SCOTT C. RYAN

Divine Conflict and the Divine Warrior

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe

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Listening to Romans and Other Jewish Voices

Mohr Siebeck

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To LeAnne, Asher, Ada, and Jubilee

Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν, ἀμήν.
"May the God of peace be with you all, amen."
– Romans 15:33

Preface

This study began as a doctoral dissertation at Baylor University in the Department of Religion under the supervision of Beverly Roberts Gaventa, which I completed in the summer of 2017. I am deeply grateful to a host of people who participated in various ways in this project and it is an honor to offer my gratitude here. To be sure, any expression of appreciation pales in comparison to the assistance and friendship provided by so many.

Beverly Roberts Gaventa kindly agreed to supervise this study and provided consistent guidance and encouragement to me as a student, scholar, and human being along the way. Dr. Gaventa's reading of the Pauline letters influenced my own well before she arrived at Baylor (just in time to advise this project), but she encouraged me to go where the evidence led and pushed me to become a scholar in my own right. Lidija Novakovic, who served as the second reader, also offered helpful feedback at numerous turns. The other committee members, Todd D. Still, W. H. Bellinger, Jr., and David Whitford, further assisted me in sharpening the argument and saving me from blunders. Any shortcomings in the work are entirely my own; the positive contributions are due in large part to the help of these fine scholars and teachers. Working with the editors and staff at Mohr Siebeck has been a delight, as I prepared this piece for publication. In particular, I appreciate the assistance of J. Ross Wagner, Jörg Frey, Katharina Gutekunst, Kendra Mäschke, Elena Müller, Daniela Zeiler, and Karen Donskov Felter.

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I further benefitted from bright colleagues who consistently encouraged and challenged me, as well as provided needed distractions at times. My thanks to Justin King, John Duncan, Lindsey Trozzo, Moon Kwon Chae, Nathaniel Jung-

Chul Lee, David Cramer, Christopher Moore, Anna Sieges Beal, Mike Whitenton, Jenny Howell, and Malcolm Foley for travelling along with me and helping bear the load. Myriad other friends offered encouragement from near and far. My sincere thanks to Nick and Virginia Mumejian, Charlie and Lori Baber, Brian Maiers, Josh Parrott, David Elrod, Jonathan Spangler, Andy Byers, and Matt Orth. My lifelong friend, Lane Graham, passed from this life mere months before I completed the project. I deeply regret he is not here to share in the joy of finishing the task, but I am grateful for his kind words along the way. My neighbors, Kyle, Karen, and Sloane Melton, Mike and Joyce Johnson, and Jeremy, Lacey, and Blakely Ballew, welcomed us to Texas with open arms and made our time there a delightful experience.

The feedback offered by fellow students in seminars and colleagues at professional meetings where I presented portions of this research helped me think through the argument and hone my thoughts. The members of my writing group – K. Leigh Greathouse, Elise King, and Karen Melton – also read and commented on parts of the study. An expression of gratitude is due to the undergraduate and seminary students in my courses at Baylor University the past four years, as well. They showed me much grace as I taught and wrote a monograph for the first time; they also offered a glimpse into how wonderful the teaching life can be.

It may be a strange a thing to mention one's pet in the acknowledgments of an academic work, but my dog, Jubilee, deserves mention. The writing life can be lonely, but thanks to Jubilee I rarely worked on this monograph alone. Because of her relentless energy, she also prompted me every afternoon to leave the books and computer screen to go out for a run.

I am further grateful for the support of my family over a long educational journey. Making the decision to move away from loved ones to enter a doctoral program was not easy, but LeAnne, my spouse, and I felt encouraged to go where the road took us. My mother- and father-in-law, David and Debra Spruill, made the trek out to visit us on our new turf several times, as did my brother- and sister-in-law and twin nieces, Jason, Cynthia, Evelyn, and Jessica Spruill. My father, mother, and stepfather, Monty Ryan and Kathy and Mike Anderson, helped us in many ways over the course of the journey. To all of you, I am immensely appreciative.

Finally, my partner in life, LeAnne, deserves pride of place. She believed in me throughout this process even when I did not believe in myself. I am forever grateful for the sacrifices she endured and her steady encouragement. I am overjoyed to be on this journey with her. LeAnne, you are indeed resplendent. Our son, Asher, came into the world near the beginning of the writing process. Just after completing the project, we welcomed a baby girl, Ada, to the crew. Always a ball of energy, Asher is constantly on the move and loves stories and books. Ada is now running all over the house, forming words, and sleeping no better than her brother did. Watching the two of them grow and develop is a great joy

for me. Neither Asher nor Ada has any idea what a monograph is or the topic of this particular book. The lack of colorful images in the following pages means they are not likely to pick it up any time soon. But I hope one day they come to appreciate this work and I pray they come to understand the importance of thinking carefully and critically.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient Near Eastern, biblical, Jewish, and Christian literature, academic journals, and monograph series follow the style indicated in *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014). Abbreviations of classical Greek and Roman literature follow the style indicated in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Chapter 1

Introduction

This wide and universal theater
Presents more woeful pageants than the scene
Wherein we play in.
– William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*[1]

"Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. "Certainly not. I tell you he is the King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea. Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion – the Lion, the great Lion."
"Ooh!" said Susan, "I'd thought he was a man. Is he – quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."
"That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver; "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're braver than most or else just silly."
"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.
"Safe?" said Mr. Beaver; "don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."
– C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*[2]

In the exchange in the epigraph above, Susan and Lucy Pevensie inquire about the strange land of Narnia they entered through a wardrobe along with their siblings. The sons of Adam and daughters of Eve, as the children are called in this new world, now discover that Narnia is a very different place from the one they left; it is a mystical world populated by talking animals that fell into the grip of the White Witch. Harnessing her Deep Magic, the Witch subdued the inhabitants of Narnia and cast a spell over the land so that it is always winter but never Christmas. At the Beavers' home, the Pevensies learn that Aslan – the King, the Lord of the wood – though long absent has returned to Narnia. Mr. Beaver explains that Aslan is the one the old rhyme claims will right every wrong, bring sorrows to an end at the sound of his roar, melt winter with the mere bearing of his teeth, and bring about spring again. The Beavers later point out this king is both "good and terrible at the same time."[3] While Aslan ushers in the longed-for restoration, he does so by wielding great power in rescuing the land and its denizens from the self-proclaimed queen. "Safe? … Who said anything about safe?

[1] William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), Act 2, Scene 7.
[2] C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (New York: HarperCollins, 1950), 80.
[3] Ibid., 126.

'Course he isn't safe," claims Mr. Beaver. "But he's good. He's the King, I tell you.'"[4]

This conversation among the characters in Lewis's tale echoes a prominent theme found in a number of texts from the Jewish Scriptures and the Second Temple period and beyond;[5] that is, the idea that Israel's deity will arrive and fight on behalf of God's chosen people to bring about restoration.[6] Take, for instance, the oracle found in Isa 59. In the first part of the chapter, the prophet laments that among the people no one righteous can be found, justice no longer dwells in their midst, and deliverance remains at a distance (vv. 4, 9, 14). They stand in need of divine help – a need Isaiah promises God will meet with judgment and restoration (Isa 59:16–21). The Lord sees there is no one to intervene, responds by putting on righteousness as a breastplate and salvation as a helmet, and arrives like "a violent stream" to repay enemies (vv. 16–20).[7]

Isaiah's image of the deity in the accoutrements of battle offers one expression of the hope that permeates the theological reflections of ancient Jewish people. Indeed, the promise that God will restore rightful kingship, eradicate evil, and rescue Israel serves as a staple in the repertoire of theological expression in the ancient Jewish imagination to such a degree that in Tremper Longman's assessment the divine warrior motif can be called "pervasive."[8] Longman notes that while the image of God as a warrior cannot be claimed to be "the central concept of the Scriptures or the key to OT and NT theology," it nonetheless remains a theme employed by authors "from Genesis to Revelation."[9] Similarly, in Patrick D. Miller's words, "From beginning to end this theme (i.e., the divine warrior)

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[4] Ibid., 80.

[5] When creating the fictional world of Narnia and making Aslan a lion, Lewis imagined what the God of the biblical texts might look like and what form the deity might take in a land of animals, according to Paul Ford. Lewis also patterned the seven-book series of *The Chronicles of Narnia* on what he saw as the overarching narrative in the biblical canon (see Paul Ford, *Companion to Narnia: Revised Edition* [San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2005], 6).

[6] The "conflict" topos in which a warrior deity battles with enemies appears in numerous ancient religions in addition to Judaism. See, for example, *Anzu*, the *Enuma Elish*, the Aššur version of the *Enuma Elish*, and the *Ba'lu Cycle*. For an analysis of the conflict myth in these texts, see Debra Scoggins Ballentine, *The Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 22–72; cf. Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). In the following pages, I adopt Ballentine's practice of referring to these ancient texts using transliterated titles.

[7] All translations of biblical texts are my own unless otherwise noted.

[8] "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," *WTJ* 44 (1982): 290–307, 306.

[9] Ibid. (emphasis original); see also Longman and Daniel G. Reid, *God Is a Warrior*, SOTBT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 13, where they refer to the divine warrior motif as "one of the most pervasive of all biblical themes."

in various forms and within various ramifications comes to the fore… Wherever one turns one encounters [it]."[10]

Scholars of the New Testament have noted the ways in which first century CE writers utilize and transform themes related to Israel's divine conflict traditions,[11] most notably in the Johannine Apocalypse, Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, and the letter to the Ephesians.[12] Yet in spite of interest in the apocalyptic tenor of Paul's letter to the Romans, along with inquiries into his understanding of the "principalities and powers" (1 Cor 15:24; Rom 8:35–39; cf. Eph 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:10, 15),[13] few readers of the Pauline texts have examined the possibility

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[10] *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 17.

[11] Following Stephen B. Chapman's suggestion, I use the phrase "divine war" rather than "holy war." In his words, "The expressions 'Yahweh war' and 'divine war' not only elude the web of common assumptions relating to 'holy war,' they also have the benefit of remaining closer to the idiom of the Old Testament itself" ("Martial Memory, Peaceable Vision: Divine War in the Old Testament" in *Holy War in the Bible: Christian Morality and an Old Testament Problem*, eds. Heath A. Thomas, Jeremy Evans, and Paul Copan [Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013], 47–67, 51).

[12] See, e.g., Rev 6:12–17; 11:15–19; 12; 13; 14:14–20; 19–21; 1 Thess 4:16–17; 5:1–11; Eph 6:10–20.

[13] Myriad publications address this topic in the Pauline letters. See Otto Everling, *Die Paulinische Angelologie und Dämonologie: Ein Biblisch-theologischer Versuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1888); Hermann Gunkel, *The Influence of the Holy Spirit: The Popular View of the Apostolic Age and the Teaching of the Apostle* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979 [German original 1888]); Wilhelm Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend: A Chapter in Jewish and Christian Folklore*, AARTTS 24 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1999 [German original 1895]); idem, *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (Berlin: Verlag von Reuther und Reichard, 1906); Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions, Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions, to the History of Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1903 [German original 1895]); F.C. Conybeare, "Christian Demonology II," *JQR* 9 (1897): 59–114; H.St.J. Thackery, *The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1900); Martin Dibelius, *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1909); Edward Langton, *The Angel Teaching of the New Testament* (London: J. Clark, 1938); Karl Barth, *Rechtfertigung und Recht: Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde* (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1938); Visser't Hooft, *Kingship of Christ: An Interpretation of Recent European Theology* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948); Oscar Cullmann, *Christus und Zeit: Die urchristliche Zeit- und Geschichtsauffassung* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1946); James S. Stewart, "On a Neglected Emphasis in New Testament Theology," *SJT* 4.3 (1951): 292–301; G.H.C. Macgregor, "Principalities and Powers: The Cosmic Background of St. Paul's Thought," *NTS* 1.1 (1954): 17–28; G.B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956); Clinton E. Arnold, *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 1992); Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); idem, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces that Determine Human Existence* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); idem, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Philadelphia:

that the cosmic conflict in Romans signals the apostle's adaptation of the ubiquitous Jewish divine conflict motifs – specifically the image of God as a warrior – found in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint (LXX), and other pieces of ancient Jewish literature. In this study, my aim will be to investigate the use of the image of God as divine warrior in ancient Jewish literature and Paul's letter to the Romans. I will conduct this inquiry by placing the apostle's letter in conversation with the literary works of his Jewish predecessors and near contemporaries.

A. Framing the Dialogue

As a first century Jew, the apostle Paul was heir to conceptions of God as a warring deity, as found in a number of sources both prior to and roughly coeval with his letter-writing career. To be sure, Paul reads Israel's texts in light of the Christ-event and transforms traditional motifs in significant ways in an attempt to make sense of a world now transformed by the cross and resurrection.[14] This being the case, in order to investigate Romans from the angle of Jewish divine war traditions, the following study will focus on three primary questions: (1) As one operating within a Jewish framework, did Paul utilize divine conflict motifs when articulating his gospel to Roman communities? (2) If he did employ these images, how did he reshape and transform them when compared to other documents? (3) Finally, in what ways might an analysis of divine conflict motifs in ancient Jewish texts illumine an understanding of Paul's argument in Romans?

Two points justify an investigation of the divine warrior in Romans and other literature. First, according to most academic reconstructions of Paul's life and mission, his letter to Roman communities stands among the latest of his extant writings. Among Paul's purposes in penning this missive, the apostle appears keen to articulate his rendition of the gospel promised through the prophets "in the holy scriptures" (Rom 1:1–3).[15] As Paul plans to take the collection to Jerusalem and then to advance his missionary endeavors to Spain (Rom 15:22–29),

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Fortress, 1986); idem, *The Powers that Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (New York: Doubleday, 1998); Kabiro wa Gatumu, *The Pauline Concept of Supernatural Powers: A Reading from the African Worldview*, PBM (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2008); Guy Williams, *The Spirit World in the Letters of Paul the Apostle: A Critical Examination of the Role of Spiritual Beings in the Authentic Pauline Epistles* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009); Robert Ewusie Moses, *Practices of Power: Revisiting the Principalities and Powers in the Pauline Letters* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014).

[14] On this point, see Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 5.

[15] Much controversy surrounds Paul's precise motive for composing Romans. See the discussions on the occasion and purpose in Karl P. Donfried, ed., *The Romans Debate*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1991); Alexander J.M Wedderburn, *The Reasons for Romans*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988). In my view, Paul likely has multiple motives for

he reflects on God's action on behalf of humanity in the Christ-event, including the promise to save all Israel and incorporate the Gentiles. He sends the letter ahead of his arrival in the city of Rome with the hope of gaining the support of communities there. Although no less contingent than his other letters, we have in this text an advanced stage of the apostle's theologizing.[16] Thus, given that Romans presents a more robust rendition of Paul's gospel, it offers an opportune text with which to test the thesis that Paul, like other Jews of his day, knew and utilized the image of God as a warrior.

As a second point, the collocation of conflict language in this particular letter opens up the possibility that Paul may be working with the trope of divine conflict. Romans takes the reader deep into the apostle's conceptions of the cosmic scope of Sin, Death, and salvation.[17] In the wake of Ernst Käsemann's claim that apocalyptic is "the mother of all Christian theology,"[18] a number of scholars investigated the influence of Jewish apocalyptic thinking on early Christian authors.[19] As advocates of this line of interpretation contend, Romans 5–8 evinces

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penning the missive: gaining favor with those in Rome and requesting their assistance in support of his missionary endeavors to Spain (Rom 1:8–15; 15:23–32); addressing theological and ethical issues within the church, of which he has some knowledge (e.g., Rom 12–15, esp. 14:1–15:13); and introducing himself and his apostolic calling to Roman communities and preaching his gospel to those communities ahead of his arrival (Rom 1:1–15; 15:14–32).

[16] On this point, see J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul 'In Concert' in the Letter to the Romans*, NovTSup 101 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 3–5. As Wagner notes, "Romans is clearly not an exercise in systematic theology, but a contingent response to particular churches in specific historical circumstances; at the same time, the letter does represent the fruit of many years of deliberate and intense theological reflection in the service of mission" (3n.12).

[17] As will be evident in later parts of this study, I capitalize "Sin" and "Death" to signal that Paul conceives of these entities as powers.

[18] "Die Anfänge christlicher Theologie," *ZThK* 57.2 (1960): 165–85, 180.

[19] See, e.g., Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); idem, *Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997); idem, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997); Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5*, JSNTSup 22 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988); idem, *Galatians: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011); Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998); Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Interpreting the Death of Jesus Apocalyptically: Reconsidering Romans 8:32" in *Jesus and Paul Reconnected: Fresh Pathways into an Old Debate*, ed. Todd D. Still (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 125–45; idem, *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007); idem, "Neither Height Nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans," *SJT* 64.3 (2011): 265–78.

an apocalyptic drama set in a "wide and universal theater."[20] Sin (ἁμαρτία) and Death (θάνατος) amount to usurpers of God's intentions, "entering" (εἰσῆλθεν, 5:12) the cosmos through Adam and dominating humanity.[21]

God's contested lordship and sovereignty over the world thus serves as a fundamental issue for Paul.[22] As a result of the enslavement Sin and Death inflict, the present life becomes a reflection of "the cosmic contention for the lordship of the world."[23] Paul highlights the conflict between God and suprahuman enemies most notably in Rom 5–8.[24] In response to the human plight, Paul indicates that God engages in battle with these oppressive forces in order to reclaim creation – both human and non-human – from subjection to Sin and Death via the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:10–11; 6:8–11, 14, 17–23; 8:1–4, 32).[25]

A few authors have suggested the apostle uses divine war images in Romans. For instance, in a recent essay, Beverly Roberts Gaventa analyzes what she calls the rhetoric of violence in the letter, cataloguing the language related to warfare, slavery, and state power.[26] As a result of her analysis, she speculates the use of this terminology may indicate the apostle's adaptation of the divine warrior tradition.[27] Michael Thate makes a similar observation in his essay on Rom 16:20, where Paul promises his audience "the God of peace quickly will crush Satan

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[20] I am borrowing here the words of Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act 2, Scene 7, noted at the beginning of the chapter.

[21] See de Boer, *Defeat*, 147; Gaventa, "Height Nor Depth," 270.

[22] Ernst Käsemann, "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic" in *New Testament Questions of Today*, trans. W.J. Montague (London: SCM, 1969), 108–37, 136. As Käsemann points out, a human being in Paul's worldview "is always a specific piece of the world and therefore becomes what in the last resort he [or she] is by determination from outside, i.e. by the power which takes possession of him [or her] and the lordship to which he [or she] surrenders" (ibid.).

[23] Ibid. See further, Alexandra R. Brown, *The Cross and Human Transformation: Paul's Apocalyptic Word in 1 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 4–6.

[24] For a discussion of conflict language in Rom 5–8, see Gaventa, "Height Nor Depth," 270–78.

[25] As Martinus C. de Boer notes, Paul speaks of Sin and Death in this letter as alien intruders and in ways similar to his talk of Satan, evil angels, and demons elsewhere in his other texts ("Paul's Mythologizing Program in Romans 5–8" in *Apocalyptic Paul: Cosmos and Anthropos in Romans 5–8*, ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa [Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013], 1–20, 13–14; see also idem, *Defeat*, 179; Dibelius, *Geisterwelt*, 119).

[26] "The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul's Letter to the Romans" in *Paul, John, and Apocalyptic Eschatology: Studies in Honour of Martinus C. de Boer*, eds. Jan Krans, L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, Peter-Ben Smit, and Arie W. Zwiep, NovTSup 149 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 61–75.

[27] Ibid., 69, 72. Cf. Peter W. Macky, "Crushing Satan Underfoot (Roman 16:20): Paul's Last Battle Story as True Myth," *Proceedings: EGL & MWBS* 13 (1993): 121–33.

under your feet."[28] Thate notes that God's "active defeat of Satan" in this verse recalls the Jewish divine warrior motif.[29] These scholarly forays provide a platform from which to develop further the idea in Romans. Although previous studies point to thematic correspondences between the Pauline texts and Jewish divine war traditions (see below), to date a full exploration of this thesis remains to be conducted. Analysis of Romans vis-à-vis other Jewish texts will reveal that Israel's hope in an eschatological warrior deity provides a helpful background for the formation of Paul's "apocalyptic grammar,"[30] which he modifies in light of his theologizing on the Christ-event when writing to Roman communities.

B. The Divine Warrior in the Pauline Letters in Recent Study

Studies on the myth of divine conflict in ancient Near Eastern texts and the Jewish Scriptures date back at least to the pioneering works of Julius Wellhausen, Hermann Gunkel, and Friedrich Schwally near the turn of the twentieth century.[31] Henning Fredriksson offered one of the earliest analyses of the image of God as divine warrior in the Hebrew Bible, investigating the instances in which YHWH appears in war-like conflicts.[32] Gerhard von Rad also produced a study on the concept of Israelite holy war that spurred a number of other investigations.[33]

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[28] "Paul at the Ball: *Ecclesia Victor* and the Cosmic Defeat of Personified Evil in Romans 16:20" in *Paul's World*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Pauline Studies 4 (Boston: Brill, 2008), 151–69. Thate looks at the interpretive tradition of Gen 3:15, its intertextual relation to Rom 16:20, and Paul's use of the tradition.

[29] Ibid., 160 (emphasis original).

[30] I am borrowing Beker's phrase here from *Paul the Apostle*, xx.

[31] See Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israel*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1885); Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: Eine religiongeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen. 1 und Ap. Jon 12* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895); Schwally, *Der heilige Krieg im alten Israel*, Semitische Kriegsaltertümer 1 (Leipzig: Dieterich, 1901). For a discussion of these texts and others up to the publication of Gerhard von Rad's *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, see Ben C. Ollenburger, "Introduction: Gerhard von Rad's Theory of Holy War," in Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 1–34.

[32] *Jahwe als Krieger: Studien zum alttestamentlichen Gottesbild* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1945); see further Ollenburger, "Introduction," 11.

[33] *Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel* (Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1951). In the intervening years, scholars called into question von Rad's amphictyony model of warfare and the claim of Israel's uniqueness in the ancient Near East. See, for instance, Manfred Weippert, "'Heiliger Krieg' in Israel und Assyrien: Kritische Anmerkungen zu Gerhard von Rads Konzept des 'Heiligen Krieges im alten Israel,'" *ZAW* 84.4 (1972): 460–93; and Gwilym H. Jones, "Holy War or Yahweh War," *VT* 25.3 (1975): 642–58. For a detailed review of research from 1990–

In subsequent years notable pieces of research appeared in print. Frank Moore Cross rooted the mythological combat and divine warrior imagery found in Hebrew poetry in the Canaanite Ba'lu epics.[34] Cross's student, Patrick D. Miller, produced a diachronic approach to cosmic war and the divine warrior, tracking the image of the march of YHWH as a warring deity from Israel's poetic texts (Deut 33:2–5, 26–29; Judg 5; Ps 68; Exod 15; Hab 3:3–15; 2 Sam 22:7–18; Josh 10:12–13) through early prose (Josh 5:13–15; Gen 23:3–5; 2 Sam 5:22–25) and prophetic traditions (2 Kgs 6:15–19; 7:6; Isa 13:1–5; Joel 4:9–12; Isa 40:26; 45:12; Zech 14).[35] Paul D. Hanson's work on Jewish apocalyptic eschatology also includes analysis of divine warrior themes.[36] Hanson argues for a movement from "prophetic eschatology" to the emergence of "apocalyptic eschatology" in Second Isaiah (Isa 40–55), which is further developed in Third Isaiah (Isa 56–66) and Zechariah.[37] In both prophetic and apocalyptic eschatology, the emphasis on God's restoration of "a holy community in a glorified Zion" remains constant; however, emphasis on the cosmic dimensions of Israel's conflict myths and the revival of divine warrior images from Israel's early literature provide significant developments within the movement.[38]

2010, see Charles Trimm, "Recent Research on Warfare in the Old Testament," *CBR* 10.2: 171–216.

[34] *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); idem, "The Divine Warrior in Early Israel's Cult," in *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformation*, ed. Alexander Altmann, Studies and Texts 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 11–30.

[35] *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel*, HSM 5 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); see also, idem, "El the Warrior," *HTR* 60.4 (1967): 411–31; idem, "The Divine Council and the Prophetic Call to War," *VT* 18.1 (1968): 100–07; idem, "Cosmology and World Order in the Old Testament: The Divine Council as Cosmic-Political Symbol," *HBT* 9.2 (1987): 53–78.

[36] *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979).

[37] Hanson defines "prophetic eschatology" as "a religious perspective which focuses on the prophetic announcement to the nation of the divine plans for Israel and the world which the prophet has witnessed unfolding in the divine council and which he translates into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality; that is, the prophet interprets for the king and the people how the plans of the divine council will be effected within the context of their nation's history and the history of the world" (ibid., 11). He defines "apocalyptic eschatology" as "a religious perspective which focuses on the disclosure (usually esoteric in nature) to the elect of the cosmic vision of Yahweh's sovereignty – especially as it relates to his acting to deliver the faithful – which disclosure the visionaries have largely ceased to translate into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality due to a pessimistic view of reality growing out of the bleak post-exilic conditions within which those associated with the visionaries found themselves" (ibid., 11–12).

[38] Ibid., 12. For a review of scholarship, see Trimm, "Recent Research," 171–216. For additional studies that address related themes, see Fritz Stolz, *Jahwes und Israels Kriege:*

Bringing the findings to bear on New Testament documents progressed slowly. Adela Yarbro Collins produced the first monograph on the use of the combat myth in the New Testament with a focus on Revelation.[39] She contends the author of the Johannine Apocalypse did not create his literary metaphors, but adopted motifs from Israel's traditions, which had "a long history and a rich variety of connotations and associations."[40] In her view, Revelation evinces close affinities to the "mythic pattern of combat which was widespread in the ancient Near East and the Classical world" – a pattern that "depicts a struggle between two divine beings and their allies for universal kingship."[41]

In an article published in 1982, Tremper Longman explored the use of divine war motifs in the New Testament, marking one of the first attempts to highlight these themes in the Pauline letters.[42] Longman claims readers of the New Testament "only implicitly recognized" the presence of these images until this point.[43] Finding evidence of these motifs in a number of places, Longman categorizes his

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Kriegstheorien und Kriegserfahrungen im Glauben des Alten Israel, ATANT 60 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1972); Millard C. Lind, *Yahweh is a Warrior: The Theology of Warfare in Ancient Israel* (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 1980); Lois Barrett, *The Way God Fights: War and Peace in the Old Testament*, PJS 1 (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 1987); T.R. Hobbs, *A Time for War: A Study of Warfare in the Old Testament*, OTS 3 (Wilmington: Michael Glazer, 1989); Thomas B. Dozeman, *God at War: Power in the Exodus Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Jerome F.D. Creach, *Violence in Scripture*, Interpretation: Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013); Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritchel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright, eds., *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, AIL 18 (Atlanta: SBL, 2014); Charlie Trimm, *"Yahweh Fights for Them": The Divine Warrior in the Exodus Narrative*, Gorgias Biblical Studies 58 (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2014).

[39] *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, HDR 9 (Missoula: Scholars, 1976); idem, *The Apocalypse* (Wilmington: Michael Glazer, 1979); see also Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies in the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993); Roy R. Millhouse, "Re-Imaging the Warrior: Divine Warrior Imagery in the Book of Revelation" (Ph.D. diss., Baylor University, 2012).

[40] Ibid., 57.

[41] Ibid.

[42] "Divine Warrior," 290–307. For other studies on divine war from Longman, see "Psalm 98: A Divine Warrior Victory Song," *JETS* 27.3 (1984): 267–74; "The Form and Message of Nahum: Preaching from a Prophet of Doom," *RTJ* 1 (1985): 13–24; "'Holy War' and the Universal God: Reading the Old Testament Holy War Texts in a Biblical-Theological and Postcolonial Setting," in *After Imperialism: Christian Identity in China and the Global Evangelical Movement*, ed. Richard R. Cook and David W. Pao (Eugene: Pickwick, 2011), 96–111.

[43] Ibid., 291. He points to the following works that "implicitly recognized" these images at the time of his publication: Paul Minear, *I Saw a New Earth* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968); J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation*, AB 38 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975); Collins, *Combat Myth*; idem, *Apocalypse*.

findings according to "eschatological passages" and "non-eschatological passages" in which authors of early Christian documents adapt imagery associated with God's warring activity.

Among the eschatological passages, he proposes four themes writers of New Testament texts utilize: (1) The Day of Yahweh (1 Thess 5:1–10; 2 Pet 3:10; 1 Cor 1:8; 5:5; 2 Cor 1:14; Phil 1:6, 10; 2:16); (2) Jesus Christ as Cloud Rider (Matt 24; 26; Mark 13; Luke 21; 1 Thess 4:16–17; Rev 1:7); (3) Christ as the Divine Warrior (Rev 6:12–17; 11:15–19; 13; 14:14–20; 19–21); and (4) A New Song as a victory shout (Rev 5:9–14; 14:1–5). Among the non-eschatological texts, he relates two themes: (1) Holy war as a conceptual background to Christ's death and resurrection (Col 2:13–15; Eph 1:19–23; Heb 2:8);[44] and (2) The Divine Warrior and the Christian struggle (Eph 6:10–20). Longman's division between eschatological and non-eschatological texts set a heuristic paradigm that subsequent writers emphasize. Readers of the Pauline letters tend to highlight the apostle's application of divine conflict motifs in the past defeat of suprahuman powers in the cross of Christ as well as the present spiritual battle in the life of communities.

In *The God Who Fights*, Charles Sherlock analyzes texts in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament that exhibit military metaphors when describing God's actions.[45] According to Sherlock, he intends to trace "the formation and development of the complex of ideas associated with the concept of God as warrior in the scriptures."[46] Covering an impressive breadth of material from Exodus to the early church, he demonstrates that the use of martial imagery is "a ubiquitous theme" in ancient Jewish and early Christian literature.[47] On one hand, authors depict God as a warrior in the roles of defender and protector of God's people; on the other hand, authors depict God as adversary and enemy at times.[48]

Sherlock sees this dual depiction not only in the Hebrew Scriptures, but also in the New Testament. He claims the "war-tradition" provides foundational images for understanding Jesus Christ's work as victor on the cross. The Gospels and letters of the New Testament repeat the pattern of victory through suffering

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[44] Longman also notes the reversal of expectations of Jesus as Messiah in the Gospels. In reference to John's expectations in Luke 7 (cf. John 18:11), he writes, "Thus Jesus' first coming was not in the role of the Divine Warrior of the Consummation as John expected. However, Jesus does wage war during his earthly ministry – a war which culminates on the cross. Jesus' Holy War is different from the Holy War of Israel. While the latter, at the Lord's command, directed their warfare against earthly enemies, Jesus struggled with the forces, the powers and principalities, which stand behind sinful mankind (cf. his miracles and healings)" (ibid., 303).

[45] *The God Who Fights: The War Tradition in Holy Scripture*, RSCT 6 (Lewiston: Edward Mellen, 1993).

[46] Ibid., 1.

[47] Ibid., 241.

[48] Ibid., 1.

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