

ANZABS CONFERENCE 2018

6-7 December, 2018

Venue: Wesley Hall, Trinity Methodist College,
202A St Johns Rd, Meadowbank, Auckland 1072

Thursday 6 December

9.30 am – REGISTRATION

10.00-10.10 – mihi

10.10-11.00 – Keynote speaker: Robert Myles – Fishing for Eyewitnesses in the Fourth Gospel

11.00-11.30 – Morning tea

11.30-12.00 – Lyndon Drake – Economic Capital in the Hebrew Bible

12.00-12.30 – Anne Aalbers – Resurrection and Celibacy: Two Sides of the Same Coin?

12.30-1.00 – Jonathan Robinson – "And he was with the beasts," (Mark 1:13): Ambiguity, Interpretation and Mark as a Jewish Author

1.00-2.00 – Lunch

2.00-2.30 – Ben Hudson – Ethical Exhortation and the Decalogue in Ephesians

2.30-3.00 – Csilla Saysell – The Servant as 'a covenant of/for people' in Deutero-Isaiah

3.00-3.30 – Afternoon tea

3.30-4.00 – Jacqueline Lloyd – Did Jesus minister in Gaulanitis?

4.00-4.30 – Mark Keown – Jesus as the New Joshua

4.30 – AGM

Friday 7 December

9.30-10.00 – Ben Ong – Pākehā Reading of the New Testament

10.00-10.30 – Jordan Chapman – Nero as "The Destroyer" in Revelation 9:11

10.30-11.00 – Morning tea

11.00-11.30 – Sarah Hart – The Rich–Poor Divide: Seeking Biblical Directives

11.30-12.00 – Paul Trebilco – What does Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, tell us about the Christians in Ephesus at the close of the second century CE?

12.00-12.30 – Ross Millar – Narrative of the discourses: the introductory settings of Matthew's teaching discourses

12.30-1.00 – Deane Galbraith – Jeremiah Wrote an Epilogue, And It Once Had a Mighty Fine Whine: The Original Prophecy of Unmitigated Doom in Jeremiah 25.1-13Lunch

1.00-2.00 – Lunch

2.00-2.30 – Stephen Gerbault – The Gospel of John, David F. Ford, and Reading in the Spirit

2.30-3.00 – Philip Church – “In Speaking of a New Covenant, God Declares the First Obsolete” (Heb 8:13): Supersessionism in the Book of Hebrews

3.00-3.30 – Julia van den Brink, “Blessed God”: The use of μακάριος to describe God in 1 Tim 1:11; 6:15

3.30-4.00 – Rikk Watts – The Stronger one and the dove: Revisiting two discarded images.

4.00 – closing words and karakia. Afternoon tea and chat for those who wish to stay.

Registration

To cover catering costs, there will be a registration fee for ANZABS 2018:

Student/lower income presenters - \$20

Student/lower income attendees - \$40

Everyone else - \$80

Please pay this registration fee **in cash, on the day**.

To sign up for attending the conference, please register here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/Cs3yPj8xJQEmWQel1>

Full abstracts are below.

Abstracts

Anne Aalbers, University of Auckland

Resurrection and Celibacy: Two Sides of the Same Coin?

In this paper I am proposing that, integral to religious belief in the first century, sexual abstinence – or celibacy – was the assumed status of the resurrected. I will discuss not only familiar NT texts but also some evidence of Jewish ascetic practice such as that which comes to us from the texts of the Judaean Desert. Greek and Latin historical sources, as well as insight available to us from common proto-gnostic attitudes, reveal a consistent cultural understanding of celibacy in the eschaton. Such diverse sources of support for the idea would suggest that, in any record of the account of the resurrected Jesus, the Gospel writers would assume this to be the case. In my PhD thesis I am proposing that John's Gospel shows full consistency with this expectation and that Jesus' puzzling prohibition to Mary Magdalene, not to touch him while he is still embodied before ascension (20:17), is motivated by this understanding.

Julia van den Brink, Laidlaw College

'Blessed God': The use of μακάριος to describe God in 1 Tim 1:11; 6:15

Blessing statements using μακάριος are scattered throughout the Septuagint (LXX) and the New Testament (NT). Most are found in beatitudes (e.g. blessed are the poor, Luke 6:20). In the diverse uses of μακάριος across the LXX and NT, there appears to be one rule for its use: it is never used to describe God. While God may be described as 'blessed' using εὐλογητός, he is not praised with μακάριος. There are, however, two noticeable exceptions: 1 Timothy 1:11 and 6:15. In this paper, I will explore some possible explanations for why the author of 1 Timothy has seemingly broken with tradition and described God using μακάριος.

Jordan Chapman, University of Otago

Nero as 'The Destroyer' in Revelation 9:11

The angel of the abyss in Revelation 9:11 is given two names, both of which mean, 'The Destroyer.' Most commentators note that an allusion to the Greco-Roman deity Apollo can be seen in the Greek name of the angel, but fail to develop its significance. Epigraphical and literary sources attest to Nero's self-association with Apollo, and the Nero-like traits of the Beast later in Revelation (13, 17) make an Apollo-Nero allusion probable. In evoking Nero in Revelation 9, John fleshes out the nature of idolatry in the chapter and foreshadows his use of Nero-like qualities for the Beast.

Philip Church, Laidlaw College

'In Speaking of a New Covenant, God Declares the First Obsolete' (Heb 8:13): Supersessionism in the Book of Hebrews

In the 2000 edition of his Hebrews commentary Robert Gordon claimed that Hebrews was supersessionist. In the second edition (2008) he added an eighteen page defence of that claim. Since Hebrews was written by an ethnic Jew to ethnic Jews, and since the argumentation is drawn from the Jewish Greek Scriptures, the critique of the Jewish cult is an internal critique, the seeds of which were sown in those Scriptures. The former covenant anticipated the new, and what it anticipated is now a reality. Now that the reality has come, what anticipated it has been fulfilled and is no longer necessary. This is fulfilment rather than supersession.

Lyndon Drake, Oxford University*Economic Capital in the Hebrew Bible*

In Genesis 2:17, God prohibits eating fruit from 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.' Commentators are divided about the reason for the prohibition and its related sanction, with some (for example, James Barr) even arguing that God acts unethically.

I propose that eating from the tree functions within the narrative world of the text as an archetypal, negative example of comprehensive consumption in the face of plenty. Or, conversely, Adam and Eve lack appropriate restraint. Other biblical texts, particularly a number of economic regulations in the law codes, present restraint rather than complete consumption as a divinely-approved virtue. By contrast, the Adapa story and the Gilgamesh epic both present the restraint of primeval humans as foolishness. I argue that the virtue of restraint presented in Genesis 2 functions as a unifying principle for a number of biblical texts which address economic issues.

Deane Galbraith, University of Otago*Jeremiah Wrote an Epilogue, And It Once Had a Mighty Fine Whine: The Original Prophecy of Unmitigated Doom in Jeremiah 25.1-13*

Jeremiah's prophecies dated before the Judahite exile of 597 BCE predict complete devastation for the land of Judah, the elimination of any remnant within its cities, and no hope of return for exiles. For Jeremiah, the 'prophet of doom', hope was something that only (pseudo-)prophets offered. Yet many have challenged this picture, pointing to the prophecies of hope in the various final forms of the book of Jeremiah. This paper finds support for a pre-597 'prophet of [unmitigated] doom' in LXX Jer 25.1-13, when read against the tyranny of the (Masoretic) canon. In LXX Jer 25.1-13, Jeremiah composed an epilogue of hopelessness, without expectation of any future for Judahites, without any knowledge of the Oracles against the Nations, and without expectation of punishment for Babylon.

Stephen C. Gerbault, Laidlaw College, Alphacrucis College*The Gospel of John, David F. Ford, and Reading in the Spirit*

How is the church to read the Gospels? In a review essay on Richard B. Hays' 2016 book, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, David Ford (2017) suggests that John is offering a creative 'reading forwards' paradigm for reading Scripture. This paper hopes to explore what is meant by reading forwards and how it relates to Hays' reading backwards. It will then conclude with brief suggestions for reading the Gospels in the Spirit.

Sarah Hart, Good Shepherd College, Te Hepara Pai*'The Rich-Poor Divide: Seeking Biblical Directives'*

What perspectives does the Bible offer regarding the economic gap between the rich and poor? Are analyses or directives of a rich-poor divide discernible in the biblical literature? These two questions focus the choice of biblical passages and secondary sources. Principal texts for the discussion are Jubilee Year and Land Tenure (Lev 25), Naboth's Vineyard (1 Kgs 21), and selected texts from the prophetic writings (Is 5:7; Am 6:4-7). Secondary sources include the work of Rainer Albertz and Samuel Adams.

Ben Hudson, University of Otago*Ethical Exhortation and the Decalogue in Ephesians*

This paper will argue that the *paraenesis* of Ephesians (Eph 4:17-6:9) is structured so as to reflect the second table of the Decalogue. The lengthly exhortations are attended by a series of

allusions and echoes which evoke the scriptural commandments concerning parents, adultery, stealing, murder, false testimony and covetousness, in reverse order. Noticing this extended engagement with the Decalogue in which Gentile Christ-believers are exhorted to a way of life shaped by scriptural commandments contributes to resolving a number of puzzles in Ephesians including; accounting for the relationship between the two halves of the letter, discerning the letter's purpose, and interpreting the difficult phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας (he abolished the law of commandments in decrees, Eph 2:15).

Mark Keown, Laidlaw College

Jesus as the New Joshua

It is common in NT studies to hear Jesus considered in regards to Messiah (Christ), Lord, Son of Man, Son of David, the Prophet, Son of God, new Moses, and so on. Yet, it is extremely rare to find Jesus considered as the New Joshua. In this paper, I will argue that God's choice of name for his Son suggests that this is as essential an OT connection as Jesus as Christ and Son of Man, the two ideas that dominate the Gospel narratives. He is after all named by God as Joshua. To understand Jesus, he must be considered as the Second Joshua.

Jacqueline Lloyd, Laidlaw College

Did Jesus minister in Gaulanitis?

References to Gaulanitis are absent in the Gospels. Consequently, Jesus' ministry in Gaulanitis is largely ignored by New Testament scholars. However, the Synoptic Gospels do state that Jesus ministered in Bethsaida, which has been identified with Et-Tell in the central Golan, a region roughly corresponding to ancient Gaulanitis. In this paper I will argue that Jesus probably did minister in Gaulanitis. I will also argue that the reason there is no mention of this in the Gospels is because the Jewish people living in first-century *Judea* considered Gaulanitis to be a part of Galilee.

Ross Millar, Laidlaw College

Narrative of the discourses: The introductory settings of Matthew's teaching discourses

Matthew is often divided into narrative and teaching sections, with the end of each teaching discourse beginning marked by the literary formula, 'when Jesus had finished saying [all] these things...' Each of these discourses begins with a narrative introduction and the settings and characters of these narrative introductions will be examined for patterns. The ways Matthew uses these opening phrases to outline the differing relationships crowds and disciples have with Jesus will be explored.

Robert Myles, Murdoch University

Fishing for Eyewitnesses in the Fourth Gospel

John 18:15–16 mentions an unknown disciple of Jesus who 'was known to the high priest' giving him access to the events in Caiaphas's courtyard. A minority of scholars maintain the identity of this disciple is consistent with John, the son of Zebedee, whom they also maintain was the author of the Fourth Gospel. To support this position, the commonplace fiction of entrepreneurial Galilean fishermen belonging to an aspiring 'middle-class' is asserted. This paper reviews the arguments and suggests that a more rigorous account of the agrarian political-economic relation in the ancient world demonstrates the implausibility of such a scenario.

Ben Ong, University of Otago

Pākehā Reading of the New Testament

The contextuality of the scholar dictates the analysis of their work. 'Pākehā' exist due to their relationship with hau kāinga, true home people, in Aotearoa and Te Waipounamu. This relationship inherently influences the contextuality of the person and, therefore, the scholar. Few contextual biblical studies works exist in Aotearoa and Te Waipounamu, this paper proposes a possible contextual methodology on the basis of relational identity granted in Te Tiriti o Waitangi for biblical studies, allowing for critical dialogue between 'traditional' analytical methods and the non-Māori scholar's understanding of te ao Māori, the Māori world.

Ka tino aweawetia te tātaritanga o ō rātou mahi e te ao horopaki o te tangata mātauranga. Nā te hau kāinga Māori te noho o ngā iwi Pākehā i roto i Aotearoa me Te Waipounamu. Ka aweawe tēnei piringa i te horopaki o te tangata me te tangata mātauranga. He mahingia horopaki itiiti o mātai Paipera Tapu ērā i roto i Aotearoa me Te Waipounamu. Kei raro i Te Tiriti o Waitangi, ka whakaaria tēnei pūrongo i tētahi tikanga i mātai Paipera Tapu, ka taea te kōrero tātaritanga te hanga i waenganui i te kōrero tātari o tikanga Pākehā me tētahi Pākehā mōhiotanga o te ao Māori.

Jonathan Robinson, University of Otago

'And he was with the beasts,' (Mark 1:13): Ambiguity, Interpretation and Mark as a Jewish Author

James Dunn, in his seminal 1980 work, *Christology in the Making*, wrote, 'We should not underestimate the Jewish hermeneutical readiness to read as much into the text as possible.' Yet it may be observed that when it comes to interpreting texts from the 1st century Jewish sect known today as early Christianity the impulse of Dunn and others is sometimes to read as little into the text as possible. This paper will explore this tendency and its ramifications using Mark 1:13 as a test case, before arguing for a 'maximal' exegesis of this remarkably ambiguous yet evocative phrase.

Csilla Saysell, Carey Baptist College

The Servant as 'a covenant of/for people' in Deutero-Isaiah

In the context of the Servant Songs, Deutero-Isaiah twice uses the phrase 'a covenant of/for people' (*berit 'am* – Isa 42:6; 49:8), a construct chain that has puzzled commentators for a long time. The exact relationship between the two parts of the chain is hard to work out and the referent for both the covenant (Noahic? Mosaic? something else?) and the people (humanity? Israel?) is obscure. This research explores the different options for interpreting this enigmatic phrase in order to throw light on the Servant's mission and its implications for the NT.

Paul Trebilco, University of Otago

What does Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, tell us about the Christians in Ephesus at the close of the second century CE?

Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History 5.23.1, quotes a letter by Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, written around 190CE. In the letter Polycrates defends the practice of concluding the Paschal fast on Nisan 14. Polycrates shows that Christians in Asia Minor were in the habit of celebrating Easter at the same time as Jews celebrated the Pascha, regardless of what day of the week Nisan 14 fell on. In this letter, Polycrates gives us some very valuable information about Christians in Ephesus at the close of the second century, including details relating to leadership, traditions, the relationship between Ephesus and other churches and the Ephesian church's relationship with the local Jewish communities.

Rikk Watts, Regent College

The Stronger One and the Dove: Revisiting Two Discarded Images.

In spite of initially appearing somewhat conventional, ascertaining the identity and significance of “the coming stronger one” and the symbolism behind the “descending dove” in Mark’s prologue has proven surprisingly difficult. This paper will review the range of options, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and indicate why there is little agreement. It will argue for a reinstatement of the two options—Yahweh and Israel—which nearly all commentators early on cite and yet immediately exclude. On the basis of some previously uncited material along with a fuller appreciation of how they function in Israel’s tradition, the paper will suggest that their rejection was precipitous and that reinstating them makes better sense of their place in the context of Mark’s narrative overall.