
Aquila Lee's *From Messiah to Preexistent Son* is a revision of a doctoral thesis supervised by Howard Marshall and submitted to the Divinity and Religious Studies faculty at the University of Aberdeen in 2003. Dr. Lee is himself on the faculty of the Biblical Graduate School of Theology in Singapore.

Lee's guiding question asks how early Christians came to see Jesus as a divine and preexistent being, alongside God. It is an excellent question and the answers scholars have put forth are varied. Lee's answer is startling and requires careful consideration. His scholarship and detailed analyses make this careful consideration rewarding.

In the first chapter, Lee reviews the various proposals that try to explain early Christian belief in the divinity and preexistence of Jesus. The wisdom Christologies of Paul and John, angelology, and aspects of Jewish monotheism are all considered. Chapters two and three explore these proposals in great detail. The former reviews ideas of the personification of divine attributes, such as the "wisdom," "word," and "name" of God. The latter reviews traditions about exalted angels (such as archangels and principal angels) and expectations of a preexistent Messiah.

The fourth and fifth chapters search for the roots of the preexistence Christology. Jesus' self-understanding, his relationship to God as his Father, his statements "I have come" and "I was sent" (Mark 2:17, 10:45; Luke 19:10, among others) are given consideration. The sixth and seventh chapters investigate early Christianity's interpretation of Pss 2:7 and 110:1 (Mark 1:11, 12:35–27, 14:61–62) and wisdom Christology in Paul (Rom 10:5–8, 11:33–36; 1 Cor 1:24, 30; 8:6; 10:4).

Lee argues that preexistence Christology originated in Christian interpretation of Pss 2 and 110, in view of how Jesus himself understood these texts. Lee does not think that Jewish ideas of angels as intermediaries or the personifications of various divine attributes played a significant role. Jesus' idea of divine sonship is clearly seen in the parable of the Vineyard Tenants (Mark 12:1–12) and the reason he understood himself as the son of the owner of the vineyard (i.e., the Son of God) is because of his understanding of Ps 110 (and Ps 2). Lee explains that "a cursory reading of the evidence may suggest that Ps 110:1 was first applied to Jesus' resurrection and interpreted by the early church as his becoming Lord at that time by being exalted to the right hand of God... early Christians interpreted Jesus' resurrection as essentially confirming his existing status rather than conferring a new status" (p. 239).

In my view, Lee's thesis has strong points and weak points. Lee surely is correct in viewing Jesus himself as an important source for the beginnings of Christology, with the resurrection explaining as well as confirming Jesus' divine sonship. Post-Easter Christological reflection makes little sense if Jesus himself had not given his disciples reason to believe that he saw himself as God's Son and anointed one. Here, Lee is on firm ground. But tracing preexistence to Jesus is much less clear. Jesus may well have understood himself as special, as called by and to God, whether at his baptism, where heaven opened and the very voice of God recognized Jesus as the Son in whom God is well...
pleased, or even in childhood (as in Luke 2), but how does any of this suggest preexistence? It is not at all clear that Pss 2 and 110 imply preexistence or that Jesus' interpretation of these psalms went in that direction.

I wonder if Lee has too quickly dismissed the pivotal contribution of wisdom ideas. It is wisdom that preexisted, according to OT Scripture and later Jewish interpretive ideas. And the fact that Jesus alluded to wisdom imagery, even applying it to himself (e.g., Matt 11:25–30; yet Lee only discusses Matt 11:25–27, omitting the very suggestive vv. 28–30; see his discussion on pp. 135–37 and elsewhere), surely encouraged interpreters, including NT writers like Paul and John, to develop wisdom Christology, which would accommodate and encourage the eventual further development of preexistence Christology.

Lee offers NT scholars a provocative and lively work. However, I am not sure its central thesis will persuade very many. It will be interesting to follow the scholarly reactions and to observe to what degree Lee's thesis impacts ongoing work in Christology.

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In a slightly modified Ph.D. dissertation directed by Gail O’Day at Emory University, the author pursues a social-scientific, rhetorical, and feminist investigation of Paul’s discourse on freedom among the Corinthians with the aid of Cynics, Stoics, and Philonic background. The work consists of five chapters and a three-section bibliography (reference works; ancient sources: texts, editions, translations; secondary literature consulted).

Galloway maintains that Paul’s line of argument in 1 Cor 9 is in rhetorical form and function a topos or discourse on freedom. The author claims that drawing on philosophic traditions exemplified in Epictetus and Philo, Paul presents his concept of freedom, though nuanced according to his understanding of mission as an apostle of the gospel. Galloway further sees the freedom theme present from 1 Cor 6:12 to 11:1 and proposes a “voices at the margins” (my terminology) hermeneutic to see how Paul and the Corinthian community’s members who are slaves and women interact on socioeconomic freedom issues.

In chap. one, “The Discourse of Freedom,” the author makes his case for treating 1 Cor 9 as a topos on freedom. He argues from vocabulary use by showing the consistent presence in the discussion of freedom in Cynics, Stoics, Epictetus, and Philo of similar terms: eleutheria, exousia, ananke, hekon/akôn, and the topic douleia. The author devotes much of his chapter to a history of research in which Malherbe appears to be the clearest precedent to his study; reference to Thiselton’s work is missing.

The second and third chapters lay out the background from philosophical traditions: Cynics, Stoics, and Epictetus, and then Philo. There is both a comprehensiveness and a thoroughness of presentation. Epictetus is clearly situated