says, "Recent scholarship has made it impossible to sustain the hackneyed notion that the Christian Trinity is a Platonic triad...the Holy Spirit...is at the same time more restricted and more powerful in his workings" than the Plotinian Soul. Origen's theology of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is not strictly Platonist. *Origen Against Plato*, 74. However, Edwards acknowledges the possibilities of comparing with Proclus' *Elements of Theology* Origen's notion of Father working with all creation, Son with all rational beings, and Spirit with the saints. See *Origen Against Plato*, 108.

¹⁸ On the Son's subordination to the Father, see, for example, *Cels.* 8.15 (SC 150: 206-208).

¹⁹ *Princ.* 1.3.7 (SC 252: 160).

²⁰ As Origen points out, some "Greek or barbarian" philosophers have also discerned the existence of the Son as the word or reason of God. Ibid. 1.3.1 (SC 252: 144).

²¹ Ibid. 1.3.5 (SC 252: 152-154) and 1.3.7 (SC 252: 158). Along similar lines, Edwards points out that Irenaeus says that "while the reprobate possess a soul and hence the image of God, only the elect have been refashioned in his likeness by the Spirit." See Edwards, *Origen Against Plato*, 75.

²² "But no one except those who are familiar with the law and the prophets, or those who profess their belief in Christ, could have even a suspicion of the personal existence of the Holy Spirit." "De subsistentia uero spiritus sancti ne suspicionem quidem ullam habere quis potuit

Matthew 12:32, which speaks of forgiveness if one blasphemes against the Son, but not if one blasphemes against the Spirit, is important to Origen's understanding that the Holy Spirit works only with the sanctified, rather than with all creation, as the Father does, and with all rational beings, as the Son does. Both in *On First Principles* and in the *Commentary on John*, Origen's explanation of this passage is a significant part of his argument that the Holy Spirit plays a role only in the lives of the already-holy. *On First Principles* speaks of the "tremendous majesty of the Holy Spirit" that might be inferred by some from the impossibility of forgiveness when one sins against him.²³ In reality, as the *Commentary on John* explains,

Perhaps it is not at all because the Holy Spirit is more honored than the Christ that there is no forgiveness for the one who has sinned against him, but because all spiritual beings have a share in Christ, to whom pardon is given when they turn from their sins. But it is reasonable that there is no pardon for those who have been considered worthy of the Holy Spirit when, with such a help toward the good, they still fall away and turn from the counsels of the Spirit which is in them.²⁴

Limited, in a sense, in scope of influence, the Holy Spirit is more fragile than the Father and the Son. Those handpicked few who are sanctified by the Spirit should not fall away from holiness; more is expected of the advanced students than of those who have never moved beyond the most basic knowledge.²⁵

praeter eos, qui in lege et prophetis uersati sunt, uel eos, qui se Christo credere profitentur." *Princ.* 1.3.1 (SC 252: 144); Butterworth 29.

²³ "Quis non obstupescat, quanta maiestas sit spiritus sancti, cum eum qui dixerit uerbum in filium hominis, audiat sperare ueniam posse, eum uero qui in spiritum sanctum blasphemauerit, ueniam non habere neque in praesenti saeculo neque in futuro?" Ibid. 1.3.2 (SC 252: 146); Butterworth 30.

²⁴ "Καὶ μήποτε 'οὐ πάντως διὰ τὸ τιμιώτερον εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ 'οὐ γίνεται ἄφεσις τῷ 'εἰς ἑαυτὸ ἡμαρτηκότι, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ Χριστοῦ μὲν πάντα μετέχειν τὰ λογικά, 'οἱς δίδοται συγγνώμη μεταβαλλομένοις ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων, τοῦ δὲ ἁγίου πνεύματος τοὺς κατηξιωμένους μηδεμιᾶς εὐλογον εἶναι συγγνώμης τυχεῖν, μετὰ τηλικαύτης καὶ τοιαύτης συμπνοίας τῆς 'εἰς τὸ καλὸν ἔτι ἀποπίπτοντας καὶ ἐκτρεπομένους τὰς τοῦ ἐνυπάρχοντος πνεύματος συμβουλίας." *Jo.* 2.80 (SC 120: 258); Heine I.115.

²⁵ This fragility of the Spirit is the reason why the Son, rather than the Spirit, became incarnate. As Origen says, redemption should have

Origen's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* provides further evidence for his understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, as he focuses his discussion on the letters of Paul. As chapter II discussed, all created spirits exist, in a certain sense, vis-à-vis the Holy Spirit.²⁶ The Holy Spirit itself exists in relation to the spiritual hierarchy of the Father and the Son. Exploration of this relationship enhances a study of both Origen's pneumatology and his doctrine of God.

Throughout the *Commentary on Romans*, Origen speaks of the Holy Spirit as uncreated. As he speaks about the work of the Spirit, he repeatedly places him with the Father and the Son, distinguishing all three from the created order. Only these three should receive creaturely worship; "we...follow and adore no creature, but the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, so that we do not err in our worship."²⁷ Speaking against the Marcionites, Origen makes the accusation "that certain people, understanding poorly the 'newness of the Spirit,'" have interpreted this phrase to mean that "the Spirit is new." As Origen points out, "the same Spirit is in the law, the same in the Gospels, and the same always with the Father and the Son, and the same always is and was and will be, like the Father and the Son."²⁸ Furthermore, when he speaks of the groaning of every creature on behalf of the others, he describes, as something separate, the groaning of even the divine

been the work of the Holy Spirit, but only the Son was able to endure it. Thus, both the Father and the Spirit sent the Son into the world, and the Spirit descended to share in the work of the incarnate Son. See *Jo.* 2.81-83 (SC 120: 258-260).

²⁶ See above, pages 44-49.

²⁷ "Nos autem qui nullam creaturam sed patrem et filium et Spiritum Sanctum colimus et adoramus sicut non erramus in cultu..." *Comm. in Rom.* 1.18.10: Hammond Bammel 1.21 (91.105-107)=PG 14:867.

²⁸ "Nouitatem sane spiritus scio quosdam male intellegentes illuc traxisse ut dicerent nouum esse spiritum, tamquam qui ante non fuerit nec ueteribus innotuerit, et nesciunt se in hoc grauissime blasphemare. Ipse enim spiritus est in lege, ipse in euangelis, ipse semper cum patre et filio est et semper est et erat et erit sicut pater et filius. Non ergo ipse nouus est, sed credentes innouat cum eos a ueteribus malis ad nouam uitam et nouam obseruantiam Christi religionis adducit et spiritales ex carnalibus facit." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.19: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (496.247-255)=PG 14:1076.

nature in the Holy Spirit.²⁹ It is clear that only the Son and Spirit can know God fully and serve as counselors to God; no creature, Origen says, is able to do either of these things.³⁰

The action of the Holy Spirit plays a significant role in the *Commentary on Romans*, as Origen speaks of the work of the Spirit in the lives of those who are holy, already healed by the Logos made flesh. It is Christ who “died for the impious, when we were still weak...;—however, the Holy Spirit does not now intercede for the impious, but for the saints; and he intercedes not according to the flesh, but according to God.”³¹ The work of the Spirit is in the lives of those already healed by the Son. The Son is the Doctor of sinners and the Spirit the Teacher and Sanctifier of saints.

* * *

EXCURSUS: *TRINITAS* IN RUFINUS' TRANSLATION

This outline of Origen's pneumatology, speaking of the Spirit in relation to the Father and the Son, raises questions about the “trinitarian” nature of Origen's theology. Although this chapter is not concerned with defending Origen as a “trinitarian” theologian, it is not possible to ignore the questions completely, insofar as *trinitas* language in the Latin translation of the *Commentary on Romans* may impact a study of the commentary's pneumatology. Any reader of Origen in Rufinus' translation must acknowledge that the language and ideas of the post-Nicene theologian may have crept into Origen's text, influencing his rendering of passages about the

²⁹ “Ne inquit parum putetis quod omnis nobiscum congemescit et condolet creatura, ne parum uideatur quod nos ipsi gemimus pro laboribus uestris, etiam diuinae ipsi naturae erga agones nostros...inest quidam miserationis affectus et ipse spiritus adiuuat infirmitatem nostram.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.2: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (578.12-17)=PG 14:1118.

³⁰ *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.6: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (708.82-94)=PG 14: 1201.

³¹ “Tantum quod ille pro impiis mortuus est—sic enim et ipse Paulus ostendit cum dicit: ‘adhuc enim Christus cum infirmi essemus secundum tempus pro impiis mortuus est;’—Sanctus autem Spiritus non pro impiis iam interpellat sed pro sanctis; et interpellat non secundum carnem sed secundum Deum, Christus autem non secundum Deum mortuus dicitur sed secundum carnem.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.7: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (582.104-110)=PG 14: 1121.

Holy Spirit. A discussion of Origen's pneumatology, then, should both be aware of appearances of *trinitas* in the text and be wary of putting too much weight on them.

Although the Greek *τριάς* appears in Christian theology before Origen,³² there are few occurrences of it in the Greek of Origen's corpus.³³ Rufinus himself admits that he has altered passages about the Trinity in *On First Principles*, stating in his preface,

Wherever...I have found in his books anything contrary to the reverent statements made by him about the Trinity in other places, I have either omitted it as a corrupt and interpolated passage, or reproduced it in a form which agrees with the doctrine which I have often found him affirming elsewhere.³⁴

In the *Commentary on Romans*, Rufinus' Latin translation contains the word *trinitas* thirteen times, while the extant Greek fragments hold no form of *τριάς*.³⁵ A brief look at these mentions of the Trinity shows how Rufinus is employing the word *trinitas*. Since these passages are part of the larger landscape of the pneumatology of the *Commentary on Romans*, it is necessary to note them as a preliminary to engaging in a close reading of the

³² Theophilus of Antioch (fl.180) speaks of the *τριάς* of God, his Logos, and, his Sophia. "...τύποι 'εἰσὶν τῆς τριάδος, τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ λόγου 'αυτοῦ καὶ τῆς σοφίας 'αυτοῦ." Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyicum*, 2.15, ed. and tr. Robert M. Grant (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 52-53.

³³ An interesting exception is found in *Hom. in Jos.* 3.2 (PG 12: 837-839), which contains an extended passage that speaks of the Trinity explicitly and uses the symbolism of the number three to represent perfection. This passage, part of which is preserved in Procopius, *Cat. In Jos.* 87.1.997A, indicates that trinitarian language in Origen may not be only the addition of Rufinus. See Barbara J. Bruce's footnote 24 in FaCh 105, 44.

³⁴ "Sicubi ergo nos in libris eius aliquid contra id inuenimus, quod ab ipso in ceteris locis pie de trinitate fuerat definitum, uelut adulteratum hoc et alienum aut praetermisimus aut secundum eam regulam protulimus, quam ab ipso frequenter inuenimus infirmatam." *Princ.* praef. Ruf. 3 (SC 252: 72); Butterworth lxiii.

³⁵ However, Franz Heinrich Kettler suggests that Rufinus may have used "trinitas" to replace, not *τριάς*, but references to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. See *Der ursprüngliche Sinn der Dogmatik des Origenes* (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1966), 36, footnote 156.

pneumatology of the text. Although these passages speak of the Trinity, Rufinus' word choice should not encourage a Nicene reading of Origen's pneumatology. At the same time, while we cannot draw theological significance from the specific appearance of *trinitas* in these passages, the passages may yet convey Origen's general intent. For consideration, the passages are the following:

1. *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.4: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (238.73-239.76)=PG 14: 947: "...since the same apostle says about Christ that he is the mediator of God and humanity, it seems to me that between God and humans, the middle is this soul, which is certainly inferior to the nature of the Trinity..."³⁶
2. *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.4: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (239.90-95)=PG 14: 948: "[Christ's] length signifies that which tends to be joined to God and the Trinity; his width that which abides among humans who are accustomed to walk on the broad and wide way; and thus he is called by the right name of mediator, since as we have said, his holy soul was the certain middle ground between the divinity of the Trinity and the fragility of humanity."³⁷
3. *Comm. in Rom.* 3.11.2: Hammond Bammel 3.8 (257.13-16)=PG 14: 957: "...we say that faith in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is whole, full, and perfect, which professes that there is nothing diverse, nothing inconsistent or extraneous in the Trinity."³⁸

³⁶ "quoniam dicit idem apostolus de Christo quod Dei et hominum mediator est uidetur mihi inter Deum et hominem media haec esse anima quae inferior quidem sit a trinitatis natura..."

³⁷ "Longitudo illud significat quod tendit ad Deum trinitatique sociatur; latitudo quod inter homines qui latam spatiosamque uiam intercedere soleant conuersatur; et ideo mediatoris recte nomine nuncupatur quia ut diximus anima haec sancta media quaedam fuit inter diunitatem trinitatis et fragilitatem humanitatis."

³⁸ "autem fidem dicimus in patrem et filium et Spiritum Sanctum integram plenam perfectam quae nihil diuersam nihil discrepans aut extraneum in trinitate profitetur."

4. *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.7: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (426.83-84)=PG 14: 1039: "...certainly it would not be held as a legitimate baptism unless it were under the name of the Trinity."³⁹
5. *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.9: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (427.113-428.126)=PG 14: 1040: "And see if we can spend three days buried with Christ when we attain the full knowledge of the Trinity; for the Father is light, and in his light, which is the Son, we see the light of the Holy Spirit. But we also spend the three nights when we destroy the father of darkness and ignorance with the deceit which is born from him—for he is a liar, as is his father, and when he lies, he says what is his own—but also, in the third place, we have destroyed the spirit of error, who inspires the false prophets, so that they, whom the Lord did not send, would say 'the Lord says this.' In fact, we destroy and trample them if we have been buried to Christ also according to what he himself says: 'Behold, I have given you the power of treading on serpents and scorpions, and on every power of the enemy.' Thus each of these, individually, is contrary to the Trinity, as night is to day, as darkness is to light, as deceit is to truth."⁴⁰
6. *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.3: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (611.50-52)=PG 14: 1138: [About Paul] "...which

³⁹ "cum utique non habeatur legitimum baptisma nisi sub nomine trinitatis."

⁴⁰ "Et uide si possumus tres dies consepulti Christo facere cum plenam trinitatis scientiam capimus; lux est enim pater et in lumine eius qui est filius lumen uidemus Spiritum Sanctum. Facimus autem et tres noctes cum tenebrarum et ignorantiae patrem una cum mendacio quod ex eo natum est—et mendax est sicut pater eius et cum loquitur mendacium de suis propriis loquitur—sed et tertio loco spiritum erroris destruimus qui inspirit pseudopropetas ut dicant haec dicit Dominus quos Dominus non misit. Destruimus enim haec et conculcamus si consepulti sumus Christo etiam secundum illud quod ipse dicit: 'ecce dedi uobis potestatem calcandi super serpentes et scorpiones, et super omnem uirtutem inimici.' Quae singular ita sunt contraria trinitati ut nox diei ut tenebrae luci ut mendacium ueritati."

heavens, I ask, which thrones, which minds so full of celestial virtues could encompass the whole Trinity in such spacious rooms!"⁴¹

7. *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.9: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (615.150-154)=PG 14: 1141: "Therefore, if the Son of God is said to be above all things and the Holy Spirit is said to contain all things, but God the Father is clearly shown to be the one from whom all things are, then the nature and substance of the Trinity is one, which is above all things."⁴²
8. *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.7: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (708.94-97)=PG 14: 1201: "Thus you see that Paul speaks about creatures in the present chapter in these words which he says: 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?'—but he exempts the nature of the Trinity..."⁴³
9. *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.9: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (709.107-116)=PG 14: 1202: "You see how in these last words he shows that, in all the things which has said above, he has separated the mystery of the Trinity... through these things he designates that the providence of the Trinity is in all things..."⁴⁴
10. *Comm. in Rom.* 10.9.2: Hammond Bammel 10.9 (812.24-25)=PG 14: 1266: "...someone might seem

⁴¹ "Qui quaeso caeli qui throni quae amplissimae uirtutum caelestium mentes tam amplis sedibus totam poterunt capere trinitatem?"

⁴² "Si ergo filius Deus super omnia dicitur et Spiritus Sanctus continere omnia memoratur Deus autem pater est ex quo omnia euidenter ostenditur naturam trinitatis et substantiam unam esse quae est super omnia."

⁴³ "Uides ergo quod Paulus in praesenti capitulo in his qui dicit: 'quis enim cognouit sensum Domini aut quis illi consiliarius fuit?' de creaturis dicat; naturam uero Trinitatis excipiat..."

⁴⁴ "Uides quomodo in ultimis ostendit quod in omnibus quae supra dixit segregauerit mysterium Trinitatis...per haec designat in omnibus esse prouidentiam Trinitatis"

at last to be full of all peace if he believed in the fullness of the Trinity.”⁴⁵

These passages, in general, are not dependent for their meaning on a Nicene understanding of “Trinity.” In almost all of them, “Trinity” could easily replace a more general reference to divinity. This is clear from the Latin passages themselves and may also be seen in the Greek for the longer cherubim passage from which #1 and #2 come, which has been found in the Tura papyrus. The Greek passage contains no word for the Trinity, instead speaking of “the divine nature” (“τῆς θεϊότητος”).⁴⁶

Of these Latin passages, only two move beyond a simple use of “Trinity” for “divinity” or “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” In passage #5, the number three plays a significant exegetical role in the interpretation of the three days of burial with Christ and the three nights with the father of darkness. It is characteristic for Origen to evoke the symbolism of the number three in this way.⁴⁷ In addition, passage #5 contains the line: “for the Father is light, and in his light, who is the Son, we see the light of the Holy Spirit.” This line is shaped by scriptural language, since Psalm 36:9 reads “in your light we see light.” The two references to “Trinity” themselves remain generic ones to divinity; “the full knowledge of the Trinity” could be “the full knowledge of God,” and the contrast of the Trinity with the powers of the enemy is a straightforward contrast of God and the devil. Passage #7 also raises questions with its statement that “the nature and the substance of the Trinity is one, which is above all things.” It is important to note that passage #7, like #6, is part of a longer section which Rufinus may have needed to construct without access to any Greek text.⁴⁸ The

⁴⁵ “ut ita demum quis repletus uideatur omni pace si in plenitudine crediderit Trinitatis”

⁴⁶ *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 158, 15. Although the larger Greek passage ties the meaning of the cherubim to the divine nature, the specific passage does not parallel either of those in which the Latin translation gives “trinitas.”

⁴⁷ E.g., *Comm. in Mt.* 11.6, which interprets Jesus’ three days in the tomb as representing the struggles of the spiritual life. See also *ibid.* 12.20.

⁴⁸ Hammond Bammel believes that Rufinus may have lacked the Greek for Origen’s commentary on Rom. 9:1-19 and Rom. 12:16-14:10a. It appears that he constructed the commentary for these parts of Romans

reader of this passage must be very cautious about construing it as part of a discussion that postdated Origen. At the same time, reading "Trinity" as "God" here produces a statement in line with Origen's overall theology, which emphasizes God's oneness and transcendence.⁴⁹

While it is important to recognize Rufinus' handiwork in the Latin text of the commentary and thus to read "Trinity" language with care, the passages in which he uses this language do not seem otherwise laden with fifth century ideas about the doctrine of God. A study of Origen's pneumatology need not avoid these passages but rather handle them with the care required by any such translation.

* * *

Anachronistic "trinitarian" terminology aside, Origen's theology involves the activity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are motivated by divine love for the world. The Spirit works particularly with the holy, those already converted by the Son, and leads them on their journey of return to God. In this work, the Spirit is revealed as necessary to the process of sanctification, which involves living out a good life in the world.

3.2. IMAGES FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

To witness the pervasiveness of the Holy Spirit in Origen's theology, we will consider Origen's choice of metaphorical language in discussing the Spirit. Generally, Origen's language for God stems from his reading of the Scriptures, although it is not strictly dependent on it. The *Commentary on Romans* contains a number of different metaphors for both the Father and the Son; Origen uses agricultural, medical, and judicial language for them.⁵⁰ One notable

by using other texts of Origen to which he had access. Hammond Bammel discusses this in detail in *Römerbrieftext*, 58-104.

⁴⁹ See Eric Osborn, "Origen and Justification: The Good Is One," *ABR* 24 (1976):18-29. Helpful texts, as noted by Osborn, include *Cels.* 5.11 and *Jo.* 2.13.

⁵⁰ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 1.13.4: Hammond Bammel 1.15 (76.54)=PG 14:859 (the Father as *agricola*); *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.13: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (450.181-183)=PG 14:1053. (the Incarnate Son as *medicus*); *Comm. in Rom.* 9.41.4: Hammond Bammel 9.41 (773.39-43)=PG 14:1242 (the Incarnate Son as *index*).

recurring schema is Origen's account of the Son as the king who comes to dwell among his people to set them free from the tyrant who holds sway over them.⁵¹

Freddy Ledegang, in his 2001 study,⁵² notes the difficulties generally involved in attempting to systematize Origen's handling of images. As he says, "the dividing line between figurative and non-figurative language is often hard to draw and not seldom are the literal and the figurative meanings of a word interwoven." Origen is willing to use both complementary and contradictory sets of images, and he uses clusters of images to draw close to the divine mystery from a variety of angles.⁵³

Without reducing the various images to an artificially oversimplified "system," Ledegang points to activities of the Holy Spirit described throughout Origen's writings (e.g., vivification, sanctification, inspiration, unification of Christians as church) and lists types for the Spirit found in Origen's works (e.g., the dove and the turtledove,⁵⁴ oil,⁵⁵ the cassia, the cloud, and salt).⁵⁶ Origen recognizes that the Bible often describes the Holy Spirit in very physical language which must then be interpreted spiritually.⁵⁷

A search of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* unearths only a few metaphors for the Spirit. With so many clear references to the activity of the Spirit already available in the Pauline letters, Origen turns less to interpretations of sensory images than he does in other

⁵¹ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.31: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (381.459-382.481)=PG 14: 1016-1017; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.11: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (447.128-449.152)=PG 14: 1051-1052.

⁵² Freddy Ledegang, *Mysterium Ecclesiae: Images of the Church and its Members in Origen*, tr. F. A. Valken, BEThL 161 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001).

⁵³ Ibid. 9-10.

⁵⁴ E.g., *Cant.* 3.1.4 (SC 376: 494); *Cant.* 4.1.5 (SC 376: 680); *Hom. in Cant.* 2.12 (PG 13: 58).

⁵⁵ E.g., *Hom. in Lev.* 8.11.15 (SC 287: 66).

⁵⁶ Ledegang 661-63.

⁵⁷ Origen assumes that sensory biblical language must be interpreted spiritually. In contrast, contemporary feminist Rebecca Button Prichard returns to this earthly biblical language for the Spirit in her *Sensing the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Feminist Perspective* (St. Louis: Chalice, 1999). As she says on page 1 of her introduction, "I was struck by the way biblical images for the Holy Spirit—tongues of flame, mighty wind, fiery pillar, new wine—appeal to the senses. This seemed a direct contrast to the way theology usually portrays Spirit—as invisible, numinous, ghostly, intangible."

homilies and commentaries. This reflects Origen's hermeneutical procedure; while the Old Testament speaks of good things yet to come, the New Testament speaks of Christ and makes him present to the soul.⁵⁸ Because of their different roles with respect to foretelling or directly revealing Christ, the Old and New Testaments use images in different ways. The soul, progressing as she contemplates the Bible, "is called to leave off the form of knowledge mediated by symbols and to contemplate the eternal and invisible."⁵⁹ Romans itself, as a more direct revelation of Christ, contains fewer sensory images than does the Old Testament. Origen's own commentary reflects this; he does not have occasion to speak of the Spirit as oil, cloud, or salt as he exegetes Romans. Much more often, he speaks of the Spirit's activity in the lives of Christians.

In this lengthy commentary, Origen uses three metaphors (Cherub, Wedding Ring, and Teacher) that help to highlight the key points of his pneumatology. Each metaphor, although only appearing once in the commentary, represents characteristics of the Spirit found throughout the commentary, and indeed throughout Origen's corpus. These metaphors, which highlight the activity of the Spirit in relation to Father, Son, and human beings, are, in a sense, still photographs witnessing to the blur of Spirit-activity between God and humanity. These few metaphors that color his discussion of the Spirit's actions help to crystallize the pneumatology of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*.

3.2.1. Holy Spirit and Logos as Cherubim

In a lengthy excursus⁶⁰ which reads the Logos and the Holy Spirit as the "cherubim" above the Ark of the Covenant, Origen provides strong imagery that reveals his sense of the connection between

⁵⁸ Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 66.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 95.

⁶⁰ *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.1-14: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (235.1-247.243)=PG 14:946-952; for the Greek, see *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 156-62 and *Frag. in Rom. JThS* XVI. There are differences between the Latin and Greek texts, but nothing that affects the discussion here. Scherer believes that Rufinus has added the interpretation of the Ark as Jesus' body, although he also admits, with respect to other textual differences, that the Greek commentary on the cherubim has been abridged, so that Rufinus' text may be more complete. See Scherer 54 and 96. See also the discussion

the Son and the Spirit, as well as that among the Son, the Spirit, and the soul of Jesus Christ. This interpretation of the Son and Spirit as “cherubim” draws on a rich preceding tradition of both Jewish and Christian thinkers, but Origen’s handling of the metaphor is also distinctively his own.

Origen’s exegesis stems from the movement he finds between Romans 3:25 and the text of Exodus 25. Romans 3:25-26 reads

Whom God put forward as an expiation⁶¹ by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteousness and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.

Origen’s commentary on this passage begins with the literal meaning that he finds: the text, on the surface, is a soteriological one, speaking of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice of himself for all humanity.⁶² However, he quickly turns to a search for the interior meaning of the text; to find it, he first looks for Paul’s language of propitiation (ἱλαστήριον, ἱλασμός, *propitiatio*, *propitiatores*, *propitiatorium*) in the law and the prophets.⁶³ This inquiry brings him immediately to the propitiatory of Exodus 25 (*propitiatorium*, LXX

in Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, tr. John A. Baker, The Development of Christian Doctrine Before the Council of Nicaea 1 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), 136-137.

⁶¹ In Rufinus’ Latin, this is “propitiationem.” Rufinus adds the phrase *sive propitiatores* to the biblical quote in *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.2: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (236.31)=PG 14:946. Schreck cites Heither to explain that Paul’s ἱλαστήριον, in the accusative case in Rom. 3:25, can be translated as either “that which propitiates” or “the one who propitiates.” In her detailed textual study, Hammond Bammel points out that a comparison of Rufinus’ translation with the extant Greek fragments indicates that Rufinus tends to translate ἱλασμός as *propitiatio* and ἱλαστήριον as *propitiator* or *propitiatorium*. The rendering *propitiatorium* is explicitly connected to his citations of Exodus 25. This same rendering is found often in other Latin MSS of Rufinus’ day; see, for example, Ambrose, Ambrosiaster, Jerome, and Pelagius. Augustine uses both *propitiatores* and *propitiatorium*. See Hammond Bammel, *Römerbrieftext*, 217-219.

⁶² “pro omni genere humano redemptionem” *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.1: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (235.9-10)=PG 14:946.

⁶³ *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.2: Hammond Bammel 3.5 237.35-37)=PG 14:946. *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 156, 29-30.

ἱλαστήριον), made after the ark of the covenant and overshadowed by two golden cherubim. The text of Exodus reads:

Then you shall make a propitiatory of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the propitiatory. Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end; of one piece with the propitiatory shall you make the two cherubim on its two ends. The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the propitiatory with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the propitiatory shall the faces of the cherubim be. And you shall put the propitiatory on the top of the ark; and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. There I will meet with you, and from above the propitiatory, from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you of all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.⁶⁴

Origen's interpretation of this propitiatory and its overshadowing cherubim is significant for his doctrine of God. The propitiatory itself, he says, is clearly the soul of Jesus, whom Paul describes in Romans as a propitiation put forward by God.⁶⁵ Even the dimensions of the propitiatory describe Jesus Christ. Measuring two and a half cubits, more than the "two" associated with creaturely reproduction and less than the "three" associated with divine incorporeality, the propitiatory's length signifies the human soul of Jesus, the mediator between God and humanity. Measuring one and a half cubits, neither the perfection of "one" nor the brokenness of "two," its width indicates "that which abides among humans who are accustomed to walk on the broad and wide way."⁶⁶ The soul of Jesus, the propitiatory towards whom Exodus

⁶⁴ Where the Revised Standard Version reads "mercy seat," I have changed it to "propitiatory," in order to highlight the linguistic connection between this passage and Rom.3:25-26 that Rufinus conveys in his text.

⁶⁵ "et uidetur propitiatorium hoc de quo scriptum est in Exodo ad nullum alium nisi ad salutorem Dominum rettulisse..." Ibid. (237.51-53). "καὶ ἔοικέν γε τὸ (ἐν) Ἐξόδῳ ἱλαστήριον ἀναφέρειν 'οὐκ ἐπ' ἄλλον τινὰ ἢ τὸν Σωτῆρα." *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 156, 30-158, 1.

⁶⁶ "latitudo quod inter homines qui spatiosamque uiam intercedere soleat conuersatur." *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.4: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (239.92-93)=PG 14: 948.

points, is “the certain middle ground between the divinity of the Trinity and the fragility of humanity.”⁶⁷

Who, then, are the golden “cherubim” overshadowing the soul of Jesus, and what is their relationship to Jesus? The meaning of the word “cherubim” itself indicates the depth of this question, for “‘cherubim,’ having been translated into our language, signifies the fullness of knowledge.”⁶⁸ Origen finds that the Scriptures reveal where the fullness of knowledge is; it is found in the Logos and in the Holy Spirit.⁶⁹ The Son and the Spirit, then, as the two “cherubim,” or fonts of wisdom, dwell always with the soul of Jesus.⁷⁰ However, they do more than simply dwell with Jesus, as they do with other human beings. In Jesus alone, the Son and the Spirit, the “cherubim,” are able to spread their wings fully and fly within his soul. Although the Son and Spirit indwell many souls,⁷¹ there is “only this one in which the Word of God finds so great a width and such capacity, and the Holy Spirit, as it is said, not only dwells, but spreads wings and even flies.”⁷² The Son and the Spirit,

⁶⁷ “anima haec sancta media quaedam fuit inter diuinitatem trinitatis et fragilitatem humanitatis.” Ibid. (239.94-95)

⁶⁸ “Cherubin enim in nostram linguam interpretatum plenitudinem scientiarum significat.” *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.5: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (240.99-100)=PG 14: 948. “ἐρμηνεία Χερουβείν ἐπίγνωσις πεπληθυσμένη” *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 158, 13. This reading of “cherubim” finds its way into the Latin Christian tradition. See, for example, Aug. *Hept.* (PL 34: 633), Aug. *Psal.* (PL 37: 1260), Cassian. *Coll.* (PL 49: 970), and Cassian. *Inst. coen.* (PL 49: 121).

⁶⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.5: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (240.100-109)=PG 14: 948. As Origen indicates, Col. 2:3 describes Christ as the one “in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” and 1 Cor. 2:10 speaks of the Holy Spirit as the one “who examines everything, even the deep things of God.”

⁷⁰ “Significat igitur ut ego arbitror in isto propitiatorio, hoc est in anima Iesu, uerbum Dei qui est unigenitus filius et Sanctum eius Spiritum semper habitare et hoc est quod indicant duo cherubin propitiatorio superposita.” Ibid.

⁷¹ See above discussion, pages 65-66.

⁷² “Nullam uero inter homines ita beatam et ita excelsam repperies animam nisi hanc solam in qua tantum latitudinis tantum capacitates inuenit uerbum Dei et Spiritus Sanctus ut non solum habitare sed et alas pandere et nouo sacramenti ritu aliquando etiam uolitare dicatur.” *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.6: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (241.119-123)=PG 14: 949.

as cherubim facing each other, together infuse the human soul of Jesus with "a sense of divinity, concordant and harmonious."⁷³

Origen's interpretation of the propitiatory's cherubim as the Son and the Holy Spirit is part of a longer Jewish-Christian tradition that associates both the Word and the Holy Spirit with angels.⁷⁴ For example, the Acts of the Apostles contain a passage (8:26-40) where the Spirit seems to be conflated with the Angel of the Lord.⁷⁵ Like Origen, the earlier Christian theologian Hippolytus understands the two cherubim as the Son and the Spirit, explicitly designating the Son as the masculine angel and the Spirit as the feminine one.⁷⁶ Irenaeus, as well, speaks of the Word and the Wisdom [i.e., the Holy Spirit] as powers of God the Father who are also called Cherubim and Seraphim.⁷⁷

There are also clear similarities between Origen's interpretation of Exodus 25 and that of Philo.⁷⁸ Philo, too, understands "cherubim" as the fullness of knowledge.⁷⁹ For him, the cherubim

⁷³ "Faciem quoque contra se inuicem super hanc beatam animam cherubin utraque habere dicuntur per quod concors ei et consonus a filio Dei et ab Spiritu Sancto diunitatis sensus infunditur." Ibid. (241.123-126).

⁷⁴ Daniélou discusses this feature of early Jewish-Christian theology in *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 117-146.

⁷⁵ Gedaliahu G. Stroumsa, "Le couple de l'Ange et de l'Esprit: Traditions juives et chrétiennes." *RB* 88 (1981): 57-61. Stroumsa also notes the language of Acts 23: 8-9, where the Pharisee/ Sadducee dispute associates angels and spirits.

⁷⁶ Stroumsa 43. As Stroumsa points out, the tendency to view the Holy Spirit as feminine is also a part of this tradition. Epiphanius, for example, refers to the Holy Spirit as the sister of Christ. Origen himself cites the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which described the Holy Spirit as Jesus' mother. See, for example, *Hom. in Jer.* 15.4.2 (PG 13: 433-434).

⁷⁷ "This God, then, is glorified by His Word, who is His Son for ever, and by the Holy Spirit, who is the Wisdom of the Father of all. And their Powers (those of the Word and of Wisdom), which are called Cherubim and Seraphim, with unfailing voice glorify God..." Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, tr. Joseph P. Smith, ACW 16 (New York: Paulist, 1952), 10. See also Daniélou, *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 138.

⁷⁸ Philo. *QE.* 2.60-68. Greek fragments are available in LCL suppl. 2: 253-256. English translations, found in the LCL volume, are by Ralph Marcus.

⁷⁹ "ἐπίγνωσις πολλή" Ibid. 2.62. As Marcus comments, "Philo's fanciful etymology is based on the combination of the two Heb. words

of Exodus represent God's two chief powers, creative and royal, with the creative power named "God" in the Scriptures.⁸⁰ Facing each other, these distinct powers communicate fully with each other for the benefit of all creation.⁸¹ Origen's reading seems dependent on Philo's in certain ways. However, Origen's interpretation, contextualized by Romans 3:25, is strongly Christological and thus fundamentally different from Philo's.⁸² While Origen sees the propitiatory as Jesus's soul, Philo understands it as "the propitious and beneficent power."⁸³ By reading Romans and Exodus together, Origen makes a strong statement about the relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit, highlighting its significance for his pneumatology.

In his interpretation, Origen pairs the Son and the Holy Spirit in a way that indicates both their relationship to each other and their joint work in the economy of salvation.⁸⁴ Just as the two cherubim face each other, the Son and the Spirit are distinct but always communicating with each other. The Son holds "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," while the Spirit "examines

bakkeir "to recognize" and *bin* "knowledge," but the second word may be *rabbim* "much," "many." Ibid. 108, *i*.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 2.62.

⁸¹ Ibid. 2.66.

⁸² As Daniélou says of these two interpretations, "There can be no doubt that in these respects [e.g., the interpretation of "cherubim" and of their face-to-face communication] Origen is drawing on Philo. The difference is that for Philo the 'powers' are not the Logos and the Spirit, which suggests that what in fact has happened is that Origen has applied an allegory of Philo's to the subject of the Trinity...whereas Origen ascribed his previous exegesis of the two Seraphim to a Hebrew who interpreted them in a trinitarian manner, here he does nothing of the kind. The trinitarian application is his own, though he may very probably have been led to it by the Jewish Christian precedent of a similar interpretation of the two Seraphim." *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 137-138.

⁸³ "τῆς ἰδέω καὶ ἑνεργητικῆς δυνάμεως σύμβολον." Philo. *QE*. 2.60 (LCL suppl. 2: 107).

⁸⁴ For similar pairings of the Son and the Holy Spirit, see *Princ.* 1.3.4 (SC 252: 148-150), for Son and Spirit as the two living creatures of Habakkuk 3.2 (LXX), and *Princ.* 4.3.14 (SC 268: 394), where they are the two seraphim of the vision in Isaiah 6:2-3. Origen explicitly connects his cherubim interpretation to Habakkuk's living creatures. See *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.8: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (242.140-142)=PG 14: 949.

everything, even the deep things of God.”⁸⁵ The Son and the Spirit know God the Father in the fullest possible sense.⁸⁶ This community of knowledge within the Trinity marks the divide between Son and Spirit and creatures, who cannot fathom God. For Origen, the inability of creation to understand God finds voice in Romans 11:33, where Paul cries out, “O the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!”⁸⁷ It is not only human beings who are unable to grasp God’s judgments and ways, but also

the whole creation. For neither would his judgments be called incomprehensible nor his ways unsearchable, unless because there is no creature which is capable either to investigate them or to examine them. For there is only the Son who has known the Father and only the Holy Spirit who examines everything, even the deep things of God. And thus this depth of God, which he calls both incomprehensible and unsearchable, he calls incomprehensible and unsearchable to every creature. But he had not been able to say this about the Son and the Holy Spirit, since the Son says to the Father in the Gospel: “Father, all my things are yours, and all yours are mine;” and Paul himself proclaims about the Holy Spirit, saying: “Because no one human knows the things which are in a man, except the spirit of the man which is in him; so too no one knows the things which are in God except the Spirit of God.”⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Origen cites Col. 2:3 and 1 Cor. 2:10. See *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.5: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (240.105-106)=PG 14: 948.

⁸⁶ This is despite the accusation of Epiphanius and Jerome that the Son is not able to see the Father, an accusation based on *Princ.* 1.1.8 (SC 252: 108). The most controversial sentence in this passage (“For as it is incongruous to say that the Son can see the Father, so it is unbefitting to believe that the Holy Spirit can see the Son”) is inserted by Koetschau into the text from a text of Jerome (Butterworth, 13, footnote 3) but left out by Crouzel and Simonetti. See Crouzel’s dismissal of this accusation in *Origen*, 103.

⁸⁷ “O altitudo diuitiarum et sapientiae et scientiae Dei! Quam inscrutabilia sunt iudicia eius et inuestigabiles uiae eius!” *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.1: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (704.8-10)=PG 14: 1197.

⁸⁸ “‘Aliquis’ autem dicimus non solum hominum sed et totius creaturae. Neque enim inscrutabilia iudicia et inuestigabiles uiae dicerentur nisi quia nulla est creatura quae uel inuestigare ualeat uel

Paul's exclamation expresses a fundamental truth about Father, Son, and Spirit;

when he says: 'the depth of the riches;' this signifies the Father from whom he says that all things are; and he shows that the depth of wisdom is Christ, who is his wisdom; and he declares that the depth of knowledge is the Holy Spirit, who even knows the deep things of God.⁸⁹

The Son and the Holy Spirit, who are uncreated and who know all that is in the Father, are the Father's "counselors," since the Father's counsel is his Wisdom (the Son) and his Holiness (the Spirit).⁹⁰ In speaking of them as the two cherubim facing each other over the propitiatory, Origen emphasizes their sharing in the deep things of God.⁹¹

More than this, both the Son and the Holy Spirit are necessary to the human Jesus and thus, in a special way, to the economy of salvation. It is through both of them working together that Jesus Christ is able to share in God's knowledge and wisdom and to participate fully in divinity. Origen often emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit to the incarnation. He frequently speaks of the

scrutari. Solus est enim Filius qui nouerit Patrem et solus est Sanctus Spiritus qui scrutatur omnia etiam alta Dei. Et ideo hanc altitudinem Dei quam et inscrutabilem dicit et inuestigabilem creaturae omni inscrutabilem et inuestigabilem dicit. De Filio uero et Spiritu Sancto dicere ista non poterat quia Filius in euangelio dicit ad Patrem: 'Pater omnia mea tua sunt et tua mea;' et de Spiritu Sancto ipse Paulus pronuntiat dicens: 'nemo enim scit hominum quae sint hominis nisi spiritus hominis qui in ipso est; ita et quae in Deo sunt nemo cognouit nisi spiritus Dei.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.6: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (708.82-94)=PG 14: 1201. See 1Cor. 2:10, John 17:10, and 1 Cor. 2:11.

⁸⁹ "ita est cum dicit: 'altitudo diuitiarum;' Patrem ex quo omnia dicit esse significant; et sapientiae altitudinem Christum qui est sapientia eius ostendit; et scientiae altitudinem Sanctum Spiritum qui etiam alta Dei nouit declarat." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.9: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (709.114-118)=PG 14: 1202.

⁹⁰ *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.8: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (708.101-709.103)=PG 14: 1202.

⁹¹ The earlier tradition, which speaks of the Son as masculine and the Spirit as feminine, adds to the sense that both Son and Spirit share in important intra- and extra-trinitarian roles.

Spirit's role in Jesus' conception,⁹² a role which he elaborates in his *Commentary on John*. As he says, the role of saving humanity properly belonged to the Holy Spirit. However,

since the Spirit cannot bear it, he sends forth the Savior because he alone is able to bear such a great conflict. And although it is the Father, as leader, who sends the Son, the Holy Spirit joins in sending him in advance, promising to descend to the Son of God at the right time and to cooperate in the salvation of men.⁹³

When he speaks of the Son and the Spirit as cherubim hovering over the propitiatory that is Jesus' soul, Origen indicates essential ways in which the Spirit and the Son assist Jesus. This is no external relationship in which the Holy Spirit simply overshadows Mary at Jesus' conception, then withdraws his presence from the human Jesus. Instead, the Spirit is present with the soul of Jesus in a constant way, flying within it and infusing it with a sense of divinity. This presence is the joint presence of the Son and the Spirit; neither works alone in Jesus' soul. It is through their presence that the human Jesus participates in divinity and that "the whole fullness of divinity was pleased to dwell in him bodily."⁹⁴ The Holy Spirit and the Son share a pivotal role in the person and life of Jesus Christ; as the fullness of knowledge, they imbue this particular man with divinity for the salvation of the world.

⁹² There are many examples throughout Origen's corpus. In the *Commentary on Romans*, see *Comm. in Rom.* 1.5.4: Hammond Bammel 1.7 (60.67)=PG 14: 851; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.9.10: Hammond Bammel 5.9 (439.143-146)=PG 14: 1046; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.12.4: Hammond Bammel 6.12 (525.53-57)=PG 14:1095.

⁹³ "καὶ ὡςπερὲν ἐπέβαλλέ πως τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἡ πρᾶξις αὐτῆς, ἡντινα ὑπομένειν οὐ δυνάμενον προβάλλεται τὸν σωτήρα, ὡς τὸ τηλικούτον ἄθλον μόνον ἐνεγκεῖν δυνάμενον, καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὡς ἡγουμένου ἀποστέλλοντος τὸν υἱὸν συναποστέλλει καὶ συμπροπέμπει τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα αὐτόν, ἐν καιρῷ ὑπισχνούμενον καταβῆναι πρὸς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ συνεργῆσαι τῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίᾳ." *Jo.* 2.83 (SC 120: 260); Heine I.116.

⁹⁴ "Inuenies igitur quoniam quidem in ipso complacuit habitare omnem plenitudinem diuinitatis corporaliter..." *Comm. in Rom.* 3.8.11: Hammond Bammel 3.5 (244.177-178)=PG 14: 950. References are to Col. 1:19 and 2:9.

3.2.2. Holy Spirit as Wedding Ring

“Thus a married woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. Accordingly she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive.

But if her husband dies she is free from that law...Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has risen from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God”

(Romans 7:2-4).

The image of Spirit and Son as cherubim emphasizes that the Holy Spirit, distinct from the Son, works together with him in the person of Jesus Christ. With other images, Origen points to the uniqueness of the Spirit, as the Spirit acts in the life of the individual Christian to effect a radically new relationship with God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Origen often connects the Holy Spirit to “newness” (*novitas*, *καινότης*), suggesting that there is something unique in the Spirit’s bestowal of new life on the Christian. The Holy Spirit is the divine link between divinity and humanity, the “Wedding Ring” (*nuptiale pignus*)⁹⁵ who ties Christians to Jesus Christ in a marriage which sets them free.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ *Pignus* is Rufinus’ Latin for the Greek ἄραβών, found in 2 Cor. 5:5. The Greek translates as “pledge,” “present or bribe,” or even as “earnest-money.” See Liddell and Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon*. The Latin *pignus* also translates as “pledge or surety.” However, it has the added connotation of “token or symbol” and can even be “applied to children as the guarantee of the reality of a marriage.” See the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P. G. W. Glare (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997).

⁹⁶ This image, which represents the role that the Spirit plays at the center of Origen’s theology as the unifying link between God and humanity, is also one that finds further resonance in later Christian tradition. Augustine speaks of the Spirit as the *pignus* of the Father and the Son, using the same term as Rufinus does in his translation of the *Commentary on Romans*, although without the adjective *nuptiale*. See *Trin.* 5.12.13. On Augustine’s pneumatology, see David Coffey, “The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son,” *TS* 51 (1990): 193-229; Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, tr. David Smith (New York: Seabury, 1983), 3: 81-85, especially 85; and Robert Louis Wilken, “*Spiritus sanctus secundum scripturas sanctas*: Exegetical Considerations of Augustine on the Holy Spirit,” *AugSt* 31 (2000):1-18; For Augustine, this

Origen presents this image of the Spirit clearly as he comments on Romans 7:2-4, saying,

To which law, doubtless, we also are dead and are strangers from its condition in which we were detained, so that now, after this, we may serve not in the oldness of the letter as before, but in the newness of the Spirit; which Spirit we have received from our Betrothed like a Wedding Ring, as [Paul] also says elsewhere: "who has given us the spirit as a pledge."⁹⁷

As the Wedding Ring given by God to each new Christian, the Holy Spirit is a promise and a guarantee of a relationship that can only be fulfilled eschatologically. Even more, the Spirit, who brings about the union between God and the human being, is also the fruit of the union, since it is as each new Christian commits herself to Jesus that the Spirit comes to dwell in the person. There is an irrevocable quality to the Holy Spirit's presence as and in this union. If a Christian withdraws from the new marriage to return to a life of sin, she enters into the dark world of rejection of the gifts of love and forgiveness.

As the pledge of the union between God and humanity, the Holy Spirit is the potent symbol of humanity's Divine Betrothed. Humanity is free to serve God in a new way, as his spouse, because of the radical newness of this Spirit. The former spouse of

language indicates that the Spirit is the promise that the Father and the Son make to creation.

⁹⁷ "Cui legi sine dubio etiam nos mortui sumus et alieni a conditione eius in qua detinebamur, ut iam post haec seruiamus non in uetustate litterae sicut prius sed in nouitate spiritus; quem spiritum ab sponso nostro tamquam nuptiale pignus accepimus, sicut et alibi dicit: 'qui dedit nobis pignus spiritum.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.5: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (486.56-61)=PG 14: 1070. Origen here quotes 2 Cor. 5:5: "God has fashioned us for this very thing [that what is mortal may be absorbed by life] and has given us the Spirit as a pledge of it." See also the Greek of *Frag. in Rom.* JThS III.35, which contrasts the newness of the Spirit with the oldness of the letter but does not cite 2 Cor. 5:5. Another reference to the Spirit as *pignus* is found in *Princ.* 2.6.7 (SC 252: 324), which speaks of the pledge received through the Spirit that the saints will behold God's glory in the eschaton. The *Commentary on John* also speaks of the Spirit as pledge; see *Jo.* 13.112 (SC 222: 90); Heine II. 91, where Origen says that now worshippers worship in the pledge of the Spirit (ἐν ᾧ ἀραβῶνι πνεύματος), but "when they shall receive the Spirit in his fullness, they will worship the Father in Spirit."

humanity, the law, is now dead.⁹⁸ The human being is now espoused to Christ, the new and eternal Spouse; their union should produce the fruit of good works.⁹⁹

One must hasten, then, to the second marriage, which is much more blessed than the first [to the law]. And see if perhaps such a law already was foreshadowing something—I don't know what—when it orders that a woman, after her former husband had died, who had not borne a child from his seed—for he had been such that he could not produce fruit—she is ordered to marry his brother—for the brother of the law of the letter seems to be the law according to the spirit—so that from him, rather, the woman might produce fruit.¹⁰⁰

Espoused to Christ, the Christian has a new obligation to bear heirs to the promise of their union, the good works and faithful teaching that mark the genuine Christian's life. Marriage to Christ entails a wholly divine way of life; faithfulness to him means faithfulness to the virtues through which Christ is known to

⁹⁸ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.7: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (487.91-488.105)=PG 14: 1071. See Riemer Roukema's discussion of this passage in *The Diversity of Laws*, 55-58. Note also *Comm. in Rom.* 3.11.4: Hammond Bammel 3.8 (257.26-259.58)=PG 14: 958, where Origen speaks of the glory of the law, which is obscured by the greater glory of Christ.

⁹⁹ "Thus, when he has made clear through all these things that the former husband has died, it is no deceit to be associated with Christ as if with another man, just as it is not a sin for the woman if she takes a second husband after the first one has died...the soul of a human being, too, if it has already come to Christ and associated with Christ as its second husband, the oldness of the letter, which is like its former husband, should in no way live in it, lest perhaps if it might have that living in it, it might be made an adulteress, who thus was associated with a second husband as the former still lived with her." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.12-13: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (491.153-162)=PG 14: 1073.

¹⁰⁰ "Festinandum est ergo ad istas secundas nuptias quae beatiores sunt multo quam primae. Et uide si forte iam tum lex tale nescio quid adumbrabat in eo cum iubeat ut mulier mortuo uiro priore de quo semen non susceperat—talis enim fuerat qui fructum non posset afferre—iubeatur fratri eius nubere—frater enim uidetur legis litterae secundum spiritum lex—ut de ipso magis mulier afferat fructum." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.13-14: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (492.173-180)=PG 14: 1074.

humanity.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, associating with evil spirits or indulging fleshly passions is a form of fornication.¹⁰²

A person who is the spouse of Christ has died with him and risen to new life in the same Spirit-Ring who seals the union. Thus, both Christ and the Spirit characterize the new life of the Christian in inseparable ways. Joined to Christ, the Christian puts to death fleshly ways.

For while we hang on his love, we do not receive the sensation of [bodily] suffering. For his love, by which he loved us and took our affection to himself, makes us not to feel physical torture and suffering. Thus, then, we conquer in all these things. The betrothed in the Canticles says something like this to the Word: she says, "I have been wounded by love." Therefore, in this way also, our soul also, having received the wound of love from Christ, even if he hands the body over to the sword, may not perceive the wounds of the flesh on account of the wound of love.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 3.6.5: Hammond Bammel 3.3 (224.79-82)=PG 14: 939; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.6.7: Hammond Bammel 5.6 (416.92-95)=PG 14: 1034; *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 166, 14-16.

¹⁰² Origen makes this particularly clear in *Hom. in Ex.* 8.5 (PG 12: 356-357), where he describes association with evil spirits as fornication and adultery, since God alone is the soul's bridegroom. See also the following texts in the *Commentary on Romans*: "...you who say not to commit adultery yourself commit adultery in the synagogue of the people of God, introducing to it a depraved and adulterous word of teaching, and you set up the teaching with the letter of the law which is external... Thus, you who forbid adultery commit so grave an adultery, since you introduce an adulterous meaning to that of which you read that God said: "I will betroth you to me in faith and in mercy." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.11.5-6: Hammond Bammel 2.8 (143.76-144.84)=PG 14: 896. "Thus you now have been made the betrothed of this man, who rose from the dead; and thus, according to his will, you must live to God, since now we are not in the flesh but in the spirit, even if at some time, placed in the flesh of sin, we were also driven by fleshly passions; which passions, through the opportunity of the law, were fruitful in our members, not to God, but to death, to that death which God did not cause." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.4: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (485.48-53)=PG 14: 1070.

¹⁰³ "Dum enim in illius amore pendemus sensum doloris non recipimus. Illius enim caritas qua nos dilexit et nostrum ad se rapuit affectum cruciatum corporis et dolorem sentire nos non facit. Ideo ergo

In the same way, sealed to Christ by the Holy Spirit, the Christian understands and loves spiritually.¹⁰⁴ This process of putting to death fleshly things and rising in spiritual ones is symbolized by Christian baptism, which raises the Christian to new life in the Spirit.¹⁰⁵

By participating in Christ's death through baptism, the Christian finds, paradoxically, that the law of sin itself has died. These deaths allow for genuinely new life in the Holy Spirit. It is this Spirit, the Ring of the marriage between God and the Christian, who both enables and seals the newness of life in baptism.

Baptism, in which the Spirit-Ring seals the newness of Christian life, is baptism into the death of *Christ* alone, since one cannot speak of God's "death."¹⁰⁶ However, Origen is insistent that

in his omnibus superamus. Tale aliquid et in canticis sponsa dicit ad uerbum: 'quia uulnerata inquit caritatis ego sum.' Ad hunc ergo modum et anima nostra a Christo uulnere caritatis accepto etiam si tradat gladio corpus non sentiet uulnera carnis pro uulnere caritatis." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.11.3: Hammond Bammel 7.9 (601.52-602.60)=PG 14: 1132.

¹⁰⁴ As Origen says in *Cant.* prol. 2. 19 (SC 375: 104); Lawson 30: "And this spiritual love of the soul does flame out, as we have taught, sometimes towards certain spirits of evil, and sometimes towards the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, who is called the faithful Spouse and Husband of the instructed soul..." The English translation, by R. P. Lawson, is available in ACW 26 (New York: Newman, 1957).

¹⁰⁵ *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.17-18: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (495.220-238)=PG 14: 1075-1076.

¹⁰⁶ "Perhaps you might ask also about this, since the Lord himself told his disciples that they should baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, why the apostle here has only taken up the name of Christ in baptism, saying: 'whoever we are who have been baptized in Christ,' when certainly it would not be held as a legitimate baptism unless it were under the name of the Trinity. But consider the prudence of Paul, since indeed in the present place he wanted to discuss not so much the reason for baptism as that of the death of Christ, in whose likeness he urges us to die to sin and to be buried with Christ, and it certainly would not be suitable if where he spoke of death he also named the Father or the Holy Spirit. For the Word became flesh, and fittingly, where the flesh is, there also is brought death. It would not be fitting if he said: whoever we are who have been baptized in the name of the Father or in the name of the Holy Spirit, we have been baptized into their death." *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.7: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (425.79-

it is necessary for baptism to be in the names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁷ In dying with Christ in baptism, each Christian rises to the new life of the Holy Spirit, the life from which she cannot turn away casually. The union which is sealed and promised by the Holy Spirit is in one sense an irrevocable one, an eternal marriage.¹⁰⁸ Once united through the Holy Spirit, the Christian should never separate herself from him; this, Origen thinks, would be the unforgivable sin of Matthew 12:32. By definition, "just as no one living can be buried with the dead, thus no one who still lives to sin can be buried in baptism with Christ, who is dead to sin,"¹⁰⁹ and thus,

if you sin again after [baptism], you would not wash these away with any tears of penitence, but you will give your accuser material for incriminating you; and although Jesus intercedes for us, nevertheless, Jesus cannot say that darkness is light, nor that bitterness is sweet.¹¹⁰

426.92)=PG 14: 1039-1040.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. See also *Princ.* 1.3.2 (SC 252, 146).

¹⁰⁸ This union sealed in the Spirit-Ring should not be broken in any way. Because of the gravity of the new marriage with Christ, the Christian must strive to avoid sin. Post-baptismal sin, threatening the new marriage, becomes a theme for other Christian theologians. For example, Pelagius writes, "For what does the washing of baptism profit us, if faith alone is sought without works? The faith of all holds that sins are washed away by baptism; but if there is to be sinning thereafter, what does it profit us to have washed it away? Listen to what the Lord says...:See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you (John 5:14). This the blessed apostle Peter also teaches most clearly, that a worse fate awaits the man who sins after he has come to know the way of righteousness...[citing 2 Peter 2:20-22]. This is also the teaching of the blessed apostle Paul when he says that the man who reverts to his former sin after receiving the sanctification of baptism is not saved without great repentance...[citing Hebrews 6:4-6]" See "On the Christian Life," 13.4, *The Letters of Pelagius and his Followers*, tr. and ed. B. R. Rees (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), 122.

¹⁰⁹ "...quod sicut nemo uiuus potest sepelli cum mortuo ita nemo qui adhuc uiuit peccato potest in baptismo consequi Christo qui mortuus est peccato..." *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.10: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (428.130-132)=PG 14: 1041.

¹¹⁰ "Si uero post haec iterum delinquas nec ullis haec paenitentiae lacrimis diluas, accusatori tuo criminandi te materiam dabis; et quamuis Iesus interpellat pro nobis, non potest tamen dicere Iesus tenebras lucem

Once the Holy Spirit bestows himself as the Ring of union, the Christian spouse is committed to a life in Christ's own footsteps.¹¹¹ The Christian should treasure this commitment in the Spirit; if she rejects it, she will injure herself. In a very real sense, to trifle with the Spirit-Ring is to play with all-consuming divine fire. As Origen says in his *Homilies on Jeremiah*, "the water of the Holy Spirit does not flee, but each of us by sinning becomes a fugitive from drinking from the Holy Spirit."¹¹² There is no wrath of the Spirit that hunts down the sinful Christian; rather, the Spirit, as Ring of union, has imprinted the Christian in such a way that her rejection of the union can only lead to her destruction. A union marked by the Spirit is not one to be taken lightly, nor is a contract sealed by the Spirit one easily broken and then later re-established.

At the same time, the union marked by the Spirit is one that can only come to complete fulfillment in the eschaton. It is thus that the Holy Spirit, as Ring, is both the effective sign of the existing union between God and Christian and the promise of a deeper union to come. This is the result, Origen says, of the inability of the corporeal human to grasp the fullness of God's gift in this life. The union effected by the Spirit is a complete one, yet, paradoxically, the human does not know it as such in this life, since

esse neque amarum dulce." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.10.3: Hammond Bammel 7.8 (598.29-33)=PG 14: 1130.

¹¹¹ However, Origen recognizes that the Christian will sin, even when sealed with the Spirit-Ring. He distinguishes the stumbling of the just person from something more permanent: "Therefore, this fall which we have discussed above, that is, in which one who falls continues and rises again, is like this which the apostle names 'stumbling' in the present place, and we turn also to that which he calls 'sin;' that which seems to me to be such as this. If, when a just person has been overcome in any one thing, for example, either in the fragility of the flesh or in another sin anywhere, he has fallen, but nevertheless he has not thus departed from the observance of the whole law, but he may hold justice and practice mercy and preserve faith, piety, and gentleness, and he may not neglect to contemplate the law of God..." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.9.5: Hammond Bammel 8.8 (683.50-58)=PG 14: 1185.

¹¹² "...non fugit aqua Spiritus sancti, sed unusquisque nostrum, dum peccat, fugit ne bibat de aqua Spiritus sancti." *Hom. in Jer.* 18.9.3 (PG 13: 482); Smith 205.

marriage in the Spirit is only perfect in the eschaton.¹¹³ The union sealed by the Holy Spirit is one of progressively deeper closeness with God, a marriage whose richness is discovered over time. The newness of the Spirit¹¹⁴ is a newness that

must be renewed always and everyday. For thus the apostle says: "for even if the one who is our outward person is corrupted, the one who is the inner is renewed from day to day." For just as an old person always ages and from day to day is made older, so too a new one here is always renewed and there is never a time when its renewal does not increase. Then consider those who progress in faith and daily shine in the virtues, how they always add better things to their good works and bring together more honorable things in their honorable actions, how they grow rich in understanding, in knowledge, and in wisdom and after a while they perceive as distinct and open those things which seem less clear for understanding... Thus, we may walk in newness of life, everyday showing ourselves as new people to him who raised us with Christ...¹¹⁵

¹¹³ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.1.4: Hammond Bammel 1.3 (48.55-61)=PG 14: 839-840. This sense that the saints now enjoy the gifts of the Spirit "per speculum et in aenigmate" is found throughout Origen's thought. E.g., *Or.* 11.2, *Princ.* 2.3.2, *Mart.* 13, and *Jo.* 13.113.

¹¹⁴ The "newness" of the Spirit should not be misunderstood, Origen says. It is important that Christians not think of this newness in the way that Marcionites do. "Truly, I know that certain people, understanding the newness of the Spirit badly... say that the Spirit is new, as if one who before neither has been nor has become known to their forefathers, and they do not know that they blaspheme him most grievously in this. For this same Spirit is in the law, the same is in the Gospels, and the same always is with the Father and the Son and always is and was and will be, like the Father and the Son. Thus he is not new, but he makes believers new when he brings them from their former evils to a new life and a new worship of the religion of Christ and makes them, from their fleshiness, spiritual." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.7.19: Hammond Bammel 6.7 (496.247-255)=PG 14: 1076.

¹¹⁵ "Neque enim putes quod innouatio uitae quae dicitur semel facta sufficiat; sed semper et cotidie si dici potest ipsa nouitas innouanda est. Sic enim dicit apostolus: 'nam et si is qui foris est homo noster corrumpitur sed qui intus est renouatur de die in diem.' Sicut enim uetus semper ueterescit et de die in diem uetustior efficitur, ita et nouus hic semper innouatur et numquam est quando non innouatio eius augeat.

As the Wedding Ring, the Holy Spirit makes possible the Christian's progression in holiness. From her death with Christ in baptism, and her resurrection with Christ through the Father's power, she is able to become ever more perfect in action, in knowledge, and in love through the Holy Spirit. Origen's "Wedding Ring" image highlights both the distinct role of the Holy Spirit in uniting the Christian to Father and Son and the Spirit's powerful—and eschatological—work in transforming each Christian into an ever-holier person.

3.2.3. Holy Spirit as Teacher

"Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with unspeakable groaning. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God"
(Romans 8:26-27).¹¹⁶

The Spirit's transformative work is ultimately the work of a Teacher. Christian growth in holiness is always the result of teaching, Origen insists.

And even sending his disciples for this work, he did not so much say: "Go *baptize* all nations;" but said: "Go *teach* all

Intuere denique eos qui in fide proficient et cotidie in uirtutibus enitescunt quomodo semper bonis operibus adiciunt meliora et honestis actibus honestiora conquirunt, quomodo in intellectu in scientia sapientiaque ditescunt et ea quae ante minus plana ad intellegendum uidebantur aperta postmodum dilucidaque perspiciunt. Et uide si non rebus ipsis huiusmodi hominem cotidie dixeris innouari, sicut e contrario ut diximus si quis uetus effici coeperit proficiet in peius et cotidie uetustior et semet ipso deterior inuenitur. In nouitate ergo uitae ambulemus ostendentes nosmet ipsos ei qui nos cum Christo suscitauit cotidie nouos..." *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.13-14: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (430.165-182)=PG 14: 1042. However, progress in newness eventually takes on a different character, since the saint, like Paul, Moses, and Stephen, eventually comes to a point where she must stop moving and stand still.

¹¹⁶ The Revised Standard Version reads "sighs too deep for words," rather than "unspeakable groaning." However, I have altered this phrase to reflect the text of Origen's commentary.

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."¹¹⁷

Perhaps the most pervasive image for the Holy Spirit in the *Commentary on Romans* is that of Teacher. Origen's commentary views all spirits as a part of the School of God's Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the head Teacher, who oversees the spiritual growth and education of every human being. Origen expresses this image in the most detail when he comments on the Spirit's intercession with unspeakable groaning in Romans 8:26-27.¹¹⁸ This intercession for human beings is a form of instruction; the Spirit is

like a teacher, taking up a clumsy student who is completely illiterate, so that he can teach and instruct him, it is necessary that he turn to the first stages of learning and himself first say the name of the letter so that the student might learn by responding, and the teacher himself might be somehow like the beginning student, saying these things and considering these things which the beginner should say and consider; thus the Holy Spirit, too, when he sees that our spirit is disturbed by the attacks of the flesh and does not know what to pray as it should, he himself, like a teacher, sends forth the prayer which our spirit pursues if it still desires to be the student of the Holy Spirit, and he himself offers groaning, with which our spirit may be taught how to groan, that it may reconcile itself to God. But indeed if the Spirit teaches and our spirit, that is, our mind, does not follow by its own fault, the teacher's instruction becomes fruitless to it.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Italics are mine. "Mittens etenim ad hoc opus discipulos suos, non dixit tamen: 'ite baptizate omnes gentes;' sed ait: 'ite docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine patris et filii et Spiritus Sancti.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 5.2.11: Hammond Bammel 5.2 (397.132-135)=PG 14: 1024.

¹¹⁸ This image is found in Rufinus' Latin. Only a fragment of Origen's commentary on Rom. 8:26 is preserved in the Greek; see *Frag. in Rom. JThS* XLVIII. This Greek fragment does not, however, use the image of Teacher to describe the Holy Spirit. For further comments on the Spirit's intercessory role, see also Origen's *Or.* praef. 2.3 and *Or.* 14.5.

¹¹⁹ "...et uelut si magister suscipiens rudum discipulum et ignorantem penitus litteras ut eum docere possit et instruere necesse habet inclinare se ad discipuli rudimenta et ipse prius dicere nomen litterae ut respondendo discipulus discat, et fit quodammodo magister ipse incipienti discipulo similes ea loquens et ea meditans quae incipiens loqui debeat ac meditari; ita ergo et Sanctus Spiritus ubi oppugnationibus carnis perturbari

This passage, Origen's commentary on a complex section of Romans,¹²⁰ describes vividly the teaching work of the Spirit, which permeates Origen's pneumatology.

The teaching of the Spirit is the work of compassionate love for human beings; like other teachers, the Spirit takes up the weaknesses of his students.¹²¹ In dwelling on the "groaning" (*gemitus*, στεναγμός) of the Holy Spirit on the behalf of the human spirit, Origen relates this groaning to the other types of groaning he has already discovered in Romans 8:22-23. As he points out, Paul has described two other kinds of groaning: Paul's own groaning for others and the groaning of all creatures as they suffer together for those who are struggling in this life.¹²² Both of these types of groaning show the empathy of created beings for one another as they strive towards God; groaning seems fundamentally compassionate. Origen makes this explicit with respect to the Spirit's groaning, which alone is "unspeakable" (*inenarrabilis*, ἀλάλητος). He paraphrases the message he finds in Romans:

nostrum spiritum uiderit et nescientem quid orari debeat secundum quod oportet, ipse uelut magister orationem praemittit quam noster spiritus si tamen discipulus esse Sancti Spiritus desiderat prosequatur, ipse offert gemitus quibus noster spiritus doceatur ingemescere ut repropiti sibi Deum. Si uero spiritus quidem doceat et noster spiritus id est mens nostra non sequatur suo uitio infructuosa ei fit magistri doctrina." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.5: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (580.59-581.74)=PG 14:1119-1120.

¹²⁰ In his 1980 commentary, Ernst Käsemann says that "the third subsection in vv.26-27" "has no parallels in the NT and is an alien body even in Paul...Hence misinterpretation abounds. An initial error is to take as a starting point the experience of difficulty in prayer, widespread in both antiquity and today, and to draw Paul into this." Käsemann's own interpretation is that Paul here speaks of glossolalia as the intercession of the Spirit in the community. See Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), 239-42.

¹²¹ Those who are truly called and chosen to be teachers participate in this compassionate work. Paul provides a human example. Origen speaks of the way in which Paul and other teachers take upon themselves the weaknesses of their students: "Quod autem moris sit in scripturis diuinis sanctos personas assumere peccatorum et magistros suscipere in semet ipsos infirmitates discipulorum..." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.12: Hammond Bammel 6.9 (516.188-190)=PG 14: 1089.

¹²² Origen summarizes the two in *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.2-3: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (579.31-44)=PG 14:1118-1119.

lest you might think it insufficient that every creature sighs deeply and condole with us, lest it might seem too little that we ourselves groan with your labors—there is even a certain state of compassion in the divine nature itself with respect to our struggles...and the Spirit himself helps our weakness.¹²³

The intercessory groaning of the Holy Spirit, which Origen understands as a part of the Spirit's teaching work, is also an expression of God's pity for humanity.¹²⁴ As Teacher, the Holy Spirit, in a demonstration of the depths of divine love and compassion, instructs the human spirit in expressing its longing for God.

This particular teaching role shows clearly the cooperation of the human spirit in the Holy Spirit's transformative work. As in any teacher-student relationship, the human being must, after all, choose to learn, or even the teaching of the Spirit bears no fruit. The Spirit offers the teaching itself in a way that is suited to the needs of the human spirit, wherever it may be on the path to God. The Spirit begins with the "alphabet," since the student can handle nothing more sophisticated.¹²⁵ Moreover, the Spirit himself prays in this simple way so that the student can pray in imitation; even this lofty grace is offered in a kenotic way, since the purpose of the teaching is that the student actually develop and learn.

¹²³ "Ne inquit parum putetis quod omnis nobiscum congemescit et condolet creatura, ne parum uideatur quod nos ipsi gemimus pro laboribus uestris, etiam diuinae ipsi naturae erga agones nostros...inest quidam miserationis affectus et ipse spiritus adiuvat infirmitatem nostram." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.2: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (578.12-17)=PG 14:1118.

¹²⁴ In *On Prayer*, Origen also reads this passage in Romans as highlighting God's compassion, although without the pedagogical overtones: "He [the Spirit] 'makes special intercession with God with sighs too deep for words' by accepting our sighs because of his great love and compassion for mankind." *Or. praef.* 2.3 (PG 11: 419-420); Greer 84. Without describing the Spirit as Teacher, Origen here also preserves human freedom: "For the Spirit 'makes special intercession' and 'intercedes,' but we pray." *Or.* 14.5 (PG 11: 463-464); Greer 111. Rowan Greer's translations are found in *Origen* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

¹²⁵ This is my terminology, derived from the schema found throughout Origen's works. See, for example, *Hom. in Num.* 27.13, where Origen compares spiritual progress to childrens' progress in literary studies, beginning with the alphabet.

The Holy Spirit's willingness to work on the human spirit's own level is a constant theme throughout the *Commentary on Romans* as well as the rest of Origen's extant corpus. Origen frequently speaks of this teaching method of the Holy Spirit as he sees it at work in the Scriptures.¹²⁶ As he often does, he turns in the *Commentary on Romans* to 1 Cor. 3:2 to find the Spirit's method of instruction in the Scriptural texts:

Certainly each person should receive it according to his own ability; one who is able and is ready for solid food should take up the words of God which are the wisdom which the apostle speaks among the perfect; but the one who is not yet ready for this should take up the words of God in which he will know nothing more than Christ Jesus and him crucified. The one who is not able to receive this should take up in himself the words of God as one who uses milk and is not strong enough for food. Indeed, if he is still weakened in his faith, let him eat the words of God in the form of herbs.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Origen's scriptural hermeneutics are the topic of much scholarly discussion. Cf. Leslie W. Barnard, "To Allegorize or Not to Allegorize?" *StTh* 36 (1982): 1-10; Robert J. Daly, "The *Peri Pascha*: Hermeneutics and Sacrifice," *Origeniana Tertia*, ed. R. P. C. Hanson and Henri Crouzel (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1985), 109-17; John David Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California, 2002); Elizabeth A. Dively Lauro, "Reconsidering Origen's Two Higher Senses of Scriptural Meaning: Identifying the Psychic and Pneumatic Senses," *StPatr* 34 (2001): 306-317; Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L'intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Aubier, 1950); Karen Jo Torjesen, "'Body,' 'Soul,' and 'Spirit' in Origen's Theory of Exegesis," *Studies in Early Christianity*, ed. Everett Ferguson et al. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1993), 287-300; Torjesen, "Hermeneutics and Soteriology in Origen's *Peri Archon*," *StPatr* 21: 333-48; Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*; Torjesen, "The Rhetoric of the Literal Sense: Changing Strategies of Persuasion from Origen to Jerome," *Origeniana Septima*, ed. Wolfgang Bienert and Uwe Kühneweg (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 633-44; Joseph W. Trigg, "Divine Deception and the Truthfulness of Scripture," *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, ed. Charles Kannengiesser and William L. Petersen (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 1988), 147-64.

¹²⁷ "Certe unusquisque pro uiribus capiat; qui potest et idoneus est ad solidum cibum, illa suscipiat eloquia Dei quae sunt sapientia quam loquitur apostolus inter perfectos; qui uero ad hanc idoneus nondum est

The Holy Spirit, working through the Scriptures to teach human readers, speaks in a variety of ways. Some, who are spiritual beginners, can only grasp the Scriptures as “milk,” but others, who have advanced spiritually with the Spirit’s guidance, are able to digest the “solid food” of the texts.

Knowing that children must be taught differently, the same Spirit-Teacher who prays with the simple letters of the alphabet also presents God in the Scriptures in such a way as to inspire good moral actions. In his *Homilies on Jeremiah*, which contain many references to God’s teaching of humanity, Origen says that

whenever the divine plan involves human matters, it carries the human intellect and manners and way of speaking. And just as we, if we are talking with a two-year-old child, speak inarticulately because of the child—for it is impossible, if we observe what is fitting for the age of a full-grown man, and when talking to children, to understand the children without condescending to their mode of speech—something of the sort also seems to me to be the case with God whenever he manages the race of men and especially those still infants.¹²⁸

For these spiritual juveniles, the Spirit speaks of “God’s wrath” and threatens punishment,¹²⁹ although this does not reveal God’s true nature. Referring to Romans 9:22-26, Origen says:

suscipiat eloquia Dei in quibus agnoscat nihil amplius quam Christum Iesum et hunc crucifixum. Qui nec hoc potest in eo suscipiat eloquia Dei ut lacte utatur et non cibo forti. Si uero adhuc infirmatur in fide eloquia Dei in holeribus sumat.” *Comm. in Rom.* 2.14.14: Hammond Bammel 2.10 (183.141-148)=PG 14: 917. See also *Comm. in Rom.* 8.10.7: Hammond Bammel 8.9 (690.82-87)=PG 14:1190 and *Comm. in Rom.* 9.36.1-3: Hammond Bammel 9.36 (763.10-764.23)=PG 14:1235-1236, which refer in the same terms to Paul’s teaching method, through which the Spirit works.

¹²⁸ “Quando uero diuina prouidentia rebus humanis sese immiscet, humanum sensum, et mores, et uerba usurpat. Et quemadmodum nos, si puerum bimulum alloquimur, propter ipsum balbutimus; neque enim fieri potest, ut, cum pueros alloquimur, ipsi nos intelligant, nisi ab aetatis perfecti uiri dignitate paululum recedentes ad ipsorum dialectum nos dimittamus; ita simile quidpiam de Deo uelim cogites, cum genus hominum et praecipue adhuc infantium administrat.” *Hom. in Jer.* 18.6.4 (PG 13: 575); Smith 198-199.

¹²⁹ E.g., *Hom. in Jer.* 19.15.5 (PG 13: 496); Smith 217: “We are all children of God and we need the discipline of children. Because of this,

I am astonished in myself, contemplating the plan of the Holy Spirit in the divine volumes. For indeed he says that the wrath of God, which is extraneous to his nature, is made known to humanity, just as this present passage of the apostle indicates; but he calls to mind that his goodness and the sweetness which is proper to his nature are hidden and kept secret, as David says: "How great is the multitude of your sweetness, Lord, which you have hidden from those who fear you!" What, will we say, is the reason that God shows his wrath to humanity and hides his sweetness? He knows, without doubt, that the human race is fragile and prone to fall through negligence, for whom it is more useful to be under the fear of wrath than to be relaxed by the hope of the kindness and sweetness of God, as the Wisdom of God also says: "One who spares the stick hates his child. For if you have struck him with a stick he will not die; but you will save him from death."¹³⁰

God's "wrath" and threats of punishment are taught by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures as the "stick" is used to motivate the beginning student.¹³¹ The more advanced student, on the other hand, is able to learn that God, beyond acts of wrath, is essentially merciful and compassionate. In the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit does not provide truths about God to students who are not yet ready to hear them.¹³² Just as a teacher instructs a student first in the

God, since he cares about us, deceives us..."

¹³⁰ "Obstupesco ego apud memet ipsum Sancti Spiritus consilium in diuinis uoluminibus contuens. Nam iram Dei quae est a natura eius extranea notam fieri hominibus dicit sicut praesens hic apostolic indicat locus; bonitatem uero eius et dulcedinem quod naturae eius est proprium abscondi memorat et occultari sicut Dauid dicit: 'quam magna multitudo dulcedinis tuae Domine quam abscondisti timentibus te!' Quid ergo causae dicemus quod Deus iram manifestat hominibus et dulcedinem celat? Scit sine dubio fragile esse hominum genus et ad lapsum proclue per negligentiam, quibus expediat magis esse sub metu irae quam spe benignitatis Dei et dulcedinis relaxari, sicut et sapientia Dei dicit: 'qui parcit baculo odit filium suum. Si enim percusseris eum uirga non morietur; animam autem eius saluam facies a morte.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 7.18.5: Hammond Bammel 7.16 (630.41-631.54)=PG 14: 1150-1151.

¹³¹ Actual punishments are also pedagogical. Origen understands pedagogically even the hardening of Pharaoh's heart and his death in the Red Sea. See *Princ.* 3.1.10-14 (SC 268: 56-86).

¹³² For a more complete discussion of God's "deceit" in the Scriptures, see Joseph Trigg, "Divine Deception and the Truthfulness of

alphabet and perhaps years later in the nuances of essay-writing or debate, the Holy Spirit unfolds revelation to the human spirit one step at a time.

As the Teacher gradually opening revelation to the human student, the Holy Spirit also helps the human spirit to become a revelation of the Gospel to the world. Again and again, Origen draws a contrast between the Holy Spirit and ink, as he cites 2 Corinthians 3:3 ("written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God").¹³³ Origen's references to the Spirit as spiritual ink reflect the newness of the Spirit as Wedding Ring and the transforming instruction of the Spirit as Teacher. One of his most beautiful elaborations of this reference is found in his Homily 13 on Genesis:

You have, therefore, in yourself documents of God and documents of the Holy Spirit. But if you transgress, you yourself write in yourself in the handwriting of sin. But...anytime when you have approached the cross of Christ and the grace of baptism, your handwriting is affixed to the cross and blotted out in the fountain of baptism. Do not rewrite later what has been blotted out nor repair what has been destroyed. Preserve only the documents of God in

Scripture," *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, ed. Charles Kannengiesser and William L. Petersen (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1988), 147-64. As Trigg says, "Although he was a resolute opponent of heresy, Origen's primary commitment was to the Bible as an instrument for personal transformation; truth, for Origen, is not factual information but saving knowledge" (164).

¹³³ "non atramento sed spiritu Dei uiui scripta" (and on human hearts, rather than on stone tablets: "καὶ ἐγγεγραμμένος οὐκ ἐν πλαξὶν λιθίναις ἀλλ' ἐν πλαξὶν καρδίας σαρκίνοις"). *Comm. in Rom.* 1.4.1: Hammond Bammel 1.6 (54.12-13)=PG 14: 847; *Comm. in Rom.* 2.9.1-2: Hammond Bammel 2.7 (136.32-33)=PG 14: 893; *Comm. in Rom.* 4.5.6: Hammond Bammel 4.5 (302.62-64)=PG 14: 975-976; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.6.3: Hammond Bammel 5.6 (413.42-414.43)=PG 14: 1033; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.8.3: Hammond Bammel 6.8 (498.41-42)=PG 14: 1080; *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 204, 8-10. The first reference is to the writing in the eternal gospel and the book of life; the other five indicate contrast the natural law with the external, dead law. See Roukema, *Diversity of Laws*, 80-81 for a discussion of the natural law in the *Commentary on Romans*.

yourself. Let only the Scripture of the Holy Spirit remain in you.¹³⁴

With the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit written on the human spirit, the person shares in the revelation which is found also in the person of Christ, the fullest revelation of God in the world:

Thus, just as Christ is all the other things, he is also mercies, many mercies, many and not one, that is, just as there are treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, but they are hidden, so too there is a treasure of mercies in him, but it is hidden, lest perhaps if it were brought forth suddenly and before its time, it would make me, and those who wish to be like me in sloth, negligent.¹³⁵

Origen has an ongoing concern that human beings will become “negligent,” “slothful,” and “relaxed” because of their trust in God’s compassion and mercy.¹³⁶ The student first does her assignments out of fear of punishment or even because she hopes for reward; later, she works for the sheer love of learning. In a parallel way, the human spirit is first led to righteous action out of fear of God’s wrath. It is only in true spiritual maturity that the human being does good actions out of love and can begin to understand the depth of God’s mercy, since she is no longer motivated by fear or in danger of lapsing into slothful behavior.

¹³⁴ “Habes ergo in te litteras Dei, et litteras Spiritus sancti. Si vero delinquas, ipse tibi conscribis peccati chirographum. Sed vide quia cum semel accessisti ad crucem Christi et ad gratiam baptismi, chirographum tuum cruci affixum, et in fonte baptismi deletum est. Non rescribas ultra quae deleta sunt, nec repares quae abolita sunt, solas in te serva litteras Dei, sola in te permaneat Scriptura Spiritus sancti.” *Hom. in Gen.* 13.4 (PG 12: 235); Heine 194.

¹³⁵ “Ergo Christus sicut cetera omnia est et misericordiae ipse est, misericordiae multae, multae non una, hoc est sicut thesauri sapientiae et scientiae in ipso sunt sed sunt absconditi, ita et misericordiarum thesaurus in ipso est sed est absconditus, ne forte si ad subitum et ante tempus proferatur faciat me et si qui mihi in desidia similis esse uoluerit negligentem.” *Comm. in Rom.* 9.1.6: Hammond Bammel 9.1 (714.69-74)=PG 14: 1204-1205.

¹³⁶ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 3.9.4: Hammond Bammel 3.6 (249.53-55)=PG 14: 953; *Comm. in Rom.* 9.3.4: Hammond Bammel 9.3 (729.51-59)=PG 14: 1214.

The Spirit-Teacher, instructing the human spirit in stages, eventually brings her into a new relationship with God. In fact, as the "spirit of adoption,"¹³⁷ the Holy Spirit instructs the human spirit to call God "Abba, Father!" Moving beyond the spirit of slavery, which motivates the person only through fear of punishment,¹³⁸ the Holy Spirit instead pours out into the human spirit the love of a true child of God.¹³⁹ In teaching the human to call God "Father," the Spirit at the same time teaches the person to be a child to God, bringing the love of God into fruition in her. As the human spirit learns to call God "Father," the person becomes a true child of God; after all, "No one except a child calls 'Father!'"¹⁴⁰ The "adoption" of the Spirit describes a gradual process of learning to be a child of God.

This process of learning begins with the healing reconciliation offered by Christ, but the Holy Spirit lifts those who have been healed to new heights. As Origen says,

...Christ came to reconcile the world to God and to offer those who believe in him to the Father. But the Holy Spirit takes up those whom he offers to the Father, so that he may sanctify them, and that he may give life as if to members of the early ones of the heavenly church and may renew them into the solidness and perfection of the whole church, and thus at last, not having a stain or a wrinkle, they may be worthy to be called the church of God. Thus, first they approach to the stage of that perfection and call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and humanity; but then the Spirit of God is in their heart, crying: "Abba, Father!"; the same Spirit teaches them also to call on the name of the Father.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ spiritum adoptionis;" *Comm. in Rom.* 1.1.1: Hammond Bammel 1.3 (45.12-14)=PG 14: 837; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.1: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (553.9-554.24)=PG 14: 1103; "τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ εἰς υἰοθεσίαν ἀνάγον;" *Frag. in Rom.* BZ I. See discussion above on pages 70-72.

¹³⁸ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.1.1: Hammond Bammel 1.3 (45.1-14)=PG 14: 837.

¹³⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.11-12: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (344.172-177)=PG 14: 997. See also *Frag. in Rom.* JThS XXVIII.

¹⁴⁰ "Neque enim patrem alius quis nisi filius uocat." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (558.96-97)=PG 14: 1105.

¹⁴¹ "Christus enim uenit mundum reconciliare Deo et credentes sibi offerre Patri. Quos autem offert Patri Spiritus Sanctus suscipit ut

This perfection is only achieved through the Spirit's diffusing love into the human heart, both the love by which the human being loves God and the love by which God loves the human being.¹⁴² The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love (*spiritus caritatis*),¹⁴³ banishes fear and enables human disciples to "love God and adhere to him in a complete state of love."¹⁴⁴ This love poured out by the Spirit is "the highest and greatest gift of the Holy Spirit,"¹⁴⁵ which makes the saints "participants in the divine nature in the abundance of love."¹⁴⁶ It is not, then, given to the student of the Holy Spirit until that human spirit is ready.¹⁴⁷ Just as the Spirit hides the deepest truths about God until the student is more mature, the Spirit-Teacher likewise diffuses God's own love in the hearts of those who are able, through it, to share in the divine nature.

Origen perceives the Holy Spirit's work as Teacher as integral to God's movement in Christian lives. Once the human spirit has

sanctificet eos et tamquam caelestis ecclesiae primitiuorum membra uiuificet atque in soliditatem totius corporis perfectionemque restituat et ita demum ecclesia Dei non habens maculam aut rugam appellari mereantur. Prius ergo quam ad gradum istius perfectionis accedant tamquam mediatoris Dei et hominum inuocant nomen Domini Iesu Christi; postea uero quam spiritus Dei fuerit in corde eorum clamans: 'abba pater;' ipse spiritus eos etiam nomen Patris edocet inuocare." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.5.2: Hammond Bammel 8.4 (654.41-51)=PG 14: 1166-1167.

¹⁴² *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.11-12: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (344.180-345.189)=PG 14: 997. See also *Frag. in Rom. JTbS* XXVIII.

¹⁴³ "Nam et ipse Paulus nominat spiritum caritatis, et Deus caritas dicitur, et Christus filius caritatis appellatur." *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.12: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (345.189-191)=PG 14: 997.

¹⁴⁴ "...diligunt Deum et toto ei inhaerent caritatis affectu omnia..." *Comm. in Rom.* 7.7.3: Hammond Bammel 7.5 (583.20-21)=PG 14: 1121.

¹⁴⁵ "...summum et maximum donum Sancti Spiritus caritatem..." *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.12: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (345.186-187)=PG 14: 997.

¹⁴⁶ "...diuinae scilicet naturae participes effecti in abundantia caritatis per Sanctum Spiritum ministratae." *Ibid.* (345.198-200).

¹⁴⁷ "...it must be carefully considered in whose hearts the love of God is poured out. I think that it is poured out in theirs who do not now have again the spirit of slavery for fear: but also in theirs in whom perfect love sends fear outside; and to whom the spirit of adoption is given who cries out in their hearts, Abba, Father. Thus it is not to any person unless he is perfect and such kind as was Paul, in whose heart the love of God through the Holy Spirit was poured out.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.11: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (344.173-180)=PG 14: 997.

accepted reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ, she becomes the student of the Holy Spirit, beginning with the most literal revelations of the Scriptures. As the new disciple grows in the literacy of the Spirit, she discovers deeper and richer truths, which open her to a full participation in the love of God. The Spirit prays with and through her in the groanings of deepest compassion, she comes to understand that the God of the Scriptures is truly Love and Mercy, and the Spirit of Love diffuses in her heart, enabling her to call upon God as Father and indeed to be his child. Although these works of the Spirit follow upon the healing work of Christ, they are themselves clearly necessary to Origen's theology. It is the teaching of the Spirit that makes the work of salvation intrinsic, rather than external, to the human spirit, involving the human being with all her freedom in her own movement towards God. The self-emptying of the Teacher-Spirit, who prays in ways that even a spiritual child can understand, is a profound manifestation of the kenosis of God, whose love for creation pervades Origen's theology.

3.3. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE FATHER AND THE SON

These three images for the Holy Spirit provide a rich picture of the Spirit's work in the lives of Jesus Christ and of holy people in general. The Spirit, together with the Son, both imbues the soul of Jesus with divinity and links all converted people to their new relationship with God. As the Teacher of the holy, the Spirit transforms new Christians in increasingly profound ways, as they move more deeply into the spiritual life. No aspect of Christian relationship with God remains untouched by the Spirit; in fact, the Spirit is necessary to growth in prayer, knowledge of God's word, and holy life.

The connection between the Son and the Spirit, one of the beauties of Origen's pneumatology, is also one of the confusions inherent in it—and perhaps inherent in the Scriptures from which Origen draws it. Origen explains that, by definition, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God.

“But if someone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his;” and [Paul] adds: “However, if Christ is in you,” it must be asked whether it is a different Spirit of God that is in someone, or the Spirit of Christ, or even Christ himself or the Spirit of

him who raised Jesus from the dead. But I consider the great logic of the present passage and what the Savior says in the Gospels about the Holy Spirit: “that he proceeds from the Father; and he will explain about me;” and he adds the explanation of this word in the following, saying: “Father, all my things are yours and yours mine, and therefore, I have said that he will explain about me;” since, I say, I perceive the unity between the Father and Son, it seems to me to be said that the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ is one and the same Spirit.¹⁴⁸

It is clear to Origen that there is only one Spirit proceeding from God,¹⁴⁹ called “the Spirit of God,” “the Spirit of Christ,” and “the Holy Spirit,” among other names. Origen does not discuss the details of this “procession,” with the terminology preserved only in the Latin translation of the *Commentary on Romans*. However, throughout the commentary are both a distinct pneumatology and a strong link between the Spirit and the Son.¹⁵⁰ There is one

¹⁴⁸ “‘si quis autem spiritum Christi non habet hic non est eius;’ et subiungit: ‘si autem Christus in uobis est;’ requirendum est utrum diuersum sit spiritum Dei esse in aliquo an spiritum Christi, uel etiam ipsum Christi aut spiritum eius qui suscitauit Iesum a mortuis. Sed quantum uel consequentiam loci praesentis intueor uel illud quod saluator in euangelis de Spiritu Sancto dicit: ‘quia a patre procedit; et de meo accipiet;’ et huius uerbi explanationem in consequentibus iungit dicens: ‘pater omnia mea tua sunt et tua mea, et propterea dixi quia de meo accipiet;’ cum inquam tantam hanc unitatis inter patrem et filium aspicio rationem spiritus Dei et spiritus Christi unus atque idem mihi spiritus dici uidetur.” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.3: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (532.17-533.29)=PG 14: 1098.

¹⁴⁹ ...ita et spiritus multi quidem sunt sed unus est qui uere ex ipso Deo procedit et ceteris omnibus uocabuli ac sanctificationis suae gratiam donat.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (554.32-34)=PG 14: 1103.

¹⁵⁰ Origen cites “Paraclete” as an example of a title shared by the Son and the Spirit: “in regard to the Saviour ‘paraclete’ seems to mean intercessor; for in Greek it bears both meanings, comforter and intercessor,...[but] it seems that in the case of the Saviour the word ‘paraclete’ must be understood rather in the sense of intercessor...When used of the Holy Spirit, the word ‘paraclete’ ought to be understood as ‘comforter’, because he provides comfort for the souls to whom he opens and reveals a consciousness of spiritual knowledge.” *Princ.* 2.7.4 (SC 252: 334); Butterworth 119.

economy here;¹⁵¹ in no way does the Spirit function in complete independence from the Father or the Son, although the Spirit does his own work.

In speaking of the relationship of the Spirit to the Father and the Son, Origen's reader must remember that, for him, divinity is Spirit.¹⁵² This understanding lies behind his use of all "spirit" language and complicates any attempt to understand when Origen is using "spirit" generally of God and when he is speaking specifically of the Holy Spirit. Despite all of Origen's explorations of spirit and Holy Spirit in the *Commentary on Romans*, he does not outline this background concept in its extant sections. For details, one must turn to other texts, such as book 13 of his *Commentary on John*.¹⁵³

In this text, commenting on John 4:24, Origen explains that God, as Spirit, is life-giving.¹⁵⁴ This is true generically of "spirit" with respect to ordinary life, which depends on the breath, or the spirit. It is even more true of the Spirit that is God, "who brings us to the true life."¹⁵⁵ Human beings come to this true life in God, in the Lord, and in the Holy Spirit;¹⁵⁶ the Son helps to bring people to this life of the spirit.¹⁵⁷ Throughout, Origen uses the phrase "the divine Spirit" as well as "the Holy Spirit," not explicating the distinction that he might intend.

However, Origen distinguishes in general among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, although all are Spirit. The Father is the source of divinity as well as of all created life, and the Son is the Wisdom of God who empties himself to become a man for the

¹⁵¹ This distinguishes Origen from the modern attempt of Vladimir Lossky to speak of a separate economy of the Holy Spirit. See, for example, Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1976), 167.

¹⁵² One important text for Origen is John 4:24: "God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." See also page 45 above and Blanc, "Dieu est *pneuma*."

¹⁵³ *Jo.* 13.123-150 (SC 222: 94-112).

¹⁵⁴ In addition to commenting on John 4:24, Origen also makes reference to Psalm 103:29-30 and provides spiritual interpretations of other biblical passages.

¹⁵⁵ "τὸν θεὸν πρὸς τὴν ἀληθινὴν ζωὴν ἡμᾶς ἄγοντα." *Jo.* 13.140 (SC 222: 106); Heine II.97.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 13.146 (SC 222: 110); Heine II.99.

salvation of human beings. The Holy Spirit, the Holiness of God, is both the One who knows the deep things of God and the guide of those who are ready to learn and progress in holiness. The Son and the Holy Spirit work in their own particular ways to bring God into the world—the Son to heal and the Spirit to teach.

The teaching work of the Spirit is, nonetheless, related to the teaching work of both the Father and the Son.¹⁵⁸ Origen speaks of God as the Teacher of human knowledge;¹⁵⁹ this seems appropriate, since the Father as Creator provides natural knowledge to all, even to those who know neither the prophets nor Christ.¹⁶⁰ The Son is also Teacher, as is evidenced by the title given to Jesus Christ.¹⁶¹ The Savior teaches by speaking to the heart of each human being and through his words in the Scriptures,¹⁶² and through the example of his life.¹⁶³ Scholars of Origen, in fact, tend

¹⁵⁸ See also *Hom. in Jer.* 10.1.1 (PG 13: 358). Henri Crouzel summarizes the teaching of Father, Son, and Spirit effectively in *Origen*, 103-104: "...the divine Being is only known if he makes himself known. Thus the three Persons have each a role in the imparting of this knowledge. All wisdom comes from God...Through the other two Persons it is always the Father, source of the Trinity, who teaches...The Son is not only the physician who cures the blindness or deafness of the soul so that it can see and hear, he is the Revealer in person who communicates to men the knowledge he has of the Father. The Spirit unveils the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures which he inspired and he acts within the soul. The role of each of the divine Persons in this teaching is not always clearly distinguished. It can be said, however, that the Father is the origin, the Son the minister, the Spirit the medium in which the teaching is produced."

¹⁵⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* praef.2: Hammond Bammel 1.1 (37.10)=PG 14: 833 and *Comm. in Rom.* 2.14.19: Hammond Bammel 2.10 (186.214-215)=PG 14: 919, both of which refer to Psalm 94:10.

¹⁶⁰ *Princ.* 1.3.1 (SC 252: 144).

¹⁶¹ Origen quotes, for example, "If I, as lord and teacher, have washed your feet..." (John 13:14) and "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Matt. 9:11) See *Comm. in Rom.* 8.5.6=Hammond Bammel 8.4 (657.105-107)=PG 14: 1168 and *Comm. in Rom.* 10.6.8: Hammond Bammel 10.6 (802.103-104)=PG 14: 1260.

¹⁶² *Comm. in Rom.* 2.5.8: Hammond Bammel 2.5 (119.128-129)=PG 14: 883; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.4: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (580.52)=PG 14: 1119.

¹⁶³ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.4: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (611.60-63)=PG 14: 1138.

to focus on the Son as Teacher,¹⁶⁴ and not without reason. The Logos, incarnate, in the Scriptures, and in the hearts of all rational beings, plays a pivotal teaching role; Origen builds this aspect of his theology on the Christology of earlier thinkers.¹⁶⁵

Thus, teaching is the revelatory work of the Father and the Son, as well as of the Holy Spirit. Even the most descriptive language for the one Holy Spirit, then, continues to point to the Father and the Son, whose salvific work cannot be separated from that of the Spirit. The Spirit is always the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ, with Father, Son, and Spirit involved in the same work of redemption. As Teacher, as Ring, as God's Ink in the human heart, this Spirit is unique and necessary to the process of salvation—but also works among the saints together with the Father and the Son. The Father is, as always, the source of all this work, while the Son and the Spirit work closely together, as Origen's "cherubim" image emphasizes. The Spirit-Teacher is the instrument for the Son's teaching, the Ring to tie the Son to each Christian. Like the Father, the self-emptying Creator, and the Son, who becomes incarnate, the Spirit is kenotic in pouring himself out in love for those whom he sanctifies. Origen's descriptions of the Spirit as Teacher highlight this kenotic aspect most clearly, but all of the Spirit's transformative work among the saints illustrates that the Spirit is the means by which God works in Christians as well as the means by which human beings themselves grow in holiness.

¹⁶⁴ See, for example, Basil Studer, *Trinity and Incarnation: The Faith of the Early Church*, tr. Matthias Westerhoff, ed. Andrew Louth (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993), 86; Marguerite Harl, *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe Incarné*, Patristica Sorbonensia 2 (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1958), 243-268; Hal Koch, *Pronoia und Paideusis: Studien über Origenes und sein Verhältnis zum Platonismus*, AKG 22 (Berlin: Walter der Gruyter, 1932), 62-78.

¹⁶⁵ E.g., Justin and Irenaeus. See Studer 45-46, 63, and 81.

CHAPTER IV: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE HUMAN *REDITUS* TO GOD

One of Origen's greatest contributions to pneumatology is found in his anthropology. While the Spirit is present in the divine *exitus* into the world, the Spirit at the same time enables the human *reditus* to God. Just as the Spirit-Ring is God's promise of new life to the human being, the same Spirit is the human promise of return to God. The Spirit-Cherub enables the incarnation of the Son and also makes possible the human activity which makes the Spirit present in the world. The human work of evangelization and catechesis participates directly in the divine work of the Spirit-Teacher.

In locating the Holy Spirit in the human journey to perfection, Origen discovers a connection to the divine in the human spirit and in all human efforts to progress toward God. As participants in the life of the Spirit, who works at the center of a teeming School of spirit-beings, holy human beings reach out to others, sharing and deepening their holiness through teaching and ethical action. In emphasizing the human role in the Spirit's work, Origen indicates the depth of the Spirit's kenosis and the breadth of human freedom. Not only does the Spirit wait patiently for human participation, but the Spirit allows its transformative work to be dependent, in a sense, on the human decision to act and to love.

The Holy Spirit is at work in every human movement in the progression of holiness, from enfolding the individual human spirit to becoming present through human evangelization. At the same time, human progress is always free, the activity of each person's own spirit.¹ This is possible because of the essential connection

¹ For discussions of grace and human freedom in Origen's theology, see W. J. P. Boyd, "Origen on Pharaoh's Hardened Heart: A Study of

between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit and because of the way in which the Spirit teaches from within, assisting the holy human spirit in self-transformation.

This chapter examines Origen's *Commentary on Romans* for his understanding of the Holy Spirit in the context of the human journey towards God. Origen's pneumatological anthropology is grounded on his understanding of the ontological connection between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit.² This relationship provides a basis for (i) the connection between ethical action and human participation in the Spirit through spiritual gifts, and (ii) human evangelization as the communication of the Spirit's own presence to the world. Beginning as a mere reflection of the Spirit, the human spirit grows to be a true imitator of the Spirit, a model of the Spirit to others. Origen's anthropology finds the Spirit's work both in the isolation of the individual conscience and prayer life and in the mutual instruction and charismatic teaching of the entire Christian community.

After exploring the relationship that Origen describes between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit and the moral potential that he finds in the "gifts" of the Spirit, this chapter looks at the pedagogy to which the holy are called. An essential part of the call to discipleship is a call to teach; the road to holiness, with which Origen's whole theological project is concerned, involves taking on the Spirit's own pedagogical role and immersing oneself in genuine concern for the salvation of others.

In every human person, there is already an element that is intimately related to the Holy Spirit—the human spirit. This spirit is the precondition for human holiness, for the human ability to choose God and return to God. Once the human soul has chosen to wed itself to the spirit, making "room" for the Spirit's indwelling,

Justification and Election in St. Paul and Origen," *StPatr* 7/1 (1966): 434-442; Henri Crouzel, "Theological Construction and Research: Origen on Free Will," *Scripture, Tradition, and Reason: A Study in the Criteria of Christian Doctrine: Essays in Honour of Richard P. C. Hanson*, ed. Richard Bauckham and Benjamin Drewery (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 239-265; Constantine N. Tsirpanlis, "Origen on Free Will, Grace, Predestination, and their Ecclesiological Implications," *PBR* 9 (1990): 95-121; Robert L. Wilken, "Justification by Works: Fate and Gospel in the Roman Empire," *CTM* 40 (1969): 379-392.

² See discussion above, pages 62-68.

she becomes the recipient of the Spirit's gifts. As her own spirit is a part of a vast spirit-world, the human being is a part of the human community. It is by embracing her own spiritual existence that the person can, at the same time, endow the community with the gifts she is given. This movement beyond the self is present in all the gifts of the Spirit, but particularly in those of prophecy and teaching. Embracing her own spirit-self, the person becomes an integral part of the Spirit's School in the world.

4.1. THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new
and right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy
holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me
with a willing spirit”
(Psalm 51:10-12).³

“We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit,
groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the
redemption of our bodies”
(Rom. 8: 23).

Like intimacy with the Spirit, participation in the Spirit's gifts is the work of human free choice as well as the Spirit's own inherent generosity. In choosing the Spirit's gifts, the human being makes herself responsible for embodying those gifts in the world. It is only in acting them out and sharing them with others that the gifts of the Spirit are fully received. Human action is thus an essential part of every spiritual gift.

The Spirit's own presence in each person is the Spirit's greatest gift (χάρις, *donum, gratia*). In order to describe this presence of the Holy Spirit in the human being, Origen turns to the Scriptures. He wonders “whether this Spirit is given to everyone from the beginning and later flees from the worst and those estranged by their actions from God,” as Scripture might seem to indicate (i.e., Genesis 6:3: “My Spirit will not remain in those human beings,

³ This passage, which Origen uses in his discussion of the Holy Spirit and other spirits in *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1, also influences Pseudo-Philo. See Levison, *Spirit*, 65-77.

because they are in the flesh.”) or “whether grace is given later by the merit of life and of faith.”⁴ Origen concludes that the latter is the case, with the Spirit’s indwelling a gift accorded to the person of faith. He points to the pentecostal descent of the Spirit in Acts 2:3 and to Jesus’ words, “receive the Holy Spirit,” in John 20:22 to demonstrate ways in which the Spirit has come to dwell in people. He theorizes that Genesis 6:3 speaks of those who, having served the Spirit, turn away from him to return to lives of sin. Origen concludes that everyone should seek the gift of the Spirit’s own presence, a search that involves the worthy living of one’s own life. Having received this gift, one must continue to live well in order to preserve the Spirit’s presence. It is from the Spirit’s presence within the human being that all other gifts flow.

4.1.1. Spiritual Gifts as Participations in the Spirit

Spiritual gifts,⁵ flowing from the Holy Spirit to the human spirit, play a significant role in the Spirit’s pedagogical work. In fact, these

⁴ “Uelim tamen hoc ipsum quod dicitur uel spiritus Christi uel spiritus Dei uel etiam ipse Christus in nobis habitare quale sit intueri; utrumnam ex initio omnibus iste spiritus datur et postmodum pessimis et a Deo alienis actibus effugatur, secundum illud quod scriptum est: ‘non permanebit spiritus meus in hominibus istis quoniam caro sunt;’ an uitae merito et fidei gratia postmodum datur secundum ea quae in actibus apostolorum docentur, quia Spiritus Sanctus tamquam linguae igneae uenit super unumquemque eorum, uel certe sicut in euangelio docemur cum ipse saluator posteaquam resurrexit a mortuis ad discipulos dicit: ‘accipite Spiritum Sanctum;’ et insufflauit in unoquoque eorum. Unde mihi uidetur quod et meritis conquiratur hoc donum et uitae innocentia conseruetur et unicuique secundum profectum fidei augeatur et gratia, et quanto purior anima redditur tanto largior ei spiritus infundatur.” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.7: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (535.72-536.86)=PG 14: 1100.

⁵ Origen is adamant that there are some gifts of the Holy Spirit that are spiritual, and others that are not. All are good gifts, but only some warrant the name “spiritual”: “What [Paul] says: ‘I will hand over to you some spiritual gift;’ this seems to indicate that is some sort of gift which is not, in fact, spiritual. For the gift of faith is, without a doubt, spiritual, and the gift of wisdom, and similarly that of wisdom and that of virginity. However, when, speaking of marriage and virginity, he says: ‘There is a proper gift which each one receives from God, one person this one, and the other that one;’ he says that marriage is also a gift, because it is written: ‘The woman was chosen for the man by God;’ but that is not a

gifts may themselves be called “spirits.” As Origen says, reading Psalm 51 (LXX 50), it is God’s own Spirit to which David refers as “holy” and “perfect”:

for just as there are many children of God,...nevertheless there is by nature one Son and only-begotten from the Father through whom all children are named [and] so also there are many spirits, but there is one who truly proceeds from God himself and gives to all the others the grace of his name and holiness.⁶

The Holy Spirit is the “first-fruits” of all spirit;⁷ all spiritual virtues, dwelling in the person of Christ, are the Spirit’s own gifts.⁸

spiritual gift. Many other gifts can be said to be from God, such as riches, bodily strength, beauty of form, or an earthly kingdom. For these are also given by God, as Daniel, too, says: ‘Because he makes and unmakes kings;’ but these are not spiritual gifts. Therefore, blessed are those to whom the apostle wishes to hand over a spiritual gift to confirm them in faith, that they, from now on, may no longer be little children, nor carried around by every wind of doctrine. When this is done by Paul, both he himself receives consolation, seeing his work strong and stable, and those are consoled, who are made participants in the apostolic grace.” *Comm. in Rom.* 1.12: Hammond Bammel 1.14 (72.8-24)=PG 14: 857-858; *Frag. in Rom.* *JThS* 1.3.

⁶ “Sicut enim multi sunt filii Dei...unus tamen est natura filius et unigenitus de patre per quem omnes filii appellantur, ita et spiritus multi quidem sunt sed unus est qui uere ex ipso Deo procedit et ceteris omnibus uocabuli ac sanctificationis suae gratiam donat.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (554.29-34)=PG 14: 1103.

⁷ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.6: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (574.94-99)=PG 14: 1115-1116. “First-fruits of the spirit” can also be interpreted in other ways, all relating to the Spirit’s gifts to Christians. The person who finally passes beyond her pedagogues “is made worthy to receive the spirit of adoption as the first-fruits of the spirit...through which ...one can also be associated with the church of the first-formed, which is in heaven.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.3: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (572.42-44)=PG 14: 1114. Origen also speaks of the first-fruits as “the gift of the Holy Spirit...which was gathered more loftily and more admirably into [the apostles] before others.” This lofty gift is closely related to apostolic ministry, which seeks “the perfection of those whom we have been sent to teach and instruct.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.5.5: Hammond Bammel 7.3 (573.75-574.85)=PG 14: 1115.

⁸ See *Hom. in Jer.* 8.5.2-3 (PG 13: 343); Christ is the “storehouse” of the spirits of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, piety,

These spiritual fruits are “spirits” because they are the Spirit’s gifts, participating in the Spirit and marking the progress of the person as she progresses to God. Such gifts, even in the giving, require the action of the recipient. There is no passivity in the person who receives spiritual gifts. Rather, each recipient is actively engaged with the Spirit, working to produce spiritual fruits. Love and peace, for example, are gifts acted out even as they are received.

Although the highest gift for which all yearn is the spirit of adoption, the Holy Spirit’s own being,⁹ other gifts of the Spirit are involved in the striving of the saints on the road to perfection. As the human spirit, joined to the Holy Spirit, is endowed with many gifts, these many gifts, lived out, lead the person ever closer to God. The Spirit’s presence and gift-giving are mirrored in the journey of the person to perfection. From the one Spirit flow many spiritual gifts; from the many fruits of these gifts, the human being arrives at the one ultimate goal. As Origen says, “just as someone does business who, finding a pearl, sold all the many precious things he had and bought that one, thus one who begins with many fruits ought to give them all for the one fruit of perfection.”¹⁰

The gifts of the spirit are many. One of these “spirits” is that of faith, a fundamental part of the spiritual journey.¹¹ This spiritual gift, exemplified by Abraham, is a participation in the Spirit:

For indeed when he enumerates the gifts of the spirit, which he says are given to believers according to the measure of their faith, there, among other things, he asserts that the gift of faith is given by the Holy Spirit; for thus after many things he also speaks thus about it: “to another, faith in the same spirit;” in order that he might show that faith, too, is given through grace...You find this also designated in the Gospels, where the apostles, understanding that this faith which is from a human being cannot be perfect unless this will have been added which is from God, say to the Savior: “increase faith in us.”...the

fear of God, power, love, and temperance. See also *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.9: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (538.114-124)=PG 14: 1101.

⁹ See above, pages 70-71 and 127.

¹⁰ “sicut is qui margaritas negotiabatur plures inueniens unam pretiosam uendidit omnes et emit illam unam, ita quis a pluribus fructibus incipiens ad unum perfectionis tendere debet fructum.” *Comm. in Rom.* 1.13.5: Hammond Bammel 1.15 (76.72-77.74)=PG 14: 859-860.

¹¹ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.12: Hammond Bammel 1.14 (72.10)=PG 14: 857.

same faith by which we seem to believe in God is confirmed in us by the gift of grace.¹²

Other such “spirits” include freedom,¹³ gentleness,¹⁴ prophecy, ministry, teaching, and exhortation.¹⁵ Moreover, because the Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of Christ,¹⁶ these gifts of the Spirit also include the virtues among Christ’s *ἐπίνοιαι*: wisdom, justice, and so on.¹⁷

¹² “Etiam ubi enumerat dona spiritus quae dicit secundum mensuram fidei credentibus dari ibi inter cetera etiam dona fidei asserit per Sanctum Spiritum tribui; post multa namque ita etiam de hoc dicit: ‘alii fides in eodem spiritu;’ ut ostendat quia etiam fides per gratiam datur. Sed et alibi idem apostolus docet dicens: ‘quia a Deo uobis datum est non solum ut credatis in Christum sed etiam ut patiamini pro illo.’ Inuenis hoc et in euangelis designari ubi apostoli intellegentes quod ea quae ex homine est fides non potest esse perfecta nisi addita fuerit etiam ea quae ex Deo est dicunt ad saluatorem: ‘auge nobis fidem.’ Ex quibus omnibus apertissime comprobatur quod hic dicit apostolus: ‘ideo ex fide ut secundum gratiam firma sit promissio;’ quia etiam fides ipsa qua credere uidemur Deo dono in nobis gratiae confirmatur.” *Comm. in Rom.* 4.5.3-4: Hammond Bammel 4.5 (300.21-34)=PG 14: 974-975. See also *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 204,10-208,14. As Scherer says, “si la foi d’Abraham était d’ordre naturel et humain, cela ruinerait la relation intime et nécessaire qu’Origène, à la suite de s. Paul, veut établir entre la *πίστις* et la *χαρίς*.” Scherer 205.

¹³ *Comm. in Rom.* 1.1.4: Hammond Bammel 1.3 (48.55-61)=PG 14: 839-840.

¹⁴ *Comm. in Rom.* 10.14.5: Hammond Bammel 10.14 (825.68-70)=PG 14: 1274.

¹⁵ *Comm. in Rom.* 9.24.2-3: Hammond Bammel 9.24 (747.8-13)=PG 14: 1225.

¹⁶ *Comm. in Rom.* 7.1.2: Hammond Bammel 7.1 (554.21-23)=PG 14: 1103.

¹⁷ “But also thus each one will be proven to have in himself the spirit of Christ. Christ is wisdom; if someone is wise according to Christ and knows the things which are of Christ, he has the spirit of Christ in himself through wisdom. Christ is justice; if someone has the justice of Christ in himself, he has the spirit of Christ in himself through justice. Christ is peace; if someone has in himself the peace of Christ, he has the spirit of Christ in himself through the Spirit of peace. So too both love and sanctification, so too every individual thing which Christ is said to be; it must be believed that this one who has these qualities has the spirit of Christ in himself and also hopes that his mortal body will be given life

These spiritual gifts enable people to put to death the “deeds of the flesh.” Each spiritual fruit destroys an opposite evil work; the spiritual gifts are thus weapons in the warfare of peace and joy, instruments of life that destroy death.

Love is the fruit of the spirit, but hate is the deed of the flesh; thus hate is mortified and destroyed through love. Likewise, joy is the fruit of the spirit, but the sadness of this world which works death is the deed of the flesh; thus this is destroyed if the joy of the spirit is in us. Peace is the fruit of the spirit, but dissension and discord are of the flesh; but it is certain that discord can be mortified through peace. So too the patience of the spirit destroys the impatience of the flesh, and goodness wipes out wickedness, and gentleness ferocity, and continence immoderation, and chastity kills shamelessness, and in such succession the one who has put to death the deeds of the flesh through the spirit will live.¹⁸

Having put to death the deeds of the flesh, the human being begets joy, as Abraham begat Isaac:

You can beget Isaac, which is joy, and this is the first spiritual fruit; your seed and your works can go up to the heavens and become works of light and be considered the gleaming and splendor of the stars, so that when the day of resurrection arrives, you will differ, so to speak, star from star in your brilliance.¹⁹

because of the spirit of Christ dwelling in him.” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.9: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (538.114-124)=PG 14: 1101.

¹⁸ “Fructus est spiritus caritas, odium carnis est actus; odium ergo per caritatem mortificatur et extinguitur. Gaudium similiter fructus est spiritus, tristitia uero huius saeculi quae mortem operatur carnis est actus; haec ergo extinguitur si sit in nobis gaudium spiritus. Pax fructus est spiritus, dissensio et discordia carnis est; sed certum est discordiam mortificari posse per pacem. Sic et patientia spiritus impatientiam carnis extinguit et bonitas malitiam perimit et mansuetudo ferocitatem et continentia intemperantiam et castitas impudicitiam necat talique ordine qui per spiritum actus carnis mortificauerit uiuet.” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.14.4: Hammond Bammel 6.14 (540.27-37)=PG 14: 1102.

¹⁹ “potes generare Isaac quod est gaudium, et hic est primus spiritus fructus; potest semen tuum et opera tua ascendere ad caelum et effici opera lucis et stellarum fulgori splendorique conferri ut cum dies resurrectionis adfuerit tamquam stella differas in claritate.” *Comm. in Rom.* 4.6.9: Hammond Bammel 4.6 (318.151-155)=PG 14:983. For this

From the begetting of Isaac, the Christian progresses to the carrying of Christ himself; those who live most fully in the gifts of the Spirit are those who bear Christ within.²⁰ As always, a participation in the Spirit is also a participation in Christ.

All gifts of the Spirit are given now only in part, even to the saints. The human being will be able to receive these spirits in their fullness only in the life to come. As Origen says:

Just as wisdom and prophecy and other gifts of the Holy Spirit are given now to the saints through a glass and in an enigma, thus also freedom is now given, not yet full freedom, but through a glass and in an enigma, and thus the saints say that they are slaves, in comparison with that freedom which will be bestowed face to face.²¹

Despite the partial character of human participation in spirit-gifts, these spirits constitute the closest possible union with God in this life.

Among these gifts, the charism of prophecy warrants particular attention, since it involves a unique participation in the work of the Spirit and relates intimately to the charism of teaching with which Christians walk on the path to God. Prophecy, requiring both the efforts of the human being and the gift of God, involves the full understanding and wisdom of the prophet.

allegorical connection between Isaac and the spirit of joy, see also *Hom. in Gen.* 7.2 (PG 12: 199) and 8.10 (PG 12: 209). In *Cant.* 4.2.18 (SC 376: 708-709), Origen describes the first fruit of the Spirit as charity, and the second as joy.

²⁰ See *Comm. in Rom.* 4.6.9: Hammond Bammel 4.6 (318.155-319.159)=PG 14:983 and also *Or.* 25.3 (PG 11: 497-498), which reads: "...let us put to death the members that are on earth; and let us bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, so that the Lord may, as it were, walk about in us as in a spiritual garden..."

²¹ "sicut scientia quae nunc datur sanctis per speculum datur et in aenigmate et profetia et cetera dona Spiritus Sancti, ita et libertas quae nunc sanctis praestatur nondum plena libertas est sed uelut per speculum et in aenigmate, et ideo sancti seruos se esse dicunt ad comparisonem illius libertatis quae facie ad faciem tribuetur." *Comm. in Rom.* 1.1.4: Hammond Bammel 1.3 (48.55-61)=PG 14: 839-840. See also the Greek of *Frag. in Rom.* BZ II. *Or.* 25.2, like many other passages throughout Origen's corpus, also indicates the partial nature of the virtues in this life. See above, page 117.

Unlike other early Christians, Origen de-emphasizes prophecy as knowledge of the future. For him, "Prophecy is the knowledge that makes obscure matters known through speech, the understanding of the structure of the universe, of the operation of the elements and periods of time."²² In the same vein, "Prophets are those who administer well the word of the teaching, and prophesy the things of God."²³ The prophet has many of the same characteristics as a philosopher; like the philosopher, too, the prophet's work is the education of God's people.²⁴ Jesus was the premier prophet, since he both healed and taught those whom he healed.²⁵ After Jesus, the gift of prophecy is replaced²⁶ by the gift of charismatic teaching found in the apostles.²⁷ For this reason, Origen's *Commentary on Romans* distinguishes between Old Testament prophecy and the "prophecy" to which Paul refers.²⁸

4.1.2. Ethics and the Gifts of the Spirit

It is significant that the charism of prophecy is a pedagogical one that, like all charisms, looks outward into the world. As with prophecy, all the gifts of the spirit demand, and assist in, ethical behavior. Charisms are not purely a private matter between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit, a "spiritual" link between God

²² *Comm. in I Cor.* 55 (JThS 1909, 36), tr. Gunnar af Hällström, *Charismatic Succession: A Study on Origen's Concept of Prophecy* (Helsinki: The Finnish Exegetical Society, 1985), 22.

²³ *Sel. in Ezech.* 13, tr. Hällström 24.

²⁴ Hällström makes the interesting point that the Spirit works in allegorists in much the same way as in prophets, Jesus, and the apostles. "The capacity for allegorizing is identical with the gift of wisdom and knowledge...Prophecy and allegory are thus both gifts from God, but both also presuppose human efforts. But the latter capacity deals with *biblical* truths, truths that are *already* present though hidden in the Scriptures." It is this latter capacity that Origen claims for himself, rather than the former one. See Hällström 44-45.

²⁵ Hällström 29-31.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 31-38. As Hällström points out, the end of prophecy with Jesus is a part of Origen's anti-Montanist polemic.

²⁷ The apostles receive the first fruits of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. See, for example, the allegorical discussion in *Hom. in Lev.* 2.2.5 (SC 286: 98).

²⁸ *Comm. in Rom.* 9.3.8-9: Hammond Bammel 9.3 (732.115-125)=PG 14: 1216.

and one individual. Rather, they are a moral imperative, a participation in God's Spirit that must always be shared with others.

Origen finds this connection between ethics and spiritual gifts exemplified in Romans 12. In this chapter, Paul has "proposed to speak about the gifts of the graces which are given through the Holy Spirit"²⁹ and has, in fact, discussed the gifts of prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, and almsgiving. The chapter then proceeds to give a list of moral exhortations. Although it may initially appear that Paul has forgotten the original intent of the chapter, he actually has a deeper purpose in writing in this manner.

But let us consider more carefully lest perhaps, since indeed he has arranged to bring in an ethical passage..., he thus would join moral precepts to the gifts of the graces, that he might show Christians that these things, too, are given through God's grace. For there are several of the gentiles well-ordered in their habits and honorably brought up who nevertheless do not refer to God this thing which they have, nor do they profess that grace has been given to them by him, but they ascribe it to their own industry or boast about their instructive teachers. But the apostle shows us that each thing which is good is from God and is given through the Holy Spirit...³⁰

Moral precepts, then, are gifts of the Spirit, enlightening Christians as to their responsibilities and enabling them to fulfill them.

Charismatic behavior is not only the "higher profile" work of prophecy but also the humble, daily gift of loving one's neighbor. The Spirit graces Christians not only to proclaim the gospel but also to live honorably and honestly in the larger community.

²⁹ "proposuit enim loqui de donis gratiarum quae per Sanctum Spiritum dantur." *Comm. in Rom.* 9.24.2: Hammond Bammel 9.24 (747.9-11)=PG 14: 1225.

³⁰ "Sed consideremus diligentius ne forte quoniam quidem in his omnibus moralem locum tractare instituit...ideo ad munera gratiarum etiam moralia praecepta coniungat ut ostendat Christianis etiam haec per Dei gratiam dari. Sunt enim et nonnulli gentilium compositis moribus et honeste institutis qui tamen hoc ipsum quod habent non ad Deum referunt nec ab ipso sibi datam gratiam confitentur sed ad propriae industriae ascribunt aut super magistris institutionibus gloriantur. Nobis autem ostendit apostolus omne quod bonum est a Deo esse et per Sanctum Spiritum dari..." *Comm. in Rom.* 9.24.3: Hammond Bammel 9.24 (747.19-748.30)=PG 14: 1225-1226.

Although the ethical precepts may appear to be the same as those followed by the pagans, they are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit. All ethical efforts must be crowned with the grace of the Spirit; the apparent gifts and morality of those without the Spirit “will be regarded as nothing,” no matter how seemingly perfect their wisdom, ministry, or teaching.³¹ The indwelling of the Spirit—and the gifts which accompany this indwelling—is the foundation of the meaningful human life.

In choosing intimacy with the Spirit, the human being chooses to receive and thus to live out the gifts of the Spirit—gifts that are different for each person and that are intended to be shared with the whole community. Participation in the Holy Spirit’s gifts is a central element in the human *reditus* to God. Only the gifts of the Spirit can open the door to perfection; only in living a charismatic life can one become more perfect. The Spirit is present in the divine giving and in the free human choice to receive, and thus to live, the gifts.

4.2. IMITATIO SPIRITUS

The human being, closely connected to the Holy Spirit and filled with the Spirit’s gifts, is called to imitate the Spirit’s own activity in the world. Integral to each human spirit’s *reditus* to God is the drawing of others also to the divine. All of the Spirit’s work involves deepening the relationship between God and human beings. As “Cherub,” the Spirit infuses divinity into Jesus; as “Wedding Ring,” he links Christians in relationship to Jesus Christ. As Teacher, the Spirit instructs people in the ways of holiness, drawing them closer to God.

³¹ “For in the same way we could say: even if someone may be perfect in faith among the children of humanity, if the faith which is from your grace is lacking to him, he will be reckoned as nothing. And thus in all these things which have been enumerated, there is a certain perfection among the children of humanity which they attain with work and their own eagerness, whether in wisdom or in doctrine or in other services; which, nevertheless, if they do not have grace given by God, they will be nothing, since if the grace of the Spirit is lacking in them, they cannot be members of the body of Christ.” *Comm. in Rom.* 9.3.7: Hammond Bammel 9.3 (731.90-101)=PG 14:1215.

Just as the Holy Spirit is kenotic in his own pedagogical and unitive work,³² everyone who is truly transformed by the Spirit works humbly to teach others to follow in their footsteps on the path of the Spirit—a path that ultimately leads to unity among believers. The work of the Spirit in the individual human spirit always moves her beyond herself into the larger community; each person's journey to God is one that includes the journey of her neighbors.³³ The Christian's intimacy with God is reflected in her drawing others into a closer relationship with him. In imitating the Spirit's own work at every stage of the spiritual life, the Christian demonstrates and deepens her understanding of charity, the lesson at the heart of all others.

4.2.1. Teaching: The Spirit's Presence in the World

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance”
(Acts 2: 4).

Origen speaks of the teaching vocation throughout his corpus, tying it specifically to the person of the Holy Spirit. In *On First*

³² It is important to note that Christ is, in a sense, more deeply kenotic than the Spirit. It is he who sacrifices himself even for sinners, while the Spirit gives of himself for those on the path to holiness. In kenotic care for others, then, the Christian is always an imitator of Christ. The *imitatio Spiritus* is an aspect of the encompassing *imitatio Christi*. Walking in God's footsteps involves walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, whose spirit cohered perfectly to the Holy Spirit. As Origen says in *Princ.* 4.4.4 (SC 268: 412); Butterworth 319: “Christ is set forth as the example to all believers...each one of us [should]...proceed along the steep path of virtue, so that perchance by this means we may as far as possible become, through our imitation of him, partakers of the divine nature; as it is written, ‘He who saith he believeth in Christ ought himself to walk even as he walked.’ The Word, then, and this wisdom, by our imitation of whom we are called wise or rational, becomes ‘all things to all men, that he may gain all,’ and to the weak becomes weak...”

³³ Jesus models the Christian communal journey, allowing even his heavenly joy to wait for our participation. As Origen says in his seventh homily on Leviticus, “As long as we do not act so that we may ascend to the kingdom, he cannot drink alone the wine which he promised to drink with us. Therefore, he is in sorrow as long as we persist in error.” *Hom. in Lev.* 7.2.2 (SC 286: 310). The English translation, by Gary Wayne Barkley, is available in FaCh 83, 134.

Principles 4.2, Origen asserts that “the disciple of the Spirit is bidden to announce the message in person, no longer through letters but through living words, to the presbyters and elders of the whole church of God, to men who have grown grey through wisdom.”³⁴ The *Commentary on Romans* illustrates the joint nature of teaching and discipleship by speaking of both the words and the actions of the holy person, who is both the student of the Spirit and, in imitation of the Spirit, the teacher of others.

The Christian work of teaching is the logical continuation of the Spirit’s work at Pentecost. In describing the manner of the Spirit’s indwelling, Origen turns to the Spirit’s descent in Acts 2:4; “the Holy Spirit came, like tongues of fire, upon each of them.”³⁵ The Spirit came upon those who, having been prepared by Jesus, were ready to become the students of the Spirit, leading them to speak in different tongues, teaching so that others could understand the Gospel in their native languages.³⁶

Origen points to still other ways in which the Scriptures describe the reception of the Spirit: Jesus’ breathing the Spirit onto the apostles and the Spirit’s descent which leads to prophecy.³⁷ At other times, he finds that the Spirit’s indwelling occurs through the preaching of the Spirit’s own students. The premier example of such human teaching as the conveyance of the Spirit is, as always, found in the work of Jesus.³⁸

³⁴ This is Butterworth’s translation of the Greek, which reads: “Ουκετι δὲ διὰ γραμμάτων, ἀλλὰ διὰ λόγων ζώντων αὐτὸς ὁ μαθητὴς τοῦ πνεύματος προστάσσεται ἀναγγέλλειν τοῖς τῆς πάσης ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ πρεσβυτέροις πεπολιωμένοις ὑπὸ φρονήσεως.” The Latin reads: “Ipse uero quae ab spiritu sancto didicerat non per litteras neque per libellum, sed uiuenti uoce iubetur annuntiare presbyteris ecclesiarum Christi, id est his, qui maturam prudentiae sensum pro capacitate doctrinae spiritualis gerunt.” *Princ.* 4.2.4 (SC 268: 314-316); Butterworth 277.

³⁵ “...quia Spiritus Sanctus tamquam linguae igneae uenit super unumquemque eorum...” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.7: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (536.79-80)=PG 14:1100.

³⁶ “...et rursus eo modo quo in actibus apostolorum diximus gestum ut diuersis linguis loquerentur apostoli.” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.8: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (536.94-537.95)=PG 14:1100.

³⁷ *Ibid.* (536.80-537.97). See John 20:22 and 1 Sam. 10:10.

³⁸ Jesus is described as διδάσκαλος in the Greek text of the commentary. See *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 150, 4.

There is also still that other way, as when the Savior, traveling after the resurrection with Cleophas and another disciple and opening the Scripture to them, ignited them with the spirit of his mouth, so that they spoke thus: "Was our heart not burning within us when he explained the Scriptures to us?"³⁹

Although Jesus exemplifies this kind of teaching, the Scriptures reveal that others may also communicate the Spirit of God through impassioned speech.

See in the Acts of the Apostles how, after Peter spoke to Cornelius, Cornelius himself and those who were with him were filled with the Holy Spirit. From which also, if you speak the word of God and speak faithfully from a pure conscience, nor yourself refute it from your words as if you were one who teaches differently and acts differently, it can happen that, by your speaking, the fire of the Holy Spirit will inflame the hearts of your listeners and they will immediately glow and burn for the completion of all that you teach, that they may fulfill the things which they have learned from your words and that they may seek those things which have arisen, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God; and they know that these things which have arisen are not on the earth.⁴⁰

The pentecostal descent bestows languages upon the followers of Jesus; these same followers use the gift of speech to communicate the Spirit to others.⁴¹ Both aspects of Pentecost

³⁹ "Est et ille adhuc alius modus ut cum saluator post resurrectionem cum Cleopa et alio discipulo iter agens et aperiens eis scripturas igniuit eos spiritu oris sui ita ut illi dicerent: 'nonne cor nostrum erat ardens intra nos cum adaperiret nobis scripturas?'" *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.8: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (537.97-101)=PG 14:1100. The scriptural quote is from Luke 24:32.

⁴⁰ Uide in actibus apostolorum quomodo loquente Petro ad Cornelium repletur Spiritu Sancto ipse Cornelius et qui cum eo erant. Unde et tu si loquaris uerbum Dei et loquaris fideliter ex conscientia pura nec ipse redarguaris ex uerbis tuis quasi qui aliter doceas et aliter agas potest fieri ut loquente te auditorum corda Sancti Spiritus ignis inflamet et continuo concalescant et ardeant ad complenda uniuersa quae doces, ut rebus impleant quae sermonibus didicerunt et quae sursum sunt quaerant ubi Christus est in dextera Dei sedens; quae sursum sunt sapiant non quae super terram." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.8: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (537.104-113)=PG 14:1100-1101.

⁴¹ As Origen shows, human beings also participate in bestowing this

communicate the Holy Spirit to human beings. Thus, teaching through words and deeds is not a minor side-effect of the Spirit's work in his students. Rather, it is one of the few ways in which the Spirit comes to dwell in a human being—in fact, the only way which involves a human mediator. In teaching, the Spirit's disciple provides the opening lesson for yet another beginning student in the Spirit's academy.

4.2.2. Progression in Teaching and in Holiness

As in every aspect of the Christian life, there are multiple stages to the work of the teacher. As one advances in holiness, she progresses as well to teaching on higher spiritual levels. Origen explains the progression in teaching through a comparison with the various types of teachers a student encounters in years of education:

...in childish studies, a teacher is called perfect, in comparison with one who is newly instructed and receives the first elements of literacy; but he is not as perfect as the one who teaches grammar. But however perfect the *grammaticus* himself may be, nevertheless the perfection of the rhetor is higher; and the perfection of philosophical teaching is much more distinguished than all these. Although the teaching of literature is among all these, a different kind of perfection and of teaching is held in each one... But [Paul] also designates a measure of the same knowledge when he says: "thus so that you are able to admonish others." In which he shows that each person ought also to admonish another in what he has learned and ought to have discussions with his fellow-students in which they may admonish and edify one another. For coming together with one another can contribute much learning, if it happens with love and awaits an understanding of deeper and

gift of language. He comments, "Now it must be asked how the apostle is a debtor to the Greeks and the barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise. For what had he received from them from which he became their debtor? I think that he was made a debtor among different nations because he received the ability to speak to all the gentiles through the grace of the Holy Spirit, as he also says: 'I speak in all your languages.' Therefore, because he received the knowledge of languages, not for himself, but for those to whom he preached, he was made a debtor to all of them, knowledge of whose languages he received from God." See *Comm. in Rom.* 1.13.6: Hammond Bammel 1.15 (77.75-83)=PG 14: 860.

more obscure things from those who are learned and more perfect...⁴²

Every Christian has something to teach to others, whether she is *simplex*, still in the early stages of her relationship with the Spirit, and thus comparable to an elementary school teacher, or advanced in the spiritual life, and comparable to the professor of philosophy. All are taught by the Spirit, who begins to teach Christians at the lowest levels. Appropriately, then, all disciples of the Spirit, however advanced their journeys, are called to share their learning with others. Mutual edification is an integral part in advancing as a student of the Holy Spirit; in order to learn the more profound truths, one must teach and learn from others.⁴³

⁴² "...in puerilibus studiis ad comparationem illius qui nuper imbuitur et prima litterarum suscipit elementa magister ipse librarius perfectus appellatur; sed non est ita perfectus ut est ille qui grammaticam docet. Ipse uero grammaticus quamuis sit perfectus superior est tamen perfectio rhetoris; et his omnibus longe eminentior filosoficae doctrinae perfectio. Cumque in omnibus his litteraturae doctrina sit diuersus tamen gradus perfectionis et magisterii in unoquoque habetur...Designat autem et scientiae ipsius mensuram cum dicit: 'ita ut possitis et alios monere.' In quo ostendit quia in eo quo didicit unusquisque debet etiam alium monere et huiusmodi cum condiscipulos habere conloquia quibus se et moneant inuicem et aedificant. Potest enim conferre plurimum eruditionis alterna conlatio, si cum caritate habeatur et de profundioribus quibusque uel obscurioribus expectet eruditorum perfectorumque sententiam..." *Comm. in Rom.* 10.10.3-4: Hammond Bammel 10.10 (813.15-814.37)=PG 14:1266-1267.

⁴³ See *Hom. in Jer.* 14.3.2 (PG 13: 407); Smith 137-138: "Perhaps in benevolence there is a reciprocity between the person *helped* and the person who has *helped*, so that the one who speaks is also the one who derives help...Thus as the teacher would derive help...from the hearers who progress and become better, he would receive help by *having fruits* in them...every teacher in the task of teaching, insofar as the listener is *intelligent*, is helped in what he teaches, in what he learns. And those who speak the lessons become stronger concerning those things which they have delivered when the *listeners*, if they are *intelligent*, accept the words not generally, but investigate and inquire and examine the intention of what was said." See also *Hom. in Ex.* 12.2 (PG 12: 383); Heine 369, where Origen castigates his hearers for their failure to edify one another: "Who seeks a divine education with as much zeal and work as he sought a human education? And why do we complain if we are ignorant because we do not learn? Some of you leave immediately as soon as you have

The School of the Spirit is no exclusive tutorial, but a forum of active discussion in which students, through continuing discussions, lead one another into a mutually deepening relationship with the Spirit. Learning from the Spirit leads Christians to teach others. As they teach, imitating the Spirit's own pedagogy, Christians continue their own process of learning. The true student is also the teacher of others; the mutual instruction of the Spirit's disciples follows in the patterns of the Spirit's own kenotic teaching.

4.2.3. The Kenotic Teaching of the Scriptural Authors

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those under the law I became as one under the law—though not being myself under the law—that I might win those under the law...To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some”
(1 Cor. 9:20-22).

Although imitation of the Spirit's teaching is expected of all Christians as they edify each other, there are particular people, graced with the charism of teaching, whose *imitatio Spiritus* rises to a different level. Teaching God's word, for Origen, is a lofty calling. All Christians instruct each other in their words and their lives, but some, specifically chosen as teachers and evangelists, convey the Holy Spirit throughout the world; some, the authors of the Scriptures, are the voices of the Spirit for generations.

As Teacher, the Spirit communicates on a variety of levels, addressing specific audiences. Therefore, the Spirit's work through specific people, such as David, Daniel, and Paul, is an essential part of the divine pedagogy.⁴⁴ The Spirit who teaches gradually, feeding

heard the texts which are selected read. There is no mutual investigation of these words which have been read, no comparison. There is no remembrance of the command which the divine Law impresses upon you: ‘Ask your fathers and they will tell you...’” The English translation, by Ronald E. Heine, is available in FaCh 71.

⁴⁴ Note that most discussions of the Spirit's pedagogy must refer to the Spirit's teaching through the Scriptures—which are written by the

disciples first with milk and only later with solid food,⁴⁵ does so primarily through the words of Scripture—words which Origen acknowledges as the words of inspired, but truly human, individuals.⁴⁶ The Spirit is kenotic in his willingness to work through these human beings, while the human authors, in their turn, lower themselves for the benefit of those whom they teach.

Origen discovers holy people employing a kenotic method of teaching throughout the Bible. As he says, "...it is the custom in the Holy Scriptures that holy people assume sins and that teachers take up into themselves the weaknesses of their students..."⁴⁷ David and Daniel exemplify this tendency for Origen; their words in Psalm 37 and Daniel 9:3-7 speak of heavy sins which are not their own. Origen believes that their purpose in speaking of themselves as iniquitous is

to understand and perceive that in themselves they describe our passions and our sins; and therefore they lament these things so that by their tears we may be invited to weep. For they considered that no one can be found so hard and

Spirit's disciples (e.g., Paul, David, Daniel). My discussion above illustrates this; see page 123.

⁴⁵ See, for example, *Comm. in Rom.* 2.14.14: Hammond Bammel 2.10 (183.141-148)=PG 14:917; *Comm. in Rom.* 8.10.7: Hammond Bammel 8.9 (690.82-87)=PG 14:1190 and *Comm. in Rom.* 9.36.1-3: Hammond Bammel 9.36(763.10-764.23)=PG 14:1235-1236. Note discussion above, pages 122-123.

⁴⁶ However, one passage in the *Commentary on Romans* seems to stand in contrast to Origen's usual attitude towards Paul. In explaining how the words of inspired scriptural authors are not fallible, like other human statements, Origen describes those who hear the word of the Lord directly—insofar as they hear that word—as gods, rather than human beings. Paul, as apostle, speaks as one who is divine, as does David, as apostle. See *Comm. in Rom.* 2.14.21: Hammond Bammel 2.10 (188.251-259)=PG 14: 920, which responds to the statement of Romans 3:4 that God is truthful, but every human being is a liar. See also *Princ.* 3.3.3 (SC 268: 190) and Hällström 13.

⁴⁷ "...moris sit in scripturis diuinis sanctos personas assumere peccatorum et magistros suscipere in semet ipsos infirmitates discipulorum..." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.12: Hammond Bammel 6.9 (516.188-190)=PG 14:1089-1090.

ungrateful, who, when he sees that his wounds are mourned by others, himself receives no sense of grief about his wounds.⁴⁸

Holy people assume the *personae* of sinners in order to instruct others in sorrow and repentance. Like the Holy Spirit, they speak to the level of their students that they may better teach them.

Origen turns to Paul as an example of a teacher⁴⁹ whose selfless humility imitates the pedagogy of the Spirit.⁵⁰ Just as the Holy Spirit uses different levels of meaning in the Scriptures to educate Christians at different stages in their spiritual journeys, the apostle Paul employs analogous techniques in his letters as he attempts to speak to his audience as he finds them struggling in their spiritual lives.

Paul's overall pedagogy is, in his letters, also the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, Paul is a human being writing in his own words, in the language of his own time and place. For Origen, Paul is a man to be revered, one who has even achieved a state of perfection, but also one who has achieved that perfection

⁴⁸ "Unde conueniens est nos legentes dicta sanctorum cum ab eis tale aliquid dici uidemus intellegere et sentire quia nostras in semet ipsis passiones nostra peccata describunt; et propterea illi haec deflent ut illorum fletibus nos inuitemur ad lacrimas. Considerabant enim neminem ita durum et ingratum posse inueniri qui cum ab aliis uideat uulnera sua lugeri ipse nullum de suis uulneribus sensum doloris accipiat." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.12:Hammond Bammel 6.9 (517.209-518.216)=PG 14:1090.

⁴⁹ Origen makes this clear throughout the commentary. See, for example, *Comm. in Rom.* 7.16.3: Hammond Bammel 7.14 (620.35)=PG 14:1144. "...ipso nobis apostolo Paulo magistro et duce huius itineris facto." Paul has a special vocation to be apostle, teacher, and preacher to the gentiles. Although all Christians are called to mutual edification, not all are given the specific charism of teaching with which Paul is graced. On Paul's vocation, see *Comm. in Rom.* 8.6.5: Hammond Bammel 8.5 (661.56-663.89)=PG 14:1172.

⁵⁰ See Francesca Cocchini, *Il Paolo di Origene* and Richard Ashby Layton, "Origen as a Reader of Paul: A Study of the *Commentary on Ephesians* (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1996), 21-24. As Cocchini asserts, Origen's view of Paul as teacher offers a counterbalance to the radical views of Marcion and the gnostics of his day, which elevated Paul's letters over other scriptural writings. Cocchini, *Paolo*, 27. Origen understands Paul as a teacher who conveys the message of the Holy Spirit in his own particular way to a particular human audience.

through fierce struggles.⁵¹ The man who persecuted the church of Christ⁵² passed through tribulations to become the saint whose love of Christ⁵³ and inspired wisdom enable him to speak as the prudent steward of God's word.⁵⁴

In his wisdom, Paul writes skillfully to convey the truths most appropriate to each level of his audience.⁵⁵ Like—and with—the Teacher-Spirit, Paul guides his students gently. The Spirit begins disciples with the spiritual alphabet; Paul does his part in this teaching work

by nourishing the weak with herbs, little children with milk, by offering the stronger food of the word to the robust, by bearing with a maternal affection those wandering and stammering in the faith, as if they were still a young fetus, until Christ would be formed in them...⁵⁶

As he teaches in this way, Paul both imitates and continues the work of the Spirit. Through the Spirit's inspiration of Paul, a

⁵¹ *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.4: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (338.60-339.72)=PG 14: 994. For further discussion of Origen's view of Paul's human limitations, see Cocchini, *Paolo*, 38-41.

⁵² *Comm. in Rom.* 5.5.6: Hammond Bammel 5.5 (410.67-71)=PG 14:1031. *Comm. in Rom.* 4.12.3: Hammond Bammel 4.12 (355.30-32)=PG 14: 1002 makes indirect reference to this persecution when Origen includes Paul in the group of those who were formerly "enemies" of God. See also the Greek of *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 224, 9-20.

⁵³ *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.7: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (444.71-73)=PG 14: 1050.

⁵⁴ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.7: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (363.90-104)=PG 14: 1006-1007; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.2.12: Hammond Bammel 5.2 (398.143-145)=PG 14: 1025; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.5.2: Hammond Bammel 5.5 (408.10-13)=PG 14: 1030.

⁵⁵ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.22: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (374.306-307)=PG 14: 1012; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.5: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (443.44-45)=PG 14: 1049; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.2-3: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (531.6-532.11)=PG 14: 1098. Even Paul's apparent awkwardness in some passages has hidden meaning; e.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 9.24.2-3: Hammond Bammel 9.24 (747.8-24)=PG 14: 1225.

⁵⁶ "...infirmos holere paruulos lacte alendo, robustis fortiolem uerbi cibum praebendo, errantes et in fide titubantes ac uelut in aborsum quoddam redactos materno affectu rursum paturiundo donec Christus formaretur in eis..." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.10.7: Hammond Bammel 8.9 (690.83-87)=PG 14:1190.

concrete individual who can speak to the audiences of his day, the Spirit does his own pedagogy in Paul and in his listeners. Yet, this action of the Spirit is neither incarnation⁵⁷ nor possession of Paul's spirit.⁵⁸ Instead, it is akin to the work of a great professor, educating his students so that they may go into the world and educate others. The teaching of the Spirit becomes substantial in those of his students who go forth to share it in the world.

Paul is always careful, Origen asserts, to teach in ways that are appropriate to his listeners. In 1 Corinthians 9:22, Paul describes the way in which he becomes "all things to all people" so that he may win them for Christ. This statement provides the lens through which Origen views Paul's pedagogical technique. Throughout Romans, Origen sees Paul addressing different audiences,⁵⁹ his different words to the different groups explaining seeming inconsistencies in the epistle. Paul's attempts to address his audiences with words appropriate to each are a mark of the inspired character of his instruction; in speaking to each listener "in his own native language," Paul teaches in the truly pentecostal School of the Spirit.⁶⁰ He speaks the tongues of both Jews and gentiles:

In this letter Paul is indeed like an arbiter settling between Jews and Greeks, that is, those who believe from among the gentiles, and on both sides he thus summons and invites them to the faith of Christ, so that neither does he completely offend the Jews by destroying Jewish rites, nor does he cast desperation upon the gentiles by confirming the observance of the law and its letter; and whether he calls to mind about the

⁵⁷ See the interesting discussion of inspiration and incarnation in Moule, *Holy Spirit*, 52-69.

⁵⁸ This is counter to some tendencies in the ancient world to identify inspiration with absolute passivity. Levison points to the connection between loss of mental control and inspiration found in texts of Philo and Josephus, in Plato's *Phaedrus* 244 A-B and in Plutarch's *De defectu oraculorum*, among others. See Levison, *Spirit*, 27-53.

⁵⁹ Paul even goes by different names with different audiences; he is Saul with the Jews and Paul with the gentiles. *Comm. in Rom.* praef.10: Hammond Bammel 1.2 (44.34-39)=PG 14: 837-838.

⁶⁰ The explicit reference to Acts 2:8 is mine, rather than Origen's.

promises or about the punishments, he divides his speech toward each people.⁶¹

Paul also speaks the language of people still enslaved to the flesh, though he himself has become a truly spiritual man.⁶² In Romans 7:14-25⁶³ Origen finds a particularly clear example of this

⁶¹ "In hac epistula Paulus uelut arbiter quidam inter Iudaeos residens et Graecos id est eos qui ex gentibus credunt utrosque ad fidem Christi ita euocat et inuitat ut neque Iudaeos offendat penitus destruendo Iudaicos ritus neque gentibus inicit desperationem confirmando obseruantiam legis et litterae; et siue de poenis memoret siue de poenis ad utrumque populum diuidit uerbum." *Comm. in Rom.* 2.14.:Hammond Bammel 2.10 (176.7-177.13)=PG 14:914. See also *Comm. in Rom.* 2.11.3: Hammond Bammel 2.8 (141.28-37)=PG 14: 895; *Comm. in Rom.* 3.2.2: Hammond Bammel 3.2 (204.10-14)=PG 14: 928 ; *Comm. in Rom.* 8.6.9: Hammond Bammel 8.5 (665.128-131)=PG 14: 1173-1174; *Comm. in Rom.* 8.10.2: Hammond Bammel 8.9 (686.5-12)=PG 14: 1187; and Peter Gorday, "The *iustus arbiter*: Origen on Paul's Role in the Epistle to the Romans," *StPatr* (1989): 393-402.

⁶² In this way, fleshly people can understand him; at the same time, more spiritual people will find the deeper spiritual meaning in his words. See *Comm. in Rom.* 2.6.1: Hammond Bammel 2.5 (119.135-136)=PG 14: 883; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.1.7: Hammond Bammel 5.1 (363.103-364.110)=PG 14: 1007; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.2.6: Hammond Bammel 5.2 (394.69-72)=PG 14: 1023; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.10: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (447.113-114)=PG 14: 1051; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.6: Hammond Bammel 6.9 (511.82-85)=PG 14: 1087.

⁶³ "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am fleshly, sold under sin. For I work that which I do not understand; for that which I will, I do not do; but that which I hate, I do. However, if I do that which I do not wish to do, I consent to the law since it is good. But now no longer do I work that, but that sin which dwells in me. For I know that the good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh. For the will is within me; but I do not complete the good. For I do not do the good which I will; but I do this evil which I do not will. But if I do that which I do not will, it is not I who work it, but the sin which dwells in me. Therefore, I find a law in myself when I will to do the good, when evil is near to me. For I delight in the law of God according to my inner humanity; but I see another law in my members, fighting the law of my mind and taking me captive to the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched person that I am, who will free me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.1: Hammond Bammel 6.9 (506.1-507.16)=PG 14: 1084-1085.

willingness to address his congregation in ways that they will understand. In this passage, where Paul describes himself as fleshly and a slave to sin, Origen sees him assuming a *persona* for pedagogical purposes—the *persona* of one who is partially converted. In taking up this *persona*, Paul addresses the Romans in the language of their own experience, “so that by the apostle’s example no one is ashamed of the nature of the body, nor does anyone despair of improvement, nor lack knowledge of the throngs of his evils, from which he has been freed through the grace of Christ.”⁶⁴

Paul’s assumption of lesser *personae* is a part of his pedagogical kenosis, by which he emulates the Spirit’s own teaching method. As the Spirit prays in ways that are comprehensible even to the most childlike person, Paul again and again counts himself as a sinner, so that he may better instruct sinners in the ways of holiness. In doing this, he imitates not only the Holy Spirit, but also “that one who, although he did not do sin, was made to be sin for us, and although he was God, he was changed to be among humans.”⁶⁵ Paul’s selfless path is shared by other scriptural authors as they work for the salvation of others in their lives as well as in their writings.⁶⁶

4.2.4. The Character of Christian Teaching

Origen finds that the selflessness of Christian teachers runs counter to the self-centeredness of the pagan and heretical teachers of his day.⁶⁷ Christian teaching, worked in the Spirit, is inspired speech,

⁶⁴ “...ut exemplo apostoli nec corporis naturae pudeat quemquam nec pro emendatione desperet nec malorum suorum multitudines ignoret ex quibus per Christi gratiam liberatus est.” *Comm. in Rom.* 6.9.12:Hammond Bammel 6.9 (518.220-223)=PG 14:1090.

⁶⁵ “Imitatur enim illum qui cum peccatum non fecisset peccatum pro nobis factus est, et cum Deum esset inter homines conuersatus est.” *Comm. in Rom.* 4.11.3:Hammond Bammel 4.11 (350.30-32)=PG 14:1000, quoting 2 Cor. 5:21.

⁶⁶ Moses, after all, was willing to be erased from the book of life for his people. *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.4: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (611.65-612.70)=PG 14: 1138. All saints, says Origen, empathize with those who struggle with sinfulness, “working with them in their state and joined to their groaning.” *Comm. in Rom.* 7.6.2: Hammond Bammel 7.4 (578.11)=PG 14: 1118.

⁶⁷ The main problem with them is that they teach their own thoughts, without reference to the Holy Spirit. E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 8.8.6:

and not merely the product of human wisdom. Teaching in the name of the Holy Spirit is a lofty charism.⁶⁸ Those who are graced with this charism teach humbly, with reference to scriptural authority rather than to their own individual inclinations. Paul himself teaches in this way; Romans 3:11-18, for example, consists of a series of quotations from other parts of Scripture:⁶⁹

as is his custom, he wants to affirm what he had said from the Holy Scriptures and at the same time offers an example to the teachers of the church, so that they will put forth those things which they say to the people, not as things taken first from their own private thoughts, but defended by divine testimonies. For if the apostle himself does not believe that the authority of his sayings able to be sufficient, unless he says that what he teaches is written in the law and the prophets, how much less ought we, being insignificant, to observe this, that when we teach we will not put forward our thoughts, but those of the Holy Spirit?⁷⁰

A self-giving humility is necessary, then, if one is to work the pedagogy of the Spirit.

The self-giving of evangelization—the paramount form of Christian activity—reflects the activity of the Father and the Son, as

Hammond Bammel 8.7 (676.76-79)=PG 14: 1181. See also *Cant.* 3.13.8 (SC 376: 628).

⁶⁸ See Joseph Trigg, "The Charismatic Intellectual: Origen's Understanding of Religious Leadership," *ChH* 50 (1981): 5-19. Trigg cites five primary characteristics of charisma: first, charism is conferred directly by God, rather than through any human mediation; second, "charisma demands and elicits free obedience;" third, this response by individuals is the verification of charismatic authority; fourth, "charisma mediates God's word;" and fifth, "charismatic authority...can belong only to individuals." Trigg, "Charismatic Intellectual," 7-8.

⁶⁹ Psalm 14:1ff; 5:10; 140:4; 10:7; Isaiah 59:7; Proverbs 1:16; Psalm 36:2.

⁷⁰ "...ut ei moris est de scripturis sanctis uult affirmare quae dixerat simul et doctoribus ecclesiae praebet exemplum ut ea quae loquuntur ad populum non propriis praesumpta sentiis sed diuinis munita testimoniis proferant. Si enim ipse tantus ac talis apostolus auctoritatem dictorum suorum sufficere posse non credit nisi doceat in lege et profetis scripta esse quae dicit, quanto magis nos minimi hoc obseruare debemus ut non nostras cum docemus sed Sancti Spiritus sententias proferamus?" *Comm. in Rom.* 3.2.3: Hammond Bammel 3.2 (205.35-42)=PG 14: 929.

well as that of the Holy Spirit. Christian teaching involves the spiritual begetting, or fathering, of one's students. This "fatherhood" of the teacher is seen allegorically in Abraham, who is the fleshly father of Jews and the spiritual father of gentiles, "he who handed over the first elements of fleshly doctrine, that is, of the law according to the letter, and was the teacher of the first education in the divine law."⁷¹ Teaching is also the work of the Son Incarnate.

Christ speaks as word and reason to each in the heart and teaches about piety, persuades about justice, about chastity, about modesty, and bears witness to all the virtues together, just as he says: "My sheep hear my voice."...Christ is heard more through the sermons of preachers, in which, as we said above, Christ is shown to speak and teach.⁷²

Like the Son, the Christian teacher must also be willing to give everything—even salvation itself—for the disciples.⁷³ Although the charism of the teacher is distinct from that of the pastor, it involves the same humility, the kenosis of "the Good Shepherd" as well as that of the Spirit.⁷⁴ Origen is scornful of the human shepherd who does not care for his people, who "governs a certain flock and uses its milk and works its wool, but does not search for the weak and does not bind the lame..."⁷⁵

⁷¹ "is qui doctrinae carnalis id est legis secundum litteram prima elementa tradiderit et magister in diuina lege primae institutionis extiterit." *Comm. in Rom.* 4.1.7: Hammond Bammel 4.1 (273.88-274.90)=PG 14: 962.

⁷² "Christus tamquam uerbum et ratio unicuique loquatur in corde et de pietate doceat de iustitia suadeat de castitate de pudicitia et de omnibus simul uirtutibus protestetur, sicut et ipse dicit: 'oues meae uocem meam audiunt.'...In hoc magis per praedicantium sermones Christum ostendit audiri in quibus secundum ea quae supra diximus Christus loqui et docere monstratur." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.5.2-3: Hammond Bammel 8.4 (655.61-69)=PG 14: 1167.

⁷³ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 7.13.5: Hammond Bammel 7.11 (612.69-84)=PG 14:1139.

⁷⁴ John 10:11-16.

⁷⁵ "Et est uocatus pastor sed non electus pastor, qui praeest quidem gregi et lacte eius utitur et lanis eius operitur sed infirmum non requirit et claudum non conligat et fortem circumscribit in labore." *Comm. in Rom.* 1.2: Hammond Bammel 1.5 (50.22-25)=PG 14: 841.

An essential part of the teacher's kenosis is a genuine desire that her students will benefit from her teaching. It is not enough simply to put forward the word of God, no matter how skillfully:

Therefore there is one strength of speech which is said to be through grace; and another strength, the power of doctrine. But there is another speech from general erudition, which although it may be elegant and skillfully composed, still, since it is neither said or written through grace, it cannot lead the hearer to progress, although it could perhaps delight the reader.⁷⁶

The true Christian teacher yearns for all disciples to understand the word and to live it. For Origen, the apostle Paul is the preeminent example of this kenotic yearning, both in his willingness to assume lesser *personae* for the sake of others, and in his constant prayers that those whom he teaches will be filled with grace.

Paul not only says through grace the things that he says himself, but he also asks that grace be given to his listeners; and not only grace, but a multitude of grace. For he writes thus: "that grace may be multiplied in you;" and he says in all his letters: "grace to you, and peace."⁷⁷

The charismatic teacher is not merely an accomplished lecturer—although certainly Origen has the highest respect for rhetorical skill⁷⁸—but a passionate lover of both the subject matter (Jesus Christ) and the students (the Christian people).

⁷⁶ "Sic ergo alia uirtus est sermonis qui per gratiam dicitur; et alia uis doctrinae potestas. Alius autem sermo est ex eruditione communi qui quamuis lautus sit et arte compositus tamen si non per gratiam uel dicitur uel scribitur delectare fortassis possit legentem, adducere autem ad profectum non potest auditorem." *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2.5: Hammond Bammel 9.2 (721.47-52)=PG 14: 1209.

⁷⁷ "Paulus igitur non solum ipse quae dicit per gratiam dicit sed et auditoribus suis precatur gratiam dari; et non solum gratiam sed et multitudinem gratiae. Sic enim scribit: 'gratia uobis multiplicetur;' et in omnibus epistulis suis dicit: 'gratia uobis et pax.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2.6: Hammond Bammel 9.2 (721.53-57)=PG 14: 1209.

⁷⁸ Origen makes manu complimentary remarks about Paul's rhetorical skill. However, even the heretics and pagans use rhetoric; this is not what distinguishes a truly Christian teacher.

4.2.5. The Fruits of Christian Teaching

“And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!’”

(Romans 10:14-15).

Yet even humility cannot guarantee the charism of teaching. The evangelist occupies a sacred position—one imbued by the Holy Spirit—and must reflect that sacredness in all that he does. The ability to convey the Holy Spirit to others is a gift of God, a gift involving one’s whole life in both words and deeds. Not everyone who tries to teach in the Christian churches necessarily lives this gift.⁷⁹ There is a critical difference between being “called” and being “chosen” to teach; the true teacher accepts the charism wholeheartedly and lives it out.⁸⁰ In so doing, the teacher’s very life becomes an integral part of the Spirit’s instruction.

The “feet” of the evangelist must be beautiful, Origen says, emphasizing the holiness of life required of Christian teachers. He finds that the Scriptures are full of allegorical references to the life of the evangelist. As he comments on Romans 10:14-15, Origen explains that the teacher’s “beautiful and attractive feet,” spiritually understood, are those “which walk on the road of life.”⁸¹

For according to him who said: “I am the way;” understand the beautiful and attractive feet of the evangelists as those which are worthy to walk on that way. Those are the feet with which Paul also says that he has run the race...⁸²

⁷⁹ Origen, like Paul in Rom.2:21, is critical of those who try to teach others what they fail to teach themselves. It is crucial, he says, that the teacher of the church live out the virtues that he hopes to see in those whom he teaches: moderation, chastity, generosity to the poor. See *Comm. in Rom.* 2.11.9: Hammond Bammel 2.8 (145.116-146.126)=PG 14: 897.

⁸⁰ See *Comm. in Rom.* 1.2: Hammond Bammel 1.4 (49.7-50.29)=PG 14: 840-841 and the parallel, though shorter passage in *Frag. in Rom.* BZ II.

⁸¹ In the Greek of the *Commentary on Romans*, see *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 132, 19-134, 1, where Origen cites Psalm 10 in speaking of the feet of the wicked, which are swift to spill blood, and *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 140, 20-142, 2, where Origen contrasts the feet that are quick to shed blood with the beautiful feet of those who announce the good news.

⁸² “Secundum illum enim qui dixit: ‘ego sum uia;’ intellege decoros et speciosos euangelizantium pedes qui per talem uiam merentur incedere.

Jesus humbles himself before his disciples' feet, showing them how to treat their own students:

...those are the feet which Jesus washes for the disciples and dries with the linen by which he is girded. And although it was then fulfilled in bodily appearance; nevertheless, listen to the sentence which reveals such a profound mystery, when Peter, since he discerned only what he saw, excused himself that the Lord would not wash his feet like a slave, as if for the sake of honor: "If, he says, I do not wash you, you will have no part with me." And again he puts forth another saying like this, as if from the secret treasures of knowledge, and says: "What I have done, you do not know now; but you will know later;" and he adds: "Since I, as lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example."

The Christian teacher is able to share in this kenotic work because she has drunk the living water of Jesus, which becomes in her "a fountain of running water for eternal life, and from this water of spiritual teaching, she can wash the feet of her disciples and cleanse all the impurities and stains from their souls."⁸³ It is when she moves to pour the gift of water for others that the teacher's feet demonstrate the true beauty of loving action.

Isti sunt pedes quibus et Paulus cursum cucurrisse se dicit..." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.5.5: Hammond Bammel 8.4 (656.92-95)=PG 14: 1168, citing John 14:6 and 1 Cor. 9:24-26.

⁸³ "Gratifice autem pedes istos esse firmabis quos Iesus discipulis lauat et linteo quo praecinctus est terget. Et quamvis corporali tunc specie fuerit impletum, tamen Petro hoc solum quod fieri uidebat intellegenti et quasi honoris gratia ne sibi seruo pedes lauaret Dominus excusanti audi quam profundi mysterii proditur sermo: 'si te inquit non lauero non habebis partem mecum.' Et iterum aliam similem huic uocem tamquam de secretis scientiae profert thesauris et dicit: 'quod ego feci uos nescitis modo; scietis autem postmodum;' et addit: 'quia sicut ego dominus et magister laui pedes uestros et uos inuicem lauare pedes alterutrum. Exemplum enim dedi uobis.'...Si quis inueniat aquam uiuam et si quis accipiat bibere ab Iesu et aqua illa fiat in eo fons aquae salientis in uitam aeternam iste de hac aqua doctrinae spiritalis potest lauare pedes discipulorum et omnes ex anima ipsorum immunditias sordesque diluere." *Comm. in Rom.* 8.5.6-7: Hammond Bammel 8.4 (656.97-657.113)=PG 14: 1168-1169.

This passage, though not extant in the Greek fragments of the *Commentary on Romans*, reflects an interpretation of feet found throughout Origen's corpus. In his *Commentary on Ephesians*, Origen cites Romans 10:15 in a discussion of the charism of Christian teaching: "And how, indeed, could anyone be an evangelist, unless the feet—so to speak—of his soul are beautiful? For them to become so, God must supply them with beauty."⁸⁴

Ledegang⁸⁵ surveys Origen's work for the symbolism of feet and discovers several meanings. In addition to the references to evangelization, Origen also uses "feet" to refer to the activity of individuals and the church as a whole in the world, particularly in caring for those in need.⁸⁶ The *Commentary on Romans* itself contains another passage in which the foot occupies its place in the body of Christ. While the one who meditates on God's wisdom is the eye of the body and the one who listens zealously to the word is its ear, "another is energetic in seeing those who are afflicted and seeking those who are suffering and finding those in positions of necessity; he is, doubtless, called the foot of the ecclesiastical body."⁸⁷ Although they are not the feet in the body of Christ, Christian teachers nevertheless are marked by their own beautiful feet and

⁸⁴ Cited by Joseph Trigg in "Charismatic Intellectual," 9; from J. A. F. Gregg, "Origen's Commentary on Ephesians," *JThS* 3 (1902): 413-414. See also *Hom. in Jos.* 12.2 (PG 12: 888); Bruce 122, although it does not specifically refer to evangelization but rather to spiritual warfare: "let us pray that our feet may be like this, so beautiful and strong that they can tread on the necks of foes and tread upon the head of the serpent so that it cannot bite our heel." The English translation, by Barbara J. Bruce, is available in FaCh105.

⁸⁵ *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 90-94. Ledegang's survey supports the authenticity of the *Commentary on Romans* text, since his research encompasses Origen's extant corpus. Ledegang (90) notes that Clement uses imagery of the feet in a similar way; speaking of the apostles as the feet of the Lord. His reference is to *Clem. Paed.* 2.8.61,3-62,1.

⁸⁶ In other instances, Origen understands feet as a symbol of humility, contrition, childlikeness, or as a part of the community of the body of Christ.

⁸⁷ "Alius ad uisendos decumbentes et requirendos tribulantes et positos in necessitatibus eruendos est impiger; qui pes sine dubio ecclesiastici corporis appellatur." *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2.14: Hammond Bammel 9.2 (725.132-135)=PG 14: 1211.

are called to a glorious position of service to their students, one which consumes their lives as well as their words.

The quality of the teacher can also be evaluated by the lives of her students.⁸⁸ Origen finds that many who claim to be Christian teachers offer words that are attractive but easily dismissed by the hearers. As he points out,

...one often sees that many eloquent and erudite men, not only preeminent in word but also in thought, although they have said many things in the churches and have received the great applause of praise, still not one of his hearers takes contrition of the heart, or progresses toward faith, or is incited toward fear of God from the remembrance of those things which were said; rather, one departs with a certain sweetness and delight having seized the ears; but often men, not of great eloquence or eager for the arrangement of words, with simple and unformed words turn many unbelievers to faith, bow the proud to humility, and implant the stimulus of conversion in sinners.⁸⁹

Teaching in the Spirit—in fact, teaching the Spirit himself—is not an elegant form of entertainment, but an honest course of instruction that inspires, not applause, but conversion. Students who learn the lesson of the Spirit as conveyed by Christian teachers transform their lives completely. Origen points to the radicality of the transformation required of the Spirit's students; they must turn

⁸⁸ The actions of Christians reflect either well or badly on God as their Teacher; non-Christians will evaluate God based on how well his students have learned to live. Thus, living a good life is inseparable from Christian worship. E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 9.14: Hammond Bammel 9.14 (739.1-740.16)=PG 14: 1221.

⁸⁹ "Denique et rebus ipsis saepe compertum est nonnullos eloquentes et eruditos uiros non solum in sermone sed et in sensibus praepotentes cum multa in ecclesiis dixerint et ingentem plausum laudis acceperint neminem tamen auditorum ex his quae dicta sunt compunctionem cordis accipere nec proficere ad fidem nec ad timorem Dei ex recordatione eorum quae dicta sunt incitari; sed suauitate quadam et delectatione sola auribus capta disceditur; saepe autem uiros non magnae eloquentiae nec compositioni sermonis studentes uerbis simplicibus et incompositis multos infidelium conuertere ad fidem, superbos inclinare ad humilitatem, peccantibus stimulum conuersionis infigere." *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2.2-4: Hammond Bammel 9.2 (720.20-31)=PG 14: 1208-1209.

every part of their bodies, and of their lives, to the service of God and their neighbor.⁹⁰ Having been converted, these students must now become teachers of grace to their own hearers, drawing still more people into the work of the Holy Spirit in the world.

4.2.6. The Unitive Character of Christian Teaching

The pedagogy of the Spirit-filled teacher serves to unite all who learn it. As the Holy Spirit links believers to Christ, the saints who walk in the Spirit's footsteps draw Christians into greater peace and unity with one another. A closer relationship with God and a fuller living out of the teachings of Jesus Christ bring the disciples of the Spirit into a deeper communion with each other as well. Origen sees this indicated in Paul's own letters. Paul lists other names with his own; he notes, for example, "Paul and brother Sosthenes"⁹¹ and "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy."⁹² In doing this,

he shows, when two or three have been put as one, that the Holy Spirit has called forth one understanding and one speech from them; so that those who wanted to teach the churches that everyone should say one thing and know one thing, these people first might show that they say one thing and know one thing, and that they might honor with one voice the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For it is called "one mouth"

⁹⁰ "Formerly your feet ran to the temples of the demons, now let them run to the church of God...First their hands were stretched out to seize other things, now may they be stretched out that their own things be given away. Formerly their eyes looked at a woman or at something else to desire them, now let them look at poor, the lame, and the needy to have compassion. Their ears were delighted with vain sound or even with the diminishment of good people, now may they be converted to hearing the word of God for the explanation of the law and for the taking the discipline of wisdom. Let the tongue which was accustomed to insults, curses, and obscene language now be converted to blessing the Lord at all times; may him put forth a sound, honest word, that he may give grace to his hearers and speak the truth with his neighbor." *Comm. in Rom.* 6.4.2: Hammond Bammel 6.4 (470.14-471.27)=PG 14: 1063.

⁹¹ 1 Cor. 1:1.

⁹² 1 Thess. 1:1.

where one and the same understanding and word proceed through different mouths.⁹³

This unity is not, however, to be a mindless agreement with others. True peace comes only with the truth, since it cannot be achieved at the expense of compromise with heretics.⁹⁴ The Holy Spirit, working with his students, helps them “to know the same thing among one another”... ‘according to Jesus Christ.’ For it could happen that some might agree unanimously in wickedness and know one thing for the worse.”⁹⁵

Imbued with the Spirit, his disciples become “one church” despite their diversity. Paul recognizes this oneness when he sends the church of Rome the greetings of “all the churches of Christ.”⁹⁶ At first glance, Origen says, this is confusing, since “surely Paul writes these things while located in [only] one church? And how it is true that he sends greetings of all the churches together to the Roman church?” Despite Paul’s physical limitations, he is able to send these united greetings either because “there was one Spirit in Paul and in all the churches of Christ” or because “he may say that he greets them through faith and is joined to the Spirit.”⁹⁷ It is the

⁹³ “Ego etiam illud quod Paulus in quibusdam epistulis aliorum uocabula secum iungit et dicit: ‘Paulus et Sosthenes frater;’ et alibi ‘Paulus et Siluanus et Timotheus;’ puto non inaniter factum, sed per hoc ostendit quia duobus uel tribus in uno positus Spiritus Sanctus unum de eis sensum atque unum elicuerit sermonem; ut qui ecclesias docere cupiebant unum dicere omnes atque unum sapere ipsi prius unum se dicere et unum sapere demonstrarent, et uno ore honorificarent Deum et Patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi. Unum namque os dicitur ubi unus atque idem per diuersorum ora sensus et sermo procedit.” *Comm. in Rom.* 10.7.6: Hammond Bammel 10.7 (807.50-59)=PG 14: 1262.

⁹⁴ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 10.6.6: Hammond Bammel 10.6 (800.66-802.93)=PG 14: 1259.

⁹⁵ “Bene autem apostolus ubi ait: ‘id ipsum sapere in alterutrum;’ addidit: ‘secundum Iesum Christum.’ Posset enim fieri ut et in malitia aliqui unanimiter consentirent et unum saperent in peius.” *Comm. in Rom.* : Hammond Bammel 10.7 (807.59-63)=PG 14: 1262-1263, quoting Rom.15:5.

⁹⁶ Rom. 16:16.

⁹⁷ “Numquid non in una ecclesia positus Paulus haec scribit? Et quomodo uerum est quod omnium simul ecclesiarum salutes Romanae mittit ecclesiae? Sed pro eo intellegere debemus uel quod unus spiritus erat in Paulo atque omnibus ecclesiis Christi, uel salutare dicat per fidem

Holy Spirit, then, who helps his disciples to grow in unity and in mutual intimacy. Their shared teaching of one another, a teaching in which they struggle together for ever-deeper understanding, both creates and is a result of their community in the Spirit.

4.3. CONCLUSION

The human spirit, enfolded in the Holy Spirit *in potentia*, provides the ontological basis for the human return to God in the Spirit. Each soul may choose the governance of its own spirit, thus accepting the embrace of the Holy Spirit. This embrace conveys many spiritual gifts and, with them, the responsibility of doing the work of the Spirit in the world. Growing in the Spirit's grace, the human being turns from educating herself to educating others. In performing the Spirit's work, each person becomes more gifted; the Spirit's charisms, shared, blossom into ever fuller participations in God.

Teaching is a cornerstone of the work of the Spirit in returning the human being to the fullness of life in God. The Spirit teaches the individual in and through the human spirit within her. The same Spirit teaches the community in and through the words of those especially gifted to speak God's wisdom in the languages that they will understand. And this Spirit edifies those both weak and strong in the faith by enabling them to instruct one another as they journey deeper into the knowledge of God.

Those who accept this charism work it out actively in the world. The grace of teaching oneself and others is not one passively received, but a grace with which one must struggle and work day by day. The transformation of each human being involves walking through the world on "beautiful feet," translating God's word into words and actions that are comprehensible to others. This loving, kenotic instruction is the teaching that creates unity in the Spirit of God, drawing together "all the churches" into glorious wholeness and peace. In the imitation of the Spirit, each person becomes, not only one who teaches others, but a ring of unity, reflecting the Spirit's own unity. This union, the drawing together of those who journey more deeply into the knowledge and love of God, weds believers both to God and to one another. In mutual

et Spiritum iungi." *Comm. in Rom.* 10.34: Hammond Bammel 10.34 (841.1-842.6)=PG 14: 1283.

evangelization, the Spirit's disciples serve as a deep bond among one another—and between God and humanity. As Origen says, in language that reflects his description of the Spirit as a Wedding Ring, “And every person who through repentance regains what is according to the image becomes a seal, a ring on the right hand of God.”⁹⁸ In becoming this ring, each Christian receives the Spirit's gift and at the same time acts out the Spirit's gifts to others in the world.

Origen presents a pneumatological anthropology that brings new light to discussions of both human beings and the Spirit. His pneumatology reveals a humble Spirit who waits for the free invitation of a human will before bestowing its gifts, who is willing to become present through the teaching of human beings, who works in the particularities of time, language, and culture to convey eternal truths. The Spirit is demanding, requiring full participation from human beings and insisting on a partnership with those who progress towards perfection. This Spirit allows human beings to share in being the path to God for others. Origen's insistence on human freedom elevates the human choice to participate in God's work; those who turn to the Spirit share in the Spirit's activities in the world and even bring the Spirit's presence to others.

In finding the Spirit's presence in loving evangelization, Origen emphasizes for his readers the importance of the sharing of faith—especially in the vocation of teacher—and the possible ways in which Christians can influence lives, both through speech and action. The Spirit's own presence is encountered through the work of human beings in the Christian community—humans who lovingly live out their own understanding of God for the better knowledge of others. Enabled, taught, and united by the Spirit, the Spirit's disciples enable, teach, and unite others in the community, revealing the Spirit as they grow in holiness.

⁹⁸ “σφραγὶς δὲ ἥτοι σφενδόνῃ ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ γίνεται πᾶς ὁ τὸ κατ’ εἰκόνα διαμετανοίας ἀναλαμβάνων.” *Fr. in Jer.* 14 (GCS 3: 204–205); Smith 286. The English translation, by John Clark Smith, is available in FaCh 97.

CHAPTER V: AN EVALUATION OF ORIGEN'S PNEUMATOLOGY

Origen's theology of the Holy Spirit, with its focus on the Spirit's activity in God's *exitus* into the world and in the human *reditus* to God, should be dusted off and removed from the shelves of history. However, in bringing Origen's pneumatology into our current discussion, we must look carefully at what such an enterprise involves. When we select Origen's *Commentary on Romans* from our library shelves, do we find merely an interesting example of ante-Nicene theology—or something more, a voice that can speak to us today, despite the layers of history that lie between us? Is it possible to dialogue with Origen without twisting his words into meanings that he never could have imagined? Must we, like Rufinus, “translate” his meanings for our own world?

There is no simple answer to these questions, either in reading Origen or in reading any other figure from a time and place different from our own. On the one hand, we must read Origen in his own context to understand his theological proposal. Decontextualized readings of Origen have, among other things, contributed to labeling him as a heretic.¹ At the same time, Origen's legacy in the Christian tradition survives because Christians from many different times and places have taken his words seriously, hearing them as words addressed to them, bearing the seeds of new answers to problems that Origen himself did not necessarily face.²

¹ However, as Crouzel says, “the historical sense and a doctrine of the development of dogma are relatively recent notions. Therefore you are guilty of an anachronism when you blame Origen's accusers of neglecting them.” See *Origen*, 169.

² See, for example, Jon F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*, North American

Origen himself read the Scriptures in this way, studying them with historical tools but also hearing the living voice of the Spirit speaking to him through the biblical text.³

Just as Origen found life in the Scriptures, readers of Origen today can find a voice of hope through a contextualized reading of his pneumatology. Origen's context both strengthens and weakens his pneumatology at different points. The specificity of his personal experience colors his pedagogical image of the Spirit with a life that needs no translation for us. In contrast, his spiritual worldview, which is important to understanding his overall discussion of spirit-beings, may be beyond translation into the language of contemporary theology.

Like Rufinus, we must know when Origen's voice no longer speaks to us. However, unlike Rufinus, we must let Origen's own voice speak before we translate it. This chapter provides the beginning of such a contemporary translation of Origen's theology of the Spirit. After summarizing and assessing his doctrine of the Spirit in his own context, we then draw Origen into dialogue, identifying specific ways in which his pneumatology must be modified in order to be coherent for Christians today. Despite its potential problems, however, Origen's contribution is greater than his weaknesses—and, in fact, provides necessary contributions to the contemporary discussion.

5.1. ORIGEN'S PNEUMATOLOGY: SUMMARY AND ASSESSMENT

5.1.1. The Spirit's Role in Origen's Theology

The Holy Spirit is the background for Origen's entire theological project. It is impossible to discuss in detail any major concept found in Origen's thought without reference to his teaching about the Holy Spirit. His theology is informed by the language of the Scriptures, and because Origen reads these Scriptures as the pedagogy of the Holy Spirit, he understands his entire theological project as a Spirit-inspired contemplation and interpretation of the

Patristic Society Patristic Monograph Series 13 (Macon, GA: Mercer, 1988).

³ For scholarship on Origen's scriptural hermeneutics, see above, page 122, note 126.

Spirit's communication to humanity.⁴ In Origen's view, the entire purpose of theology is to understand the Spirit's words in their proper spiritual sense and to convey them to others in a way appropriate to their needs. The theologian, beginning from the Spirit-filled Scriptures, thus continues and participates in the pedagogical work of the Spirit. In this sense, then, Origen does all of his theology explicitly in the context of the Holy Spirit.⁵

In addition to being the backdrop for all theological reflection, however, the Spirit also plays a central role as a subject matter of Origen's theology. As we have seen, Origen wrote in a context where "spirit" was an important concept, understood in a number of different ways. Despite Stoic materialism, most people in Origen's world tended to oppose spirit and matter, whether "spirit" indicated good or bad influences or impulses, life itself, or God's presence in the world. Earlier Christian texts, such as *The Shepherd of Hermas* and *The Testament of Reuben*, emphasized the need for individuals to discern the spirits whom they encountered, distinguishing which would assist them to do good and which would lead them to evil.

Like many of his predecessors and contemporaries, Origen sees spirit as vitally real and present throughout creation. He identifies different types of spirit from the language of the Scriptures, which he explicates carefully, even when it fails to fall into neat categories (e.g., the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the

⁴ McDonnell speaks of the hermeneutical complexity caused by this inseparability of the Spirit from the theological project: "The authority of the Bible, whether it is inspired or not, is not a thing to be taken for granted. It has always to be shown and identified. But how does that happen? Only as the Holy Spirit proves the worth and meaning of the Scriptures and brings us into the truth. One cannot know God unless somehow God is actually present within the knower. And this happens through the Spirit...The Holy Spirit, however, can never become the 'object' of theological reflection because the Spirit is the horizon within which any theological reflection is possible. We can never adequately reflect on and objectify the point of view from which we speak; rather, we express it in everything we say." McDonnell, "Determinative Doctrine," 145.

⁵ The *Logos* is the content of the Spirit's teaching. See Torjesen's discussions of the relationship between the scriptural text and its hearer, found in *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 124-147.

heavens, who are “spiritual” but evil).⁶ For Origen, spirit is real existence, with matter existing principally to assist in the journey of created spirit to the Uncreated Spirit who is God. It is the spirit in creation that connects the created order, providing the closest point of identification between diverse kinds of beings, whether angels, humans, or even the sun, moon, and stars.⁷

Against this background, Origen's picture of the Holy Spirit is understandably vivid. In his worldview, where all life is connected by the spirit within it, it is not surprising that the Spirit in God—comparable to the conscience in a human being—offers creation its deepest connection to the Creator. By examining three metaphors for the Holy Spirit used in the *Commentary on Romans*, those of Cherub, Wedding Ring, and Teacher, we have seen that Origen uses a variety of biblical images to describe a Spirit who is active in ways that must not be oversimplified. Origen's use of the three metaphors emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is the link between God and humanity, active in the work of both God and human beings in the world. The Spirit, whose own activity unites God and humanity, also brings together the human beings who receive his gifts, uniting them through their shared teaching and learning as they travel toward God.

The heart of Origen's theology is the love of God that draws all humanity to himself through the gradual education of each person in freedom. The Spirit, for Origen, is the means by which God reaches out to creation and the means by which created beings return to God. As a Wedding Ring, the Spirit symbolizes the eschatological union of God and creation, a union which the Spirit renders possible. The Spirit is humanity's potential for holiness and thus for divinity; at the same time, the Spirit is the personification of God's desire to draw all people to himself. As God's own “conscience,” the Spirit knows the most hidden divine things. Embracing the conscience in each human being, the Spirit draws the person to the knowledge of the best that she is and can become. The teaching work of the Spirit, which is integral to the pedagogy of the Father and Son, communicates the Logos to humanity and draws Christians together into the union that is the church.

⁶ See above, pages 76-83.

⁷ *Princ.* 1.7.2-3 (SC 252: 208-214).

Origen's whole theological project follows the pattern of *exitus* and *reditus*, the outreach of God into the world to restore creation to himself. Pivotal to God's *exitus* into the world, the Holy Spirit provides the very context for the human restoration to God. The human *reditus* occurs in the Spirit's own School, the place where the student chooses to learn in the grace of God.

The centrality of Origen's pneumatology for his theology can be seen in considering one overarching theme of the *Commentary on Romans*—that of human freedom.⁸ Origen details his notion of created freedom in *On First Principles* 3, insisting that human beings are moved by our own agency, controlled by neither our constitutions nor God's working in our lives. The circumstances of our lives are beyond our power, he admits, but each person chooses freely how to respond to them.⁹ God would not hold each person responsible for living a good life if she were not capable of doing so freely.

For Origen, one of the proofs of human freedom is the way in which education is able to change people who choose to allow its influence into their lives.

It is as when a man who suffers from ignorance and want of education, and becomes conscious of his personal defects either from the exhortation of his teacher or from his own reflection, entrusts himself to one whom he believes to be capable of leading him on to education and virtue. When he so entrusts himself, his instructor promises to take away his lack of education and to implant in him education, not as if it counted for nothing in regard to his being educated and escaping from his ignorance that he should have brought

⁸ As Robert Wilken points out, this picture of human freedom includes God's grace; "Origen wants to have it both ways." Wilken shows that Origen's assertions are unique in his context: "Against fate and astrology he asserted free will and rewards and punishments; in response to the biblical picture of a saving, redeeming God he asserts that only through God can man really change." See Wilken, "Justification by Works," 72.

⁹ *Princ.* 3.1.5-6 (SC 268: 28-40).

himself to be cured, but because the instructor promises to improve one who desires improvement.¹⁰

Just as even the least educated person may search for knowledge, the one with the least knowledge of God's goodness may desire a deeper understanding of God—an understanding which will necessarily involve becoming more like God in one's own thoughts and life. Turning to God for education in holiness is a step into the Spirit's School, a meeting-place of grace and freedom in the movement toward becoming more God-like and coming to know God more deeply.

The Holy Spirit, though able to contain the human spirit, nevertheless does not force the human progression towards holiness. While providing the potential for sanctification, the Spirit leaves the choice to each individual. It is not until the person accepts the healing of Christ and freely turns to the good life that the Spirit becomes actively involved with her as Teacher and Wedding Ring.¹¹ The newness of the Spirit is available to anyone who desires to convert to holiness—but the person must first have the desire and remain faithful to the pursuit of increasing sanctification. Limitless graces are offered throughout the journey to perfection to the one who has chosen to become the dwelling-place of the Spirit of God. Yet, as Teacher of Holiness, the Spirit never coerces, but only guides the human student. The Spirit may offer appropriate instruction, and even remedial tutoring, but only the human disciple can choose to learn the divine lessons. Nevertheless, the teacher, for Origen, is more important than the pupil. It is impossible to discuss Origen's conception of human freedom without acknowledging the integral role of the Holy Spirit. The extent to which the Spirit is interwoven in the exercise of human freedom indicates how necessary the Spirit is to Origen's theology.

¹⁰ *Princ.* 3.1.15 (SC 268: 90-92); Butterworth 187. Here, in discussing Ezekiel 11:19-20, Origen is concerned with understanding the scriptural passage in a way that maintains human freedom.

¹¹ As Wiles says of Origen, he shows "that even if man's faith be logically prior to God's foreknowledge, yet even the embodiment of God's grace in the redemptive act of Christ's incarnation and death is logically prior to man's faith." *Divine Apostle* 103.

This kind of integrated pneumatology presents a unique challenge to contemporary theologians. As Kilian McDonnell describes the situation today:

In the West, we think essentially in Christological categories, with the Holy Spirit as an extra, an addendum, a “false” window to give symmetry and balance to theological design. We build up our large theological constructs in constitutive Christological categories, and then, in a second, non-constitutive moment, we decorate the already constructed system with pneumatological baubles, a little Spirit tinsel.¹²

McDonnell himself suggests a “two-directional hermeneutical function” for pneumatology, in which the Spirit is “the point of contact between God and history,” the point from which theology can discuss the Trinity on the one hand and the church on the other.¹³ To be healthy, McDonnell proposes that pneumatology must be fully integrated into one’s overall theological project.

There can never be a balanced doctrine of Christ without the recognition that pneumatology is the point of entry into Christology and ultimately into the Trinity...the Spirit is the horizon where the meaning of Christ and history are made manifest. One respects this horizon not necessarily by making the Spirit the specific object of theological reflection, or by continual talk about the Spirit, but by recognizing this role of point of entry and contact and its consequences for the whole theological process.¹⁴

McDonnell’s description of a sound, integrated pneumatology resonates with Origen’s own theology of the Spirit, in which he places the Holy Spirit at the center of human-divine interaction, speaking of the Spirit in a wide range of ways, but without attempting to limit the Holy Spirit to precise and dogmatic theological reflection.

¹² McDonnell points out that contemporary theology is very different from that of the patristic period; as he says, “Contemporary theology has turned from a theology of the Word to a theology of the World.” See “Determinative Doctrine,” 142.

¹³ Ibid. 148.

¹⁴ Ibid. 153.

5.1.2. Questions About Origen's Pneumatology

While Origen's pneumatology is thoroughly integrated into his theology, bypassing one danger encountered by many contemporary theologians, there are, nevertheless, potential problems in his theology of the Spirit. Although it would be anachronistic to hold him to a standard of "Nicene orthodoxy," it is still important to look at Origen's presentation of the Spirit vis-à-vis the Father and the Son. Perhaps more significantly, Origen's treatment of the body and material creation and his restriction of the Spirit to the holy may point to flaws in his theological project overall. If we are to take Origen's pneumatology seriously today, we must be prepared to recognize those areas of his thought that require the most adjustment, or "translation."

Although Origen should not be judged by Nicene definitions of what it means to be "trinitarian," nor can we speak with certainty of his own use of the language of "τριάς," it is still clear that the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—plays an important role in his theology. The Son and the Holy Spirit, like the Father, are divine and uncreated by nature. With the Son, the Spirit knows the Father fully and is able to counsel him—unlike any created being. Of Father, Son, and Spirit, each has his own gift to offer to created beings: the Father gives life to all, the Son gives reason to the rational, and the Spirit gives spiritual gifts to the holy. Although it is the Son alone who becomes incarnate, he is sent by the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit indwells the soul of the human Jesus to assist him in his work.

From our twenty-first century perspective, it might initially appear that Origen separates the activities of the Divine Persons too completely, failing to recognize the triune character of every one of God's deeds. However, such a criticism would ignore the way in which the Father is the One Source of all activity of the Son and the Spirit. Although the Son and Spirit have their own roles in the work of salvation, with only the Son able to become incarnate, both always enact the Father's loving plan for all—a plan which they also embody and adopt. The oneness of God lies at the root of everything that Origen says about the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, providing a crucial interpretive lens. Theologians today who attempt to dialogue with Origen on the subject of pneumatology should be aware of his overall understanding of the unity of God, without losing sight of the possible limitations of his thought when

read piecemeal. For Origen, the names of all three Persons are required by the baptismal formula; the presence of all three is required in the life of Jesus Christ. With one purpose, Father, Son, and Spirit cannot fail to be united in their overall activity.

In fact, rather than operating too independently, the Father, Son, and Spirit often seem so united in their work that it can be difficult to distinguish one from another. Origen's terminology can, at times, be confusing, particularly as he describes the Son and the Spirit. One important example of this confusion is found in discussions of pedagogy, which is the work of the Father and the Son, as well as the Spirit. As Henri Crouzel puts it, "The role of each of the divine Persons in this teaching is not always clearly distinguished. It can be said, however, that the Father is the origin, the Son the minister, the Spirit the medium in which the teaching is produced."¹⁵ Origen's descriptions of the Spirit-Teacher, the focus of this study, reveal the joint work of all Three Persons as well as the strong role of the Spirit in bringing this work to fruition.

There are two possible weaknesses in Origen's pneumatology that might indicate flaws in his theology overall. Kilian McDonnell points them out clearly,¹⁶ saying that Origen's theology of the Spirit: (i) fails to connect the Holy Spirit explicitly to the work of creation, and (ii) unduly restricts the Spirit's activity to those who are sanctified and are already prepared to embark on the path to holiness. As a result of the Spirit's limited scope of activity, McDonnell believes that Origen renders the Spirit irrelevant to the lives of ordinary believers.

The Christian layperson with a secular occupation "in the world" will only with difficulty identify with Origen's worthy, the perfect, and the ascetic, those for whom the Spirit has a special concern. Origen's pneumatology is too cramped to serve the whole of the Christian community...Origen's category of 'the worthy' has the potentiality for becoming the churchy Spirit, or the pietist Spirit, privatized and turned inward...The Spirit has to be active not only where persons live their interior lives, but also be real where they live their exterior lives, economic and political. If the Spirit is not related in a significant way to the whole of creation, if the Spirit is restricted to the interior life..., then we can judge the mission

¹⁵ Crouzel, *Origen*, 104. See above page 132, note 158.

¹⁶ McDonnell, "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine."

of the Spirit to be junior grade. One can trivialize the Spirit. Origen clearly does not do this, but the seeds are there.¹⁷

McDonnell sees two related problems: (i) the Spirit is not involved in the act of creation and thus has only a limited relationship with the created world, and (ii) the Spirit is intimate only with those who are worthy.¹⁸

Although, on the surface, Origen's pneumatology is vulnerable to these criticisms, a look at his theology in his own context reveals a more complex picture. Origen may not clearly connect the Spirit with the act of creation, but he does show that the Spirit is fully engaged with the created world as he understands it. At the same time, Origen's descriptions of the Holy Spirit as the Teacher of the worthy must be read in light of his own universalist tendencies. A brief look at both of these criticisms highlights the importance of reading Origen's pneumatology in light of his own theological project. Understood in context, each of these apparent "weaknesses" pinpoints a particular strength in Origen's theology of the Spirit.

a. The Spirit and Creation

In Origen's theology, creation is the work of God the Father, a work in which the Son has a share.¹⁹ The Holy Spirit, though existing eternally with the Father and the Son, does not seem to participate in the act of creation as it is described in Genesis. The reference to the Spirit in Genesis 1:1-2, later often understood as

¹⁷ McDonnell, "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine," 32-33. As McDonnell also notes, the connection between pneumatology and the ascetic/monastic life is a strong one, not limited to Origen. Athanasius and the Cappadocians, for example, follow in Origen's footsteps in proposing a higher relationship to the Spirit that was open only to a limited group of Christians.

¹⁸ Because of these limitations, McDonnell believes that Origen does not provide a suitable foundation for contemporary projects centered on the Holy Spirit. He specifically asserts that Origen's pneumatology cannot be a point of departure for such projects as the document of the 1979 Puebla Conference of Latin American Bishops and M. D. Meeks' *God the Economist*, "which envisages a critical retrieval of the trinity as a way of speaking about property." See "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine," 33.

¹⁹ See *Princ.* 3.8-9 (SC 268: 250-254).

describing the Spirit's involvement in creation, proves to Origen only that the Spirit, like the Son, existed with the Father before all of creation.²⁰ God the Father is the beginning of all things and thus will also be the end to which all things return.²¹ The Son and the Holy Spirit play pivotal roles in achieving this return of all things to God the Father. It is in helping to work creation's return to God that the Spirit is intimately connected to creation, though not responsible for its origin.

For Origen, all creation is itself thoroughly "spiritual" and spirit is "material" only in the sense that the Spirit permeates all of creation. His theology of the Spirit is interwoven into his understanding of the whole of creation—one that is radically different from that in the contemporary Western world. Origen's view of the created world is one in which spirit has a crucial place. A contextual reading of Origen's pneumatology highlights the importance of the Holy Spirit in a world that is itself essentially spiritual, rather than material.

In Origen's theology, the heart of all creation is spirit, with matter a secondary kind of being.²² Hans Urs von Balthasar speaks of Origen's "sacramentalism...through which the body is made transparent to its underlying spirit."²³ Spirit is a crucial part, not only of angels and human beings, but of everything that exists. Indeed, Origen specifically speaks of the spirits of the sun, moon, and stars.²⁴ Therefore, Origen's spirit-schema, which might initially strike his contemporary reader as ignoring large parts of the created order, instead recognizes the higher element in all that exists. The element of spirit in each part of creation is God's direct point of contact with creation, and the point in everything that tends towards the Divine. Indeed, it is the spiritual character in all creation that in the end, makes it possible for God to "be all in all."²⁵

²⁰ E.g., *Hom. in Is.* 4.1 (PG 13: 231); *Princ.* 1.3.3 (SC 252: 148).

²¹ *Princ.* 3.6.8 (SC 268: 252).

²² E.g., *Princ.* 4.4.8 (SC 268: 422).

²³ See Balthasar's preface in *Origen*, tr. Rowan Greer (New York: Paulist, 1979), xiii.

²⁴ *Princ.* 1.7.2-3 (SC 252: 208-214).

²⁵ "erit Deus omnia in omnibus;" "γένηται ὁ Θεὸς πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν." 1 Cor. 15: 28 is a favorite eschatological passage of Origen throughout his works. See the extended discussion in *Princ.* 3.6.2-8 (SC

From Origen's perspective, all of material creation is spirit-filled. Although matter itself is lower than the spirit and should be ruled by it, it is, nevertheless, an obstacle to be overcome in the created being's journey to God. Despite the "groaning" of creation because it is embodied, spirit's existence in matter is for the good of all creation:

For I think that the sun too might say, "I could desire to be dissolved (or 'to depart') and be with Christ; for it is far better." And whereas Paul adds: "But to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sakes," the sun might say: "To abide in this heavenly and shining body is more needful for the sake of the revealing of the sons of God." The same may well be believed and said of the moon and stars.²⁶

In this context, Origen speaks of the Holy Spirit's deep relationship with the human spirit and other spirits. By virtue of its relationship with all created spirit, the Holy Spirit is intimately associated with all creation, even though not directly responsible for its existence. In the deep and abiding connection between the Holy Spirit and created spirit lies the path to God for all creation, a path that begins within and leads beyond the individual, into the wider pathways of God's own life.

268: 238-254). In the *Commentary on Romans*, see *Comm. in Rom.* 3.1.11: Hammond Bammel 3.1 (199.146)=PG 14: 926; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.3.7: Hammond Bammel 5.3 (404.79)=PG 14: 1028; *Comm. in Rom.* 5.10.15: Hammond Bammel 5.10 (452.210)=PG 14: 1053; *Comm. in Rom.* 6.5.6: Hammond Bammel 6.5 (475.77)=PG 14: 1065; *Comm. in Rom.* 7.4.13: Hammond Bammel 7.2 (568.182-183)=PG 14: 1112; and *Comm. in Rom.* 8.13.10: Hammond Bammel 8.12 (709.121-122)=PG 14: 1202; *Frag. in Rom.* Scherer 128, 15.

²⁶ *Princ.* 1.7.5 (SC 252: 218-220); Butterworth 64. This is the translation of the Latin; the Latin for this passage is substantially the same as the Greek fragment found by Koetschau in Justinian, *Ep. ad Mennam*. (See Butterworth, *On First Principles*, 64, footnote 6.) The Latin reads, "Puto enim quia similiter possit etiam sol dicere quia optarem resolui (uel redire) et esse cum Christo; multo enim melius. Et Paulus quidem addit: Sed permanere in carne magis necessarium propter uos; sol uero potest dicere: Permanere autem in hoc caelesti et lucido corpore magis necessarium propter reuelationem filiorum dei. Eadem sane etiam de luna et stellis sentienda sunt ac dicenda."

b. The Spirit and the Worthy

If we were to decide that the Spirit's work only among the holy renders the Spirit meaningless to the common believer, we would mistake Origen's interest in preserving human freedom for an artificial distance. The Spirit, present to each human being *in potentia*, only limits direct involvement with each out of respect for human freedom. Life in the Spirit, despite this limitation, is not one of monastic isolation, but one that necessarily draws the person out into the community.

In recognizing the essential brokenness of creatures, despite their calling to joyous communion, Origen describes the active work of the Holy Spirit among the saints, who are moving always closer to God, and thus also to their fellow creatures. The Holy Spirit relates to every spirit in a potential way, but only creatures themselves can choose to develop an active relationship with the Spirit. For Origen, this helps to explain the phenomenon of sinfulness while also respecting the reality of creaturely freedom.

Origen's pneumatology, with its beautiful images of Divine compassion and pedagogy, is centered on the model of the Holy Spirit working actively only among those already sanctified. There is a sense in Origen's thought that the Spirit is fragile, unable to bear contact with sin and sinners.²⁷ However, Origen's limitation of the Spirit's active role is both an acknowledgment of the reality of sin and an insistence that God respects freedom, refusing to force active intimacy on anyone.

Origen's theology is oriented, as McDonnell says, towards an audience already advanced in the spiritual life. Origen assumes the superiority of the ascetic life, although his asceticism is an asceticism that operates charitably in the world, rather than an asceticism of the desert. In writing the *Commentary on Romans* in particular, Origen is addressing an educated reader who is attempting to progress beyond the superficial study of Scripture offered at weekly services, a reader who is also willing to move beyond the trite "pleasures" of the world. Consistent with this audience, Origen gives a narrow view of the Spirit's activity,

²⁷ E.g., *Jo.* 2.81-83 (SC 120: 258-260). This perspective is part of a larger tradition; see above, pages 37-38 and Morgan-Wynne, "The 'delicacy' of the Spirit," 154-57.

focusing only on the activity of the Spirit in the lives of his intended audience.

The Spirit teaches only the worthy convert, and even this converted Christian may be separated from the Spirit if she sins after conversion.²⁸ However, Origen's overall schema makes one wonder about this seemingly limited and harsh aspect of his pneumatology. If punishments are threatened—and given, too—only for pedagogical purposes, then the separation of the Spirit from the once-sanctified sinner must also be pedagogical and temporary. As Origen makes clear, God is never truly wrathful, but always loving, with the apparent divine wrath used only as a teaching tool.²⁹

The Spirit has a relationship *in potentia* with everyone on the level of created spirit. Even beyond that, the Spirit works indirectly through created spiritual beings, from spirits of punishment to angels to human beings themselves, to educate each person. This indirect universal work of the Spirit is a mitigating factor in Origen's seemingly limited work among the saints. The Spirit is, in fact, concerned with bringing *everyone* to share in the Divine life. Only a universally loving Spirit would send the Son to redeem the world and inspire the saints to evangelize. The Holy Spirit's own direct work may be limited, but it always spirals into a broader working in and for the whole world. There is, in the Spirit's willingness to work through others, a certain humility. The sacred work of evangelization is not the Spirit's own exclusive province, but shared with all who open themselves to the Spirit to undertake it.

However, humble as the Spirit is, the reality of human freedom requires that the human being choose the path to holiness before the Spirit begins to teach her actively. The teaching of the Spirit cannot be efficacious in any human being without the active participation of the human disciple.³⁰

²⁸ Origen is influenced on this point by Matt. 12:32, which says that there is no forgiveness for blasphemy against the Spirit. See above, page 91.

²⁹ E.g., *Comm. in Rom.* 7.18.5: Hammond Bammel 7.16 (629.8-631.57)=PG 14: 1150-1151.

³⁰ The Father and the Son also need a human response for their work in the human being to be effective. See *Princ.* 3.1.6 (SC 268: 36-38),

Disciples must choose to be in active relationship with the Spirit, but they need not, and, in fact, cannot be perfect to enter this relationship. The Spirit—who groans in intercession for all his disciples, who teaches them slowly, beginning with the spiritual alphabet, and who lovingly guides them from fear of God to calling God “Abba!”—loves and works with those who are imperfect. It is not perfection that draws one into an active relationship with the Spirit, but rather the desire for holiness. This desire, combined with a willingness to learn from the Spirit, makes one “worthy.”

This Holy Spirit, who connects all spirit together and calls disciples to imitate him through evangelization in the world, is a Spirit who speaks to contemporary Christians. Despite Origen’s very different context, and even despite the confusions and possible problems in his own presentation, he speaks of the Spirit in ways that resonate with those today who search for a deeper understanding of God.

5.2. ORIGEN’S PNEUMATOLOGY AND CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY

Origen, in his theology of the Holy Spirit, speaks with a voice that Christians today need to hear. His broad, interconnected sense of “spirit” provides a balance for our world, where “spirit” and “spiritual” so often refer to something private, individual, or purely emotional. His understanding of the transformative power of the Holy Spirit—and his parallel insistence on the role of human beings in this transformation—have important implications for contemporary reflections on the Holy Spirit. In some cases, Origen’s pneumatology needs to be enriched by contemporary perspectives. However, even in those cases, Origen’s own thought provides a basis for further discussion today. In other cases, as when Origen speaks explicitly about Christian pedagogy, his doctrine of the Spirit makes an independent contribution, describing teaching as a concrete way of bringing God’s presence into the world. Never forgetting that he is a man of the second and third centuries, Christians today encounter in Origen a voice that, in so many instances, manages to speak to us where he finds us.

for one of many examples. This passage illustrates the need of the free human being to respond to Jesus.

5.2.1. "Spirit": From Private Feelings to Interconnected Community

"Spirit" today has many different meanings.³¹ Used in certain religious contexts, of course, it still refers to the Holy Spirit or other supernatural beings. At the same time, "spirit" is also used to describe the animating force within any living being, a mood or emotional state, or the part of a person associated with the mind, will, and feelings. "Spirit" can also describe the mood of an occasion or period in time.³²

Despite the diversity of meanings for "spirit," there is, nevertheless, a tendency today to associate "spirit" with emotions and feelings. If one person's "spirits are low," this is an individual, private state of affairs. Even a pervasive "spirit of optimism," incorporating the feelings of many people, is still emotive and difficult to explain. There is a sense that "spirit" itself is irrational and, if not always individual, something that is constantly varying, different from circumstance to circumstance and day to day. People may be able to control and shape their opinions and stores of knowledge, but their "spirits" drift, somewhat on their own, unique to the individual or to the situation in which she finds herself.

This individual, emotive understanding of "spirit" impacts the larger sense of spirituality today. For many in Western society, spirituality is something purely private, a getting-in-touch with their own feelings; at best, those private feelings may coincide with those of others, bringing a group of people together for a time.³³

Origen's understanding of "spirit" is radically different. Although his worldview is not and cannot be ours, his sense of the interconnectedness of reality—and thus of spirit—is important for Christians today. Spirituality, in Origen's world, is a recognition of the truth of reality in itself, a turning to the external as well as to

³¹ See "spirit" in *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978).

³² See "spirit" in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

³³ As C. F. D. Moule says of the word "spirit," "It is so widely and loosely used today that a commission to write a book on the subject is about as informative as saying 'Write an essay on air'...for [most people], the word denotes, in the vaguest and most general way, whatever transcends the material or belongs to 'the other world.'" See his *Holy Spirit*, 1.

the internal world. As Origen's pneumatology insists, no encounter with spirit—and no theology—can be a purely private endeavor. Instead, all theology must be shaped by the interaction between members of the Christian community and in particular by the relationships between teachers and students.³⁴

Origen's pneumatology unfolds against a collage of concepts of spirit specific to his own time and place. Whereas twenty-first century thinkers tend either to associate "spirit" with private piety or the individual will or emotions or to generalize it into something vague and impersonal, Origen formulates his understanding of spirit amid Stoicism's materialistic notion of spirit and Gnosticism's dualistic one. For him, "spirit" is a polyvalent term that indicates both the common life of higher created beings and the specific existence of each. God is Spirit and the ground of all created spirit. It is from God's Holy Spirit that all created spirits come and to this Spirit that all must return. The human spirit is the locus of the divine Spirit's embrace. From—and still contained in—this embrace, the human spirit moves outward into the church community shaped and informed by fellowship in the Spirit.

It is difficult to comprehend the meaning of spirit in Origen's worldview. In the contemporary world, where "spirit" often refers to an individual, isolated, and interior part of a human being, "spirit" cannot capture the essence of the created world. While acknowledging the contemporary distance from Origen's understanding of spirit and matter, we can nevertheless appreciate the depth that it adds to his pneumatology. Given Origen's view that the Spirit is connected to the created spirit that it embraces and thus is the inherent potential in everything embodied,³⁵ it is only fair to credit Origen with a pneumatology that embeds the Spirit in creation and, at the same time, provides the basis for a universal, communal sense of spirituality.

In this regard, Origen's thought resonates with the work of theologians who find the possibility of the Divine-human relationship in the human spirit. For example, Karl Rahner speaks of the Holy Spirit as intrinsically involved with human nature,

³⁴ See chapter IV above.

³⁵ Origen is generally thinking of rational creation when he speaks of embodied spirit. However, rational creation encompasses a larger group for him than for moderns: the sun, moon, and stars, for example, are rational spiritual beings.

rendering human subjectivity possible.³⁶ Likewise, for Wolfhart Pannenberg, there is no fundamental distinction between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit.³⁷

Origen's understanding of the interconnectedness of all spirit is beautiful, but his schema fails to find the beauty in created matter itself and thus can only begin to provide a basis for discussion today. Some contemporary theologians—heirs, in a sense, to Origen's understanding of the unity of life—speak eloquently about the holiness of material creation. Only by appreciating the goodness of all of creation, and not merely of the spirit within creation, can theologians today speak to the experiences of all of God's people.

Recognizing the presence of the Holy Spirit in all of life, including material creation, Jürgen Moltmann points out that “the experience of God which is expected from the coming of the Spirit is...universal—no longer particular, but related to ‘all flesh’ in the whole breadth of creation.”³⁸ He emphasizes that the Spirit is not only the Spirit of the Son but also the Spirit of the Father, in this way reminding Christians of the Spirit's involvement with the Father in creation.³⁹ The gift of the Holy Spirit, received in different aspects, is ultimately the gift of life itself, “the source of

³⁶ Karl Rahner, “Experience of Self and Experience of God,” *TI* 13 (New York: Seabury, 1975), 122-132.

³⁷ “The element of transcendence in spirit suggests that after all it might be neither necessary nor wise to admit a fundamental distinction between a human spirit and a divine spirit. The ecstatic, self-transcendent character of all spiritual experience brings sufficiently to bear the transcendence of God over against all created beings. The spirit never belongs in a strict sense to the creature in his immanent nature, but the creature participates in the spirit—and, I venture to say: in the divine spirit—by transcending itself, i.e., by being elevated beyond itself in the ecstatic experience that illustrates the working of the spirit...Thus the idea of spirit allows us to do justice to the transcendence of God and at the same time to explain his immanence in his creation. Theology loses this chance when a fundamental distinction is accepted between divine and human spirit.” See Wolfhart Pannenberg, “The Working of the Spirit in the Creation and in the People of God,” *Spirit, Faith, and Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 21.

³⁸ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, tr. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 57.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 82.

life created, life preserved and life daily renewed, and finally the source of the eternal life of all created being.”⁴⁰ The Spirit’s gift involves the stages of a person’s life from birth to death, endowing her with her own being in the details of her own existence, whatever they may be.⁴¹ Moltmann speaks, for example, of the physically handicapped life as a special gift of the Holy Spirit, since “whatever a person is and brings with him becomes a charisma through his calling, this has to be true of his disablement too.”⁴² The disabled life, like every life, is a vocation, given by the same Spirit who helps the person to fill it with divine light. In a theology of this kind, the Holy Spirit endows and participates in the dailiness of embodied existence. All of creation is thus filled with the goodness of the Spirit, even in its smallest details.

Many theologians emphasize the presence of the Spirit not only in all of created life, but especially in the bodies of women and the matter of planet earth, as both bearers and nurturers of created life. Theologies of feminism and ecology strive, by highlighting the life of the Spirit in created bodies, to overcome the body-spirit dualism that still persists today.⁴³ These projects depend on the recognition of the Spirit at work in creation. As Elizabeth Johnson explains,

A theology of the Creator Spirit overcomes the dualism of spirit and matter with all of its ramifications, and leads to the realization of the sacredness of the earth. The Spirit of God dwelling in the world with quickening power deconstructs dualism and draws in its place a circle of mutuality and inclusiveness. Instead of matter being divorced from spirit and consigned to a realm separate from the holy, it is an intrinsic part of the cosmic community, vivified, indwelt, and renewed

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid. 180-181.

⁴² Ibid. 193.

⁴³ Dualism is a wider problem than simply the opposition of body and spirit. In her address to the World Council of Churches, Chung Hyun-Kyung speaks of the Spirit’s call to convert “from the habit of *dualism* to the habit of *interconnection*. Our body and our spirit, our emotion and our mind, our world and God, immanence and transcendence, women and men, black and white, poor and rich: In this culture we are divided against ourselves. We forget that we all come from the same source of life, God, and all the webs of our lives are interconnected.” See Chung, “Welcome the Spirit; hear her cries,” *CaC* 51 (1991): 222.

by the Creator Spirit. The Spirit creates matter. Matter bears the mark of the sacred and has itself a spiritual radiance. Hence the world is holy, nature is holy, bodies are holy, women's bodies are holy. For the Spirit creates what is physical—worlds, bodies, senses, sexuality, passions—and moves in these every bit as much as in minds and ideas.”⁴⁴

This recognition of the fundamental goodness of materiality is clearly an important step beyond Origen's pneumatology. For him—and for many other thinkers throughout Christian history—spirit *is* the cosmic community, with matter purely extrinsic to it. As Johnson and others assert, the world, seen by Origen as a teeming cosmos of interconnected spirits, is actually one where bodies and minds are all interrelated. Rosemary Ruether describes “reality as the connecting links of a dance in which each part is equally vital to the whole.”⁴⁵ At the center of this dance, enabling its rhythms, is the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶

Origen's pneumatology provides, in ways he himself could never have imagined, a basis for such an interconnected view of reality. For him, it is at the level of spirit that all creatures interact with both God and each other. In emphasizing this interrelatedness, contemporary theologians, without realizing it, reflect Origen's understanding of the unity of created spirit.

5.2.2. Teaching: Sacrament of the Spirit's Presence

Origen's pedagogical understanding of the Holy Spirit is one of his most powerful and important contributions to both pneumatology and anthropology. In speaking of the Spirit as Teacher, Origen uses the image of a person who is inseparable from activity among others, one who is constantly in relationship with students—as well as with other teachers, human and divine. Origen's language for the Spirit is particularly potent, since it draws immediately on his own experiences as teacher, experiences that shaped his life from the

⁴⁴ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Women, Earth, and Creator Spirit*, Madeleva Lecture in Spirituality (New York: Paulist, 1993), 59-60.

⁴⁵ Johnson, *Women, Earth, and Creator Spirit*, 31, quoting Rosemary Radford Ruether, *To Change the World: Christology and Cultural Criticism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 67.

⁴⁶ See, for example, Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 148-149.

start of his catechetical career when he was only a teenager.⁴⁷ Although the image of Teacher is not the only one that Origen offers for the Spirit, it vividly expresses Origen's own experiences of the Spirit's work on and through his own life. In doing so, the image provides a point of entry and discussion for others who teach and learn; reflection on Origen's metaphor may lead to new understandings of the teaching vocation and the Spirit's work in it—and in us.

There is, of course, always a danger in relying exclusively on any one image for God. Elizabeth Johnson points out that "given the diverse experiences that mediate the mystery of the evercoming God, language about the Spirit consistently breaks the boundaries of neat codification or one single metaphor."⁴⁸ Speech about the Spirit always reminds the theologian of the apophatic nature of God, with each image merely the shadow on the cave-wall of Divine Reality. Yet the metaphors used for the Holy Spirit are important signifiers for the truths that Christians discover in their experiences of God. In addition, these metaphors shape human experiences of God and thus influence our perceptions of, and treatment of, other human beings. Even in examining one of the shadows flickering on the wall, we discover new dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world—and are challenged anew in our own work.

Origen's pneumatology is shaped by and structured in his images of the Holy Spirit, images that theologians today can interweave into the current pneumatological patchwork of language pictures. Just as "spirit" was a polyvalent term in Origen's day, Origen's images for the Holy Spirit were likewise multifaceted, offering a glimpse of the Spirit from both theological and anthropological perspectives.

In finding the Spirit vividly present with the Ark of the Covenant in Exodus, Origen indicates the rich layering of the Spirit's presence throughout the Scriptures and the history of the

⁴⁷ Eusebius says that Origen lectured at a catechetical school after his father was martyred (when he was almost seventeen) and was in charge of the school at the age of eighteen. See Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.3.3 (SC 41: 87). Nautin puts Origen between nineteen and twenty-three years old when he started teaching catechetical classes. See Nautin 409.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is*, 127.

world. The Spirit as Cherub represents the life of the Spirit, along with that of the Son, within the human Jesus Christ. This image also signifies the wide movement of the Spirit among spiritual beings, of which the cherubim are but one kind. This one image, created by the layering of two scriptural passages,⁴⁹ is particularly potent as a reminder of the indwelling of the Trinity in Jesus—and similarly in every human being who is spacious enough, in Origen's terms, to accommodate them. In the same way, Origen's acknowledgment of the Spirit's embrace of every human spirit underlines the potential for holiness in each person. As sharers in created spirit, which is itself led by the Holy Spirit, humans have the ability themselves to work towards holiness—and finally to assist in the striving of others.

In another image, Origen describes the Holy Spirit as Wedding Ring, showing that the Spirit signifies the eschatological union of humanity with Jesus Christ. In promising new life, the Spirit-Ring makes the newness possible for the Christian. In Origen's theology, the Spirit-Ring binds God and humanity; the Spirit is Love—particularly the Love of God for creation—a Love stronger than creaturely sin.⁵⁰ Origen's image, however, contains a further dimension not explored by the Western tradition, which generally follows Augustine, since it is also reflected in another powerful image: that of the human being as ring.⁵¹ Since each person, repentant and becoming again the image of God, becomes a ring on God's own hand, she, too, becomes the worker of unity between God and humanity. The nuances of Origen's metaphor of the Spirit as Ring point to a potent link between God and humanity. The Holy Spirit is the promise of God to humanity and also the basis for humanity's reciprocal response to God.

The image of the Holy Spirit as Teacher, reflecting as it does Origen's own experience, moves beyond the language of scriptural allegory. There is a power to this metaphor that stems from Origen's reflection on his own vocation as teacher. His words about the Spirit's teaching activity are those of one who himself tries to teach in self-giving charity.⁵² As the Teacher of the saints, the Holy

⁴⁹ Ex. 25:18 and Rom. 3:25.

⁵⁰ See, for example, Tsirpanlis, "Origen on Free Will."

⁵¹ *Fr. in Jer.* 14 (GCS 3: 204-205). See above, page 169, note 98.

⁵² For more on Origen as teacher, see above, page 53. The school described by Gregory Thaumaturgus is not even a specifically catechetical

Spirit takes up those who have accepted that healing of the Son; in this sense, the Spirit's School is one for "advanced" students. Yet the Spirit teaches these students in the ways that their humble state requires, beginning with the milk of spiritual knowledge and only later moving to spiritual food. The Spirit-Teacher, portrayed by Origen as a gentle and self-effacing guide, assists the disciple patiently, with slow and small steps towards perfection. As Teacher, the Spirit tells each the truth in the manner she can best understand it—threatening when pedagogically necessary, although wrath is not really part of God's own being.

Like Origen's other metaphors for the Spirit in the *Commentary on Romans*, that of Teacher operates both theologically and anthropologically. The Spirit is the means of God's teaching in human lives. At the same time, the Spirit's disciples make the Spirit present to one another in their mutual edification, teaching, and evangelization. As Teacher, the Spirit embraces humanity with divine instruction, while sending humans to instruct one another in a movement that ascends to God.

Origen's image of the Spirit as Teacher contributes substantially to contemporary pneumatology by emphasizing the kenotic compassion of the Spirit's pedagogy, a compassion in which the Spirit's disciples share as they communicate the Spirit in their own teaching.⁵³ His vision of the Spirit-Teacher is far from authoritarian; for Origen, the Spirit works from within, moving at a level and a pace suited to each person's capacity. The Spirit's teaching is individualized, tailored for each student. The Spirit's

school. It is striking that Gregory's transformative pedagogical experience happened outside of a church context. For further discussion of Origen's school at Caesarea, see Michael Slusser's introduction in FaCh 98, 19-21 and Annewies van den Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and Its Philonic Heritage," *HTR* 90 (1997): 59-87.

⁵³ This image of the Spirit as Teacher is scripturally based. Elizabeth Johnson notes this, saying, "One of the difficulties with associating the Spirit exclusively with love, as von Balthasar has wryly noted, is that in the Johannine tradition it is the Father and Son who do the loving, while the Spirit is the Spirit of Truth who has the function of reminding, teaching, and guiding the disciples into all truth." See Johnson, *She Who Is*, 141 and Hans Urs von Balthasar, "The Holy Spirit as Love, *Explorations in Theology III: Creator Spirit*, tr. Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), 117-134.

tutorial may be elite, but, once accepted, students are assured of self-giving kindness that leads progressively towards perfection.

On this journey to perfection, the Spirit continues to reveal deeper levels of reality. Thus, the disciples of this Teacher must be prepared to embrace new possibilities. The literal understanding, of the Scriptures, for example, gives way to the allegorical, and the allegorical allows for a rich unfolding of previously unthought-of truths. The road to perfection—Christ himself⁵⁴—is not readily mapped and paved by creatures, but must instead be navigated by the Holy Spirit. Origen's image serves as a valuable reminder to contemporary pneumatology that the Spirit, who is inseparably connected to the path that is Christ, is controlled by no human being, institution, concept, or system. Instead, students of the Spirit-Teacher must be ready for this Spirit of Christ to challenge their worldly presuppositions, drawing them to new levels in their spiritual education.

This image of Teacher is enriched by an examination of Origen's school-related terminology as it is found throughout his corpus. In his twenty-seventh homily on Numbers, Origen uses his customary school-imagery to speak of progress in the virtuous life:

In the literary game by which children receive elementary instruction, some children are called "abcd's"; others, "syllabarians"; others, "namers"; and others, "counters." And when we hear these names, we know from them how far the children have progressed. Likewise in the liberal arts, when we hear a passage recited or a consolation or an encomium..., we notice by the name of the topic how much progress the youth has made.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ "it is on the Lord himself, who is the true road, that the saints walk..." *Comm. in Rom.* 4.9.8: Hammond Bammel 4.9 (342.126-127)=PG 14: 996.

⁵⁵ "In litterario ludo, ubi pueri prima elementa suscipiunt, abecedarii dicuntur quidam, alii syllabarii, alii nominarii, alii jam calculatores appellantur: et cum audierimus haec nomina. ex ipsis qui sint in pueris profectus agnoscimus. Similiter et in liberalibus studiis, cum aut locum recitare, aut allocutionem, vel laudem, aliasque per ordinem materias audierimus, ex materiae nomine profectum adolescentis advertimus." *Hom. in Num.* 27.13 (PG 12: 800); Greer 268. The English translation, by Rowan Greer, is available in *Origen* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

In the same way, Origen says, one can use the language of the Hebrews' journey to the land of Israel to describe the journey to perfection.

Before [the soul] arrives at perfection, it dwells in the wilderness, where, of course, it is trained in the commandments of the Lord and where its faith is tested by temptations. And when it conquers one temptation and its faith has been proven in it, it comes to another one; and it passes, as it were, from one stage to another.⁵⁶

Origen uses this language of travel for spiritual progress in the *Commentary on Romans* as well, although not as extensively as in the *Homilies on Numbers*, where the book of Numbers itself shapes his choice of language. In the *Commentary on Romans*, he understands the biblical language of walking or running as representing progress in virtue. The imperfect stumble, and the perfect have no need to move at all.

At some time they come to a point where they have to stop. It was thus that Christ appeared, standing at the right hand of the power, to Stephen, the first martyr, who had already come to the stage of perfection. And the Lord himself said to Moses, who also, after much progress, had arrived at perfection: "But you, stand here with me." But also Paul, when he knew the completion of perfection in himself, said: "I have finished the race."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ "antequam ad perfectum veniat, in eremo habitat; ubi scilicet exerceatur in praeceptis Domini, et ubi fides ejus per tentationes probetur. Ubi cum vicerit unam tentationem, et fides ejus in ea fuerit probata, inde venit ad aliam, et quasi de una mansione ad alteram transit." *Hom. in Num.* 27.5 (PG 12: 786); Greer 252.

⁵⁷ "Sed adhuc quod dixit in nouitate uitae ambulemus, uide ne forte mystice illud ostendat quod donec proficit quis ambulare dicitur. Nec tamen putandum est quod sine fine ambuletur sed uenire aliquando ad eum locum eos qui in profectibus ambulant ubi standum sit. Sic denique primo martyri Stefano qui iam ad perfectionis uenerat gradum stans a dextris uirtutis apparuit Christus. Et ad Mosen qui et ipse post multos profectus ad perfectionem peruenerat dicit Dominus: 'tu autem hic sta mecum.' Sed et Paulus ubi in semet ipso consummationem perfectionis agnouit dicit: 'cursum consummaui.'" *Comm. in Rom.* 5.8.14: Hammond Bammel 5.8 (431.187-196)=PG 14: 1042-1043.

Thus, Origen's understanding of the Spirit as Teacher is a multi-faceted one. This Teacher's pedagogy cannot be described by academic language alone, but requires images of physical journeying as well as those of a parent introducing new foods to an infant. Origen describes the Spirit-Teacher with such parental imagery when he speaks of the Spirit's concern in "feeding" human beings the knowledge for which they are prepared: as milk, as herbs, as solid foods.⁵⁸ The Spirit who begins to teach through lesser spirits of punishment ends in the direct pedagogy of love. Attempting to describe such a complex range of relationships requires that Origen draw on every possible type of pedagogical activity, beginning and ending with the form most familiar to him: that of the classroom.

If the Holy Spirit, as Teacher, is also a parent and a coach along the journey to perfection, then the human being who tries to imitate the Spirit must also assist others with every possible form of compassionate pedagogy. The Spirit becomes present through human evangelization, yet words alone do not evangelize. Just as the Spirit's teaching resembles the work of the parent as well as the professor, human teaching, to be effective, must move beyond elegant lectures and attractive rhetorical style. Only the teacher with "beautiful feet" who lives out what she teaches is a true evangelist. She is known by the fruits of her own life and those of the lives of her students.

Eusebius describes Origen as a teacher whose pedagogy produced results, pointing proudly to his students who witnessed to their faith in martyrdom.⁵⁹ Origen himself, in the *Commentary on Romans*, likewise emphasizes the life a Christian convert should live in the world.⁶⁰ By a good life and death others will know the true student of a Spirit-filled teacher.

Origen identifies only a few ways in which the indwelling of the Spirit is found in the Scriptures: in the Pentecostal tongues of fire, in Jesus' own breathing upon the apostles, in the descent that inspires prophecy, and through the impassioned preaching of

⁵⁸ *Comm. in Rom.* 2.14.14: Hammond Bammel 2.10 (183.141-148)=PG 14: 917; *Comm. in Rom.* 8.10.7: Hammond Bammel 8.9 (690.82-87)=PG 14:1190; *Comm. in Rom.* 9.36.1-3: Hammond Bammel 9.36 (763.10-764.23)=PG 14:1235-1236.

⁵⁹ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.4-5 (SC 41: 90-93).

⁶⁰ See above, page 166.

human beings.⁶¹ The Spirit-filled teacher, who preaches with love, truly makes the Holy Spirit present in the world. Origen does not speak of the Spirit becoming present through any standard formula of words or ceremonial actions,⁶² but through the words of a teacher on fire with love for Jesus—and intensely desiring the betterment of her students. The Spirit's own teaching is worked through such an enthusiastic teacher, who offers the truth in the words best suited to her hearers' place, situation, and time. Such Christian teaching is the real symbol of the Holy Spirit in the human community.

Christian teaching, then, is a sacrament of the Holy Spirit's presence in the world. Speaking of teaching as "sacrament" draws on a post-Vatican II Roman Catholic use of the term. Karl Rahner speaks of sacraments "in the first place as ecclesial manifestations and historical incarnations of *that* grace which is at work everywhere in the history of mankind." "Secondly," he continues, they are "signs which grace creates for itself out of its most distinctive essence."⁶³

Herbert Vorgrimler, describing the sacraments as "a particular part of the relationship between God and human beings," explains that sacraments, a communication of God's self, are necessary because "God's self-revelation to human beings requires a mediation that lies within their receptive capacity."⁶⁴ For Origen, the Holy Spirit communicates his very self to human beings in many ways. One manner of this self-communication, which itself serves as a metaphor for the Spirit's relationship with humanity, is loving Christian pedagogy. In the real historical community,

⁶¹ *Comm. in Rom.* 6.13.7-8: Hammond Bammel 6.13 (537.97-538.113)=PG 14:1100.

⁶² This is not to say that Origen rejects such ritual formulae, but rather that he is interested, in his theology, in discussing other ways in which God becomes present in the world. His writings are full of allegorical interpretations of rituals, from the Jewish sacrifices, explored in his *Homilies on Leviticus*, to the Christian Eucharist, interpreted in his *On the Passover*. Origen approaches religious rituals with an interest in their hidden levels of meaning.

⁶³ Karl Rahner, *Meditations on the Sacraments*, tr. James M. Quigley (New York: Seabury, 1977), xvii.

⁶⁴ Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental Theology*, tr. Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 5-6.

through the particular choices and relationships of individuals, the Holy Spirit becomes known as Christians teach one another.

This picture of Christian teaching as the sacrament of the Spirit's presence in the world is both inspiring and humbling to those who attempt Christian teaching as their particular vocation. It is through teachers' lives and their love for their students that the Spirit becomes known; this realization calls teachers to invest a fuller passion in their work. At the same time, students, as all people in free partnership with the Spirit, must also invest themselves more fully. The sacrament of teaching is also that of learning—the Spirit dwells in the mutual edification of teacher and disciple.

The *exitus* and *reditus* of the Holy Spirit between God and humanity becomes comprehensible, for a moment, in the interaction between human teachers and students. Only the teacher can offer the knowledge, but only the student can choose to learn it. The pedagogical relationship involves both the teacher's willingness to work humbly on the student's level and the student's free choice to try to progress to the teacher's level. This relationship models the Spirit's relationship to humanity, even while it serves to communicate the Spirit's own presence in the world.

The sacrament of pedagogy, inspiring for teachers, is nonetheless not their exclusive province. Just as the Holy Spirit's own pedagogy can be described in a variety of ways beyond academic terminology, sacramental pedagogy is certainly not limited to the classroom. In fact, it is, in an important sense, the calling of all Christians. Although very few have been called to the kind of teaching demonstrated by the apostle Paul, and not everyone is given the special charism of teaching (one in which Origen might well have claimed his own share), every Christian has a responsibility to edify others both through word and action. The Spirit teaches each as she is able to hear and understand him; at every stage in their spiritual development, there are Christians who are able to assist in this sacramental work.

5.3. CONCLUSION: THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We have opened the dusty books of Origen and found within them a picture of the Holy Spirit so vibrant that it will not stay within the library-bound pages. Drawing this picture out of the volumes, we find that it speaks to us so easily sometimes that we forget that we

are “translating” it into contemporary discussion. This Spirit of whom Origen wrote in the third century is the Spirit we encounter today; the Spirit-filled Christianity to which he aspired presents a model of hope for our church and our world.

For those who struggle to clarify Christian doctrines of God, Origen presents a strong picture of the Spirit working in the world, a picture that can be helpful to contemporary theologians who struggle with the rather hazy Spirit envisioned by many Christians since Origen. In the face of the vagueness of even the Nicene Spirit, Origen’s Spirit has the concreteness of a person, one with whom the human being can have a real encounter. At the same time, he understands the Spirit as someone always unfolding new facets and realities, someone never fully grasped, someone with infinite depths, who himself examines even the deep things of God. With these depths of knowledge to be discovered, the Spirit is yet always the Spirit who continues the work of Jesus Christ. There is a reality—a personhood, one might say—to this Holy Spirit who joins creation to God at its holiest point and draws it ever deeper into the Divine.

Later theology has criticized Origen for “subordinationism.”⁶⁵ Anachronistic as this is as a criticism, it is nonetheless true that Origen views both the Son and the Spirit as subordinate to the Father. Origen’s subordination of the Spirit, however, enables him to give the Spirit a more distinct role. Many theologians since Origen have defined the Spirit as divine and equal to the Father and the Son, but without giving any specific attention to the work of the Spirit in the economy of salvation. Such a Spirit would be, to

⁶⁵ See, for example Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 275-295. Henri Crouzel addresses concerns with Origen’s supposed subordinationism: “If care is taken to study exactly the trinitarian doctrine of Origen, it will first be seen that the unity of the Father and the Son is expressed fairly exactly by formulae that are of an order more dynamic than ontological and that in spite of a few clumsy expressions his subordinationism is not heterodox: concerning the origin and the economy, he affirms, as Athanasius and Hilary themselves were to do, both the equality of power of the Persons and a certain subordination of the Son to the Father, considered as the decision-making centre of the Trinity. Besides the clarity of his affirmations of the eternal generation of the Son forbids us to confuse the subordination of Origen with that of Arius.” Crouzel, *Origen*, 268.

borrow McDonnell's words, "junior grade," restricted to fulfilling a definitional role.⁶⁶ Likewise, Harnack's criticism of Origen⁶⁷ could more appropriately be directed to those who simply parrot Nicene definitions, without demonstrating the Spirit's uniqueness. For Origen, the Spirit has his own role to play, carrying on the salvation begun in the Son. The Son offers his healing medicine to all, and the Spirit teaches those who, having chosen to take the medicine, are healed. Origen shows clearly the distinct work of the Spirit and thus recognizes him as a distinct person of the Trinity.

While distinct, the Spirit is also clearly the Spirit of both the Father and the Son, reaching out in their shared love of humanity. Origen's descriptions of the Spirit-Teacher show that the Spirit is genuinely self-giving. The Holy Spirit pours love into the human heart and guides each disciple gently, even praying in ways that the beginning student of the Spirit will understand. This Spirit is patient, willing to read the alphabet and to take baby-steps with the convert, since each holy person begins as a mere infant in the mystical journey to perfection.

Origen's sense of the Spirit's kenosis, apparent in his descriptions of these direct and active relationships with the saints, is reflected in pneumatology today. In fact, many theologians go farther than Origen, with his descriptions of the Spirit's humble activity, and identify the very nature of the Spirit as self-effacing. Looking at how difficult the Christian tradition has found it to speak of the Spirit, they claim that this difficulty is caused by the very nature of the Spirit, rather than by any lack in theological reflection. Vladimir Lossky points to the Spirit as the only member of the Trinity "not having His image in another Person. The Holy Spirit, as Person, remains unmanifested, hidden, concealing Himself in His very appearing."⁶⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar reminds that "the One who lets the glory of God shine out in the face of Jesus Christ, and transforms us who have faces into his likeness, is himself 'faceless.'"⁶⁹ It may be this very "facelessness" that leaves

⁶⁶ McDonnell, "Does Origen Have a Trinitarian Doctrine," 32-33.

⁶⁷ Harnack argues that the Spirit is not essential to Origen's theology but is mentioned only because the rule of faith requires it. See Harnack 2: 357.

⁶⁸ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 159-160.

⁶⁹ Aidan Nichols, O.P., *Say It Is Pentecost: A Guide Through Balthasar's Logic* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2001), 140, in

the Spirit open to being understood as so many different things by so many different institutions and causes.⁷⁰ On the other hand, this sense of the Spirit's "facelessness" may be an acceptance of a long tradition of inadequate reflection on the Spirit's person. Origen's Spirit, though humble, is not "faceless."

Many contemporary theologians connect the Spirit's kenosis to that of the Incarnate Son, speaking of a *pneumatologia crucis* and emphasizing the Spirit's active participation in Jesus' suffering and death on the cross. In this context, Delmar Lyle Dabney describes the Spirit's self-emptying as "the precondition for the self-humiliation of the Son" and calls the Spirit "the spirit of kenotic self-surrender."⁷¹ Moltmann says,

If the Spirit is God's empathy, this means that the eternal Spirit is also involved, in profoundest and identifying suffering. It is precisely his suffering with the Son to the point of death on the cross which makes the rebirth of Christ from the Spirit inwardly possible. The Spirit participates in the dying of the Son in order to give him new 'life from the dead.' Because he accompanies Christ to the end, he can make this end the new beginning.⁷²

For Moltmann, maternal imagery helps to describe the kenotic Spirit, who is self-emptying in creation as well as redemption. As Mother, the Spirit empties herself to carry each person within, assisting in the person's growth and development and finally birthing the person in pain.⁷³ Moltmann's use of kenotic maternal

commentary on Balthasar's *Theologie* III. On the other hand, Elizabeth Johnson says "Forgetting the Spirit is not ignoring a faceless, shadowy third hypostasis but the mystery of God closer to us than we are to ourselves, drawing near and passing by in quickening, liberating compassion." See Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 131. The Spirit's "facelessness," as Balthasar calls it, is simultaneously the quality that brings the Spirit so close to each person.

⁷⁰ See above, page 3.

⁷¹ See Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 64, quoting Delmar Lyle Dabney, *Die Kenosis des Geistes* (diss., Tübingen, 1989), 151.

⁷² Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 68.

⁷³ "The 'Mother' acts differently [from the 'Lord' or 'Judge']. She does not act outwards. She carries her child within herself, communicates life to it, and gives birth to it with pain, so that she may hold it on her lap with joy. She is the archetypal image for the *vita vivificans*...There are

language finds an echo in Chung Hyun-Kyung's choice of the goddess Kwan In as an image of the Spirit. As she says,

She is a *bodhisattva*, enlightened being. She can go into Nirvana any time she wants to, but refuses to go into Nirvana by herself. Her compassion for all suffering living beings makes her stay in this world enabling other living beings to achieve enlightenment.⁷⁴

For both Moltmann and Chung, one face of the Holy Spirit is that of a woman who pours herself out in love for others, fully sharing in their pain and joy. Their illustrations of the Spirit in a *pneumatologia crucis* help to expand the language of Origen's humble, self-giving Teacher.

Origen's Spirit, who both has a face and pours himself out in love in created spirits, can be a starting-point for a new pneumatology of the cross. The Spirit's compassionate outpouring for sinners culminates in the cross of Jesus but is not limited to it. A fully-developed *pneumatologia crucis* should emphasize the Spirit's kenosis throughout the historical life of Christ and in the lives of concrete individuals today. Such a theology should show that there are no limitations to the activity of the Spirit, who operates in the lives of the marginalized, the forgotten, and the oppressed, whether or not they are aware of the Spirit's presence.⁷⁵ In Origen's theology, it is the Holy Spirit who works in humble evangelization with and through Christian missionaries; we might add that the Spirit also works outside the boundaries of Christian missionary efforts. José Comblin speaks of the humility of the Spirit's own evangelization, a humility which Christians are learning to imitate:

analogies in the relations between people. A child grows *in* its mother and only becomes a counterpart *outside* the mother once it has been born and its umbilical cord has been cut." Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 286-287.

⁷⁴ Chung, "Welcome the Spirit," *CaC* 51 (1991): 223.

⁷⁵ "In *positive terms*, the Spirit of God is *the presence of Christ* among and in the victims of violence...The Spirit is Christ's solidarity with them. In *positive terms*, the Spirit of God is *the atoning power* of Christ's substitution among and in the perpetrators. Christ is 'the God of sinners'. The Spirit is Christ's atoning power for them and in them. In *positive terms*, the fellowship of the HS is *the divine love* which holds in life even self-destructive human communities in order to heal them." Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 143. See also Johnson, *She Who Is*, 131.

The important thing is to present Christ as he presented himself: the way of humility and the cross...In this way, Christ and the Spirit are united in mission too, and it is only their unity in mission that makes mission possible at this juncture of human history.⁷⁶

Such a description of the Holy Spirit, emphasizing the Spirit's universal, yet intimate, gift of Self, recalls that the Spirit is the Spirit sent by Jesus Christ. In pointing to the kenosis of the Spirit, a *pneumatologia crucis* emphasizes that the Spirit is the Spirit of Love, poured out into every heart without measure or reason, because God loves universally and intimately—and without limit.

Origen's theology insists on the widespread nature of the Holy Spirit's work. In Origen, the Spirit's direct activity may be limited, but it always spirals into the action of others, with the work of the Spirit in both *exitus* from and *reditus* to God becoming a motivating force behind the outreach of others. In reaching out from God, the Spirit sends the Son into the world, abiding within Jesus for his entire earthly life. In leading creatures back to God, the Spirit sends the saints out to edify each other and to evangelize the world. In this way, the Holy Spirit's teaching work extends as far as that of Jesus and the Christian teachers who follow him.

Origen's pneumatological anthropology demonstrates that the Spirit reaches out through many, in a diversity of languages and cultures—so that people will hear the gospel in the ways best suited to them. Origen shows the humility of the Spirit who is willing to allow human beings to communicate him to others as they preach and live the gospel. That the Spirit would permit creatures to “control” his presence in such a way is remarkable. It illustrates the extent to which the Spirit will go, as long as people choose a relationship with him, to help their spirits to be their own pathways to God. Origen's pneumatology, at this point, is reflected in that of Vladimir Lossky, who says that the Spirit

substitutes Himself, so to speak, for ourselves; for it is He who cries in our hearts *Abba, Father!* as St. Paul puts it. We should say, rather, that the Holy Spirit effaces Himself, as Person, before the created persons to whom He appropriates grace. In Him the will of God is no longer external to ourselves: it confers grace inwardly, manifesting itself within our very person...It is then [in the age to come] that this divine Person,

⁷⁶ Comblin, *Holy Spirit and Liberation*, 162.

now unknown, not having His image in another Hypostasis, will manifest Himself in deified persons: for the multitude of the saints will be His image.⁷⁷

Even more, the image of the Spirit in this world is manifest in those who struggle towards God in an infinite number of ways, whether they are “spiritually advanced,” understanding their struggle, “spiritual children,” confused but well-intentioned, or “spiritual infants,” with no idea yet that they are on a journey to the Divine. The eschatological image of the Spirit is found in the saints, and the imitation of the Spirit is, as Origen shows, in those who work for others in the world.

In its first chapter, this book pointed out that the Spirit is used by various institutions and causes for their own ends. Do the many, very different, claims about the Spirit refer to one Spirit? In Origen's view, the Spirit certainly makes himself known on different levels. Some, for example, might experience the Spirit as harsh and punishing, while others know the one who groans, empathizing in the suffering of all creation. The Spirit communicates to each person as he finds her on her spiritual journey, sometimes through pedagogues and other times directly. However, the direct teaching of the Spirit can only follow the healing work of Jesus Christ. Looking at the different claims about the Spirit today, Origen might say that the Spirit may indeed be revealed in these diverse ways—but only if the theologies and institutions involved are truly converted by Jesus, carrying his death within them, that they may manifest his life. In a sense, Jesus reveals the Spirit, just as the Spirit reveals him.

Christian pneumatology, worked in this kenotic Spirit of Jesus Christ, must remain ever humble, realizing as it searches that no answer is final. Exploration in and of the Spirit involves the risk of discovering that our first beliefs were only a shadow of the truth, that the world we always inhabited was the world of the child, that God is beyond our wildest imaginings. The Spirit who leads creatures back to God is the Spirit who challenges them to new heights that may plunge them to the deepest places. The Spirit, who dwells only in the widest, most spacious souls, and who alone knows the deep things of God, demands conversion of the narrowness of the human heart. It is this demand for a new

⁷⁷ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 172-173.

breadth in humanity that allows for the growth of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God's own children. Accepting the challenge offered by Origen, as he walked in the footsteps of the Holy Spirit, we open our spirits to the wideness of the Spirit and hope that we may become sacraments of the Spirit's presence in the world.

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