

FIRST SESSION (10:30-11:20 AM)

Parallel Papers / Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) & Evangelical Philosophical Society (EPS)

David Deuel (ETS) - "Come to the Banquet: Jesus' Disability Mission." Ph.D. Academic Director, The Master's Academy International.

Jubilee was God's compassion program for Israel. The economic custom of alleviating crushing debt held a special place in the ancient Near East with the release of indebted people, land, and wealth of all sorts. Although God's people Israel shared a common practice of remitting debts with their neighbors, Jesus' use of Isaiah 58:6 in quoting Isaiah 61:1-3 demonstrated a special heart's commitment to people with disabilities. This paper will offer a theological and methodological framework for applying the Jubilee principle to disability ministry based on the OT Jubilee concept Jesus used in His proclamation found in Luke 4. The disability theme resurfaces crucially in Luke 14.

For copy after reading, e-mail : ddeuel1043@aol.com

Eric Lewellen (EPS) - "The Messiah as Apologist." M.A. student (Theology/ New Testament), Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

The charges levied against Christianity (and religion in general) by the so-called new atheists present pressing issues of pastoral significance to the modern American church. The new atheists, over and against traditional atheism, claim that Christianity is not only evidentially and epistemologically untenable, but also dangerous and is the primary factor inhibiting societal progress. Their criticisms of Christianity are often taken as bombastic gibes based on arrogant (mis)readings of Scripture and, as a result, are met with equally polemical rebuttals. However, while they inhabit a drastically different cultural milieu, the new atheists share important practical assumptions with the Jewish leaders who inhabited first century Palestine, i.e. with Jesus' primary opponents. Namely, they require evidence to corroborate the claims associated with their respective worldviews, implement shame tactics to make their arguments against Jesus and Christianity, and see the refutation of their opponents as a necessary means to reach utilitarian ends on earth. The question posed in this study is: Given these similarities, can Jesus' interaction with the Jewish leaders inform a contemporary apologetic methodology with new atheists? As Christians, we look to the person of Jesus Christ as the definitive revelation of God in this world to shape our theology. However, the example of Jesus is conspicuously absent from many discussions of contemporary apologetics. It is my contention that Jesus' interaction with the religious authorities in Mark's temple narrative has much to offer methodologically to apologists who seek to thoughtfully and effectively engage in discussion with the critiques of new atheism.

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Larry Poston and Audrey Watne (ETS) - "The Hand of Tender Terribleness: Wounding in Order to Heal." Larry Poston, Ph.D. Chair of the Department of Religion and Professor of Religion, Nyack College, also author of *Islamic Da'wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam* (Oxford University Press, 1992), and *The Changing Face of Islam in America* (Horizon Books, 2000); Audrey Watne, B.A., Program Assistant, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University; spent semester abroad in Middle Eastern Studies; preparing to begin graduate studies in International Relations and Development.

Amos 3:6 asks rhetorically, "*When disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?*" The Minor Prophets are filled with instances in which God deliberately and purposefully brought severe suffering both to specific individuals and to entire peoples of the Middle East—including the inhabitants of Israel and Judah—for the declared purpose of humbling them to the point that they would seek Him for salvation and for sanctification. In this sense, disability and suffering can be seen as tools in the hand of an Almighty and Sovereign God to fulfill His divine purpose of calling both the unrighteous and His own people to repentance.

This essay will seek to develop a macro-level theology of suffering rooted in the revelations of the Minor Prophets and showing how these concepts have been continued in the New Covenant as well. These precepts will then be applied to the situation that exists in the Middle East today, with specific reference to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

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Steve Squires (ETS) - "Who Knows When the Sunrise Will Be: Luther's Theology and Mental Illness." Th.D. student at Boston University

Luther's theological development was driven by both confrontation and struggle. One well documented struggle for Luther was his "anfechtung" or spiritual struggle. This spiritual struggle manifested itself as, among other things, depression. Luther believed this affliction could be overcome only by clinging to God's promises, or the Gospel. In turn, the struggle was evidence of the presence of the Gospel in his life. One informed the other. This paper will examine the contribution that Luther's theology makes in dealing with and understanding mental illness (chronic depression in particular). Hope can be found in Luther's understanding of God's constant presence in Christ as well as his honesty on God's inscrutable will found in the "hidden God."

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Adonis Vidu (EPS) - "Deceiving the Deceiver: Ransom Theory in the Context of Ancient Justice." Ph.D. Associate Professor of Theology, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

I propose to study the development of the patristic theories of the atonement in the context of ancient Greek and Roman conceptions of justice. I am assuming that all theories of the atonement presuppose a particular understanding of justice in attempting to describe and explain the work of Christ. My suggestion is that what is to us the repulsive theory of divine deception in the theology of Origen, Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine does not clearly conflict with ancient discourse about divine justice. I will examine this relationship by looking at Greek tragedy, Plato, Aristotle, and Seneca.

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SECOND SESSION (11:30 AM- 12:20 PM)

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Laura Cassidy-Moffat (ETS) - "Understanding Disorders and How They Typically Manifest Themselves." M.Div. student at Bethel Seminary of the East

This paper will focus on Autism, ADHD, and Asperger's Syndrome. Its aim is to delineate how these disorders typically manifest themselves and to give guidelines for teachers on how to meet the challenges that students with these conditions bring to the classroom, such as, attempting to meet their needs while not neglecting the needs of their classmates. The working relationship between the teacher and the parents of these special children will also be addressed, as well as a checklist of do's and don'ts when working with these children.

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Gregory E. Ganssle (EPS) – "The Possibility of Divine Causation." Ph.D. Senior Fellow, Rivendell Institute at Yale

In a recent book, Evan Fales has argued that divine causation is not possible. His central argument involves an analysis of causation such that the causal relation is a relation between universals. Suppose a particular event 1, causes event 2. The universal [event of type 1] stands in the causal relation with the universal [event of type 2]. Fales admits that his analysis requires there to be a mapping feature built into the nature of the causal relation to guarantee that the particular effect follows the particular cause. He suggests that being related in space and time will provide the means to map the right effects onto their causes.

In this paper, I argue that the spatial relation between cause and effect is not necessary to the causal relation. In cases of volition, it appears that the mapping of particular effects onto volitions is achieved by the intentional content of the volition. Therefore, spatial relations are not necessary to causation and the impossibility of divine causation has not been shown.

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Andrew Sargent (ETS) – "Divide, Stir, or Calm: YHWH's Engagement of the Sea in Isa 51:15, Jer 31:35, and Job 26:12." Ph.D., a recent graduate, Dr. Sargent is looking for a teaching position. Founder and President of Biblical Literary Ministry since 1998.

Though Jeremiah 31:35, and Isaiah 51:15 are identical passages, and Job 26:12 is close enough to them to suggest some intimate connection, our English translations' interpretations of them are inconsistent, rendering *RG'* alternately as *divide*, *stir*, or *calm*. While YHWH's power to divide, stir, and calm the sea are all repetitive sub-themes in Scripture, I will argue that the grammar, structure and context of each are best represented by YHWH's power to calm the sea.

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Nathan D. Shannon (EPS) – "Believe and Confess: Revisiting Christian Doxastic Intentionality." Ph.D. Candidate, Free University of Amsterdam

In this paper, I begin by endorsing William Alston's contention that propositional belief is insufficient as an explanatory category in religious epistemology. I sharpen his critique, however, by arguing that the problem is not so much the category of belief but the methodology of applying a generic epistemological analysis to specifically religious questions, or more importantly, to what Scripture teaches regarding the epistemology of salvation. I demonstrate this claim with a brief look at the work of Nicholas Wolterstorff. Alston proposes acceptance as an alternative to belief, but in a recent article, Hamid Vahid argues that Alston has not managed to make the distinction between belief and acceptance clear, or to make one at all. Vahid's critique points us toward the real problem: while the argument against propositional belief and in favor of a volitional doxastic category is not without value, Alston repeats the more fundamental error of treating religious epistemology as a species of epistemology broadly conceived, and attempts to impose a generic understanding of acceptance on the cognitive aspect of salvation as taught in the New Testament. I challenge the narrowness of Alston's theory of acceptance with a discussion of the complexities of the epistemology of soteriology as found in the New Testament, and illustrate how these complexities bolster my proposal of confession as more fortuitous nomenclature.

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THIRD SESSION (2:30 - 3:20 PM)

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Wayne Brandow (ETS) "The Centrality of the Cross in Baptism" MDiv. Reformed Baptist pastor (ARBCA), Bible Baptist Church of Galway, Galway, NY

Does baptism replace circumcision? Is baptism the sign and seal of the new covenant? This paper will examine the long held circumcision/baptism paradigm used to support infant baptism. The New Testament writers use the words, *tupos* (type) and *antitupos* (antitype) with respect to baptism and neither of these occurrences has reference to circumcision. The baptism of the New Testament to which other baptisms typically foreshadow or look back to is the baptism that Christ spoke of when He told his disciples in Mark 10:38, "Are you able to drink the cup I drink or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" He was speaking of the cross. The place circumcision holds in unfolding elements of the new covenant and baptism's function in the aforesaid new covenant will be carefully investigated.

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John Jefferson Davis (EPS) – "How Personal Agents are Located in Space: The Metaphysics of Person and Place and Implications for Eucharist and Worship." Ph. D., Professor of Systematic theology and Christian Ethics, Chair of Division of Christian Thought, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

The purpose of this paper, "How Personal Agents Are Located in Space," is to argue that the clarification and modification of some of our common-sense notions of "place" and "object" can shed light on some important theological issues: how God is present in corporate worship; how the risen Christ is "really present" during the eucharist; and how the believer is really, not just metaphorically, united to Christ. The analysis will focus on the concepts of the *circumscriptive* vs. *repletive* presence of entities in space, and on the concept of an *extended mind* in personal agency.

This is also an attempt to provide some further clarification to some of the notions advanced in my book, *Worship and the Reality of God* (InterVarsity Academic, 2010), especially chapters three ("Reality in Worship: The Real Presence of God on Sunday Morning") and four ("The Eucharist: Meeting the Risen Christ at the Table").

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David Deuel (ETS) – "God's Story of Disability: The Unfolding Plan from Genesis to Revelation." Ph.D. Academic Director, The Master's Academy International.

God has a story too. From Genesis to Revelation, salvation history displays the plans of God's heart, His mission. The story includes disabilities for they play pivotal roles in God's bringing people to Himself. His glory and our worship are at the very center. Although entire books have been written on small details of disability in Scripture, the entire story from creation to eternity needs to be told. It is, at heart, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and a basis for praise. In our study, we explore the Bible's perspective on disability as it develops in salvation history.

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Noel Sherry (ETS) – "Discerning and Responding to a Ministry Calling." M.R.E. Center Director of Bethel Seminary of the East, New England

This paper aims to revisit a perennial topic of interest to all followers of Christ, but of particular need among Seminary students, or those engaged in any form of theological study: Discerning and acting on a ministry calling. The co-authors, bring 60+ years of pastoral experience and theological reflection to the topic- Noel Sherry with 30 years as Associate Pastor in two New England churches (and currently the NE Center Director of Bethel Seminary of the East), and Doug Fombelle with 30 years pastoring in upstate New York (and since 2003 the Dean and Executive Director of BSOE). This paper examines the biblical data for calling, as a basis for discerning divine and human signposts for Christian vocation and mission; key historical contributions to the topic from four periods in Church history (including several fallacies or biases); and some developmental markers which may contribute to our discernment of a particular calling as Christian leaders.

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