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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

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THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN BIBLICAL
INTERPRETATION: A STUDY IN THE
WRITINGS OF JAMES INNEL PACKER

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Evangelical scholars have forcefully articulated their views on the Holy Spirit's supernatural work in producing an inspired and authoritative Bible. Yet, comparatively little attention has been given to the Spirit's role in biblical interpretation. Even when scholars mention the subject, they seldom discuss it extensively. Two vital questions are prompted by this apparent indifference to the Spirit's work in interpretation: (1) Should the Evangelical doctrine of Scripture be rested on the deistic concept that the Holy Spirit, having inspired the Bible, departed and left the church alone to wrestle with the problems of interpretation? (2) If one admits that the Holy Spirit plays a part in the interpretative process, what is the exact nature of his role, and who qualifies as a Spirit-guided interpreter?

The purpose of this dissertation was to set forth, analyze, and evaluate the view of James Innell Packer on the role of the Holy Spirit in biblical interpretation. In setting forth Packer's doctrine of Word and Spirit, his works were studied systematically with a keen eye on how his starting point and theological presuppositions influence the direction of his thought, as well as his conclusions on the Spirit's role in the hermeneutical process.

Chapter 1 offers an overview of the wider Evangelical context for Packer's doctrine of Word and Spirit. It investigates how the Spirit's relationship to Scripture was set forth and formulated by the two spiritual forebears of twentieth-century Evangelicalism, i.e., the sixteenth-century Reformation (Luther and Calvin) and the Revival movement of the eighteenth century (Wesley). These two movements, and the developments that succeeded them (seventeenth-century Protestant Scholasticism, and nineteenth-century theological liberalism), set the stage for twentieth-century Evangelical developments in which Packer plays a major role.

Chapter 2 presents the immediate context for Packer's theological activities, exploring the ways in which the third epoch of Evangelical history (i.e., twentieth-century Evangelicalism) was a response to nineteenth-century theological liberalism, and the role played by three major twentieth-century theological movements, namely, Neo-orthodoxy, Fundamentalism, and the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement. The chapter investigates how Packer's pietistic conversion and discovery of Puritan writings shaped his theological orientation. This background leads into a discussion of theological

method, inquiring how it is predicated upon his doctrine of human knowledge of God, a doctrine that culminates in his view of the Holy Spirit as the Agent for the production and reception of Scripture as the Word of God.

Chapters 3 and 4 set forth Packer's view of the Spirit's role in the interpretative process. On the one hand, chapter 3 describes and analyzes the *divine* dimension of biblical interpretation, showing how the Spirit's work of illumination prepares an individual's heart and mind for the understanding of Scripture. Through the eyes of Packer, the research explores the necessity of illumination, its nature, and its essential characteristics and parameters. On the other hand, chapter 4 examines the actual task of interpretation (exegesis, synthesis, and application), investigating how the *human* interpreter cooperates with the divine Spirit in the hermeneutical enterprise. The investigation probes how Packer affirms Evangelicalism's grammatical-historical approach to interpretation and how, at the same time, he makes efforts to overcome the method's apparent weaknesses. The chapter also considers how Packer addresses the relationship between the Spirit's ongoing guidance in applicatory interpretation today and his leading of believers throughout the postapostolic ages.

Chapter 5 summarizes the results of the study and assesses of Packer's doctrine of Word and Spirit. Packer's view is evaluated against his wider and immediate Evangelical contexts, and in terms of its logical consistency and coherence with relevant biblical data. Finally, some tensions in Packer's understanding of the Spirit's role in the hermeneutical process are raised as fruitful areas for further investigation.

THE LAWS OF CLEAN AND UNCLEAN ANIMALS OF LEVITICUS 11: THEIR NATURE, THEOLOGY, AND RATIONALE (AN INTERTEXTUAL STUDY)

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This dissertation fills a gap in Pentateuchal studies on the Mosaic dietary laws concerning clean and unclean animals by investigating the nature, theology, and rationale of the food regulations. After an introduction, chapter 1 deals with the chronological development of the interpretation of the laws of clean and unclean food. Chapter 2 reviews relevant explanations of these laws topically, analyzes them, and briefly evaluates the different approaches to the Pentateuchal dietary laws. Chapter 3 examines the context and the literary structure of Lev 11 and demonstrates on exegetical grounds various links among key Pentateuchal passages (Gen 1-2, Gen 3, Gen 7-9, Lev 11, and Deut 14:2-21). Chapter 4 describes these dietary regulations in the broader perspective of a theology of eating. The rationale of dietary rules is explored. The final conclusion summarizes the main points of the investigation.

This intertextual study within the canonical text of the Pentateuch demonstrates exegetically that the Mosaic laws of clean and unclean animals are to be taken as dietary laws (Lev 11:1-23, 41-47; Deut 14:2-21). The study differentiates between two basic types of uncleanness: ritual/ceremonial and natural/hereditary. Ritual uncleanness is closely associated with elements of time,