Paul Blackham 2: Weak Theological Links

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Andy Saville has accurately summarised the teachings of Paul Blackham, inviting church and academy to regain a more robust, apostolic approach to identifying the Trinity in the Old Testament.[1]

I have already critiqued key exegetical arguments. Blackham's approach to Old Testament texts requires a particular hermeneutical methodology alongside a predetermined doctrinal commitment. His exegesis largely imposes New Testament interpretations upon amenable Old Testament passages. He prematurely claims, for the times of Abraham and Moses, the orthodox doctrinal conclusions otherwise associated with the first century A.D. (after the revelation afforded by the Incarnation, Easter and Pentecost) or the fourth (after further centuries of conciliar clarification). The dénouement of a whole-canon systematic theology is passed off as the assured results of a few-chapters' exegesis.[2]

This present summary moves beyond the weak links in Dr Blackham's exegesis and hermeneutics to flag more of the methodological shortcuts taken and to consider the theological foundations and consequences of his position.

Methodological Issues

The rhetorical presentations of 'christophanists' like Blackham are prone to several methodological infelicities. Those I will demonstrate from a single example are readily found elsewhere.

The primary weakness is excessive reductionism, attacking (largely) straw men to consolidate one's own position. Consider Blackham's approach to Hebrews 1, which further models his harmonising of Scripture:

> The Scriptures quoted interweave Ps 2:7, 2 Sam 7:14, Ps 104:4 and Ps 45:6-7. Is this an example of faithful exegesis of those Scriptures, or is it an imposed 'Christian' eisegesis, claiming to find (whether by the Spirit or a new perspective) a 'meaning' that the original authors knew nothing of? If the writer of the book of Hebrews were engaged in a theologically driven eisegesis we must ask to what extent this would have been

> persuasive to his original audience. If these Scriptures were not recording the Father's declarations concerning his divine Son, then what value would they have to the Hebrew readers who were struggling to understand the identity of Jesus?[3]

Readers are given only two options, and all but forced to accept the (apparently) orthodox alternative, lest we pronounce the inspired author guilty of a heinous interpretive crime. However, there are more options than the two extremes presented: further alternatives which Blackham does not know or does not offer.

This example evinces further methodological manoeuvres. First, Blackham's rhetoric often asks questions rather than makes direct assertions.[4] Second, the audience is regularly guided by polarised descriptors; the 'Christian' 'meaning' of some 'new perspective' is pitted against 'faithful exegesis'.[5] Third, by design or carelessness, again the exegetical options offered may not accurately represent Scripture; I think Blackham subtly misunderstands/misrepresents Hebrews' purpose. Fourth, the reductionistic alternatives given are based on modern interpretive sensibilities; the charge of eisegesis ignores other first-century exegetical procedures that Hebrews may have employed—precisely to engage its first readers.[6]

Reductionism is joined by hyperbole. Blackham disparages the alleged 'story of the doctrine of the Trinity': the supposed protracted dilemma faced by 'believers as people in theological crisis', unresolved until 'three hundred years after Pentecost'.[7] History certainly attests three centuries passed before church councils responded to *later* crises by enshrining Trinitarian doctrine in familiar creeds. But Blackham's dramatic reconstruction misrepresents the nascent doctrine, sometimes already in credal form, experienced and expressed by the earliest Christians (e.g. Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). Of course there exist sceptics who propose a slow, humanistic evolution of religion, but these are diligently countered by careful scholarship.[8] It may also be misleading to characterise the hypothesis of centuries-long doctrinal evolution as 'standard' and 'common'.[9] Through such caricature, Blackham intimates that *all* who oppose his position share the extreme liberal alternative, exacerbating the reductionistic division already presented.[10]

Blackham himself exposes such hyperbole as a rhetorical device. Elsewhere he

allows a more orthodox explanation of the difference between first- and fourth-century formulations—

> It is a mistake to think that the New Testament church **grew** in its doctrine of the Trinity. The Christian Church certainly grew in its ability to articulate the doctrine and to preserve the doctrine from errors of heresy, but it held the doctrine from its earliest days…[11]

Audiences ought not be beguiled into hastily accepting the binary choice between some extremely-liberal spectre and the hyper-orthodox refuge proffered by Blackham. The weakness of such methodologies, especially when compounded with exegetical shortcomings, is visible in the theological arguments and corollaries which comprise the latter half of Saville's summary, to which we now turn.

Theological Arguments

Blackham demands that all Old Testament theophanies are, more precisely, christophanies. We have previously seen the assertion—commonly accepted but unsubstantiated by careful exegesis—that God the Father is somehow permanently invisible, in a way that the Son (and Spirit) is not.[12] Certainty that the Son acts as sole delegate of the Trinity relies on some uncertain theology as well as some faulty logic.

Blackham rightly queries Augustine's assumption that theophanies reveal the divine essence/substance rather than triune persons.[13] Yet, while Blackham seems to allow that a theophany may be 'a combination of the Persons,' he typically presumes theophanies disclose only the Son. Moreover, he emphasises the anthropomorphic theophanies to the exclusion of other appearances.[14]

Saville judges merit in Blackham's christophanist conclusions based on both 'the direct exegesis of Scripture' and 'theological truth'.[15] My previous articles demonstrate that none of the texts marshalled constrains the Father to remain invis-ible, even though he commonly remains transcendent. They also demonstrate the weaknesses of the theological truth Saville claims. The word 'mediator' does not entail what Blackham infers. In misappropriating the biblical term, christophanists over-extend certain passages to insist it is the Son, exclusively, who appears and communicates for the triune God. 1 Timothy 2:5 proclaims 'one mediator' who *reconciles* God and humanity, but the verse cannot be pressed to demand Christ Jesus is the only way God appears and speaks.[16]

While there is one mediator-who-redeems, there is more than one mediator-who-communicates. Amongst divine candidates, we know the Father can be heard (as at Jesus' baptism and transfiguration, and at John 12:28) and the Spirit can be seen (as at Jesus' baptism and at Pentecost).[17] There are also many mundane candidates. Scripture repeatedly attests that God communicates with his people via the Son *and/or the Spirit, through created angels and/or human intermediaries*. Blackham would have us disregard these additional channels of communication, which are repeatedly found in both Testaments (e.g. the commissions of the prophets; Matt. 10:40; 28:18-20; John 17:18-21; Acts 1:8; 9:15; 1 Thess. 1:4-9; 2:13; 1 Pet. 4:11; 2 Pet. 1:16-21; 1 John 1:1-4; Rev 1:1-3). Revelation 1 is particularly significant: the message is given from God to Jesus, sent via an angel to John, then entrusted to a team of prophets to encourage God's people.[18] The Son is certainly a key part of such processes, *but not exclusively so*. So responsible are human intermediaries that prophets and priests are even granted the prestigious title 'messenger/angel of Yahweh' (Hag. 1:13; Mal. 2:7; cf. 2 Chron. 36:15-16).[19]

Similarly, we have noted Blackham's simplistic assumptions about the 'Word of God', especially its christological interpretation in many Old Testament passages.[20]

Blackham relies heavily on another theological argument, which Saville elucidates sporadically. As with other christophanists, a key player is the enigmatic 'Angel of Yahweh' found primarily in the first books of Scripture.[21] Like others counteracting Augustinian influence, Blackham does an admirable job of demonstrating how the Angel appears and speaks for, and as, Yahweh. I concur. Where such studies fail is in showing that the Angel is readily *distinguished from* Yahweh. Rare passages suggest this, particularly Zechariah 1:11-12. Yet Blackham does not invoke such a passage. Rather, he propagates a popular etymology that 'Angel *of* Yahweh' means 'the One *sent from* Yahweh'. This reading has merit but is far from agreed even amongst conservative biblical scholars. I judge the considered, documented grammatical analysis by an evangelical like Douglas Stuart to deserve warmer reception. In taking the time to explore this Hebrew construct form, Stuart demonstrates:

> Of the dozen or so types of constructs typically recognized by Hebrew grammarians, the most likely type involved here is the appositional construct (also called definitional construct, genitive of apposition,

> genitive of definition, genitive of association), that is, the form of the construct that uses the second word to identify the first. A useful analogy is found in the well-known expression *nehar perat*, [the] River Euphrates, also an appositional construct….Likewise, *mal'ak yahweh* is grammatically appositional and best translates as 'the angel that is Yahweh' or 'the Angel Yahweh' or 'Angel Yahweh'.[22]

Once again, there is more than the simple choice presented to us, and alternative answers are at least as viable as those aired by Blackham. The Angel of Yahweh may indeed be *identified with* God, but it is undemonstrated that he must be numerically *distinguished from* God. Blackham has to show more careful grammatical analysis before his conclusions prove convincing.[23]

Historical Arguments

Dr Saville's summary accurately represents Dr Blackham's arguments both in variety and extent. We have thus seen fair portrayal of the exegetical arguments presented by Blackham, intermingled with several orthodox-sounding doctrinal anchors. The remainder of Saville's summary offers several pages of historical corroboration—lists of others who share Blackham's views—before considering some of the theological corollaries.

Both Blackham and Saville marshal names from past and present to endorse their case. The support of others is responsible academic and rhetorical style (hence my own detailed endnotes). Less responsible are three ways in which these names are employed.

First is the numerical misrepresentation of support. Blackham's principal essay claims vindication from 'exegetes such as Justin, Irenaeus, Luther, Owen, Edwards, and moderns like Colin Gunton'.[24] Saville rightly gauges Justin Martyr as 'the most frequently quoted', alongside something of Irenaeus. But the others earn only sparse mention and little citation in the essay—and I can find nothing at all of Luther's contribution. Saville thus performs a disservice in preserving each scholar's limited quotes, implying these are representative of wider support. Nor should we presume that such lists enumerate independent authorities; scholars recognise the direct influence of Justin upon the likes of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius.[25]

Second and more seriously, just because such names are famous for some

significant influence on the church and for occasions of exemplary exegesis and doctrine, we cannot conclude their every contribution is equally valuable. The second-century apologists were neither more pure nor more objective in their exegesis.[26] Those influenced by Justin simply replicated similar theological shortcuts. Every charge brought against Blackham's exegesis and methodology can be levelled against Justin himself (see later). Likewise, some of Martin Luther's treatment of Old Testament passages requires similar caution. Twenty-first-century generations must continue to beware the perils of being unthinkingly influenced by celebrity endorsement.

The third misuse is the most serious. Some names adduced by Blackham do not ultimately support his claims. So, for example, John Owen. One of Blackham's flagship popular papers bluntly asserts—

> Did Adam know Christ? Of course, who else was it that walked in the Garden and spoke to him? In saying that I am in no way trying to impose the NT onto the OT. John Owen, the great 17th century Puritan theologian, in his 10th introductory essay to his commentary on Hebrews, argues precisely this point from an examination of the Hebrew text of Genesis 3.[27]

Owen is regularly cited in Blackham's teaching. Yet closer inspection of Owen's myriad writings suggests that, while he holds a high Christology even within the Old Testament, he does not teach nearly as much direct familiarity with the person and work of Christ as Blackham claims. Owen thus contradicts Blackham's primary point, admitting his reliance upon the fuller revelation of the New Testament when trying to discern Old Testament events.[28]

Similarly for other sources he cites. Various denominational creeds are not as perspicuous as claimed; we find his conclusions there only if we expect to. Consider also that, as Saville demonstrates, Blackham devotes equal space to (1) building much of his argument and historical credibility upon the work and reputation of Justin, and (2) countering the influence of Augustine by dismissing his approach as unduly influenced by Greek philosophy, particularly Neo-Platonism.[29] Regardless of how we judge Augustine, *Justin* is regularly recognised as allowing (Middle) Platonic philosophy to sway his exegesis. How ought we consistently apply Blackham's contempt for such influence?[30] Nor do the modern scholars cited particularly earn kudos for Blackham. He cites the work of Margaret Barker, which has conspicuously failed to convince either

church or academy that Israel once embraced two Gods.[31] Saville rightly compares Blackham's trans-testamental hermeneutic with Wilhelm Vischer's, but that is not necessarily high praise (see next). Nor have modern academics Walter Kaiser and Anthony Hanson won the day with certain of their interpretations of the Old and New Testaments.[32]

Saville is guilty of similar misuse of sources. Yes, David Baker's work is admired. Yes, Baker's analysis demonstrates Vischer's approach to be strikingly similar to Blackham's. But Saville fails to identify that Baker offers only qualified support: 'few would follow all that Vischer said'. Baker complains that Vischer promotes 'not only "unity" but "identity" of the two Testaments, to the extent that, 'although he concedes the theoretical priority of the Old Testament over the New, in practice Vischer's interpretation is dominated by the New Testament'. So Saville rightly compares Blackham with Vischer, but wrongly implies that an accurate parallel is automatically favourable. If anything, he has directed us to the 'further study' he desires—and the analyses of Baker and others highlight potential *limitations* of Blackham's approach.[33]

Theological Corollaries and Casualties

We can admire the zeal of Dr Blackham to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ. The church, as always, needs its apologists. Yet such zeal has often led to shortcuts in exegesis and theology. One analyst could be speaking of Blackham in noting Justin Martyr's eagerness to demonstrate the pre-incarnate Christ from the pages of the Old Testament: it 'functions as an exegetical guide' and 'becomes the object and the purpose of the exegesis of the theophanic texts because of theological and apologetic reasons'.[34]

Laudable goals can spawn unfortunate side-effects. Blackham's (intentional) doctrinal commitments often drive his exegesis, but his exegesis often generates other (unintentional) theological casualties. Though cause and effect are sometimes unclear, several deficiencies are readily identified.[35]

While his Christology is prominent, Blackham's 'patrology' is less transparent. What does he affirm/deny for God the Father? Analysts of Justin note how transcendent Justin's (Platonic) God is. Justin himself is adamant that 'he who has but the smallest intelligence will not venture to assert that the Maker and Father of all things, having left all supercelestial matters, was visible on a little

portion of the earth'.[36] Is this something we wish to claim for the Father? What does it make of the Father's undeniable verbal interactions? How then should we interpret Blackham's own premise that 'the Father does not at any point **directly** engage with the earthly creation'?[37] What does it say for the Trinity if one member is unable to participate in the created world in the same ways that the other two clearly do? Trakatellis pursues this—

> The Son does not have the transcendence which the Father has, hence he is in a position to appear and converse in visible forms during the various Old Testament theophanies. But then how can he be God unreservedly? The dilemma is inescapable: either the Son is God like the Father, equally transcendent, and thus he should also be excluded as an agent of the theophanies; or if he is the agent who appeared in the theophanies he cannot be God like the Father. However, Justin apparently does not face that dilemma. He retains the contradictory formulations and he is not tired of constantly repeating them.[38]

Similarly and significantly, Blackham's pneumatology is demonstrably deficient. In presuming that salvation is identical Old Testament and New, he assumes the Spirit is identically active throughout both. It is certainly valid to seek, and sometimes find, the person and work of the Spirit in Old Testament texts.[39] Yet this assumption ignores a number of important discontinuities explained in Scripture (and in detailed scholarship on the issue). Blackham presumes that the Spirit not only regenerates believers prior to Pentecost but also indwells and sanctifies them.[40] This ignores Jesus' teaching that 'the Spirit of truth…is *with* you and **will be** *in* you' (John 14:17), prefigured by John's explanation that 'the Spirit was not yet [given], because Jesus was not yet glorified' (7:39; cf. 16:7). A post-resurrection pneumatology is incorrectly interpolated into the Old Testament.[41]

Such disregard for discontinuity is transparent in Blackham's minimising of progressive revelation. Although there is occasional recognition of additional *clarification*, the bulk of his comments deny much 'progress'. They even suggest some degree of *regression*, which is certainly borne out on occasions when Blackham prefers to teach the gospel from the Old Testament. Saville's summary: 'Dr. Blackham raises an even more radical challenge, suggesting that the Old Testament revelation, and the older parts of it, are in certain ways actually superior.'[42]

This stance is unlikely to prove persuasive. On the one hand, its foundational arguments are flawed. Blackham repeatedly marshals an impressive list of texts to show that 'When Paul wishes to establish the truth of his claims his preference is to go right back to Abraham and Moses—see Rom. 4.1, Acts 26.22-3 *et al*'.[43] Elsewhere the list adds Luke 24 and Acts 2, 7, 8, 13, 17.[44] But Blackham is wrong to claim this reflects Paul's 'preference' for ancient authors. Such texts do not prove the gospel is readily found in, perhaps even best proclaimed from, the oldest books of Scripture. On each occasion listed, Paul cites the Hebrew Scriptures because they carry weight with his audience! The apostles avoid appeal to ancient Jewish authors when they encounter pagans (e.g. in Lystra, Athens). The majority of Paul's epistles eschew Old Testament citations (perhaps two quotes in Philippians through Philemon; cf. 1-3 John). Blackham's adaptation of Justin's logic, that older sources are better, would then suggest we accept pagan poets (cited by Paul in Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12) and apocryphal writings (e.g. Jude 14) as being superior to the later witness of the New Testament apostles.

On the other hand, the corollaries of Blackham's minimisation of progressive revelation are equally untenable. His stance can produce erratic interpretations of both Testaments. Particularly disingenuous is his claim that 'as we go through Hebrews we discover that the author constantly asserts *the utter continuity* between the experience of the faithful in the Old Testament and those that live after the Incarnation'.[45]

Such rhetorical sleight of hand is visible elsewhere. In defending an unchanging *message*, Blackham nominates Hebrews 1:1-3 and distinguishes a progression in *messengers*. He over-emphasises another discontinuity to defend continuity of revelation. In doing so, he moves towards contradicting his usual approach to divine revelation in the Old Testament (minimising the Angel's direct involvement) and denying the clear role of human messengers in the New (as the Hebrews themselves had experienced, 2:1-4). The wrong passage is invoked, with Hebrews' pervasive flavour of discontinuity channelled in an irrelevant direction.[46]

Rare affirmations of progressive revelation appear to be little more than lip service. Blackham elucidates his stance most bluntly—

> Moses is an apostle of Jesus Christ—the gospel preached by Moses is

> *exactly the same* gospel preached by the New Testament apostles. The only point of difference is that Moses looked forward whereas the apostles looked back. The gospel has always been a matter of justification by faith alone in Christ alone since the beginning of the world. Luther [whom Blackham is endorsing] has no time for ideas of progressive revelation.…Rather, the *whole* gospel of Jesus Christ is set out from the very first page of the Bible.…So Scripture interprets itself in presenting to us the same message at all times and in all places.[47]

Saville rightly notes that Blackham's collapsing of the New Testament back into the Old removes any need for a notion of *sensus plenior* and alleviates discomfort with apostolic treatment of the Old Testament.[48] It is typical of this position that what Saville catalogues as a corollary is as much a foundational tenet. Any rejoinders to be raised here would cover familiar territory: Blackham's exegesis of the *crux interpretum* of 1 Peter 1:10-12 is incomplete, not least its sidelining of Peter's indicators of discontinuity ('concerning the grace *for you*', 'the things *now* announced'). The warning that *sensus plenior* tempts subjective interpretation is fair, yet also confronts Blackham's habit of (objectively?) discovering Trinitarian identities and roles in the tabernacle furniture of Exodus 25 and the narratives of Exodus 33–35. And of course we feel encouraged to 'reject the assumptions of one such as Harnack'—which apparently only leaves us free to accept Blackham's interpretive model.

Saville's final corollary is that Blackham's model 'provides a firmer foundation for the doctrines of God and the Gospel'.[49] To be sure, *if we accept Blackham's presupposition that there is a single Christomonistic gospel perspicuously revealed throughout Scripture* then, by definition, we will be comforted to find …a single Christomonistic gospel perspicuously revealed throughout Scripture. Once again, the *order* of exegesis and doctrine appears to have been reversed.

Blackham promotes this conflation of the two Testaments by raising the spectre of other religions. The threats of pluralism and relativism are real, and must be guarded against. Yet the two fronts on which Blackham attacks are not necessarily fronts which need defending within evangelical circles. His forceful arguments are not only sometimes logically flawed, but they expend their energy boxing at shadows rather than at the realities casting those shadows.

Yes, some theologians attempt to exploit the idea that Old Testament figures could be saved despite a less-than-perfect understanding of gospel mechanics. But to respond that Old Testament believers must have had a near-complete and conscious faith in the person and work of the triune Son is to miss the point. (It also leads to the exegetical and theological gymnastics being queried here.) Such defensiveness embraces the presupposition that ignorance of Christ today can be directly compared with (and alleviated as in the days of) ignorance of Christ prior to his incarnation. This presupposition itself may be challenged, without needing to unearth New Testament salvation in Old Testament times. While Blackham is hardly the first to defend 'Old Testament salvation,' such energies would be better spent exploring the disjunctions between Old and New Testament soteriologies, rendering any contemporary (mis)application irrelevant.[50]

Secondly, Blackham is concerned to quarantine triune Christianity from comparison with monotheistic Judaism and Islam. His quest is important. Yet *Christian* readers of the Old Testament who do not find Blackham's degree of Trinitarian clarity therein are not thereby promoting 'The contemporary assumption that Islam, Judaism and Christianity all worship the same God…nourished by the tradition of classical theism'.[51] Blackham seems to fall victim to his own black-or-white reductionism. While an overly/overtly-Trinitarian reading of the Old Testament certainly protects against such relativism, it is neither the only logical solution nor the only orthodox one.

This is arguably where Blackham's most rigorous contribution proves to be amongst the least convincing. His formal essay on 'The Trinity in the Hebrew Scriptures' crystallises his ministry and his popular writings. Saville builds much of his summary, especially his theological implications, upon this essay, judging that Blackham 'provides a firmer foundation for the doctrine of God'.[52] It epitomises the need and ability to distinguish Father from Son from Spirit:

> Margaret Barker's work in accounting for this overwhelming feature of the New Testament contains much fascinating material, even if I struggle to accept all her methods and conclusions.…'The Trinitarian faith of the Church had grown from the older Hebrew belief in a pluriform deity, and so the earliest Christian exegetes had not been innovators when they understood the LORD of the Hebrew Scriptures as the Second God, the Son of El Elyon. The One whom they recognized in Jesus had been the

> LORD, and so they declared "Jesus is the LORD".'… When we adopt the theological convictions of exegetes such as Justin, Irenaeus, Luther, Owen, Edwards, and moderns like Colin Gunton, we are able to follow the careful detail of the Hebrew text in its delineation of the identity and roles of the divine Persons. When we start with the truth that the God of Israel is a unity of God Most High, his Son, and his Spirit, then we are free to give full exegetical weight to the distinctions between the three Persons made in the text, through its careful descriptions of divine titles and roles. God Most High sends his Angel with his Spirit…[53]

Note the key mechanism by which we can confidently identify the three persons: where the text itself carefully delineates 'divine titles and roles.'

While Blackham is careful here to reflect those titles (God Most High=El Elyon=Father; LORD=Yahweh=Son; Spirit) he cannot sustain the distinction. Within that same essay the referent of 'LORD/Yahweh' varies. He follows Barker in assigning '*Jesus* is the LORD'. He then introduces 'the LORD who hides himself in the thick darkness', confirming that he intends LORD=Father.[54] He immediately returns to 'the LORD God' who *can* appear even though 'the Most High God may not be seen'.[55] Yet another reversal occurs shortly when, in explaining 'the LORD who appears' (i.e. the Son), Blackham demands the interpretation 'the One sent from the LORD' (i.e. LORD=Father).[56] The same muddling of the referent of 'LORD' occurs again shortly—within a single sentence—as Blackham describes 'a transcendent, invisible Father, an appearing, sent LORD, and the Spirit of the LORD'.[57] Elsewhere Blackham confirms that 'LORD' can even denote the *Spirit*.[58]

The same confusion occurs with other divine titles, such as 'LORD of hosts'. Other supposedly-exegetical arguments also contradict themselves.[59]

Blackham himself cannot maintain the crucial textual basis for distinguishing the persons of the Trinity in the Old Testament. Possible responses seem obvious. Perhaps we expect too much from Blackham; perhaps many divine names can be rightly applied to every member of the Trinity, just as we use 'God' for each. If so, confidence in the text's 'careful descriptions of divine titles' appears misplaced; it certainly remains unproven. Moreover, there seems to be no regular title for the Son comparable to 'Most High God' and 'Spirit'.[60]

Alternatively, perhaps Blackham himself has demonstrated for us that his tripartite taxonomy seeks a clarity which 'the careful detail of the Hebrew text' will not yield. Either way, we might reflect back at Blackham his criticism of Augustine—

> Augustine seems genuinely confused throughout this whole section as to how he might decide which member of the Trinity is speaking or visible at any time in the Hebrew Scriptures. He seems to think such judgements are somehow arbitrary.[61]

Blackham's own judgements often do have some schema to them. But his attempts to clarify such through 'careful descriptions of divine titles' is singularly unconvincing. They also diverge from his patristic supporters—not least Justin and Irenaeus—who commonly determine that 'Yahweh' denotes the *Father*.[62]

Finally, we might query what Blackham claims/entails for a doctrine of inspiration. He so emphasises the unity of Scripture through its single divine Author that he disallows any diversity between its human contributors (who effectively become uniform mechanical scribes). One wonders whether, in a commendable bid to distinguish Trinitarian Christianity from monotheistic Islam (and often *for* monotheistic Muslims), Blackham ends up approaching an Islamic model of Scripture: the monochrome revelation of a single deity without variety of authors or languages or genres.

Closing Thoughts: Some Final Shortcomings

Blackham ultimately seeks to promote a different kind of 'exegesis'. The very way he uses and exemplifies this term is often subtly at odds with modern evangelical methodologies. He seems to demand the kind of surface-level interpretive procedures favoured by the patristic and Puritan eras he typically cites.[63]

History will have to judge how responsible this approach is. I have outlined what I think are some of its limitations, both exegetically and theologically. Similarly, some of Blackham's own interpretive heroes decry the extent to which he would push Scripture. We have seen John Owen refuse to countenance some of Blackham's conclusions. Similarly, John Calvin challenges superficial discoveries of the Trinity in Old Testament texts (not least for

apologetic purposes); concerning the three-fold 'Holy, Holy, Holy' of Isaiah 6—

> And although I do not doubt that the one God in three Persons is here meant by the angels (for certainly God cannot be praised without honoring Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together), yet I think clearer passages should be used in defending our faith, lest we incur the ridicule of heretics.[64]

I have presented Blackham's approach as a series of links in a chain. This analogy highlights one final methodological problem. Blackham gives the impression that several probable interpretations reinforce each other. We are invited to *add* probabilities, yielding a more confident certainty. However, Blackham's arguments are typically interdependent. Recall one example, which relies on God's 'presence' denoting God's Angel *and* on that Angel being divine *and* on identifying this Angel as the divine Son. Dependent probabilities do not add, but *multiply*—substantially *reducing* the overall possibility.

So Blackham's 'chain' of argument is hardly as strong as it appears. The many links do not reinforce each other, but offer increased likelihood that one (or more) of them will prove weak—rendering the whole chain unable to bear the weight placed upon it. My two-part analysis has identified several suspect links and corollaries, thus calling into question the strength of the entire argument. I would concur with Warfield:

> Certainly we cannot speak broadly of the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament. It is a plain matter of fact that none who have depended on the revelation embodied in the Old Testament alone have ever attained to the doctrine of the Trinity.[65]

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ENDNOTES

1. Andy Saville, 'Paul Blackham: a Trinitarian Reading of the Old Testament,' *Churchman* 123.4 (2009): 341–60.
2. Andrew S. Malone, "Paul Blackham 1: Weak Exegetical Links," *Churchman* 125.1, (2011): 51-71.
3. Paul Blackham, 'The Trinity in the Hebrew Scriptures,' in Paul Louis Metzger (ed.),

Trinitarian Soundings in Systematic Theology (London: T&T Clark, 2005), pp. 36-7; cited partially by Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' p. 344. Compare the provocative subtitle of Stephen Motyer, 'The Psalm Quotations of Hebrews 1: A Hermeneutic-Free Zone?' *Tyndale Bulletin* 50.1 (1999): 3-22.

4. In the debate over women in ministry, one analyst critiques another over similar methodology. Such use of 'questions rather than assertions…virtually admits that his view depends on speculative deductions'; Daniel Doriani, 'Appendix 1: A History of the Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2,' in Andreas J. Köstenberger *et al.* (eds.), *Women in the Church* (1st edn.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), pp. 213-67, here 259. Blackham's questions are not always avoiding responsibility for an assertion, but are sometimes employed for understandable rhetorical effect.
5. Compare the closing note of Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 47 n. 26, where he suggests his opponents 'wander suspiciously close to a kind of Marcionism.'
6. For entry to the 'hot topic' of NT exegesis of OT passages, readers might again consider the introductory orientations offered in Kenneth Berding and Jonathan Lunde (eds.), *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008); or the more detailed analyses in G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007).
7. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 37; cited extensively by Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' p. 345.
8. See, for example, the prolific work of the aptly-titled Early High Christology Club like Larry W. Hurtado, e.g. *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); and Richard J. Bauckham, e.g. *Jesus and the God of Israel: 'God Crucified' and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008). On the phenomenon of this Club, see the Introduction to David B. Capes *et al.* (eds.), *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007); or the review thereof by James M. Hamilton Jr, *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 19.3 (2009): 463-5.
9. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 37.
10. For another example, see Paul Blackham, 'Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions,' in Steve Levy with Paul Blackham, *Bible Overview* (Fearn: Christian Focus, 2008), pp. 307-8; preserved by Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' p. 348. Blackham's final question offers a binary choice between a dispensational view of the OT which recognises only 'physical and earthly' promises, and his presentation that OT figures knew and trusted 'the person of Christ.' Blackham then insists that his views 'tend' to be enshrined in each of the Heidelberg Catechism, 39 Articles, Westminster Confession, and Baptist Confession of Faith. Not much of a choice…or of a balanced presentation.

11. Paul Blackham, 'The Trinitarian God', <web.me.com/paulblackham/Following_Jesus/Articles/Entries/2008/11/18_The_Trinitarian_God.html> posted 18 Nov., 2008, accessed 10 May, 2010), citing theologian Broughton Knox.
12. See Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' pp. 346-7; and my further discussion and critique in 'Paul Blackham 1,' pp. 55-8, and 'The Invisibility of God: A Survey of a Misunderstood Phenomenon,' Evangelical Quarterly 79.4 (2007): 311-29.
13. Blackham, e.g. 'Trinity,' pp. 43-5.
14. Compare the same narrow focus of J. A. Borland, *Christ in the Old Testament: Old Testament Appearances of Christ in Human Form* (2nd edn; Fearn: Mentor, 1999).
15. Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' p. 346.
16. To further demonstrate Blackham's hyperbolic methodology, notice precisely that he interpolates additional definitions: 'There only has ever been one Mediator between God and humanity… see 1 Timothy 2:5'; Blackham, *A Study Guide to the Book of Exodus* (Carlisle: Authentic Lifestyle, 2003), pp. 25-6; appropriated by Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' pp. 347-8. The letter to Timothy does emphasise 'one'. But Paul is claiming Christ's uniqueness against other human hopes for reconciliation, not contrasting the persons of the Trinity. Neither does the apostle use additional specifiers like 'only' or 'ever'. I am not disputing that Christ is the unique eternal ransom for humanity (though such conclusions are reinforced by other passages), but Blackham has interpolated additions into 1 Timothy in order to annex the term 'Mediator'.
17. One might also explore the regularly-accepted identification of the Spirit with the post-incarnation angels who direct the apostles (e.g. Acts 8, 10). F. F. Bruce speaks for many in judging that here 'it is difficult to see any real distinction between "the angel of the Lord" and "the Spirit of the Lord"'; *The Book of the Acts* (NICNT; rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 174.
18. The intermediate team of prophets is perhaps distinguishable in Rev 22:9, 16; see Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation* (BECNT 19; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), e.g. pp. 13, 446, 654, 678, 784, 792. Although not universally accepted, many others concur there is yet this extra human link in the chain of communication.
19. For some of the passages listed here, with a defence of the responsibility and dignity of God entrusting humans with divine communication, see Peter Adam, *Written For Us: Receiving God's Words in the Bible* (Nottingham: IVP, 2008), esp. pp. 29-31.
20. Malone, 'Paul Blackham 1', p. 62. It is especially telling to contrast the restraint of Walter Kaiser. Saville ('Paul Blackham,' p. 350) rightly recognises similarities between Kaiser and Blackham, not least in Kaiser's contributions to Berding and Lunde, *Three Views*. Kaiser also readily identifies the Angel of Yahweh with the pre-

incarnate Son; e.g. 'Exodus,' *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), vol. 1, pp. 363, 505, 545; *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1996), pp. 191-2. Yet, concerning the 'Word of the LORD' and its coming to OT prophets and even being seen, Kaiser does not pursue a christological explanation. Indeed he allows auditions of Father as well as Son, and focuses primarily on the communicative ministry of the Spirit (*Hard Sayings*, pp. 68–9)!

21. Not a few interpret the Angel christologically, such as the fresh study series of David P. Murray, *Cross Reference: Discovering Christ in the Old Testament: The Angel of the Lord* (Grand Rapids: HeadHeartHand Media, 2011). One of the more detailed written synopses remains Borland, *Christ in the Old Testament*. For Blackham's treatment of the Angel, see e.g. "Trinity," pp. 41-2; "Frequently Asked Questions," pp. 300-1; along with pertinent passages in his study guides on *Genesis* and *Exodus*.
22. Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus* (NAC 2; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), pp. 110-13 (his square brackets). This excursus is replete with many additional examples, arguments, and documentation. Note also the treatment of key passages by Günther H. Juncker, 'Jesus and the Angel of the Lord' (PhD diss.; Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001).
23. On the difficulties of this distinction, both grammatically and exegetically, see my forthcoming article on "Distinguishing the Angel of Lord" in *Bulletin for Biblical Research*. Even scholars who judge that the Angel can be distinguished from Yahweh argue that this hardly demands a Trinitarian solution; see the summary of arguments and references in René A. López, "Identifying the 'Angel of the Lord' in the Book of Judges: A Model for Reconsidering the Referent in Other Old Testament Loci," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20.1 (2010): 1-18.
24. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p.45; cited by Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' p. 349.
25. e.g. Willis A. Shotwell, 'Justin Martyr,' in Donald K. McKim (ed.), *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2007), pp. 589-93.
26. The superiority of second-century exegesis is very much the tone of Blackham's 'Trinity' essay, e.g. pp. 37-8. Yet note the fresh warning of Michael Reeves, *The Breeze of the Centuries: Introducing Great Theologians* (Nottingham: IVP, 2010), e.g. p. 9 (citing C. S. Lewis), 11: ancient theologians are no more infallible than modern ones.
27. Blackham's opening contribution to his 2001 debate with Graeme Goldsworthy, transcribed at <www.theologian.org.uk>, reproduced as 'The Bible Speaks: Faith in Christ in the Old Testament,' *Contact OnLine* 7 (2003), and found in other versions of his paper, 'Christ the Object of Our Faith' presented around the world.

28. Andrew S. Malone, 'John Owen and Old Testament Christophanies,' *Reformed Theological Review* 63.3 (2004): 138-54; online at <www.theologian.org.uk>.
29. So Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' pp. 349-51, fairly representing the balance taken by Blackham himself in his 'Trinity' essay.
30. On Justin's Platonism, see e.g. Eric F. Osborn, *Justin Martyr* (BHT 47; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1973); Deirdre Carabine, *The Unknown God: Negative Theology in the Platonic Tradition* (LTPM 19; Louvain: Peeters, 1995), e.g. pp. 226-8; Craig D. Allert, *Revelation, Truth, Canon, and Interpretation: Studies in Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho* (VCSup 64; Leiden: Brill, 2002). Note also the critique of Gerald L. Bray, *The Doctrine of God* (Leicester: IVP, 1993), pp. 126-7, who demonstrates similar tendencies in Origen.
31. e.g. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p.37, citing Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest* (London: T&T Clark, 2003) and *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992). Even Blackham himself concedes his 'struggle to accept all her methods and conclusions.'
32. See, for example, the robust rejoinders to Kaiser in Berding and Lunde, *Three Views*. The identifications made by Saville ('Paul Blackham,' p.350) are also recognised explicitly by Blackham himself. He commends the works of Barker, Vischer, Kaiser and Hanson (along with others like Borland) at the end of a printed sermon, 'The Doctrine of God and the Exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures' (generated 4 Feb 2004, accessed 8 Apr 2004).
33. David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: A study of the theological relationship between the Old and New Testaments* (rev. ed.; Leicester: Apollos, 1991), quotes pp. 94, 103. The third evaluation (on 'theoretical priority') was made in Baker's first edition (1976, p. 210), though his revised edition demurs. Similar analysis and conclusions are offered by many others, including Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 163-76, who interacts with other weighty critics who complain that '[Vischer's] exegesis strikes us as arbitrary' (Berkouwer). Saville's inclusion (p. 358, n. 51) of Baker's chapter title may further skew his presentation; 'The Old and New Testaments as equally Christian Scripture' simply 'sums up Vischer's thesis' (Baker, p.103) and is one of four positions surveyed. Baker does defend the OT as Christian Scripture, but is equally aware that 'It would be a mistake to ignore the substantial differences between the Old and New Testaments, or to let either dominate the interpretation of the other' (pp. 261-2). Further, Baker shows differences between Vischer and Blackham: 'Vischer does not claim that Jesus Christ was present in Old Testament times and may be found and expounded directly in the texts of the Old Testament'

(p.102). Baker would also disdain Blackham's over-harmonisation of the two Testaments and mechanical reliance on NT 'exegesis' of the OT (e.g. pp. 268-9), and insists that a label like 'Christ' requires the revelation of both Testaments (e.g. p. 104). Note now Baker's third edition (Apollos, 2010).

34. Demetrius C. Trakatellis, *The Pre-existence of Christ in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (HDR 6; Missoula: Scholars, 1976), p. 67. On Blackham's apologetic goals, see my note in 'Paul Blackham 1' p. 67, n. 17.
35. Note the warning of Graham A. Cole, *God the Peacemaker* (NSBT 25; Nottingham: Apollos, 2009), p. 105. Writing of Irenaeus's zeal to promote Christ in every aspect of his theology, Cole recognises 'Irenaeus goes far beyond what is written because of the gravitational pull of his own theory. This is the perennial temptation for the theologian.'
36. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 60.2 (*ANF* 1:227); cf. 56.1; 127.2-4. Thus Trakatellis, *Pre-existence of Christ*, pp. 86-7: 'In his effort to demonstrate that in the theophanies Scripture speaks of the Son as God besides God the Father, Justin abides firmly by a fundamental presupposition: the absolute transcendence of the Father. Dialogue 60,2 shows that Justin would not make any compromise on that subject. The paramount importance ascribed by the Apologist to the principle of the transcendence of God is constantly revealed in Dial. 56-62 and 125-129 [his core chapters on OT christophanies]…The concept of the transcendence of the Father of all, consistently maintained by Justin, creates an impasse for any interpretation other than christological.'
37. Blackham, 'The Trinitarian God'.
38. Trakatellis, *Pre-existence of Christ*, p. 87. Compare Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, p. 176: 'A final concern about Vischer's method is that his sole focus on the witness to Christ leads to Christomonism, that is, an exclusive concentration on Jesus Christ. This exclusive focus slights the triune God…'
39. So, for example, the accessible survey of Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Oxford: Monarch, 2006).
40. e.g. Blackham, *Exodus*, p.39 on Exod. 35:30-33 (emphasis added): 'So, another Person called the LORD, the Spirit of God, comes to *live in* those craftsmen'. Compare a response in the 2001 Goldsworthy debate; Blackham expects Moses could have articulated something like: 'And then there is the Spirit of the Lord who indwells his people to enable them to do the will and purposes of the Lord.'
41. On such discontinuities, particularly these Johannine verses, see esp. James M. Hamilton Jr, *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments* (NACSBT 1; Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006). Several of Hamilton's

surveys are available separately: 'Old Covenant Believers and the Indwelling Spirit: A Survey of the Spectrum of Opinion,' *Trinity Journal* 24.1 (2003): 37-54; 'God with Men in the Torah,' *Westminster Theological Journal* 65.1 (2003): 113-33; 'Were Old Covenant Believers Indwelt by the Holy Spirit?' *Themelios* 30.1 (2004): 12-22. Hamilton's findings have since been corroborated by the major pneumatological study of Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (FET 4; Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), e.g. pp. 143-5. Blackham ('Frequently Asked Questions,' pp. 297-8) under-represents the discontinuity: 'in John 14:15–18, Jesus tells the disciples that they not only already know the Holy Spirit but also that the Holy Spirit would continue to be with them forever.'

42. Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' p. 352, part of his accurate summary of Blackham's views of progressive revelation at pp. 351-3.
43. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 39. This quote is the climax of Saville's summary on the topic, pp. 352-3.
44. Blackham, 'Frequently Asked Questions,' p. 304.
45. Paul Blackham, 'Do the NT writers misunderstand the OT?', available from a previous website (accessed 13 Nov 2001, emphasis added). The present rescension (<web.me.com/paulblackham/Following_Jesus/Articles/Entries/2008/11/18_Do_the_NT_writers_misunderstand_the_OT.html>) helpfully excises the absolute term 'utter'. Compare 'Frequently Asked Questions,' pp. 292-3, where he dismisses (or at least sidesteps) any sense of discontinuity in Heb. 11:40.
46. Blackham, 'Frequently Asked Questions,' pp. 289-90.
47. Paul Blackham, 'Evangelicals and the Bible,' in Iain Taylor (ed.), *Not Evangelical Enough! The gospel at the centre* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), p. 100 (emphasis added). Saville cites this paragraph only in part and in parts (pp.343, 352), perhaps to reduce its impact.
48. Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' pp. 353-4.
49. Saville, 'Paul Blackham,' pp. 354-5.
50. Some degree of discontinuity between the salvation offered to OT figures and NT believers is, I think, one of the conclusions that John Owen draws; see my analysis of 'John Owen,' pp. 146-8. There are many studies of discontinuity, including Daniel Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelised* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002), e.g. pp. 163-6, 189-98, who overtly addresses Blackham and his proposed uniformity; and Allen P. Ross, 'The Biblical Method of Salvation: A Case for Discontinuity,' in John S. Feinberg (ed.), *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (Westchester: Crossway, 1988), pp. 161-78, who queries (p. 169) why 'Many

biblical scholars have stressed the uniformity of the method of salvation to such an extent that they make NT revelation the necessary content of the faith of OT believers'.

51. Blackham, "Trinity," p. 36; cited by Saville, "Paul Blackham," p. 354.
52. Saville's evaluations are from "Paul Blackham," pp. 342, 354, also judging this essay '[t]he clearest summary of Dr. Blackham's views'.
53. Blackham, 'Trinity,' pp. 37 (citing Barker, *The Great High Priest*, p. xi), 45-6. These are amongst Blackham's introductory and concluding paragraphs, giving shape to the whole essay.
54. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 39 with n. 9: 'I use the title "Most High" here to refer to the LORD, who refuses all visual contact'. See also Blackham, *Exodus*, pp.31, 37, which I have cited in 'Paul Blackham 1'.
55. Blackham, 'Trinity,' pp.39-40.
56. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 41 and ensuing discussion. The identification of LORD = Father is again explicit in the accompanying n. 20, where Blackham draws the parallel between 'the One sent from the LORD' and John's phrase 'the One sent from the Father' (cf. 'Frequently Asked Questions,' p. 301). This further flags Blackham's exegetical shortcuts; in John, Jesus is always 'sent' in the active voice, never the passive. The only ones 'sent from the Father/God' are John the Baptist (1:6; 3:28) and the Spirit (15:26).
57. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 42. The same confusion of titles is repeated by Saville ('Paul Blackham,' pp. 346-7) as he cites such comments in succession.
58. Blackham, *Exodus*, p. 39: 'There is a third Person called the LORD' (cf. n. 40 above). Further confusion seems to occur in publications where Blackham cannot (or does not) distinguish 'LORD' (Yahweh) and 'Lord' (e.g. Adonai). So 'Frequently Asked Questions,' p. 288, where Luke 20:42 cites Ps. 110:1: 'David understood that the Messiah was the Lord.' Which 'Lord' does Blackham intend? Moreover, Blackham claims support from Jesus himself—yet in Luke's account Jesus uses the ambiguous Greek *kyrios*, which does not distinguish 'LORD' from 'Lord' from 'sir'. Even if we allow that Jesus had the original Hebrew in mind, notice that David writes *adoniy* ('my master') rather than *Adonay* ('Lord'). Finally, a Trinitarian interpretation of the psalm presumes LORD = Father, and not LORD = Son; the psalm is making a different point altogether.
59. Christophanists presume that the commander who serves the 'host of Yahweh' in Josh 5:13-15, i.e. the Son, is sent from Yahweh. Yet they also judge the appearance of 'Yahweh of hosts' himself (e.g. Isa 6:3, 5) to also be a christophany. Furthermore, this Isaiah theophany portrays 'the Lord seated on a throne'—even though it is

elsewhere insisted that a throne delineates the identity and role of the Father. Blackham's presumptions concerning the enthroned Father (e.g. *Exodus*, pp. 49-50) are further endorsed by Levy himself, *Bible Overview*, p. 115: 'When Daniel in the Old Testament and John in the New are given visions of heaven, the first thing they see is a throne on which the Father is seated', citing Rev 4:2.

60. The lack of clarity does not stop Blackham from appropriating at least a dozen OT titles for the Son, particularly in 'Frequently Asked Questions'. 'Lord of hosts' is again appropriated (p. 291) as are many others (p.297). The latter list elicits titles from Isa 9:6—though we might ask why Blackham appropriates 'Counsellor' and 'Prince of Peace' for the Son…but not also 'Mighty God' and 'Everlasting Father'!
61. Blackham, 'Trinity,' p. 43.
62. e.g. Peter Toon, *Our Triune God* (Wheaton: BridgePoint, 1996), p. 90. Such confusion/conflation of titles has also been one of Margaret Barker's shortcomings. The supposedly-distinct titles 'Elyon' and 'Yahweh' refer to one deity/person in Gen. 14:22; Pss 7:17; 47:2, and are in (epexegetical?) parallel in 2 Sam. 22:14 = Ps. 18:13; Pss. 91:9; 92:1. Collocation is likely elsewhere in the OT, and is also found beyond the canonical works in texts like *Sir* 17:17 and *Jub* 15:31-32; so Peter R. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels* (SNTSMS 95; Cambridge: CUP, 1997), p. 66 n. 64. Others have long recognised that divine titles—especially 'Yahweh'—can be applied 'to Father, Son, and Spirit indifferently.' So B. B. Warfield, 'The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity,' in *Biblical Doctrines* (New York: OUP, 1929), p. 142; affirmed by John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2002), p. 638. A far more careful approach to the OT titles and their allocation/appropriation in the NT is offered in Bauckham's essay on 'Paul's Christology of Divine Identity,' in *Jesus and the God of Israel*, pp. 182-232. The apostle typically identifies OT uses of 'Yahweh' with 'God'/'Father' rather than with 'Christ'/'Son', and 'clearly does not simply equate YHWH with Christ' (p. 191).
63. This is much the claim of his two essays on 'Evangelicals and the Bible' and 'The Trinity'. Each essay gives insight into (but little definition of) what he understands of the term 'exegesis'. Some of his intentions are obscured by the reductionistic polarisation between his own approach and liberal historical-critical models.
64. Calvin, *Comm.* Isa 6:3, *Calvin: Commentaries* (LCC 23; ed. & trans. Joseph Haroutunian (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1958), p. 123. Recall that Calvin refuses to use John 12:41 to narrow Isaiah 6 'to the person of Christ'.
65. Warfield, 'The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity,' p. 140.