

## IMAGE OF ADAM, SON OF GOD: GENESIS 5:3 AND LUKE 3:38 IN INTERCANONICAL DIALOGUE

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### I. INTRODUCTION

It has not been widely noticed that the first genealogy of the Bible begins, and the last genealogy in the Bible ends, not with any human individual, but with God. In Gen 5:1–3, God creates Adam in his image and likeness (the *imago Dei*), and then Adam fathers Seth in his own image and likeness (what we will call the *imago Adami*). In Luke 3:38, the lineage of Jesus is traced backwards to “Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God” (τοῦ θεοῦ). Seen together, these genealogies seem to suggest some kind of continuity from God → Adam → Seth, and thus, by implication, some kind of association between creating and begetting. Genesis 5:3, in particular, raises the question of an association between a father/child relationship and the *imago Dei*:

“When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son *in his own likeness, after his image* (בְּדַמּוֹתוֹ כְּצַלְמוֹ), and named him Seth.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet so far there has been surprisingly little exploration of the import of Gen 5:3 for the meaning of the *imago Dei*, and almost no effort at bringing Gen 5:3 and Luke 3:38 into dialogue with each other.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this article is to explore Gen 5:3 and Luke 3:38 in relation to each other, and together in relation to the meaning of the *imago Dei*. It advances two claims: first, Gen 5:3, by comparing creating and begetting, makes a contribution to the biblical conception of the *imago Dei*; second, this association of creating and begetting (or “image” and “offspring”) provides a plausible explanation for the

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<sup>1</sup> All translations are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> I document this neglect more systematically below, but for now suffice to say I have been able to locate only one article-length examination of Gen 5:3 and only one text that correlates Gen 5:3 and Luke 3:38. Jeffrey H. Tigay, “He begot a son in his likeness after his image’ (Genesis 5:3),” in *Tehillab le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg* (ed. Moshe Greenberg, Mordechai Cogan et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997) 139–47, argues that the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3 means that Seth was born resembling Adam in normal human manner rather than malformed (which was common in the ancient world and often associated with divine disfavor). G. K. Beale analyzes Gen 5:3 in his treatment of Christ as the last Adam and true Israel, arguing that the NT’s identification of Christ as “Son of God” in Luke 3:38 draws from the identification of Adam as “son of God” in Gen 5:1–3 (*NT Theology: The Unfolding of the OT in the New* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011] 401–2, 427–28, 653). But Beale’s treatment is necessarily brief and invites further exploration. I am grateful to my brother Dane for directing me to Beale’s work.

ending of Luke 3:38. I will proceed in three steps. First, I note a general neglect of, and frequent confusion regarding, the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3. Second, I explore the significance of the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3 for the meaning of the *imago Dei*. Third, I explore how the teaching of Gen 5:3 may clarify the interpretative options regarding why Luke ends his genealogy with τὸ ἄνωγον in 3:38.

## II. MERELY A RECAPITULATION? NEGLECT OF GENESIS 5:3

Theological accounts of the *imago Dei* have, generally speaking, tended to draw from Gen 1:26–28 (occasionally combined with Gen 9:6) rather than Gen 5:1–3. Representative of this tendency, for instance, is Millard Erickson's skipping from Genesis 1 to Genesis 9, pausing only to see a recapitulation of the former in Genesis 5;<sup>3</sup> or Merrill's reference to Gen 1:26–28 as "the central text" and to Gen 5:1–3 and 9:6 as "derivative texts";<sup>4</sup> or Sherlock's cutting off Gen 5:3 from Gen 5:1–2, leading him to see nothing of the *imago Dei* in Genesis 5 that is not already present in Genesis 1.<sup>5</sup> Neither has Genesis 5 featured significantly in historical treatment of the *imago Dei*. The lengthy accounts of the *imago Dei* in Augustine,<sup>6</sup> Aquinas,<sup>7</sup> and Calvin,<sup>8</sup> for instance, have repeated interaction with Genesis 1, but none with Genesis 5.<sup>9</sup> In the modern era, salient examples of this same tendency include Bavinck,<sup>10</sup> Berkouwer,<sup>11</sup> and Barth, the last of whom referred to Gen 5:1 as "merely a recapitulation" of Gen 1:27.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 519.

<sup>4</sup> E. H. Merrill, "Image of God," in *Dictionary of the OT: Pentateuch* (ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003) 443–44.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Sherlock, *The Doctrine of Humanity* (Contours of Christian Theology; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996) 30, 42, 52, 82.

<sup>6</sup> The lengthy account of the *imago Dei* in Augustine's *De Trinitate* is highly exegetically interactive and contains a lengthy discussion of the divine Father-Son relationship in relationship to the *imago Dei*. But Genesis 5 does not feature in this work or in his *On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees* or his *The Literal Meaning of Genesis* (*The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, vol. 1 [ed. John E. Rotelle; trans. Edmund Hill; Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2002]). See, e.g., Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity* 10.6 (NPNF<sup>1</sup>; ed. Philip Schaff; 1887; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2012) 3.157–58.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1.93.1–9 (trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province; Notre Dame, IN: Christian Classics, 1948) 469–77.

<sup>8</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (trans. and ed. John T. McNeill; trans. Ford Lewis Battles; 2 vols.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006) 1.15 (pp. 183–96).

<sup>9</sup> One exception to this tendency in church history is Origen's rather strange application of the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3 to Trinitarian relations. See his *De Principiis* (ANF; ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson; 1885; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2012) 1.247–48. In describing the relationship between God the Father and God the Son, Origen appeals to the *imago Adami* for help: "Christ is the invisible image of the invisible God, in the same manner as we say, according to the sacred history, that the image of Adam is his son Seth." Origen then quotes Gen 5:3, arguing that "this image contains the unity of nature and substance belonging to the Father and the Son."

<sup>10</sup> Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: God and Creation* (ed. John Bolt; trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004) 2.554, does reference humanity as the "son, or likeness, or offspring of God" once in his discussion of the *imago Dei*, but he does not develop this comment; and Gen 5:1–3 is not explored in his discussion.

<sup>11</sup> G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God* (Studies in Dogmatics; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962) 69, has a lengthy and interesting discussion of the *imago Dei* but only refers to Gen 5:3 in the context of

That Gen 5:3 is located in a genealogy has probably contributed to its neglect, since genealogies are themselves frequently neglected. This neglect is unfortunate, since in biblical thought genealogies are rife with theological as well as social-historical significance.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, even when attention has been given to the genealogy of Gen 5:1–6:8,<sup>14</sup> the focus has tended toward (1) the problem of the length of the life spans listed here,<sup>15</sup> and (2) source-critical questions of the history behind the text.<sup>16</sup> When interest has strayed into the figures named in the genealogy, it has been focused towards the “standout” figures of Enoch (who walks with God and is taken away) and Lamech (who fathers Noah and predicts his significance).<sup>17</sup> On those rare occasions when Gen 5:3 does receive attention, it is typically with just a passing comment.<sup>18</sup>

Another factor for the neglect of Gen 5:3 may simply be the strangeness of its teaching. Brueggemann calls the *imago Adami* “an odd ambiguous statement,”<sup>19</sup> and this ambivalence is representative of many commentators. A number of Genesis

his argument that “image” and “likeness” are essentially interchangeable terms (contra most patristic and medieval thought).

<sup>12</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III.1 (ed. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance; repr. New York: T&T Clark, 2009) 196–97, downplays the significance of Gen 5:3 on the basis of the change in the sequence of nouns and the inversion of prepositions from Genesis 1, and because Genesis 1 deals with male and female together while Genesis 5 deals only with Adam’s male son. Barth calls von Rad’s interpretation of Gen 5:3 expressing the continuance of the divine image through physical generation a “drastic oversimplification,” but his own comments seem more concerned to protect the divine initiative in bestowing the image than to clarify where von Rad’s view needs modification or extension. Cf. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III.2 291–324.

<sup>13</sup> As Joel B. Green notes, “[G]enealogies are concerned as much with theological and apologetic issues as with historical; in them resides remarkable social power.” *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 189.

<sup>14</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987) 121, makes a compelling case for seeing this section as extending through 6:8 rather than 5:32.

<sup>15</sup> As observed by Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 248, and Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary* (trans. John J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974) 347.

<sup>16</sup> It is commonplace to assign Genesis 5 to the “P source” in Pentateuchal source criticism—e.g. Donald E. Gowan, *From Eden to Babel: A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 1–11* (ITC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 77. Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis* (IBC; Atlanta: John Knox, 1982) 67, follows this line also, drawing comparisons from “book of generations of Adam” (5:1) to the “book of generations of heaven and earth” (2:4).

<sup>17</sup> As an example, Arthur Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis* (Chicago: Moody, 1922) 73, observes, “until we reach the twenty-first verse of Genesis 5, there is little else in the chapter which calls for comment.”

<sup>18</sup> For instance, Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (NSBT 15; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003) 58, in his tracing out the *imago Dei* through the OT, suggests that Gen 5:3 implies a “link between sonship and the image of God” but does not develop this intriguing suggestion. Similarly, Edward M. Curtis, “Image of God (OI),” *ABD* 3.390, notes that Gen 5:3 “suggests that the way in which a son resembles his father is in some sense analogous to the way in which the human is like God.” But he does not go further than this one sentence. Terence E. Fretheim, “The Book of Genesis: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections,” *NIB* 1.380, suggests that “the relationship between son and father embodies the notion of image,” but does not pursue this interesting comment. Moreover, his separation of the meaning of “image” and “likeness” is unconvincing. On this point, see the helpful treatment of Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God* 68–69.

<sup>19</sup> Brueggemann, *Genesis* 68.

commentaries simply omit any discussion of the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3. These include Gunkel,<sup>20</sup> Walton,<sup>21</sup> Bowie,<sup>22</sup> Yates,<sup>23</sup> Speiser,<sup>24</sup> Dods,<sup>25</sup> Cotter,<sup>26</sup> Hughes,<sup>27</sup> Gangel and Bramer,<sup>28</sup> and Atkinson.<sup>29</sup> A few Genesis commentaries note the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3 but do not discuss its meaning. These include Kidner,<sup>30</sup> Fritsch,<sup>31</sup> Maly,<sup>32</sup> and Reno.<sup>33</sup>

When commentators have brought Gen 5:3 into discussion concerning the *imago Dei*, the general tendency has been to reduce its significance to the extension of the image to Adam's descendants. In other words, it has been seen to be concerned with the scope of the image, not its meaning. This interpretation of Gen 5:3 has two basic variations, one more negative in thrust and the other more positive. The older, more negative view, now very much in the minority, contrasted the good *imago Dei* of Gen 5:1 with the corrupt *imago Adami* of Gen 5:3. This was the predominant view of the Reformers. Calvin, for instance, claimed that the metaphor communicates the transmission of both the *imago Dei* as well as the defilement of sin from Adam to his offspring.<sup>34</sup> For other Reformed theologians, the *imago Adami* was entirely negative, representing little different than the doctrine of original sin (thus Luther,<sup>35</sup> Zwingli,<sup>36</sup> Chytraeus,<sup>37</sup> Willet,<sup>38</sup> and Gill<sup>39</sup>). Later proponents

<sup>20</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (trans. Mark E. Biddle; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997) 54–55.

<sup>21</sup> John Walton, *Genesis* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001) 279–85.

<sup>22</sup> Walter Russell Bowie, “The Book of Genesis,” *IB* 1.527–29.

<sup>23</sup> Kyle M. Yates, “Genesis,” in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison; Chicago: Moody, 1962) 11.

<sup>24</sup> E.A. Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 1; New York: Doubleday, 1964) 39–43.

<sup>25</sup> Marcus Dods, *The Book of Genesis* (New York: A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1903) 51–54.

<sup>26</sup> David W. Cotter, *Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003) 47–48.

<sup>27</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing* (Preaching the Word; Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004) 118–19.

<sup>28</sup> Kenneth O. Gangel and Stephen J. Bramer, *Genesis* (Holman OT Commentary; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002) 59–61.

<sup>29</sup> David Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1–11* (The Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990) 121–29.

<sup>30</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1967) 80.

<sup>31</sup> Fritsch, *Book of Genesis* 38.

<sup>32</sup> Eugene H. Maly, “Genesis,” in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy; Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968) 14.

<sup>33</sup> R. R. Reno, *Genesis* (Brazos Theological Commentary; Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010) 111–12, interprets Genesis 5 in light of the cycle of decay and cleansing in Genesis 1–11, contrasting the failure of Cain with Seth's promise as a fresh start. His comments are illuminating with respect to the general flow of Genesis 5–11, but do not help with the interpretation of Gen 5:3.

<sup>34</sup> John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis* (trans. Rev. John King; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003) 1.228–29.

<sup>35</sup> Martin Luther, *Commentary on Genesis* (trans. J. Theodore Mueller; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958) 1.121.

<sup>36</sup> Ulrich Zwingli, “Annotations on Genesis 5:3,” in *Genesis 1–11* (ed. John L. Thompson; Reformation Commentary on Scripture; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012) 218.

<sup>37</sup> David Chytraeus, *Commentary on Genesis*, in *Genesis 1–11* (ed. John L. Thompson) 218.

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Willet, *Commentary on Genesis*, in *Genesis 1–11* (ed. John L. Thompson) 217.

of reformed theology, such as Pink,<sup>40</sup> have also popularized this view, as have the German Lutheran commentators Keil and Delitzsch,<sup>41</sup> and the popular biblical commentator Matthew Henry.<sup>42</sup> A few contemporary commentators have also interpreted the *imago Adami* as the communication of some kind of flawed nature to Adam's posterity, such as Brueggemann,<sup>43</sup> Jeske,<sup>44</sup> Davies,<sup>45</sup> and Youngblood.<sup>46</sup>

More commonly, however, especially in recent times, scholars have interpreted the *imago Adami* in a positive light as referring to the continuance of the *imago Dei* beyond Adam. The significance of Gen 5:3 is seen to be, in this view, that the *imago Dei* is not obliterated by the fall, but continues to Adam's posterity. Von Rad gives a classic expression of this view: "God's image was therefore peculiar not only to the first man, but was inherited in successive generations."<sup>47</sup> Thus see the contributions by Wenham,<sup>48</sup> Keil,<sup>49</sup> Hamilton,<sup>50</sup> Gowan,<sup>51</sup> Westermann,<sup>52</sup> Skinner,<sup>53</sup> McKeown,<sup>54</sup> Matthews,<sup>55</sup> Hartley,<sup>56</sup> Ross,<sup>57</sup> Cassuto,<sup>58</sup> Davidson,<sup>59</sup> and Vermigli.<sup>60</sup> A rare variation of this view is that Gen 5:3 expresses the continuance of the *imago*

<sup>39</sup> John Gill, *An Exposition of the First Book of Moses Called Genesis* (1763; repr. Springfield: Particular Baptist Press, 2010) 96–97.

<sup>40</sup> Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis* 73.

<sup>41</sup> C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the OT in Ten Volumes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 1.124.

<sup>42</sup> *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991) 20.

<sup>43</sup> Brueggemann, *Genesis* 68, interprets the sonship metaphor of Gen 5:3 as reflecting a weakening of the *imago Dei* in Seth and his heirs, resulting in a "strange, unresolved mixture of the *regal* image of God and the *threatened* image of Adam" (emphasis original).

<sup>44</sup> John C. Jeske, *Genesis* (People's Bible Commentary; St. Louis: Concordia, 1992) 69.

<sup>45</sup> G. Henton Davies, *Genesis* (Broadman Bible Commentary 1; Nashville, Broadman, 1969) 149.

<sup>46</sup> Ronald Youngblood, "Genesis," in *The NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985) 13, "as God created man in his own perfect image, so now sinful Adam has a son in his own imperfect image."

<sup>47</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 70.

<sup>48</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* 127.

<sup>49</sup> C. F. Keil, *The Pentateuch*, in C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the OT* (1866; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011) 1.79.

<sup>50</sup> Hamilton, *Book of Genesis* 255–56.

<sup>51</sup> Gowan, *From Eden to Babel* 79–80.

<sup>52</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11* 347–48, 356.

<sup>53</sup> John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1910) 130.

<sup>54</sup> James McKeown, *Genesis* (Two Horizons OT Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 45–47.

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996) 310, combines this view with the older view of Calvin and Luther above, seeing Gen 5:3 as communicating both the blessing of God's good image as well as the sinfulness of Adam's.

<sup>56</sup> John E. Hartley, *Genesis* (NIBC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000) 92.

<sup>57</sup> Allen Ross, *Genesis* (Cornerstone Biblical Commentary; Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2008) 65.

<sup>58</sup> Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (trans. Israel Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1044) 275.

<sup>59</sup> Robert Davidson, *Genesis 1–11* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) 62.

<sup>60</sup> Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Commentary on Genesis*, in *Genesis 1–11* (ed. John L. Thompson) 217.

*Dei*, but only to righteous individuals, not to all humanity (thus Boice<sup>61</sup> and Chrysostom<sup>62</sup>). But among all these various expressions of some species of “transmission” interpretation, little is said about the nature and implications of this transmission; and what is said often feels cursory, partial, and/or hesitant.

### III. BRIDGE OR WINDOW? THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GEN 5:3

While the transmission of the *imago Dei* to Adam’s offspring is certainly implied as a *consequence* of Gen 5:3, it is difficult to see how this “transmission interpretation” in any of its variations is satisfactory as an *explanation* for the *imago Adami*. After all, what Gen 5:3 asserts is not that Seth, like Adam, was created in *God’s* image and likeness, but that Seth was created in *Adam’s* image and likeness. The thrust is not merely: as was God to Adam, so is God to Seth; but rather, as was God to Adam, so is *Adam* to Seth. The image of God passes *through* Adam, and thus a parallel is drawn between God’s creating and Adam’s procreating. If the text were concerned simply with communicating the continuation of the *imago Dei*, this seems to be an odd way to do it.

An additional problem of the “transmission” interpretation is that it would very naturally seem to imply that the image is continued only through the line of Seth, excluding Adam’s other descendents, such as Cain and his line. Indeed, some later Jewish commentary used Gen 5:3 to emphasize precisely this point. Philo, for instance, singled out Gen 5:3 to highlight God’s priority of Seth over Cain, and he read the significance of the *imago Adami* in this light.<sup>63</sup> Throughout later Jewish and rabbinic literature, Seth is portrayed as the ideal man of righteousness and obedience,<sup>64</sup> and the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* even claimed that Seth was the offspring of Eve and the angel Sammael, rather than Eve and Adam.<sup>65</sup> Its rendering of Gen 5:3 adds an explanatory comment to bolster the Cain-Seth contrast: “When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he begot Seth, who resembled his image and likeness. For before that, Eve had borne Cain, who was not from him and who did not resemble him.”<sup>66</sup> Some later Jewish thinkers went even further than this, positing

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<sup>61</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982) 1.224–25, suggests that the *imago Adami* refers to the godly line of ancestors who displayed “a likeness to Adam in that they followed his lead in worshiping the true God.”

<sup>62</sup> John Chrysostom, “Homily 21,” in *Saint John Chrysostom: Homilies on Genesis 18–45* (trans. Robert C. Hill; The Fathers of the Church; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1990) 55, interpreted the *imago Adami* as meaning, “in other words, of the same ilk as his parent, preserving the same stamp of virtue, revealing the image of his father in his actions.”

<sup>63</sup> Philo, *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesis*, I, in *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (trans. C. D. Yonge; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993) 807–8.

<sup>64</sup> See the survey of literature in Scot McKnight, “Seth,” in *Dictionary of the OT: Pentateuch* 740–41.

<sup>65</sup> *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (trans. Michael Maher; Aramaic Bible 1B; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992) 31.

<sup>66</sup> *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* 36.

that Adam's children prior to Seth were demons; and thus only with Seth does true humanity continue.<sup>67</sup>

In the biblical text, the Seth-Cain contrast is softer. It is true that at Seth's birth, Eve interprets him as a replacement for righteous Abel (Gen 4:25), and significantly, Genesis 5 traces Adam's lineage through Seth, not Cain. But nowhere is it suggested that true humanity continues only through Seth, or that Cain and his descendents are precluded from the *imago Dei*. Indeed, Gen 9:6 rules out this possibility out by appealing to the *imago Dei* as the basis for valuing *all* human life, and the radical disjunction of Cain as demonic and Seth as angelic would find little ability to account for God's continuing protection of Cain in Gen 4:15.

In light of these difficulties, it is worth considering the *imago Adami* as concerned with the meaning of the *imago Dei*, not merely its continuance. To construct a metaphor, Gen 5:3 may function more like a window into the nature of the *imago Dei*, rather than merely as a bridge over which it passes. Specifically, it seems to imply a comparison between creating and begetting—that is to say, a comparison between being created in God's image and being God's children. Initially, this conclusion might seem to put too much theological weight on this one small verse. But several textual features invite a comparison between the *imago Dei* and the *imago Adami*, and a number of parallels in ancient Near Eastern creation myths strengthen the plausibility of such an association.

1. *Textual analysis.* It is significant that the *imago Adami* is not placed randomly within the biblical narrative, but immediately on the heels of the re-articulation of the *imago Dei* in Gen 5:1–2. In fact, the flow of thought and textual proximity from 5:1b–2 to 5:3ff. invites reading the *imago Adami* in relation to the *imago Dei*, and more generally suggests continuity between 5:1b–2 and the rest of the genealogy. Genesis 5:1a introduces a new section with the introductory, “this is the book of the generations of Adam” (the second תולדת after Gen 2:4, a header that will be repeated throughout Genesis).<sup>68</sup> This structural designation provides initial grounds for reading 5:1b–2 in close relation to 5:3–32, and it turns out that there are some interesting similarities between 5:1b–2 and the regular refrain that recurs 9 times (with only a few variations) from 5:3–31. For instance, the parallel of “naming” is striking: in 5:1–2, God names humanity after he creates them in his image; in 5:3, Adam names Seth after begetting him in *his* image and likeness. The different senses of אדם throughout 5:1–3 should be noted: in verse 3 Adam is a proper name; in verses 1–2 it refers to humanity generally (hence “man” is both “male and female”). What appears in English translation as “man” in 5:1b–2 and “Adam” in 5:3 is actually the same word, and thus אדם, like every other figure in the genealogy, is begotten (5:1–2) before begetting (5:3). From one angle, then, 5:1b–2 can be read as a preamble to the genealogy, but from another angle it can also be read as a part of

<sup>67</sup> *Genesis Rabbah* 24.6 (trans. and ed. Rabbi H. Freeman and Maurice Simon; London: Soncino, 1939) 203.

<sup>68</sup> Kidner, *Genesis* 80, argues this section was originally a self-contained unit.

the genealogy. Given this flow of thought, it is difficult to suppose that the meaning of “image” in 5:1 has no import for the meaning of “image” in 5:3.

Furthermore, the language of Gen 5:3 invites comparison with that of Gen 1:26–28. A more general comparison of Gen 5:1–2 and Gen 1:26–28 is frequently observed. The terms for “God,” “created,” “man,” “likeness,” and “blessed” are the same in both passages, and many specific ideas are common to both—e.g. the image being bestowed specifically at creation (1:26, 5:1), both male and female constituting the image (1:27 and 5:2), divine blessing associated with the image (1:28, 5:2), etc.<sup>69</sup> It is striking, however, that the use of both “image” (צלם) and “likeness” (דמות) in 1:26 resurfaces only with the *imago Adami* in 5:3, whereas 5:1 only uses “image” (as in 1:27). Since the phrase “in his image, after his likeness” is not included in the other eight refrains in the rest of the chapter, its addition here in 5:3 suggests intentionality and significance. In addition, since these two terms are paired nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible other than Gen 1:26 and 5:3, it is only natural to seek to correlate the *imago Dei* and the *imago Adami*.

In sum, if Genesis did not intend a comparison between the relationship of God and Adam (creating) and the relationship of Adam and Seth (begetting), it is difficult to fathom why the *imago Adami* is placed in 5:3 immediately after the *imago Dei* in 5:1–2, and with identical terminology to the *imago Dei* in 1:26.<sup>70</sup>

2. *Ancient Near Eastern parallels.* There are a number of intriguing parallels to the association of creating and begetting in other ancient Near Eastern creation texts. The relation of the creation account in Genesis to other ancient Near Eastern cosmogonies has been a point of scholarly exploration over the last several generations, and some of these studies have focused specifically on the *imago Dei*.<sup>71</sup> Yet few studies have drawn attention to the very common association of creating and begetting in these texts. There are too many examples to list, so here we limit ourselves to texts that associate not only creating and begetting, but specifically being created as the image of a god/goddess and being begotten by that god/goddess.

a. *Enuma Elish.* Parallels between the creation story of Genesis and the Babylonian creation myth *Enuma Elish* have been frequently noted. But the focus has tended to be on alleged parallels between the watery chaos in Gen 1:2 and the Babylonian chaos monster *Tiamat*, or between the order and depiction of creation acts

<sup>69</sup> Charles T. Fritsch, *The Book of Genesis* (Layman’s Bible Commentary; Richmond: John Knox, 1959) 38.

<sup>70</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to explore later biblical echoes of the comparison between begetting and creating. But to chart out what direction such a project might take, the sonship connotations of the *imago Dei* in Gen 5:1–3 must be seen in the context of the development of the motif of the *imago Dei* throughout the OT, from Adam to Israel to David to the fully orbed messianic expectation. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, argues that the royal and sonship connotations of the *imago Dei* in Genesis are echoed throughout the OT in the portrayals of Abraham (p. 76), Moses’ descent at Sinai (p. 106), David (pp. 141, 198), Solomon (pp. 147, 202), and Israel as a whole (p. 225).

<sup>71</sup> Edward Mason Curtis, *Man as the Image of God in Genesis in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Parallels* (Ph.D. diss.; University of Pennsylvania, 1984); J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005) 93–145, has a briefer and helpful overview, from which I have especially benefitted in what follows.



in Genesis 1 and *Enuma Elish*.<sup>72</sup> With respect to the *imago Dei*, a parallel has been drawn with Marduk's employment of his own blood in the creation of man, but only with reference to Gen 1:26–28, not Gen 5:1–3 or the *imago Adami*.<sup>73</sup> Cassuto, however, is one of the few commentators who has noticed the similarity between Gen 5:3 and *Enuma Elish* 1:16, which he renders, “Anu begot Nudimmud in his likeness.”<sup>74</sup> Throughout *Enuma Elish*, creating is frequently compared with begetting,<sup>75</sup> but here the association is made specifically with the “likeness” (Akkadian *salma*) of *Anu* (or *Ansu*, or *Anzu*; the primeval deity representing fresh waters). It is unfortunate that Cassuto did not develop his comments on this parallel, and that other commentators have appeared not to notice or appreciate Cassuto's observation.

b. *Various Egyptian texts and inscriptions.* The association of creating and begetting is common in ancient Egyptian literature, especially with respect to the birth of divine figures.<sup>76</sup> Middleton, drawing from Curtis, mentions eighteen different Egyptian texts or inscriptions that refer to a particular pharaoh as the image of a god, mostly drawn from the 12<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, and he admits that this list is not exhaustive.<sup>77</sup> Most relevant to this paper are those texts or inscriptions that associate being the image of a god with being the offspring of a god. Four examples are listed by Clines:

- Pharaoh is called “the shining image of the lord of all and a creation of the gods of Heliopolis. . . . He has begotten him, in order to create a shining seed on earth, for salvation for men, as his living image.”
- Amosis I is called “a prince like Re, the child of Qeb, his heir, the image of Re, whom he created, the avenger (or the representative), for whom he has set himself on earth.”
- Amenophis III is addressed by the god Amon as “my living image, creation of my members, whom Mut bare to me.”
- Amon-Re says to Amenophis III, “you are my beloved son, who came forth from my members, my image, whom I have put on earth.”<sup>78</sup>

Other examples beyond those listed by Clines could be mentioned. For example, one text labels the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Pharaoh Merenptah as a “child and likeness of the Bull of Heliopolis”<sup>79</sup> and the *Instruction for Merikare*, referencing the god who

<sup>72</sup> See the introductory comments by L. W. King, *Enuma Elish: The Seven Tablets of Creation* (English Translations; London: Luzac, 1902) 1.lxxxii–lxxxvii. Middleton, *Liberating Image* 131, also draws attention to the use of cognate words for the watery deep (Hebrew תהום and Akkadian *tiamat*), the threefold classification of land animals, the broad sequence of creation events, the important place of humanity in the creation, and the divine rest after creation.

<sup>73</sup> King, *Enuma Elish* 1.lxxxvii.

<sup>74</sup> Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* 277. King, *Enuma Elish* 5, renders this verse, “And the god Anu . . . Nudimmud, whom his fathers [his] begetters.”

<sup>75</sup> See especially 1.3, 2.9; cf. 1.52, 1.55, 1.127, 2.2, 2.33, 3.24, 4.20.

<sup>76</sup> Curtis, “Image of God (OT)” 390–91; Middleton, *Liberating Image* 99.

<sup>77</sup> Middleton, *Liberating Image* 108–11.

<sup>78</sup> D. J. A. Clines, “Humanity as the Image of God,” *TynBul* 19 (1968) 34. Middleton, *Liberating Image* 109, also cites these last two examples.

<sup>79</sup> Middleton, *Liberating Image* 109.

also made heaven and earth, asserts that “they who have issued from his body are his images.”<sup>80</sup> This last statement provides a particularly interesting example in that it applies the notion of creation in the image of a god not just to a royal figure, but to all humanity (a move relatively rare outside the Bible).

c. *Gilgamesh Epic*. Parallels are often drawn between the creation of Adam in Genesis and the creation of Enkidu in this text. But there are also some interesting parallels for the association of creating and begetting. One particularly interesting example reads thus:

30. Great Aruru they called: “Thou, Aruru, didst create [Gilgamesh(?)];
31. Now create his equal, to the impetuosity of his heart let him be eq[ual].
32. Let them ever strive (with each other), and let Uruk (thus) have re[st].”
33. When Aruru heard this, she conceived in her heart an image of Anu;
34. [A]ruru washed her hands, pinched off clay, (and) threw (it) on the steppe:
35. [...] valiant Enkidu she created, the offspring .... of Ninurta.<sup>81</sup>

The text is difficult, as several key words are missing, and the meaning of the Akkadian word *zikeru* is disputed. But even with the missing words, and apart from knowing how to translate *zikeru*, the association of creating and begetting is evident: the text portrays the creator-goddess Aruru conceiving a *zikeru* of Aru (the sky-god of Uruk), and then subsequently creating Enkidu, who is referred to her as her “offspring.” Middleton argues that the best rendering of *zikeru* here is something like “idea” or “mental image,” citing a similar use of the term in the Akkadian myth *Descent of Ishtar to the Underworld*.<sup>82</sup> If this is right, then the association between creating and begetting here provides an even more intriguing parallel to Gen 5:3. But the textual ambiguities here make it unwise to put much weight on this particular text.

d. *Other Mesopotamian texts*. The Assyrian *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, which recounts the victories of the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I over the Babylonian king Kashtiliash IV, describes the Assyrian king as born of the gods, gestated in the divine womb, and exalted to a status just behind the warrior-god Ninurta, who is the first-born son of the high god Enlil, and then refers to him as “he who is the eternal image of Enlil.”<sup>83</sup> In addition, Adad-shumu-usur, an exorcist-priest in the royal court of Ninevah, wrote to the Neo-Assyrian King Esarhaddon, “the father of the king, my lord, was the very image of Bel, and the king, my lord, is likewise the very

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 99.

<sup>81</sup> *Gilgamesh Epic* 1.2.30–35, translated by Alexander Heidel, in *The Gilgamesh Epic and OT Parallels* (2d ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949) 18–19. Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982) 192–97, analyzes earlier and later versions of this passage and draws out similarities with a passage from the first tablet of *The Atrahasis Epic*.

<sup>82</sup> Middleton, *Liberating Image* 97, cites Speiser’s rendering of *Descent of Ishtar to the Underworld* 11–12: “Ea in his wise heart conceived an image [*zikeru*], and created Asushunamir, a eunuch.”

<sup>83</sup> Middleton, *Liberating Image* 112.

image of Bel.”<sup>84</sup> There are a few other relevant examples from Mesopotamian documents, but they are not as numerous as the Egyptian.<sup>85</sup>

The whole issue of how these various texts may or may not be related to each other or the Bible is quite complicated, and it is not necessary here to assume any particular theory of influence among them. It is enough to observe that other ancient Near Eastern creation myths often associated creating and begetting, and specifically creating *in one's image* and begetting. These parallels suggest that such an association between “image” and “offspring” was not foreign to ancient Near Eastern thought, and thus add plausibility and significance to the existence of such an association in Gen 5:3.

#### IV. LUKE 3:38 IN LIGHT OF GENESIS 5:3

Commentators have frequently been puzzled by the conclusion to Luke’s genealogy. On the one hand, most commentators are quick to highlight the significance of the fact that the genealogy extends all the way back to Adam, in contrast to Matthew’s more “Jewish” genealogy, which begins with Abraham. In this, it is claimed, Luke means to emphasize Jesus’ human nature, and his corporate solidarity with all the rest of humanity, having just emphasized his status as God’s “beloved Son” in the preceding verse (3:22). But this raises the question all the more forcefully: why does a genealogy concerned with Jesus’ humanity conclude with “the son of God” (τοῦ θεοῦ)?

As with the *imago Adami* in Gen 5:3, some commentaries simply lack any attempted explanation of “the son of God” in Luke 3:38. In some cases, it is mentioned but not explained; in other cases it not mentioned at all. Thus see Liefeld,<sup>86</sup> Bovon (who holds “of God” to be a later redaction),<sup>87</sup> Johnson,<sup>88</sup> Tolbert,<sup>89</sup> Creed,<sup>90</sup> Bowie,<sup>91</sup> Summers,<sup>92</sup> Calvin,<sup>93</sup> and Butler.<sup>94</sup> Among commentators who do address the issue, there are basically three schools of thought (though some overlap among them is inevitable).

1. *Christ’s divine sonship*. First, a number of commentators, often noting that Luke’s genealogy follows directly on the heels of Jesus’ baptismal identification as the Son of God, see the conclusion of the genealogy as echoing this identification

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. 113.

<sup>85</sup> For discussion, see *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Walter L. Liefeld, *Luke* (EBC 8; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 861.

<sup>87</sup> François Bovon, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50* (trans. Christine M. Thomas; Hermenia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002) 136–37.

<sup>88</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (SacPag; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991) 72.

<sup>89</sup> Malcolm O. Tolbert, *Luke*, in *The Broadman Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman, 1970) 9.41.

<sup>90</sup> John Martin Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London, MacMillan, 1930) 59.

<sup>91</sup> Walter Russell Bowie, *The Gospel According to Luke*, IB 8.82.

<sup>92</sup> Ray Summers, *Commentary on Luke* (Waco, TX: Word, 1972) 52, simply comments that Adam is the “father of the human race.”

<sup>93</sup> So John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke*, vol. 1 (trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

<sup>94</sup> Trent C. Butler, *Luke* (Holman NT Commentary; Nashville: Holman, 2000) 51.

(and possibly anticipating later identifications in Luke's Gospel). As Morris put it, "Luke adds *the son of God*, for we must see Jesus in his relationship to his Father. In this the genealogy harmonizes with the preceding and following narratives, both of which are concerned with Jesus as the Son of God."<sup>95</sup> In this regard, see also Culpepper,<sup>96</sup> Just,<sup>97</sup> Pate,<sup>98</sup> and Arndt.<sup>99</sup>

2. *Christ's humanity*. Most commentators have not been satisfied with this explanation. Marshall, for instance, objects that "to regard divine sonship as mediated to Jesus through his ancestors conflicts with the birth story," and notes that this view requires all 78 names<sup>100</sup> from Joseph to Adam to function as one gigantic parenthesis.<sup>101</sup> Instead, Marshall suggests that by tracing Jesus back to Adam as the Son of God, Luke means to identify Christ as the "second Adam" and to emphasize his solidarity with all humanity.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, see the works by Jeffrey,<sup>103</sup> Schlatter,<sup>104</sup> Manson,<sup>105</sup> Ellis,<sup>106</sup> Gonzalez,<sup>107</sup> Mattam,<sup>108</sup> Wright,<sup>109</sup> and the Church father Irenaeus.<sup>110</sup>

Some commentators opt for some combination of these first two views. Wilcock, for instance, claims that since Christ has just been dubbed the Son of God at the climax of his baptism (3:22), immediately preceding the genealogy, Luke is highlighting the divine and human natures of Christ as both son of Adam and Son of God<sup>111</sup> (so also the Church father Ambrose<sup>112</sup>). An occasional variant of this view is that Luke is contrasting Christ as the Son of God (3:22) with Adam as the Son of God (3:38).<sup>113</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary* (TNTC; repr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 111.

<sup>96</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, "The Gospel of Luke," *NIB* 9.95.

<sup>97</sup> Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 1:1–9:50* (Concordia Commentary; St. Louis: Concordia, 1996) 165, 168.

<sup>98</sup> C. Marvin Pate, *Luke* (Moody Gospel Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1995) 110–11.

<sup>99</sup> William F. Arndt, *Luke* (Concordia Classic Commentary Series; St. Louis: Concordia, 1956) 123–24.

<sup>100</sup> Some manuscripts contain fewer names.

<sup>101</sup> Marshall, *Gospel of Luke* 161.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> David Lyle Jeffrey, *Luke* (Brazos Theological Commentary; Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012) 64–65.

<sup>104</sup> Adolf Schlatter, *Das Evangelium des Lukas: Aus seinen Quellen erklärt* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1960) 218–19.

<sup>105</sup> William Manson, *The Gospel of Luke* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1930) 35.

<sup>106</sup> E. Earle Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* (London: Nelson, 1966) 93.

<sup>107</sup> Justo A. Gonzalez, *Luke* (Belief; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010) 55–56.

<sup>108</sup> Zacharias Mattam, *The Gospel According to St. Luke: The Voice of the Beloved* (Mumbai: St. Pauls, 2008) 118–21.

<sup>109</sup> N. T. Wright, *Luke for Everyone* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004) 40, finds the significance of the ending of the genealogy as primarily indicating the universal relevance of Jesus' identity, concluding from this phrase, "though Jesus is indeed the Messiah of Israel (another meaning of 'son of God'), he is so precisely for the whole world."

<sup>110</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.22.

<sup>111</sup> David Wilcock, *The Message of Luke: The Savior of the World* (The Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979) 57–58.

<sup>112</sup> Ambrose, *Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*, in *Luke* (ACCSNT 3; ed. Arthur A. Just Jr.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003) 70.

<sup>113</sup> John Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* (WBC 35A; Dallas: Word, 1989) 167, 173.

3. *Divine origins of humanity.* It is far from clear, however, whether Marshall's view actually overcomes the problems it detects in the first view. Whether the emphasis is on Christ's deity or on his humanity, a Christological interpretation of τοῦ θεοῦ still seems to require that the 78 names of the genealogy function basically as a parenthesis. If Luke's primary concern in the conclusion of his genealogy is Christological, why does he trace this identification through Jesus' human ancestry, with the result that τοῦ θεοῦ is placed at the location in the genealogy that is furthest removed from its referent? Are there not clearer ways to identify Jesus' humanity (or deity)? In light of such considerations, other commentators interpret τοῦ θεοῦ as primarily anthropological in thrust. Plummer's commentary gave classic expression to this view:

Why does Lk. add that Adam was the son of God? Certainly not in order to show the Divine Sonship of the Messiah, which would place Him in this respect on a level with all mankind. More probably it is added for the sake of Gentile readers, to remind them of the Divine origin of the human race.<sup>114</sup>

Reference is sometimes made in articulations of this view to Paul's quotation of Aratus in Acts 17:28, "we are indeed his offspring," as seen in Godet,<sup>115</sup> Craddock,<sup>116</sup> and Hughes.<sup>117</sup> This anthropological view is sometimes combined with a soft affirmation of (2), since the divine origins of the human race and Jesus' solidarity with the entire human race complement one another. Thus Green writes, "the reference to Adam as son of God presents the divine origin of the human race and indicates Jesus' solidarity with all humanity."<sup>118</sup>

A few commentators go one step further to associate the *imago Dei* with the reference to "Adam, the son of God," such as Geldenhuys,<sup>119</sup> Bock,<sup>120</sup> and Ryken.<sup>121</sup> Surprisingly, however, none of these commentaries brings Gen 5:3 into the discussion.<sup>122</sup> In fact, several commentators explicitly assert the absence of any OT, pseudepigraphical, Qumranic, or rabbinic precedent for a genealogy tracing back to God.<sup>123</sup> For example, Nolland claims that "a genealogy that reaches back to

<sup>114</sup> Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900) 105.

<sup>115</sup> Frederick Louis Godet, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Classic Commentary Library; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1887) 1.207.

<sup>116</sup> Fred B. Craddock, *Luke* (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1990) 53, who strangely denies that Luke is developing a "second Adam" Christology even while affirming that the purpose of Luke 3:38 is to express "the universal reach of God's purpose."

<sup>117</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Luke* (Preaching the Word; Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998) 1.129.

<sup>118</sup> Green, *Gospel of Luke* 189.

<sup>119</sup> Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951) 153.

<sup>120</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994) 360. Cf. idem, *Luke* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) 123–24.

<sup>121</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke* (Reformed Expository Commentary; Phillipsburg: P&R, 2009) 1.148–49.

<sup>122</sup> As noted above, this connection is made uniquely in Beale, *NT Theology* 401–2, 427–28, 653.

<sup>123</sup> So Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50* 360.

God is not known in the OT,”<sup>124</sup> and Hughes asserts, “there is no parallel in the Old Testament or in rabbinic texts for a genealogy to begin or end with the name of God.”<sup>125</sup>

But these statements overlook Gen 5:1–3, which provides precisely such a parallel. In fact, the parallelism between these two passages operates on more than one level: not only do both suggest continuity from God to Adam to Seth, but both do so specifically in the context of a genealogy, and through the metaphor of begettingness. In fact, if we read Luke 3:38 in light of the identification of Adam as the son of God in Gen 5:1–3, those very features of Luke’s genealogy that are initially puzzling instead become illuminating. Specifically, we are able to appreciate, rather than attempt to circumvent, the genealogical context of Luke’s identification of Adam as the son of God. Moreover, the placement of τοῦ θεοῦ at the end of the genealogy becomes natural and even necessary. Therefore, the reading of Luke 3:38 that best accounts for the details of the text is the third interpretation surveyed above, namely, that Luke is concerned with the divine origins of humanity.<sup>126</sup> When Luke identifies Adam as the son of God, he is following a pattern established in the first genealogy of the Bible, and common in ancient Near Eastern thought, in which creating and begetting are associated. Indeed, given the similarities of the two passages (genealogical context, filial language, etc.), it is even plausible to detect in Luke 3:38 an allusion to, or at least an echo of, Gen 5:3.<sup>127</sup>

It is worth observing in closing one final point of consideration that may strengthen this reading. Just as creation in a deity’s image and being begotten by that deity were associated in other ancient Near Eastern creation myths, similar parallels of createdness and sonship seem to have made their way into Jewish thought in the first century (at the time of Luke’s writing). Philo, for instance, in his *On the Virtues*, customarily refers to God as “Creator and Father of the Universe,”<sup>128</sup> and his account of the creation of Adam explains the nobility of Adam’s status as divine image bearer in terms of Adam’s status as the son of God:

Was it not, then, a perfect excess of all nobleness, which could not possibly come into comparison with any other which is ever spoken of as favours? For

<sup>124</sup> Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* 173.

<sup>125</sup> Hughes, *Luke* 129.

<sup>126</sup> Of course, this need not preclude the additional corollary emphases of (1) and (2) insofar as Luke also wants to identify Christ as the true humanity, second Adam, and image of God. But if some combining of a Christological and anthropological referent is in view, as some commentators favor, the phrase has a Christological thrust precisely *because* it more immediately has an anthropological thrust. In this way Luke’s genealogy would serve to anticipate not just Paul’s identification of humanity as the offspring of God in Acts 17:28, but more subtly his identification of Christ as the image of God in Col 1:5 and 2 Cor 4:4.

<sup>127</sup> On the distinction between “echo” and “allusion,” see Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986). Peter Mallen, “Genesis in Luke-Acts,” in *Genesis in the NT* (Library of NT Studies; New York: Bloomsbury, 2012) 60–82, has demonstrated a significant number of allusions in Luke to Genesis. In light of this, it would not be surprising if Luke’s genealogy contained an allusion to the first genealogy in Genesis. I am grateful to my brother Dane for directing me to Hays’s discussion.

<sup>128</sup> Philo, *On the Virtues* 8.34, 12.77, 14.85, 33.179, in *Works of Philo* 643, 647, 648, 658.

all persons who lay claim to that kind of eminence rest their claims on the nobility of their ancestors. But even those men who have been their ancestors were only animals, subject to disease and to corruption, and their prosperity was, for the most part, very unstable. The father of this man was not mortal at all, and the sole author of his being was God. And he, being in a manner his image and likeness according to the dominant mind in the soul, though it was his duty to preserve that image free from all spot of blemish . . . deliberately chose what was false.<sup>129</sup>

In his concern with the nobility of the *imago Dei*, Philo here appeals to the notion of the “nobility of birth,” which identifies nobility with one’s ancestral background. For Philo, Adam’s noble status as God’s image-bearer and the bearer of a soul is grounded in his ancestral background being none other than God himself. He is the “son of God.” Nor is Philo alone in making an association between Adam’s status as God’s son with his being created in the image and likeness of God. The pseudepigraphical text *Life of Adam and Eve*, or *Apocalypse of Moses* (c. AD 100), for instance, refers to God as Adam’s “unseen Father” because “he is your image.”<sup>130</sup>

## V. CONCLUSION

In addition to shedding light on Gen 5:3 and Luke 3:38, two further conclusions may be drawn from this article. First, greater recognition should be given to the metaphor of begottenness in discussions concerning the meaning of the *imago Dei* in the Bible. The image is notorious for both its theological significance and its ambiguity in meaning. As Barr put it, “the isolation of the phrase [‘image of God’], combined with its highly strategic position, makes it a very debatable subject and yet at the same time one upon which serious consequences depend.”<sup>131</sup> Any role that Gen 5:3 may play in refining the meaning of *imago Dei* is therefore welcome—especially so because it need not be seen as overturning more traditional views of the *imago Dei*, but rather as supplementing and potentially unifying them. After all, the metaphor of fathering for creating is consistent with the basic trajectories of interpretation that have traditionally been offered with respect to the *imago Dei* (e.g. substantive/relational/functional, “resemblance” and “representation,” etc.). A father/child relationship accords with all of these: a child is like his father, represents his father, bears many of his father’s characteristics (such as capacity for relationship), etc. At its core, the *imago Dei* suggests that humans are like God: and the analogy of children seems quite apt for communicating this idea.

Second, the metaphor of begottenness for the *imago Dei* provides a striking example of the Bible’s tendency toward relational, experiential language, as op-

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<sup>129</sup> Philo, *On the Virtues* 37.204, in *Works of Philo* 661.

<sup>130</sup> As quoted in Beale, *NT Biblical Theology* 444. Beale also cites some additional relevant texts passages in Philo.

<sup>131</sup> James Barr, “The Image of God in the Book of Genesis—A Study of Terminology,” *BJRL* 51 (1968): 12.

posed to abstract, conceptual language.<sup>132</sup> The Bible nowhere uses the technical language the church would eventually employ to define the *imago Dei*: instead, it compares it to a universally meaningful human relationship. The same is true with regard to the Bible's language for the Trinity. Words such as *homoousios* and *hypostasis*, *perichoresis* and procession, begottenness and being, spiration and substance are important and valid in their context; but when the Bible wants to talk about the Trinity, it typically uses words such as "Father" and "Son" and "Helper" and "love" and "life." In the Bible, the highest matters of theology are related to, and communicated in terms of, the deepest experiences of our lives.

In his *Institutes*, John Calvin wrote that "recognition of [God] consists more in living experience than in vain and high-flown speculation."<sup>133</sup> Even more provocatively, a young Martin Luther wrote, "by living, no: by dying and being damned does one become a theologian, not by knowing, reading, or speculating."<sup>134</sup> There is, of course, a danger here of pressing this contrast too starkly; but insofar as these statements correspond to the Bible's experiential-relational tendency of idiom, they suggest the limitations of academic study and learning for theological understanding. Theology, from this perspective, is learned not only in libraries, but in hospitals and at weddings and gravesites; it requires not only study and reflection but love, pathos, and existential ache; and one may deepen as a theologian not only through insight and epiphany but through hearing a delightful strain of music, experiencing a stab of nostalgic longing, or tasting the self-abandonment of falling in love. The person who wants to penetrate most deeply into the theological meaning of the *imago Dei*, for instance, may progress particularly by considering the experiences associated with having children. From the vantage point of Gen 5:3, it is valid and even illuminating to associate the question, "What does it mean to say that we are created in the image of God?" with the question, "How does it feel to hold your child in your arms for the very first time?"

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<sup>132</sup> Though we speak of "the metaphor of begottenness" for the *imago Dei*, it would be more accurate to say that God himself, in his triune relations and also in his act of creation, exemplifies the true meaning of "Father" and "Son," of which *our* father and son relationships are metaphors.

<sup>133</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1.10.2 (trans. and ed. John T. McNeil) 1.97.

<sup>134</sup> Quoted in Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I.1 18. I am grateful to Dane Ortlund, Eric Ortlund, and Joel Green for their thoughtful feedback on earlier drafts of this article.